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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
391st MEETING
19 AUGUST 2013
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

PSC/PR/BR.(CCCXI)

PRESS STATEMENT

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The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU), at its 391st meeting held in open session, on 19 August 2013, on the occasion of the World Humanitarian Day, was briefed on the protection of civilians and the humanitarian situation in the Central African Republic (CAR) and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) by the Commission of the African Union, the United Nations (UN), partners, civil society and the Institute for Security Studies.

Council took note of the humanitarian assessment mission undertaken by the Department of Political Affairs from 12 to 16 August 2013 to the CAR and welcomed the briefing made by the UN Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs to the UN Security Council on 14 August 2013 on the humanitarian situation in the CAR.

Council noted with concern that the presence of negative forces in eastern DRC is a major source of violence, instability, insecurity, denial of access to humanitarian assistance to those in need of urgent help, violations of human rights and an alarming increase in internal displacement.

Council also noted with concern that the events that have occurred since the takeover of power by Seleka in CAR, on 24 March 2013, has caused the weakening of State institutions and resulted in widespread insecurity, arbitrary detentions, summary executions and the denial of access to humanitarian assistance to people in dire need.

Council urged the UN Security Council to expedite provision of financial and logistical support to the African-led International Support Mission in the Central Africa Republic (AFISM-CAR) to ensure, among others, the safety of humanitarian personnel and protection of the civilian population.

Council endorsed the African Union theme for the humanitarian day "Helping Hands", and encouraged a sustained engagement by more Africans in humanitarian action in conflict-affected areas in Africa.

Council commended the efforts of the Secretary General of the United Nations, as well as those of UN agencies in sustaining awareness and responses for effective mobilization of humanitarian aid.

Council welcomed the outcome of the 6th Extraordinary Summit of the International Conference for the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) on the situation on the DRC held in Nairobi on 31 July 2013, Kenya, within the context of the implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the DRC and the Great Lakes Region.

Council condemned the escalation of fighting in the east of the DRC and urged both the Government and armed opposition to conclude the peace talks under the auspices of the ICGLR to facilitate the restoration of stability in the east of the DRC and the return of displaced populations.

Council welcomed the progress made in the benchmarking of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the DRC and the Great Lakes Region and renewed its support for its full implementation. Council took note of the continuing deployment of the Intervention Brigade under the UN Mission for the Stabilization of the Congo (MONUSCO), as authorized by the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2098 (2013).

Council appealed to all AU Member States to provide assistance to the conflict-affected civilian population in the CAR and the DRC. In this context, Council called on those Member States that have not yet done so, to sign and ratify the AU Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa.

Council appealed to the international community to continue to provide and increase assistance towards emergency humanitarian needs and protection of refugees and Internal Displaced Persons (IDPs) in the CAR and the DRC. In this regard, Council further stressed that support should be provided to both refugees and the recipient communities, to help them cope with pressure on resources.

Council stressed the need for promoting inter-community dialogue and reconciliation that address the root causes of conflict, promote ethnic co-habitation, and reform the cultural structures that impact women's rights in conflict-affected areas.

Council agreed to operationalize the Livingstone Formula to facilitate its interaction with civil society organizations in the area of peace and security.

Council finally agreed to periodically review the humanitarian situation in conflict-affected countries in Africa.