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Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, P.O. Box: 3243 Tel.: (251-11) 551 7700 Fax: (251-11) 5519 321  
Email: [situationroom@africa-union.org](mailto:situationroom@africa-union.org)

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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL

771<sup>ST</sup> MEETING

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

11 MAY 2018

PSC/PR/COMM(DCCLXXI)

COMMUNIQUE

## COMMUNIQUE

The Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU), at its 771<sup>st</sup> meeting held on 11 May 2018, adopted the following decision on the African Migrants Crisis: Imperative for Expediting Free Movement Policy in Africa:

### **Council:**

1. **Takes note** of the statements made by the Commissioner for Social Affairs, H.E. Amira Elfadif, as well as the representatives of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Council **also takes note** of the presentations made by Lt. General Jalal Eldin Elsheikh Eltayeb, of the Republic of Sudan, in his capacity as the Chairperson of the Committee of Intelligence and Security Services of Africa (CISSA) and by the Director for Political Affairs;
2. **Recalls** its previous communiqués and press statements on free movement of people and goods, particularly communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM(DCLXI)] adopted at its 661<sup>st</sup> ministerial meeting held on 23 February 2017. **Acknowledges** that the AU Heads of State and Government have adopted important policy decisions on free movement of persons and goods, including Agenda 2063. In this context, Council further **recalls** decision [Assembly/AU/Dec.607(XXVII)] on the Free Movement of Persons and the African Passport adopted by the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government at its 27<sup>th</sup> ordinary session held in Kigali, Rwanda, in July 2016 in which the Assembly urged all Member States to adopt the African Passport and to work closely with the AU Commission to facilitate the process towards the issuance at national level based on international, continental and national policy provisions and continental design and specifications;
3. **Commends** the efforts deployed by CISSA to reduce security impediments related to the free movement of person in Africa, as well as the efforts by AU Commission to speed up the implementation of the Protocol to the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community Relating to Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Right of Establishment in Africa adopted by the AU Summit in January 2018 in Addis Ababa and subsequently signed by a significant number of countries during the 10<sup>th</sup> Extra-Ordinary Summit of the AU held in Kigali in March 2018;
4. **Also commends** the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the East African Community (EAC) for the significant progress recorded to date in the promotion of free movement of persons, goods and services and **urges** other Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs) to emulate the good examples;
5. **Further commends** Member States which have signed the Protocol to the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community Relating to Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Right of Establishment in Africa and the Agreement establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and **emphasizes** that the two instruments go hand-in-hand and are crucial in addressing the challenge of irregular migration in Africa. Council **acknowledges** that the implementation of these continental instruments will ensure dignified and legitimate movement of Africans without hindrance. Furthermore, Council **emphasizes** that the free movement of persons will promote regular

migration and prevent migrant traffickers from exploiting migrants. Council **further notes** that necessary steps are being taken to address security concerns, in particular through sharing of bio-data as regular migrants travel legitimately using official border crossings;

6. **Expresses deep concern** on the migrant situation in Libya, as it is unacceptable and constitutes a security threat not only to the region, but also on peace and stability of the entire continent. In this regard, Council **stresses the urgent need** to search for a lasting solution to the deplorable situation of African migrants in Libya, which is a shared responsibility of all Member States. In this regard, Council **takes note** of the steps taken by the Tripartite Task Force of the AU-EU-UN, under the leadership of the AU Commission;

7. **Notes with concern** that organized criminal and terrorist networks have turned the otherwise historically safe migration routes into a criminal industry with devastating consequences for the migrants and dire security implications for source, transit and destination countries alike. In this regard, Council **emphasizes the need** for Member States to develop a coordinated sharing of information strategy, as well as deployment of latest technologies that would ensure dismantling of the organized criminal and terrorist networks controlling and promoting irregular migration in the continent. Council **underscores the important** role of the RECs/RMs in combating organized crimes, terrorism and human trafficking, in close coordination with Member States;

8. **Urges** African countries to make use of their respective security services to undertake joint border tactical and operational measures with their respective neighbouring countries, to curb illegal migration and transnational organized criminal activities, as well as conduct joint operations to identify human traffickers within their areas of jurisdiction. Council **requests** CISSA to work with the relevant stakeholders in destination countries to identify migrant trafficking criminal networks in order to bring them to justice;

9. **Endorses** the establishment of the African Migration Observatory, as proposed by His Majesty Mohammed VI, King of Morocco, AU Champion for Migration, which aims mainly at collecting data, ensuring information exchange and coordination between African countries. The Observatory, which would be based on the triad Understand, Anticipate and Act, will create synergies with continental initiatives on migration, and support them, through data and knowledge sharing, to address efficiently challenges related to Migration flows from and within Africa. Council **emphasizes** the importance for the Observatory to collaborate with the existing initiatives such as the Regional Operation Center (ROC) in Khartoum, the Horn of Africa (HoA) Initiative to enhance collaboration and intelligence sharing and to address continental crimes related to migration;

10. **Calls on** Member States which have not done so, to sign and ratify the Protocol to the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community Relating to Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Right of Establishment in Africa and the Agreement Establishing the AfCFTA, in order to realize the full benefits of free movement of persons, good and service in Africa, including promoting of regular migration;

11. **Reiterate** the need for CISSA to continue providing necessary support to member states and RECs / RMs in order to ensure that AU police decisions relating to free movement of persons and

goods are realized. In this regard, Council **encourages** CISSA to continue providing quarterly briefings to Council on its activities to address security impediments to free movement of persons in Africa;

12. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.