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UNIÃO AFRICANA

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, P.O. Box: 3243 Tel.: (251-11) 5513 822 Fax: (251-11) 5519 321
Email: situationroom@africa-union.org

PRESS RELEASE

AFRICAN UNION DETERMINED TO TAKE ACTION AGAINST THE MILITIA AND OTHER ELEMENTS WHICH TERRORIZE CIVILIANS IN THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Addis Ababa, 12 February 2014: The Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union (AU), Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini- Zuma, is deeply concerned by the violence perpetrated these days in Bangui and other places in the Central African Republic (CAR). She notes, in particular, criminal attacks committed in recent days by armed groups against innocent civilians belonging to the Central African muslim community members, as well as against Chadian nationals. She stresses that such acts will only contribute to the worsening of community and religious divisions in the country, thereby undermining stabilization efforts undertaken by the Central African authorities with the support of leaders in the region, Africa and the rest the international community.

The Chairperson of the Commission also notes with deep concern the new phenomenon of deliberate attacks by elements of the said anti- Balaka militias against uniformed personnel of the African-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic (MISCA). In this regard, three Rwandan soldiers and a policeman of Formed Police Unit (UPC) of the Cameroonian in the MISCA were injured, some very seriously, on 6 February 2014, to the north of Bangui, while they assured the protection of Chadian nationals who were being repatriated to their country.

The Chairperson of the Commission strongly condemns these acts. She underlines the commitment of the AU to ensure that the perpetrators and sponsors of these acts are held accountable for their actions. She also underlines the commitment of the AU to ensure the effective implementation of the mandate of the MISCA, including the protection of civilians and other activities essential for the stabilization of the CAR, including the pursuit of securing the corridor which links the CAR to Cameroon. In this context, and in coordination with the Central African authorities, following the meeting of the Special Representative of the AU, General Jean-Marie Michel Mokoko, with the CAR Prime Minister André NZAPAYEKE, on 9 February 2014, the MISCA will take all appropriate measures, including the use of force against all militias and other armed elements which continue to commit abuses and maintain a climate of insecurity and hatred in the country and against all those who attack its staff.

The Chairperson of the Commission reiterates the request made by the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the AU, at its meeting of 29 January 2014, for all concerned CAR stakeholders to make calls, unequivocally, for their supporters to put to an immediate end attacks against civilians and any other action likely to undermine efforts for peace and reconciliation in their country. She emphasizes that the Commission will seek to finalize as soon as possible, a list of persons against whom targeted sanctions will be imposed in accordance with relevant decisions of the PSC. She reiterated the commitment of the AU to cooperate fully with the United Nations in the implementation of sanctions adopted by the Security Council against individuals and entities that undermine peace efforts, as well as the fulfillment of the mandate of the International Commission of Inquiry of the United Nations responsible for shedding light on the violations of human rights and International Humanitarian Law in the CAR since 1 January 2013.