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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL

503RD MEETING

ADDIS ABABB

30 April 2015

PSC/PR /COMM.2(DIII)

PRESS STATEMENT

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The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU), at its 503rd meeting held on 30 April 2015, was briefed by the Commissioner for Peace and Security on the follow-up to communiqué PSC/PR/COMM/1.(CDXCVI) on the situation in Western Sahara adopted at its 496th meeting held on 27 March 2015.

Council welcomed the steps taken by the Chairperson of the Commission to follow-up on the relevant provisions of the aforementioned communiqué, in particular the letter that she addressed to the United Nations (UN) Secretary-General on 30 March 2015, transmitting both the report submitted to the 503rd meeting of Council and the communiqué adopted on that occasion, for the purpose of circulation to the members of the Security Council, and requesting that the AU Special Envoy for Western Sahara, former President Joaquim Chissano of Mozambique, brief the Security Council during its April 2015 meeting on this issue.

Council deeply regretted that the Security Council did not agree to the AU's request that the AU Special Envoy for the Western Sahara address it. Council stressed that this situation does not reflect the spirit of the AU-UN strategic partnership, in particular between the Peace and Security Council of the AU and the UN Security Council, which must apply to all peace and security issues on the African continent, including Western Sahara.

Council expressed its firm conviction that the settlement of the conflict in Western Sahara, which has been in a stalemate for more than four decades despite the efforts of the successive Personal Envoys of the UN Secretary-General, as well as the effective implementation of Security Council resolutions, both require an enhanced international engagement and a close partnership between the AU and the United Nations. Council, taking note of the adoption, on 28 April 2015, of resolution 2218 (2015) on Western Sahara, reiterated the AU's commitment to continue to work towards the early resolution of the conflict in Western Sahara on the basis of international legality and relevant OAU/AU decisions, and to cooperate closely with the United Nations, to mobilize all the support that the Personal Envoy of the UN Secretary-General needs, in order to carry out his mandate.

Council expressed its deep appreciation to the African members of the Security Council (A3) for their efforts to facilitate an interaction between the Security Council and the AU Special Envoy, and encouraged them to continue to promote the African position on the question of Western Sahara.