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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
503RD MEETING
ADDIS ABABA
30 APRIL 2015

PSC/PR/COMM.1(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 Permanent Representative of the Republic of South Africa to the AU on the xenophobic attacks against foreign migrants in South Africa and the measures taken by the South African authorities to address this situation.

Council expressed its rejection of xenophobia in all its forms and manifestations. In this respect, Council welcomed the press release issued by the Chairperson of the Commission on 15 April 2015, which strongly condemned the attacks, expressed her concern for the safety of foreign nationals and called for the immediate halt of these unacceptable attacks. Council further expressed strong condemnation of these acts carried out by isolated groups against innocent foreigners. Council expressed its heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims and wished prompt recovery to the injured.

Council commended the Government of South Africa for the steps it has taken to address the situation, notably the concerted leadership of President Jacob Zuma and the South African Cabinet. Council noted that the situation is beginning to return to normalcy. Council expressed its confidence that the South African authorities would do all in their power to fully address the issues at hand, to ensure that there is no repeat of this xenophobic violence in the future, including bringing to justice the perpetrators of these heinous acts. Council further called for steps to compensate for the loss of life and property.

Council acknowledged that the incidents that have taken place in South Africa are a reflection of larger social, economic and political challenges facing the continent, which are further reflected in the attempts by African migrants to cross the Mediterranean Sea to Europe, notably through Libya, with the attendant massive loss of life. In this respect, Council underlined the need for a comprehensive approach to these challenges, taking into account the constraints of Member States, the imperative to respect the rights of migrants and ensure their humane treatment, as well as the overall objective of achieving freedom of movement across the continent, as one of the main components of the integration agenda of the Union.

Council recommended that the relevant policy organs convene a special session devoted to the issue of migration and its related challenges, with a view to agreeing to an enhanced African collective effort, on the basis of a report to be submitted by the Commission.