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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
1206TH MEETING

4 APRIL 2024
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

PSC/PR/BR.1206 (2024)

PRESS STATEMENT

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The Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU) dedicated its 1206th meeting, held on 4 April 2024, to an Open Session on the Prevention of the Ideology of Hate, Hate Crimes and Genocide.

Council took note of the opening remarks by H.E. Ambassador Jainaba Jagne, the Permanent Representative of the Republic of The Gambia to the African Union and the Stand-In Chairperson of the PSC for April 2024; the briefing by H.E. Ambassador Bankole Adeoye, AU Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security in the presence of the Deputy Chairperson of the AU Commission, H.E. Dr. Monique Nsanzabaganwa; the presentation by the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Rwanda to the AU, H.E. Ambassador Maj. Gen. (Rtd) Charles Karamba; the statements by Member States and Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs); as well as the statements by the representative of the European Union, H.E Ambassador Javie Nino Perez.

Council recalled all its previous decisions and pronouncements on the prevention of the ideology of hate, genocide, and hate crimes in Africa, particularly Communique [PSC/PR/COMM.1147 (2023)] adopted at its 1147th meeting held on 6 April 2023.

Council also recalled Article 4(h), (j) and (o) of the AU Constitutive Act and Aspirations 4 and 5 of Agenda 2063, and reaffirmed the respect for, and sanctity of, human life as enshrined in the AU Constitutive Act, the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide of 1948.

Council noted with deep concern that the scourge of hate ideology and hate crimes continues to pose significant threats to peace and stability across the African continent and beyond and called for decisive action to prevent these scourges.

Council acknowledged that Africa is a diverse Continent rich in cultural diversity and value systems with a complex context of historical, social, economic and political interactions, which require concerted efforts to promote mutual trust, tolerance and respect, in order to inculcate a culture of living together in peace and good neighborliness, anchored on African shared values enshrined in the philosophy of Ubuntu.

Council expressed solidarity with all victims of genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda, ideologies of hate, and hate crimes, and egregious violation of human rights on the continent.

Council welcomed the development of the African Union Transitional Justice Policy (AUTJP) and recommended it as an instrument to guide Member States emerging from conflict situations in the implementation of their national transitional justice processes and/or programmes.

Council commended the Republic of Rwanda for the progress made on the national reconciliation process after the genocide and all preventive measures undertaken to prevent genocide and hate speech; and in this regard, encouraged Member States to continue to share experiences and lessons and best practices in dealing with these scourges.

Council congratulated all Member States that have already acceded to all regional, continental and international legal instruments, particularly the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide of 1948, and encouraged those Member States that have not yet done so, to also accede to these instruments.

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Council expressed appreciation to the UN and the rest of the international community, in particular, the International Police Organization (INTERPOL), for their efforts and cooperation with Member States in preventing the ideology of hate, hate crimes and genocide, as well as in tracking fugitives of these heinous crimes.

Council strongly condemned all ideologies of hate, hate speech, identity and religious based conflicts, ethnic and tribal violence, xenophobia, racism, marginalization, which collectively constitute drivers of the ideology of hate, hate crimes and genocide, and stressed the need for promoting the culture of peace, tolerance and national reconciliation.

Council underlined the importance of promoting accountability, fighting impunity and promoting justice to the victims of ideologies of hate, hate crimes and genocide, among others, by bringing to justice all perpetrators and, in this context, Council encouraged all Member States, that have not yet done so, to promulgate legislation and establish national institutions for the effective prevention and combating of the ideology of hate, hate crimes and genocide.

Council directed the AU Commission to urgently provide comprehensive policy elaboration of 'hate speech' and 'hate crimes', as well as to compile adequate data, with a view to more effectively deter, prevent and combat these scourges.

Council encouraged the AU Commission to continue applying the AU Transitional Justice Policy and the Post Conflict and Reconstruction and Development Policy to support efforts by Member States to promote accountability, justice, national reconciliation, and unity as well as to comprehensively address all structural root causes that can trigger hate ideology, hate crime and genocide in Africa.

Council urged Member States to continue to enhance their national early warning and early response capacities, as well as to promote awareness raising campaigns through various media, informal and formal education, and in this regard encourages Member States to include in their education curricula, human rights, peace, leadership, reconciliation, tolerance of diversity, togetherness, justice and democratic values; as well as to formulate inclusive policies which reflect the diversity of the population in their countries.

Council underscored the need for Member States to effectively regulate and closely monitor the use of the conventional and unconventional media (social media), and in the same context, stressed the need for the media to remain professional, desist from fake news, remain ethical, as well as to report factually.

Council also encouraged Member States, working in close collaboration with the RECs/RMs, to redouble efforts in developing effective preventive strategies that holistically address the root causes and drivers of violent conflicts, and in this regard, underlined the critical role of women, youth, civil society organizations, traditional and religious leaders, as well as the private sector in preventing and combating the ideology of hate, hate crimes and genocide.

Council commended the Chairperson of the AU Commission for the progress achieved, thus far, regarding the appointment of an AU Special Envoy on the Prevention of Hate Crimes and the Crime of Genocide.

Council reiterated the importance of expeditiously implementing the decision of the AU Assembly, particularly, on the construction of the AU Human Rights Memorial dedicated to victims of human rights violations in Africa, such as the genocide against the Tutsis in Rwanda, apartheid rule in South Africa, the Red Terror in Ethiopia, colonialism and the Slave Trade; and encouraged Member

States to renew their commitments toward the realization of the objectives of the project, with a view to effectively promoting awareness and preventing the recurrence of similar crimes.

Council also reiterated the call for the Panel of the Wise to undertake a review of the status of implementation of the recommendations contained in the Report of the OAU International Panel of Eminent Personalities on the 1994 Rwanda Genocide and Surrounding Events.

Council looked forward to the successful organization of the 30th Commemoration of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda (Kwibuka30), on 07 April 2024, under the theme "Remember – Unite – Renew", in remembrance of all victims and survivors of hate, hate crimes and genocide across the African Continent.

Council agreed to remain actively seized of the matter.