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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL

278TH MEETING

13 MAY 2011

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

PSC/PR/Comm.(CCLXXVIII)

PRESS STATEMENT

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The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU), at its 278th meeting held on 13 May 2011, received a briefing on the activities of the AU Panel of the Wise, represented by Dr. Kenneth Kaunda, former President of the Republic of Zambia, Dr. Mary Chinery-Hesse, Mrs. Marie-Madeleine Kalala-Ngoy and Mrs. Elisabeth Pognon.

Council welcomed the efforts being made by the Panel in pursuance of its mandate to support the efforts of the Peace and Security Council and those of the Chairperson of the Commission, particularly in the area of conflict prevention. In this respect, Council expressed satisfaction at the outcome of the visit undertaken by the Panel to Tunisia, from 6 to 7 April 2011, and looked forward to the planned mission to Egypt, in June 2011. Council stressed the important role that the Panel can play in accompanying and supporting the ongoing transitions in both Tunisia and Egypt.

Council also welcomed the activities being planned by the Panel as a follow up to its report on “the strengthening of the role of the African Union in the prevention, management and resolution of election-related disputes and violent conflicts in Africa”, as endorsed by the 13th ordinary session of the Assembly of the Union, held in Sirte, Libya, from 1st to 3 July 2009 [Assembly/AU/Dec.254(XIII) Rev.1], in particular the undertaking of pre-electoral assessment missions in selected situations falling under its conflict prevention mandate.

Council commended the Panel for working towards the completion of its thematic reflection on “Non-impunity, truth, justice and reconciliation in Africa – Opportunities and constraints”, and looks forward to receiving the final report. Council also looks forward to the completion of the thematic reflection on “Sexual violence, Women and Children in Armed conflicts”.

Council encouraged the Panel to expeditiously undertake the comprehensive review, including the early convening of a workshop bringing together relevant stakeholders, of the existing mechanisms relating to democratization and governance in Africa, as requested at its 275th meeting, held on 26 April 2011 [PSC/MIN/BR.1(CCLXXIV)], and make recommendations to it on how best to strengthen the democratization processes on the continent, in light of the challenges and opportunities linked to the popular uprisings in North Africa, at a meeting to be convened no later than December 2011.