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PRESS RELEASE

TANZANIA CHAIRS THE AFRICAN UNION SECURITY COUNCIL (PSC) ON THE AGENDA OF INTEGRATING WOMEN PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA IN IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AfCFTA WITH A FOCUS ON WOMEN IN CROSS BORDER TRADE IN CONFLICT AND POST CONFLICT SITUATIONS

Addis Ababa, 14th March 2023

Today the 14th March 2023, the United Republic of Tanzania in its capacity as the Chair of the African Union Peace and Security Council (PSC) for the month of March 2023 convened the 1144th PSC Session at the Ambassadorial Level on the Agenda of Integrating Women Peace and Security Agenda in Implementation of the AfCFTA with a focus on Women in Cross Border Trade in Conflict and Post Conflict Situations. The Meeting was chaired by H.E. Ambassador Innocent Shiyo, Permanent Representative of the United Republic of Tanzania to the African Union.

The session was held in line with commemoration of the 2023 International Women's Day. This is the first time since its establishment that the PSC has considered an agenda with a nexus on Women, Peace, Security and trade with a view to ensure a meaningful and effective participation of women in implementation of the AfCFTA Agreement.

The Council noted the significant contribution and participation of African women in cross border trade and peacebuilding. The Council also noted with concerns the persistence of challenges facing women in conflict and post conflict situations and their adverse impact on participation of women in socio-economic activities including cross border trade. In particular, the Council condemned violence against women in cross border trade.

The session therefore deliberated on national, regional and continental strategies to strengthen women's participation in the area of peace, security and trade. In this respect, the Council encouraged Member States to sign, ratify and fully domesticate all AU and international instruments relating to women, peace and security.

The Council further welcomed the development of the AfCFTA Protocol on Women and Youth in Trade and commended Her Excellency Dr. Samia Suluhu Hassan, President of the United Republic of Tanzania and Champion of Women and Youth in Trade under AfCFTA for her leadership in ensuring fully participation of African women in implementation of the AfCFTA.

In addition to AU PSC Member States, the Meeting was attended by the AU Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security; Special Envoy of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission on Women, Peace and Security; Representatives of Secretary-General of the AfCFTA; Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict; as well as Representatives of Women from the Democratic Republic of Congo and Sierra Leone.

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