

**AFRICAN UNION**

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**PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL 562<sup>nd</sup> MEETING**

**ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA 10 DECEMBER 2015**

**PSC/PR/COMM.I(DLXII)**

**COMMUNIQUE**

## COMMUNIQUE

The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU), at its 562<sup>nd</sup> meeting held on 10 December 2015, adopted the following decision on the situation in Somalia and the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM):

### **Council,**

1. **Takes note** of the briefings provided by the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the Commission for Somalia and Head of AMISOM. Council **also takes note** of the statements made by the representatives of Somalia and of Ethiopia, as Chair of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), as well as by those of China, France, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, as members of the United Nations (UN) Security Council, the UN Secretariat, the European Union (EU) and Italy, as co-Chair of the IGAD Partners Forum;
2. **Recalls** its previous pronouncements on the situation in Somalia, including communiques PSC/PR/COMM.(DVIII) adopted at its 508<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 18 May 2015, communique PSC/PR/COMM. (DXXI) adopted at its 521<sup>st</sup> meeting held on 30 June 2015, and communique PSC/PR/COMM.I(DXLIV) adopted at its 544<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 18 September 2015;
3. **Reaffirms** the AU's full support to the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and its commitment to continue to assist the FGS in its stabilization and reconstruction efforts. Council **welcomes** the significant progress made by the FGS against key milestones in the completion of Somalia's federal state formation process and towards reviewing the Provisional Constitution. In this respect, Council **notes with satisfaction** the establishment of the Interim Regional Administrations of Jubaland, South West and Galmudug, and **calls for** the timely completion of the formation of the Regional Administration for Hiraan and Middle Shabelle, as well as for the determination of the status of Mogadishu and Banadir. Council **welcomes** the steps taken towards the operationalization of the National Independent Electoral Commission, as well as of the Boundaries and Federation Commission, following the appointment of the members of these two organs in July 2015. Council **calls for** the mobilization of the required human, technical and financial resources to enable the two Commissions to fulfill their respective mandates;
4. **Commends** the FGS for re-affirming its commitment to respect the constitutionally- mandated terms of the legislature and the executive, which expire in August and September 2016, respectively;
5. **Welcomes** the launch in Mogadishu, on 19 October 2015, of the National Consultative Forum (NCF) tasked to oversee the consultative process that will determine the most appropriate electoral model for the 2016 polls. Council **further welcomes** the work of the NCF in the preparation of the Facilitation Guide that set out four options for the conduct of the elections in 2016 and in the conduct of regional consultations on the electoral process in several locations across Somalia, on 16 and 17 November 2015;
6. **Looks forward** to the outcome of the final plenary session of the NCF scheduled to take place in Mogadishu, in December 2015, and **calls upon** all parties to come up with a compromise model in the interest of moving the process forward and delivering a credible and peaceful transition in 2016;

7. **Urges** the international community to continue to provide the necessary support to the FGS and its institutions, in order to consolidate the gains made and facilitate the completion of the political process. In this regard, Council **welcomes** the holding of an ambassadorial-level meeting of the High-Level Partnership Forum (HLPF) in Mogadishu, on 8 December 2015, to review progress, identify gaps and solutions on the priorities in the implementation of the Government's Vision 2016 Agenda and the New Deal Compact. Council **looks forward** to the holding of ministerial-level HLPF meeting, in Istanbul, Turkey, in February 2016, during which the implementation plan for the chosen electoral model for 2016 will be discussed, with a view to addressing any gaps in funding. Council **further looks forward** to the establishment of the process and principles that will guide the formulation of the post-2016 international aid architecture for Somalia during the Istanbul Forum ;

8. **Urges, once again**, all the Somali stakeholders, working in a spirit of inclusiveness and national unity, to spare no efforts in ensuring the full implementation of Vision 2016, including constitutional review and implementation, completion of the federal system and democratization, which is expected to culminate with the holding of free, fair, credible and transparent elections in 2016;

9. **Notes with serious concern** the recent clashes in Gaalkacyo, Central Somalia, between the forces of the regional administrations of Puntland and Galmudug that resulted in the killing and displacement of civilians. Council **appreciates** the successful mediation process undertaken by FGS Prime Minister Omar Abdirashid Ali Sharmake, with the support of the leaders of the Interim Administrations of Jubaland and South West, culminating with the signing of the 2 December 2015 Gaalkacyo Agreement. Council **calls on** all parties to respect the Agreement, including ensuring the protection and safety of civilians, and to engage in dialogue to find a lasting and peaceful solution to the underlying issues;

10. **Pays tribute** to all the AMISOM uniformed and civilian personnel, as well as to the Troop and Police Contributing Countries (T/PCCs), namely Burundi, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria and Uganda, for their continued commitment and the sacrifices made thus far;

11. **Welcomes** the appointment of Ambassador Francisco Caetano J. Madeira, from Mozambique, as the new Special Representative of the Chairperson of the Commission for Somalia and Head of AMISOM, and **pays tribute** to his predecessor, Ambassador Maman S. Sidikou, for his leadership and outstanding contribution to the quest for peace, security and stability in Somalia. Council **assures** the new Special Representative of its full support in the execution of his mandate, and **calls on** all the Somali stakeholders to extend full support to him;

12. **Looks forward** to the consolidation and expansion of the significant gains realized following the joint operations conducted by AMISOM and the Somali National Army (SNA), through the successful conclusion of Phase 3 of Operation Juba Corridor aimed at dislodging al Shabaab elements from their remaining strongholds, degrading their capabilities, limiting their sources of revenue and facilitating the restoration of state authority. At the same time, Council **notes with concern** that, in spite of the progress made, al Shabaab continues to retain the capability to conduct targeted terrorist attacks against AMISOM and SNA defensive positions, as well as asymmetric attacks on the Government and local populations, and controls some areas, particularly in the Juba Corridor. Council **also notes with deep concern** that the conflict in Yemen and the expansion of terrorist activities in that country are adversely affecting security in Somalia, in particular, and in the Horn of Africa, in general;

13. **Requests** the Commission to expedite the implementation of the revised harmonized Concept of Operations (CONOPS) for AMISOM, as transmitted to the UN Security Council in accordance with paragraph 9 of communique PSC/PR/COMM.I(DXLIV), bearing in mind the security strategy outlined in paragraph 5 of Security Council resolution 2232(2015) of 28 July 2015, namely: (i) continuing offensive operations against the al-Shabaab strongholds, (ii) enabling the political process at all levels, including through securing critical political processes throughout Somalia, and (iii) enabling stabilization efforts and delivery of security for the Somali people, as part of the wider process of peace building and reconciliation, including through the gradual handing over of security responsibility from AMISOM to the SNA and, subsequently, to the Somali Police Force (SPF);

14. **Reiterates** the imperative of enhanced command and control of AMISOM, in line with the relevant provisions of the revised harmonized CONOPS, as a critical factor in ensuring the effectiveness of the Mission, and **requests** the Chairperson of the Commission and the Special Representative to take all required steps in this respect. Council **requests** the T/PCCs to extend full cooperation to that end, in keeping with the commitments made during the 16<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Military Operations Coordination Committee (MOCC), held in Addis Ababa on 1 September 2015. Council **further requests** the Chairperson of the Commission to provide regular updates on progress made in this respect and on any challenges that may be encountered;

15. **Recalls** the earlier pledges made by Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda to offer air assets for AMISOM operations, as acknowledged in paragraph 10 of communique PSC/PR/COMM.I(DXLIV). Council, in this regard, **requests** the Commission to expedite consultations with these countries in order to generate the pledged air assets, as well as to source the required contingent owned equipment from existing AMISOM T/PCCs or other countries, both within and outside the continent, in line with paragraph 14 of resolution 2232 (2015). Council **underlines** that all force enablers and multipliers should operate under the authority of the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the Commission and the Force Commander of AMISOM;

16. **Commends** the AMISOM leadership and the T/PCCs for their continued efforts to ensure full compliance with international human rights and humanitarian law in the conduct of the Mission's military operations, including the prompt establishment of Boards of Inquiry and other mechanisms to investigate credible allegations of violations by AMISOM uniformed personnel and the adoption, where applicable, of appropriate sanctions upon the perpetrators, in line with the relevant provisions of the Memoranda of Understanding between the AU and the T/PCCs. Council, reaffirming the AU's zero tolerance policy for sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA), **requests** the Commission to continue to actively follow-up on the recommendations of the investigation into allegations of SEA leveled against some AMISOM personnel, undertaken between November 2014 and February 2015, and **looks forward** to a detailed report on steps taken in this respect within 45 days following the adoption of the present communique;

17. **Takes note** of the adoption by the UN Security Council, on 9 November 2015, of resolution 2245 (2015) in which the Council, having emphasized the role and impact of a responsive, effective, efficient and responsible field support platform as a strategic enabler in Somalia, and in view of the expansion of the mission of the UN Support Office to AMISOM (UNSOA), since its establishment in 2009, decided that UNSOA shall bear the name of the UN Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS). Council **notes with satisfaction** the improvements contained in the resolution in respect to the support package to AMISOM, including

maintenance services for partner donated and partner owned equipment jointly recognized as being required by the AU, the UN and the TCCs, as well as reimbursement to TCC's for basic and essential supplies and services required by AMISOM's contingents to sustain themselves;

18. **Further takes note** of the decision made by the Security Council, in resolution 2245 (2015), that the Head of UNSOS shall report to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on the delivery of UNSOS mandate and, through the Special Representative, to the Security Council. Council **also takes note** of the request made to the Head of UNSOS to have a quantifiable compact with the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the Commission and Head of AMISOM. In this regard, Council **welcomes** the preliminary consultations between the Commission and the UN Secretariat on this issue, and **requests** the Commission to expedite these consultations, bearing in mind the need to ensure that support to AMISOM is delivered in a timely, responsive and efficient manner, with due consideration of the Mission's operational imperatives and tempo. Council **notes** the request made by the UN Security Council for the Secretary-General to work closely with the AU in improving the performance of AMISOM through the delivery of the support package, as well as support the AU in the form of technical and expert advice, and **requests** the Commission to take full advantage of the assistance offered by the UN and to urgently work out its modalities with the UN;

19. **Requests** the Commission to report to Council, within 90 days, on the implementation of the support package to AMISOM, as per the relevant provisions of resolution 2245 (2015), including any challenges that may be faced by AMISOM in the discharge of its mandate;

20. **Notes with concern** the negative impact of the imminent funding gap that would result from the decision of the EU, within the framework of the support extended through the Africa Peace Facility (APF), to reduce by 20% the allowances to AMISOM uniformed personnel starting from January 2016. Council **requests** the Commission to continue to engage the EU, with a view to addressing all issues of concern, as well as to explore alternative solutions with other partners, bearing in mind that the reduction of allowances for uniformed personnel will seriously affect the morale of the personnel and the overall effectiveness of AMISOM, with serious adverse effect on the ongoing process in Somalia;

21. **Reiterates** that, in deploying AMISOM, the AU is acting on behalf of the UN Security Council, which has primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Council, accordingly, **calls on** the Security Council to extend enhanced support to AMISOM to enable it fully deliver on its mandate and support the process leading to the 2016 elections, until such a time the UN is in a position to deploy a peacekeeping mission, bearing in mind that, in resolution 2232 (2015), the Security Council agreed with the Secretary-General that conditions in Somalia are not appropriate for the deployment of a UN peacekeeping mission until the end of 2016 at the earliest;

22. **Reiterates** the central and critical role of the SNA not only in joint operations, but also in taking over security functions in recovered areas to facilitate continued offensive operations. In this respect, Council **recalls** its earlier pronouncements on the establishment of a non-lethal support package for the SPF and on the extension to Puntland forces of the non-lethal support package for the SNA, as well as of the related recommendations of the UN Secretary-General. Council **takes note** of the assessment made by the UN Secretary-General on this matter, and **looks forward** to progress on this issue, including the identification of a suitable entity to provide support to the SPF and to Puntland forces. In the meantime,

Council **welcomes** the decision of the Security Council, in resolution 2245 (2015), to authorize the expansion of the targeted support package to SNA troops on joint operations with AMISOM in relation to field defense stores and radio communication, and the provision of in-theatre medical evacuation for the SPF;

23. **Calls, once again**, on international partners to enhance support to the Somali National Security Forces, both lethal and non-lethal, to facilitate the takeover from AMISOM of security responsibilities by the respective Somali institutions;

24. **Stresses** the importance of the active involvement of the Somali civil society, including women and youth, in the efforts to counter violent extremism and promote lasting peace, security and reconciliation in the country. In this regard, Council **looks forward** to the recommendations of the "Conference on Community-Based Approaches to Counter Extremism- The Role of Somali Women", to be organized by AMISOM and the FGS in Djibouti on 15 and 17 December 2015;

25. **Further stresses** the importance of regional security cooperation in effectively neutralizing the al Shabaab terrorist group. Council **welcomes** the progress made within the framework of the Djibouti Process on the Enhancement of Security Cooperation in the East Africa region, including the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on the Establishment of a Fusion and Liaison Unit for East Africa (UFL-EA), during the third meeting of the Heads of Intelligence and Security Services of East Africa, held in Addis Ababa, from 7 to 8 December 2015, with the support of the Commission;

26. **Reiterates its deep concern** at the prevailing humanitarian situation, noting in this respect that 4.9 million people are in need of assistance, that 1.1 million are internally displaced, and that the situation has been compounded by the El Nino phenomenon. Council **further notes with concern** the attacks and threats against humanitarian actors, which limit access to the populations in need. Council **strongly condemns** all impediments to humanitarian assistance, **reiterates the AU's deep appreciation** to the humanitarian actors on the ground, who are operating under very challenging conditions, and **calls for** a scaled-up humanitarian response, bearing in mind that the Humanitarian Response Plan for 2015, which amounts to 863 million dollars is currently funded at only 38 percent;

27. **Decides** to renew the mandate of AMISOM until 30 May 2016, bearing in mind paragraph 16 of communique PSC/PR/COMM.(CDLXII) adopted at its 462<sup>nd</sup> meeting held on 16 October 2014, as well as the decision of the UN Security Council, as contained in paragraph 3 of resolution 2232(2015) of 28 July 2015, to authorize the Member States of the AU to maintain the deployment of AMISOM until 30 May 2016, for a maximum level of 22,126 uniformed personnel, and as part of an overall exit strategy for AMISOM, after which a decrease in AMISOM's force strength will be considered;

28. **Further decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.