

Briefing on financing for ATMIS

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Tomorrow (12 April) the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council (PSC) is expected to convene its 1075th session to discuss the financing of the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) which replaced AMISOM as of 1 April 2022.

Following the opening remark by Willy Nyamitwe, Permanent Representative of Burundi to the AU and the Chairperson of the PSC for the month of April, Bankole Adeoye, AU Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS), is expected to provide update on the state of mobilization of funds for ATMIS. It is also anticipated that the representatives of the two partner organizations of the United Nations (UN) and European Union (EU) will also make intervention. Police and Troop Contributing Countries (P/TCCs) are also expected to participate in the meeting.

It is to be recalled that the AUPSC authorized this new mission at its 1068th meeting held on 8 March 2022 with a mandate to degrade Al-Shabaab; provide security to population centres and open the main supply routes; develop the capacity of the Somali Security Forces to enable them to take over security responsibilities by the end of the transition period in December 2024; support peace and reconciliation efforts of the Somali Federal Government; and help develop the capacity of the security, justice and local authority institutions of the Federal Government of Somalia and Federal Member States. Subsequently, the UN Security Council also unanimously adopted resolution 2628 on 31 March 2022 endorsing the decision to reconfigure AMISOM into a new transition mission.

Despite the fact that ATMIS took over from AMISOM and its

mandate commenced on 1 April 2022, its funding requirements remain unsettled. What further complicates the matter is that the troops are said to have not been paid for the month of March which underscores the urgency of addressing the financing issue. Troop Contributing Countries will likely raise this issue at the meeting.

The imperative of securing sustainable and predictable financing for the mission has been a perennial issue. It was also raised during the discussion and negotiation on ATMIS both in Addis Ababa and New York as a critical issue for the success of the mission. In its 8 March Communique, the AUPSC 'reaffirm[ed] the critical importance of sustainable and predictable financing, at adequate levels and for the full duration of the mission from 1 April, 2022 up to 31 December, 2024.' Accordingly, the AUPSC 'appeal[ed] to the UN, European Union and other partners to establish a financial support package, including through UN assessed contributions, taking into consideration the primary responsibility of the UN Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security.'

Resolution 2628 also 'underline[d] the need to enhance the predictability, sustainability and flexibility of financing for African Union-led peace support operations authorised by the Security Council and under the Security Council's authority consistent with Chapter VIII of the Charter.' This resolution of the UN Security Council 'encourage[d] the Secretary-General, African Union and Member States to continue efforts to explore in earnest funding arrangements for ATMIS, bearing in mind the full range of options available to the United Nations, African Union, the European Union, and to other partners, and considering the limitations of voluntary funding, in order to establish secure future funding arrangements for ATMIS'.

The UN is expected to continue providing logistical support package to the new mission. UN Support Office in Somalia

(UNSOs) is mandated to provide logistics support to ATMIS uniformed and civilian personnel. This Support is provided through a combination of assessed budget and voluntary contributions from member states to the AMISOM Trust Fund. UK is said to have contributed recently some amount of money to the Trust Fund. UNSOs is also mandated to provide logistical support to the Somali Security Forces which is funded through voluntary contributions from member states to a Trust Fund managed by UNSOs. The Security Council has expressed its intentions to consider increasing the number of Somali security forces eligible for support through the UN Trust Fund and urged member states to continue contributing to the fund. But the use of UN assessed contributions to finance the mission, a longstanding request by the AU, is not being considered due to strong opposition by some permanent members of the Security Council. These members do not appear to be particularly keen to discuss the financing issue in a mission-specific context like ATMIS.

The EU has been a major financial partner of AMISOM and it is expected to continue financing ATMIS. However, the EU has not yet made any commitment to finance the expense of ATMIS in full. The EU was part of the consultations on the reconfiguration of AMISOM to ATMIS as part of the Quartet format (Somalia, AU, EU and the UN). Consultations between the AU and EU has continued. On 30 March 2022, a delegation from the EU held a meeting with the AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, Ambassador Bankole Adeoye. The meeting centered on the EU Peace Facility, with affirmation of EU's continued support to AU's peace support efforts in the spirit of the Joint AU-UN vision adopted at the February 2022 AU-EU summit. While the EU put forward a proposed budget towards funding ATMIS, this does not meet the full funding requirements of ATMIS. It is not clear whether EU's proposed funding amount short of the funding requirements of ATMIS is a result of current pressure facing the EU on account of the war on Ukraine and the resultant unexpected resource mobilization for

meeting resource needs relating to the crisis arising from the war.

There are understandable concerns about how realistic the objectives set out for ATMIS are in the light of the current political and security dynamics in Somalia. Particularly, there is recognition that the success of the mission hinges on the full and effective implementation of the Somali Transition Plan and the ability of the government to mobilize the necessary forces. Past experiences in the implementation of the plan are far from reassuring in this regard. The relation between the federal government and the regions continues to be complicated as the government seeks to centralize power. The political situation in the country remains tense due to the infighting between the President and the Prime Minister and the ongoing electoral process with reports of potential violence in the context of the plan for certification of Members of Parliament. These conditions of heightened demand for the role of ATMIS in this delicate context make the need for filling in the funding gaps for ATMIS even more pressing.

At the time of going to publication, it remains uncertain if this session would have an outcome document. The PSC is expected to commend the TCCs and PCCs of ATMIS for continuing to deliver their responsibilities, despite remaining challenges. In terms of addressing the funding gaps, there are four options. The first is to go back to the EU and negotiate on additional funding to meet the shortfall. It is not clear if there is room for further negotiation with the EU on this and as such it is an option with limited chance of success. The second option is the possibility of filling the funding gaps from AU member states funds. Here as well current economic situation of member states and the funding of the AU is such that there may not be room for this option unless special dispensation for utilization of unused funds from other areas of the AU is going to be secured. The third option is to make a case to the UNSC to authorize the use of assessed

contribution for filling in the funding gap of ATMIS. This speaks to the terms of Resolution 2628 which endorsed the PSC decision on the deployment of ATMIS. But it is difficult to see whether agreement would be reached on availing this option within reasonable time to address current funding shortfall of ATMIS. The fourth and last resort option is the convening of a funding summit for ATMIS for raising fund from AU member states and partners.