

The situation in Somalia

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Tomorrow (7 November) the Peace and Security Council (PSC) will hold its 806th session, the first session of the month under the chairpersonship of Djibouti, dedicated to the situation in Somalia. During the session the PSC is expected to receive the report of the African Union (AU) Commission (AUC) Chairperson on the situation in Somalia. The AU Peace and Security Department and the Special Representative of the AUC Chairperson to Somalia and head of the AU Mission to Somalia (AMISOM), Francisco Madeira, are expected to make statement and introduce the report of the chairperson.

During the introductory part of the session, following the practice of the PSC the Inter- Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), particularly Ethiopia as the Chair of IGAD and African Member of the UN Security Council (A3), the UN office to the AU (UNOAU) and the European Union (EU) will also make their statements at the session are expected to make a statement.

The report, which covers the period from August to November 2018, provides updates on the major political and security developments in Somalia and issues pertaining to AMISOM. In the political front, the report presents developments relating to the implementation of the Somali Transitional Plan (STP), including agreement on the political roadmap for 2020, the constitutional review process, the federal system and the legislative and institutional preparations for the 2021 general election.

For PSC members, it would be of interest to inquire on challenges pertaining to the implementation of the required measures in these various areas, including significant number of key legislations, within the timelines set and on how

AMISOM meaningfully contribute for achieving the timelines.

In the political front, the major issue of concern for Somalia, highlighted in the report, is the deterioration in the relationship between the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and the Federal Member States (FMS). As the Chairperson's report notes, the major developments in this regard include the communiqué of the FMS meeting of 8 September in Kismayo announcing severance of relationship with the FGS and the refusal of the FMS to attend the emergency meeting that President Mohamed Farmaajo called for 17 and 18 September 2018. During a meeting held in Garowe, Puntland, the FMS have established security arrangements, which, according to the Chairperson's report, not only represent a departure from the STP but also duplicate the role of the National Security Council (NSC).

Despite efforts for bridging the difference through intervention by the Federal Parliament and a ministerial committee, not only that the efforts failed to achieve breakthrough but the division is further deepening.

While he was attending a peace event in Juba, South Sudan last week, President Farmaajo criticized the FMS. Highlighting their failure to provide basic services to their residents, he rejected their demand for more political mandate and called their engagement in foreign policy, a sphere exclusive to the federal government, unacceptable. In this context, it is worth noting that the political crisis in Somalia is in part a result of the entanglement of Somalia in the Gulf crisis. Indeed, Somalia has become the country most affected by the exportation into the Horn of Africa of the destabilizing rivalry between Middle Eastern countries and among the Gulf states.

There are increasing concerns that the rising tension between the FGS and the FMS would adversely affect not only the political reconciliation efforts in Somalia but also the

elections that the FMS are expected to have in the coming months. Indeed, there are signs that the elections planned for November 17 in South West could be derailed. On 4 November, the Upper House of Parliament issued a statement warning against