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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL

425TH MEETING

24 MARCH 2014

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

PSC/PR/BR.(CDXXV)

PRESS STATEMENT

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The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU), at its 425th meeting, held on 24 March 2014, was briefed on the situation in Somalia by the Commissioner for Peace and Security and the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the Commission (SRCC) for Somalia and Head of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). Council was also briefed by the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General, as well as by the Representatives of the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and Ethiopia, in its capacity as the Chair of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD). Council further received the statements made by the Representatives of Rwanda, France, Russian Federation, United Kingdom and United States of America, as well as by Italy and the European Union.

Council recalled its communiqué PSC/PR/Comm.(CCCXCIX) adopted at its 399th meeting held on 10 October 2013, as well as UN Security Council resolution 2124 (2013), of 12 November 2013, which, *inter alia*, authorized an increase in the AMISOM force strength to 22,126 uniformed personnel, expanded the UN logistical support package, and requested the UN Support Office to AMISOM (UNSOA) to support the elements of Somali National Army (SNA) involved in joint operations with AMISOM as articulated in AMISOM's CONOPOS. Council further recalled communiqué PSC/PR/COMM.(CDXIV) of 21 January 2014, endorsing the AMISOM revised CONOPS.

Council welcomed the steps taken by the Commission, with the active support of partners, including the United Nations (UN), the European Union (EU) and others, in the implementation of the relevant provisions of resolution 2124 (2013) and communiqué PSC/PR/COMM.(CDXIV).

In particular, Council commended the joint Somali National Army (SNA) and AMISOM military operations, which have resulted in the further recovery of key strategic locations from Al Shabaab. Council paid tribute to the AMISOM military and police component for their courage, and, once again, commended the Federal Government of Somalia, troop and police contributing countries (Burundi, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Sierra Leone, Nigeria and Uganda) for their continued commitment to the promotion of lasting peace, security, stability and reconciliation in Somalia.

Council called for renewed efforts to ensure that the logistical support especially with regard to vital life support, facilities and engineering, provided by UNSOA fully meets the operational needs of the Mission on the ground and the specific nature and tempo of the current operations against Al-Shabaab. Council also called on Member States and international partners to contribute to the Trust Fund established in pursuance of resolution 2124 (2013) to support the SNA in joint operations with AMISOM, and called for speedy operationalization of the Fund. Council further called on those AU Members States, which can do so, to avail appropriate helicopters to support the on-going operations of AMISOM.

Council condemned the continuing terrorist attacks perpetrated by Al Shabaab against innocent Somali civilians, the FGS and AMISOM. Council offered its condolences to the families of all the victims of these attacks and to their respective Governments.

Council encouraged the FGS to establish local administrations and provide security and other essential services to the populations in the areas recovered from Al Shabaab.

Council welcomed progress being recorded in the political process in Somalia and commended the efforts of the IGAD, through its Chair, Ethiopia, the UN Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) and the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the Commission for Somalia in supporting the FGS in its efforts towards peace and reconciliation and urged them to continue with their efforts.

Council further encouraged the FGS to develop a political roadmap which will facilitate reconciliation, federalism and the completion of the constitution making process that will pave the way for general elections in line with Vision 2016. Council urged AU Member States and the larger international community to provide the required financial support to the FGS in this regard.