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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
753RD MEETING
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA
15 FEBRUARY 2018

PSC/PR/COMM.(DCCLIII)

COMMUNIQUÉ

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The Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU), at its 753rd meeting, held on 15 February 2018, adopted the following decision on the political stabilization process in Somalia and on the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) activities and exit strategy:

Council,

1. **Takes note** of the Report of the Chairperson of the Commission, as well as the briefings made by the AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, Ambassador Smail Chergui, and the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Special Envoy for Somalia, Dr Mohamed Ali Guyo. Council **also takes note** of the statements delivered by the Permanent Representatives of Somalia; Ethiopia, in its capacity as the Chair of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and African Member of the UN Security Council (A3); Cote d'Ivoire in its capacity as A3 member, and Djibouti in its capacity as a Troop Contributing Country, as well as by the representatives of the League of Arab States (LAS), the United Nations (UN) and the European Union (EU);
2. **Recalls** its previous decisions on the situation in Somalia and on AMISOM, in particular Communiqué PSC/PR/COMM.(DCCXLI) adopted at its 741th meeting held on 19 December 2017 and Communiqué PSC/PR/COMM.(DCC) adopted at its 700th meeting held on 12 July 2017;
3. **Takes note** of the progress made in the political process in Somalia, notably with regard to relations between the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and the Federal Member States, the constitutional review process and the development of an electoral system towards 2020 elections. In this regard, Council **commends** the FGS for the progress made, thanks to the political space and enabling environment created by AMISOM working in collaboration with the Somali Security Forces, the passing of key legislation, the adoption of the National Security Architecture, which provides the broad framework for the requisite building up of the Somalia National Security Forces (SNSF), as well as the recent agreement on a Roadmap on Inclusive Politics, which calls for a constitutional review process, a new electoral model for elections under universal suffrage by 2020, and reconciliation. In this context, Council **encourages** AU Member States to provide support, in particular technical assistance to the FGS, in support to the constitutional review process and the establishment of an electoral system;
4. **Commends** the FGS for its continued efforts to foster greater political unity and consensus with the Federal Member States to reach critical outcomes in the search for a lasting solution to the protracted political and security challenges facing Somalia. In this regard, Council **emphasizes the importance** of regular convening of the National Security Council meetings between the FGS and the FMS as a forum for dialogue, consensus building, and decision making on critical political and security issues;

5. **Applauds** the initiatives and leadership role demonstrated by IGAD in its engagement in the search for a lasting solution to the conflict in Somalia.
6. **Pays** tribute to the commitment exhibited by AMISOM Troop/Police Contributing Countries (T/PCCs) and in particular to AMISOM personnel who have paid the ultimate sacrifice and have sustained injuries while in the search for lasting peace and stability in Somalia. In that regard, Council urges AMISOM personnel to persevere until Al Shabaab is completely defeated;
7. **Welcomes** the merger between the Galmudug Regional State and Ahlu Sunnah wa Jamah (ASWJ) to form a joint administration and security force, following the power-sharing agreement signed in December 2017. However, Council **notes with deep concern** the tensions and military build-up between Puntland and Somaliland, which raises the risk of armed conflict, if not de-escalated;
8. **Stresses** the need for timely commencement of the Operational Readiness Assessment of regional forces, in order to accelerate discussions on the integration of regional forces into the SNSF and support the identification of SNSF elements responsible for the Somalia Transition Plan;
9. **Condemns, in the strongest terms possible**, the continued terrorist attacks being perpetuated by the Al Shabaab terrorist group, and **calls** for redoubling of efforts in order to defeat the terrorist group.
10. **Notes** the security improvement in Somalia and **welcomes** the progress made to date in the fight against the al-Shabaab terrorist group. In this regard, Council **reiterates** that defeating Al-Shabaab requires the long-term stabilization of Somalia through a functional and accountable government at all levels. In this regard, Council **underscores** the importance of implementing the Juba Valley Corridor Operational Plan, in order to facilitate the neutralization of Al-Shabaab in Jamane, Jilib, Buuale and Sakow, setting conditions for SNSF control of Jubaland;
11. **Commends** the efforts towards the development of the Somalia Transition Plan, and **calls** for its timely completion by end March 2018. Council **reiterates** the need for stabilization activities and the need for supporting the SNSF, with a view to ensuring that it has the necessary capacity to takeover of security responsibilities of the country. In this regard, Council **underscores** the importance of a coherent and comprehensive approach towards the transition process in Somalia;
12. **Underscores** the dual and mutually reinforcing objectives of addressing AMISOM's funding gaps and financing the SNSF to take-over from AMISOM the primary responsibility in the security of the country and **emphasizes** that further success on the security institutions in Somalia cannot be achieved without sufficient progress on the political process. In this regard, Council **underlines** the need for the AU to further strengthen its political and strategic relationship with the FGS and the FMS in support of accelerated progress on Somalia's path towards peace and stability;

13. **Underlines the need for** predictable and sustainable funding for AMISOM, particularly from the UN assessed contributions with a view to enabling the Mission to more effectively discharge its mandate. Furthermore, Council **emphasizes the importance** to replenish the AMISOM Trust Fund to facilitate training of the SNSF by the AMISOM;
14. **Reiterates its gratitude** to the UN, the EU and other bilateral and multilateral partners for their continued support to AMISOM and the FGS. Furthermore, Council **expresses its gratitude** to partners for the pledges made during the London Conference in May 2017 and **appeals** to them to fully honour their pledges. Council **appeals** to the UN and partners to support the AMISOM troops through providing force multipliers and force enablers to enhance its capacity;
15. **Also reiterates** its call to all actors in Somalia to coordinate and harmonize their support to Somalia, including the trainings provided to the SNSF, to avoid mixed messages to the SNF and other institutions in this critical stage of stabilizing the country;
16. **Requests** the AU Commission to expedite the development of a new AMISOM Concept of operation, which is essential for effective operations, identify the required support including from the United Nations Support Office in Somalia (UNSO);
17. **Stresses the need** for the AU Commission to continue developing its administrative capacity on its Peace Support Operations as recommended by the Report of the Independent Panel of Experts on Verification and Confirmation of the Africa Standby Force Pledged Capabilities;
18. **Decides** to establish a mechanism of naming and shaming of suppliers, financiers, facilitators, transit points and recipients of illicit weapons, with a view to stemming the phenomenon of the illicit proliferation of these weapons, in line with Press Statement [PSC/PR/BR. (CDXXX)] of its 430th meeting held on 24 April 2014 and the AU Master Roadmap to Silence the Guns by the Year 2020. In this regard, Council **requests** the AU Commission, in close cooperation with the Regional Economic Communities/Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs) and the Committee of Intelligence and Security Service of Africa (CISSA), to develop a draft mechanism and to be submitted to Council for consideration;
19. **Underscores** the progress made on AMISOM exit strategy. In this respect, Council **stresses the importance** of an AMISOM transition plan that is based on a realistic timeframe and the attainment of the key security conditions suggested by the AU-UN Joint review, in order to ensure a sustained progress in the political and economic evolution in Somalia. In this regard, Council **underscores** the need for capacity building for Somali administrative institutions to enable them effectively occupy the AMISOM liberated areas;

20. **Requests** the AU Commission, working in close collaboration with the FGS, to operationalize the Joint Task Force on Somalia, with a view to enhancing coordination and harmonization of all activities in Somalia and support being provided to Somalia. Council **calls on** the Commission to establish a platform for political dialogue with AMISOM T/PCCs, IGAD, and concerned AU Member States to ensure a coherent and unified political approach of the situation in Somalia;
21. **Decides** to review the situation in Somalia and AMISOM activities on a quarterly basis and **urges** the FGS to report to Council on progress made on key milestones of the transition process;
22. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the situation.