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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
1173RD MEETING

14 SEPTEMBER 2023
ADDIS-ABABA, ETHIOPIA

PSC/PR/COMM.1173 (2023)

COMMUNIQUÉ



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Adopted by the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU) at its 1173rd meeting, held on 14 September 2023, on the Situation in Somalia and the Operations of the AU Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS):

The Peace and Security Council,

Recalling all its previous decisions and pronouncements on the situation in Somalia and on ATMIS, in particular, Communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM.1143 (2023)] adopted at its 1043rd meeting, held on 7 March 2023, Communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM.1123 (2023)] adopted at its 1023rd meeting held on 30 November 2022 and Communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM.1068 (2021)], adopted at its 1068th meeting held on 8 March 2022; as well as the UN Security Council Resolution 2628 (2022) which authorised the reconfiguration of the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) into ATMIS and UN Security Council Resolution 2687(2023);

Reaffirming the AU's solidarity with the people and the Federal Government of Somalia in their aspirations for durable peace, security, stability, and prosperity, which will benefit the Horn of Africa region and the Continent as a whole; **also reaffirming** the unwavering commitment of the AU to respect the territorial integrity, sovereignty and unity of Somalia;

Noting the opening remarks by H.E. Ambassador Churchill Ewumbue Monono, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Cameroon to the AU and Chairperson of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) for September 2023, the remarks by H.E. Ambassador Bankole Adeoye, AU Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security, as well as the briefing by H.E. Ambassador Souef Mohamed El-Amine, Special Representative of the Chairperson of the Commission for Somalia and Head of ATMIS; **also noting** the statements by the representatives of the Federal Government of Somalia, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and the United Nations (UN);

Acting under Article 7 of its Protocol, the Peace and Security Council,

1. **Commends** the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) for its continued initiative to take full ownership and leadership of Somalia's stabilisation and reconciliation processes, particularly in the liberated areas and **welcomes** the sustained cooperation between the FGS and the Federal Member States marked by the regular meetings of the National Consultative Council (NCC), chaired by H.E. Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, President of the Federal Republic of Somalia;
2. **Applauds** H.E. Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, President of the Federal Republic of Somali, for his sustained efforts and support towards the African Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) and the AU Commission, broadly to continue contributing towards the stabilisation and protection of the territorial integrity of the country against the onslaught by al-Shabaab; **appeals** to the FGS to consult with the AU Commission on any domestic decision that has any bearing to ATMIS personnel;
3. **Welcomes** the Report of the Joint Technical Assessment (JTA), outlining the impact assessment of phase I drawdown, including threat assessment, ATMIS performance, Lessons Learned, funding requirements and the detailed plan and timeline for the phase 2 drawdown, including implications of the drawdown of 3000 ATMIS troops by 30 September 2023; **and commends** the

Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and ATMIS for the successful conduct of the JTA, in collaboration with other partners and stakeholders.

4. **Further welcomes** the Outcomes of the Somalia Operations Coordination Committee (SOCC) meeting held on 6 September 2023 regarding the modalities for the completion of the phase 2 drawdown process;
5. **Underlines** that the threat assessment recognises that al-Shabaab remains the major threat to peace and security in Somalia; and **expresses concern** that al-Shabaab retains influence on some Main Supply Routes, enabling them to extort money from the public through illegal taxation;
6. **Further reiterates** the importance of consolidating the peace and security gains in Somalia and **decides**, in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 2628 (2022) and UN Security Council Resolution 2687 (2023), to withdraw, without any conditions, 3,000 ATMIS troops by 30 September 2023 in an equitable manner to prevent any security gap; **further decides** to withdraw 851 ATMIS police personnel as per the directives of the FGS;
7. **Emphasises** the imperative of ensuring that the withdrawal of troops is undertaken in a manner that does not leave ATMIS vulnerable to attacks and that all efforts are directed towards enhanced ATMIS force protection during and following the drawdown as well as protection of the population within ATMIS Area of Operations;
8. **Pays tribute** to the AU Troop and Police Contributing Countries (T/PCCs) for their sacrifices, contribution and dedication throughout the years to date, towards peace in Somalia; **further pays tribute** to all those who have paid the ultimate price in the country in service to humanity;
9. **Expresses deep concern** over the recent attacks by Al-Shabaab, leading to several deaths and destruction of key facilities and infrastructure, which underlines the reality that Al-Shabaab still remain a significant threat to peace and stability in Somalia; **expresses concern** that Al-Shabaab may exploit any gaps during or following the drawdown of the 3000 ATMIS troops if not done equitably;
10. **Commends** ATMIS for its contribution to the degradation of Al-Shabaab, reducing its threat and protection of Main Supply Routes, population centres and crucial infrastructures, including the airports and seaports;
11. **Condemns in the strongest terms** Al-Shabaab's terror attacks on civilians, ATMIS, Somali Security Forces and members of the FGS as well as infrastructure in the country;
12. **Reiterates** the FGS's request for the lifting of the arms embargo on Somalia and that the Somalia Security Forces (SSF) should be provided with adequate firepower and resources to enable them to reduce the threats posed by Al-Shabaab;
13. **Encourages the** SSF to further enhance its efforts to hold Forward Operating Bases (FOBs) and secure areas where ATMIS troops will withdraw; in this regard, **Requests** partners to increase their support to the SSF, including in enhancing force generation, with attendant capabilities and structures, particularly Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) and aviation, including casualty evacuation (CASEVAC) and medical evacuation (MEDEVAC) to increase its performance;

14. **Expresses concern over** the dire humanitarian challenges and **encourages** the SSF to create safe corridors for the delivery of humanitarian assistance, and to ensure that essential services like food, medical aid, and life-saving support are not negatively affected;
15. **Underscores** the crucial need for the integration of regional security forces into the Somali Security Forces and Institutions and **acknowledges** the importance of involving FMS in the entire drawdown process and the continued implementation of the National Security Architecture;
16. **Further reiterates** its decision on the need to organise a pledging conference to support the FGS in its force generation efforts, stabilising the country and addressing the humanitarian challenges brought about by both insecurity and climate change-related shocks; **calls** on bilateral and international partners to redouble their efforts in financially supporting the FGS in its national efforts;
17. **Requests** the AU Commission, in collaboration with the FGS, to undertake a Study to evaluate the progress made by the FGS in reforms, force generation, and readiness to stabilise the country, as well as a needs assessment to determine the support required to accompany the FGS in its aspiration for degrading al-Shabaab and protecting the territorial integrity in the country;
18. **Also requests** the Chairperson of the Commission to work out a viable ATMIS exit strategy, which should include proposals on AU's continued engagement with and support to Somalia post 31 December 2024;
19. **Further requests** the AU Commission to expedite the operationalisation of the AU Ministerial Committee on Counter-Terrorism as decided by the 16th Extraordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union on Terrorism and Unconstitutional Changes of Government in Africa, held on 28 May 2022, in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea;
20. **Directs the AU Commission to transmit** this communique to the UNSC in compliance with UNSC Resolution 2628 (2022); and
21. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter

2023-09-14

Communiqué of the 1173rd Meeting of the Peace and Security Council, Held on 14 September 2023, on Updated Briefing on the Situation in Somalia and the Activities of the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS).

Peace and Security Council

African Union Commission

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