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**STRATEGIC CONSULTATIONS
ON THE FUTURE OF THE AFRICAN UNION PRESENCE IN SOMALIA**

MEETING OF EXPERTS

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
24 July 2026

**REPORT OF THE EXPERTS MEETING ON THE OPTIONS FOR POSSIBLE AFRICAN SECURITY
MECHANISMS IN SOMALIA IN THE ABSENCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS SUPPORT OFFICE**

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REPORT OF THE EXPERTS MEETING ON THE OPTIONS FOR POSSIBLE AFRICAN SECURITY MECHANISMS IN SOMALIA IN THE ABSENCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS SUPPORT OFFICE

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The meeting of experts from the Troop and Police Contributing Countries of the African Union Support and Stabilisation Mission in Somalia (AUSSOM), the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and members of the Military Staff Committee took place on 24 July 2026 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in preparation for the meeting of the Chiefs of Defence Forces and Police of the Troop and Police Contributing Countries of AUSSOM, scheduled to take place in Kampala, Uganda, on 29 July 2026.
2. The meeting was convened to discuss the three options for possible African security mechanisms in Somalia in the absence of the United Nations Support Office, presented by the African Union Commission (AUC) pursuant to Peace and Security Council (PSC) Communiqué PSC/PR/COMM.1317(2025) of 15 December 2025, Assembly Decision Assembly/AU/Dec.978(XXXIX) of 15 February 2026 and the outcome of the 22nd Informal Consultative Meeting of the PSC of 8 July 2026.
3. The meeting was preceded by a two-day consultation between the AUC, AUSSOM, FGS, United Nations Office to the African Union (UNOAU) and United Nations Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS) to consolidate the proposed options elaborated by the AUC.

II. ATTENDANCE

4. The meeting of experts was attended by representatives of AUC, AUSSOM, the Federal Republic of Somalia, Republic of Burundi, Republic of Djibouti, Arab Republic of Egypt, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Republic of Ghana, Republic of Kenya, Federal Republic of Nigeria, Republic of Sierra Leone and Republic of Uganda.
5. Moreover, the meeting was attended by the members of the Military Staff Committee of the Peace and Security Council (People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, Republic of Benin, Republic of Cameroon, Republic of Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Kingdom of Eswatini, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Gabonese Republic, Kingdom of Lesotho, Kingdom of Morocco, Federal Republic of Nigeria, Republic of Sierra Leone, Federal Republic of Somalia, Republic of South Africa, Republic of Uganda), the three African members of the United Nations Security Council (Democratic Republic of Congo, Republic of Liberia, Federal Republic of Somalia), as well as representatives of UNOAU and UNSOS.

III. OPENING AND PRESENTATION OF THE OPTIONS

6. The AUC, represented by the Head of the Peace Support Operations Division (PSOD), AUSSOM, represented by the Force Commander, and the FGS, represented by the Deputy Permanent Representative in Addis Ababa, recognised the sacrifices of the African Union Member States and the international community in Somalia and stressed the fundamental importance of the engagement at such a critical juncture for the future security mechanism in Somalia.

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7. The options presented by the Commission articulated the key specific assumptions, advantages and disadvantages, elements for a proposed mandate and strength, phasing of operations, mission support considerations, broad financial implications, legal considerations and transitional arrangements from AUSSOM.

IV. OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8. Following extensive exchange of views, the meeting of experts took note of the options developed by the AUC pursuant to PSC Communiqué PSC/PR/COMM.1317 (2025), Assembly Decision Assembly/AU/Dec.978(XXXIX) and the outcome of the 22nd Informal Consultative Meeting of the PSC and made the observations and recommendations presented below.

A. Observations

9. The meeting made the following observations:

- i. The three options were not considered feasible due to the significant risks they posed to operational continuity, force sustainment, the ongoing security transition and the potential creation of security gaps. Whilst noting the opportunities of the three options, the experts also highlighted that they present an increasing number of issues, including limited time frame, possible fragmentation, lack of the identified competent Regional Authority, amongst other concerns;
- ii. A funding-driven, uncoordinated drawdown, as opposed to a deliberate and jointly sequenced transition, risks creating exploitable gaps that Al-Shabaab could use to retake strategic towns and main supply routes, reversing years of hard-won gains within a short period;
- iii. On account of the lessons learned from previous United Nations operations drawdowns and liquidations, the transition would necessitate not less than 18 months;
- iv. The current funding limitations raise concerns about the impact on the efficiency in implementing the Mission's mandate and emphasize to explore innovative financing models.

B. Recommendations

10. In light of the above observations, the meeting recommended the following:

- i. A joint and sustained diplomatic engagement by the African Union, FGS and all relevant parties with the United States of America to negotiate for the continuation of the African Union-United Nations-FGS planned transition (2024-2029). UNSOS should be mandated to ensure uninterrupted mission support throughout the transition period;
- ii. The active intensification of high-level engagements by the Federal Government of Somalia with all stakeholders, especially bilateral partners, in preparation for the Extraordinary Summit of the AUSSOM Troop and Police Contributing Countries in Uganda and beyond;

- iii. The maintenance of the current operational footprint with the required capacities, supported by a more cost-efficient, unified and integrated mission support capability, which can continue operating to the benefit of the Somali National Armed Forces and the African Union mission while allowing for an orderly transfer of security responsibility up to 2029;
 - iv. The implementation of the decision of the Extraordinary Summit of Kampala of 25 April 2025, which directed the Chiefs of Defence Forces of the Troop Contributing Countries plus Somalia to develop a comprehensive plan to deter, degrade and eliminate Al-Shabaab;
 - v. The Federal Government of Somalia and AUSSOM, supported by partners, to continue carrying out joint offensive operations in fighting Al-Shabaab and other terrorist groups, and demonstrate tangible achievements through the transfer of responsibility of some locations to the Somali National Armed Forces;
 - vi. A coordinated advocacy by all stakeholders for continuous political and financial support to Somalia security institutions;
 - vii. The timely pronouncement of the African Union and United Nations decision-making organs on the realistic way forward and a condition-based transition and support arrangements.
11. The meeting submitted the three options developed by the AUC pursuant to PSC Communiqué PSC/PR/COMM.1317 (2025), Assembly Decision Assembly/AU/Dec.978(XXXIX) and the outcome of the 22nd Informal Consultative Meeting of the PSC, along with the above observations and recommendations, for the consideration of the Chiefs of Defence Forces and Police of the Troop and Police Contributing Countries of AUSSOM.

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