

AFRICAN UNION

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**PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL 978TH MEETING
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA
9 FEBRUARY 2021**

PSC/PR/COMM. (CMLXXVIII)

COMMUNIQUE

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Adopted by the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU) at its 978th meeting held on 9 February 2021, on the consideration of the Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on the Situation in Somalia and the implementation of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) mandate:

The Peace and Security Council,

Noting the Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on the situation in Somalia and the implementation of the AMISOM mandate;

Also noting the opening remarks made by the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Ghana to the AU and Chairperson of the PSC for month of February 2021, Her Excellency Ambassador Amma Adomaa Twum-Amoah, as well as the statement of the AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, H.E. Ambassador Smail Chergui; **and further noting** the briefing by the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the AU Commission for Somalia and Head of AMISOM, Ambassador Francisco Madeira; as well as the statements made by H.E. Mohamed Abdirizak, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Somalia, as the country concerned; the representative of the Republic of Sudan in its capacity as the current Chair of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD); the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and Head of the UN Office to the African Union; the representative of the European Union; and the representative of the United Kingdom, as a penholder in the UN Security Council;

Recalling its previous decisions and pronouncements on the situation in Somalia and the activities of AMISOM, particularly Communiqués [PSC/PR/COMM.(DCCCXLIX)] adopted at its 949th meeting held on 24 September 2020; [PSC/PR/COMM.(CMXXIII)] adopted at its 923rd meeting held on 7 May 2020; [PSC/PR/COMM.(CMXI)], adopted at its 911th meeting held on 24 February 2020; [PSC/PR/COMM.I.(CMI)] adopted at its 901st meeting held on 13 December 2019; [PSC/PR/COMM.(DCCCLXV)] adopted at its 865th meeting held on 7 August 2019; and [PSC/PR/COMM.I.(DCCCXLVIII)] adopted at its 848th meeting held on 9 May 2019, as well as UN Security Council Resolutions 2472 of 31 May 2019 and 2520 of 29 May 2020;

Reaffirming the unwavering commitment of the AU to respect the sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Somalia, as well as AU's solidarity with the people and Government of Somalia; and

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

1. **Welcomes** the progress achieved by the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and Federal Member States (FMS) in implementing the agreements arrived at on 17 September 2020 including concerning the necessary modalities for holding the elections;
2. **Takes note** of the convening of the recent consultative summit in Dhusamareeb from 1 to 6 February 2021, and **expresses concern** with the conclusion of these recent consultations without an

agreement that creates conducive conditions for the successful organization of credible and transparent elections in 2021, by addressing political tensions, polarization and instability, given that such a protracted political situation could embolden spoilers;

3. **Underlines** the need for all Somali stakeholders to work together to address the root causes of the crisis in their country and find urgent solutions to the current impasses and pressing challenges; in this regard, **encourages** the FGS, FMS and other stakeholders to continue with their ongoing dialogue, guided by the spirit of consensus and compromise with a view to arriving at consensual agreement, including on all outstanding election-related matters, and cognizant in this connection of the direct and significant impact of the current political situation on the security situation and on the effective capacity to continue to confront and degrade Al Shabaab and other terrorist groups;

4. **Stresses** the vital importance of holding free, fair, timely and credible elections in Somalia to the people of Somalia's aspirations to security, stability, democracy, good governance and development, and **calls upon** all the relevant Somali stakeholders to refrain from undertaking any unilateral or non-consensual measures that might further complicate the situation and deepen the current political impasse;

5. **Commends** AMISOM for the efforts deployed since 2007, particularly in its support to the FGS and FMS, including in the areas of security, governance, public administration, and rule of law, promotion of dialogue and reconciliation, humanitarian relief, protection of civilians and stabilization and the extension of state authority across Somalia;

6. **Pays tribute** to the AMISOM Troop and Police Contributing Countries (T/PCCs), and their nationals, especially those that have paid the ultimate sacrifice in the promotion of peace, security, stability and reconciliation in Somalia;

7. **Calls on** AMISOM civilian and uniformed components to continue providing technical support to the FGS and FMS, including through the Federal Election Implementation Team (FEIT), towards effective planning, conduct and security for the forthcoming elections;

8. **Commends** AMISOM for its humanitarian assistance efforts, including its assistance to health workers in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions it imposes on population movements in Somalia; and **calls** for additional international dedicated support, including funding and required resources to enable AMISOM to more effectively support humanitarian efforts in all its Sectors, particularly due to the compounded humanitarian challenges currently facing Somalia against the background of the pandemic, devastating floods and desert locust infestations;

9. **Expresses grave concern** over increasing security threats, exacerbated by Al-Shabaab and other terrorist groups in Somalia, such as the recent deadly attacks in Mogadishu on 7 February 2020, as well as the 18 December 2020 attack against the Galkacyo Stadium; **condemns in the strongest terms** these barbaric acts, and **urges** the Somali Security Forces (SSF) and AMISOM to remain resolute in discharging their mandate; **calls for** continued support to the SSF in confronting the terrorist threat;

10. **Welcomes** the envisaged reconfiguration of AMISOM, in collaboration with the SSF, **commends** the creation and operationalization of mobile forces in its Sectors, and **continues** to urge the FGS and FMS to expedite the force generation processes, including integration of regional forces into the SSF, to enhance SSF capabilities to the required levels that will enable AMISOM's reconfiguration to be completed to adequately support the key priorities of the Somali Transition Plan (STP);
11. **Urges** the FGS and FMS to urgently reach agreement on the modalities for the integration of regional forces and to scale up force generation efforts to ensure increased SSF capacity that will facilitate effective handover of primary security responsibilities by AMISOM to Somali authorities;
12. **Takes note** of the progress made in finalizing the revision of the STP, and **encourages** the FGS to formally endorse the STP by the National Security Council, with the participation of the FMS, and the high-level Security and Justice Committee, for consideration and endorsement by the PSC;
13. **Welcomes** AMISOM's determination to continue to enhance coordination with the FGS, including through current placements and coordination with Somali National Army Liaison Officers with AMISOM Force and Sector Headquarters, as well as within various strands of the Comprehensive Approach to Security (CAS) mechanism;
14. **Calls on** the AU and UN to ensure that all efforts are undertaken to ensure that all the political partners in Somalia reach consensus on a safe, peaceful and orderly transition that is embedded in constitutionality, respect for the rule of law, upholding of a transparent electoral process, ownership and fidelity to the STP by all actors;
15. **Urges** the AU Commission to ensure that the historical consensus built between domestic, regional and international actors in Somalia, that include the FGS and all its related entities, is secured and guaranteed and include the T/PCCs and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and draws on all political and military options in order to advance the progress towards peace and security in Somalia;
16. **Further urges** the FGS and FMS, as well as the UN and the broader international community, to note that the direction regarding the reconfiguration of AMISOM will be provided by the PSC and will include a robust political and civilian component support role and responsibility, alongside that of the police and military, in order to continue enhancing security, stabilization, institution building, governance and the rule of law, as well as reconciliation and confidence building measures in Somalia;
17. **Regrets** that the UN Security Council did not take into account the views of the AU with regard to the Independent Assessment, particularly the AU's request for an AU-UN joint leadership and expanded scope in undertaking the Assessment, pursuant to paragraph 15 of PSC Communique adopted at its 923rd meeting, held on 7 May 2020 and paragraph 38 of UN Security Council resolution 2520 of 29 May 2020;
18. **Supports** the proposal by the UN Security Council to renew the mandate of AMISOM for 10 months, and **stresses** that this renewal of the mandate should carry no change in the mandate of the

Mission or the current troop ceiling;

19. **Appeals** to the international community, and in particular the UN Security Council, to avail the space necessary for the FGS, in close collaboration with the AU, to lead the discussions concerning the international engagement with Somalia post 2021, in line with the STP, after undertaking its internal process and assessment; in this regard, **requests** the UN Security Council to refrain from pronouncing prematurely on any possible arrangements beyond 2021, including through the use of non-agreed concepts and terminologies that are beyond the existing applicable arrangements;

20. **Requests** the Chairperson of the Commission to expedite the deployment of the AU-led Independent Assessment Team to begin a comprehensive assessment of the way forward for a multidimensional AMISOM and the AU's overall engagement in and with Somalia beyond its current mandate and to report back to Council in May 2021;

21. **Highlights** the paramount importance of the role of the AU in supporting post-conflict reconstruction and development in Somalia as a key aspect of prevention of violence and relapse, and **requests** the AU Commission, in collaboration with AMISOM, to step up the activities of the civilian component of the latter in supporting peace building and stabilization activities in Somalia, including through the dedicated AUPCRD Centre in Cairo;

22. **Decides** to adopt the amended Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on the situation in Somalia and **requests** the Chairperson of the Commission to transmit said report, as well as this Communique, to the African Members of the UN Security Council (A3), and to the UN Secretary-General for circulation to the Members of the UN Security Council as a working document, pursuant to paragraph 36 of UNSCR 2520 (2020);

23. **Decides** to remain seized of the matter.