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SOMALIA AND HEAD OF AMISOM AT THE SECURITY COUNCIL
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ETHIOPIA**

Mr. President, Excellences', Ladies and Gentlemen,

I thank you for this opportunity to brief the Security Council alongside the new Special Representative of the Secretary General, my colleague and brother, Mr. Michael Keating. I welcome him to Somalia, it is my belief that shall we continue to build on the good working relationship already established by our predecessors in the delivery of our shared mandates.

Mr. President.

I brief this council barely two weeks after the deadly attack on AMISOM's El Adde Base in Gedo Region. This attack, and previous attacks on AMISOM Forward Operating Bases, illustrate the continuing threat all our forces face in the fight against al Shabaab. I pay tribute to all the AMISOM uniformed personnel who continue to exhibit professionalism, tenacity and courage in the campaign to degrade al Shabaab's capacity. I would also like to make special mention of the Troop and Police Contributing Countries. I would like to once again express my grief and condolences to the families of all our fallen Heroes who have paid the ultimate price in service of Africa but also in the preservation of global security.

Mr. President,

My briefing today will focus on recent security and political developments in Somalia. Since my predecessor last briefed the council in May 2015, we have continued to make significant security gains. AMISOM and SNA commenced renewed offensive operations code-named **Operation Juba Corridor** in July 2015. These joint operations are currently in their 3rd phase and are expected to be completed by March 2016. The overall strategic objective of the current operations remains to significantly degrade the capabilities of Al Shabaab in its remaining strongholds. This would provide the enabling environment for the advancement of the much needed political processes.

Mr President,

The dislodging of al Shabaab from towns and villages under its control has led to an overstretched capacity of AMISOM with its attendant security implication for AMISOM, which Al Shaabab has exploited with its increased terrorist attacks.

As the attacks in El Adde as well as similar attacks in Leego and Janaale suggest, Al Shabaab has become changed tact in launching a combination of asymmetrical and direct attacks on AMISOM bases. In this respect, we have seen an incremental occurrence of guerilla warfare as well as the use of IED's in their attacks.

Overall, the security situation in Somalia has remained fluid, volatile and unpredictable despite the territorial gains achieved by AMISOM.

Mr. President,

On the political front, I am encouraged by the progress that the people and Government of Somalia continue to make in the state formation process, in the revision of their constitution as well as the preparations for holding of elections later this year.

In regard to state formation, the government embarked on the process for the formation of the final regional administration for Hiraaan and Middle Shabelle earlier this month. We welcome this initiative and continue to urge the Federal Government of Somalia to take the necessary steps towards achieving a positive outcome which would see the establishment of this last regional administration.

In the area of elections, as expressed jointly with Mr. Keating, we are very pleased that an electoral model was announced by the government just yesterday. This model is based on a unique balance of representation between clan and constituency and offers a hopeful outlook for an inclusive electoral process.

I continue to urge Council and other partners to support the Federal Government of Somalia in the effective

implementation of this electoral model. Based on the declared principles and timeframe of the election. I would like to commend the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) for reaffirming its commitment to respect the constitutionally mandated terms of the legislature and executive, which expire in August and September 2016, respectively. This is consistent with the AU's charter on democracy, Elections and Governance.

Whilst the political progress made is laudable, much more needs to be done in the consolidation of this processes as well as in the rejuvenation of the constitutional review process which remains a critical pillar to political stability in Somalia.

Mr. President,

I would like to reassure council that the AU remains committed in support of peace and stability in Somalia amidst the immense sacrifices made and the challenges that the mission continues to face. In this respect, I would want to urge the Council to consider the strengthening of our partnership in the following areas in order to further enhance the implementation of AMISOM's mandate.

First I would like to emphasize that the Somali National Army (SNA) is central to the conduct of joint operations, as well as in

taking over security functions in the recovered areas to facilitate continued offensive operations. It is also of note that the only viable process that will lead to the realization of AMISOM's mandate in Somalia and its subsequent exit strategy is the standing up of a capable, legitimate and inclusive Somali National Army. In the same vein, I urge Council to ensure that the pledges made towards the "Guulwade plan" are fulfilled. The International Community also needs to be better coordinated in its support for the Somali Security Forces.

Second, I would like to stress that better coordination between the multiplicity of partners and specifically between AMISOM, UNSOS and UNSOM remains vital more than ever before.

Council would recall that Resolution 2245 adopted on 4 November 2015, underscored the need to ensure operational efforts between UNSOM and AMISOM are aligned with a common set of strategic priorities. Under the new leadership of Mr. Keating and myself, we are hopeful that there would be progress in the strengthening and revitalization of the joint senior leadership decision-making framework.

I also look forward to the joint development of the quantifiable compact between the Head of UNSOS and myself, which is expected to enhance the provision of support to AMISOM. Our recent interactions with the USG Field Support, on the

provision of timely and flexible support to AMISOM has been encouraging.

Third, the provision of additional enablers remains central to AMISOM's operations. It will be recalled that the governments of Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda have pledged helicopters to AMISOM. However the tripartite letters of assist between these TCC's, the AU and the UN remains outstanding. We would like to urge Council to request the Secretary General to facilitate an expedited negotiation process that takes into account the unique nature of the AMISOM offensive mandate. This would allow for the deployment of these assets, which are urgently required in boosting the operational tempo of AMISOM.

Fourth, the AU is committed to improving AMISOM's strategy in Somalia. I am pleased to report to council that the AU is currently organizing a TCC summit, expected to lead to the political commitment amongst the various stakeholders on how to address amongst other issues, command and control, provision of additional enablers and enhance overall coordination. This summit will take place in due course.

Finally, grave concern has been brought about by the decision of the European Union to cut the allowances to the uniformed personnel of the Mission by 20%, starting in January 2016. The African Union Commission (AUC) is making all efforts to fill the gap created by the EU decision. In this regard, the AU recently appointed Mr. Donald Kaberuka as the High Representative on the AU Peace Fund, responsible for the mobilization of additional resources for AU peace support operations. Immediate steps are also being taken to generate additional funds for AMISOM. However this is occurring within the context of an economic downturn owing to the drastic reduction of commodity prices. Hence, I would like to urge Council to consider various funding mechanisms that would sustain the current support for AMISOM including through the increased financial support by the UN, individual Council Members and other relevant stakeholders in the interest of global peace and security.

Mr. President, I thank you.