Message from the Police Commissioner

As the curtain falls on the Somalia’s Electoral Process, it is important we reflect on the role of AMISOM in terms of provision of security, technical advice and logistical support to the Federal Government of Somalia.

AMISOM Police was called upon to engage in a variety of diverse tasks in electoral processes pursuant to its mandate of capacity building and bridging policing gaps of the Somali Police.

Somalia has witnessed a smooth sailing electoral process. To this end, AMISOM Police in support of the Somali Police Force was actively involved in planning of security, in the preparatory stages, through to the actual process and will be involved in the transition period.

The police component took proactive measures informed by threat assessments and deployed a platoon each of Formed Police Unit (FPU), to Baidoa and Kismaayo to work side by side with the respective state police forces and AMISOM Individual Police Officers (IPOs) on the ground.

The IPO's were also deployed in Adaado, the capital of the interim Galmudug administration and Jowhar, the administrative capital of HirShabelle state. They assisted in securing election venues to guarantee a safe and secure environment for candidates, delegates and electoral officials.

AMISOM Police was also involved in election security training and provision of logistical support to the SPF.

Whereas all capacity building initiatives of the Somali Police in terms of mentoring activities of the Somali Police Forces were suspended in favour of the election duties, the joint electoral process operations provided an opportunity for AMISOM Police officers to demonstrate the best policing practices to their Somali counterparts.

“"I would like to commend the Somali National Security Forces for the professionalism and dedication demonstrated during the electioneering period."”

Anand Pillay
AMISOM Police Newsletter

Message from The Police Commissioner cont’d

Of utmost importance are the lessons learnt. Our mandate requires AMISOM Police to build the institutional and individual capacity of Somali Police Force with a view of ensuring that they have the capacity to take over safety and security operations, once AMISOM starts drawing down in 2018.

As AMISOM Police, we will draw from the lessons learnt, with a view of reinforcing gains made, as well as bridging policing gaps that still exist.

I would like to commend the Somali National Security Forces for the professionalism and dedication demonstrated during the electioneering period. Formidable security institutions are a recipe for lasting peace and development in any country.

AMISOM Police remains focused to the overall objective of ensuring that the SPF is well equipped with policing knowledge, skills and equipment, in preparation for the eventual AMISOM exit.

Thank you,
Anand Pillay

AMISOM Police supports Galmudug in landmark electoral process

Between the 27th October and 2nd November 2016, AMISOM Police trained a total of 227 Galmudug State police officers on electoral-related security issues. The trainees consisted of 193 males and 34 females.

AMISOM Police was part of the security team that secured the electoral process in the Galmudug administrative capital of Cadaado, alongside the AMISOM military and the Somali security forces.

The security provided yielded fruit, contributing to peaceful elections throughout the process.

A section of the police officers undertook extended training on body search, using hands and electronic devices such as handheld metal detectors. They also learnt how to search a vehicle using the belly-scope mirror.

Under the supervision of AMISOM Police, the Galmudug police personnel were able to search all delegates, with AMISOM Police mentors at hand to offer guidance.

Galmudug state is unique because AMISOM was first deployed in its administrative capital in October 2016, to secure the region for the electoral process, as it was a designated electoral center. AMISOM Police deployed in Cadaado on 25th October 2016, to work alongside AMISOM military.

The role of the police was to safeguard the electoral process and protect stakeholders, who included polling staff, elders, candidates and delegates; as well as voting materials at all electoral venues.

AMISOM Police was part of the electoral preparatory security meeting held at the Galmudug presidential palace on 26 October 2016. During this meeting, an electoral security committee was formed and a joint operations centre was established for security agencies in Galmudug and AMISOM forces to meet daily to discuss electoral security, intelligence information and security implementation strategies.

Under the plan, the committee to which AMISOM Police was a member, agreed to secure vital infrastructure that included the airport, the presidential palace, the electoral centre, the offices of the State-level Indirect Electoral Implementation Team (SIEIT) and the AMISOM defence camp at Kafala Guesthouse.


When Galmudug completed the parliamentary electoral process on 11th December, it was a milestone worth marking for the Galmudug State Police Force, AMISOM Forces and Somali National Security Forces (SNSF).
Electoral security arrangements were satisfactory in Kismaayo - Aryee

Ahead of the electoral process in Jubbaland state, senior police officials from the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) endorsed the security arrangements that were in place at the electoral centre in Kismaayo.

The team from AMISOM led by ACP Francis Ayitey Aryee held discussions with top Jubbaland administration officials on security measures aimed at ensuring an incident-free electoral process in the state.

At the time, ACP Aryee was a member of the Security Task Force, charged with overseeing and coordinating security during the electoral process.

“We expect that the delegates will come in and exercise their responsibility without hindrance or fear of intimidation. We expect a free, fair, credible, transparent and incident free process,” ACP Aryee said.

He added, “We want to take this opportunity to thank the Jubbaland state administration for all their efforts in trying to make sure the process takes off successfully. Somalia’s electoral process will be a landmark and a step further towards getting the country back to normalcy.”

The visiting team met the chairperson of the Jubbaland State-level Indirect Electoral Implementation Team, Mr. Abdi Ali Raghe and the Jubbaland representative on the Somalia Electoral Security Taskforce Mr. Mohamed Abdinor Ahmed.

“We are happy with what we have found,” ACP Aryee summed up the assessment mission to Kismaayo.

AMISOM Police and the military worked closely with the Somali National Security Forces, the federal government and regional states to secure the electoral process.

By the time the electoral process kicked off on 8th November, at the Pavilion voting centre along State House road in Kismaayo, the measures in place were adequate, to guarantee security for the delegates.

There were a total of six polling stations in Kismaayo and a separate compound adjacent to the Pavilion was used for screening of delegates. AMISOM Individual Police Officers (IPOs) took positions in different places at the polling stations, while a platoon of Formed Police Unit (FPU) deployed at the inner perimeter.

Police officers from the Jubbaland State of Somalia Police Force (JSSPF), exhibited a high level of professionalism in view of the length of training they had received.

The exercise was incident free and all candidates were satisfied with the procedures at the polling centers.
AMISOM Police supported HirShabelle electoral process

In pursuit of its mandate, AMISOM Police deployed ten (10) police officers led by CSP Saleh Samaila, to ensure that the electoral process in HirShabelle is conducted in a peaceful incident free environment.

The assigned team undertook tasks that included training, mentoring, advising and supporting the HirShabelle State Police in securing the electoral process. They also supported the Somali Police Force (SPF) to manage access to the electoral center and secure the inner/green zone of the electoral centre.

The team supervised the delivery of electoral materials to the State-level Indirect Electoral Implementation Team (SIEIT) and consulted with the team on the electoral process from time to time. They also cooperated with their AMISOM military counterparts, SNA, SPF and the National Intelligence Agency - NISA - in election related security operations.

As a result of these efforts, the process to choose representatives of the Upper House and the House of the People of the federal parliament was a success. It was a milestone achieved towards the realization of full democracy in the country.

On 7th November 2016, AMISOM Police officers delivered a lecture on electoral security to the Somali police officers at Jowhar Central Police Station.

On 20th November and 1st December 2016, a high-level UN/AMISOM team led by UN and AU Special Representatives to Somalia Mr. Michael Keating, Ambassador Francisco Caetano Madeira respectively; and the AMISOM Deputy Police Commissioner, Christine Alalo, visited HirShabelle state.

The visit aimed at providing guidance and support towards the electoral process.

Considering that Somalia is emerging from nearly three decades of prolonged conflict, it was critical that the electoral process is transparent, fair and credible. AMISOM military, AMISOM Police Component, the SNA, SPF and NISA provided adequate security in the entire duration of the electoral process. These efforts resulted in a relatively peaceful exercise.

With the next elections envisaged for 2020, the Federal Government of Somalia has a window of opportunity to make preparations that will lead to more representative, democratic elections. Also, it gives ample opportunity to further build the capacity of the Somali National Security Forces before the next elections.
How AMISOM Police secured the electoral process in Mogadishu

In Mogadishu, the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) conducted training for Somali police officers to enhance their capacity in elections security.

The first batch of officers, drawn from various police stations in Mogadishu, commenced training organized by AMISOM Police, supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and funded by the Japanese government.

The trainees learnt the importance of elections and elements of election security, voting systems, electoral justice and the role of police and security forces prior, during and post an electoral process. They were also taught how to identify election security targets, threat assessment and security measures to counter identified threats; other topics included causes and prevention of electoral violence; screening and searches.

The training was officially opened by the Somali Police Force (SPF) Commissioner, Maj. Gen. Mohamed Sheikh Hassan Hamud, and the AMISOM Police Training and Development Coordinator, Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP) Francis Ayitey Aryee.

“You must display the highest level of professionalism, you must be alert, approachable and you must be vigilant because there are spoilers who do not want the elections to take place and may try to derail the electoral process. As police, you must not allow that to happen,” noted ACP Aryee.

“The successful conduct of general elections will constitute a big step forward in the peace process and progress of Somalia towards the attainment of normalcy, development and stability,” he added.

In his remarks, Maj. Gen. Hamud said the police would play a lead role in safeguarding the electoral process and urged the officers to take the training seriously.

As the commercial capital and federal government administrative centre, Mogadishu was the designated venue of the electoral process for the Banaadir and Somaliland elections.

Voting for Banaadir members of the Lower House began on 30 November 2016, while the voting for Somaliland commenced on 7th December 2016. This process took place under tight security provided by Somali security forces and AMISOM Police led by the Acting Operations Coordinator Emmanuel Mukama and Captain Mohamed Ali of Somali Police Special Forces.

The AMISOM Police and SPF provided round the clock security at General Kaahiye Police Academy and SPF Transport workshop, the election venues. The police collaborated with Bancroft to conduct sweeps for explosives in the electoral centers. The military component of AMISOM and the SNA provided outer perimeter security protection.

High-level coordination of communication among security agencies responsible for the administration of security at the electoral centers contributed to the overall success of the electoral security operations.

These efforts culminated in the swearing in of 293 MPs at General Kaahiye Academy on December 27, 2016.

Anticipating and pre-empting of security risks and mitigating their impact or probability of occurrence, coupled with integration of effective security plans and dedication from security officers contributed to ensuring the elections in Mogadishu were conducted in a peaceful and incident-free environment.

“The successful conduct of general elections will constitute a big step forward in the peace process and progress of Somalia towards the attainment of normalcy, development and stability,” ~ ACP Aryee.
Joint SWSSPF and AMISOM Police electoral security operations in Baidoa

In Baidoa, electoral security duties began with the training of 104 police officers of the South West State of Somalia Police Force (SWSSPF).

Between October and December 2016, the South West state conducted elections for leaders of the Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament or the House of the People. The process took place in Baidoa, the regional capital and kicked off with registration of delegates from 69 clans, who would select representatives for the people.

The 2016 electoral process presented enormous security challenges, particularly because of the presence of clan militias alleged to be affiliated to some politicians. There were also a high number of election ‘hotspots’, proliferation of small arms and a tense political environment.

During the process, the police dealt with emerging clan differences and performed arbitration tasks on emerging differences; encouraging peaceful resolution of differences, in order to facilitate a peaceful electoral process.

The SWSSPF and AMISOM Police jointly secured the electoral venue and conducted high visibility day and night patrols within Baidoa town. The Formed Police Unit platoon deployed in Baidoa provided a rapid response capability, to attend to any security threats.

Despite an emotionally charged environment, overall, the electoral process went on smoothly, with enthusiastic delegates casting votes for their preferred candidates. This was proof of democracy taking root in South West state.

Working alongside the South West State of Somalia Police Force, AMISOM Police observed campaign activities within the converging points for delegates.

They jointly ensured that unauthorised individuals did not access the electoral venue with weapons. In one incident, an incumbent member of parliament was apprehended as he attempted to access the electoral venue with a pistol.

Incidents of violence, kidnappings, intimidation and use of intemperate language against some candidates, especially the female candidates were reported.

The AMISOM Police in Baidoa takes note of the efforts by the Federal Indirect Electoral Implementation Team (FIEIT) to ensure a transparent and credible electoral process in 2016, through engagement with stakeholders throughout the process.

AMISOM Police commends Somalia’s emerging electoral institutions as well as mechanisms for dispute resolution. We call on the leaders of these institutions to continue playing a positive role in ensuring a peaceful post-election environment.

AMISOM Police was encouraged by the high level of security preparedness and measures put in place, which contributed to the peaceful conduct of the elections in South West state. Security personnel were visibly present at polling stations, and their conduct was professional and presence discreet.
On 28th December 2016, Kenyan police officers serving under the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) received commendation for outstanding service during their yearlong tour of duty.

The contingent comprising six police officers, serving as Individual Police Officers (IPOs), were awarded medals and certificates, at a function held in Mogadishu. IPOs train and mentor Somali Police officers on matters security in both federal and regional administrations.

AMISOM Police Commissioner, Anand Pillay, who presided over the function, said the group had done Kenya proud by making immense contribution to the stabilization process of Somalia.

“You have done an excellent job here. You have made a great contribution to our mandate on this mission. We have gone a step further with your assistance. We still have a lot to do and hopefully the team that is replacing you will continue with the good work that you have done on this mission,” said Commissioner Pillay.

His sentiments were echoed by Mr. Dundun, who noted that the contingent had served with dedication and integrity, and thanked the Kenyan government for allowing its personnel to serve on the mission.

“I want to personally congratulate the Kenya Police Service for grooming such people and accepting to send such calibre of people to the mission. It is a big congratulation to Kenya as a country, a big congratulation to the Kenya Police Service and also a big congratulation to the individuals that have exhibited these key values,” he added.

Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP) Aryee said despite working in very difficult environment, the team had defied all odds and performed exceptionally, setting a high standard to other serving officers.

Kenyan police officers awarded medals for distinguished service

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“I want to personally congratulate the Kenya Police Service for grooming such people and accepting to send such calibre of people to the mission.” – Rex Dundun
Ghanaian IPOs awarded medals for distinguished service

A group of Ghanaian police officers who had served in the Mission for two years received medals and certificates for their excellent service.

The group comprising of six Individual Police Officers (IPOs) officially completed their service in Somalia and were given a befitting send off at a ceremony presided over by the Special Representative of the African Union Commission Chairperson (SRCC) for Somalia, Ambassador Francisco Madeira.

In attendance were senior Mission personnel who included the AMISOM Police Commissioner, Anand Pillay and his deputy CP Christine Alalo.

Ambassador Madeira saluted Ghana, describing the country as a pacesetter in the African continent for the successful conclusion of the general election.

He also lauded the officers for a job well done.

"I am personally grateful to you for the good work you have done here. You have helped the Somalis to see how a national police force should look like," Ambassador Madeira told the departing police officers.

The police and soldiers usually serve on the mission for a period of one year and rotate out. However, the one-year tour of duty can be extended due to a number of factors, including excellent service.

Citing the difficult and risky environment in which the police operate, Ambassador Madeira acknowledged the sacrifices made by the officers.

"You are heroes of our continent because you are fighting our cause in the most advanced and most difficult front. You left your families twenty four months ago," he said, in appreciation of their work in Somalia.

"If it was not for that policy, we would recommend them for another year," Police Commissioner Pillay said in his remarks.

Ghana only has IPOs serving on the mission, who are mainly involved in training and mentoring the Somali Police Force.
August 23, 2016 will forever remain etched in the memory of Sergeant Ladhi John, a female Nigerian police officer, serving under the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).

A dedicated officer, Sergeant Ladhi’s day, which had started on a good note, ended tragically, with a bullet in her back.

The jovial officer serving in the Nigerian Formed Police Unit (FPU) of AMISOM, was shot and gravely wounded while on duty, but miraculously survived, after a bullet struck her back, exiting through her left breast.

It was the combination of luck and swift medical intervention, first at the AMISOM level II hospital in Mogadishu where she had been rushed, then later at Nairobi hospital, in Kenya, that saved her life.

“It was the first time I was coming so close to death,” the mother of three says, as she recounts her ordeal.

“As I was being rushed to the hospital I was thinking about my children. I prayed all the way, asking God to help me and God answered my prayers. I never knew I would survive,” she adds.

Four months after the horrific incident, she was back in Somalia, to continue with her duties.

“Though I lost a lot of blood, I am now fine. I do my work normally,” the jovial officer who has won the hearts of many people with her diligence to work, said.

A seasoned police officer, who has served in the police force for 13 years, Sgt. Ladhi was part of the Nigerian FPUs, who completed their tour of duty in Somalia, on January 4, 2017.

On the fateful day, Ladhi woke up in a buoyant mood and readied herself for work at the stadium camp, located on the fringes of Mogadishu city and the base of AMISOM Police FPUs.

At 7:30am, in the company of other Nigerian and Ugandan FPU officers, they set off for the main AMISOM base camp in two armoured vehicles, escorting a team of AMISOM Individual Police Officers (IPOs), who co-locate with the Somali police officers, to train and mentor them, at various police stations daily.

At 9:00am the convoy departed for Dharkenley Police Station where the IPOs were co-locating with their SPF colleagues. As is the requirement, 20-percent of mentorship undertaken by the IPOs is done within the police stations, while 80-percent is on-the-job mentorship in the field.

It was while in the field that trouble unfolded. Riding in two armoured vehicles, the team of police officers encountered two armed men, one in military uniform and the other in civilian clothes who had erected an illicit checkpoint in a deserted and bushy section of the city.

Ladhi says the situation degenerated when the senior Somali police officer who was with them attempted to ascertain the identity of the two-armed men. One of the men fired injuring the station commander, SGT Ladhi and Police Constable Alex Okot of Ugandan FPU.

“I felt something hit me in the back then my body jerked and I fell down. I crawled and hid next to the armored vehicle, and then I began convulsing. It is then that my colleagues helped and rushed me to the hospital,” she narrates.

Okot sustained a deep cut on the chin and was hospitalized at the AMISOM Level II hospital for more than a week.

“I still feel pain in the jaw and experience headaches every two or three days. For the last two months I have been receiving treatment on a regular basis for headaches, although I continue working,” Constable Okot, who serves on the 140 strong Uganda Formed Police Unit (FPU) said.

When the incident happened, Okot was only 21 days old in Somalia, having jetted into the country on August 2, 2016 with the 5th Uganda FPU contingent.

AMISOM Police Commissioner paid tribute to the two officers for their unwavering resolve and commitment to continue rendering their valuable support to ensure peace and stability in Somalia.

“Every peacekeeper is aware of the dangers we are prone to but we do not allow such thoughts to distract us from our mandate. The two peacekeepers who came into harm’s way while on duty personify and represent what AMISOM stands for.”

Although the two armed-men managed to escape, one AK 47 loaded with 30 rounds of ammunition was recovered.

The unfortunate incident represents the risks and dangers that the 500 policemen from five Police Contributing Countries of Kenya, Uganda, Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone face in Somalia.
AMISOM commends role played by female peacekeepers in stabilizing Somalia

On 12 December, 2016, female AMISOM Police officers joined their counterparts from the military component and the Somali Police Force (SPF) to participate in the inaugural female peacekeepers conference, in Mogadishu, Somalia.

The Special Representative of the African Union Commission Chairperson (SRCC) for Somalia, Ambassador Francisco Madeira, and Head of AMISOM, lauded the female peacekeepers for their diligence and courage in their work.

He described them as inspirational figures, who are encouraging Somali women to be active in the affairs of the country.

He emphasized the importance of women’s participation in the fight against terrorism.

“You have understood this and you have decided to enlist yourselves to come and confront this challenge. I salute you for your courageous decision and for the work you are doing in all the six sectors (of Somalia),” SRCC Madeira said.

AMISOM Deputy Police Commissioner, CP Christine Alalo, highlighted the sacrifices made by female peacekeepers in the stabilization process of Somalia.

“Like their male counterparts, they have fought at the frontline, they have operated big guns like artillery to fight the enemy, they are commanders of their troops and contingents, and they have gathered intelligence, enabling operations,” CP Alalo emphasized.

“The women are building the capacity of the local security to enable them handle the security of their country. Some are in administration and in the leadership of the Mission to ensure that the mandate of the mission is achieved,” CP Alalo added.

“I am always delighted when I come to a room full of women in uniform, and today we celebrate AMISOM female peacekeepers. As Somali Police Force, we are recognise the amazing work undertaken by the female peacekeepers,” Captain Idil Hassan, the Head of the Gender Unit in the Somali Police Force (SPF) said.

AMISOM has a total of 657 women serving in various capacities in the Mission. The leadership of AMISOM is advocating for more female peacekeepers, due to the role they play in stabilization of Somalia.

The conference on female peacekeepers was held in Mogadishu in December 2016 and discussed achievements and challenges facing female officers in the Mission.

“The conference will enable female peacekeepers have a sense of recognition,” AMISOM Military Gender Officer Major Bupe Chanda concluded.