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Statement to the UN Security Council (via VTC)

By

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Chairperson (SRCC) for Somalia

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Mr President,

Thank you for inviting me to address this Council on the situation in Somalia.

Let me start by congratulating you, Mr. President, and your Country, Mexico, for assuming the Presidency of the Council for the month of November.

Overview of ongoing indirect elections

Since my last briefing and despite the deeply concerning slow pace of the process, Somalia has moved away from the Pre-May 27 electoral impasse and has recently completed its Upper House election, a not minor feat which we have all welcomed.

The country is now in the early stages of its Lower House electoral marathon and it's our ardent hope and desire that this process will be completed before the end of the year as per the commitment taken by the country's political leadership at their last National Consultative Council.

It was with satisfaction that, after months of protracted dispute over the composition and leadership of the Somaliland electoral management body, we witnessed and took note of the start of the lower house election in the Somaliland constituency in Mogadishu the first of its kind in this electoral season.

It's worth noting that, despite persistent differences, the country's political stakeholders have maintained their doors open to each other. This is allowing for a sustained interaction and dialogue to continue among them despite the odds, ensuring a platform where differences can be narrowed and possibilities for consensus around issues of common concern can be enhanced. This is a very positive development which we should continue to encourage and harness to ensure a swift, peaceful, and credible completion of the remaining stages of the

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electoral process which are pivotal to returning the country to peace, stability and prosperity.

Mr. President,

The 30% quota for women remains a challenge.

While the African Union welcomes the Upper House elections completion, we note, with concern, that its results have fallen short of the minimum 30 per cent quota for women, having risen only to 26 percent.

To strengthen women's voice in the quest to have their rights and level of political representativity recognized and upheld, AMISOM has been working closely with the women's Goodwill Ambassadors and other female activists. Their focus now is the upcoming House of the People elections and the way to prevail over the elders and other political leaders to ensure that they live up to the commitment they have taken and voluntarily enshrined in the 17 September and 27 May agreements to improve on the electoral mechanisms to ensure that the very important minimum 30% quota for women is achieved.

While attention has rightly been focused on the completion of national elections, I am encouraged by the peaceful completion of the first direct, one person one vote local council elections that took place in three districts of Puntland last October. The election was free, transparent and peaceful; voter enthusiasm was immense and the turnout high. It was a unique experience in many years, which, I'm sure, will be emulated.



Recognising the importance of AMISOM extending its support beyond election security, the African Union Peace and Security Council (AUPSC) through its Communique 994 (2021), mandated AMISOM to provide technical assistance to other areas of Somalia's electoral process. In this context, I am pleased to report that Somalia is now the first African Union member state to receive a multi-pronged intervention support from the African Union through an African Union peace support operation.

This support now includes:

- i. African Union technical experts embedded with the Federal Election Implementation Team (FEIT), providing important advisory support on logistics, legal issues, and election security;
- ii. Financial support to the FEIT, to assist in fulfilling its electoral obligations;
- iii. Conducting capacity building workshops on key election themes, including building support for enhanced participation of women in the electoral process; and
- iv. Provision of Information Technology equipment for the FEIT and the Federal Ministry of Women and Human Rights Development as part of operational support to these institutions.

Since my last briefing, AMISOM Police, together with their Somali counterparts, have continued to enhance their efforts to secure the ongoing elections. This has led to AMISOM Police units being deployed beyond their traditional areas of activity across the federal member states, particularly Garbahaarey in Jubaland, Jowhar in HirShabelle and Barawe in South West.

In anticipation of the operationalisation of the Joint Operations Centres (JOCs) across Somalia, AMISOM Police have also focussed on election-related training. In this regard, AMISOM's election security cell has recently trained two hundred forty-five security officials mostly from the SPF, NISA, and SNA. The trainings were aimed at providing Somali security officials with the requisite

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knowledge and skills to plan, monitor, and coordinate the activities of the JOC, before, during and after the elections.

Overview of the security situation

Mr President,

Insecurity across Somalia remains a source of grave concern. Apart from continuing to infiltrate its Amniyaat operatives into major cities and towns, extortion and drone surveillance, AL Shabaab has increased its IED attacks, complex attacks, probing attacks, grenade/mortar attacks, ambushes, suicide bombings and targeted assassinations. In addition, and of late, Al-Shabaab's effort is increasingly and deliberately directed at disrupting the electoral process, with attacks on some election centres, indirect fire attacks against AMISOM fortified bases and increased public execution of individuals working with Somali security forces and AMISOM personnel,

While Al-Shabaab remains the principal threat to peace and security, I am concerned with the recent resort to armed confrontation in the standoff between Alhu Sunna Wal Jama'a (ASWJ) and the Galmudug authorities. Separately and in conjunction with other international partners, we have appealed to the parties to cease fighting and seek to redress their differences through negotiated mechanisms. Armed clashes have died down. Guri'el town and the villages of Bohol are now quiet but our effort in the direction of peaceful resolution of this standoff must continue.



Somali Transition Plan (STP)

Mr President

In the period under review, we have conducted joint operations with SNA, disrupting Al-Shabaab in Lower Shabelle, notably Basra in October, and in Gambole in September and frustrating, through robust air power, the attempts by Al Shabaab to reclaim some bridge towns.

With regards to joint planning and coordination, AMISOM Force Headquarters and Somali National Army representatives held a series of meetings to implement the harmonized AMISOM reconfiguration plan. To facilitate joint planning and coordination of operations, Joint Operations Coordination Cells (JOCC) have been opened in all AMISOM sectors and SNA staff officers have been nominated to lead the cells.

Security framework for post-2021

Mr President

The African Union core priorities and objectives at this stage of its history are, not only the preservation and consolidation of its member states hard won political independence and sovereignty, including that of Somalia, but also the enhancement of that independence and sovereignty with the empowerment of its peoples and states through economic and social development and prosperity. These continental strategic objectives which are enshrined in the AU Constitutive Act and are part and parcel of the AU agenda 2063, cannot be achieved in isolation and without peace. The security threat confronting Somalia today is a threat not only to the Somalis. It is a regional threat, it is a continental threat, it's a worldwide threat. It retards and stifles the development of Somalia and its neighbours. It will continue to jeopardize and compromise the attainment of our continental objectives if it is not contained and removed.

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For the sake of the people of Somalia and for our own sake as a continent and as region, we need peace and stability in Somalia. But this cannot come unless we continue to work together and complementarily.

AMISOM mandate comes to an end on 31st December 2021 and there is a clear need for a new mission that would take over from AMISOM. To achieve this and in full respect of Somalia's sovereignty and territorial integrity, we need, as a matter of urgency, to continue and conclude, in a detailed and exhaustive manner, the discussions that we have already started on issues that will shape the future mission and are relevant to its effectiveness and success, matters related to the enhancement of our coordination and cooperation, coherence and complementarity in our approaches, mutual trust and accountability, sustained information sharing, funding and other.

Our work in this regard has, to a large extent, been facilitated by this august body's resolution 2568 (2021) which has called for proposals on the strategic objectives, Size, and composition of the new Mission and requested for the updating of the Concept of Operations which should clearly spell out the end state, nature, mandate, tasks, posture, structure, duration, command and control of the Mission. It is in this context that the AU Peace and Security Council has requested the AU Commission to immediately resume consultations with the Federal Government of Somalia and relevant international partners with the view to reaching a common approach on the above issues. The AU commission has already indicated its readiness to engage in this regard. Thank you.

