

**Security Council**

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**Letter dated 24 December 2015 from the Chair of the
Security Council Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations
addressed to the President of the Security Council**

I have the honour to transmit herewith the concept note (see annex) of this year's fourth thematic discussion of the Security Council Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations, held on 26 June, entitled "The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM): Lessons learned".

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex would be brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council and issued as a document of the Council.

(Signed) Mahamat Zene **Cherif**
Chair

Security Council Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations



Annex to the letter dated 24 December 2015 from the Chair of the Security Council Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Concept note

26 June 2015 Security Council Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations thematic discussion entitled “AMISOM: Lessons Learned”

On 26 June 2015, Chad, as Chair of the Security Council Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations will be holding a meeting entitled “The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM): Lessons learned”. This session will bring together Security Council members and a broad range of Member States, including countries involved in efforts to stabilize Somalia. Atul Khare, the Under-Secretary-General, Head of the Department of Field Support at the United Nations, Ambassador Tété Antonio, African Union Permanent Observer to the United Nations, Ambassador Thomas Mayr Harting, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, and Ambassador Tekeda Alemu, Permanent Representative of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia to the United Nations, have been invited to brief the Working Group.

Context

The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) was deployed in January 2007 in order to stabilize the security situation in the country and to support the Transitional Federal Institutions in their efforts to establish authority in Somalia. Since its deployment and in spite of the asymmetric threats it has faced, the Mission has been instrumental in improving the situation on both fronts. Al Shabab, once in control of vast swaths of territory and of the main cities, including the capital city Mogadishu, has lost most of its territorial control in south-central Somalia thanks to the successive military offensives of AMISOM and is now confined to the Jubba Valley and the region between south-central Somalia and Galmudug. Al Shabab nevertheless remains a serious security threat, having switched to the use of asymmetric tactics and carrying out targeted attacks throughout the country. At the same time, a rise in clan conflicts has occurred in the past two years, and the general security situation in Somalia remains unstable. On the political front, the constitutional and federalism processes are under way as envisioned in the “Vision 2016” plan, although with significant delays having been experienced and the overall timetable behind schedule. Furthermore, the Somali National Army and the Somali Police Forces, which have been benefiting from the support of international partners, including AMISOM, the United Nations and the European Union, are envisioned to take on increasing roles and responsibilities in the coming years. Undoubtedly, the road ahead is still long and bumpy, but the progress made is significant and the achievements accomplished by AMISOM must be duly acknowledged.

Over the years, a complementarity has emerged between regional organizations, such as the African Union, and the United Nations in the field of peace operations. This complementarity stems from the Charter of the United Nations, Chapter VIII, which states that “The Security Council shall, where appropriate, utilize [...] regional arrangements or agencies for enforcement action under its authority”. As such, the United Nations, being the ultimate guarantor of

international peace and security, collaborates with regional organizations in their efforts to maintain peace and security within their respective geographical areas of responsibility. A range of modalities across the collaboration-to-cooperation spectrum have arisen over time. These modalities can take the form of: (1) no United Nations support beyond the adoption of a mandate; (2) United Nations Trust Fund support; (3) a United Nations assessed funding logistical support package; (4) a United Nations political mission operating alongside an African Union or regional peace support operation; (5) a hybrid operation; and (6) a planned transition from a non-United Nations operation to a United Nations operation.

The United Nations has been playing a key role in support of AMISOM in spite of the doctrinal differences between United Nations peacekeeping and the African Union Peace Support Operations. The Security Council has deployed two missions currently operating in Somalia. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSAM), deployed since 2013, aims mainly at providing policy advice to the Federal Government of Somalia on peacebuilding and state-building in the areas of governance, security sector reform and rule of law, development of a federal system and coordination of international donor support. The United Nations Support Office for AMISOM (UNSOA), deployed since 2009, has the mandate of delivering a logistics capacity support package to AMISOM. Furthermore, a United Nations-managed Trust Fund has been established by the Organization to receive voluntary contributions for AMISOM.

The European Union has also been playing a crucial role in support of AMISOM both directly and indirectly. The European Union Naval Force Somalia, deployed since 2008, is a military counter-piracy operation; the European Union Training Mission (EUTM) Somalia, deployed since 2010, seeks to train the Somali Security Forces; and the) European Union Mission on Regional Maritime Capacity-building in the Horn of Africa (EUCAP NESTOR), deployed since 2012, strengthens the capacities of land-based coastal police forces in the Horn of Africa region, including in Somalia. Most importantly, since the launch of AMISOM, the European Union has contributed over 500 million euros to the Mission through its African Peace Facility, mainly to cover for allowances of African Union troops, costs for the police component of the Mission, international and local civilian staff salaries, as well as operational costs of the Mission's offices.

The AMISOM case is of interest to the international community at large and especially to the Security Council, because it covers several forms of collaboration between the United Nations and the African Union and because to date it represents the longest deployment of a peace operation for triangular cooperation. Furthermore, Africa being the continent with the most armed conflicts, the African Union and the United Nations along with the European Union, are likely to further their cooperation in the future. As such, the lessons learned by the African Union, the United Nations and the European Union in Somalia should be analysed with great attention and discussed openly. Listed below are some of the main lessons learned. It is important to note, however, that they are not definitive, since the deployment of AMISOM is ongoing. They should be taken for what they are: lessons drawn at a certain point in time and in a certain context. These lessons may evolve and must be treated with great caution.

Lessons learned

On the military side, the involvement and the resolve of neighbouring countries were instrumental in strengthening AMISOM. However, the presence of foreign troops with a history of intervening in Somali internal affairs may cause — even if the deployment of these troops is United Nations-mandated — the local population to turn their back on the entire peace operation.

The more efficient AMISOM became at denying Al Shabab territorial control in Somalia, the higher the probability to see insurgents leaving the country and trying to destabilize other parts of the region, especially the neighbouring countries involved in the Mission.

With Al Shabab changing tactics and adopting a “hit and run” posture, AMISOM needed to react by adapting its tactics and material accordingly — but has not been able to do so yet. In this context, agility and flexibility at all levels, as well as adequate force enablers and proper maintenance capabilities are key to military advances.

The international experience in Somalia shows how difficult it is to reform the security sector, while leading joint offensive operations at the same time. For instance, the temptation to focus mainly on strengthening the army for obvious short-term security reasons and for the sake of an early exit may run counter to the longer term democratization goals. It is crucial to ask what kind of security mechanisms Somalia wants, needs and can afford and to strike a balance between those three questions which replies may at times seem incompatible.

Turning to the political aspects of AMISOM mandate, regional politics and clan allegiance play a big part in daily Somali life. There is a requirement to build a security sector which reflects this reality and obtaining buy in/support from community leaders to recruit from their communities is essential.

Another lesson learned from AMISOM lies in the importance of adapting the pace of the political process and of the military progression on the ground. The recent military offensives have placed vast parts of Somalia under the authority of the Federal Government (FGS) and its allies, but that progression has not been followed by equal progress on the political and service delivery front, which endangers the stabilization of those areas. Moreover, it has proved difficult to generate international support for increasing the number of AMISOM police officers and to accelerate the training and deployment of Somali Police Forces in some of those areas. The Guulwade (Victory) Plan of the Federal Government of Somalia may be useful to foster this support.

On the financial front, AMISOM exemplifies the necessity to secure a stable and predictable funding for peace operations, including those led by regional organizations. Despite substantial international support in the form of a United Nations/European Union bilateral financial cocktail, AMISOM suffers from a recurring resource gap that undermines its ability to maximize operational effectiveness, making it difficult for the Mission to go beyond the stabilization stage and hence hindering peacebuilding and state-building efforts.

In terms of logistics, the United Nations and the African Union have proved in Somalia that they can come up with innovative solutions when it comes to collaborating and putting forward their respective comparative advantages. For

instance, the United Nations is able to provide — through UNSOA — a logistics package to AMISOM in order to help the Mission acquire the relevant capabilities and resources to perform its mandated tasks. Nevertheless, such arrangements can be further improved at the planning, coordination and delivery levels.

The triangular cooperation between the African Union, the United Nations and the European Union is proving ever more promising for AMISOM even though some responsibilities need to be better defined — such as the training of Somali Police and Armed Forces — as the situation on the ground evolves.

In Somalia, the efforts to foster a transition from externally driven security with internal support to internally driven security with external support may take longer than expected to bear fruit, as implied by the latest African Union-United Nations Joint benchmarking mission: the main challenge for AMISOM lies in maintaining military pressure on Al Shabab while at the same time mobilizing more resources towards facilitating the political process and the setting-up and training of Somalia security and defence forces.
