



Security Council

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Letter dated 11 February 2019 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to refer to the exchanges of letters between the President of the Security Council and myself, dated 20 December 2013 (S/2013/764) and 24 December 2013 (S/2013/765), and 31 March 2015 (S/2015/234) and 2 April 2015 (S/2015/235), concerning the deployment and increase of a static United Nations guard unit to strengthen the security of facilities and installations of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) and the United Nations Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS), located in Mogadishu.

As indicated in the above-mentioned exchanges of letters, in addition to the protection provided by the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and the Somali national security forces, the Security Council took note of the proposed arrangements for the establishment of a United Nations guard unit, which would be part of the overall security concept by providing “inner ring” static protection for UNSOM and UNSOS facilities and installations in Mogadishu.

The Security Council authorized for this purpose the deployment of a guard battalion composed of static guard companies, an extraction and reinforcement team, as well as an adequately composed logistics support company (530 personnel in total). The guard battalion will form part of UNSOM and will be created as contingents by Member States with the following functions: (a) to provide static security, patrols and access control for UNSOM and UNSOS facilities and installations in Mogadishu, including should UNSOM move outside Mogadishu International Airport; (b) to act as a deterrent against possible attacks on those facilities and installations by extremist elements; (c) to provide rapid extraction capability within the airport; and (d) to support AMISOM and the Somali national security forces in extracting and relocating United Nations personnel who are outside the airport area in the event that they are under imminent threat of physical violence.

I take this opportunity to express my appreciation for the support and assistance provided by the African Union and the Government of Somalia to the United Nations in this regard. In my previous letters, I expressed my intention to review on an annual basis the continuing need for the presence of the United Nations guard unit by conducting a security assessment, and to revert to the Security Council with advice on any supplementary measures that may be required. In this context, the Secretariat, in collaboration with the United Nations team on the ground, reviewed the current security arrangements and needs for the UNSOM and UNSOS facilities and installations in Mogadishu from September to November 2018. The review highlighted a sustained level of threat. It indicated increased requirements for static security, gate screening and emergency response, owing to the growth of the



United Nations facilities and the rise in the number of staff, as well as contractors and others visiting the United Nations compound over the past three years. It also indicated potential requirements for emergency response, as more United Nations personnel operate within the city while engaged in the implementation of the UNSOM mandate. After three years without increase, the strength of the United Nations guard unit needs to be augmented commensurate with the threat level, as recommended in the review.

Based on this recommendation, I intend to increase the strength of the United Nations guard unit in Mogadishu to a total of 625 personnel, an increase of 95 troops. The additional troops will reinforce the existing deployments, including the Emergency Response Team, and will also be responsible for staffing the two main gates of Mogadishu International Airport to facilitate the entry of United Nations personnel and contractors. This increase will be in line with the current concept of operations for the guard unit. The Government of Somalia was notified on 7 February 2019.

In accordance with the arrangements in the above-mentioned exchanges of letters, should other situations warrant the use of additional guard units, especially in the regions, I will revert to the Security Council with advice on the supplementary measures that may be required. I also intend to continue to review the ongoing need for the presence of the United Nations guard unit by conducting a yearly security assessment.

As noted in my report to the Security Council on Somalia of 11 September 2015 ([S/2015/702](#)), a protocol of amendment to the status-of-mission agreement for UNSOM, extending the necessary legal protections to the United Nations guard unit and to the State or States contributing contingents, was concluded and entered into force on 23 May 2015.

I would be grateful if you could confirm that the arrangements described above are acceptable to the Security Council. If so, it would then be my intention to take the steps necessary to increase the strength of the United Nations guard unit as soon as possible. In keeping with existing practice, I would, in due course, notify the Council of the concurrence of the troop-contributing country or countries whose units would be deployed to Mogadishu.

(Signed) António **Guterres**
