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P.O. Box: 3243, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Tel.:(251-11) 551 38 22 Fax: (251-11) 551 93 21
Email: situationroom@africa-union.org, oau-ews@ethionet.et

PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
116TH MEETING
28 MARCH 2008
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

PSC/PR/BR(CXVI)

PRESS STATEMENT

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The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU), at its 116th meeting held on 28 March 2008, was briefed on the situation in Somalia.

Council reiterated its support to the Transitional Federal Institutions (TFIs), as well as the need for the Somali stakeholders and the international community as a whole to seize the opportunity that exists to restore lasting peace and reconciliation in Somalia and bring to a definite end the suffering inflicted on its people.

Council welcomed the steps taken by the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) to initiate dialogue with opposition groups; encouraged the TFG to pursue and intensify its efforts; and urged all Somali stakeholders to respect the conclusions of the National Reconciliation Congress (NRC) and to commit themselves to the promotion of an all-inclusive reconciliation process, within the framework of the Transitional Federal Charter (TFC).

Council expressed, once again, its appreciation for the work being done by the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), and commended Uganda and Burundi for providing troops to the Mission. Council, once again, appealed to AU member States to provide the required troops and personnel to reach the authorized strength of AMISOM and, in this regard, looked forward to the early deployment of the contingents pledged by Nigeria and Ghana. Council also appealed to the AU member States and partners to provide the required logistical and financial support for AMISOM. Council reiterated its appeal to the United Nations Security Council to authorize as soon as possible the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping operation that would take over from AMISOM and support the long-term stabilization and reconstruction of Somalia.

Council reiterated its strong condemnation of the threats and/or acts of violence perpetrated by those elements seeking to undermine the political process, hinder the operations of AMISOM and undermine regional peace and stability. In this respect, Council urged the United Nations Security Council "to take measures against those who seek to prevent or block a peaceful political process, or those who threaten the Transitional Federal Institutions or AMISOM by force, or take action that undermines stability in Somalia or the region", in line with its intension as stated in resolution 1801(2008) of 20 February 2008.

Council expressed deep concern at the prevailing humanitarian situation in Somalia, and demanded that all concerned in Somalia take the required steps to ensure the safety and security of the civilian population, as well as that of the humanitarian personnel, and facilitate access to the needy population.

Addis Ababa, 28 March 2008

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