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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
217TH MEETING
25 FEBRUARY 2010
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

PSC/PR/BR.(CCXVII)

PRESS STATEMENT

PRESS STATEMENT OF THE 217th MEETING OF THE PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL

The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU), at its 217th meeting held on 25 February 2010, received an update on the situation in Somalia by the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the Commission (SRCC) of the African Union for Somalia, as well as by representatives from IGAD, United Nations and the League of Arab States.

Council reiterated its support to the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) of Somalia and commended the contributions of Member States of the AU to this Government and appealed for more support to it, including military and capacity building support, to enable the TFG to neutralize the armed elements carrying out attacks against it and deliver basic services to the country.

Council further reiterated its strong condemnation of the continuing acts of violence and terrorism by the Al Shabaab and Hizbul Islam, with the active support of foreign elements, in defiance of the peace overtures of the TFG and the international community.

Council expressed deep concern at the humanitarian situation in Somalia and demanded the Armed Opposition Groups (AOGs) to immediately comply with international humanitarian law and ensure unrestricted humanitarian access and assistance to needy civilians in areas under their control.

Council welcomed the initialling of an agreement, ahead of the signing of the Framework for Cooperation, between the TFG and Ahlu Sunna Waljama'a (ASWJ), and noted that this is an important concrete step taken by the TFG in expanding and broadening the scope of dialogue and reconciliation in line with the principles and objectives of the Djibouti process. It reiterated its call to all the Somali parties who have not yet done so to join the peace process without any precondition and any further delay.

Council reiterated its appreciation to Police Contributing Countries and welcomed the recent commissioning of eight (8) battalions of the Somali Security Forces as part of the AMISOM training support to the TFG and called upon the TFG to ensure the effective deployment of these battalions in order for them to assume primary and greater responsibility in providing security for the TFG and the population in Mogadishu in particular.

Council also welcomed the steps taken by AMISOM Police Component to effectively support the rebuilding of the Somalia Police Force (SPF), through training and mentoring and in this regard, noted the successful completion of the Induction Course for the AMISOM Police trainers and mentors from Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Uganda.

Council further encouraged AMISOM to continue to play a coordinating role in the overall capacity building efforts in Somalia and called on the international community to ensure the sustenance and retention of the Somali Security Forces.

Council reiterated its appreciation to the Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) namely Burundi and Uganda, for their unflinching commitment as demonstrated in their continued and increased deployment of troops and other resources to AMISOM. Council renewed its call to the AU Member States that have pledged troops to AMISOM to redeem their pledges accordingly, in order to enable AMISOM to reach its authorized strength. Council further called on other AU member States to provide troops and other support to AMISOM.

Council called on AU Member States to further commit themselves to the cause of Somalia and provide support to AMISOM.

Council renewed its call to the UN Security Council to speedily act on its earlier request for the imposition of a no-fly-zone and the blockade of sea ports to prevent the entry into Somalia of foreign elements and the supply of logistical and other support to the insurgency.

Council underscored that the continued deterioration of the situation in Somalia is proof of the increasing internationalization of the conflict. In this regard, Council stressed, once again, the primary responsibility of the United Nations Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security and called on the Security Council to take the decisions expected of it, in terms of support to the peace efforts in Somalia, including the deployment of UN operations to help stabilize the situation and support the long term reconstruction of the country.

Council expressed deep appreciation to all countries and institutions providing support to AMISOM. At the same time, Council noted that this support remains below what is required on the ground and called for a much greater mobilisation of the international community.

Addis Ababa, 25 February 2010

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