

DECLARATION ON THE SITUATION IN SOMALIA

We, the Heads of State and Government of the African Union, meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 31 January to 2 February 2008, in the 10th Ordinary Session of our Assembly:

Having reviewed the situation in Somalia and the ongoing efforts aimed at promoting lasting peace, security and reconciliation in that country, in the light of the report submitted by the Chairperson of the Commission to the 105th meeting of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) [PSC/PR/2(CV)], held on 18 January 2008, and the communiqué adopted by the PSC on that occasion [PSC/PR/Comm(CV)],

Stressing that the situation in Somalia represents one of the most serious peace and security challenges facing the Continent,

Welcoming the steps taken within Somalia, including the convening of the National Reconciliation Congress (NRC), in July – August 2007, the recent appointment of a new Prime Minister, Mr. Nur Hassan Hussein, and subsequent formation of a new government, as well as the efforts made by the AU, notably through the deployment of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM),

Reiterating the conviction expressed by the PSC that, despite the daunting challenges confronting the peace and reconciliation process, the opportunity that arose in December 2006, when the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) regained control of Mogadishu and other parts of the country, in order to find a lasting solution to the crisis in Somalia still exists,

Stressing the need for both the Somali stakeholders and the international community as a whole to seize this opportunity to decisively address the conflict in Somalia and to take all steps required to this end,

Hereby:

1. **FULLY ENDORSE** all the steps identified in the PSC Communiqué referred to above;
2. **DEMAND** that all parties in Somalia reject violence, uphold the principles and spirit enshrined in the Transitional Federal Charter (TFC) and work towards genuine national reconciliation within that framework;
3. **ENCOURAGE** the TFG to urgently devise concrete ways to fully implement the outcome of the NRC, and adopt a broader inclusive approach to reach out to all Somali stakeholders who reject violence, both within and outside Somalia, in line with the TFC, and **WELCOME** the commitment of the newly appointed Prime Minister to an all-inclusive reconciliation;

4. **CALL UPON** all Member States, especially the countries of the region, and the larger international community to stand by the legitimate Somali Institutions and provide adequate and concrete support in order to enhance their capacity, including that of the TFG and its security and defence forces;
5. **URGE** the United Nations Security Council to take measures against those who seek to prevent or block a peaceful political process, threaten the TFIs or AMISOM, or take action that undermines stability in Somalia or the region, in line with its intention as stated in Resolution 1772(2007);
6. **COMMEND** Uganda and Burundi for having contributed troops to AMISOM, Nigeria for the steps it has taken for imminent deployment of the battalion which it pledged to contribute to AMISOM and Rwanda for having contributed to the training of the Somali defense and security forces. We **ALSO COMMEND** Ethiopia for its invaluable assistance to the TFG;
7. **STRONGLY APPEAL** to Member States to provide the required troops and personnel to reach the authorized strength of AMISOM, as well as financial and logistical support, to facilitate the deployment of the Mission and the sustenance of its operations;
8. **APPEAL** to the AU partners to provide increased logistical and financial support for AMISOM, especially in view of the fact that the AU, in deploying an operation in Somalia, is also acting on behalf of the larger international community;
9. **STRESS** the need for the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping operation in Somalia that will take over AMISOM and support the long-term stabilization and post-conflict reconstruction of Somalia;
10. **APPEAL ONCE AGAIN** to the United Nations Security Council to urgently take the necessary steps for the early deployment of such an operation, bearing in mind that it has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security;
11. **APPEAL** to the international community, including Member States, to continue to provide humanitarian assistance to the needy population in Somalia, and **URGE** that all necessary steps be taken to create conditions conducive to the provision of humanitarian assistance, including unhindered access to needy population and security for humanitarian workers and organizations;
12. **AGREE** to review the situation at its next ordinary session and to assess the status of implementation of the PSC decision of 18 January 2008 and agree on the best way forward, and in the meantime, **REQUEST** the PSC to regularly review the situation in Somalia.

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