



COMMUNIQUÉ HIGH LEVEL MEETING ON SOMALIA

1. The High-Level Virtual Meeting on Somalia took place on 29 April 2020, co-chaired by the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and the African Union (AU) attended by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the European Union (EU), United Nations (UN), Turkey, United Kingdom and United States also attended the meeting;
2. The meeting comes at a time when the world including Somalia is battling with the unprecedented challenges posed by COVID-19. The pandemic has claimed lives, disrupted livelihoods increasing the rate of unemployment, exacerbating the risk of food insecurity, hindering the capacity of the Federal Government and Member States to deliver services to the Somali people;
3. The meeting expressed deep concern over the multiple of threats faced by Somalia. In addition to the challenges posed by the novel coronavirus, the country is also dealing with floods caused by heavy rains, the locust invasion as well as the attendant humanitarian crisis, which have displaced many. During these uncertain times, the meeting called for the promotion of a people and partnership centric approach in support of the Somali people. In the same vein, the meeting also called upon all Somalis in positions of political, economic and social responsibility to unite and put the safety of Somali citizens as their primary concern;
4. The meeting took note of the efforts being deployed by the Federal Government (FGS) of Somalia towards promoting inclusive political participation and dialogue with its Federal Member States (FMS) and the articulation of a common vision for Somalia. Participants encouraged the FGS and its FMS to continue to engage in regular political dialogue at all levels and strengthen technical level engagement on security cooperation and development. The meeting also noted that Somalia has committed to building political

consensus in order to tackle the threat of Al-Shabaab as well as the other national priorities;

5. The meeting welcomed the noteworthy progress over the course of the last six months made by the FGS in the implementation of its legislative agenda, in particular the signing into law by President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed Farmaajo, on 26 December, 2019, of the Public Finance Management and Corporate Legislation Act, as well as the approval by the House of the People of Federal Electoral law and its signing into law by President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed Farmaajo, on 20 February 2020;
6. The meeting commended Somalia's commitment to restoring macroeconomic stability through the strengthening of macroeconomic management, rebuilding financial institutions and improving governance, as part of meeting its requirements under the IMF Monitored Program (SMP) and congratulated the Federal Government on reaching the Decision Point on debt relief, allowing the FGS normalize its ties with international financial institutions, which will facilitate new development financing and boost Somalia's economy to better address poverty, and ensure sustainable development for its people;
7. The meeting also took note of the reforms in the security sector including the biometric registration of all Somali National Army personnel, the direct payment of regular salaries to soldiers, the establishment of a human resource management system, progress towards the enactment of the implementation of the Pensions and Gratuity bill and the establishment of partner training programs to professionalize military and police personnel. The meeting further welcomed the beginning of the Badhbado security operations that have resulted in the Somalia National Army's first hold operations. In combination, these reforms are crucial steps to bolster the governance and institutions of Somalia, which in turn strengthens security;
8. The meeting encouraged the FGS and FMS to maintain dialogue and unity of purpose to agree on a common vision of federalism and finalise the constitutional review, and, in preparation for the elections, move forward on the electoral legislation. The meeting participants called on international partners to continue to mobilize resources to supplement the Federal Government's financing of the multi-party universal elections in 2020/21;
9. The meeting expressed deep concern over the continuous and indiscriminate attacks by the primary threat to security, Al-Shabaab against civilian population and facilities, as well

as targeted assassinations of Government personnel, prominent politicians, AMISOM personnel, foreigners as well as humanitarian staff; and further acknowledged that Al-Shabaab still poses an existential threat to the peace, security and stability of Somalia and the region as a whole;

10. The meeting noted that strengthening Somali capacity to defeat the asymmetric threat posed by the organisation, in particular, its use of improvised explosive devices, and to restore State authority over Al-Shabaab-controlled territory is a priority for Somalia and international partners. However, a new parallel approach is required to degrade the terrorist group's appeal as well as its capacity and capability to adapt. Somalia and its partners must find new ways to respond to this evolution. Renewed efforts to tackle the evolving threats posed by the terrorist group including extortion, financing, logistics, recruitment, alternative governance, communications and commercial enterprises requires a comprehensive security approach including a robust political, socio-economic, stabilisation and reconciliation strategy geared towards supplementing the hard-earned security efforts;
11. The meeting commended the vital work of AMISOM and its Troop Contributing Countries' vital work in enabling security and stability to allow Somalia to establish political institutions and extend state authority. It recognized that AMISOM's effort comes at great sacrifice, and commended the bravery and commitment of its personnel, as well as Somali forces, in fighting Al Shabaab. It welcomed the progress in Lower Shabelle and noted the importance of sufficient security and stabilization efforts in the liberated areas to preserve and build on these gains. It called for renewed offensive efforts in coordination with the Somali National Army and FMS security services in all AMISOM sectors, and underlined the need for renewed progress on the Somalia Transition Plan (STP);
12. The meeting further acknowledged that for Somalia and AMISOM to succeed in the implementation of the Somalia Transition Plan (STP) and in the fight against Al-Shabaab, there is a need for a common, coordinated and comprehensive approach among the Somalia stakeholders on the one hand and with AMISOM troop contributors on the other hand, which would enable the FGS to pursue the security sector reforms necessary, including force generation to develop the capability needed to relieve AMISOM. The meeting recognized the need to identify the threats to Somalia's stability and security in the current context, and to take a fresh look at what steps need to be taken by Somalia and international partners to enable Somalia to assume primary responsibility for security and enable the completion of AMISOM's mandate.

13. The meeting recognized that there have been delays in the implementation of the STP. As such, the meeting called for the STP to be revised and updated with clear defining roles for all key stakeholders. The meeting further recognized a further reconfiguration of AMISOM is necessary in support of Somalia's primary role in securing its citizens post-2021. In this regard, the meeting called for an updated Transition Plan with roles and responsibilities clearly defined for all the concerned stakeholders and for the mandate renewal to take into account the realities on the ground. The meeting further called upon the forthcoming UN Security Council Resolution defining the renewed mandate for AMISOM to provide guidance on the direction necessary and recognised by this meeting;
14. The meeting recognised the need to take collective responsibility for sustainable funding for AMISOM in the bridging period and for future international security presence in order to successfully achieve the objectives of the revised Somalia Transition Plan;
15. The meeting underscored the need for continued regional political consensus in support of a Somali-led and owned agenda. As such, as Somalia takes great strides towards the next chapter of its statebuilding agenda, the meeting called on the regional and extra regional players to continue playing a united and cohesive role in supporting Somalia. The meeting welcomed the call for a broader regional engagement. In this regard, the AU in close collaboration with IGAD will continue to engage its Member States to secure a regional consensus in support of Somalia;
16. The meeting commended IGAD, the UN, the EU and other bilateral partners for their financial and material support to AMISOM and their commitment to continue supporting the build-up of Somali security capacity supported by future international security presence in the implementation of a revised Somalia Transition Plan;
17. The meeting further commended IGAD, the UN, EU, UK, USA, Turkey and other bilateral partners for their continued financial and material support to both the FGS and AMISOM.
18. The meeting acknowledged that this is an important platform to forge a collective, unified and coordinated approach in support of UNSC 2472. Participants agreed that they would hold this high level meeting on a quarterly basis to assess progress, challenges and identify concrete steps to address them.

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