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**REPORT OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE COMMISSION ON
THE JOINT AU-UN BENCHMARKING EXERCISE AND THE REVIEW
OF THE AFRICAN UNION MISSION IN SOMALIA**

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. In resolution 2093 (2013) adopted on 6 March 2013, the United Nations (UN) Security Council welcomed the review by the Secretary-General of the UN presence and engagement in Somalia. Having agreed with the Secretary-General that the conditions in Somalia were not yet appropriate for the deployment of a UN peacekeeping operation, the Security Council requested him to keep the situation under review, including through the setting of benchmarks for when it might be appropriate to deploy a UN peacekeeping operation. The Security Council stressed that it was looking forward to receiving this information as part of the regular reporting to the Security Council. In its presidential statement of 6 June 2013 (S/PRST/2013/7), the Security Council welcomed the intention of the UN Secretariat to conduct a joint review of AMISOM with the AU, and emphasized the importance of both organizations working closely together in this exercise.

2. At its 379th meeting held on 13 June 2013, Council reiterated its call to the UN Security Council to consider creative and action-oriented steps towards the re-hatting of AMISOM, given the improved situation in some parts of the country, which allowed for an enhanced UN presence on the ground. In this regard, Council stated that, further to Security Council resolution 2093 (2013), it was looking forward to the benchmarking exercise to be undertaken by the UN Secretariat and the AU Commission.

3. In resolution 2111 (2013), adopted on 24 July 2013, the Security Council looked forward to the results of the then upcoming joint review of AMISOM. It requested options and recommendations to be presented to it by 10 October, and welcomed the AU's intention to work closely with the Secretariat on the review.

4. The present report provides an update on the benchmarking exercise and the AMISOM review conducted jointly by the AU and the UN, from 26 August to 6 September 2013. It concludes with recommendations on the way forward.

II. CONTEXT OF THE JOINT MISSION

5. Council would recall that the Strategic Concept for the future operations of AMISOM, as adopted at its 306th meeting, held on 5 January 2012 [PSC/PR/COMM.(CCCVI)], had contemplated a force level of 35,500 troops for the successful implementation of the military strategy. However, based on a number of considerations, including prioritizing the conduct of AMISOM expansion operations in a sequential manner, provision of force enablers, particularly helicopters, Armed Personal Carriers (APCs), engineering and logistical units, continued Ethiopian support to the Somali National Security Forces (SNSF) operations in Bay, Bakool and Hiraan regions pending the finalization of successor arrangements by AMISOM, and provision of immediate operational logistical support to the SNSF elements involved in joint operations with AMISOM, the Strategic Concept recommended the middle path option of a total strength of 17,731 troops.

6. The AU Strategic Review of AMISOM, conducted in January 2013, proposed three options regarding the future configuration of AMISOM. At its 356th meeting, held on 27 February 2013, Council endorsed the option proposing the enhancement of AMISOM [PSC/PR/COMM(CCCLVI)]. This option required the Mission to maintain a robust posture, with the necessary force multipliers and enablers and to establish special training teams to enhance the capacity of the Somali national defence and public safety institutions. Council called upon the Security Council to authorize the enhancement of the support to AMISOM. However, the major recommendations made by the review and endorsed by Council were not taken on board by the Security Council in its resolution 2093 (2013). In that resolution, the Security Council decided to authorize the deployment of AMISOM until 28 February 2014, and requested the Secretary-General to continue to provide a logistical support package for AMISOM until that date.

7. On 10 April 2013, the Military Operations Coordination Committee (MOCC) recommended that AMISOM should not undertake further expansion operations as it was deemed to have reached its operational limit. In the report submitted to the Security Council on 13 June 2013, as part of the mandatory AU reporting, the Commission stressed that two of the considerations that underpinned the Strategic Concept had not been realized, since AMISOM remains without all the required force enablers, while the SNSF lack adequate logistical support. The Commission indicated that AMISOM was geographically stretched and hence was unable to undertake further expansion operations without risking the gains already achieved.

8. The meeting of the Heads of State and Government of the Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) to AMISOM, Ethiopia and Somalia, held in Kampala, on 4 August 2013, noted that, given the evolution of the situation in Somalia, the January 2012 Strategic Concept had been overtaken by events. It requested the AU, in consultation with the TCCs, Ethiopia, Somalia, as well as the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the UN, in the context of the AU-UN joint review, to revise the Strategic Concept in order to align it with the prevailing circumstances in the Mission area. The meeting expressed concern about discussions aimed at partial re-hatting of AMISOM, which it considered to be premature, as it may cause dysfunctional command and control, unequal and inequitable distribution of resources and negative consequences on the operational effectiveness of the Mission.

9. The joint mission took place against the background of a highly dynamic political process, with challenges relating to the constitutional process, decentralization and preparation of elections. While Al Shabaab no longer constitutes a significant force, residual clan rivalries have the potential of complicating the implementation of the peace and reconciliation process.

III. CONDUCT AND OBJECTIVES OF THE JOINT MISSION

10. As indicated above, the joint mission was conducted from 26 August to 6 September 2013. Led by the AU Commission and the UN Secretariat, the mission also included representatives of partner countries and organizations. The joint mission undertook wide ranging consultations in Addis Ababa, Nairobi and Mogadishu. It met with President Hassan Sheikh Mahmoud and Prime Minister Abdi Farah Shirdon, as well as with the leadership of the Somali National Police (SNP) and Somali National Army (SNA). It also met with the leaderships

of AMISOM, the UN Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) and the United Nations Support Office for AMISOM (UNSOA), the UN Country Team, the European Union Training Mission (EUTM), bilateral partners, civil society organizations and international non-governmental organizations. It also visited the headquarters of all four AMISOM sectors in Mogadishu, Kismayo, Baidoa and Beletweyne. Consultations were also undertaken with AMISOM Troop and Police Contributing Countries (T/PCCs), with IGAD and members of Council. President Hassan Sheikh Mahmoud was also debriefed on the outcomes of the mission.

11. The benchmarking exercise and the AMISOM review were informed by current political and security realities in the Somali as well as the regional context. The joint mission focused on addressing the security challenges in the short and medium-term, particularly as they relate to the military and police efforts to address the threat posed by Al Shabaab and other spoilers. It considered options to enhance the capacity to respond to asymmetrical attacks on Somali and international targets.

12. More specifically, the joint mission:

- (i) examined the operational status of AMISOM (military, police, civilian) in all four sectors;
- (ii) established the requirements for the enhancement of AMISOM in line with the recommendations of the Strategic Review of AMISOM, as endorsed by Council at its 356th meeting held on 27 February 2013 [PSC/PR/COMM(CCCLVI)];
- (iii) assessed AMISOM military strategy and determined whether it is in line with the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) actions in delivering core political tasks ahead of the 2016 general elections;
- (iv) evaluated the international community support to the FGS in the establishment of credible and effective security forces, and developed options for the immediate short-term enhancement of international support; and
- (v) established options for a potential role of the UN in the military and police operations currently led by AMISOM and the SNSF, with corresponding benchmarks for when such a deployment may be appropriate.

IV. KEY FINDINGS OF THE JOINT MISSION

13. The following are the key findings of the joint mission in regard to the Al Shabaab threat, current AMISOM operations and the state of the Somali National Security Forces (SNSF):

- (i) the number of Al Shabaab fighters is estimated in the thousands and is increasing through forced recruitment. If revived, Al Shabaab is likely to expand its targets beyond Somalia, as has been the case in the past and more recently in Nairobi on 21 September;

- (ii) while a significant drop in Al Shabaab's income was initially observed upon the capture of the Bakaramarket, in May 2011, and of Kismayo, in October 2012, its control of a number of towns with access to natural sea-jetties continues to provide it with opportunities for revenue generation through the taxation of illegal exports. Securing these ports/towns would be imperative to future AMISOM/SNA operations;
- (iii) after the securing of some strategic towns and ports by AMISOM and the Somali forces in 2012 and early 2013, AMISOM military operations stagnated due to lack of force enablers and the failure to achieve the envisaged level of force generation for the SNA. This, coupled with Al Shabaab's deliberate shift toward asymmetrical warfare since May 2013, has led to a deterioration in the security situation, as evidenced by the increased frequency of attacks against AMISOM and FGS positions; and
- (iv) the capacity of the SNA in the past two years fell short of the levels anticipated in 2010/2011. This was attributed to lack of basic logistics, such as rations, fuel, transport, medical and stipends. Furthermore, AMISOM capacity to provide training for effective joint operations is limited.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE JOINT MISSION

14. The joint mission identified a set of benchmarks and assessed conditions for a United Nations peacekeeping operation in Somalia in line with benchmarks outlined in the Secretary-General's report of 9 March 2009 (S/2009/132). The conclusions of the joint mission on these benchmarks and assessment of conditions for re-hatting to UN peacekeeping operations are as follows:

- (i) the conditions for re-hating AMISOM into a UN peacekeeping operation do not exist at present and hence the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping operation at this time would be a high-risk option;
- (ii) a change in the military posture to a UN peacekeeping operation may inadvertently provide the insurgents the opportunity for continuing or escalating the armed conflict, and trigger attacks that could draw the peacekeeping force into combat operations beyond its mandate; and
- (iii) the prevailing fragile political and security environment could undermine the impartiality and neutrality of the UN forces. Even where the UN to consider a robust posture or operating alongside AMISOM, the time needed for a conversion into a UN peacekeeping operation would further challenge the political process at present. It would also allow time and space for Al Shabaab to further increase its asymmetric capacity with a possibility of gaining sufficient capabilities to pose a renewed conventional threat.

15. Pursuant to its terms of reference, the joint UN-AU Mission is proposing the following:

- (i) AMISOM should not at this stage be re-hatted to a UN mission. The current security situation in South Central Somalia is not conducive for a UN

peacekeeping operation in Somalia, hence the need to continue providing support to AMISOM;

- (ii) given the urgent need to resume the military campaign against Al Shabaab, it is imperative that additional capabilities, in the form of greater troop numbers, force multipliers, enablers and Formed Police Units (FPUs) be provided. These additional capabilities must however be clearly linked to specific objectives and defined timelines. In this regard, AMISOM shall be expected to undertake operations in areas that are currently providing Al Shabaab with economic resources to be able to re-equip, re-arm, train and launch attacks. The increased support to AMISOM should be availed through UN assessed contributions. The overall proposed increase in force level is 6,235, out of which 3 battalions will be deployed for a limited period and will be considered as a force asset under the control of the AMISOM Force Commander. This will bring the authorized strength of AMISOM to 23,966, as compared to the current 17,731. The breakdown of the force level increase is as follows:

- Support units (training, logistics, engineering signal, port security and Civilian Casualties Tracking, Analysis And Response Cell – CCTARC)	1845
- Surgetroops for 18-24 months	2550
- Guardforce	1000
- FPU	840

16. The increased support to AMISOM must be concurrent with the provision of additional non-lethal support to the SNSF, including both the military and the police. The support to the SNSF must be drawn from UN assessed contributions. This would enable the SNSF both to hold the areas currently cleared of Al Shabaab, as well as to expand into and recover new areas, thus increasing the FGS footprint in the country.

17. The expansion of military and police operations must be linked to a political objective. In this regard, the clearing or capturing of new areas from Al Shabaab must be linked to the ability of the FGS to set up political and other governance structures in the recovered areas.

18. The safety and security of international personnel, including UN staff, is of paramount importance, as this will enable the international community to provide the requisite support to the FGS in its efforts to promote lasting peace and development. In this regard, options for a Guard Force are also being proposed.

VI. OBSERVATIONS

19. Remarkable progress has been made in Somalia, both on the political and security fronts. However, many challenges remain, as demonstrated by the continued attacks of Al Shabaab, both inside and outside Somalia. Security conditions have to improve further to enable the achievement of the political objectives, with the constitutional referendum and elections planned for 2016. In 2012 and early 2013, Somali forces, AMISOM and Ethiopia succeeded in significantly degrading Al Shabaab capabilities in a campaign sustained for 18 months at considerable cost and under complex conditions. This allowed progress to be achieved, including the successful conclusion of the transition, agreement on a provisional constitution and the election of a new leadership.

20. Accordingly, active operations against Al Shabaab have to resume urgently in order significantly to improve the security situation and allow the implementation of the political process within the agreed timelines. The envisaged military tasks cannot be conducted under a classical peacekeeping operation. The pursuit of military operations against Al Shabaab will assist in creating a conducive environment that would allow AMISOM to hand over responsibilities to a United Nations peacekeeping operation at a future date.

21. In order to enable AMISOM and the SNSF to resume the military campaign against Al Shabaab, the joint mission has made recommendations on how best to strengthen their capacity. These provide for an increase in AMISOM strength, the provision of force multipliers and enablers and sustained support to the SNSF. It is recommended that Council endorses the recommendations made and calls on the Security Council to do the same, while at the same time appealing to the other AU partners, notably the EU, to adjust their support accordingly, in order to meet the requirements of the situation on the ground.

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