7TH MEETING OF THE MILITARY OPERATIONS COORDINATION COMMITTEE (MOCC)

ADDIS ABABA, 12 NOVEMBER 2012

OPENING REMARKS BY AMBASSADOR RAMTANE LAMAMRA, COMMISSIONER FOR PEACE AND SECURITY
Ms Ameerah Haq, Under Secretary-General of the United Nations,

Chiefs of Defence Staff,

Outgoing Special Representative of the Chairperson of the Commission (SRCC) Boubacar Gaoussou Diarra,

Incoming SRCC Mahamat Saleh Annadif,

Generals and other officers,

Ladies and Gentleman,

Let me take this opportunity to welcome you to this 7th meeting of the Military Coordination Committee (MOCC). I would like to begin by extending a special welcome to Ms. Ameerah Haq, the Under Secretary-General in charge of the United Nations Department of Field Support. I thank her for accepting to attend this meeting during which we will have the opportunity to share ideas on important issues regarding the United Nations Support to AMISOM.

Also right from the onset, I would like to take recognition of the fact that, since the last MOCC meeting on 21 September 2012, there have been significant security and political developments in Somalia. The Somali forces and AMISOM secured the important port of Kismayo, in Sector 2, on 30 September. Progress has also been made in other Sectors. I commend the Somali Forces and AMISOM for these achievements, and express much appreciation to the Governments of Burundi, Uganda, Kenya and Djibouti for the continued commitment of troops and equipment to AMISOM. I would also like to recognize the contributions made by the Ethiopian National Defence Forces in support of AMISOM and the Somali Forces.

These gains on the ground have been instrumental in establishing a secure environment that enabled a smooth end of the transition period, with the election of a new leadership for Somalia, and the subsequent formation of a Government. In order to maintain the political momentum, the Somali authorities should establish effective governance structure in the areas secured by AMISOM and the Somali National Security Forces. In this respect, I would like to renew AU’s call to Member States and the larger international community to extend the necessary support.

On its part, the AU Commission will soon be carrying out a comprehensive review of AMISOM, in order to determine how best the Mission can support the stabilization of Somalia in light of the positively changing situation on the ground. While carrying out this review, the
Commission will work closely with the UN and all other actors in Somalia, so as to ensure that our efforts are well coordinated and that a clear division of responsibility exists.

Pending the completion of this review, the Commission has requested the UN Security Council to authorize the technical roll-over of the current UN support package, with additional support in the following key areas: (a) strengthening of AMISOM civilian capacity to further stabilization in liberated areas; and (b) provision of maritime support that will enable the Mission to ensure a better surveillance of Somali’s coastline. I note with regret that the recently adopted UN Security Council resolution 2073 (2012) did not fully meet our expectations. I hope that the Security Council will seize the opportunity to further review the matter in the context of the conclusions of the planned AU Strategic Review.

Aside from these specific requests related to UN support package, the Commission also brought to the attention of the Security Council the issue of large volume of charcoal found in the city of Kismayo by AMISOM and urged that an *ad hoc* and urgent solution be found in consultation with the Somali Government. At the same time, efforts should be made to address this issue in the long-term, in the context of the embargo on the export of charcoal from Somalia.

In actual fact, the UN Security Council should address the larger issue of the funding of AMISOM. Based on current projections, the EU will not be able to provide funding for the Mission beyond June next year. This means that short of alternative and sustainable funding, it will not be possible to maintain AMISOM’s presence beyond that period. And yet, the Mission has a critical role to play in the coming months in support of the stabilization efforts in liberated areas and the expansion of State authority. Against this background, the AU renews its call to the UN to either take steps to deploy a peacekeeping operation that would take over AMISOM or to provide a full support package based on assessed contributions that would cover all expenses involved, including the payment of allowances and reimbursements to the TCCs/PCCs. We have to urgently address this issue, as the current uncertainties have the potential to compromise the effectiveness of the Mission.

Allow me also to bring to the fore operational issues which are critical to the success of the efforts being made on the ground. First and foremost, I would like to express satisfaction at the manner in which all new troops have been fully integrated into AMISOM command and control structure and further stress that all operations will be conducted in accordance with AMISOM authorized tasks.

Secondly, it is acknowledged that there has been steady progress towards the implementation of the key operational benchmarks, as approved by the MOCC on 9 March 2012. However, as observed by the last MOCC meeting, there is need for all stakeholders to expeditiously execute the remaining deployment activities. In line with this, it would be critical to ensure that the Support Concept is properly aligned to AMISOM CONOPS. More specifically, UNSOA should ensure that the support package is flexible and responsive to the realities on the
ground, including the maintenance of equipment and the fact that the Mission is spread on a vast territory.

The third issue concerns the security of AMISOM forces and their equipment. Despite the improvement of the overall security situation, Al Shabbab still retains the ability to strike. In this regard, AMISOM must take necessary precautions in line with the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to ensure adequate force protection at all times.

Before concluding my remarks, I would wish to return to the issue of supporting the Federal Government of Somalia in building an effective security force. As you are aware, the AU Commission has continued to engage with the international community on the establishment of a sustainable support mechanism to address acute shortages of financial and logistical resources that have seriously impaired the effectiveness of the Somali Security Forces. As much as we recognize the role of NSSP in providing a long-term framework for concerted effort, we have impressed upon the international community to address the immediate logistical, financial and other needs of SNSF. In this regard, on 5 August 2012, the Commission requested 20 AU Member States to provide immediate support to the Somali Forces operating alongside AMISOM. Strengthening the Somali forces will enable us to scale down AMISOM’s presence and to ensure that the Somalis are indeed in charge of providing security to their own people.

Finally, I would again like to thank the troop and police contributing countries to AMISOM, and the entire AMISOM leadership for their contribution to all that we have achieved in Somalia.