

AFRICAN UNION

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PRESS STATEMENT

OUTCOME OF THE 21ST MILITARY OPERATIONS COORDINATION COMMITTEE MEETING ON THE AFRICAN UNION MISSION IN SOMALIA HELD AT THE AU HEADQUARTERS, ON 11 NOVEMBER 2016, IN ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

Addis Ababa, 11 November 2016: The Chiefs of Defence Forces (CDFs) of all African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) namely Burundi, Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya, the Commander of Land Forces of the Uganda Peoples Defence Force (UPDF), representing the Chief of Defence Forces of Uganda, held the 21st meeting of the Military Operations Coordination Committee (MOCC) on 11 November 2016, to review the progress made in the provision of security in support of the electoral process in Somalia, as well as to consider options for strengthening the AMISOM operational effectiveness in light of future offensive operations. The meeting also considered support to the Somalia National Security Force (SNSF) by UNSOS and the payment of AMISOM troop allowances.

The meeting was officially opened and chaired by the African Union (AU) Commissioner for Peace and Security, H.E. Ambassador Smail Chergui and, was also attended by the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the AU Commission for Somalia, the Deputy CDF of the Somali National Army (SNA) and the Deputy Police Commissioner of the Somali Police Force. Representatives of partners, namely, the European Union (EU), UNSOS, UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, UN Office to the AU, United States of America, and United Kingdom also attended the meeting.

On the basis of the statement made by the Commissioner for Peace and Security, the briefings made by the AMISOM SRCC, the Force Commander and the Deputy Police Commissioner, and the subsequent deliberations, the MOCC concluded as follows:

Requests the deployment of additional forces, key combat and stabilisation capabilities in order to enable AMISOM and SNSF to conduct necessary operations in Juba Valley, Hiraan regions and North East coastline. In this regard, the meeting stressed the need for the UN and the international community to support additional forces of up to 4,000 troops for a maximum period of six months to conduct offensive operations.

Strongly recommends that the UN and other international partners enhance the provision of UNSOS non-lethal support to the current authorised 10,900 SNA personnel. In addition, due to the successes recorded by SNA in operations and the progress made in training, it is further requested that the UN and the international community consider elevating the support provided to the SNA to up to 20,000 forces, in order to accelerate the planned AMISOM exit strategy.

Commends and expresses its appreciation to the P/TCCs for the sacrifices made in support of the people and Government of Somalia in their pursuit for sustainable peace and security.

Further expresses its appreciation to the UN, EU and other international partners for the continued support to the peace efforts in Somalia. However, **regrets** the decision by the EU to reduce the payment of AMISOM troop allowance by 20%, and **urges** the UN, EU and the larger international community to urgently find ways of bridging this gap.

Strongly rejects the recent decision by the EU to differentiate its payment procedure to the Burundian National Defence Force (BNDF) contingent in Somalia. **Emphasises** that the deployment of the BNDF is within the context of an AU deployment and there should be non-discrimination in the payment to all TCCs; **Recalls** the sacrifices being paid by the forces on the ground and, encourages the EU to urgently consider modalities for reversing this decision, which could have far-reaching negative consequences on AMISOM operations and the overall security gains achieved in Somalia.

Urges the UN and partners to facilitate the deployment of UN Security Council authorised critical enablers and force multipliers, including the deployment of an anti-Improvised Explosive Device capability in support of AMISOM operations. **Stresses** that the continued delay in the provision of requisite resources, equipment and logistics to AMISOM, may force the TCCs to take appropriate decision, in due course.

Notes with satisfaction the completion of the Letters of Assist between the UN and the Government of Kenya in relation to the deployment of pledged helicopters. **Further underlines** the importance of the UN to finalise similar processes with the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the Government of Uganda, and possibly with Djibouti.

Expresses appreciation to the AU Commission for convening the meeting.