OPENING REMARKS BY AMBASSADOR RAMTANE LAMAMRA, COMMISSIONER FOR PEACE AND SECURITY

AT THE 2nd MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE JOINT COORDINATION MECHANISM ON SOMALIA ON THE PRELIMINARY OUTCOME OF THE AU STRATEGIC REVIEW OF AMISOM

ADDIS ABABA, 14 JANUARY 2013
Excellencies, Ministers of Defence,
Special Representative for Somalia of the Chairperson of the AU Commission,
Special Representative of the UN Secretary General for Somalia,
Head of the UN Office to the AU,
Professor Ibrahim Gambari - Head of the AU Review Team
Generals,
Ladies and Gentleman,

Let me take this opportunity to welcome you to this 2nd Meeting of the Joint Coordination Mechanism (JCM).

You will recall that the 1st Meeting of the JCM was held on 11 April 2012. During that meeting, the Terms of Reference of the JCM were considered and adopted. Since then, there have been eight (8) meetings of the Military Operations Coordination Committee (MOCC), which were attended by Chiefs of Defence Staff. These forums have immensely assisted the Commission in the coordination between the AU and the Troops Contributing Countries (TCCs), other interested countries and partners. In a nutshell, they have made it possible to effectively address the challenges facing the Mission and other critical operational matters. The meetings have also provided opportunity for the TCCs and other interested countries to have visibility on the implementation of the AMISOM operational benchmarks which have been crucial in ensuring the deployment of forces in all the four (4) sectors as envisaged in the Strategic Concept and the Concept of Operations (CONOPs).

The achievements of the military efforts have given credibility to AMISOM and have been instrumental for the successful implementation of the political process. As you are aware, there is now a new political dispensation in Somalia which has ushered in a period of optimism and euphoria among the Somali people and has equally emboldened the engagement by the international community in Somalia. I take this opportunity to congratulate and thank all the TCCs, the Government of Ethiopia and the leadership of AMISOM for supporting the Federal Government of Somalia in the realization of these achievements.

In the light of these significant developments, the AU found it necessary to carry out a Strategic Review of AMISOM’s mandate and operations, in order to realign the Mission’s role to the objectives and priorities of the Federal Government. The launching of the Strategic Review of AMISOM was endorsed by the Peace and Security Council (PSC) at its 337th meeting, held on 11 October 2012. A Review Team was constituted, on 15 December 2012, under the chairmanship of Professor Ibrahim Gambari, and has already completed its task. It includes a number of civilian and security experts. The Peace and Security Department and AMISOM provided the Secretariat of the Review team.
Without preempting the outcome of the Review, which will be shortly presented to you by the chairman of the Team, I would like to recall that the aim of the exercise was to carry out a comprehensive review of AMISOM, in order to take stock of the achievements made to date and challenges encountered, and how the Mission is to adjust to the changing environment in Somalia, including with respect to its mandate, structure and *modus operandi*. In its terms of reference, the Team was required to particularly focus on AMISOM mandate implementation, prioritization of Mission plans and activities in support of the Federal Government of Somalia. Importantly, the Review was also to address the critical issue of funding AMISOM and suggest a coherent strategy on sustainable funding.

The outcome of the Review is expected to address the best means and way through which AMISOM can further contribute to the stabilization of Somalia and the successful implementation of the priorities set by the Somali Government, in close coordination with an empowered and restructured national defense and security sector. Critical to this would be the building of the institutional capacity of Federal Government of Somalia to facilitate justice, rule of law, effective governance, particularly through public service delivery at all levels.

The UN also carried out a review of their engagement in Somalia and their support to AMISOM. Updates on their report will be presented to this meeting so that we can have a perspective on the endeavors of both the AU and the UN on Somalia and appreciate areas of commonality. As I indicated during the last meeting of the MOCC, we look forward to further consultations with the UN and we will explore ways of an enhanced partnership in Somalia.

With these remarks, I now suggest that we move straight to the next item on the agenda.

Thank you.