



PRESS STATEMENT

THE AFRICAN UNION WELCOMES THE DECISION BY THE SECURITY COUNCIL TO ENHANCE UNITED NATIONS SUPPORT TO ITS MISSION IN SOMALIA

Addis Ababa, 22 February 2012: The Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union (AU), Jean Ping, welcomes the adoption, today, by the United Nations Security Council of resolution 2036 (2012), which significantly enhances the UN support package to the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).

This resolution comes in response to the request made by the AU Peace and Security Council (PSC) in its communiqué of 5 January 2012. In that communiqué, the PSC, having endorsed the jointly-elaborated AU-UN Strategic Concept for the new phase of AMISOM operations, urged the UN Security Council to expeditiously consider and authorize the support required for the immediate implementation of the Concept, in order to take advantage of the unique opportunity created by the operations being conducted against Al Shabaab in different parts of Somalia and, thereby, consolidate the security gains made and move the peace process forward.

In particular, the resolution supports the decision made by the PSC to increase AMISOM's force strength from 12,000 to 17,731 uniformed personnel; expands accordingly the UN support package for the Mission; and authorizes the inclusion, into the support package, of the reimbursement of vitally-needed force enablers and multipliers.

The increase in the AMISOM force strength will facilitate the integration of Kenyan and Djiboutian troops into AMISOM, whose mission is to provide support for Somalia's Transitional Federal Institutions (TFIs) in their stabilization efforts and pursuit of political dialogue and reconciliation.

The Chairperson of the Commission thanks the UN Security Council and Secretary-General for the decision reached today. He said:

"With today's resolution, an important milestone has been reached. The decision taken by the Security Council is a further testimony to the commitment of the UN to help AMISOM and the Somali leadership to consolidate the important gains made on the ground and the progress recorded towards the completion of the transition process. The resolution is also a

clear indication of the importance that the world attaches to the AU's efforts in Somalia and recognition that the AMISOM's work is vital to global and regional security, including the fight against terrorism and piracy. More generally, it is an important step in the efforts by the AU and the UN to build an innovative and forward looking partnership to address the daunting challenges of peace and security in Africa".

The Chairperson of the Commission notes that the adoption of the resolution comes on the eve of an important meeting of world leaders in London, which will discuss all aspects of the situation in Somalia, with the view of facilitating a holistic and coordinated approach and galvanizing support for the efforts being made on the ground by the Somali leadership and AMISOM.

The Chairperson of the Commission stresses that AMISOM has successfully completed the first phase of its original concept of operations by helping the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) secure the Somali capital, Mogadishu. *"With the integration of the new contingents, the second phase of operations – expansion out of the capital – has now commenced,"* he said. *"At this critical juncture, I welcome the growing contribution from the region and the integration of Djiboutian and Kenyan forces under AMISOM control, which will join increasing numbers of troops from Burundi and Uganda. I equally welcome the invaluable assistance provided by Ethiopia, and pay tribute to the Ethiopian National Defence Forces and the TFG forces, which, with the support and cooperation of the local population, have just taken control of the city of Baidoa from the Al Shabaab terrorist group, following the liberation of Beledweyne and other areas".*

The adoption by the Security Council of the resolution enhancing support to AMISOM, together with the London Conference, demonstrate a renewed sense of urgency and pro-activeness from the international community to seize the present opportunity to further peace and reconciliation in Somalia.