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**PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
170TH MEETING
18 FEBRUARY 2009
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA**

PSC/PR/BR(CLXX)

PRESS STATEMENT

**PRESS STATEMENT OF THE 170TH MEETING
OF THE PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL**

The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU), at its 170th meeting, held on 18 February 2009, was briefed by the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union (SRCC) for Somalia and the AMISOM Force Commander, as well as by the representatives of Somalia, Ethiopia, in its capacity as Chair of IGAD, Special Envoy of IGAD for Somalia and the United Nations on the current developments in that country.

Council welcomed the continued progress being made in the implementation of the Djibouti Agreement of 19 August 2008 and other subsequent decisions taken within this framework. In this respect, Council noted with satisfaction the expansion of the Transitional Federal Parliament (TFP) and the extension of the transitional period by two years.

Council further welcomed the election of a new President of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) of Somalia, on 31 January 2009, as well as the subsequent appointment of a new Prime Minister. Council looks forward to the early formation of a Government of National Unity, in line with the commitments made by the Somali parties.

Council encouraged the new leadership of Somalia to spare no effort towards its quest for reconciliation and the promotion of an all-inclusive political process.

Council reiterated its deep concern at the prevailing security situation in Somalia, including its negative impact on the delivery of the humanitarian assistance to the needy Somali population, as well as its strong condemnation of the acts of violence being carried out by elements seeking to undermine the peace process and stability in the region as a whole. Council called upon the TFG to speedily take the steps required to operationalize the Somali Joint Security Forces, in coordination with all stakeholders.

Council welcomed the support to be provided by the United Nations to AMISOM, as contained in the letter sent by the UN Secretary-General to the Security Council, on 30 January 2009. Council called for the speedy implementation of this support package. At the same time, Council reiterated its call to the Security Council, in line with resolution 1863(2009), to take all measures required for the speedy deployment of a UN peace keeping operation that will take over AMISOM and support the long-term reconstruction and stabilization of Somalia. Council also called on international partners to honour their financial pledges to AMISOM.

Council reiterated its call on Member States to urgently provide troops to enable AMISOM reach its authorised strength. In this respect, Council reiterated its gratitude to the Governments of Burundi and Uganda for the commitment to deploy an additional battalion each, as well as to Nigeria for its pledge of one battalion expected to be deployed soon.

Council agreed to meet before the expiration of the current mandate of AMISOM, in mid-March 2009, to review the situation in Somalia.

Addis Ababa, 18 February 2009