

AFRICAN UNION



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PRESS RELEASE

The African Union welcomes the extension of the mandate of AMISOM by the UN Security Council

Addis-Ababa, 7 March, 2013 --The Chairperson of the African Union (AU) Commission has today welcomed a UN Security Council Resolution extending AMISOM's deployment in Somalia for another year, considering a number of positive aspects it contains, while some others require further review and consultations.

Under Resolution **2093**, AMISOM is authorized to continue to maintain a presence across the four sectors in which it is currently deployed until 28 February 2014, and to work closely with Somali government forces and the Federal Government of Somalia to reduce the threat posed by the al Shabaab terror group, and to create conditions for effective and legitimate governance across the country.

The Chairperson stressed the importance of the historic context in which the decision was made. *"Coming on the 6 year anniversary of AMISOM's deployment into Somalia, the mandate extension is an acknowledgement of the remarkable success the Mission has had,"* she said. *"Today we are helping Somalia to confront international terrorists operating within its borders and to rebuild its security and governance infrastructure,"* she added.

"The African Union remains committed to this mission and will continue to stand shoulder to shoulder with the people of Somalia as they work towards rebuilding their country and its institutions," she said.

The Chairperson also welcomed the partial lifting of the 21-year arms embargo against Somalia to allow for the equipping of the country's security forces which was requested by the African Union. *"We must now focus on helping to build up the capacity of the Somali National Security Forces so that they can progressively take over responsibility for securing their own country and people,"* she said.

AMISOM is helping to train the core of a rejuvenated Somali National Army as well as a Somali Police Force. The Mission is also helping to build governance capacity within the Federal Government of Somalia by training civil servants and working with local officials and civil society to enhance linkages to the central government and strengthen relations and interactions between citizens and the state.

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