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**PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
267TH MEETING
18 MARCH 2011
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA**

PSC/PR/BR(CCLXVII)

PRESS STATEMENT

PRESS STATEMENT OF THE 267th MEETING
OF THE PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL

The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU), at its 267th meeting held on 18 March 2011, was briefed by the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union for Somalia, Amb. Boubacar G. Diarra and the Force Commander of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), as well as the Representatives of Somalia and the United Nations, on the latest developments in the situation in Somalia.

Council, recalling the decision of the AU Assembly of 31 January 2011 and the Communiqué of the IGAD Extra-Ordinary Summit held on 30 January 2011, expressed support to the ongoing efforts by AMISOM, IGAD and UNPOS to help bridge the differences among the Somali stakeholders on the transitional arrangements and expedite the implementation of the transitional tasks, with a view to addressing the most urgent ones by 20 August 2011.

Council expressed its appreciation to the Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) for their commitment to peace in Somalia, and encouraged other African countries that have pledged troops and contributions in kind, to speedily provide them to enable AMISOM achieve its goals. In this respect, Council took note of the pledge made by Djibouti that it will provide, through AMISOM, military assistance for training and re-organization of the Somali security forces.

Council expressed its deep condolences to the TCC Governments, as well as to the families who lost their beloved ones during the recent offensive by the TFG and AMISOM against the insurgents in Mogadishu.

Council paid tribute to AMISOM troops, TFG Forces, including Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a (ASWJ) and other friendly forces, for the substantial gains made over the past few weeks in extending their areas of control in Mogadishu and elsewhere in Somalia. Council hailed the courage and commitment of the troops involved in these operations, and encouraged them to pursue and intensify their efforts, in order to improve security and create more conducive conditions for the pursuit of the reconciliation process.

Council stressed that AMISOM's success depends, to a large extent, on the operational readiness and effectiveness of Somali security forces. Accordingly, Council called on the TFG to spare no efforts in creating an enabling environment for the Somali security forces to fully play the role expected of them.

Council, once again, emphasized the importance of strengthening the TFG Ministry of Defence, its national security forces and affiliate Civil Defence Forces. Council also called for more cohesion among the Transitional Federal Institutions and the Somali leadership.