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**Remarks by the African Union Commission Chairperson,
HE Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma**

To the

HIGH LEVEL MEETING ON SOMALIA:
IMPLEMENTING VISION 2016: INCLUSIVE POLITICS IN ACTION

24 September 2014. New York. USA

Your Excellency, President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, President of the Federal Republic of Somalia,
Your Excellency, Mr. Ban ki-moon, Secretary General of the United Nations,
Excellencies, Heads of State and Government
Commissioner for Peace and Security, Sergui Smail
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me begin by thanking you, Mr. President for your leadership of the Federal Government, and for the progress recorded in our march towards a more secure and peaceful Somalia. We are pleased with the progress being made in the implementation of Vision 2016. We are also well aware of the challenges that still need to be addressed.

In particular, let me underline that inclusive political processes, especially in the formation of the federal states, as well as the unity of Somalia's political institutions, both within the Executive and between the Executive, the legislature and the nascent judiciary, are critical to maintain the progress achieved to date and to making further progress.

I would also like to underscore the place of women and other marginalized groups. Women must be properly included at all levels and empowered to help shape Somalia's future, and all groups must be made to feel fully a part of Somalia.

As we all recognize, it is important to liberate the towns and cities, and to provide those liberated with the necessary peace dividends. We can do so if we ensure their protection, including the establishment of inclusive interim local administration, local security institutions as well as the provision of much needed humanitarian relief and basic services such as education, water, sanitation and health. This requires concerted effort by the Federal Government, IGAD, the continent and all partners.

The AU remains fully committed to conducting joint operations with the Somali National Army to recover and secure more towns and cities from Al Shabaab. In the long term however, this responsibility will have to be primarily that of the

Somali National Army, with the AU and partners in a supportive role. It is therefore imperative that we sustain our collective efforts to professionalize the Somali National Army, as well as continue providing an enhanced and flexible logistical support.

Let me make a few comments on the Human Rights Watch (HRW) Report which contains allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse in Somalia. The AU, which reacted to this report, takes seriously any such allegations, and has already embarked on a process to carry out a thorough investigation. I would also underline the AU's condemnation of any such acts and that we maintain a 'Zero-tolerance' policy on misconduct and indiscipline.

Let me conclude my remarks by once again expressing the AU's appreciation to all our partners including the UN, the EU and its member states, notably the UK, the USA, and other bilateral partners for the sustained support to AMISOM.

We are proud of our men and women of Amisom, and the sacrifices they made and continue to make to ensure that Somali can be peaceful and stable. We remain grateful to our troop and police contributing Member states as well as to IGAD for its pivotal role in Somalia. The AU will continue to stand with the people and Federal Government of Somalia as they shape a more secure, stable and peaceful country, which is at peace with itself and its neighbours.

When we gathered here in a similar meeting last year in the margins of the General Assembly, at the time when you were just assuming office, we welcomed you, Mr. President with much hope and expectation. Our hopes and expectations have not been dashed. I hope that by this time next year, we will have recorded even more progress for the betterment of Somalia. We have listen very careful to what you said, Mr. President, we've take note of the issues you raised and will do our best to continue to support the efforts of your government and that of the peoples of Somalia.

Thank you.