

Yusef
Somalia
**ACTION
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Note to the Secretary-General

SOMALIA ✓



18/06/09

1. The situation in Mogadishu remains volatile, with neither the TFG nor the insurgent groups able to claim outright victory. The areas and districts controlled by the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and those held by the insurgents remain largely unchanged. "Uncontrolled" areas change hands on a regular basis with neither side being able to sustain its gains. At this juncture, the outcome of the conflict depends much more on military capabilities than on popular or international support, or political deals.

2. Somali Prime Minister Sharmarke recently told UNPOS that the TFG is outgunned by the armed groups who have more heavy weapons and ammunition. This had led President Sheik Sharif to conclude that the political risk of asking for a proactive and aggressive AMISOM mandate in support of the TFG is offset by the need to defeat the insurgents. AMISOM's view is that the TFG's main problem is lack of command and control rather than an issue of supplies.

3. The recent heavy fighting (16-17 June) was sparked by a successful TFG counter-offensive. The rebels quickly regrouped and launched a fresh offensive using heavy weapons and mortar fire, which resulted in the killing of 30 TFG personnel, including the Commander of the Banadir Police Force and three technicals. This is a considerable loss that has shaken the TFG. The ability of the insurgents to regroup so quickly suggests that they continue to receive military and other support from outside. The TFG has since regrouped in a number of locations; and further fighting is to be expected. AMISOM is now clearly involved in the fighting, though within its defensive mandate. Civilian casualties have been the highest. The Minister of National Security, Omar Hashi, was assassinated today in a suicide attack that claimed 60 lives, including some community elders and leaders with whom he was consulting.

4. The Somali Prime Minister indicated yesterday that AMISOM's mandate should be amended from a 'reactive' to a proactive one. He called for the immediate deployment of the third Burundian battalion (airlift remains the only obstacle) and requested the immediate supply of heavy weaponry and ammunition in large quantities. The Prime Minister further told UNPOS that the TFG is close to a political agreement with the Ahlu-Sunna-Wal-Jamma and that discussions with the Sheikh Hassan Aweys group are ongoing at sub-leadership level.

5. We believe that, although the TFG survived the May 2009 coup attempt, it remains fragile, and that without the protection of AMISOM, it is likely to collapse. There is, therefore, little doubt that the TFG needs to have a stronger military capability to defeat the insurgents, especially in view of the assassination today of the Minister of National Security.

6. We should bear in mind that amending AMISOM's mandate from a defensive to a proactive one – which would involve AMISOM's use of heavy artillery – carries considerable political risk for the TFG. Proactive engagement by AMISOM would inevitably result in greater civilian casualties. AMISOM could be tagged as an aggressive occupying force and a replacement for the Ethiopians. The TFG could be seen as supporting the occupation of Somalia by foreign troops. This is likely to be a rallying call for the armed opposition. We believe that a show of strength by AMISOM within its current defensive

mandate – on a *pro-active defence* basis – would be useful; but, as UNPOS indicated to the Prime Minister, amending AMISOM's mandate is a prerogative of the AU Peace and Security Council. The UN cannot lead on this.

7. The deployment of the additional Burundian battalion needs to take place immediately. AMISOM also needs further enhancement; and pressure should be put on the Burundian and Ugandans to deploy a 4th battalion. Sierra Leone and Malawi need to be persuaded to deliver on their offer to deploy a battalion each. In this regard, the Brussels pledges need to be urgently mobilized. The TFG forces require urgent supplies. The issue of suppressing the armed groups' sources of supply should also be addressed without delay. At the same time, greater and immediate attention needs to be given to the difficulties the TFG is experiencing in its overall political and security strategies, including communications, public diplomacy etc.

8. Lastly, you may wish to approach the Presidents of Burundi, Uganda, Malawi, Burkina Faso and Sierra Leone with a request for Burundi and Uganda to contribute additional troops and for the other countries to contribute battalions to AMISOM.



Lynn B. Pascoe
18 June 2009

cc: Mr. Le Roy
Mr. Holmes
Ms. Malcorra
Mr. Starr
Ms. O'Brien
Ms. Clarke