



ATMIS

REVIEW

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A NEW CHAPTER



Message from the SRCC

Amb. Mohamed El-Amine Souef
The Special Representative of the Chairperson of
the African Union Commission for Somalia.

“
After 15 years of peace support operations in Somalia, AMISOM formally ended on 1 April 2022 and ATMIS began operations.
”

I am pleased to welcome you to the inaugural issue of the ATMIS magazine, which compiles the activities and achievements of the Mission from April to December 2022. After 15 years of peace support operations in Somalia, AMISOM formally ended on 31st March 2022 and ATMIS officially took over on 1st April 2022. As the successor Mission to AMISOM, ATMIS is committed to achieving lasting peace and stability in Somalia.

During the first quarter of ATMIS' lifeline, we implemented several Transition related activities and laid the groundwork for the timely execution of key tasks outlined in UN Security Council Resolution 2628 (2022), the African Union Peace and Security Council Communiqué 1068 (2022) and the ATMIS Concept of Operations, 2022-2024.

In the second quarter Somalia successfully concluded the historic Federal Parliamentary and Presidential elections. Somali Security Forces (SSF) and ATMIS played essential role in securing the elections. The peaceful handover process and swearing-in of the President was witnessed by several visiting international leaders from the region and foreign diplomats.

ATMIS implemented interventions including Quick Impact Projects to support stabilisation and early recovery activities in our Areas of Responsibility (AoR). Among others, we completed a new police station to

improve security at Jowhar Airport. Our forces provided life support and medical assistance to communities in southern Somalia, affected by the severe drought.

As a Mission we continue to work closely with the Federal Government and the Federal Member States. Our partners, namely, the UN, EU, USA, UK just to mention a few remain important to our work and we value their support.

Capacity building is integral to our work, and in this regard our Police component continues to work hand in hand with Somalia Police Force to improve on policing activities effectively and efficiently. In line with our mandate to handing over security responsibilities to Somali Security Forces, our Police component supported the screening and recruitment of 300 applicants to the Jubaland State Police Force.

This year, we launched and operationalised the Joint Operations Centres (JOCs) at the Force Headquarters and our sectors to enhance coordination and planning with Somali Security Forces during joint operations against Al-Shabaab.

As the SRCC and Head of ATMIS, I am committed to ensuring that ATMIS works collaboratively with all its partners and to deliver on our mandate. We look forward to implementing Phase One and Two of our CONOPs and wish you all the best in 2023.

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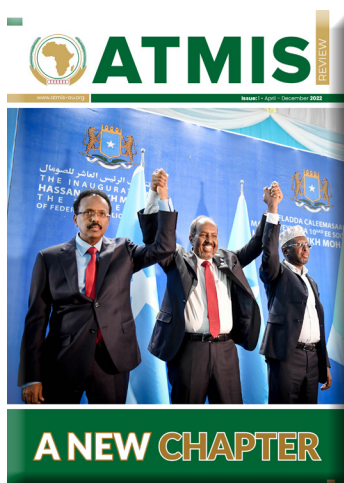
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Table of Contents

BULLETIN BOARD	4
Welcoming the new Head of ATMIS	5
‘Thank you for your contribution’	6
SOMALIA/ATMIS NEWS	
AU Peace and Security Council on assessment visit	7
Honouring outgoing military officers	9
SPF hails ATMIS role during the elections	10
Ending the threat of IEDs	11
ATMIS, SNA train on civil-military relations	12
Senior ATMIS officers cheer hospitalised troops	13
SNA, ATMIS soldiers train on enhanced operations	14
ATMIS, UNMAS counter-IED meeting	15
Handling emergencies during combat	16
SECTOR ONE	
Medals awarded to Ugandan soldiers	17
ATMIS hands over recovered weapons	18
SECTOR TWO	
Kenyan contingent conducts medical mentorship	19
ATMIS troops detonate IED in Dhobley	20
Troops in tree-planting drive	20
IN PICTURES: ATMIS At Work During Elections	21
SECTOR FOUR	
Djibouti Army celebrates 45 years	22
Celebrating Djibouti independence	23
Ethiopians in Beletweyne feted for support to peace	24
Armoured vehicles to support peace and security efforts	25
SECTOR FIVE	
Burundi army chief hails ATMIS for securing Somalia	26
SECTOR SIX	
ATMIS officers trained on civilian protection	27
ATMIS POLICE NEWS	
Sierra Leone celebrates independence	28
ATMIS police train in child protection	29
New police station at Jowhar Airport	30
ATMIS supports Jubaland Police recruitment	31
Nigeria deploys 160 FPU personnel	32
FEATURE: Interview with ATMIS Force Commander	33



Somalia's President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud raises the hands of his predecessors at his inauguration in Mogadishu, Somalia on 9 June 2022.

Photo | ATMIS



02 April 2022 – Newly deployed Sierra Leone ATMIS Formed Police Unit (FPU) personnel, disembark from an aircraft upon arrival at Aden Abdulle International Airport in Mogadishu



14 April 2022 – Newly elected female lawmakers take their oath of office during a swearing-in ceremony of newly elected Members of Somalia's 11th Federal Parliament and the Upper House or Senate



29 April 2022 – ATMIS Police officers at the venue for the election of the Speaker of the House of the People in Mogadishu



13 May 2022 – The ATMIS Force Commander, Lt. Gen. Diomed Ndegeya, accompanies the US Africa Command (AFRICOM) Commander, Gen. Stephen J. Townsend (left), during the latter's visit to the ATMIS Force Headquarters



04 June 2022 – The ATMIS Force Commander, Lt. Gen. Diomed Ndegeya led soldiers in a beach clean-up in Mogadishu, as part of an activity organised by the UN and ATMIS to commemorate World Environment Day



11 June 2022 – ATMIS concluded a three-day training for members of a Jubaland State committee responsible for vetting and recruiting people seeking to join the police. The committee comprised clan elders, civil society, women, and police officers that vet people enlisting in the police

Welcoming the new Head of ATMIS

On 1 September 2022, Ambassador Mohamed El-Amine Souef was appointed as the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (SRCC) for Somalia and Head of ATMIS.



SRCC and Head of ATMIS, Ambassador Mohamed El-Amine Souef, inspects a guard of honor mounted by ATMIS soldiers

Prior to his appointment as SRCC and Head of ATMIS, Ambassador Souef was the Regional Head of Office in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission (MINUSMA) in Gao, Mali.

He previously served in the same position from 2015 to 2017. He has a wealth of experience in peacekeeping and foreign affairs.

In peacekeeping, he has been successively Head of the UNAMID Liaison Office in Khartoum, South and North Darfur from April 2012 to October 2015. He then joined MINUSMA on 3rd October 2015 as Head of Office in Gao, Sector East.

Formerly, Ambassador Souef served in various capacities in his government, including Comoros' Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation from 1999 to 2006. Designated Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Comoros

to the United Nations, New York, (February –July 2006); Member of Parliament at the National Assembly in 2002; State Minister in charge of Cooperation with the Arab World (July 1998-September 1998); and as Comoros' Ambassador to Egypt, as well as Permanent Representative to the Arab League States (1994-1998).

He equally served as Adviser to the President of the Comoros (1992-1994) and as Head of Africa/Asia Bilateral Cooperation Division - Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Comoros (January 1991 –April 1993). He was reappointed as Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation in July 2017 up to July 2020.

Ambassador Souef holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Comparative & Modern Literature from Sidi Mohamed Ibn Abdillah University; Fes Morocco (1988-1990), and a Master of Arts degree

University of Medina, Saudi Arabia.

He further attended Diplomatic trainings at the Diplomatic Centre of Egypt (1991), and at the Foreign Training Centre of Islamabad, Pakistan (1991-1992). He is a former Lecturer at the Hiroshima Peacebuilding Centre.

He is equally a writer and has authored five books on Politics and Geopolitics which include: *Les Comores en mouvement*; *Les Grands Défis de la Politique Etrangère des Comores*; *Le Transport Aérien entre la Sécurité et la Souveraineté aux Comores*; *Discours et Images des Comores*; *Réflexions sur la Géopolitique de l'Océan indien*.

Ambassador Souef is fluent in French, English, Arabic and Swahili.

‘Thank you for your contribution’

At the end of October, the ATMIS Force Commander, Lt. Gen. Diomedes Ndegeya, and the Police Commissioner, AIGP Augustine Magnus Kailie completed their tour of duty in Somalia.



Senior leadership of the military and police components in a group photo at the farewell dinner



The Deputy Head of ATMIS, Fiona Lortan presents a medal and certificate to Lt. Gen. Diomedes Ndegeya

Other senior officers who completed their tour of duty included the Deputy Force Commander in charge of Support and Logistics, Maj. Gen. Gerbi Regassa Kebede, Deputy Force Commander in charge of Operations and Plans, Maj. Gen. William Shume, and the ATMIS Police Chief of Staff, Commissioner of Police Rex Dundun.

The Deputy Head of ATMIS, Ms. Fiona Lortan, presented medals and certificates to other senior police and military officers.

At the ceremony, Ms. Lortan hailed the outgoing Force Commander, the Police Commissioner, the two deputy Force Commanders, and the police leadership team for their dedication and commitment to peace and security in Somalia. In his farewell message, Lt. Gen. Ndegeya said the ongoing military offensive and recovery of towns and cities from Al-Shabaab is a positive indicator of the growing capabilities of the SNA.

He said SNA's ability to attack

and hold ground was a critical indicator that it was growing into a force capable of taking full responsibility for national security and protecting the citizens.

I am pleased that beginning in September of this year, under the leadership of the new government, the local population have joined hands in the fight against Al-Shabaab. It is certain that there is political will to defeat terrorism in Somalia," said Lt. Gen. Ndegeya.

During the tenure of Lt. Gen. Ndegeya, the African Union and the Federal Government of Somalia adopted a plan that put in motion the process to reconfigure the mission, under which some military Forward Operating Bases (FOBs) in Afgoye, Marianguway and other areas were handed over to Somali authorities.

The handover of the bases was part of the implementation of a gradual but steady transfer of full security responsibilities to the Somali authorities under the

Somalia Transition Plan, which is a process supported by the government of Somalia and its international partners.

Lt. Gen. Ndegeya hailed the support of the international community, with whom he forged a relationship of mutual understanding, for providing financial and logistical support to ATMIS.

"We wouldn't be able to achieve much in Somalia without our partners. I thank them for their support and appeal to them to do more and not get fatigued," he noted.

AU Peace and Security Council on assessment visit

In mid-July, a delegation from the African Union Peace and Security Council (AUPSC), visited Somalia, a first for ATMIS since it launched on 1 April 2022.



AU Peace and Security Council delegation led by Djibouti Ambassador to Ethiopia and Permanent Representative to the African Union, H.E. Abdi Mahamoud Eybe, during a meeting with Somalia's Prime Minister Hamza Abdi Bare in Mogadishu

“The objective of this visit is to gather first-hand information on the framework of the implementation of the ATMIS mandate and progress made towards the Somalia Transition Plan,” said the leader of delegation, Ambassador of Djibouti to Ethiopia and Permanent Representative to the African Union, Abdi Mahamoud Eybe.

“The expectation is to have a comprehensive understanding of the situation on the ground that will inform deliberations during our upcoming

Ministerial Peace and Security meetings,” added Ambassador Eybe.

On arrival, the delegation was briefed by the ATMIS senior leadership team, led by the Deputy Head of ATMIS, Fiona Lortan.

The delegation was updated on various issues, including the current security situation, progress in implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 2628 (2022), the humanitarian emergency



Djibouti Ambassador to Ethiopia and Permanent Representative to the African Union, H.E. Abdi Abdi Mahamoud Eybe during a meeting with Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) representatives in Mogadishu

brought about by the current drought, as well as political developments in the country, including the recent successful conclusion of parliamentary and presidential elections, where ATMIS supported the Somalia Security Forces (SSF) in securing the elections.

The delegation was also briefed on Somalia's national priorities as outlined by President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud in his inaugural address.

These include national reconciliation, improving relations between the central government and federal member states, addressing the security challenges, in particular the security threat posed by Al-Shabaab, and attending to the drought-related humanitarian emergency.

While in Somalia, the delegation also held a series of meetings and consultations with various key stakeholders including top officials of the Federal Government of Somalia, the United Nations, the European Union, Inter-governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), envoys from ATMIS' troop and police-contributing countries as well as representatives from Somalia's civil society groups.

The AU Peace and Security Council (PSC) has 15 members and is the standing decision-making organ of the AU for the prevention, management and resolution of conflict and crisis situations in Africa. It is also the key pillar of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), which is the framework for promoting peace, security and stability in Africa.



AU Peace and Security Council delegates pose for a group photo with envoys from Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) in Mogadishu

Honouring outgoing military officers

In July, ATMIS celebrated 40 outgoing military staff officers for their outstanding contribution in supporting Somalia's pursuit for lasting peace, security, and stability.



ATMIS Staff Officers display their medals at a farewell ceremony in Mogadishu

The Deputy Head of ATMIS, Fiona Lortan, who presided over the ceremony, said the selfless service and immense sacrifices of the officers had helped advance the goals of the Somalia Transition Plan (STP).

"In the time that I have been here, I have discovered that this is not an easy posting at all. Despite numerous challenges, you have given everything to support Somalia," said Ms. Lortan. "It is a symbol of pan-African solidarity, which we are trying to forge and promote on this continent," she noted.

Lortan emphasised ATMIS' commitment to the STP and the gradual drawdown of ATMIS forces ahead of the handover of security responsibilities to the Somalia Security Forces by December 2024.

The STP is a key deliverable in the ATMIS mandate agreed between the Federal Government of Somalia and its partners.

The ATMIS Force Commander, Lt. Gen Diomed Ndegeya, praised the officers for effectively discharging their duties in planning, coordination, and providing administrative and logistical support during their tour of duty.

"The spirit of cohesion that you have demonstrated shows how devoted Africans are to restoring peace on their continent," said Lt. Gen Ndegeya.

The officers were especially praised for their role in supporting ATMIS' strategic objectives as defined in the Concept of Operations (CONOPS).

The CONOPS provides a framework for harmonised plans and targeted operations between ATMIS and the Somali Security Forces to degrade Al-Shabaab and other terrorist groups.

"I have witnessed the resilience of the African spirit. Several nations have come together to support an African country in its time of need. During my tour of duty, I have seen selfless service from men and women who are dedicated to the goals of the mission," said outgoing ATMIS Chief Force Engineer, Colonel Saheed Olalekan Sadiq.



Senior ATMIS officials pose for a group photo during a farewell ceremony hosted in honour of outgoing ATMIS Staff Officers in Mogadishu



SPF commends ATMIS role during the Elections

On 22 May, Somalia recognised ATMIS' security support to the Somali security forces before, during and after the Parliamentary and Presidential Elections.

The Somali Police Commissioner, Maj. Gen. Abdi Hassan Mohamed, thanked ATMIS, Somali security agencies, and the international community for contributing to peaceful elections.

On 15 May 2022, Hassan Sheikh Mohamud was elected 10th President of Somalia. He won the presidential election held at Afisioni, located within the Aden Abdulle International Airport.

As a result of a coordinated effort between the Somali security forces and ATMIS, the peaceful exercise, was observed by members of the international community, including Fiona Lortan, the Deputy Head of ATMIS.

After the elections, the SPF presented certificates to ATMIS Force Commander, Lt. Gen. Diomede Ndegeya, ATMIS Sector One Commander, Brig.

Gen. Keith Katungi, ATMIS Police Chief of Staff, Commissioner of Police Rex Dundun, and Acting Police Operations Coordinator, Superintendent of Police Allan Tugizire.

“I would like to congratulate and thank ATMIS police, military and civilian officers for helping us secure the country and hold a successful election,” Maj. Gen. Abdi said.

ATMIS Force Commander Lt. Gen. Ndegeya stressed the need for close coordination and collaboration between ATMIS and Somali security forces.

“We made adequate deployments on land, sea and air in the run-up to the presidential elections. We are grateful to all the Somali security forces for their support throughout the process,” said Lt. Gen. Ndegeya.



ATMIS Force Commander Lt. Gen. Diomede Ndegeya (right) is awarded a certificate of recognition by Somali Police Commissioner, Gen. Abdi Hassan Mohamed, in Mogadishu.



Senior ATMIS Military and Police officers display their certificates of recognition

Ending the threat of IEDs

During the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action held in Mogadishu, ATMIS and the UN Mine Action Service called for greater efforts to eliminate the dangers posed by explosives.

Observed on 4 April, the day aims to raise awareness about landmines and progress in eradicating them, as well as to reflect upon the consequences, including deaths and injuries, caused by mines, explosive remnants of war, and improvised explosive devices (IEDs).

ATMIS took part in a number of activities to mark the day, including a demonstration by the UNMAS Explosive Ordnance Disposal unit on how IEDs work.

In his remarks at the event, ATMIS Force Commander, Lt. Gen. Diomedede Ndegeya, hailed UNMAS for supporting ATMIS in mitigating IED threats in Somalia.

“IEDs are the preferred weapon of choice for Al-Shabaab, posing a significant threat to ATMIS troops, Somali security forces, and civilians. We appreciate UNMAS for the continuous efforts to address the threats posed by mines and IEDs,” said Lt. Gen. Ndegeya.

A total of 501 civilians were killed or injured in Somalia in 2020 as a result of explosive remnants of war and improvised explosive devices. The number of casualties increased to 669 in 2021.

With UNMAS’ training, mentoring and equipment, ATMIS troops in Somalia have been able to mitigate IED threats, contributing to operational dynamics and assisting the mission in achieving its mandate.

In his speech, UNMAS Chief of Mine Action Programme Jean-Guy Lavoie praised the joint efforts of ATMIS and UNMAS in building a robust counter-IED threat mitigation strategy. He called for more support to reduce the effects of mines and IEDs in Somalia.

“UNMAS and ATMIS work together to protect civilians from the deadly effects of explosive hazards, particularly IEDs. On this day, let us build on our past progress and rid Somalia of the scourge of explosive hazards once and for all,” said Lavoie.

The theme of the event was “Safe Ground, Safe Steps, Safe Home”, emphasising the remarkable accomplishments of the mine action sector towards a world free of mines and explosive remnants of war, from playgrounds to pathways, farms and homes.



ATMIS Force Commander, Lt. Gen. Diomedede Ndegeya



ATMIS military and UNMAS officials inspect equipment used to counter IEDs

ATMIS, SNA train on civil-military relations

In May, the Somali National Army (SNA) with ATMIS military and police components trained on how to better interact with civilian populations in the theatre of operations.



ATMIS and Somali military officers at a CIMIC training in Mogadishu

A total of 28 officers participated in a five-day Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) training, which aimed to improve relations between the military and police and civilians, local authorities, international organisations, and non-governmental organisations.

The CIMIC training was organised by the ATMIS CIMIC Cell and facilitated by the UK Mission Support Team (UKMST).

“Make the most of the knowledge acquired by ensuring that it is applied in your various sectors. It is also important to remember that CIMIC tasks involve coordination, cooperation and sharing of information between the military and civilians,” the ATMIS Chief Military Information Officer, Col. Hans Nyange, told the participants.

The training covered Humanitarian Awareness and Principles, the Somalia Transition Plan, Gender Concepts, Civilian Protection, Human Rights, Justice Systems in Somalia, Media Relations and Diseases and Prevention.

According to ATMIS Chief CIMIC Officer Col. Herman Kabwita, CIMIC training helped newly deployed ATMIS officers better understand the local context, and prepare Somali security forces to assume security responsibility once ATMIS leaves Somalia.

“The aim is to sharpen these officers, who have joined the mission, in such a way that they will be able to operate independently in the local communities,” Col. Kabwita.

Lt. Mohamed Foley, a member of the SNA, said the training helped him and his colleagues build mutually beneficial relationships with civilians.

“We learned a lot in this training, including the nuances of the local communities and how to conduct ourselves in newly liberated areas where Quick Impact Projects are needed to meet some of the population’s immediate needs,” Lt. Foley said.



ATMIS and Somali military officers in a group photo at the end of a CIMIC training in Mogadishu

Senior ATMIS officials visit troops in hospitals

On 10 May 2022, the ATMIS leadership visited soldiers admitted at the Level 2 Hospital in Mogadishu to thank them for their sacrifices to security and stability processes.



According to Lortan, meeting with wounded soldiers was a sacred duty of the mission's leadership, as the troops' dedication and sacrifice for peace in Somalia cannot be taken for granted.

She commended the medics at the hospital for staying true to their calling of saving lives of soldiers injured in combat and those with other illnesses.

"We say thank you, on behalf of ATMIS, the African Union, and on behalf of the Somalis because the sacrifices these soldiers are making are on behalf of our mission's mandate in Somalia and on behalf of the continent. These are young people carrying a huge burden for the continent, and we thank and recognise them," said Lortan.

The Deputy Head of ATMIS, Fiona Lortan, arrived at the hospital with ATMIS Force Commander, Lt. Gen. Diomedes Ndegeya, ATMIS Police Chief of Staff, Commissioner Rex Dundun, and other senior officials.

At the hospital, the team met soldiers who had been injured in battle as well as those suffering from other ailments.

"It's our responsibility and duty to visit all troops in hospital, wish them well, express appreciation for their sacrifices, and bring them tokens of appreciation," Lortan said.

During the visit to ATMIS Level 2 Field Hospital, Lt. Col. Dr Ben Nsajju, the commanding officers of the facility, reported that the senior leadership's presence ennobled the soldiers' injuries and gave them a sense of appreciation.

"These visits encourage not only the patients, but also us as service providers, to maintain our commitment to providing medical care. We feel appreciated, and the patients also feel the leadership is with them," said Lt. Col. Nsajju.



The Deputy Head of ATMIS, Fiona Lortan, (second right), accompanied by Lt. Col. Dr. Ben Nsajju, the Commanding Officer of the ATMIS Level 2 Hospital in Mogadishu

SNA, ATMIS soldiers train on enhanced operations

In May, a total of 32 ATMIS and Somali National Army (SNA) soldiers completed training on Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) facilitated by the UN Field Technology Services and the UK Mission Support Team (UKMST).

The five-day training honed the soldiers' intelligence gathering and processing, surveillance and reconnaissance skills. In addition, the Somali security forces were able to gain skills in preparation for taking full responsibility for Somalia's security.

"I am pleased we had many SNA soldiers and officers on this course," said ATMIS Deputy Force Commander in charge of Support and Logistics, Maj Gen. Gerbi Kebede Regassa.

"This is a step closer to our ultimate objective of handing over responsibility to the Somali security forces," he said.

The UKMST Commanding Officer, Lt Col Jeremy Sapwell, said the course prepared the personnel for intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance missions needed to counter Al-Shabaab.

"I want to underline that ISR is a critical capability in modern military operations and to ATMIS. With the effective use of ISR and its integration into operational planning process, you can identify the enemy, uncover his intentions and help protect and support your forces," Lt Col Sapwell said.

Drones and ISR systems are important tools for monitoring and restricting enemy movements, as seen in the Somalia battle against Al-Shabaab.

US Department of State drones support joint operations with



A military officer of the Somali National Army (SNA) receives a certificate at end of a training

SNA. By using drones, ATMIS and SNA soldiers have prevented Al-Shabaab from planting IEDs that injure and kill civilians.

Also, along the main supply routes, aerial surveillance by drones protects convoys and civilians and uncovers Al-Shabaab hideouts.

Sgt. Stanley Muriuki from the ATMIS Kenya contingent, who received a certificate at the end of the training, said, "I have gained valuable knowledge which is essential to advancing the mission's goals through the application of enhanced aviation and intelligence skills."



Officials of UKMST and ATMIS in a group photo with ATMIS and SNA soldiers at the end of the training



ATMIS, UNMAS counter-IED meeting

ATMIS, UNMAS, and other stakeholders, held a three-day conference in mid-June to assess the measures to counter Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and develop a comprehensive IED threat mitigation plan.

Representatives at the conference held in Mogadishu included Somali security forces, the European Union Training Mission in Somalia (EUTM Somalia), the UK-Mission Support Team (UK-MST) and others.

ATMIS Force Commander, Lt Gen. Diomedede Ndegeya in his remarks, noted the need to evaluate the conduct of the mission's activities and operations, to find solutions to the IED challenge.

He noted that to counter the threat posed by IEDs, all stakeholders, including local communities, must work together.

"To mitigate the IED threat will require the military actors involving the Somali authorities and working with communities, to strengthen governance, and support stabilisation efforts," Lt. Gen. Ndegeya stated.

According to the Force Commander, combating IEDs requires innovative countermeasures from the mission and partners.

While UNMAS continues to implement training, mentoring, and equipment support to improve ATMIS counter-IED capabilities, IEDs continue to pose a significant threat to the mission.

"Our ability to come up with solutions and thereby enhance our counter-IED capability is critical to the advancement of the mission's mandate," Lt. Gen. Ndegeya stated during the conference.

On his part, UNMAS Head of Programme Unit, Simon Porter, called for the swift implementation of the conference's recommendations and plans to bolster the mission's mandate, given the timelines set by the UN.

Under the UN Security Council Resolution 2628 (2022), ATMIS will hand over security responsibilities to the Somali security forces by the end of 2024.

Porter said, "What is important is that we take forward the recommendations and plans that have been made here and see how they can be operationalised."

He added, "We really don't have a lot of time to sit back."

At the opening, the UNMAS Chief of Mine Action Programme, Jean Guy Lavoie, noted that the conference was an ideal opportunity for participants to come up with solutions to the threat of IEDs in Somalia.

"It is about doing more, doing better, being more efficient, working together better, and also about delivering on our new mandate," said Lavoie.

In his remarks, the Director-General in Somalia's Ministry of Defence, Hassan Said Samantar, noted that Somalia is most affected by IEDs, and he lauded UNMAS for the support to counter IEDs.

"We are thankful for all the work that UNMAS has been doing in collaboration with all the institutions of Somalia," said Samantar.

Handling emergencies during combat

On 23 May 2022, about 20 ATMIS military officers completed a two-day training in Mogadishu on how to minimise and prevent battlefield casualties during combat operations.

The Battlefield Emergency First Aid (BEFA) training was conducted by the UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS) and a private contracting firm, Safe Lane Global.

During the course, participants learned about basic combat trauma care, first aid, managing complications in injuries, improvising temporary solutions, and extracting and evacuating wounded personnel.

According to ATMIS Chief Military Information Officer Col. Hans Nyange, such training is imperative for understanding terrain and reducing injuries and deaths during combat.

“Applying skills learned in this course will undoubtedly save lives on the frontlines. I am sure

you have the knowledge, skills, techniques, and confidence to prevent battlefield deaths,” Col. Nyange told the officers after the training.

At the training, ATMIS Force Engineer, Col. Saheed Sadiq, said he gained valuable knowledge for first responders during combat.

Col. Sadiq said, “We were able to identify the roles we should play as first responders after an attack or hostile enemy action.”

“From this training, we will be able to treat severe haemorrhages, clear airways and assist the injured,” he added.



Staff officers in a practical session during a two-day training on managing combat medical emergencies

Ugandan soldiers celebrated

In April, ATMIS awarded Ugandan soldiers medals and certificates for their contributions to the ongoing peacebuilding process in Somalia.

ATMIS Force Commander, Lt. Gen. Diomedes Ndegeya, and the commander of the ATMIS Uganda contingent, Brig. Gen. Keith Katungi, honoured the soldiers at a medal parade.

The soldiers from Battle Group 32, deployed to the mission in March 2021, and completed one year of service in Somalia. They were replaced by Battle Group 35, commanded by Col. Bernard Kashemeza.

Lt. Gen. Ndegeya hailed the soldiers for their professionalism and selfless service to the Somali people in their ongoing efforts to restore peace and stability.

“You have done your country and this mission proud. You have served with professionalism, discipline, and commitment to advance the mission’s mandate. Through your commitment and sacrifice, Somalia is enjoying relative peace,” said Lt. Gen. Ndegeya.

A small group of soldiers from the outgoing Battle Group, commanded by Col. Charles Odong, attended the ceremony for symbolic purposes and in accordance with COVID-19 Standard Operating Procedures.

Battle Group 32 secured the areas of Barawe and Beldamin sub-sector, with forward operating bases in Embresso, Barawe Knoll, Airport Runway, Kismayo Road, Barawe Seaport, Golweyn, Buulomareer, and areas around Mogadishu.

Lt. Gen Ndegeya challenged the newly deployed Battle Group 35 to embrace their duties with vigour and professionalism, as the mission operated under a new mandate.

“We have just transitioned into a new mission. You have to hit the ground running, with regard to implementing the ATMIS mandate as stipulated by the UN Security Council Resolution 2628. You must show professionalism and discipline,” Lt. Gen. Ndegeya noted.

Brig Gen. Katungi commended Battle Group 32 for successfully conducting several offensive operations against Al-Shabaab terrorists, including securing parliamentary elections in Barawe.



Battle Group 32 Commander Col. Charles Odong (right) hands over to Battle Group 35 Commander Col. Bernard Kashemeza

ATMIS hands over recovered weapons

At the end of April, the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) received from ATMIS, weapons captured during operations against Al-Shabaab.



The Deputy Head of ATMIS, Fiona Lortan (second right) hands over a captured weapon in Mogadishu

Among the weapons handed over were machine guns, rifles, and ammunition recovered by ATMIS forces and the Somali National Army (SNA) in the Lower Shabelle region.

At an event in Mogadishu, the Deputy Head of ATMIS, Fiona Lortan, presided over the handover of the weapons to SNA Commander of Land Forces, Gen. Mohamed Tahlil Bihi.

According to Lortan, the handover was in accordance with the

Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) protocol, which outlines procedures for the storage and management of weapons.

The procedures require that seized weapons be documented, photographed, and inspected before they are destroyed or redistributed.

“The Federal Government of Somalia and ATMIS shall document and register all weapons and military equipment captured during offensives or in

the course of carrying out their mandate,” Lortan noted.

Lortan further noted that the seizure of the weapons and the handover represented important steps in the fight against Al-Shabaab.

The ATMIS Deputy Force Commander in charge of Operations and Plans, Maj. Gen. William Kitsao Shume, praised the SNA and ATMIS forces for their steadfastness.

“We hand over weapons captured by Sector 1, and I appreciate the efforts to implement the ATMIS mandate. It is a sacrifice by all our contributing troops,” said Maj Gen. Shume.

The ATMIS Uganda contingent commander, Brig. Gen. Keith Katungi, said the goal is to control the proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

“This exercise shows the achievement of our objective to degrade and deny Al-Shabaab freedom of action and freedom of movement,” added Brig. Gen. Katungi.

In his remarks, Gen. Mohamed praised the cooperation between ATMIS and SNA in restoring peace and stability before the anticipated transfer of security responsibilities.

“Our collaboration weakens the enemy and encourages our forces – both ATMIS and Somali security forces,” said Gen. Mohamed after receiving the cache of weapons.



ATMIS soldiers load the captured weapons onto a truck during the hand over

Kenyan contingent provides medical mentorship

During the month of June, the ATMIS Kenya contingent commander in Dhobley, Brig. Jattani Gula, launched a medical mentorship training for Somali health workers at ATMIS Level 2 Hospital.

The training aimed to reinforce the medical knowledge and skills for Somali doctors to improve healthcare delivery in local hospitals.

Mentorship was provided to at least 13 medics in anaesthesia, maternity emergencies, point of care sonography in midwifery, laboratory techniques, perioperative nursing, and wound care.

During the event, Brig. Gula emphasised the importance of building the capacity and capability of Somalia’s institutions and security forces as mandated by ATMIS, and urged the participants to take the course seriously.

“The course is designed to achieve ATMIS’ mentorship and skills transfer objective to facilitate self-reliance and sustainable peace in Somalia. At the end of the mentorship period, the developed local capacity will enhance service delivery at local hospitals,” said Brig. Gula.

The ATMIS senior medical officer in Dhobley, Lt. Col. Dr Edward Mackutwa, noted the high number of cases referred from local hospitals, for further management at the ATMIS Level 2 Hospital Dhobley. He noted that as a result, there was need for medical mentorship for medics working in the hospitals in Dhobley.

Lt Col. Mackutwa said there has been close collaboration between ATMIS and the local hospitals in various health programs, necessitating, over time, a mentorship program to enhance the capacity of the local medical staff.

The Managing Director of Dhobley Hospital, Ali Hassan thanked the ATMIS Kenya contingent for the gesture and noted that the mentorship would benefit the community as the skills acquired will last a lifetime.



Brig. Jattani addresses the health workers during the training at the ATMIS Level 2 Hospital in Dhobley



The health workers and ATMIS officers in a group photo at the end of the training in Dhobley

ATMIS troops detonate IED in Dhobley

At the beginning of June, ATMIS soldiers serving in Dhobley town successfully removed and detonated a Remote Controlled Under-Vehicle Improvised Explosive Device.

Earlier in March, an Improvised Explosive Device placed under a vehicle exploded in Dhobley town, killing one person and injuring four others.

The explosive device was attached on a vehicle intended to target ATMIS troops and Somali security forces that are battling Al-Shabaab militants in the area.



ATMIS soldiers prepare to conduct the detonation

Following the successful removal and detonation of the device, ATMIS Kenya’s Mine Action Officer, Capt. Annceta Munywoki, assured residents that ATMIS would continue to support Somali security forces to protect and safeguard residents.

Communities and local administrators appreciated ATMIS’ efforts to detonate the IED, which could have caused casualties. Members of the community noted that safeguarding lives indicates existing brotherhood and coexistence with ATMIS soldiers.

Troops plant trees

On 5 June, ATMIS soldiers planted 500 Neem and Moringa tree species in Dhobley, southern Somalia, to mark World Environment Day.

The Deputy commander of the ATMIS Kenya contingent in Dhobley, Col. Joel Maiyo, and the Quality Assurance and Surveyor Engineer, Mr. Ibrahim Hassan, led the tree planting.

sustainable environment,” added Mr Ibrahim.

At the event, themed ‘Only One Earth,’ Col. Maiyo emphasised the importance of environmental conservation in mitigating the effects of global climate change.

The UN General Assembly established World Environment Day in 1972 during the Stockholm conference to raise awareness about nature’s importance.

“Human actions are causing irreversible damage to our environment, leading to extreme weather patterns. In some areas, drought has caused conflicts leading to displacement,” noted Col. Maiyo.



ATMIS soldiers planting trees

Mr. Ibrahim emphasised the need to reduce and prevent further environmental damage, as well as pollution that adversely impacts human health.

“It is paramount that we inspire one another to improve the environment, which supports life. The current changes in weather patterns have emphasised the significance of safe, clean and



The commander of the Uganda ATMIS contingent, Brig. Gen. Keith Katungi, (right) and the Somali Police Commissioner, Gen. Abdi Hassan Mohamed, respond to media questions on plans to secure the presidential elections



ATMIS and Somali Police Force officers work jointly to secure the venue of the presidential elections in Mogadishu



An ATMIS Police officer verifies a delegate's details at the polling centre during the presidential election in Mogadishu



ATMIS, Somali Police Force and Federal Government of Somalia officials in a meeting ahead of the presidential elections



ATMIS Force Commander Lt. Gen. Diomedes Ndegeya interacts with a Somali police officer during the presidential elections in Mogadishu



The Deputy Head of ATMIS, Fiona Lortan, interacts with President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud soon after he was declared winner in the election

Djibouti Army celebrates 45 years

On 6 June 2022, Djibouti forces serving under ATMIS commemorated the 45th anniversary of the Djibouti Armed Forces (DAF).



Djibouti ATMIS troops march during celebrations to mark the 45th anniversary of the formation of the Djibouti Armed Forces in Beletweyne

A colourful ceremony and parade took place at the ATMIS Sector 4 headquarters in Beletweyne, attended by ATMIS, UN personnel, and Hiiraan regional officials, Hirshabelle State.

“We are here in Somalia to secure peace and support the people. Djibouti forces have been in Somalia for the past 11 years, and we thank God,” Col. Mohamed said.

Djibouti’s ATMIS contingent commander, Colonel Humad Ahmed Mohamed, said the DAF has contributed significantly to the peace operation since it first deployed over a decade ago.

Over a decade ago, Djibouti was the third country to contribute troops to AMISOM. The troops have helped secure the region by resolving clan conflicts and building up the Somali National Army (SNA).



Djibouti ATMIS troops joined by an official from Hiran region, in laying a wreath during celebrations to mark the 45th anniversary of the formation of the Djibouti Armed Forces in Beletweyne

The Governor of Hiiraan region, Ali Jeyte Osman, congratulated ATMIS Djibouti forces on their anniversary and commended them on their contribution to peace and stability.

“Every country celebrates its historical events and we are happy to celebrate with our brothers this historic day,” said Governor Ali.



Celebrating Djibouti Independence Day

On 27 June, Djibouti forces serving with ATMIS marked their country’s 45th Independence anniversary at the contingent headquarters in Beletweyne, Hirshabelle State.

The ceremony presided over by the Djibouti ATMIS contingent commander, Colonel Hassan Jama Farah was attended by the ATMIS Sector Four commander, Colonel Humad Ahmed Mohamed, local leaders, and representatives from the civil society.

In his speech, the contingent commander paid tribute to the fallen heroes of the struggle for independence.

“We reflect on their sacrifices; many died, property was lost and others were expelled from their homes. Their struggle led to our freedom,” said Col Hassan.

The deputy chairperson of finance and politics in the Hiiraan region, Abukar Abdullahi Maadey, hailed the support by ATMIS Djibouti troops to the community to degrade Al-Shabaab.

“The Djiboutian troops have a special place in our hearts. We have an excellent relationship, they provide security and humanitarian aid in times of need,” said the deputy chairperson.

In ATMIS, Djibouti Armed Forces serve alongside other troop-contributing countries, including Uganda, Burundi, Kenya, and Ethiopia.



Djibouti ATMIS troops hoist the Djiboutian flag to celebrate Djibouti’s 45th Independence Day at ATMIS sector 4 Headquarters in Beletweyne

Ethiopians in Beletweyne celebrated for their contribution to security

At the event on 7 June 2022, an ATMIS Ethiopian contingent that completed its tour of duty in Beletweyne in Hirshabelle State, was recognised for its contributions to peace in Somalia.



Commander of the SNA 5th Battalion, Maj. Mohamed Omar Ibar (left) presents a certificate to an officer

The Governor of Hiiran Region, Mr. Osman said, he was impressed with the Ethiopian soldiers' performance and commitment to restoring peace in Somalia.

Abdi Sheikh Farah, an elder from the Hiiraan region, expressed gratitude and praised the troops for the service in Somalia.

"We appreciate your sacrifice and contribution to the security and stability of Somalia. Your contribution to the peace process in the region has been significant. We thank all ATMIS troops in Beletweyne and elsewhere," said elder Farah.

ATMIS Sector 4, based in Beletweyne, is a multinational sector served by the Djibouti Armed Forces (DJAF) and Ethiopia National Defence Forces (ENDF).

For their distinguished service to secure peace and support Somali security forces to deter Al-Shabaab terrorists, the personnel received certificates of merit from the African Union (AU). The troops served in Somalia for over two years.

The Deputy Commander of ATMIS Sector 4, Col. Yeshiwas Kerebet, praised the troops' gallantry and contribution to Somalia's peace. The governor of the Hiiran region,

Ali Jeyte Osman, members of the civil society and officials from ATMIS attended the event.

"We conducted our mission based on ATMIS mandate with the support of stakeholders such as UNMAS, the Hiiraan region security forces and SNA. We successfully used our human and material resources to protect civilians from Al-Shabaab," said Col. Kerebet.



Ethiopia ATMIS troops attend the medal ceremony in Beletweyne

Armoured vehicles to support peace and security efforts

on 3 August 2022 to boost its obligations to degrade Al-Shabaab and to protect civilians and critical infrastructure, at the beginning of August, ATMIS took delivery of 24 Armoured Personnel Carriers (APCs), donated by the United States government.

The specialised vehicles will be used by the Djiboutian contingent in joint operations with the SNA in and around Beletweyne and other areas in the Hiraan region.

Handing over the APCs at ATMIS Headquarters, Larry Andre, the US Ambassador to Somalia, reiterated his government's support to efforts aimed at bringing peace and stability in Somalia and the greater Horn of Africa region.

"The expression of our support, amongst other ways, is the donation of these vehicles to help protect African Union forces—in this case Djibouti's military contingent—as they travel the roads of Somalia which too often will be trapped by dangerous explosive devices put there to harm those who only seek to help Somalia," said Andre.

"We know that this equipment will make a difference by increasing pressure on Al-Shabaab. This is in line with the plans of His Excellency President Hassan Sheikh Mahmoud and is in keeping with the Somalia Transition Plan, which will see a steady increase in handover responsibilities to Somalia's security

forces," he added.

Receiving the vehicles on behalf of the mission was the Deputy Head of ATMIS, Fiona Lortan, who noted that the military hardware had arrived at an opportune time as ATMIS was reconfiguring its troops and equipment.

"On behalf of the African Union, its membership, and all the ATMIS Troop Contributing Countries including Djibouti and all the others since ATMIS is a collective effort of solidarity and support to the Somalia people, I would like to thank the government and the people of the United States for the generosity and steadfastness in supporting our presence in Somalia," said Lortan.

Over the years, Al-Shabaab has engaged AU troops and SNA soldiers in asymmetric warfare, especially through the laying of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) on main supply routes and built-up locations. The donated vehicles are going to enhance ATMIS' counter IED capability and aid the troops in protecting civilians, critical infrastructure and sensitive sites, in facilitating the provision of humanitarian supplies and in supporting stabilisation activities.



Senior ATMIS, Djibouti and US officials inspect one of twenty-four Armoured Personnel Carriers (APCs) donated by the US



US Ambassador to Somalia, Larry Andre, speaks after the handover of the APCs



Senior ATMIS, Djibouti and US officials inspect one of donated APCs

Burundi Army Chief commends ATMIS for security in Somalia

In June, Burundi's army chief, Gen. Prime Niyongabo, visited Somalia for a week to meet with Somali authorities and ATMIS commanders in order to assess the mission's progress.



The CDF of Burundi, Gen. Prime Niyongabo in a briefing with senior ATMIS officials during his visit to the ATMIS Force Headquarters

Gen. Niyongabo visited ATMIS Burundi soldiers based in Jowhar, Hirshabelle State, to assess their conditions and interact with the personnel in the frontlines. He also visited Mahaday, Adale, Qorilow and Maslah forward operating bases (FOBs) and met with the commanders led by Brig. Gen. Elie Ndizigiye.

Burundi's military chief met with his Somali counterpart Brig. Gen. Odowaa Yusuf Rage and other top Somali National Army (SNA) commanders. He also visited the Presidential palace in Mogadishu, to congratulate President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud on his election.

He also held a closed meeting with the ATMIS senior military officers led by the Force Commander, Lt. Gen. Diomede Ndegeya.

"The purpose of my visit was to see how the troops are performing (in) the mission; to see how they are doing and to encourage them to continue supporting the Somali National Army and forces and to follow all mission rules," Gen. Niyongabo said.

During the visit, Gen. Niyongabo also led the ATMIS military officers at Force Headquarters in planting trees to commemorate World Environment Day.

He reminded ATMIS Burundi soldiers to adhere to the mission's objective of helping Somalis regain their independence.

"I encourage them to perform their mission to give peace to the Somali people within the timeframe set by AU and partners," he added.



The CDF of Burundi, Gen. Prime Niyongabo lays a wreath in memory of ATMIS troops and Somali security forces who died in pursuit of peace in Somalia



The CDF of Burundi, Gen. Prime Niyongabo inspects a parade mounted by ATMIS soldiers

ATMIS officers trained on civilian protection

In mid-April, Kenyan troops serving under ATMIS in Kismayo, completed a two-day training on the protection of civilians during military operations.



Kenya ATMIS troops pose for a group photo at the end of training on the Protection of Civilians (PoC) in Kismayo

Thirty-one newly deployed officers, including three women, attended the training on International Humanitarian Law, aimed at enhancing their knowledge and skills on the obligations of protecting civilians while undertaking operations.

“We are focusing on several modules of protection, including general protection, child protection, women protection, and International Human Rights Law,” said ATMIS Protection Officer, Gloria Jaase.

According to International Humanitarian Law, armed forces are obligated to protect civilians from dangers arising from military operations, and to pay particular attention to children, women, the elderly, persons with disabilities, and displaced people.

“We have taken our officers,” Jaase explained, “through the guidelines of protecting civilians as established by the African Union for peace support operations. We have also taken them through the legal frameworks guiding them on protecting civilians.”



Kenya ATMIS soldiers at a training on the Protection of Civilians (PoC) in Kismayo

A participant, Lt. Tom Obonyo, said the course was beneficial and served as a reminder of their primary responsibility to ensure civilian safety.

“We are grateful to attend this course on the protection of civilians in this operational area. As the main actors in this operation, we need this knowledge to protect women and children. The lessons will go a long way in assisting us during the conduct of operations,” said Lt. Obonyo.

Sierra Leone celebrates Independence Day

On 5 May 2022, the Deputy Head of ATMIS, Fiona Lortan, commended Sierra Leone’s contributions to peacekeeping and applauded its progress towards reconciliation, which could serve as a model for other African nations.



Sierra Leone peacekeepers serving under ATMIS entertain guests during celebrations to mark their country’s 61st independence anniversary in Mogadishu

contributing countries until their service was disrupted by the unfortunate outbreak of Ebola. We honour our Sierra Leone brothers, including those who paid the ultimate price,” said Maj. Gen. Shume.

ATMIS Police Commissioner, Assistant Inspector General of Police (AIGP), Augustine Magnus Kailie, noted that Sierra Leone and Somalia share a lot in common.

“Some of us have been refugees, some of us have been displaced, so we know the problems of Somalia. We empathise with them,” noted AIGP Kailie.

Ms. Lortan spoke at a function to celebrate Sierra Leone’s 61st independence anniversary.

Sierra Leone gained independence from Britain on 27 April 1961. Sierra Leone is one of the countries that has deployed formed police personnel to ATMIS.

At the event, Lortan congratulated Sierra Leonean personnel serving with ATMIS for their contribution to Somalia’s peace process.

“The contribution that Sierra Leone can make is profound, especially when viewed from the perspective of reconciliation,” Lortan said.

She added, “Despite everything that you have been through, you have decided to take the path of reconciliation and to learn to live with your enemies.”

ATMIS Deputy Force Commander in charge of Operations and Plans, Maj. Gen. William Kitsao Shume commended Sierra Leone nationals serving in the mission for contributing to peace and stability in Somalia.

“Between 2012 and 2014, Sierra Leone was one of the troop

He added, “A lot of people have shed their blood to let us have peace, and that is the peace we are enjoying today in Sierra Leone.”

A contingent of the Sierra Leone Formed Police Unit (FPU) under ATMIS is stationed in the Jubaland State, supporting their Somali Police counterparts to maintain law and order. Other ATMIS Police-Contributing Countries include Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Uganda, and Zambia.



Sierra Leone peacekeepers serving under ATMIS entertain guests during celebrations to mark their country’s 61st independence anniversary in Mogadishu

ATMIS police train on child protection

On 16 June 2022, ATMIS and the UN held a one-day awareness training for ATMIS police personnel on their role in safeguarding and protecting children in armed conflict.



ATMIS Police officers attend an awareness training in Mogadishu, on protecting children in armed conflict.

The UNSOM Child Protection Officer, Sylvia Ngane, highlighted the impact of armed conflicts on children and the need for police to respond to child abuse, neglect, exploitation, and violent incidents.

The training covered other topics on national and international legal frameworks on human rights, including International Humanitarian Law, International Human Rights Law, duty to prevent, investigate and raise awareness about gender-based violence, and conflict-related sexual violence.

The training coincided with the commemoration of the International Day of the African Child, celebrated on 16 June every year, to raise awareness about the plight of children in Africa.

This year, the day was marked under the theme of “Eliminating Harmful Practices Affecting Children.”

Facilitators from the ATMIS Protection and Human Rights Group (PHRG), and the UN Assistance Mission in Somalia Human Rights and Protection Group (HRPG), jointly conducted the training.

ATMIS Head of the Civilian Casualty Tracking, Analysis and Response Cell (CCTARC), Jones Sarfo, said they targeted ATMIS police personnel because they work closely with communities where children live.

“The police personnel closely interact with the population in the field. We want to sharpen their skills to engage their Somali Police counterparts on child protection issues,” said Sarfo.

Inspector of Police (IP) Tracilla Ngonzi, ATMIS Police Gender Officer, who was among the trainees said the training will help ATMIS and the Somali Police Force personnel to combat violations against women and children.

The training was attended by 20 ATMIS police personnel from Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Uganda, and Zambia contingents serving with different ATMIS sectors in Somalia.



ATMIS Police officers with training facilitators in a group photo during an awareness training in Mogadishu



New police station at Jowhar Airport

On 22 June 2022, in an effort to boost enforcement of law and order, a new police station opened at Jowhar Airport in Hirshabelle State, constructed with support from ATMIS and the Government of India.

At a colourful ceremony, the Deputy Head of ATMIS, Fiona Lortan, handed over the newly constructed facility to Hirshabelle State Minister of Security, Mohamed Abdirahman Kheyre.

The police station was built as a Quick Impact Project (QIP) to support stabilisation efforts and ensure the presence of the Somali Police Force (SPF) in the liberated areas. The police station has facilities that include offices, holding cells and ablution units.

“We are supposed to assist the Somali security forces to take full control of security by 2024. This is a key part of that process, as handing over the infrastructure will have a long-lasting legacy. It will allow Somalis to build on this police station to ensure that they can provide security for the airport,” Ms. Lortan added.

The Minister of Security in Hirshabelle State, Mohamed Abdirahman Kheyre, said the facility would improve policing. He urged the police to take good care of the facility and provide diligent service to the public.

The ATMIS Police Commissioner, Assistant Inspector General of Police (AIGP) Augustine Magnus Kailie, praised the Hirshabelle State Police for their dedication to service and reaffirmed the ATMIS’ commitment to work closely with the SPF.

With the support of international partners, ATMIS has renovated, built and equipped about 20 police stations in various locations of south-central Somalia since 2009. Among the renovated facilities are the SPF Headquarters in Mogadishu and the construction of police stations at airports in the federal Member States, including the one at Aden Abdulle International Airport in Mogadishu.

ATMIS supports Jubaland Police recruitment

At the end of June, the ATMIS Police component supported the vetting and recruitment of 300 applicants to join the Jubaland State Police Force.



Fresh recruits at a briefing session during a vetting and recruitment exercise for Jubaland police in Kismayo

The recruitment conducted by the Jubaland State Police in Kismayo, paved way for commencement of training of the recruits to boost security and maintain law and order.

The recruitment aimed to build the capacity of the police in Jubaland State, ahead of the planned transfer of security responsibilities from ATMIS to Somali Security Forces by the end of December 2024.

“The recruitment intends to increase the number of Jubaland Police to fight crime and provide security in the region,” said the ATMIS Police Communication Information Technology Services (CITS) Advisor, Superintendent of Police (SP) Ibrahim Sini.

The Spokesperson of Jubaland State Police Force, Col. Jama’a Ahmed Hassan, noted that the recruitment was a rigorous and transparent process.

“The recruits are from different clans and were selected based on academic qualifications. We expect them to return to their home districts to enhance security,” said Col. Jama’a.



An ATMIS police officer takes measurements of a recruit during a vetting and recruitment exercise in Kismayo

The vetting and recruitment was preceded by a training conducted by ATMIS police for the Jubaland police vetting and recruitment committee, composed of clan elders, representatives of civil society, women groups, and Jubaland Police.

They European Union, UK and German Government fund the joint Police Programme.

Nigeria deploys 160 FPU personnel

On 13 July, Nigeria bolstered the ATMIS Police component by deploying 160 FPU personnel to support ongoing peace efforts in Somalia.



Newly deployed officers from the Nigerian Formed Police Unit - 11

The incoming personnel replaced their compatriots from the 10th contingent who returned to Nigeria after completing a tour of duty that included supporting the Somali Police Force to secure the parliamentary and presidential elections.

“These officers are well-trained and disciplined. They will fulfil the mandate that has been assigned to them, and will not fail their country or the African Union,” said Superintendent Mohammed Ibrahim, the contingent commander.

Among other duties, the FPU personnel are expected to support specialised training, advising and mentorship of the SPF including in joint patrols and protection of vital installations.

They will also support the service delivery capacity of the Somali Police in the provision of policing services, counter violent extremism, support community policing, public order management and other crime prevention strategies.

Deputy Superintendent of Police Fidelix Jonah Awu, who led the incoming team, noted that they were adequately prepared to support efforts to ensure law and order, the rule of law and efforts to restore peace and stability in Somalia.

This is Nigeria’s eleventh police unit to be deployed to Somalia since 2012. The ATMIS police contributing countries include Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Uganda and Zambia who are deployed across the five operational sectors.



ATMIS Police officers salute the newly deployed officers from the Nigerian Formed Police Unit-11

FEATURE: Interview with outgoing ATMIS Force Commander



QUESTION: Almost three months since AMISOM was reconfigured into ATMIS to facilitate a phased handover of security responsibilities to Somalia in line with the Somalia Transition Plan. What is ATMIS military component's priorities and plan of action under phase one of the transition?

ANSWER: The African Union Transition Mission (ATMIS) is to implement its mandate in line with the Somalia Transition Plan (STP) in four phases geared towards the progressive hand over of security responsibilities to Somali Security Forces (SSF). Presently we are in the first phase where the mission is expected to reconfigure in conformity with the UN Security Council Resolution 2628 (2022) and make our troops more agile, mobile, flexible with required force multipliers and enablers. Also, we will conduct a review to better determine our equipment and logistical requirements. This is essential since the mission has evolved with new tasks to perform and meet our operational objectives. So the review will enable the mission to determine what is required to effectively perform our tasks as laid out in the CONOPs. We will also need to review important internal documents that guide the mission, such as the Standard Operating Procedures for personnel. Overall, we continually work to consolidate the achievements by the two AU missions made over the years.

QUESTION: In the creation of ATMIS, the UN and AU prioritised implementation of the Somalia Transition Plan, the National Security Architecture and force generation for the SNA. Do you envisage the completion of the transition by 2024?

ANSWER: While it is important to set timelines, it may be too early to comment on whether the transition can be achieved by 2024 or not. ATMIS is in its initial phase, operating in an environment that is highly unpredictable. That said, the possibility of completing the transition by 2024 will be clear as the phases are rolled out. Also, we don't work in isolation. We have various partners, both local and international. In order to move forward on transition, there has to be consensus after a comprehensive assessment of the conditions on the ground. Equally it is important to note that ATMIS is a Somalia-led peace and security process and thus can only achieve its mandate when commitment takes centre stage.

QUESTION: ATMIS military is mandated to conduct joint, planned and targeted offensive operations with Somali security forces to degrade Al-Shabaab and other affiliates linked to ISIL. How are you progressing with carrying out this mandate in the ATMIS areas of responsibility?

ANSWER: Since the inception of ATMIS in April 2022, the mission under phase one, has conducted a number of joint operations with the Somali security forces across our areas of responsibility, with the objective to disrupt and degrade Al-Shabaab and other armed opposition groups. To enumerate a few, between 4 and 8 April, we ATMIS/DANAB conducted a successful joint operation in the locations of Gamboole, Jameeco, Jilyaale, Kiliga, Shiinaha and Shaw, all in the Lower Shabelle region. Also, from 16 to 17 April, another successful joint operation was conducted in Caliyow Baarow. In Middle Shabelle region, on 27 May 2022, ATMIS/DANAB conducted a joint disruption operation in Warciise. In Bay region and Leego, ATMIS/DANAB also conducted a disruption operation on 30 May 2022. It is imperative to note that in all the above joint operations ATMIS provided air (that is CAS and CASEVAC), Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance, artillery and communication support and, in some instances, ground troops to operate jointly with our SNA counterparts.

QUESTION: The ATMIS mandate as laid out in UN Security Council Resolution 2628 (2022), assigns ATMIS the mandate to support capacity development for the Somali security forces, especially force generation. In what ways are you achieving this objective and what progress has been made so far?

ANSWER: Presently we are in the first phase of implementing the transition mandate. Capacity development of the Somalia security forces is expected

to commence in earnest under phase two. However, ATMIS military component is continually engaged in conducting capacity building of Somali security forces in mentorship of the forces that are in joint operation with our contingents. Equally, establishment of Joint Operation Cells (JOCs) at both Force and Sector headquarters is ongoing. This is aimed at strengthening command and control capabilities for both ATMIS and Somali security forces.

ANSWER: ATMIS Military component is well aware of Al-Shabaab's weapon of choice – the Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs). A number of counter-IED measures have been put in place which aim to protect our troops in the war theatre. Every sector has an equipped Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) team that seeks to clear the main supply routes of IEDs. Most significantly, our troops are regularly trained on IED matters with emphasis on recognition and immediate



Combat helicopters provide aerial support during ATMIS joint operations with the Somali Security Forces

QUESTION: ATMIS and the forerunner AMISOM have provided combat mentorship to the SNA during joint operations. What is your assessment of the readiness of the SNA to lead operations during and after the transition?

ANSWER: The Somali National Army troops are well trained and have demonstrated the ability to conduct successful military offensive operations against Al-Shabaab. However, enhanced capacity is imperative if the envisaged objective of taking over full security responsibility is to be realised. Capacity building takes time and SNA has made commendable progress in readiness to eventually take over from ATMIS. There are a number of bilateral partners supporting the federal government in force generation. There are targets that have been set to support the integration of existing forces, training and equipping to ensure a successful transition.

QUESTION: ATMIS has severally expressed the need to mitigate the threat posed by Improvised Explosive Devices in Somalia, which remain the weapon of choice for the Al-Shabaab and the groups affiliated to ISIL. What is ATMIS doing to counter the improvised explosive devices?

action on encountering an IED. Equally, drivers are trained on defensive driving especially at sections along the main supply routes where IEDs are often placed. Recently we conducted a successful ATMIS/UNMAS conference where IED experts congregated to discuss the best course of action for IED mitigation. The outcome of the conference which includes deliberate actions to include local community in IED mitigation will be infused in the existing IED mitigation measures.



QUESTION: As part of implementing of the Somalia Transition Plan, there was the creation of the Quick Reaction Forces across all the sectors as part of the CONOPs. What have been some of the achievements of the QRFs in the operations theatre to date?

ANSWER: Following the reduction in troop numbers as part of the initial drawdown, the establishment of Quick Reaction Forces (QRFs) became necessary to enable the mission to adapt to the new realities. Today, all the ATMIS contingents have established Quick Reaction Forces, though on a small scale, to enable our forces to maintain operational effectiveness, conduct offensives and quickly respond to enemy threats within the respective areas of responsibility. It is expected that by the end of phase one, a minimum of one mobile battalion per sector will be operational. I am happy to note that the QRFs today are conducting counter-insurgency operations, which has increased our operational efficiency and effectiveness under this transition phase.

Devices and infantry fighters. Also, Somalia has the longest coastline in Africa, which is largely unpatrolled. This grants easy arrival for foreign fighters including the smuggling of weapons through the Arabian Peninsula into Somalia. Equally, limited air assets, Counter-IED facilities, engineering capabilities, as well as Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance equipment with required range stands out as major challenges.

QUESTION: You were the last AMISOM Force Commander and the first ATMIS Force Commander, what are your thoughts about African peace and security and the search for 'African solutions to African problems'?

ANSWER: The pursuit for sustainable peace and security in Africa continues to face challenges, with ongoing conflicts in a number of regions across the continent. That said, we need homegrown solutions to the conflicts. More often than not, Africans themselves have the best diagnosis and always understand the



ATMIS soldiers conduct a search for Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) planted by Al-Shabaab along a main supply route in Somalia

QUESTION: What is the major challenge that you would ascribe to the effective fight against Al-Shabaab?

ANSWER: There are a number of factors that range from social, political, and economic. I can only elaborate on those reasons that relate to security. Al-Shabaab and other armed opposition groups continue to evolve as demonstrated by their growing resilience, enlistment of local militia support hence enhancing their numbers. As a result, they have increased their use of complex attacks, combining Vehicle-Borne Explosive Devices, Person-Borne Improvised Explosive

genesis of these conflicts. International partners can only assist up to a certain point. The responsibility is for Africa and people to ensure continental peace. The mission in Somalia was a blueprint, being the first Africa-led peace support operation and can be used as a lesson to shape future missions. One of the lessons learnt is that unpredictable funding needs to be answered if Africa is to succeed in getting a solution to its problems.



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