

**Statement to the Somalia Security
Conference**

By

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**Your Excellency, Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, President of the Federal Republic of Somalia,
Honourable Ministers and Heads of Delegations,
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,
All Protocols Observed**

It is a privilege for me to address this session on **Key Progress and Challenges in the Somali Security Sector focusing on ATMIS Transition and ongoing operations**, vital issues which should remain at the core of all our discussions and actions. I congratulate the Government of Somalia for this special initiative, which provides a unique opportunity to reflect on how all of us can work together to consolidate Somalia's peacebuilding and State-building achievements.

I take this opportunity to commend the President of Somalia for his leadership and the progress Somalia has achieved in advancing peace and security. I salute the bravery of the Somali people and forces who are leading operations against al-Shabaab, with support from ATMIS and other partners, and further extend condolences to the families of SSF forces, Somali people and ATMIS forces who have paid the ultimate price. We all owe them our gratitude and respect.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

This conference comes at a time of great successes for Somalia. The recent lifting of the arms embargo on Somalia underscores the international community's trust in Somalia's leadership and provides a tremendous opportunity to advance Somalia's quest for sustainable peace and security.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

The transition process has witnessed renewed collaboration and cooperation in the implementation of jointly agreed priorities. In this context, ATMIS continued to support SSF-led and owned offensive against Al Shabab and reconfigured its force posture when the offensive expanded beyond its area of operations.

This operational support which predominantly focused on air support (CASEVAC/MEDEVAC), ground troop support, ISR, intelligence and joint operations, shifted to provision of long-range artillery support, inter-sector operations as well as shaping and clearance operations.

In parallel, ATMIS, the Federal Government of Somalia, the UN, and key security partners undertook a Joint Technical Assessment of the Phase 1 drawdown and through the FGS, submitted a Joint Technical Assessment Report, which comprehensively examined the security transition in Somalia.

In addition, the Federal Government of Somalia, ATMIS and UNSOS established a Joint Tripartite Committee, which planned, executed, and completed the drawdown of 2,000 ATMIS troops by 30 June 2023. Subsequent to the FGS request for a 90-day pause in ATMIS drawdown, the Committee resumed preparations for the Phase 2 drawdown of ATMIS troops and it is encouraging to note that the Phase 2 drawdown will conclude by 31 December 2023.

In line with the African Union Peace Support Operations, ATMIS extended support to Somalia beyond the military aspects to also cover the police and civilian elements. In this regard, ATMIS continued to provide operational support to the Somalia Police Force and supported SPF mentoring and capacity building both in Mogadishu and in Federal Member States.

Through its civilian component, ATMIS assisted the FGS stabilisation efforts, facilitated delivery of humanitarian assistance, and took the necessary measures to ensure that its operations are conducted in full compliance with respective countries' obligations under all applicable international legal instruments, including with the AU Compliance and Accountability Framework, the UN Human Rights Due Diligence Policy (HRDDP) as well as International Humanitarian Law and International Human Rights Law.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

While efforts are being made to strengthen coordination of international security assistance, we must not lose sight of the pathway to a successful transition. This is a unique opportunity to focus on achieving further progress. SPF and SNA must continue to receive the requisite support to ensure full implementation of the transition process, whose end, will undoubtedly mark the beginning of a new phase in Somalia's security sector development.

The fight against Al-Shabab must continue to be resourced and sustained to its successful conclusion. Partners who have committed to train, equip, and build Somali Security forces and institutions must not relent on this noble mission.

As ATMIS, we have introduced new utility and striking capabilities to address previous weaknesses and we believe that the lifting of the arms embargo will enable Somalia to acquire the necessary firepower to advance the fight against Al-Shabab.

To supplement and further reinforce these military achievements, we encourage further progress in other supportive elements. Without adequate reconciliation, social cohesion, and extension of state authority to liberated areas, it will be challenging to envision lasting peace.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

ATMIS remains fully committed to the implementation of its mandate and delivering a smooth and orderly transition remains a key priority. In this respect, we encourage sustained international cooperation to ensure that all stakeholders can align their efforts and resources to support the ongoing fight against Al-Shabab, the extension of stabilisation efforts to newly liberated areas and enhanced prioritization of cooperation on additional steps towards a smooth and orderly transition by 31 December 2024.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate AU and ATMIS commitment to stand with Somalia. I also thank all partners for their continued support to Somalia and ATMIS, as we build on the significant progress to date, and take the necessary steps to deliver on our collective responsibility to help Somalia achieve her national priorities.

I thank you.