



UGANDA

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AT A HIGH-LEVEL OPEN MEETING OF THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL
WORKING GROUP ON PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS
AGENDA ITEM : “TRADITIONAL PEACEKEEPING VS PEACE
ENFORCEMENT”**

New York, February 20, 2015

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Mr. Chairman,

Thank you for the opportunity accorded to us to share the Uganda People's Defence Forces' experience in peacekeeping operations in AMISOM.

The backdrop to the AMISOM intervention in Somalia is the African Union Constitutive Act, which provides for intervention inside African Union (AU) Member States against genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes. The Act exemplifies the serious measures that the AU Member States were willing to undertake in order to guarantee these basic protections to every living person in Africa.

By way of background, following the overthrow of President Siad Barre in 1991, a volatile situation erupted in Somalia. Despite the political interventions of the UN, the OAU, League of Arab States and the OIC, the situation rapidly deteriorated to a point where there was no central government. Somalia unsuccessfully experienced several peacekeeping Missions from UNOSOM I, to UNITAF to UNOSOM II, all operating under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations. A number of tragic incidences actually led to the withdrawal of peacekeeping forces amidst an environment of mistrust and accusations from the Somali people that the UN had also become a belligerent rather than a peacekeeper. By 2005, the country was deeply divided along tribal lines creating a safe haven for criminals, pirates and terror cells to breed. Both the Somali mainland and the international waters off its coastline had become extremely dangerous territory. This was a situation of concern for us in the sub-region, as it threatened the security of the neighboring countries.

Mr. Chairman,

It has been stressed in several fora that the principle of peacekeeping can only apply if certain factors are in place. These are that i) A peace Agreement must be in place ii) A green-belt must be clearly demarcated iii) A clear mandate must be articulated. Following the establishment of some semblance of peace, control by a legitimate government and the signing of a peace agreement, traditional peacekeeping can then be applied.

For Uganda and indeed for the UPDF, our AMISOM journey began in 2007 following the AU's decision to militarily intervene in Somalia and the adoption of the communiqué of the African Union Peace and Security Council of 19 January 2007, which stated that the "*... African Union shall deploy for a period of six months, a mission to Somalia (AMISOM), aimed essentially at contributing to the initial stabilization phase in Somalia, and that the mission will evolve into a United Nations operation that will support the long-term stabilization and post-conflict restoration of Somalia ...*" The total number of Ugandan and Burundian troops tasked to train the Somali army, protect the presidential palace, airport and harbor in Mogadishu was 4,300. The UN Security Council in its resolution 1744 endorsed this decision but only committed to a review of the situation after 6 months to determine the feasibility of a UN peacekeeping operation. It has since then renewed that mandate every 6 months.

Prior to 2009, for the UPDF in AMISOM, the crucial and most frustrating part of these mandates was that whereas they were Chapter 7 mandates on paper, the rules of engagement for the forces were more of Chapter 6 ½. The instructions to the troops forced them to take a “defensive stance” in an active conflict. In other words, the troops were only expected to respond with force if attacked first. Suffice it to say that the militants took full advantage of this to increase the attacks on the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia.

Mr. Chairman,

In 2009, the Uganda government requested that the United Nations Security Council strengthen the mandate of AMISOM to a more robust one so that it could dislodge militants who had increased attacks on the Government there. In its statement to the UN Security Council, the Uganda delegation argued that the wording of the mandates rendered AMISOM an observer in an active conflict. AMISOM had become a peacekeeping force in an environment which was not peaceful. In addition, there was a need for at least 16,000 troops in Somalia if the situation there was to be contained and for the relevance of the troop presence to be felt. In these circumstances, it was as good as a “Mission Impossible”.

Mr. Chairman,

In our view, Security Council resolution 1863 marked the turning point for AMISOM’s tangible successes. The Council responded positively by renewing the AMISOM mandate for another six months and authorizing the Mission to take all necessary measures to protect key infrastructure in Somalia, as well as to create the appropriate security conditions for the delivery of humanitarian aid. It also requested that the African Union maintain AMISOM's deployment and reinforce the original 8,000-troop deployment in order to enhance the mission's capability to carry out an unfettered peace enforcement mandate and to protect key installations around Mogadishu.

The Security Council also called on the Secretary-General to establish a Trust Fund for African Union Forces in the country until United Nations peace-keeping troops could arrive to assist in training Somali security forces. The Council also asked the Secretary-General to hold a donors' conference as soon as possible to gather contributions to the trust fund and also called on the African Union to consult with the Secretary-General and submit budgetary requests to the fund. In response to a recommendation from the Secretary General, the Council approved the enhancement of AMISOM by transferring assets after the liquidation of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE).

In order for AMISOM’s forces to be incorporated into the proposed United Nations peacekeeping operation, the Security Council requested the Secretary-General to provide a United Nations logistical support package to AMISOM, including equipment and services, until June 1, 2009, or until the Council reached a decision on establishing a United Nations force.

Mr. Chairman,

AMISOM has transitioned beyond Burundi and Uganda, and now we have Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya and Sierra Leone also providing troops. Ghana and Nigeria are among the police contributors; Force Command rotates from Uganda to Burundi while the other countries provide deputies. Uganda now is holding the docket of Deputy Force Commander Operations and Plans, Kenya holds Support and Logistics. This Multinational nature of the command of the force is a great achievement.

The Peace dividend from joint efforts within the AMISOM family cannot be over-stated. We now have businesses flourishing in Mogadishu and investors have confidence to venture into Somalia. The sea port is also vibrant and airlines have re-opened their flight routes into Somalia.

Mr. President, at this juncture, I would like to emphasize the importance of the strengthening of the UN-AU partnership. The concept of a UN supported regional force, like AMISOM is simply an evolving construct which can be traced back to UNMIL's take over from ECOMOG in Liberia in 1990, The AU-UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur (2004), the Force Integration Brigade in the DRC and the African-led International Support Missions in Mali and the Central African Republic. These operations are not that new, the difference is that in dissecting the question of peacekeeping vs peace enforcement, we are beginning to appreciate the importance of a more equal partnership with regional bodies.

In 2013, the U.N. which had begun to move its operations permanently to Mogadishu recommended the deployment of a "static" guard unit to strengthen the security of its compound within the international airport in Mogadishu, which had been attacked repeatedly by Al-Shabab. The first ever UN Guard Unit (UNGU) was created in May 2014 and tasked specifically with protecting UN personnel deployed in Somalia. The Unit is currently made up of 410 troops provided by the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF). Consequently, the UPDF in Somalia currently wears two hats: The green berets for peace enforcement under AMISOM and the UN blue berets for peacekeeping, giving us more relevance beyond peace enforcement which was initially our main pre-occupation.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman,

Our biggest lesson thus far has been that there can be no progress without winning the hearts and minds of the populations in conflict. AMISOM's successes are really as a result of the full cooperation and leadership of the Somali people themselves. AMISOM's success can be traced to the moment it was understood that the Somalis themselves would have to lead this and define how the international community should engage.

The challenges of modern peacekeeping, as we have seen in recent times, clearly indicate that not even the United Nations is capable of tackling the challenges on its own. The UN needs to fast-track its efforts in broadening the contributor base by working with partners at the regional and sub-regional levels. It should take advantage of these capacities and we welcome the efforts so far taken in this regard. The UN should take maximum advantage of the strengths and

roles that regional organizations such as the African Union and sub-regional organizations such as: SADC, ECOWAS and IGAD can play.

It is my delegation's opinion that whenever possible and as has effectively been the case with AMISOM, Regional Organizations like the AU should carry out the difficult, combat-oriented task of peace enforcement. Once the situation is relatively stabilized and an effective peace agreement is in place, the Mission can be transferred to the UN. During the transition of mandate from that Regional Organization, the UN can conduct detailed integrated planning with the peace enforcement force and establish an effective transition plan.

I thank you