

**UN Statement to the African Union Peace and Security
Council and the United Nations Security Council
Informal Dialogue**

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Mr. Chairman and members of the AU Peace and Security Council, the President and members of the UN Security Council, the African Union Commissioner for Peace and Security, Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. Your informal dialogue today marks another important step in the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union on peace and security on the continent. I thank the president of the UN Security Council and the Chairman of the African Union Peace and Security Council for organizing these discussions, which come at a critical time for both Burundi and Somalia.
2. The political and security situation in Burundi remains of grave concern. The worsening violence poses a major threat to peace and stability in Burundi and the region as a whole.

3. The situation can only be addressed through a credible, inclusive and sustainable political process. International partners must continue to actively encourage the Government of Burundi and the opposition to engage in dialogue in good faith with a priority of bringing an end to human rights violations. The UN fully supports the African-led facilitation of this process.
4. Renewed efforts are needed to establish a viable political dialogue process. The international community must speak with one voice and urge all Burundian stakeholders to take concrete steps to resolve the crisis through an inclusive and genuine political dialogue.
5. The region's continued direct political engagement with the support of the international community is critical in helping restore peace and security in Burundi.
6. The Secretary-General has commended the determination of the African Union to support the Government and people of Burundi in this difficult period. The UN has been cooperating with the African Union in this endeavor, including with planning for the deployment of the African Prevention and Protection Mission in Burundi (MAPROBU).

7. The UN Security Council visit to Bujumbura to stress the urgency of pursuing an inclusive and transparent dialogue and of preventing the escalation of violence is a positive and timely initiative in our collective efforts to restore peace and stability to Burundi.
8. As mandated by resolution 2248 (2015), the Secretary-General has commenced the deployment of a UN team to Burundi. The core group of this team is now on the ground. The team, led by Special Adviser Benomar, will work with the Government of Burundi and other stakeholders to support a credible and inclusive political dialogue process and advise the authorities on addressing security concerns. The team will also monitor closely the situation on the ground to provide reporting and situational analysis to facilitate UN planning efforts.
9. This is a potentially momentous year for Somalia. The continued and coordinated engagement and support of both Councils to ongoing political discussions on modalities of political transition in Somalia is critical to their timely success.
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11. AMISOM remains key in these efforts and will continue to require the support of both Councils. The pattern of recent mass casualty attacks against AMISOM troops by Al Shabaab requires a review of the operational posture of the Force. The United Nations is working with the Africa Union on a review to prevent further attacks and enhance its ability to deliver its mandate. At the same time, we also need to take very seriously the allegations of possible human rights violations by AMISOM troops. These need to be reported and investigated, and the UN will support the AU and AMISOM on this. This is critical to preserve the credibility of AMISOM and the relationship it builds with the local populations, the Government, and the Somali National Army.
12. Al Shabaab will not be defeated only by military means. Stabilization of the recovered areas is critical in this regard, as is more focus on disengaged combatants, and on a public communication strategy.
13. Last week, the humanitarian response plan was launched. The humanitarian situation in Somalia is still dire, and should not drop off the radar. The new plan is seeking USD \$885 million to reach 3.5 million people. The long-standing IDP situation is a case in point, and the UN will increase its focus on displacement this year. We call for contributions to the response plan.

I thank you and wish you fruitful deliberations.