

**Committee:** Security Council (SC)

**Issue:** Ensuring the peaceful termination of the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia

**Student Officer:** Stergios Stivaktakis

**Position:** Deputy President

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## PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

Dear All,

My name is Stergios Stivaktakis, and I am currently in Year 11 at the German School of Athens (DSA). I have the honor of serving as one of the Deputy Presidents of the Security Council at this year's ACGMUN. On that note, it is my pleasure to welcome you to the committee, where, throughout the conference, we will try to find solutions to the world's most important issues.

In the Security Council, we discuss crises and topics of paramount importance that require a base understanding of their background. This study guide has been written for you to further your research on the topic of Ensuring the peaceful termination of the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia. I urge you to use the links and content provided to prepare for the conference this March.

For any questions that may arise in the meantime, do not hesitate to contact me via email at [stergiosstivaktakis@gmail.com](mailto:stergiosstivaktakis@gmail.com).

Sincerely,  
Stergios

## TOPIC INTRODUCTION

The nation of Somalia has found itself in a decades-long conflict against Al-Shabaab, a terrorist militant group that was created within its borders. Meanwhile, the Somali government is trying to enhance the nation's security sector to fight off threats to its national sovereignty.

The main attempt to eliminate Al-Shabaab was the 2007 African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), which—on April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022—changed its name to the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS), adapting its mandate to a peacekeeping mission, rather than an offensive one.

Al-Shabaab has, in the last two decades, taken over parts of central and southern Somalia, wreaking havoc in the aforementioned areas. Its main goal is to overthrow the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS). While the organization is predominantly composed of Islamist extremists, it is important to note that the group does not support the idea of a global jihad (i.e., Islam's "holy war").

In more recent times, the group has been degraded to such an extent that it does not cause an immediate threat to the legitimate Somali government. With that in the international community's purview, by including the African Union (AU)—which Somalia is part of—the question that arises is how to terminate ATMIS without causing conflict in the affected area.

The international community's main and current concern is reforming Somalia's security sector and re-establishing the rule of law in the nation. This is what the Security Council wants to achieve by preventing the reappearance of Al-Shabaab while ensuring that by terminating ATMIS, no further damage will be caused to the nation of Somalia.

## DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

### **Federal Government of Somalia (FGS)**

The legal, internationally recognized government of Somalia. Created after the fall of the Somali Democratic Republic, it replaced the transitional government in 2012. This organ acts as the Somali Government's executive branch, with the President being its leader, as well as the Head of State.

### **Human Rights**

"Human rights are rights inherent to all human beings, regardless of race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, or any other status. Human rights include the right to life and liberty, freedom from slavery and torture, freedom of opinion and

expression, the right to work and education, and many more. Everyone is entitled to these rights, without discrimination.”<sup>1</sup> Simply, the inalienable set of rights a person has due to the fact they are human.

### Peacekeeper

A person—or group of people—who works to ensure peaceful operations in a specific area. The most prominent group of peacekeepers is the United Nations Peacekeeping Force. According to the United Nations (UN), “UN peacekeepers provide security and the political and peacebuilding support to help countries make the difficult, early transition from conflict to peace. UN Peacekeeping is guided by three basic principles; Consent of the parties; Impartiality; Non-use of force except in self-defense and defense of the mandate.”<sup>2</sup>

### Rule of Law

“Rule of law, the mechanism, process, institution, practice, or norm that supports the equality of all citizens before the law, secure a non-arbitrary form of government, and more generally prevents the arbitrary use of power.”<sup>3</sup>

### Security Sector

A general term that describes all parties responsible for the security of a nation. This includes the police, government institutions, as well as a nation’s armed Forces, among others.

### Transitional Force

A transitional force is any entity that is placed in a nation or area after a conflict or major shift in power to ensure that the transition from one period to the next happens smoothly.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### Historical Background

Somalia, a nation located in the Horn of Africa, has a rich history. Being in Africa, the country had been colonized by the United Kingdom (UK), formerly the British Empire, and Italy until decolonization in the 1960s. Since its independence on

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<sup>1</sup> ---. "Human Rights." *United Nations*, [www.un.org/en/global-issues/human-rights](http://www.un.org/en/global-issues/human-rights)

<sup>2</sup> United Nations. "What is Peacekeeping?" *United Nations Peacekeeping*, [peacekeeping.un.org/en/what-is-peacekeeping](http://peacekeeping.un.org/en/what-is-peacekeeping)

<sup>3</sup> Rule of law | Definition, implications, significance, & facts. (2017, April 25). Encyclopedia Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/rule-of-law>

July 1st, 1960, Somalia has found itself in constant political and civilian turmoil, starting with the assassination of President Abdirashid Ali Shermarke in 1969.

The then-British protectorate was abandoned by the major European powers in 1940 due to the Second World War but was retaken by the UK in 1941, together with the territory of Italian Somaliland. All Somali provinces were then unified under British military rule, except for French Somaliland (today the nation of Djibouti).

With only ten years to prepare the country for independence under the trusteeship of the United Nations, the Italians returned to southern Somalia in 1950. However, clans and their followers were the ones to shape the political landscape of the new republic, with the unification of the former Italian trust area and the previous British protectorate at the last minute being the catalyst for the nation's current political turmoil.

### **Since Independence**

Somalia has undergone multiple periods of crisis throughout its history. After the death of Abdirashid Ali Shermarke, for example, the nation suffered through a coup-d'etat (military coup), where Lieutenant (Lt.) General Ibrahim Abboud rose to power.

Declaring a state of emergency, he dissolved the government and collected all the power in the country for himself. The southern, non-Muslim part of the nation faced extreme Islamization under Abboud's rule. This, along with the lack of economic stability by Abboud's government, led to protests in the area, which culminated in a coup on November 1, 1964.<sup>4</sup> Ibrahim Abboud retired just 15 days later. The first period of Somali military rule formally ended with a transitional government taking power on December 3, 1964.

Two more sequences of assassinations and coups took place later in the nation's history in 1969-1986 and 1989-2003, respectively. This has weakened the security of the nation, allowing for extreme ideas or groups to cause conflict in the nation. One such example is the region of Somaliland, in the northern part of the country, which declared independence without being recognized by the international community. It currently remains a de facto state.

### **Present Era**

Since 2004, however, with the formation of the Islamic Courts Union (ICU), which included "The Party of the Youth," commonly known as Al-

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<sup>4</sup> Lentz, Harris M. "Sudan, Republic of the." *Heads of States and Governments Since 1945*, Routledge, 2014, p. 709.

Shabaab, the nation has been fighting against armed groups wreaking havoc in its territory. A transitional government was formed in exile in October 2004, with Abdullahi Yusuf becoming the president of this body.

Sensing a threat to its sovereignty, Ethiopia invaded the area, including the capital of Somalia, Mogadishu, without resistance from the ICU. The Transitional Government, also called the FGS, entered the capital on January 7, 2007, kickstarting a plan to neutralize the ICU and Al-Shabaab and bring peace to Somalia. This plan was implemented in February of the same year with the introduction of UN-backed AMISOM. Up until March 2022, AMISOM was responsible for expelling Al-Shabaab forces from its borders, a mission in which the program was successful.

On April 1, 2022, AMISOM was replaced by ATMIS, the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia, also changing its mandate. Now, Somalia finds itself in a transitional period. With the possible termination of ATMIS, the nation must rebuild its security sector to ensure such terrorist groups will not rise again, further destabilizing the already fragile region. After the fall of Al-Shabaab, ATMIS has completed its purpose. It is up to the international community to figure out a way to carry out the aforementioned transition, allowing the nation to develop.

### **Al-Shabaab's Operation**

Most of southern Somalia was taken over by Al-Shabaab, which was part of the Somali Council of Islamic Courts in the second half of 2006. Al-Shabaab has persisted in its brutal insurgency throughout southern and central Somalia even after being defeated by Somali and Ethiopian forces in 2007.

By recruiting local sub-clans and their militias, even through coercion and employing guerilla warfare and other terrorist tactics against the FGS, peacekeepers from AMISOM, and non-governmental aid organizations, the group has occasionally maintained temporary control over strategic locations in those areas.

The organization Al-Shabaab began as a militia connected to the Islamic Courts Union (ICU), a confederation of Islamic courts based on local and clan systems that were established in southern Somalia in 2004 to fight the lawlessness that had been plaguing the region since the Somali government fell in 1991.

The ICU as a whole is not centralized in its agenda or goals, with different clans and organizations advocating for different outcomes. This has led to fighting among the ICU leadership, whose rank-and-file members come from various clans, and the group is subject to clan politics, internal divisions, and shifting alliances.

The militia began operating as the ICU's armed wing in 2004. Al-Shabaab adopted a more radical ideological position than the ICU as a whole, advocating a strict interpretation of Islam that contrasts with the version that is popular among Somalis.

Most of its fighters are primarily focused on the battle against the FGS and are not supportive of global jihad. Nonetheless, the senior leaders of Al-Shabaab and Ayman al-Zawahiri, the leader of terror organization al-Qaeda, publicly announced the merger of the two groups in February 2012. Since then, the group has lost four senior figures since September 2014, which may have hindered its communications with al-Qaeda leadership.

### **African Union Mission in Somalia**

The AU was permitted by the UN Security Council on February 20, 2007, to send out a six-month peacekeeping force. In addition to requesting a report on a potential UN peacekeeping deployment within 60 days, the peacekeeping mission aimed to assist national reconciliation efforts.

The AU was further authorized by the Security Council in October 2014 to carry out its operation in Somalia through November 30, 2015. Additionally, the council gave the African Union mission permission to take all necessary steps to facilitate dialogue and reconciliation by facilitating free movement, ensuring everyone involved in the national stabilization process is secure, and providing protection.

### **The Mission**

Resolution 2372 of the UN Security Council created AMISOM and set its mandate. The scope of the mission, as dictated by the mandate, is to allow for the transition of security responsibilities from the African Union's forces to Somali Security Forces, neutralize the terrorist organization Al-Shabaab and other armed opposition groups, and help in the political stabilization of Somalia.

This would be carried out through a plethora of measures, including but not limited to the constant presence of AMISOM personnel in populated areas, especially in population centers in central Somalia, thus securing access to supplies that would otherwise be used by Al-Shabaab and reorganizing the Somali security Sector, to be able to protect the country from groups like Al-Shabaab.

### **Differences from ATMIS**

While AMISOM is an offensive campaign, directly confronting Al-Shabaab and similar groups, ATMIS focuses more on refocusing supplies for

the stabilization of Somalia and the prevention of uprisings similar to Al-Shabaab's.

### **The African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS)**

ATMIS is “a multidimensional mission (military, police and civilian), authorized by the African Union and mandated by the United Nations Security Council.”<sup>5</sup>

The above means that ATMIS focuses on measures to stabilize the nation and improve its military, police force, and citizen participation and authority. The Mission has been running since April 1, 2022.

#### **Concerns with Termination**

Seeing as ATMIS has completed its goal, many now want to terminate the mission and allow the Federal Government of Somalia to run the nation and continue in its mission to improve the country. However, many fear that, by terminating the mission as of January 2024, a security vacuum would be created, exposing the nation of Somalia to threats to its sovereignty.

If the ATMIS were to be immediately removed from Somalia, a permanent government would have to be set up. In the case this is done incorrectly (i.e., in haste), there is a risk of being taken advantage of by Somalia's enemies, Al-Shabaab and the ICU. The above would create more conflict, which would be detrimental to the area.

## **MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED**

### **Djibouti**

Djibouti has extended its support to the nation in its efforts to combat the terrorist group known as Al-Shabaab. Al-Shabaab has been a threat not only to Somalia but also to neighboring countries, including Djibouti. The government of Djibouti has been actively involved in supporting Somalia's fight against Al-Shabaab, both militarily and financially, given the potential threat the group poses to the security and stability of the region.

Djibouti's strategic location, which also plays a role in its involvement, as it is the only country in the region that hosts military bases for multiple foreign powers

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<sup>5</sup> *About ATMIS - African Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS)*. <https://atmis-au.org/about-atmis/>. Accessed 21 Jan. 2024.

(including the People’s Republic of China, Japan, and the United States), has made it a crucial player in the fight against terrorism in the Horn of Africa.

### **Kenya**

Kenya, being a primary target of Al-Shabaab—alongside Somalia and Djibouti—is actively fighting against the militia, having deployed a substantial number of troops and providing essential supplies to the Somali State as part of a series of collaborative measures to safeguard itself and its neighboring countries from potential terrorist attacks.

As part of a strategic plan orchestrated by the African Union and the United Nations, Kenya's military presence in Somalia is undergoing a phased withdrawal. The gradual retreat of troops has already commenced, and the remaining forces are scheduled to complete the withdrawal by the end of 2024. The aforementioned removal of troops aligns with the broader international efforts to address security concerns in the region and reflects a coordinated approach to counter-terrorism initiatives.

### **Russian Federation**

Russia has also been critical of Al-Shabaab, showing its full support to and recognition of the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS). According to Russia's external policy, Moscow has reiterated its willingness to provide the Somali army with the supplies it needs to combat extremists like Al-Shabaab and al-Qaeda that are still present in the nation. This eagerness, however, also reveals a growing interest from Russia in the African continent. Coupled with Russian activity in the area through the Wagner Group, a proxy militia directly answering to the Russian government, concerns have arisen, as it could signify the expansion of Russia’s sphere of influence in Africa.

### **United States of America (USA)**

The United States, like Russia and other More Economically Developed Countries (MEDCs), has supported Somalia in recent times against al-Shabaab. With one of the most powerful armies in the world, the US provides military help not only in the form of troops but also as an advisor to Somalia, offering military tactics and intelligence against their enemy. Additionally, it is crucial to note that the US financially supports Somalia, contributing to the reform and economic recovery process. This multifaceted support underscores the collaborative effort to address security challenges and promote regional stability. This comprehensive support from the United States signifies a commitment to fostering long-term stability in Somalia, ensuring a secure and self-sufficient environment, as ATMIS concludes.



## Al-Qaeda

Osama bin Laden established the militant Islamist group Al-Qaeda in the late 1980s. After carrying out the September 11, 2001, attacks, Al-Qaeda rose to prominence as one of the most infamous terrorist groups in the world. Al-Qaeda supports the idea of global jihad, i.e., the global implementation of Islamic Law through a “holy war.” In 2012, it incorporated the militant group Al-Shabaab in its ranks, further strengthening both groups. Al-Qaeda operations have scaled down since, with branches of the organization committing crimes in their respective countries. The group remains intact, however, under the leadership of Saif al-Adel.

## European Union (EU)

The European Union, considered one of Somalia's principal financial backers, advocates for security sector reform, viewing it as crucial for its stabilization. With direct financial contributions since 2007 to AMISOM and ATMIS, the European Union is prepared to maintain a tight and unwavering commitment to supporting ATMIS operations and building on its current accomplishments. As the mission concludes, this collaborative international support emphasizes the shared dedication to Somalia's lasting stability. The EU's financial and advocacy role positions it as a pivotal contributor to Somalia's ongoing security and reform efforts.

## TIMELINE OF EVENTS

Date	Description of event
1 July 1969	The nation of Somalia gains independence from its European colonizers.
15 October 1969	Abdirashid Ali Shermarke, Somalia’s first president after independence, is assassinated, leading to the first of many coups in the country.
15 December 1964	The first transitional government rises to power in Somalia.
Late 2004	Al-Shabaab is formed as a wing of the Islamic Courts Union of Somalia (ICU). It is unclear when exactly this organization was formed.

10 October 2004	A transitional government is formed, while in exile, to stop the rise of Al-Shabaab.
27 June 2006	Al-Shabaab takes control of Somalia's capital city, Mogadishu.
6 December 2006	Ethiopia invades Somalia, after sensing a threat to its national sovereignty.
19 January 2007	AMISOM becomes operational, with a six-month mandate, later to be extended, by UN Security Council Resolution 2372.
August 2011	AMISOM forces push Al-Shabaab out of Mogadishu and other population centers.
9 February 2012	Al-Shabaab joins forces with al-Qaeda.
October 2014	The African Union and the UN Security Council authorize AMISOM to continue its operations until November 30, 2015.
30 September 2017	The UN allows for the withdrawal of 1000 troops, by the end of that year, signifying the first-ever de-escalation efforts since the mission's inception.
1 April 2022	With a SC resolution being ratified a day prior, AMISOM changes its name to ATMIS, with its new mandate dictated by S/RES/2628.
21 December 2022	The mandate of ATMIS is extended to June 30, 2023, by Security Council Resolution S/RES/2670.
27 June 2023	The mandate of ATMIS is further extended to December 31, 2023, by Security Council Resolution S/RES/2687.

## RELEVANT UN RESOLUTIONS, TREATIES AND EVENTS

- Security Council resolution 2628 (2022) [on the establishment of the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS)], 31 March 2022, **(S/RES/2628)**<sup>6</sup>
- Security Council resolution 2687 (2023) [on the extension of the authorizations of the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) until 31 December 2023], 27 June 2023, **(S/RES/2687)**<sup>7</sup>
- Security Council resolution 2670 (2022) [on the extension of the authorizations of the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) until 30 June 2023], 21 December 2022, **(S/RES/2670)**<sup>8</sup>
- Security Council resolution 2710 (2023) [on the extension of the authorizations of the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) until 30 June 2024], 15 November 2023, **(S/RES/2710)**<sup>9</sup>

## PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE ISSUE

### Somalia Transition Plan

The Somalia Transition Plan describes the nation's efforts to move away from the African Union and UN Peacekeeping forces by introducing its own. The plan was enforced by both AMISOM and ATMIS, with its mandate being enacted in 2018, long before the introduction of ATMIS. It allows for a decrease in ATMIS troops and an increase in Somali Armed Forces. Somalia's transition to a fully functional security sector is far from over, with ATMIS still operating. However, the Transition Plan is the base for the nation's stabilization. It also introduces a piece of legislature, the Transitional Federal Charter of The Somali Republic, which sets the foundation of the Somali State's operations.

This document acts as Somalia's Constitution. It covers citizenship, official language, state identity, sovereignty, and territory. It also affirms the Transitional Federal Government and outlines its responsibilities, as well as the state's organization and structure. The Charter also enforces the rule of law in the nation of

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<sup>6</sup> *Resolution 2628 (2022)*. United Nations Security Council, 31 Mar. 2022, <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N22/306/06/PDF/N2230606.pdf?OpenElement>.

<sup>7</sup> Kithumbu, Alex. "Resolution 2687 (2023) Adopted by the Security Council at Its 9359th Meeting, on 27 June 2023." *African Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS)*, 1 July 2023, <https://atmis-au.org/3710-2/>.

<sup>8</sup> *Resolution 2670 (2022)*. United Nations Security Council, 21 Dec. 2022, <https://atmis-au.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/scr-2670-2022-on-somalia-atmis-adopted-res-e-93.pdf>.

<sup>9</sup> *Resolution 2710 (2023)*. United Nations Security Council, 15 Nov. 2023, <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N23/357/07/PDF/N2335707.pdf?OpenElement>.

Somalia, disallowing anyone from escaping legal repercussions after committing a crime, due to status, income, or position in government.

### **Somali/Djibouti Peace Process**

The Djibouti/Somali Peace Process is a 2008 peace pact made in neighboring Djibouti between the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and the Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia (ARS). Through the process, the two nations aim to eliminate all conflict in the area while preventing the rise of extremist organizations.

The first phase of the Djibouti Process (early 2009) resulted in an agreement on the formation of a new Transitional Federal Government. This included increasing the size of the Parliament from 275 to 550 members to accommodate ARS legislators, as well as expanding the government. It also asked the UN to send an international stabilization force made up of the nation's allies.

The Djibouti process is the most recent step in Somalia's political settlement and peacemaking efforts, which began nearly immediately after the outbreak of hostilities in the 1990s. The task, as always, is to solidify previous victories and to attract others into constructive conversation and out of the cycle of violence.

## **POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS**

### **Reform of the Somali Security Sector**

One of the most important parameters to consider is the lack of a fortified security sector in Somalia. The areas that would need to be reformed are those associated with citizen protection, such as the army and the police force, by introducing various levels of reform. These reforms would ensure that the aforementioned militant groups will not be allowed to develop in Somalia.

In the example of the armed forces, for example, a robust intelligence framework within the military, which could identify and counter potential threats, may work in the nation's favor by giving them the ability to prevent attacks before they happen. The police force, on the other hand, would allow for community participation in its operations, not only raising the number of available personnel but also permitting a more nuanced approach to the issue. The above could also be enhanced through the use of technology. A database, shared among national and international agencies, of potential attackers would be established, helping the agencies collaborate.

The nation of Somalia, through the adoption of a multi-faceted approach that addresses military capabilities, law enforcement effectiveness, technological

advancements, international collaboration, and community engagement, can significantly improve its security landscape and prevent the resurgence of militant groups like Al-Shabaab, thus fulfilling the purpose of ATMIS.

### Political Reform

The nation's political system has also been scrutinized in recent times. In the case of Somalia, ensuring a smooth transition of power and providing fair elections is the first step that needs to be taken to stabilize the nation. Key positions in the cabinet could also be reconsidered, to protect Somalia's interests and national sovereignty better, a job which falls into the hands of the future President. The Ministries responsible for Defence, Military, and Public Safety would need also to be reinforced, through fairer allocation of resources and greater legal freedoms.

### Humanitarian Assistance

Conflict causes harm to all sides, but those most affected are the citizens. Many have been killed, injured, or displaced due to the decades-long fight between Somalia and al-Shabaab. Thus, the international community needs to aid the nation for a set period, both in the financial and humanitarian sectors, through the establishment and ratification of a multi-aspect action plan, which would be realized by national governments, intergovernmental organizations, and non-governmental organizations, providing monetary aid, medicine, as well as developmental aid to the nation of Somalia.

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