

Dear Colleagues,

It is that time of year when we reflect on past months to evaluate our efforts, celebrate our accomplishments, and envision our future plans.

First, I would like to most sincerely thank each one of you for the good progress we have made this year. I have enjoyed serving with you and feel a shared sense of pride in our achievements. I extend my gratitude also to all UN, ATMIS, Federal Government of Somalia (FGS), and development partners. Without their cooperation and great teamwork, UNSOS would not have been able to achieve much.

In April, as I was starting my journey with UNSOS, we were honoured to host UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres. During his visit he reiterated the UN's commitment to supporting Somalia in its peacebuilding, stabilization and development effort.

I wish to commend the very warm reception that I was accorded by the UN family, senior FGS and ATMIS officials all of which laid a good foundation for a strong tripartite relationship amongst us. With this, we set aside time to hold structured listening sessions to learn more from our clients on how to further enhance our support to them and become a more client-oriented organization and I am glad we continue to make good progress in this regard.

As mandated, we facilitated the handover of security responsibilities from ATMIS to the Somali security forces and completed phase 1 of the drawdown in June 2023 and currently, UNSOS continues to facilitate phase 2 of the drawdown in spite of the recent El Niño crisis. We have not only gifted UN-owned equipment, but we also provide training on its proper handling and maintenance to the Somali Security Forces assuming control of the Forward Operating Bases.

As a strategic enabler, UNSOS continued to provide day-to-day logistical support to all our clients in various locations across Somalia. Throughout the year, UNSOS stepped up support to address a wide range of challenges, including the El Niño-induced floods. UNSOS personnel provided aid in conjunction with ATMIS, FGS, and UN Country Team in Somalia (UNCT) to mitigate the devastating impacts of the floods on livelihoods.

We also had the privilege of hosting United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Operational Support, Atul Khare, in September and a 22-member delegation of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, (C34) in November. The USG and the delegation were pleased with the close collaboration we have with our partners and with the contribution of UNSOS to the security transition in Somalia and committed their full support to the Mission.

As the year came to an end UNSOS participated in the Somalia Security Conference in New York led by HE President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud and attended by representatives from more than 20 nations and key partners; during which UNSOS' contribution was appreciated and supported. On the side-lines of the conference, UNSOS, the Federal Government of Somalia and ATMIS signed a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding to enhance support to Somali Security Forces involved in peacekeeping operations.

Also in December, the Federal Government of Somalia gave UNSOS an award in recognition of its role and contribution in bolstering the aviation sector of the nation. The award from the FGS is a testament to the hard work of our committed and diligent staff and partners.

We are sincerely grateful to our development partners for their generous donations to the UNSOS Trust Fund to support Somalia Security Forces. Special thanks for the recent contributions by the United Kingdom and the United States, which have gone a long way in supporting Somali Security Forces.

Moving forward, there will be more work to be done in the upcoming year, including supporting the ongoing transition, enhancing the capacity of SSF, rolling out our decentralization programme, strengthening our relationships with partners, implementing our mandate (including the increased number of SSF to be supported,) enhancing support to our clients and improving the welfare of our staff. I am confident that we are a strong team, unwavering in commitment and focused on shared goals.

As we close this remarkable year, I would like to extend to you, your loved ones and families warm holiday greetings and wish you all a very happy and prosperous New Year.

Warmly,

Aisa Kirabo Kacyira
ASG, Head of UNSOS