

## African Union Mission in Somalia Considerations for Transition and Kenya's National Security

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### ABSTRACT

*This study assessed the implications of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) on Kenya's national security within the context of AMISOM's transition to the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS). The objective of the study was analyse achievement of African Union Mission in Somalia mandates, to examine the effects to Kenya's National security and assess transition strategies of national security. The study was guided by Functionalist, Strategic and Securitisation theories. The research employed a mixed-methods research design using questionnaire surveys and interviews with respondents in Kenya's border counties most affected by Somali instability. Study findings established that, while a majority (52%) believe AMISOM has achieved its mandate to a moderate extent, concerns remain regarding the capacity of Somali Security Forces (SSF) and the overall stability of Somalia. In addition, study findings established that while progress has been made in degrading Al-Shabaab and supporting the Somali Federal Government (FGS). However, only a third of respondents believe the SSF has been adequately mentored by AMISOM. Despite success in facilitating humanitarian assistance and Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) projects, nearly two-thirds believe Somalia lacks the conditions necessary for long-term stability. The study concludes that AMISOM's transition strategy inadequately addresses governance and security aspects essential for Kenyan security. Weak SSF and FGS capacity pose a threat of failed stabilization after AMISOM's withdrawal. Additionally, Kenya's current border security measures are insufficient to manage potential spill over effects. ANOVA indicated an F statistic of 134.318 and a p value of  $0.000 < 0.05$  thus the Somalia PSO strategies significantly predict Kenya's National Security. Regressions weight model ( $\beta = -0.451, P = .000 < .05$ ) implied that Nature of Somalia PSO strategies negatively influences Kenya's National Security. The study recommends a revision of the AMISOM transition strategy to include capacity building for FGS and SSF, including forces in federal member states like Jubaland; allocation of sufficient time for a well-monitored transition with clear benchmarks; an exploration cautious negotiations with Al-Shabaab, contingent on a strong FGS and a hybrid AU-UN peacekeeping mission to succeed ATMIS to ensure Kenya's long-term security.*

**Keywords:** AMISOM, Capacity Building, Peace Support Operations, Security Sector Reforms, Stability

### I. INTRODUCTION

Peace support operations (PSOs) connote a continuum of planning, transitions and exit of multilateral efforts to restore peace in conflict areas as sanctioned under article 33, Chapter 6 of the UN Charter. PSO portend challenges as well as opportunities for the attainment of national security objectives. Such national security objectives are pursued in the context of military interventions to bid for collective security, self-defence or other national and international interests (Williams & Hashi, 2016). Specifically, PSOs have strategic objectives, which require apt planning to align ends and means (Clark, 2006). Unfortunately, transition strategies have often fallen short in one way or another, as evidenced in various bungled PSO transitions and exits, such as in Afghanistan in August of 2021.

In Vietnam, the USA-led military operation was adjudged as having failed due to rigidity by the operational commanders in adapting their strategies to the unconventional nature of the conflict (Angell, 2015). The twenty-year operation ended in 1975 after arduous jungle fighting resulting in the disgraced exit of a conventionally superior USA Military force. The guerrilla tactics employed by the rag-tag Vietcong bogged the mighty USA Army in a protracted jungle warfare that proved costly, with more than 55,000 American soldiers and between 3 and 4 million Vietnamese killed in action (Waldron, 2017). The protracted nature of the conflict resulted in the waning of the American public support for the war and the draining of the USA's coffers (approximately \$ 168 billion as of the then dollar value). Among the outcomes was the withdrawal of the crestfallen allied troops without a concrete post-conflict plan to stabilise the country. The Vietnam War debacle has haunted the USA's international reputation for years in the field of military intervention. A similar fate is possible for AMISOM Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs), especially Kenya,

if the transition strategies are not carefully planned to consolidate the AMISOM mandate and achieve the set Kenya National Security goals of the operation.

Over in Afghanistan, both the USSR and the USA had embarrassing military outcomes of their campaigns contrary to what would be expected of superior military powers. As such, Afghanistan has been touted as the graveyard of empires. In December 1978, the USSR invaded Afghanistan to effect regime change (Vedder, 2009). However, after a decade of fighting, the mighty Soviet army suffered a loss at the hands of the Mujahideen Militia despite the asymmetry in military strength (Gompert et al., 2014). The Mujahideen considered the Soviets as Kaffirs (apostates), and their presence in Islamic territory was sacrilegious, thereby justifying the use of all possible means to drive them out. Thus, with the aid of the CIA, they used unconventional tactics to offset the asymmetry in military might. The Soviet occupation and eventual defeat deepened the socioeconomic and political woes that added to the factors that led to the eventual collapse of the USSR at the end of the cold war.

Furthermore, in the late 1970s, Military campaigns by USSR in Afghanistan entailed an undeclared proxy war where the USA was clandestinely supporting the Mujahideen against the USSR. It stemmed from the cold war relations between the West and East blocs; thus, any opportunity that would hurt the opponent was capitalised on (Dormandy, 2007). Besides unstable Afghanistan left behind in the wake of the war, the Mujahideen led by Osama Bin Laden later morphed into Al Qaeda. Afghanistan came under extremist governance by the Taliban and accommodated Al Qaeda extremists destabilising the region and the globe through acts of terror (Jackson & Amiri, 2021). In the case of AMISOM transition and exit, and more so, Kenya contingent's exit, the peace and stability situation of areas bordering Somalia will likely deteriorate if a good transition strategy is not implemented. The security vacuum created by exiting troops may enable Al-Shabaab militants to have freedom of movement to conduct incursions in the immediate border regions in counties such as Mandera, Wajir, Garissa and Lamu. The counties are already experiencing significant attacks and other activities by Al-Shabaab operatives.

Military operations by the USA in Afghanistan were justified in the context of the Global War on Terror (GWOT) after the 11 September 2001 (popularly known as 9/11) attack on the USA (Okoth, 2003). However, after two decades in the country and two successive weak pro-west regimes (led by Hamid Karzai and Ashraf Ghani, respectively), the USA-led operations ended in anti-climax after the hasty exit by August 2021 (Crocker, 2021). The exit had been preceded by peace talks between the Government of the USA and the Taliban anchored on four pillars viz withdrawal of troops, guarantees that Afghanistan would not become a platform for terrorism, intra-Afghan dialogue, and a comprehensive ceasefire (Jonegård, 2019). The poor alignment of ends, ways and means by the USA military and foreign policy experts has been alluded to as one of the critical factors in the bungled exit from Afghanistan (Sopko, 2021). The significant consequence was the takeover of the country by Taliban fundamentalists, thus posing a threat to the peace and security of western nations in militating against the fourth pillar of the peace talks.

Whereas it can be inferred that a moderate Taliban regime would have taken over, according to the negotiations, it turned out to be the old fundamentalist Taliban in a 'moderate' guise. A similar trend was witnessed earlier in Iraq, where even after a phased draw-down of coalition forces, militants of Islamic State in Syria and the Levant (ISIS/L), with a camouflage name Daesh, swept through the country in 2014, filling the vacuum left by coalition forces (Crocker, 2021). It is a damning indictment of the USA and its allies regarding their concern for the post-intervention stability of countries. As Kagwanja et al. (2020, p. 121) submitted, the Iraq invasion was focused regime change with little regard for post-Saddam stability of the state of Iraq and no consideration was given for regional and global implications of Iraq's destruction. Such transition-failed outcomes are possible motivations for other jihadist organisations, such as Al-Shabaab, who hope the same route will occur with AMISOM transition and exit, thus presenting an opportunity to exploit.

In Africa, Peace support operations (PSO) under the auspices of the UN have been conducted in many countries with varied outcomes. Some well-executed PSOs leading to stability, such as in Namibia, Sierra Leone, Burundi, and Ethiopia-Eritrea, among others, have seen some measure of success in peace and stability (Kagwanja et al., 2020). These PSOs have employed a mixture of approaches, including hard power, soft power or a blend of the two in what some scholars call military diplomacy or smart power (Kagwanja et al., 2020; Imbiakha et al., 2021). Attempts in Somalia illustrate failed PSO interventions. It is a fact noted in a thesis by Ligawa (2018:175) arguing that the nature of AMISOM strategies slows down peacebuilding, therefore, needing realignment to support peacebuilding in Somalia. After the fall of Siad Barre's regime in 1991, the UN attempted to stabilise the situation in Somalia to provide security for humanitarian aid, which activities of warlords such as Farah Aideed and Ali Mahdi Mohamed had hitherto hampered. The result was the deployment of UNOSOM I in 1993, then UNITAF in 1994, which shortly transitioned into UNOSOM II, which eventually exited in 1995 (Ligawa, 2018; Nzau, 2018). The infamous 1993

incident christened 'Black Hawk Down' resulted in a reassessment of USA Military interventions in Africa guided by a risk-averse approach called Somalia Syndrome (Bass & Zimmerman, 2013; Patman, 2015).

Hand over security responsibilities gradually to FGS and SSF, a transition and exit of AMISOM was on condition that FGS could assume governance and security responsibilities (Kagwanja et al., 2020; Williams & Hashi, 2016). However, there were concerns that the planned transitions were being hurried and the critical milestones needed to be achieved; thus, rethinking the transition, its implementation, and its consequences were crucial (Williams et al., 2018). The planned transition did not materialise at the projected timelines leading to extensions and mandate renewals of AMISOM. AMISOM transited to ATMIS WEF 01 April 2022. ATMIS is a force configuration tasked with implementing the STP, and eventually handover to SSF or a hybrid UN-led peacekeeping mission alongside SSF at the end of 2024. Since AMISOM has transited to ATMIS and has an outlined concept of operation, it is important to contextualise the influence of the achievements of the transition to Kenya's national security which was the motivation of this study. The objective of the study was analyse achievement of African Union Mission in Somalia mandates, to examine the effects to Kenya's National security and assess transition strategies of national security.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Theoretical Literature Review

#### 2.1.1 Strategic Theory

The strategic theory was propounded through the works of Schelling (1984; 1980), a classical strategic theorist. The theory posits that to optimize outcomes, all the possibilities and forces at play, including costs and risks, and decisions and consequences, should be considered against those of adversaries or allies. It requires planners to adjust ends to means in employing resources to attain national security objectives.

Scholars note that strategic theory studies correlations between ends and means (Smith, 2008). It implies the use, threat of use, of armed forces as a conscious choice of political actors' intent on rationally pursuing their national security objectives. Yager (2006, p.2) notes that strategic theory is anchored on seven key assumptions, viz: the importance of considering ends and means; the centrality of the political actor as the unit of analysis; understanding the political actor's value system and preferences; the more comprehensive strategic environment will influence an actor's interest; the actor behaving rationally in pursuit of aims; the acceptance of clashing interests and the observance of moral neutrality.

The strategic theory is vital in comprehending the decision-making process concerning military power and its use in pursuing national security objectives. Thus, the theory was suitable for the study since it explained the need for careful planning that considers all possible permutations and combinations when pursuing national objectives in the context of multinational engagements and military operations. It includes careful planning through the continuum of conflicts, including transitions and terminations. The theory complimented the functionalist theory by emphasizing the need for detailed but rationalistic plans that aid a state in attaining its interests and objectives in multilateral and bilateral engagements. However, the theory mostly focuses on means and ends, and does not explain how issues are framed as compelling to require a strategy. This gap was remedied by securitization theory.

#### 2.1.2 Securitisation Theory

The theory was postulated by Wæver (1995) and later developed by Buzan et al. (1998). It posits that political issues are framed as extreme security issues to be dealt with urgently through a labelling process that portrays them as dangerous, menacing, threatening, or alarming. An authority does such framing as a securitising actor possessing the institutional power to advance the issues beyond politics.

Securitisation is set within the Copenhagen School of thought, which views security as an outcome of a social process or speech act instead of an objective condition. The Copenhagen School further posits that deciding on what issues are to be characterised as security threats is a rational process that is subjective mainly in orientation and changes with the views of different individuals, groups or organizations (Buzan et al., 1998: 29-30). As Wæver (1995, p. 55) submits, nothing is a security issue by itself; instead, it becomes a security issue only if labelled. Consequently, the connotation of security in contemporary global politics is ultimately constructed through the speeches and representations made by relevant political actors; through the speech act, they are sold to their constituents for endorsement and acceptance of subsequent countermeasures by the state.

According to Eroukhmanoff (2018), securitisation is beset within five sectors viz economic, societal, military, political and environmental. For each, a definite threat is articulated as threatening a referent object. For instance, in the societal sector, the referent object is identity. The referent objects in the environmental sector are the ecosystem

and endangered species, while the military sector retains the state as the referent object (Eroukhmanoff, 2018). The sectoring of threats means that existential threats are not objective but relate to each referent object's different characteristics. While some threats, such as suicide bombers, are a more significant source of anxiety for some people, they may not be accurate for others despite the globalist connotation of suicide bombing as a threat.

Securitization theory was apt for this study since the notion of national security as a matter of policy is not straightforward (Williams, 2003). Instead, such a policy is carefully designated by planners and decision-makers. The entry of Kenya into Somalia and subsequent re-hatting to AMISOM was justified as a security issue and accepted by Kenyan Citizens. Similarly, the transition of AMISOM portending national security challenges must be securitised for proper strategies to mitigate adverse security effects. The theory provides clearly the political aspect of security issues unlike the strategic theory, which is keen on means and ends.

### III. METHODOLOGY

The study used a descriptive survey research design entailing mixed methods approach. The study was conducted in Mandera, Wajir, Garissa and Lamu counties. The target population was 3,340 respondents comprising Security Personnel, County officials, NPS officials, KRA officials, Immigration Officials and community elders. The study used cluster and purposive sampling to select respondents and key informants. A sample of 400 respondents and 49 key informants were selected for the study. Data was collected using questionnaires and interviews and analysed using SPSS for quantitative data and thematically for qualitative data. The results were presented using descriptive statistics such as percentages, charts, graphs, frequency distribution, and thematic analysis of the excerpts.

### IV. FINDINGS & DISCUSSIONS

#### 4.1 Response Rate

Self-administered questionnaires were used to collect responses to primary data from the selected respondents. The response rate is indicated in Table 1.

**Table 1**

*Response rate*

	Frequency	Percentage
Returned Questionnaires	370	92.5%
Unreturned Questionnaires	30	7.5%
Total	399	100%

Table 1 indicated the response rate being at 92.5%, a rate deemed high and adequate to represent the target population. According to Kumar (2014: 141), in social sciences, a response rate of 50% is adequate for producing accurate estimations when using questionnaires. Therefore, the response rate for this research was significantly high; thus, the data could provide a reliable generalization to the study population.

#### 4.1.1 Advent of Actors of AMISOM

AMISOM is an AU-led PSO in Somalia that aimed to stabilize the Country after decades of instability. The PSO deployed in 2007 after the ignominious withdrawal of UNOSOM II in 1995. Initially authorized by the AU Peace and Security Council (PSC) on 19 January 2007, AMISOM was also authorized by UN Security Council resolution 1744 on 20 February 2007 (Williams et al., 2018). As identified by Williams et al. (2018), the internal actors of AMISOM include the FGS, Federal Member States, SSF Somalia citizens. External actors of AMISOM include the TCCs (Burundi, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Uganda, Kenya, and Rwanda); training, financial and logistics support (EU, EUTM, UK and UNSOS), the AU through PSC and the UN (Williams et al., 2018, p. 39).

Over the years, AMISOM's mandate strategies would evolve from protecting the Somali authorities and facilitating a political process to warfighting, counter-insurgency, and stabilization with state-building admixture. To execute its responsibilities, the AU and UN altered the character and nature of the mission to enable the attainment of the Mission tasks between 2007 and 2011 (Ligawa, 2018). From the confines of Mogadishu, the mission expanded to other regions when contingents from Kenya and Djibouti joined those from Uganda and Burundi.

AMISOM strategy employed throughout the PSO duration was encapsulated within its mandate. Deployed under the auspices of APSA, AMISOM's mandate was to degrade Al-Shabaab and other militia and create conditions

for the stability of Somalia (Williams et al., 2018). Nzau (2018) and Oluoch (2018) observed that the threat environment in Somalia required that the AMISOM mandate be oriented towards peace enforcement since there was no peace agreement signed between belligerent parties and thus no peace to keep. Therefore, the AMISOM mandate took the peace enforcement trajectory (under Chapter Seven of the UN Charter) to create the necessary condition for restoring peace and stability. The AMISOM mandate is hinged on degrading Al-Shabaab through a mixture of approaches such as use of military forces as well as WHAM activities. This was the main effort of the strategy, and was meant to create conducive environment for the long-term stability and development of Somalia. A key informant's views encapsulated the holistic AMISOM strategy as follows:

*The Somalia conflict has required a holistic approach in efforts to foster peacebuilding in Somalia. With the appreciation that sustainable peace will be achieved in different fronts; civilian empowerment, institutional capacity growth and SSF capacity building, are critical in AMISOM strategy implementation. Besides the military kinetic operations against Al-Shabaab's empowerment of the human terrain is key in fighting the Centre of Gravity of Al-Shabaab insurgents. The same operational tempo is transferred to ATMIS as it takes over from AMISOM* (Interview with the Deputy Sector Commander, Sector 2 at Dhobley, on 28 December 2022).

The views of the key informant speak to the broader approach to operations as espoused in MAA concept (Kibusia, 2021). Moreover, it resonates well with the submission by Onditi (2015) which argued that PSO structures should adapt to the realities of African conflicts, which require efforts beyond traditional military approaches. In addition, it gives credence to the argument by Ligawa (2018), that cultural intelligence alongside military approaches should be blended for optimal AMISOM peacebuilding outcomes. The sectoring strategy by AMISOM aligned to Nzau's (2018) analysis of contingent deployment to reflect the national interests by each TCC.

William & Nguyen (2018) observed that the AMISOM mandate had been extended severally by UN Security Council resolutions with each mandate period lasting for six months. AMISOM eventually transitioned to ATMIS on 01 April 2022, effectively ending its mandate. An assessment of the achievements of the AMISOM mandate has been spasmodic at best, with various scholars providing varying assessments. Without statistical backing, William et al. (2018) claimed that AMISOM had made significant progress in pursuit of its strategic objectives, viz reducing the threat posed by Al-Shabaab and other armed opposition groups, provision of security to enable Somalia's political processes and reconciliation and, handing over of security responsibilities to Somalia Security Forces. A Key informant shared a similar optimism, pointing out that:

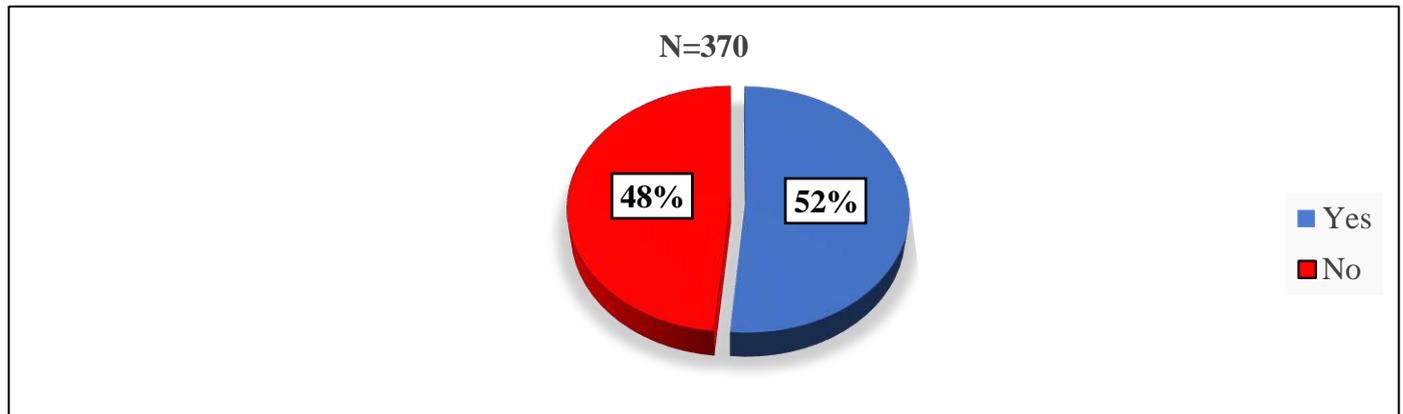
*AMISOM troops, especially the Kenyan contingent, have made a good account of themselves despite challenges. Strategic areas such as Kismayu, Afmadhow, Tabda, Hosingo, Gherille, Burahache and Beles Qoqaan have been liberated, thus denying Al-Shabaab strategic deployment posts. The militants (Al-Shabaab) have been degraded through a multipronged approach that has included hard military power and engaging the community in the context of WHAM using CIMIC. Governance has been restored in liberated areas through electoral and appointment processes done by and acceptable to the locals. Regular regional elections, as well as federal elections, have been conducted and secured by AMISOM forces. The progress has been commendable. However, the mentorship of the local security forces has been slow, and they are not yet up to the required standards to assume full security responsibilities. More must be done in this respect* (Interview with ATMIS Military Commander in Kolbiyow, 30 November 2022).

The views of the key informant resonate with Onditi (2015) submission that adapting PSO structures to African conflict realities is crucial. Therefore, cordial relations between PSOs' military and civilian entities are essential, as envisaged in APSA. While AMISOM had set objectives, some of which would indicate the mandate's achievement, the success criteria were lacking in the strategies. It is impossible to attain 100% of set objectives, and thus, the need for success criteria that would set the extent to which each objective should be achieved to determine whether it is a success or failure (Yarger, 2006). To this end, achievement indicators that act as markers to determine progress and extent would be set. Similarly, a prioritization of the objectives based on weighted significance and a proportion of objectives to be achieved should be determined in the assessment matrix before the mandate achievement is determined. Success criterion is not an alien concept in military planning and should apply to PSO plans and strategies.

#### 4.1.2 Achievements of AMISOM

Supportive of the positive appraisal of the achievement of the AMISOM mandate, the findings presented in Figure 1 depicts respondents' perception of the achievement of the AMISOM mandate in Somalia. Study findings in Figure 1 revealed that majority 52% of respondents affirmed that AMISOM had achieved its mandate, while 48%

indicated that it had not. A split opinion on a question should attract a definitive opinion about success or failure. This study contents that while AMISOM has done well in attempts to stabilize Somalia, a significant portion of the population still feels that more has to be done. This onus has to fall on ATMIS as the shepherded transfer of responsibilities to FGS and SSF. The results indicate an almost equal split in respondents' perceptions of the achievement of the AMISOM mandate.



**Figure 1**  
*Achievement of AMISOM Mandate*

These findings are corroborated with studies by Ligawa (2018) and Kagwanja et al. (2020) which advanced that AMISOM has liberated large swathes of territory under Al-Shabaab's control, including capturing the strategic port city of Kismayu, Marka, and control of Mogadishu. In addition, and with regards to success of AMISOM, the findings of this study are corroborated with Williams et al. (2018) which established that piracy along the Indian Ocean has been vanquished, thus saving Kenya's tourism sector and the economy. Other critical areas liberated from Al-Shabaab include the coastal towns of Quday, Burgaabo, and Ras Kiamboni (Williams et al., 2018). These were the revenue bases for Al-Shabaab, and their capture denied Al-Shabaab finances to fund their activities. However, this study notes that, by the time of AMISOM's transition to ATMIS, critical areas such as Jilib, Jamaame, Buale, and Sakoow, among others, remain under Al-Shabaab's control.

**4.1.3 Achievement of AMISOM Mandate Strategic Objectives**

The study also sought to assess AMISOM's achievements with regards to the strategic objectives. Respondents assessed each of the AMISOM mandate objectives to determine the extent to which each had been achieved in the context of the overall AMISOM mandate. It was in an attempt by the study to foster the idea of an assessment matrix with clear parameters to measure the achievement of each objective to determine the extent of the mandate. Data on the same were collected, analysed and the results presented in Table 2.

**Table 2**  
*Cross-tabulation for Achievement of AMISOM Objectives*

AMISOM Mandate Objectives	Achievement rating (%), N=370				Total (%)
	Great extent	Large Extent	Less extent	Not achieved	
Degrading Al-Shabaab	15.2	51.5	24.2	9.1	100
Provision of support to Federal Government of Somalia (FGS)	27.3	57.6	9.1	6.1	100
Mentoring and Capacity building of Somalia Stability Fund (SSF)	6.1	33.3	54.5	6.1	100
Facilitation of Humanitarian assistance	6.1	54.5	36.4	3.0	100
Creation of conditions for long-term stability, reconstruction, and development of Somalia	3.0	30.3	39.4	27.3	100
Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) and Quick Impact projects	3.0	63.6	27.3	6.1	100

The findings in Table 2 indicate the extent of achievement of the AMISOM objectives as rated by respondents. Regarding degrading Al-Shabaab, majority 51.5% of respondents rated that this mandate had been achieved to a large extent, 15.2% rated that the objective had been achieved to a great extent, 24.2% indicated that it had been achieved to a less extent and 9.1% indicated that this mandate had not been achieved. The current study contends that with majority respondents indicating this mandate has been achieved is a good indication and indeed a threshold that could be used to trigger AMISOM transition. These results suggest significant progress in weakening the insurgency, and thus a key factor for transition.

On the aspect to providing support to FGS, majority 57.6% of respondents indicated that to a large extent this mandate had been achieved, 27.3% of respondents indicated that to a great extent this mandate had been achieved, 9.1% of respondents indicated that this mandate had been achieved to less extent, only 6.1% respondents indicated that this not achieved. This paper contends that a supermajority (over 84%) feels AMISOM has significantly supported the Somali government. These findings indicate strong support for the Somali government, which is essential for its stability and governance. The findings thus indicate a potentially stronger Somali security apparatus able to take on security affairs with the support of AMISOM.

Regarding the mandate of mentoring and capacity building of SSF, majority 54.5% of the respondents rated that mentoring of SSF had been achieved to a lesser extent, 33.3% of respondents rated that this mandate had been rated to a large extent, 6.1% to a great extent, only 3% rated that this mandate had not been achieved. Only a third of respondents believe that this objective is achieved to a large extent. This suggests the SSF may not be fully prepared to handle security on its own. These findings suggest that SSF may be a potential area of concern for transition, as capacity building is crucial for sustaining stability in the post-AMISOM regime.

In relation to AMISOM facilitation of humanitarian assistance majority 54.5% of respondents argued that this mandate had been achieved to a large extent, 36.6% less extent, 6.1% great extent and only 3% rated this as not having been achieved. The findings indicate effective facilitation of humanitarian aid, which is vital for addressing the humanitarian crisis in Somalia. The high rating therefore is indicative on readiness for transition.

On whether creation of conditions for stability and reconstruction of Somalia had been achieved 39.4% of respondents indicated that this had been achieved to a less extent, 30.3 large extent, 27.3 not achieved and only 3% indicate that this parameter had been achieved to a great extent. This study contends that, nearly two-thirds (66.7%) of respondents feel this objective has not been fully achieved. This raises concerns about Somalia's overall stability for a complete AMISOM withdrawal and transition to ATMIS. The results indicate challenges in achieving long-term stability and development, which are fundamental for transition. This paper argued for the need to scale up more effort in this area before transitioning to ATMIS.

On the mandate of Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) and Quick Impact projects, majority of 63.6% indicate that this mandate had been achieved to large extent, 27.3% indicated to less extent, 3% indicated this had been achieved to a great extent and 6.1% of respondents indicated that this had not been achieved. This study contends that, the majority view with regards to CIMIC is positive, suggesting some success in building trust with Somali civilians. This is crucial for long-term stability.

The result reveals that AMISOM has created a foundation for a successful transition with degrading Al-Shabaab and supporting the Somali government emerging from the results as crucial steps for transition. In addition, study findings highlight the need for caution in the transition process. The areas include, continued support for the Somali security forces and efforts to improve stability might be necessary before a complete AMISOM withdrawal.

Regarding the central objective of degrading Al-Shabaab and creating a conducive and enabling environment for political processes, 51.5% of the respondents rated that Al-Shabaab had been degraded to a large extent. Comparatively, the creation of conditions for long-term stability, reconstruction, and development of Somalia was rated to have been achieved to a less extent by 39.4% of the respondents. The findings are congruent with the data analysis in Figure 1 that military efforts have been significantly achieved, but the political processes still lag. Furthermore, another worrying aspect of AMISOM mandate achievement presented from the findings in Table 1 *viz* mentoring and capacity building of SSF, which the respondents (54.5%) rated as having been achieved to a less extent.

The two aspects are crucial for the stability of Somalia since they hinge on the security and governance of Somalia post-AMISOM. With the advent of ATMIS as part of the gradual handover of responsibilities to FGS and SSF, the objectives of security and governance ought to have been achieved to a greater extent. According to Kagwanja et al. (2020, p. 122), the future of Somalia will not rest on militarism but on the civilian rule set in a law and order framework. While this observation is relevant in the context of destabilizing militarism and warlordism, concerning post-AMISOM Somalia, well-trained, disciplined, and professional security forces are essential for the stability of Somalia and the establishment of civilian governance. As aptly observed by William and Hashi (2016), it

would be irresponsible for AMISOM to exit Somalia without leaving behind capable, legitimate, and inclusive Somalia Security Forces. A Key Informant expressed concern for the professional state of SSF:

*The security concerns for most areas of Somalia, such as Jubaland, are the capacity of its security forces. The plans to train, equip and mentor them have not been effectively done; therefore, they (JSF) are not operationally capable. The regular soldiers have poor basic training, poor discipline, lack operational enablers, and not well remunerated. Clan loyalties affect the cohesiveness of the force as a fighting unit with defections back and forth between Al-Shabaab and SSF. Patriotism is lacking, and a common sentiment amongst them is that they will abandon their posts immediately after the Kenyan contingent exits. It will surely give Al-Shabaab an easy time taking over large swathes of liberated territory; thus, Somalia's security and governance will not be achieved. The new government and ATMIS need to reassess their approach to ensure that the security forces are brought up to the task to enable the socio-political and economic reconstruction of Somalia, or else the efforts by AMISOM will have gone to waste (Interview with ATMIS Military Commander in Gedo region on 27 November 2022).*

Qualitative evidence from the key informant interview conforms to reservations hitherto expressed by scholars on post-military interventions. Analysis of military interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan supports the notion that a weak post-intervention security posture is inimical to the stability of a country. Kanat (2019) concluded that the exit of USA forces from Iraq created a security vacuum that led to protracted conflict between the Shia and Sunni Muslim sects leading to the collapse of the Country and takeover by ISIS/L. Afghanistan suffered the same fate after the Taliban swiftly took over the Country after, and even before, the USA forces had completed their exit. The common denominator in the two cases was the emphasis on military victory against the Republican Guard and Taliban while ignoring the rebuilding of the security apparatus of the states for post-conflict stability.

The attainment of the AMISOM mandate is not exclusive to the post-conflict reconstruction of Somalia. A strategy continuum should inform PSOs in Somalia, such as AMISOM. The DSS trilogy espoused by Braun and Allen (2014) entailing shaping, Decisive, Sustainment, and Stability should form a seamless continuum. Strategic phasing predicated on strategic theory assumptions should be organized so that the subsequent phases are conditioned on the success of the preceding phases. A success criteria matrix should be used to evaluate the achievements of objectives based on set parameters for each objective with due consideration of costs.

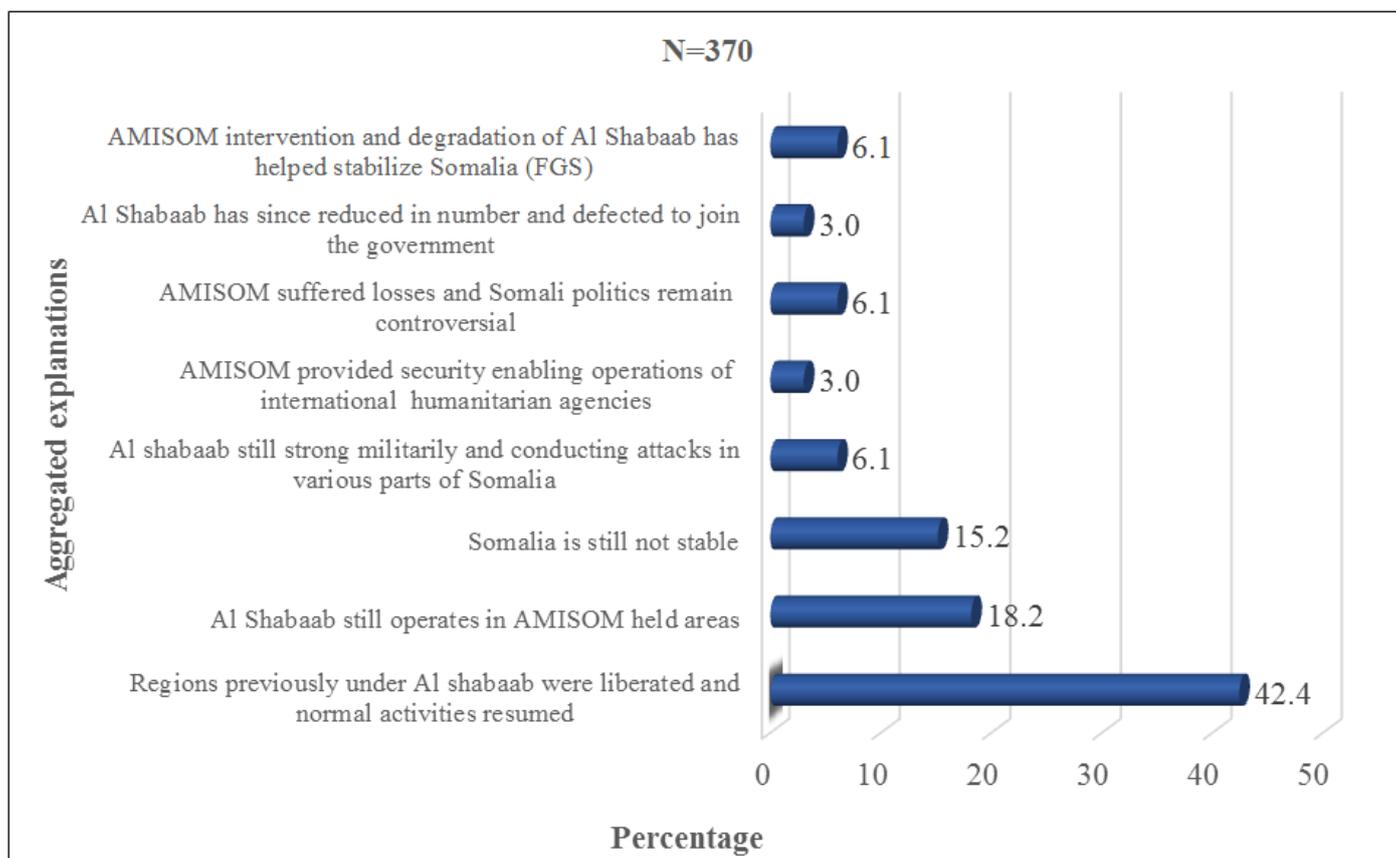
Beyond the governance and security-related objectives, AMISOM made significant achievements in supporting FGS, CIMIC, quick impact projects, and facilitating humanitarian assistance. It supports the assessment by Williams et al. (2018) that AMISOM has made significant progress toward achieving most of its objectives. The aspects of CIMIC, quick impact projects (QIP), and facilitation of humanitarian assistance are efforts to alleviate the living conditions of the local population who had hitherto lived the hardships of a hostile climate, dysfunctional state, and brutal state oppression by Al-Shabaab. Kagwanja et al. (2020) highlighted the health, education, and economic projects conducted in the Kenyan Contingent areas of Dhobley, Beles Qocaa, and Tabda. The Dhobley female engagement teams (FET) implemented model agribusiness projects based on irrigation to teach the community about income-generation farming.

CIMIC and QIP are geared towards WHAM to gain the local population's support. WHAM enables a conducive environment for military operations by denying the Al-Shabaab local support and thus isolating them for targeting. Onditi (2015) and Mowat (2015) opined that CIMIC and WHAM activities, especially in hardship and marginalised areas, help in assuaging the perceptions of marginalisation and thus restoring faith in state governance. While achieving these AMISOM objectives was critical, there ought to have been a balance between the core objectives (security and governance) and the facilitative objectives (CIMIC and QIP, facilitation of humanitarian assistance, and support to FGS). Whereas the facilitative objectives will enable AMISOM to have immediate wins, they are short time within the operation timeline. The security and governance objectives would transcend the PSO deployment, ensuring a stable Somalia post-AMISOM. In this way, the pitfalls of pre-AMISOM PSOs will be avoided alongside the negative security implications to Kenya.

#### 4.1.4 Aggregated Explanations on Achievement of AMISOM Mandate

The aggregated explanations of the respondents regarding the achievement of the AMISOM mandate paint a better picture, as depicted in Figure 2. In support of the arguments by Williams et al. (2018) and Kagwanja et al. (2020), the respondents' explanations support the notion that the Kenya Contingent in AMISOM has liberated large areas from Al-Shabaab thereby enabling the resumption of normal activities by the local population. It was conveyed by the sentiments of 42.4% of the respondents. Significantly, the sentiment of 18.2% of the respondents that Al-Shabaab still operates in areas held by AMISOM forces is a cause for concern since the militants still influence the

security landscape of liberated areas. The ability of the militants to strike devastating blows to AMISOM positions, such as in Ceel Ade, Kolbiyow, and Ceel Baraaf, among others, indicates that Al-Shabaab still retains a significant level of operational capacity. It is an issue for consideration for AMISOM planners to decisively degrade the militants before exiting and handover to SSF. As Kagwanja et al. (2020) indicated, a transition pillar for AMISOM would hinge on a stable Somalia with a degraded Al Shabaab.



**Figure 2**  
*Aggregated explanations on Achievement of AMISOM Mandate*

The explanations in Figure 2 further highlight vital aspects critical to stabilizing the state of Somalia, *viz*, military efforts versus political processes. The findings indicate that the mandate has primarily been successful as far as military efforts are concerned. It is explained by 42.4% of the respondents who indicated that AMISOM activities had liberated regions previously under Al-Shabaab. Comparatively, 15.2% of the respondents believed that Somalia's government is still unstable. It indicates that the political process, a crucial element of the AMISOM mandate, has not been attained adequately.

Further exposition is provided by 6.1% of the respondents who explained that AMISOM has helped stabilize the FGS (government), 3% of the respondents who explained that Al-Shabaab militants have reduced in number, and some joined the FGS. Similarly, 3% of the respondents explained that AMISOM provided a security-enabling environment for international humanitarian agencies to operate, more so outside Mogadishu. While the AMISOM military component was not to get involved in the politics of Somalia, they were charged with creating an enabling environment for establishing and conducting the political process to rebuild the FGS (Williams et al., 2018). The fact that the findings indicate a lag in the political stabilization of Somalia is a validation of an observation by Ligawa et al. (2017) that there was a need for realignment of AMISOM PSO activities to support the development of peace and stability in Somalia.

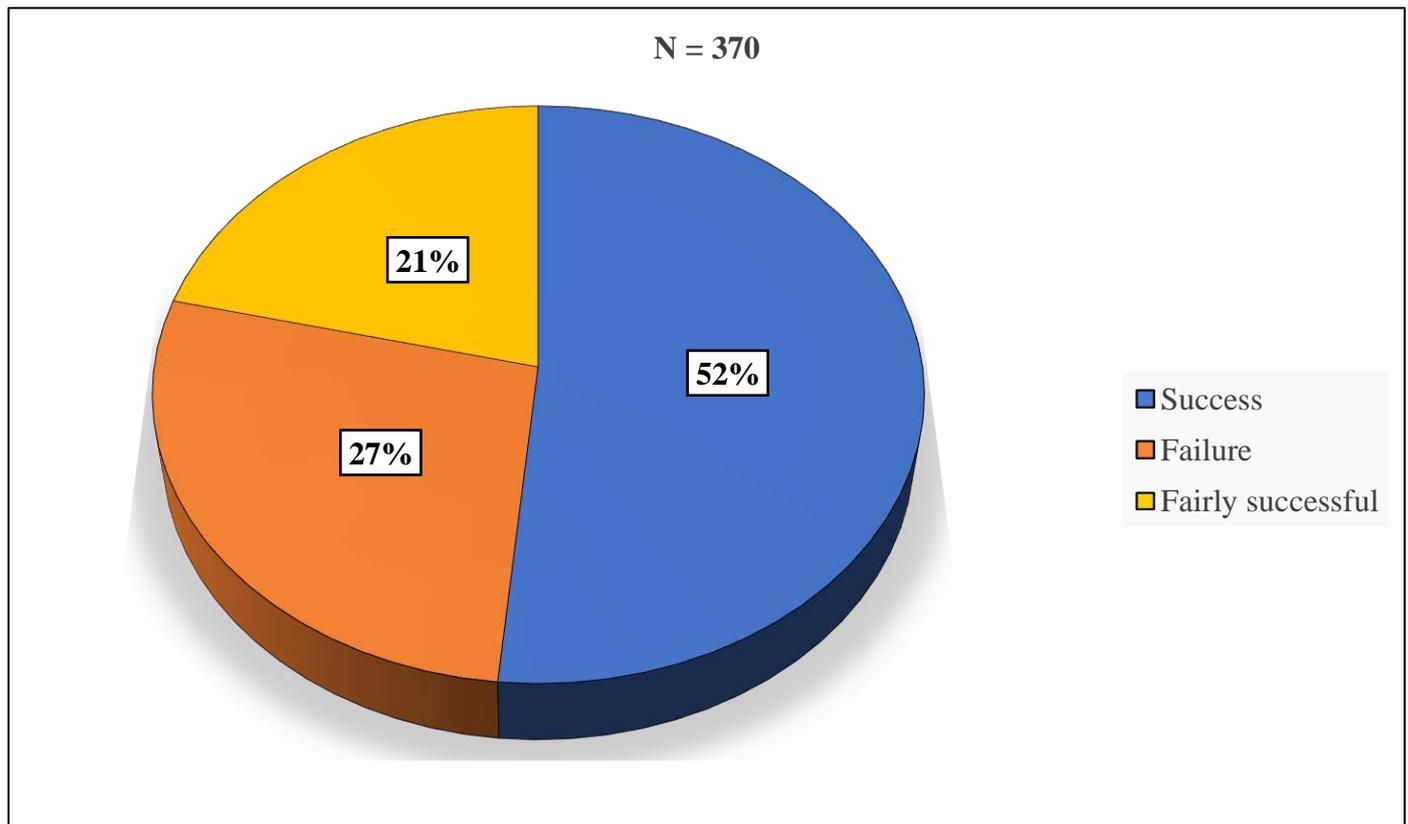
Peace support operations such as AMISOM help a return to a pre-conflict state, enabling peacebuilding processes. Such is enabled by a clear and attainable mandate that has to be set and facilitated by the planners and sponsors. The strategic theory requires that plans and strategies informing mandates and operations thereof have to take into consideration the ends, means, the centrality of the political actors, political actors' value system and

interests, and the influence of the broader strategic environment, among others (Yarger, 2006, p. 2). In so doing, the achievement of AMISOM mandate should be assessed within not only Somalia but also how it influences the immediate and broader environment. It aligns with the arguments of functionalist theory that a society is a sum of its constituent parts, and a disturbance (or instability) in one or more of the constituent parts affect the rest of the system functionally. It has to adjust or remedy the anomaly (Levin, 2021).

During the launch of Operation Sledge Hammer to capture the port city of Kismayu, KDF commanders intimated the preceding analysis. They securitised the issue by equating the Al-Shabaab menace to a gigantic 'serpent' whose tail caused insecurity in Kenya while the head was inside Somalia. Therefore, it was operationally prudent to solve the problem at the source to reduce the consequences abroad. The findings on the achievement of the AMISOM mandate are a testament that the 'head of the serpent' has essentially crashed. Thus, the disturbances to the entire socio-economic and security system of HoA have been reduced. In essence, this study argues that the achievements of AMISOM should not be assessed only within Somalia but on how the achievement of the mandate affects the national security of Kenya and the wider HoA.

#### 4.1.5 Overall Assessment of AMISOM PSO

Based on the extent of achievement of the mandate and the objectives, the overall assessment of AMISOM PSO was presented in Figure 3. Majority 52% of respondents agreed that the AMISOM PSO was successful, while 27% gave it the overall failure assessment. About 21% of the respondents rated the overall assessment of the PSO as being fairly successful.



**Figure 3**  
*Overall assessment of AMISOM PSO*

The findings presented in Figure 3 on the overall assessment of the AMISOM PSO correspond to the findings on achieving the AMISOM mandate, as presented in Figure 1. In both instances, majority 52% of the respondents answered in the affirmative. The findings further support the summation by William et al. (2018) that AMISOM has contributed commendably to the stabilization of Somalia according to its mandate, which evolved from protecting the Somali authorities and facilitating political processes to warfighting and then counter-insurgency and stabilization mixed with state-building.



These favourable assessments notwithstanding, the data indicates a gap in achieving mandate objectives relating to security and governance. Kagwanja et al. (2020) cautioned that the AMISOM transition should consider Somalia's post-AMISOM stability and regional peace and security. Blyth (2019) was succinct when he averred that for Somalia's stability and assumption of governance and security responsibilities, the exit of AMISOM contingents should factor more time allocation to phased handover, accelerated training of SSF, the building of institutions and further degradation of Al-Shabaab. It is prudent that the security and governance mandate objectives are attained sufficiently to enable a stable post-AMISOM Somalia that will not be inimical to the security and stability of HoA, more so Kenya's national security.

The assessment by 27% and 21% of the respondents that AMISOM has been a failure and successful, respectively, is significant. The findings point towards deficiencies in setting suitable conditions for post-AMISOM Somalia's stability. Corroboration to this claim is found in Table 1, where a majority (39.4%) of the respondents rated that the conditions for long-term stability, reconstruction and development of Somalia had been achieved to a less extent. It supports Dessu's (2022) and Ligawa's (2018: 300) observation that there are still concerns about the state of FGS and SSF to assume governance and security functions credibly. Furthermore, Nzau (2018, p. 544) observed that the political wrangles and the Somali question (clannist political dynamics) had not been adequately resolved. Such deficiencies cast a shadow of doubt on the stability of post-AMISOM Somalia and the security concerns of Kenya.

#### 4.2 Correlation Analysis

This section presents results of the correlation between the Nature of Somalia PSO strategies and Kenya's National Security. Results are shown in Table 3.

**Table 3**  
*Correlation Matrix*

		Kenya's National Security	Nature of Somalia PSO strategies
Kenya's National Security	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
Nature of Somalia PSO strategies	Pearson Correlation	-.517**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	370	

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 2 show that Nature of Somalia PSO strategies ( $r = -.517$ ,  $p = .000 < .05$ ) had a negative and significant relationship with Kenya's National Security. This implies that Nature of Somalia PSO strategies negatively influences Kenya's National Security.

#### 4.3 Regression Analysis

The study sought to interrogate African Union Mission in Somalia transition strategies affecting Kenya's National security. Regression analysis was conducted to determine the extent of prediction of independent variable on the dependent variable. Model summary, ANOVA, and coefficient results are presented in Table 3, Table 4, and Table 5, respectively.

**Table 3**  
*Model Summary*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.517a	0.267	0.265	0.691

a Predictors: (Constant), Nature of Somalia PSO strategies

Table 3 shows an R square of 0.267, which means that Somalia PSO strategies explained 26.7% of variations in Kenya's National Security. The validity of the model is also validated using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) as shown in Table 4.

**Table 4***Analysis of Variance*

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	64.149	1	64.149	134.318	.000
	Residual	175.754	368	0.478		
	Total	239.903	369			

a Dependent Variable: Kenya's National Security

b Predictors: (Constant), Nature of Somalia PSO strategies

Table 4 indicates an F statistic of 134.318 and a p value of  $0.000 < 0.05$ . This implies that the study model was statistically significant (excellent fit) in predicting the dependent variable. This confirms that Nature of Somalia PSO strategies significantly predict Kenya's National Security. The regression weights in the model are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5***Regression Coefficients*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.616	0.143		25.351	0.000
	Nature of Somalia PSO strategies	-0.451	0.039	-0.517	-11.59	0.000

a Dependent Variable: Kenya's National Security

Table 5 indicates that Nature of Somalia PSO strategies had a negative and significant influence on Kenya's National Security ( $\beta = -0.451$ ,  $P = .000 < .05$ ). The results implied that Nature of Somalia PSO strategies negatively influences Kenya's National Security.

## V. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 Conclusions

The study concludes that AMISOM transition strategies have not adequately addressed the governance and security aspects of Somalia's stabilization, posing a threat to Kenya's national security. Whereas the overall AMISOM stabilization efforts can be adjudged as successful, the crucial mandate objective of creating suitable conditions for Somalia's long-term stability and development has not been adequately attained. The capacity of SSF and FGS remains weak and thus will be unable to credibly assume security and governance of the country in the post-AMISOM era. It poses a threat of failed stabilization and threatening to Kenya's National Security.

Moreover, the established buffer zone in Jubaland remains feeble and is likely to collapse on the exit of KENCON from Somalia. Jubaland security forces' capacity is not up to par with desired levels of professionalism, implying that they could not maintain the buffer zone. Besides, they are not considered in the STP as part of SSF, and this is a conflict flashpoint, in the post-AMISOM period, between the federal member states and the FGS. Kenya's post-AMISOM homeland defence strategy is not well instituted, as evidenced by weak border security management measures, porous borders and sparse deployment of security, and lagged socio-economic development of NFD, among others. In combination, these factors leave the border counties of Mandera, Wajir, Garissa and Lamu vulnerable to adverse security effects post-AMISOM.

Furthermore, as part of the transition strategy, the STP does not adequately factor in the cohesion of Somalia with due consideration of the clan dynamics, more so in the security architecture. The transition CONOPs risk failing due to such omissions besides short transition timelines, lack of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to ensure the attainment of critical transition targets and lack of a coherent transition programme of action, among others. Eventually, the preferred model is a transition to AU-UN hybrid mission focusing on peacebuilding with the ability to muster sufficient resources. In sum, owing to the inadequacies, Somalia's PSO transition strategies (including AMISOM) have a significant negative correlation and influence on Kenya's national security. ANOVA indicated an F statistic of 134.318 and a p value of  $0.000 < 0.05$  thus the Somalia PSO strategies significantly predict Kenya's

National Security. Regressions weight model ( $\beta = -0.451$ ,  $P = .000 < .05$ ) implied that Nature of Somalia PSO strategies negatively influences Kenya's National Security.

## 5.2 Recommendations

Therefore, the study recommended that GoK engage AMISOM to review the transition strategy as reflected in the STP and ATMIS CONOPs to cater for the security forces of federal member states such as JSF and RKB, among others. The SSF and FGS capacity must be developed sufficiently before the transition is finalized. Additionally, sufficient timelines be allocated for the transition shepherded by an effective monitoring and evaluation mechanism to ensure transition targets is attained and resources are utilized effectively. Cautiously, negotiation with Al-Shabaab could be considered for post-AMISOM political dispensation in Somalia. However, this should be explored based on a strong FGS with sufficient capacity to control the process and outcome. Also recommended is a hybrid AU-UN Peacekeeping mission in post-AMISOM.

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