Beat: News

ATMIS Hands Over Seized Weapons to Somalia

Amid Onslaught Against Al-Shabab

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AFSData Media Partner - The African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) said it has handed over weapons captured during security operations against Al-Shabab to the government as part of efforts to degrade the militants.

The AU mission said the handing over of machine guns, rifles, and several rounds of ammunition recovered by its forces and the Somali National Army (SNA) in the Lower Shabelle region, aims to control the proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

“The Somali government and ATMIS shall document and register all weapons and military equipment captured during offensives or in the course of carrying out their mandate,” deputy head of ATMIS, Fiona Lortan said in a statement issued on Saturday in the Somali capital, Mogadishu.

She noted that the handover complied with the Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) protocol, which outlines procedures for the storage and management of weapons.

Under the procedures, all seized weapons are recorded, photographed, and inspected before their destruction or redistribution.

Lortan noted that the recovery of the weapons and the handover are significant achievements in efforts to flush out the militants who have engaged the government and AU forces in nearly daily attacks in a bid to topple the government.

Keith Katungi, the commander of ATMIS Uganda contingent said the recovery of weapons from al-Shabab aims to control their widespread use.

“This exercise shows the achievement of our objective to degrade and deny al-Shabab freedom of action and freedom of movement,” Katungi said.

Mohamed Tahlil Bihi, SNA commander of land forces, hailed the cooperation between ATMIS and SNA in efforts to restore peace and stability, ahead of the anticipated transfer of security responsibilities to Somali security forces.

“Our collaboration weakens the enemy and encourages our forces – both ATMIS and Somali Security Forces,” Bihi said after receiving the cache of weapons.

Report by XINHUA

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