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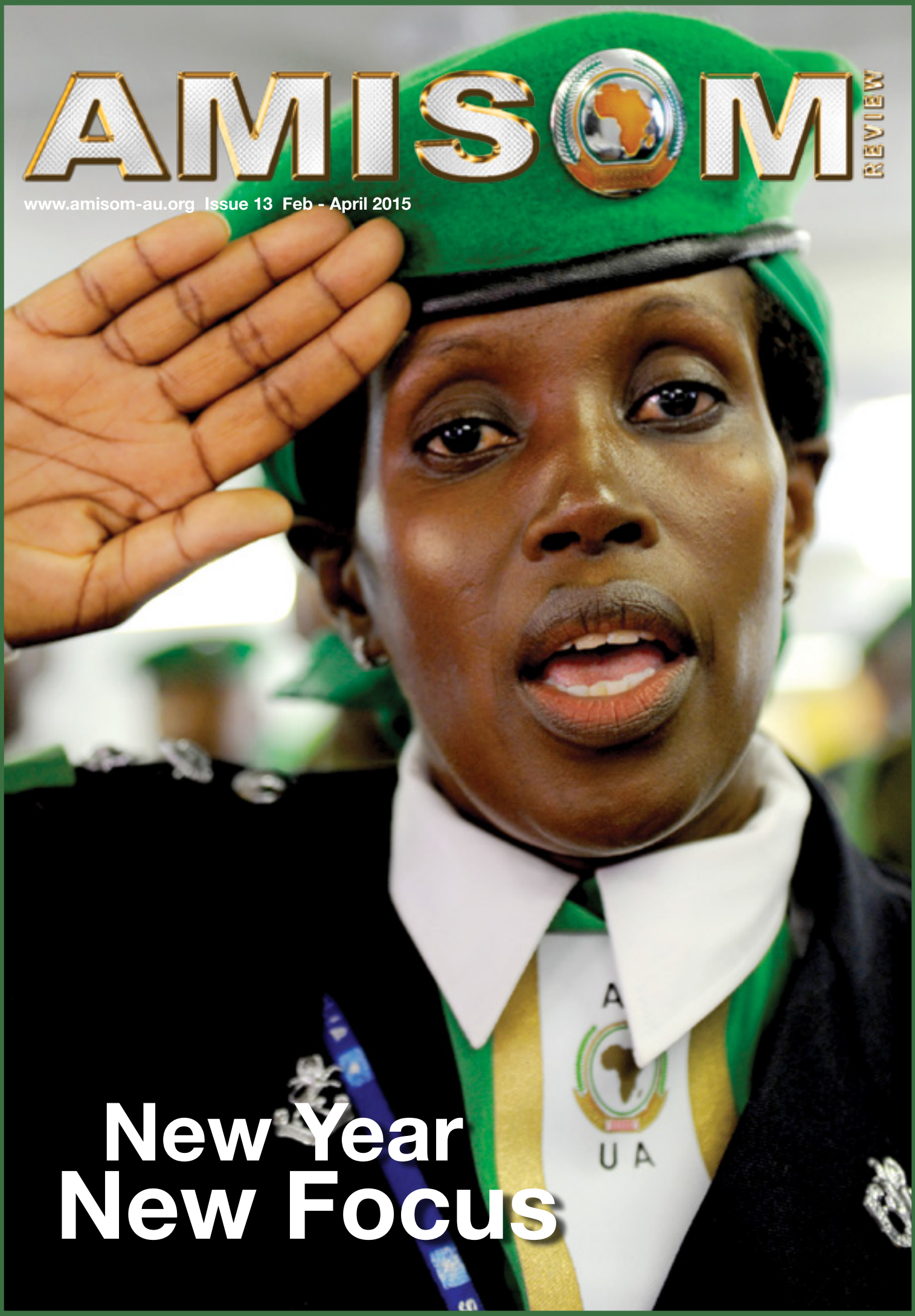

New Year New Focus

Message from the SRCC

Editorial by The Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia (SRCC), Maman Sidikou

I would like to wish you all a very Happy New Year and a warm welcome to our very first edition of 2015. It's a new year, with a new focus. Last month, the leadership of AMISOM met with key partners mainly the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) to reflect on our work on the ground, both in support of the needs of the Somali government and people. Following that refection, we have jointly agreed to renew our focus on certain priorities that I am glad to share with you now.

Last year, the Somali National Army (SNA), with the support of AMISOM, liberated eight towns during Operation Indian Ocean. This is in addition to the 10 towns that were liberated earlier during Operation Eagle. These towns still lack basic social services and urgently need humanitarian relief assistance. We have therefore committed to create humanitarian corridors, support the FGS as it sets up administrative structures, support the SNA and Somali Police Force (SPF) as they secure those areas and also carry out out quick impact projects. We also resolved to improve coordination of security and stabilization efforts between AMISOM, UN and the FGS. The protection of women and girls from all forms of violence is also a priority this year, as is advocating for increased participation in politics for women in the run-up to the 2016 elections.

2014 was also a politically vibrant year, with significant positive political activities both at the center and in the regional states. Reconciliation was heartily pursued, as you might recall the Reconciliation conferences held in Kismayo, Baidoa, recently in Afgoye and the agreement signed between Puntland and the Central government. The Interim South West Administration was also established. For us in AMISOM, we feel proud to have supported the government and people of Somalia by facilitating an environment where such political activities, especially reconciliation and state formation, have thrived. We are very hopeful that these positive developments will continue in this New Year.

AMISOM Police will continue to support the SPF especially in launching a massive community policing drive. This initiative includes the continuous training of the SPF to reach out to the population and to engage them in crime prevention.

I recently returned from Addis Ababa, where I participated in the statutory meetings of the 24th African Union Heads of State and Government Summit. During this summit, we had the opportunity to interact with different partners supporting the peace agenda in Somalia, including the Heads of State of our member states contributing troops and police to AMISOM. I am happy to report that there is shared enthusiasm and hope that the situation in Somalia can only get better. The gains are not just a major achievement for Somalia but for Africa as a whole. There is therefore strong commitment to continue supporting Somalia on its path to recovery.

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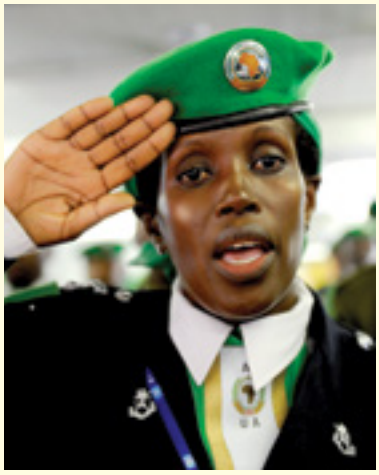

A female Kenyan AMISOM Police Officer salutes to the guests during a medal award ceremony for the Kenyan Formed Police Unit on December 12 at AMISOM's Base Camp in Mogadishu, Somalia. The medals were being awarded to 13 policemen and women who completed their deployment to Somalia.

Photo by Ilyas Ahmed

Managing Editor: Eloi Yao
Design & Layout: Vikki Keingati
Photography:
AU/UN IST Newsroom
thenewsroom@auunist.org

Email: amisommediacentre@gmail.com

P.O. Box 20182 – 00200, Nairobi, Kenya
Phone: +254 202 713 755 /56 /58
Fax: +254 202 713 766

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IN THE NEWS

9 October 2014

As part of continued efforts by the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) to prevent Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA), a three-day workshop was held in Johannesburg, South Africa to review mechanisms for addressing SEA.

"Like any other human undertaking, AMISOM must continually seek to improve our systems and processes in order to respond to the dynamics of the Mission, particularly on issues that affect the most vulnerable in society, such as those of sexual exploitation and abuse of women and girls," said the SRCC Amb. Maman Sidikou.

28 October 2014

President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, the SRCC Maman Sidikou and senior military officers from the Somali National Army (SNA) and AMISOM, provided an update on the success of Operation Indian Ocean - the offensive that targeted extremist bases along Somalia's Indian Ocean coastline.

"The Somali National Army, with the help of AMISOM's forces, now control more than 80 percent of Somalia," said AMISOM's former Force Commander, Lieutenant General Silas Ntigurirwa.

29 October 2014

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and World Bank President Jim Yong Kim paid a historic visit to Somalia, to show solidarity and pledge further support to the Federal Government of Somalia.

"Somalia is on the right track and I am confident that its people will rise to the challenges the country still faces. We are here to tell Somalis that they are not alone and that we will redouble our efforts to help them protect the gains made in recent years," Ban Ki-moon said.

30 October 2014

AMISOM held a four-day Gender Audit workshop in Naivasha, Kenya aimed at enhancing the Mission's ability to examine its activities from a gender-based perspective. Deputy Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (DSRCC) for Somalia Hon. Lydia Wanyoto, emphasized the importance of aligning all activities to the needs and expectations of the Somali people.

1 October 2014

Sensitization workshops were held in Baidoa, Belet Weyne and Mogadishu to reiterate the role of AMISOM in ensuring that the rights of children are protected. As part of the exercise, Child Protection Focal Persons were appointed in each sector.

8

November 2014

A high level delegation from the African Union Peace Support Operations Division (PSOD) visited various parts of Somalia to review AMISOM's activities. The DSRCC), Hon. Lydia Wanyoto Mutende said the tour was not only part of the regular process of reviewing the Mission's activities, but also an important morale booster for the troops.

24

November 2014

AMISOM and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) launched the Somalia Country Specific Guidelines to govern relations between AMISOM and the humanitarian stakeholders in Somalia.

AMISOM's leadership welcomed the formation of the Interim South West Administration (ISWA) and the election of its leader.

The Interim South West Administration (ISWA) covers the Bay, Bakool and Lower Shabelle Regions and its formation is in line with the ongoing federalization process in accordance with the Provisional Federal Constitution of Somalia.

3

December 2014

[15] December 2014

AMISOM bid farewell to Lieutenant General Silas Ntigurirwa who completed his tour of duty after 12 months of service.

"It is my pleasure and indeed that of the entire AMISOM family to say thank you and bid farewell to our immediate former Force Commander Lieutenant-General Silas Ntigurirwa who served AMISOM with dedication and zeal during his tenure, recording significant military successes against the Al-Shabaab extremists. We wish him well in his future undertakings," said the SRCC Amb. Maman Sidikou.

Lt. Gen. Ntigurirwa was appointed AMISOM Force Commander on December 16, 2013. During his year-long command, the Mission recorded key military victories against Al-Shabaab under Operation Indian Ocean and Operation Eagle.

[20] December 2014

The Mission bid farewell to its 850 Sierra Leonean troops and hailed them for sacrifice commitment after their rotation was delayed by the Ebola outbreak in parts of West Africa.

A total of 850 Sierra Leonean troops were deployed in Somalia in 2013 for 12 months.

The African Union halted the deployment of further troops from the country as part of the mechanisms put in place to avoid further spread of the Ebola virus.

Somali President Hassan Sheik Mohamud and the SRCC Amb. Maman Sidikou applauded the troops during a ceremony in Kismayo.

29 December 2014

AMISOM Police inducted a new contingent of Ghanaian police officers tasked with mentoring and training their Somali counterparts.

7 January 2015

AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, Amb. Smail Chergui, visited Somalia in a show of solidarity following a terrorist attack on the main AMISOM Halane Base Camp in Mogadishu on December 25, 2014.

He was accompanied by representatives of the Chiefs of Defence Forces of AMISOM's TCCs.

8 January 2015

High-level AMISOM officials, development partners and representatives of Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) met in Kampala, Uganda to ensure that the Mission's priorities for 2015 are in line with the needs identified by the Somali people. Participants resolved to focus on security sector reform, human rights, gender and protection, supporting inclusive politics and aiding stabilization in newly recovered areas - as well as facilitating access to them.

[10] January 2015

Foreign Ministers from Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya and South Sudan convened in Mogadishu for a historic Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) meeting that indicated how much progress has been made in Somalia. The last IGAD meeting in Somalia was in 1985.

[12] January 2015

Representatives of Somalia's diverse and influential Diaspora gathered for conference in Kigali, Rwanda to discuss key elements of a policy that will streamline their contribution to their country's rebirth.

The conference was organized by the Office for Diaspora Affairs (ODA), a department within Somalia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Investment Promotion and supported by AMISOM, the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD) and the Rwandese government.

[25] January 2015

January 2015: Turkish President, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, visited Somalia to launch several development projects, including a new terminal for the Aden Abdulle International Airport terminal, in the capital Mogadishu.

Secure & Stable Somalia

On the Offensive

Somalia's government, security forces and the African Union in Somalia (AMISOM) met in Mogadishu on October 28, 2015 to provide a joint update on the security situation in the country.

President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, SRCC Amb. Mohammed Sidikou, along with senior military officers from the Somali National Army (SNA) and AMISOM briefed the media on the numerous victories recorded in Operation Indian Ocean.

"With support from AMISOM and the European Union, we've been able to get the various specialist technicians that our forces needed," said General Dahir Adan Elmi, Somalia's Chief of Defence Forces.

The highlight of the day were updated maps that revealed the extensive loss of territory that the extremist Al-Shabaab had suffered since January 2014.

"All the blue areas are the ones in the hands of the Federal Government of Somalia," said General Mohamed Hassan Qarfow, the Commander of Somalia's National Army (SNA).

Officials said that an earlier offensive – Operation Eagle – which began in March 2014 resulted in 10 significant towns being liberated and paved the way for Operation Indian Ocean, which began in September 2015 and focused on Somalia's strategic coastal towns. Eight urban centers, including the Al-Shabaab strongholds of Barawe, Adale and Koday were liberated in order to disrupt Al-Shabaab resupply routes and isolate pockets of resistance.

"What AMISOM and the Somali National Army have done, under your leadership and for the sake of a united Somalia, is ensure that everybody has his own share of the cake, so to speak." SRCC Sidikou said.

United Nations Security Council resolution 2124 was adopted in November last year, allowing additional troops and other resources to be deployed in January 2014 to bolster AMISOM, which then enabled the joint forces to launch fresh operations.

"The Somali National Army with help from AMISOM forces now control more than 80 percent of Somalia's territory," said AMISOM's former Force Commander, Lieutenant General Silas Ntigurirwa.

President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, who visited Barawe after its liberation, told officials and journalists that violent extremism was a global problem and that his government was well aware that although battered, Al-Shabaab had not been annihilated and would desperately try to reassert itself.

"The government of Somalia had pledged an amnesty of 45 days. The 45 days have lapsed and more than 700 young men have taken advantage, renounced Al-Shabaab and handed themselves in. The government of Somalia welcomes them. We will also develop more rehabilitation facilities and give them opportunities, opportunities to study and gain skills so that they can return to society. There will be no retribution, instead they will be given education," said the Somali President.

President Mohamud also said that his administration is now focused on providing food, water, restocking hospitals and clinics that were stripped bare as the militants retreated.

Officials concluded by noting that the only significant towns still under Al-Shabaab control are Jamaame, Jilib, Buale and Sakow in Middle Juba Region, Diinsor in Bay region and Bardere in Gedo region and a few other smaller towns like El-Dere in Middle Shabelle.

Adale

Bula Gadud

Ragaele

Kurtunwaarey

Operation Indian Ocean

Buulo Mareer

Barawe

Taking the Lead

As part of its mandate to prepare Somalia National Army (SNA) soldiers to take charge of their country's security, AMISOM peacekeepers intensively train their Somali counterparts to secure newly liberated areas.

AMISOM's Ethiopian contingent - for example - trained over 300 SNA soldiers in the Bakol region after the strategic town of Tiyeeglow was jointly liberated by the SNA and AMISOM peacekeepers under Operation Indian Ocean on August 25, 2014.

Before its liberation, Tiyeeglow, located approximately 503 km northwest of Mogadishu, was an important Al-Shabaab logistical hub that also acted as the biggest transit point for its fighters from the south, to the north of the country, and vice versa.

The young men, and nine women, were selected to join the SNA by the local community after a vetting process that all who wanted to enlist had to undergo. The successful candidates received training in combat and respect for human rights.

Speaking during the graduation ceremony, AMISOM Sector 3 commander Brigadier-General Gebremedhin Fikadu congratulated the soldiers and applauded the community for their cooperation and reiterated AMISOM's commitment to supporting stabilisation efforts in Somalia.

"I thank the people of Tiyeglow for voluntarily bringing their youth to be part of this formidable force that will protect their people and country. We wish to reassure the Somali people that AMISOM is here to support them and work with them to bring back peace and stability in Somalia," Brig. Gen. Gebremedhin told the new recruits, elders and local administration who attended the colourful event.

Saying Goodbye

The commitment exhibited by Sierra Leonean troops serving under the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) was commended as exemplary and reflective of the true spirit of African brotherhood, at a ceremony held to bid the contingent farewell after 20 months of service in Somalia.

Somali President Hassan Sheik Mohamud, SRCC Maman Sidikou, the head of the Interim Juba Administration (IJA) Ahmed Islam Madobe and the acting AMISOM Force Commander Major General Jonathan Kipkemoi Rono attended the event in honor of the departing troops.

850 Sierra Leonean troops deployed in Somalia in 2013 for what was meant to be a 12-month stint. Sadly their return home was delayed by the Ebola outbreak in parts of West Africa. The African Union halted the deployment of further troops from the country as part of the mechanisms to prevent infection. AMISOM also set up an isolation ward at its Level II Hospital and continued the training of its troops and medical personnel to bolster awareness.

Sierra Leone will now be replaced by other troops contributing countries in AMISOM, until the virus has been fully contained.

"I'm left with a feeling of sadness as we depart from our Somali friends, mothers, fathers, children and loved ones who have been very hospitable to us throughout our stay in this beautiful country. We feel this deeply because total peace - in accordance with the AMISOM definition of a secure Somalia - is yet to be achieved," said Brig. Gen. Tamba Alieu, the Sierra Leonean Contingent Commander.

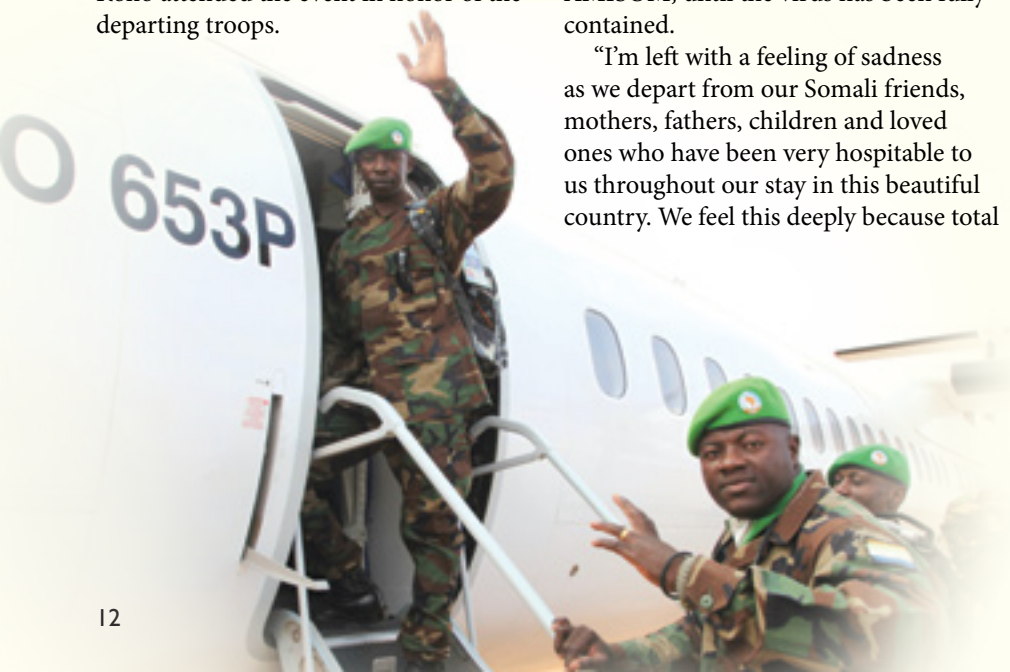
President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud thanked the troops for their sacrifice towards the reconstruction of Somalia.

"This is something that has been beyond the control of the Republic of Sierra Leone, beyond the control of the AU and beyond the control of the Federal Republic of Somalia, but we have clearly stated that we are very grateful for their contribution. They came to Somalia at a very difficult time. They are leaving Somalia in a much better situation than they found it," he said.

The Head of AMISOM Ambassador Maman Sidikou added that the African Union is proud and grateful to Sierra Leone for their service.

"We wish they could have stayed, but they have been here too long. There is no rotation possible because of the nature of the situation that the President described. We wish them well and we hope they will come back one day to visit us and just enjoy the goodies or the benefits of their hard work later on," he noted.

Leobatt 1 was deployed in Dobley, Tabda and Kismayo, working alongside the Kenya Defence Forces and Burundi National Defence Forces.



Working Together

Guidelines to facilitate more harmonized and coordinated delivery of aid support to the Somali people were launched by AMISOM and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) on November 24, 2014.

The 'Somali Country Specific Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination Guidelines'

were presented to SRCC Maman Sidikou and the UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia, Philippe Lazzarini at a ceremony in Mogadishu.

The guidelines aim to establish agreed principles and practices for constructive civil-military relations between AMISOM and the humanitarian actors who operate in Somalia.

Speaking at the launch, the SRCC reiterated AMISOM's commitment to provide a conducive environment for humanitarian assistance to reach the Somali people.

"I am so proud of what AMISOM has done on the ground here in Somalia, but what we also want to show from these guidelines is they aren't just people carrying guns, but people who are helping to make it possible for the populations of South Central Somalia to access their god-given rights to food, to health and to education," he said.

Mr. Lazzarini added that such guidelines are very important in ensuring better

structured relations which in turn leads to more effective aid delivery.

"If we can improve the movement of basic commodities and movement of population it will favourably contribute to the overall food security situation. It is true that today we are in a situation which is comparable to 2010. We have a number of indicators telling us if we are not addressing the need today the situation will get worse tomorrow," he noted.

The guidelines also with civil-military coordination in complex emergency situations and disasters in peacetime settings as well.

Helping Hands

ABOVE:
Children play football in a match organised and supported by the Civil Affairs Unit in the AMISOM Base Camp in Mogadishu on October 30, 2014.

RIGHT, Top to Bottom:
AMISOM ENDF who are implementing quick impact projects visited Baidoa Regional Hospital to check on the progress of renovations on January 13, 2015:

The Humanitarian Unit conducted assessments after the liberation of Bulo Burte town in the Hiraan region and Garbahaarey town in the Gedo region in early August 2014.

Women and children sit on benches donated to the free AMISOM KDF Medical Center by UNIDO in Kismayo, Somalia on November 12, 2014.

Road to 2016

The inauguration of Sharif Hassan Sheikh Adan as the leader of the newly-formed Interim South West Administration (ISWA) was held on December 3, 2014 in the regional capital, Baidoa.

The ceremony was attended by high-ranking officials including Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (SRCC) and Head of AMISOM, Ambassador Maman Sidikou, the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Somalia (SRSG) Nicholas Kay, EU officials, the IGAD Special Envoy to Somalia, Mohamed Abdi Afey, several parliamentarians and representatives from the other interim regional administrations of Puntland, Jubbaland and Galmudug.

The Interim South West Administration (ISWA) covers Somalia's Bay, Bakool and Lower Shabelle regions. ISWA's formation is part of the ongoing federalization process that is rooted in the Provisional Federal Constitution of Somalia.

"Today is a big day in Somalia's history and in the history of these three regions that have joined hands in this new administration and now we are inaugurating its leader. This is a great day and it will always have a significant place in our country's history," said President Mohamud.

SRCC Sidikou, while congratulating the Federal Government of Somalia and ISWA, reiterated the African Union's support for the people of Somalia in their quest for peace and national cohesion.

"This means that reconciliation is a must and it is working. This is a key milestone for Vision 2016 as well. It's wonderful that we have the Interim South West Admininstration today, after all the debate about whether it should be 3 or 6 states, that is all behind us now and the leader has now been inaugurated. It's a sign that Somalia is on the right track, not only

We will put all our efforts into building an administration that has the capacity, knowledge and experience that will save this country from the problems caused by insecurity

This is a great day and it will always have a significant place in our country's history

this State, but all of Somalia," he said.

Speaking at the ceremony, the ISWA leader Sharif Hassan Sheikh Adan outlined his administration's immediate priorities.

"You know the situation Somalia is currently going through. We will put all our efforts into building an administration that has the capacity, knowledge and experience that will save this country from the problems caused by insecurity. We will work for peace, defeat Al-Shabaab and reconcile our people," he said.

The EU, IGAD, and regional administration's representatives also congratulated the new ISWA leader and its people.

"I cannot measure my happiness especially because Somali women also have political ambitions, and the new Interim South West Administration's leader has promised to include us. Long live our leader and we want him to know that we are a shoulder for him to lean on and also his shield," said Fatuma Haji Nur, who lives in Baidoa.

"I'm really happy today. We have a new administration that is organized which is what we need. The formation of this administration has not been easy, we've gone through a lot but today, we have reached our goal," added Hussein

...we are here to show our solidarity first and also to give our full support to Somalia for the strides that it is making

Salad Adow, a traditional elder.

Sustained reconciliation efforts and negotiations by the Federal Government of Somalia and its international and regional partners, finally bore fruit on June 23, 2014 with the formation of ISWA and subsequent election of Sharif Hassan Sheikh Adan as its leader.

Progress is also being made with the Interim Jubbaland Administration (IJA) which is based in the southern port city of Kismayo and is made up of the three regions of Gedo, Middle Juba and Lower Juba.

On January 20, the DSRCC Hon. Lydia Wanyoto travelled with other high-ranking UN, Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and EU and UK envoys and officials to Kismayo to help officially launch the selection process for Jubbaland's Regional Assembly.

IJA leader Ahmed Mohamed Islam Madobe - who was elected on May 15, 2013 - thanked AMISOM and the other partners for their support, and pledged that the Regional Assembly's members selected in a fair and transparent way, in order to ensure effectiveness and equal representation for the region's people.

"We welcome the launch of the selection process for the Interim Juba Administration's Regional Assembly. This is an important step towards peace and state-building for the people of the Juba regions, as well as all Somalis. We urge the IJA leadership to include women, youth and minority groups in the regional decision-making process by ensuring their participation in the new Assembly. Ensuring a fair and inclusive process will help build a just, peaceful society that can serve as a model for the rest of the country," said the various international partners in a joint statement.

And in a further sign of Somalia's return to democratic governance, the two leaders of the IJA and ISWA met in Kismayo on December 30, 2014 to sign an MoU on federalization, security, the 2016 general elections, trade, and the constitution.

Another exciting political marker for Somalia came on January 9, 2015 as four Foreign Affairs Ministers from Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, and South Sudan arrived in Mogadishu for a historic IGAD Ministerial meeting, which was last held in Somalia in 1985.

The Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs and Investment Promotion Dr. Abdirahman Beileh, senior Somali government officials and AMISOM commanders were on hand to receive the delegation.

Ethiopia's Foreign Affairs Minister and current Chairperson of the IGAD Council of Ministers, Dr. Tedros Adhanom expressed gratitude to Somalia for hosting the meeting.

"The reason for hosting this IGAD meeting here is to discuss Somalia's progress and consult on the implementation of Vision 2016. IGAD believes that Vision 2016 will be implemented as planned because as I said earlier, the progress is commendable and we don't expect any problems, we are here to show our solidarity first and also to give our full support to Somalia for the strides that it is making," Dr. Adhanom said.

We urge the IJA leadership to include women, youth and minority groups in the regional decision-making process by ensuring their participation in the new Assembly

Protecting Human Rights

Zero Tolerance on SEA

In early October, AMISOM's leadership convened in the South African city of Johannesburg, to review existing mechanisms and policies for addressing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA).

AMISOM adopted a zero-tolerance policy towards SEA in September 2013 which states that: "Exchange of money, employment, goods or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behavior is prohibited. This includes any exchange of assistance that is due to beneficiaries of assistance."

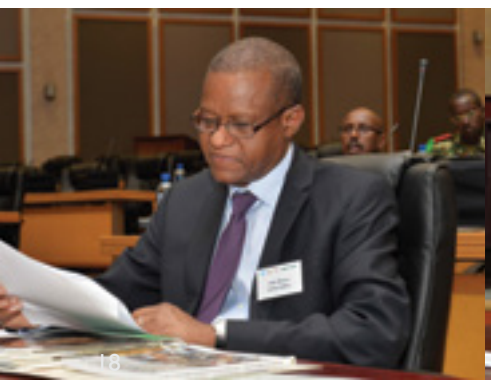
SRCC Maman Sidikou led discussions with representatives from the Mission's military, police and civilian components on how to enhance transparency on SEA, further improve existing accountability mechanisms and how the Mission could support any victims of SEA.

"Like any other human undertaking, AMISOM must continually seek to improve our systems and processes in order to respond to the dynamics of the Mission, particularly on issues that affect the most vulnerable in society, such as those of sexual exploitation and abuse of women and girls," said the SRCC.

He also noted that AMISOM is "duty-bound to diligently respect and implement the mandate entrusted to the Mission by the African Union Peace and Security Council (PSC) and authorized by the United Nations Security Council in line with applicable policy guidelines on gender and human rights."

Participants were drawn from the Federal Government of Somalia, Pan-African Parliament, the AU Commission, AMISOM, United Nations (UNSOM and UNSOA), human rights experts and civil society organizations from across the continent.

The workshop was organised with the support of UNSOA, the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD) and the Norwegian-funded Training for Peace (TfP) programme.



SEA Investigations Begin

The investigation team set up by the African Union to look into allegations of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse against AMISOM personnel, began its investigations soon after the workshop in Johannesburg, with a visit to Mogadishu in early November last year.

The team, which is made up of human rights and legal experts from around the continent, were tasked by the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC), H.E. Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma to:

Establish the facts with respect to these allegations so that a determination can be made on whether the allegations of SEA occurred or not.

Establishing, if they occurred, the duration that such actions have been taking place and the actions taken by the AMISOM Leadership that either contributed to, or deterred the alleged actions from occurring.

The allegations were contained in a September 2014 report by Human Rights Watch titled 'The Power these Men Have Over Us – Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by African Union Forces in Somalia'.

"With the experience I have and that of my team members, we will be able to get to the bottom of the problem. What we need to find is the root of the problem and means of dealing with it. I would like to emphasize that we go to

Without women, there would be nothing left of Somalia now. They are the backbone of society and they need our support so that they can continue to sustain this country

Women First

The AU Envoy on Women, Peace and Security Ms. Benita Diop added her voice, influence and support to the push for women's rights in Somalia during a visit to Mogadishu in November 2014.

Ms. Diop was accompanied by three prominent African women: the Namibian Ambassador to Ethiopia and the African Union and member of the Peace and Security Commission, H.E. Anne Mutelo. Ms. Julienne Lusenge, an award winning gender activist from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Ms. Mumbi Mathangani, the Conduct and Discipline Advisor for Peace Operations at the African Union also accompanied Ms. Diop.

During her visit she met with various stakeholders, including President Hassan Sheikh Mahamud and First Lady Sahra Hassan.

She also spoke with key Somalia government ministers, women groups, NGOs, traditional elders, religious leaders and top officials in AMISOM and the UNSOM.

Ms. Diop is a renowned gender activist with over 35 years experience in human rights and development issues. She has served in the UN Women International Civil Society Group and is best remembered for co-chairing Resolution 1325, in March 2012, with H.E. Mary Robinson, the former Irish President.

"Without women, there would be nothing left of Somalia now. They are the backbone of society and they need our support so that they can continue to sustain this country. They want to contribute in the rebuilding of governance mechanisms, they want to help with constitutional reform, they want to participate in elections, they want to lead, they want to be in parliament and they want laws that will protect them," Ms. Diop said told journalists.

Protect the Children

Apart from the regular trainings conducted for AMISOM officers on gender, human rights and SEA prevention, the Mission has also intensified efforts to improve awareness and policy implementation on issues of child protection.

The associated activities included several 'child protection sensitization' workshops in Baidoa, Beletweyne and Mogadishu to help troops better understand their role in protecting Somalia's children. A focal person was selected in each of the sectors.

In addition, a workshop was held to begin the process of drafting AMISOM's action plan on child protection. AMISOM's goal - and mandated task in this area - is to build the capacity of Somalia's government and security forces so that they can prevent any form of child abuse.

the field without any bias and we will conduct independent and objective investigations," said Prof. Koki Eghafona of the University of Nigeria, who is part of the team that includes legal and human rights experts from Tanzania, Ghana and Zimbabwe.

The findings and recommendations of the investigation team will be made public using the appropriate AU channels and with due regard given to victim protection, the rights of alleged perpetrators as well as the operational imperatives of AMISOM.

What we need to find is the root of the problem and means of dealing with it

AMISOM Gender Unit at a Glance

VISION

Support the Africa Union Mission in Somalia to engage in strategically gender mainstreaming in all areas of operations in order to support the Federal Government of Somalia, to achieve sustainable peace by ensuring that the post-conflict reconstruction process promotes gender equality and boys and girls' rights.

SCOPE OF WORK

To ensure an efficient gender mainstreaming by undertaking a leadership role in training mission personnel on the importance of mainstreaming gender perspectives into their work.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

CAPACITY BUILDING

2012
- 1 workshop assessing the needs of female MPs.

2013
- 6 internal capacity building workshops undertaken.
- 8 programs and the drafting of Somalia National Gender Policy.
- 240 Peacekeepers trained.

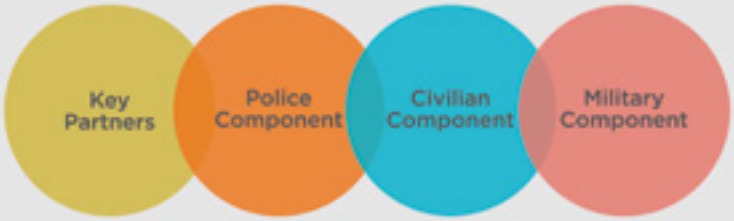
2014
- 10 internal workshops on SEA and Gender Audit program.
- 6 programs with the Federal Government of Somalia.
- 1023 Peacekeepers trained.

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

- 7 radio packages on UNSRC1325: Gender equality issues and Somalia Draft Gender Policy.
- 6,000 advocacy material produced and distributed.
- Somalia Media sensitization workshop on gender

AMISOM GENDER ACTION PLAN (GAP)

Clear deliverables successfully implemented in close collaboration with:



BUDGET

- 0$ 2012
- 68,000$ 2013
- 0$ 2014

KEY FOCUS FOR 2015

1. Reinforcing AMISOM and FGS Gender mechanisms.
2. Advocacy sessions geared towards implementing the AU Gender Policy.
3. Enhancing women political participation for 2016 Election; (UNSCR1325).

Troop Contributing Countries to AMISOM and their Female Representation

Burundi	Djibouti	Ethiopia	Kenya	Uganda
5337 Troops	987 Troops	4394 Troops	3663 Troops	6220 Troops
77 Women	7 Women	131 Women	3 Women	160 Women
1.4%	0.7%	2.9%	0.08%	2.57%

KEY PARTNERS

AACCORD

CCCPA

zif Zentrum für Internationale Friedenseinsätze

Policing
Somalia

Joining Hands

The Somalia Police Force (SPF) officially launched its national community policing program with a town hall meeting in Mogadishu on October 21, 2014. The event was the highlight of a series of ongoing initiatives spearheaded by the SPF - and supported by AMISOM - to improve security and boost stabilisation efforts, not only in the seaside capital, but in other parts of the country as well.

The meeting was hosted by the Ministry of Information and involved representatives from women and youth groups, as well as clan elders and other community leaders who were invited to give their views and insight on how to improve security to the police.

"This meeting is very encouraging because it brings together a wide range of the Somali people, such as religious leaders, civil society and the youth. It also shows the great role that the AMISOM and Somali police play when they work together," said Mustaf Ali Dhuhulow, Somalia's former Minister of Information, Posts, Telecommunications and Tourism.

The initiative - which promotes closer interaction between police and community leaders - is already operational in other parts of Somalia like Baidoa, Kismayo and Beletweyne.

Mogadishu was under the control of the extremist group Al-Shabaab until 2011 when Somali soldiers, back by AMISOM's troops, drove the Al-Shabaab out of the city. Since then, the joint forces have also chased the embattled militants from most of their former bases in the Horn of Africa nation.

The community policing program is being used to stabilise liberated areas and thwart attempts by Al-Shabaab to re-base.

"The reality is that our people and country need AMISOM to restore peace and stability and that is AMISOM's mandate. AMISOM did not send itself here. We asked them to come and help us by providing training and lend their experience to us and the army as well," said Col. Yusuf Mohammed Farah, who directs the Community Policing Program for the SPF.

This meeting is very encouraging because it brings together a wide range of the Somali people, such as religious leaders, civil society and the youth.

The SPF has also announced plans to recruit volunteers in neighborhoods across the country who will serve as liaisons between SPF officers and the communities they serve.

The representatives from a cross-section of Somali society who attended the launch, were encouraged by the police to introduce themselves to their local officers, be in regular contact with them and quickly report any suspicious behaviour.

"When you see people coming together like this, that's the first major step. It's an indicator that the conflict is over and the process of rebuilding has started. People begin to engage with the government, agencies and international bodies. People begin to express themselves and their opinions on what they think is right, and what they think is wrong, how the society should be rebuilt and how they think gaps should be refilled," said Chief Superintendent of Police (CSP) Akin Fakorede, AMISOM's Police Reformed Unit Adviser.

Set the Balls Rolling

When we engage with the youth, especially in constructive things like sports, it keeps them away from Al-Shabaab and other harmful activities

Another strategic way in which the SPF is building up goodwill within its host communities and enabling ordinary people to participate in policing their homes, neighborhoods and towns, is through the promotion of sports to fans and players alike.

"The youth are the ambassadors of peace. Sporting is a unique way of assembling the youth, having fun and building up their physical and mental endurance," added Edwin Mugera, the AMISOM Police Public Information Officer.

With AMISOM's support, footballs are being donated to teams and groups around the nation in a bid to promote community interaction, and positive forms of entertainment, especially among the youth.

"Sports is an activity that helps a community strengthen its security. The youth are very happy and we are grateful for this gesture. When we engage with the youth, especially in constructive things like sports, it keeps them away from Al-Shabaab and other harmful activities. Our sports sector was eroded during the civil war and it's just being revived now. We welcome anyone who wants to support us," said Col. Mahad Abdirahman, the Bay Regional Police Commissioner, just after receiving about 20 footballs from AMISOM Police in Baidoa on January 15, 2015.

At a similar ceremony in Hamarweyne, one of the capital's 16 districts, the SPF and AMISOM not only handed over footballs, but set the ball rolling by organising a friendly four-a-side match between local teams W.Kacaan and W.Hilaac. W.Kacaan won by six goals to one!

"This is a pleasure for me. I am very happy that our brothers - AMISOM - have visited our district in this way; and this will lead to more interaction within the community. It was not like this before, and so the young players are very happy," said Hamarweyne District Commissioner, Abduqadir Mohamed Abduqadir, who received the footballs in a ceremony witnessed by Isidore Kirukiye, AMISOM's Acting Police Commissioner and Mohamud Ahmed 'Garaar,' the District Police Station Commander.

Our sports sector was eroded during the civil war and it's just being revived now. We welcome anyone who wants to support us

Heading Home

As 2014 drew to a close, it was also time to say goodbye to the Kenyan and Nigerian officers who had completed their tour of duty.

Medal parades were held for both contingents in Mogadishu, in recognition of their contribution to the peace process in Somalia over the past year.

The Kenyan group, made up of 3 women and 17 men, deployed on December 17th, 2013 and served in various capacities as mentors, trainers and advisors.

The ceremony was presided over by the AMISOM Police Commissioner Anand Pillay and the current Acting Force Commander Major General Jonathan Rono.

Speaking during the ceremony, Major General Rono challenged the officers to apply the knowledge acquired while in Somalia, to the fight against terrorism back home.

"We are facing a situation where we have a lot of intrusion of terrorist activities in the country and this is facing the police at all our boarders. So as you go, I am so happy because you will employ that knowledge, you will employ that technique that you have been using here, to see that you enforce law and order and also detect issues of possible terrorism and safeguard human life," Major Gen. Rono told the honorees.

AMISOM's police officers are drawn from Ghana, Nigeria, Uganda, Kenya and Sierra Leone. Their mandate is to train and transform the SPF into a professional body that operates according to international standards and conventions.

"The Somali Police Force have increased in number and gotten valuable training. There is a lot of increased visibility in the streets and they are performing their duties professionally after being mentored not only by Kenyans, but all AMISOM Police," said Benjamin Mwanthi, the Kenyans' Contingent Commander.

"Am proud to have served among the nations that have contributed to the restoration of peace in Somalia. I have learnt a lot of diversity from the people I have worked with, and part of what I have learnt is that we are supposed to be humble and appreciate each other, no matter where we come from," added Chief Inspector Purity Muthoni.

The outgoing Nigerian officers also received their awards at a colorful ceremony attended by Ambassador Maman S. Sidikou, the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (SRCC) for Somalia.

"We need to ensure, even as we do our police work, that Somali communities come on board to help wage what is really their war against intolerance, insecurity and terrorism," SRCC Sidikou told the invited guests and awards recipients.

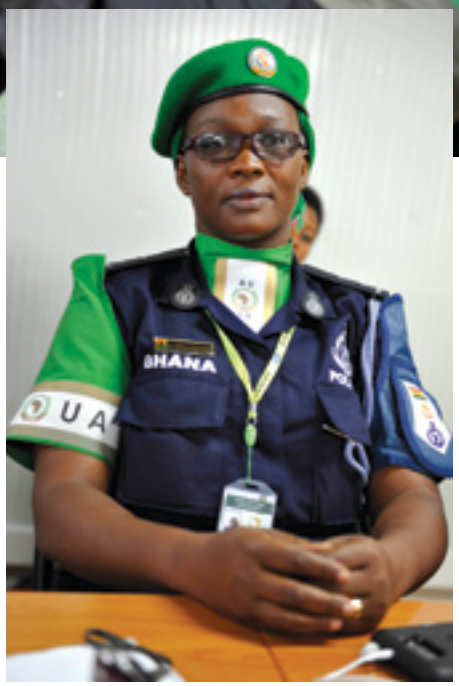
Speaking at the ceremony, AMISOM Police Commissioner Anand Pillay, thanked the officers for their hard work and dedication during their tour of duty in the country.

"It's sad for me. For one, I know that I have made many friends amongst you. I know the quality of people that you are, and the work and performance that you have displayed whilst in the area, the commitment displayed in performing your functions and in creating a stable and secure Somalia," he said.

Brigadier-General Ahmed Dayib, who attended the event on behalf of Somalia's Acting Police Commissioner, highlighted the benefits of working alongside AMISOM's police units, who have trained their Somali counterparts in public order management, traffic control, protection of VIP escorts and various other stabilisation efforts.

"This portrays the work done for the Somali National Police, which consists of several branches now, like the traffic police, which the FPU (Formed Police Units) also support. They assist with our general operations here in the Banaadir area and conduct training for the Somali Police Force," Brig. Gen Dayib said.

Duty Calls



Am proud to have served among the nations that have contributed to the restoration of peace in Somalia.

The bittersweet farewells were tempered soon by the arrival of fresh officers from the PCCs (Police Contributing Countries) of Ghana and Nigeria.

The 17 new Ghanaian peacekeepers arrived on December 17. Their Nigerian counterparts, a contingent made up of 101 men and 39 women, concluded induction training on January 15, 2015.

A key part of the orientation course is ensuring that the officers have a comprehensive and clear understanding of AMISOM's mandate in Somalia. They were also briefed on the AU and UN Peace & Security architecture, structure of the Somali Police Force, Somali culture, ongoing reforms in Somalia, avoiding Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) and abiding by the AMISOM code of conduct.

AMISOM has the mandate to train, advise and mentor Somali police officers in the principles of democratic policing. We have officers in this contingent from diverse backgrounds, who are skilled in human resource and administration. Some of them have very good operational abilities; some of them have training abilities. We have a contingent here that has various competencies to contribute to AMISOM's mandate of training, advising and mentoring the Somali Police," said the AMISOM Police Chief of Staff, ACP Rex Dundun.

Best Photos of 2014

Shared Experiences

A conference that brought together representatives of Somalia's diverse and influential Diaspora, to discuss key elements of a policy that will streamline their contribution to their country's rebirth, was held from January 12 - 16, 2015 in Kigali, Rwanda.

Dubbed the 'Diaspora Policy Consultation Conference for Development in Somalia', the event was the brainchild of the Office for Diaspora Affairs (ODA), a department within Somalia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Investment Promotion. The conference was supported by AMISOM, the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD) and Rwanda's government.

The SRCC, Amb. Maman Sidikou attended with Omar Ali, Chief of Staff for the Somali Presidency, Amb. Welile Nhlapo of ACCORD and the Guest of Honor, Parfait Gahamanyi, the Director General of the Multilateral Cooperation Unit in Rwanda's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation.

"Your country needs you now more than ever before, and you owe it to the millions of Somalis who didn't have the privilege and opportunity to leave Somalia and have been holding the fort, recognise them and make your contribution," Amb. Maman Sidikou told almost 100 participants who had flown into the Rwandan capital from countries like Malaysia, Canada, USA and other parts of the world.

Rwanda, fondly known in the region as 'the land of a thousand hills', was selected by the ODA as the venue for this significant meeting because of the country's exemplary track record in engaging it's extensive and dynamic diaspora network, to support homegrown efforts to recover from internal conflict and the horrific genocide of 1994.

Parfait Gahamanyi told the delegates that the Rwandan Diaspora were directly responsible for numerous poverty reduction, social welfare and public relations initiatives for which the country as a whole, can view with pride.

"We hold Rwanda Day several times a year to give updates to Rwandans all across the world on how far we have come," he said.

Amb. Welile Nhlapo encouraged the participants not to underestimate the restorative power of shared experiences, and invited them to join ACCORD and the AU in their shared mission of seeking "African solutions to African problems".

Although Somalia's Minister of Foreign Affairs & Investment

It has been amazing to see how Rwanda was able to overcome all the destruction of war and rebuild their country.

Promotion, Abdirixman Du'ale Bayle was unavoidably absent from the conference, he sent an emotive pre-recorded message in which he thanked the Diaspora – and Somalia's women especially – for keeping the country alive during decades of fighting.

"If anything has kept Somalia and its people going during the period of turmoil it was its Diaspora…" he said. It's a sentiment which was echoed by Omar Ali, Chief of Staff for the Somali presidency and one of the government representatives in attendance.

While much of the 5-day event had participants focused on working group discussions and presentations from various experts, several field visits were organised to the Rwandan Parliament, the Mutobo Demobilisation Centre and the Kigali Genocide Memorial Centre to allow delegates to see and hear for themselves about Rwanda's commendable recovery efforts and achievements.

"It has been amazing to see how Rwanda was able to overcome all the destruction of war and rebuild their country. It's so beautiful and clean. We've been given a lot of information about governance, reconciliation, building peace and how to handle perpetrators and victims as well. We've learnt a lot," said Zainab Hassan who runs Somalia's National Library in Mogadishu.

The delegates who came in from the US, Canada, parts of Europe and Asia and Africa, also come from diverse but representative walks of life e.g. medical professionals, clerics, civil servants, entrepreneurs and students.

The Somali government and its advisors are keen to tap the huge financial and human resources held by its Diaspora.

"The remittances that the Somali people send home it's estimated at two billion US dollars. Rwandans only send about 164 million. So if Somalis really wanted to, they could invest just one percent of that a year in our recovery, which would be 22 million every year which would change a great deal," said Abdulkadir Ahmed, the director of the Office of Diaspora Affairs (ODA).

Delegates were also taken to Kigali's One Dollar Campaign Complex – a children's home built with donations by Rwandan diaspora.

The conference ended with a compilation of the week's suggestions and ideas that are expected to form the proposed pillars and thematic areas of the Diaspora Policy that will help to kickstart development projects.

Somalia Rebuilds

Alma Mater

Tucked amidst the rubble that serves as a stark reminder of the fierce battles that were fought in the streets of Somalia's capital, are five newly refurbished buildings. They house Somalia's National University, which recently welcomed a fresh batch of students for the first time in 23 years.

The campus is located in the Hamarweyne district of Mogadishu – also known as 'Old Mogadishu'.

The Somalia National University (SNU) has reopened its doors with the intention of producing the calibre of leaders that will drive Somalia's return to the global stage.

Many Somalis say the resumption of classes here is 'history in the making' and students have travelled from far-flung parts of the Horn of Africa nation to join one of the six faculties on offer i.e. medicine, education, veterinary, agriculture, law and economics. Pre-university courses in Mathematics, Physics, Biology and English began on October 6, 2014.

"I recommend that all Somali students, both male and female, join us the moment they graduate from high school, so that they can be part of the history and joy being created here at SNU," said Abdulahi Mohamoud Ali, an English lecturer at SNU.

The campus was built by Italian colonialists in 1956 originally as an institute for Somalis to learn management, law and economics. In 1969 – nine years after independence – it was renamed the Somalia National University.

The school grew over the years into a 14-faculty institution that produced many of the country's top civil servants. In 1990, the government of President Mohamed Siad Barre fell, and like all other government structures, the university was abandoned.

"This university collapsed before I was born. It was shut down in 1991 and I was born in 1993, that's two years after my birthday. I've been told this was a national university with 15,000 students who studied for free. The university was shut down before I was born so for me to be part of it now makes me so happy and I cannot measure my happiness. I wish to share that happiness with Somalis all over the world," said Bishal Awil Ali, one of the 374 students currently enrolled in SNU.

After graduating in 1976 with a Bachelor in Linguistics and a Major in Italian Language, Dr. Mohamed Jim'ale has returned to his Alma mater to serve as its chancellor. He says the revival of the university is an example of the restorative power of public-private sector partnerships.

Terrorist group Al-Shabaab forbade education and stifled development. After

The government realised that it is their duty to give the young people this opportunity and that is why they focused on rebuilding this public university,

the defeat of the extremist militants in Mogadishu, the Federal Government of Somalia (FGOS) had the security and support it needed to mobilise financial and technical assistance from local businesses to rehabilitate the campus.

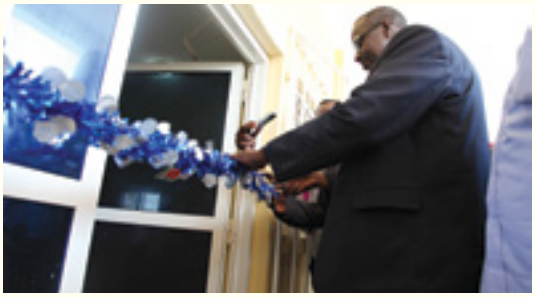
"The government creates equal opportunity because if there was only private education, a lot of the young people would not have access to it because of the economic situation. The government realised that it is their duty to give the young people this opportunity and that is why they focused on rebuilding this public university," said Dr. Jim'ale.

Marginalised by Al-Shabaab, women are now being encouraged to take an active and leading role in the country's social, economic and political renaissance.

"I'd like to say to all Somali women that will watch this, get up and get an education so that you're qualified to help your country. The men are going forward and we must be like them. I urge all mothers to let their girls go to school so that they're able to help themselves in the future," said Ayan Abdiweli Mohamud, another student at SNU.

Somalia's government has many challenges to overcome as it works to rebuild institutions like these. Soon it will have the support of the graduating classes of SNU, to assist in their country's long road to recovery.

License & Registration Please



The signs of recovery can be seen not only in the capital, but all over the country as well. When the Interim Juba Administration (IJA) was formed on May 15, 2013 there were more than a few chronic pessimists who did not think the mix of Middle Juba, Lower Juba and Gedo regions would hold together as one federal entity.

After being recognized locally, regionally and internationally, the IJA has moved quickly to silence its critics by reviving key infrastructure in and around the southern port city of Kismayo.

A Central Bank is now operational and key government offices are being rebuilt in order to supply public services.

The latest revival is the Ministry of Transport, Posts and Telecommunication which was officially opened on January 8, 2015. This means the local population can now access vital government documents, licences and passes.

"The people of Jubaland will now have to adhere to the new rules and regulations of the State, such as mandatory number plates for all vehicles, road licenses and stickers. Gone are the days when we used to be ruled by militias. We now have a fully-functioning Ministry of Transport, Posts and Communications and so people will have to apply for log books and driving licenses," said Ibrahim Hassan Abdi, the IJA's Minister of Transport, Posts and Telecommunication.

After being recognized locally, regionally and internationally, the IJA has moved quickly to silence its critics...

A Friend Indeed

Turkish President, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, visited Somalia on January 25, 2015 to launch several development projects, including a new terminal for the Aden Abdulle International Airport airport terminal, in the Somali seaside capital of Mogadishu.

President Erdogan was accompanied on his second visit to the Horn of Africa country by his wife, daughter and several ministers.

Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud thanked his Turkish counterpart for his country's investments in Somalia, which is working to rebuild critical infrastructure and institutions after decades of internal conflict.

"You have provided this terminal and many other things including moral support. Somalis will always remember your generosity," said President Hassan Sheikh.

Turkey, in partnership with the Federal Government of Somalia, has constructed several hospitals, roads and buildings – including the new airport terminal that was being inaugurated. Places of worship have also been restored, and many Somalis are currently being educated in Turkey.

"I'm very happy and delighted to inaugurate the new terminal of Mogadishu's airport. I think it will help the Somali people who used to experience difficulties," said President Erdogan.

Somali government official say the two presidents also signed new development agreements focusing on real estate, military and security cooperation, youth and sports initiatives, civil service training, >

Turkey, in partnership with the Federal Government of Somalia, has constructed several hospitals, roads and buildings – including the new airport terminal that was being inaugurated.

(Continued)

marine transportation, police support and cooperation between Turkish National Radio TRT and Somali National TV.

Deputy Special Representative of the Chairman of the African Union (DSRCC) for Somalia, Lydia Wanyoto Mutende represented the AU Mission (AMISOM) at the launch.

"On behalf of the African Union, I'd like to congratulate the Federal Government of Somalia on this very exciting day, when we're getting a brand new, state-of-the-art terminal for international travel. But also, on behalf of African Union and Somalia, that it has been done in a very peaceful environment, everybody's happy and we'll see many developments come to Somalia," the DSRCC said.

Erdogan first visited Somali in 2011 while still serving as Turkey's Prime Minister. He is lauded by Somalis for being the first world leader to set foot in the country in 20 years.

He is lauded by Somalis for being the first world leader to set foot in the country in 20 years.

Open for Business

The residents of Mogadishu must feel like a new building has been added to their cityscape every time they turn their heads.

But this one is special. It's the spanking new premises of the International Bank of Somalia (IBS), the first financial institution of its kind here, in over two decades.

Just like most other institutions in Somalia, the financial sector collapsed when the government imploded in 1991. A plethora of money transfer companies – known as hawalas – sprang up to cater to the millions of Diaspora who had fled the country, but needed to regularly send funds back to the friends and families they had left behind.

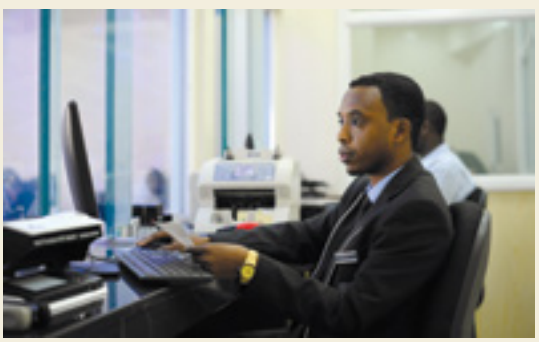
While they facilitated the transfer of over one billion US dollars annually, the hawalas were confined solely to incoming transactions after receiving the remittance deposits, due to the absence of a central governing body and fiscal legislation.

Somalia's security forces assisted by African Union peacekeepers have created an enabling environment for Somalia's government to focus on the country's political, social and economic revival.

The central bank was reopened in 2009 and its officials quickly set about putting in place the policies that allowed Sharia-compliant IBS to open its doors in October 2014.

"In IBS we are using international standards. We have risk management, compliance, we have anti-money laundering system, we have name screening, we have internal audit and external audit. We have all sorts of safeguards that make us connect to the rest of the world, that's the reason IBS has connections (and) correspondence around the world, which makes money transfer through the banking system easier, something which was not available in the country," said IBS CEO, Ahmed Hassan Yusuf.

Ahmed Hassan is first to admit that there are considerable challenges, such as the entrenched use of US dollars over the local Somali shilling, the high cost of power and bandwidth and the scarcity of qualified local labor.



"The operating costs in Somalia are very high, you have to do everything yourself and that's a challenge. The other challenge is that you need to educate people on how the banking sector really works and how they stand to benefit from it. People have their own mentality of how banks work, so some of the products you're going to introduce, if you are not able to adapt to the local customs, there will be a challenge," he continued.

"Most Somali people are used to the hawala money transfer system, there was no recognised banking system. If I'm not wrong, this is the first bank that not only offers money transfer services, but international banking services as well," added Abdi Nasir Sheik Ahmed, one of IBS's first customers.

Analysts regularly point to Somalia's economic potential. The resource-rich Horn of Africa nation lies in a region that the World Bank says experienced 4.7 percent growth last year. Livestock, remittances and telecommunications form the backbone of a healthy informal sector. The unprecedented return of Diaspora Somalis looking to invest, and the bustling sea and air ports, are also encouraging signs in the absence of substantive economic statistics.

The recent and highly-publicised installation of the country's first ATM at the popular Jazeera Hotel, is another symbolic – and tangible – indicator that Somalia is now open for business.

"Somalia's banking sector is going to grow. More banks are coming, there will be more regulations and actors coming into the scene. There will be good news coming, for example the stock market, an association of banks will also be in play," said Ahmed Hassan.

Somalia's financial players like Ahmed Hassan have big plans for their country, but the true measure of their success will be how profoundly and quickly the benefits of their initiatives will be felt in the businesses and lives of their nation's ordinary citizens.

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