

AMISOM



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STEADY PROGRESS

Message from the SRCC



“

we are supporting the Somali Security Forces in creating a secure environment for the government to be present

”

In July this year, we commenced implementation of the second phase of the Somalia Transition Plan, after making quite some commendable progress in the first phase. The handover of Jaale Siyaad Military Academy to the Somali authorities in the first phase of the transition plan was a major milestone. We also carried out joint operations together with the Somali Security Forces and took control of strategic bridge towns of Sabiid Anole and Bariire in Lower Shabelle region, in line with our mandate. Under the second phase of the transition, we liberated the bridge town Awdheegle, building on what we begun under the first phase.

As we continue to implement the transition plan, guided by the latest UN Security Council resolution 2472 (2019), we envisage an increased role by the Somali Security Forces as they increasingly acquire capacity to take the lead in security operations, taking over forward operating bases, as AMISOM reduces its military footprint ahead of its anticipated exit in 2021. An example of this was the recent hand over by AMISOM Sector 5 of Warsheikh Forward Operating Base, to the HirShabelle State security forces.

The deployed HirShabelle state police personnel were part of the team that recently trained and graduated in Jowhar with support from AMISOM and our international partners. We will also continue to work jointly with our international partners, the Federal Government and Federal Member States, to support recruitment and training of police personnel to work alongside our troops to protect population centres and secure the main supply routes and allowing continued movement of people, goods and humanitarian assistance. In the recovered areas, we are supporting the Somali Security Forces in creating a secure environment for the government to be present, and set up structures that can allow it to administer the

population, provide services and perform other important government functions. We are forging ahead with activities on stabilisation and early recovery, and we are laying the ground for rehabilitation and restoration of public trust and confidence in the Government. One of the ways to achieve this is through implementing of Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) such as medical outreaches, support to rehabilitation of roads to ease movement of people, goods and the provision of government services. In doing so, we work jointly with the Somali civil society actors and tap into their comprehension of the Somali socio-cultural landscape and proven ability to mobilise communities.

It is important to note that our humanitarian partners have warned of adverse weather conditions in the months ahead, which could impact crop yields in the agriculture-dependent regions, including the regions located in our area of responsibility. This means that we will have to step up operations to create conducive conditions for the delivery of assistance when the need arises.

I would like to salute all our men and women in uniform, who, for the last 12 years, have fought shoulder to shoulder with our Somali brothers, risking it all on the frontline to confront the enemy. There is considerable progress on Somalia's road to recovery. We stand with Somalia on this journey as the country confidently works to put an end to the war, build peace and bring prosperity to its people.

**Ambassador Francisco
Caetano Madeira**

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African Union Commission for Somalia (SRCC)*

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Military personnel serving under the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), operate road maintenance equipment to rehabilitate a road that links Jowhar Airport to Jowhar town in HirShabelle State, Somalia.

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01

JULY

Somalia marked its 59th Independence Day, during which President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed 'Farmajo' asked international partners to prioritise development support rather than aid for his country. The President hosted a state banquet at the presidential palace in Mogadishu, for members of the international community and diplomats residing in Somalia.



20

JULY

AMISOM military officers from the contingents of Burundi, Kenya and Uganda met with officials from UNSOS and discussed about the maintenance and servicing of equipment which the contingents receive from international partners. Discussions focused particularly on the high rate of equipment wear and tear due to the harsh operating environment.



20

JULY

The African Union High-level Implementation Panel (AUHIP) led by former South African President, Thabo Mbeki, visited Somalia and held talks with President, Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed Farmajo on regional integration in the Horn of Africa. The panel, comprising officials from IGAD and the UN, also met with leadership of AMISOM, UNSOM, diplomats and civil society.



25 AUG

Recently deployed military officers from Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Sierra Leone, Uganda and Zimbabwe completed a five-day induction course. Induction training is a mandatory requirement for all uniformed personnel before they commence service under AMISOM.



21 AUG

A special envoy of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Ambassador Abdoulaye Diop, visited Somalia and held talks with the leadership of AMISOM and the Federal Government of Somalia. Ambassador Diop who also serves as Chief of Staff to the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat, spent two days in Somalia evaluating the work of AMISOM with a view of scaling up support.



14 AUG

The Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and AMISOM commenced an audit of companies and organisations operating within the Aden Abdulle International Airport protected area. The audit aimed to enhance security and ensure that companies and organisations contracted by the UN and AMISOM operate within the laws of the country.



31

JULY

AMISOM marked the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons with an event to raise awareness on the need to promote and protect the rights of victims of trafficking. A symposium held in Mogadishu, in partnership with the Somali Police Force (SPF), attracted over 100 AMISOM police and SPF officers.



AMISOM commences review of its Boards of Inquiry standard operating procedures

“The Boards of Inquiry are administrative managerial tools which we use to investigate serious incidents that occur in the Mission, to establish facts and circumstances under which such events, harmful to Somali citizens or our own staff,

Mogadishu – On 27 June, AMISOM commenced harmonising its Boards of Inquiry standard operating procedures (SOPs) to enhance efficiency in investigating critical security incidents occurring in its areas of operation to ensure appropriate compensation is made when required. The review process will include all components mainly the military, police and civilian units to guarantee that decisions made on critical incidents, involving AMISOM

personnel, are based on agreed standard operating procedures (SOPs).

“During the course of AMISOM operations, it has been noted that the constitution and management of the boards of inquiry in general have been faced with various challenges which include, administrative processing delays and application of different SOPs,” said AMISOM Deputy Force Commander in charge of Operations and Plans, Maj. Gen. Nakibus



“It is against this backdrop that this review and harmonisation workshop is taking place in order to develop relevant and all-encompassing SOPs,”

Maj. Gen. Nakibus Lakara, the AMISOM Deputy Force Commander in charge of Operations and Plans, addresses participants during the AMISOM Boards Of Inquiry (BOI) workshop to review and harmonise the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). The workshop was held in Mogadishu, Somalia.

Lakara, at a consultative meeting held in Mogadishu.

“It is against this backdrop that this review and harmonisation workshop is taking place in order to develop relevant and all-encompassing SOPs,” Maj. Gen. Lakara added.

According to the UN, a Board of Inquiry is an analytical and managerial tool to review investigation reports, establish facts related to critical security incidents involving organi-

sations of the UN Security Management System, including whether the incident occurred as a result of the acts or omissions of any individual(s).

AMISOM’s legal officer, Dr. Henry Nampandu, said the workshop will help harmonise the Mission’s compensation standards in accordance with the existing international laws.

“The Boards of Inquiry are administrative managerial tools which we use to investigate se-

rious incidents that occur in the Mission, to establish facts and circumstances under which such events, harmful to Somali citizens or our own staff, occur,” Dr. Nampandu observed. In the event of an incident that leads to the disability and/or death of personnel and the loss or damage of Mission property or casualties of third parties and the loss of or damage to their property, AMISOM is required to carry out a compensation process through legal provisions encapsulated

in the African Union legal and regulatory frameworks.

African Union medical planner, Dr. Achamyelesh Debela, urged the leadership to ensure the SOPs are harmonised, by taking into consideration lessons learned and challenges faced by various components when investigating incidents and compensating those affected.

“In the context of African Union peace support operations which is multi-dimensional,

composed of civilian, military and police and has many varieties of different nature incidents and occurrences, it is very important to put all the lessons learnt, challenges, gaps, and achievements together in order to review the existing standard operating procedures regarding the Boards of Inquiry," said DeBELA.

Her sentiments were echoed by Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP), Brenda Sindimba, an investigation/Board of Inquiry Officer, who noted that the workshop will review the procedures applied, highlight the gaps and address inconsistencies.

"At the end of the workshop my expectations are that the things that are missing or lacking will be captured and included in the harmonised standard operating procedures," said ASP Sindimba.

Maj. Emmy Ekyaruhanga, a Board of Inquiry officer at the Force Headquarters, expressed confidence that the workshop will address and review anomalies and inconsistencies in different SOPs applied by the different components of the Mission.

Apart from compensating its personnel, in 2016 AMISOM began a process of making amends to civilians who suffer harm as a result of its operations in the country.



Civilian and military staff of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), attend the AMISOM Boards Of Inquiry (BOI) workshop to review and harmonise the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). The workshop was held in Mogadishu, Somalia.



Dr. Achamyelesh DeBELA, the Medical Planner from the African Union Commission, addresses participants during the AMISOM Boards Of Inquiry (BOI) workshop to review and harmonise the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). The workshop was held in Mogadishu, Somalia.



Military staff officers of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), attend the AMISOM Boards Of Inquiry (BOI) workshop to review and harmonise the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). The workshop was held in Mogadishu, Somalia.



Senior military officers of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), attend the opening session of AMISOM sector commanders' conference in Mogadishu, Somalia.

Mogadishu - On 07 July 2019, AMISOM contingent commanders concluded a meeting during which they resolved to enhance coordination with the Somali security forces to implement the Somali Transition Plan.

The commanders, along with their Somali counterparts, met over three days in Mogadishu to evaluate progress made in implementing the mission's Concept of Operations (CONOPs).

During the meeting, the commanders also discussed the operational readiness of the Somali security forces, which is crucial to the successful implementation of the Somali Transition Plan. Under the transition plan, AMISOM will transfer



Senior military officers of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), Somali National Army (SNA), and international partners attend the closing session of AMISOM sector commanders' conference in Mogadishu, Somalia,

AMISOM, Somali commanders to enhance coordination in operations



Ambassador Francisco Madeira, the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (SRCC) for Somalia, senior military officers of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and Somali National Army (SNA), attend the opening session of the sector commanders' conference in Mogadishu, Somalia.

security responsibility to Somali security forces ahead of AMISOM's anticipated exit in 2021.

Ambassador Francisco Madeira, the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the AU Commission (SRCC) for Somalia, commended the Somali security forces for carrying out offensives to liberate Sabiid, Anole and Bariire, in Lower Shabelle region.

He also hailed as significant, the commencement of integrating Ahlu Sunna forces into the country's security forces.

"This commitment shows that Somalia wants to move forward despite existing challenges. The work of their national forces deserves increased support," Ambassador Madeira noted.

He also commended the federal government and international partners for supporting AMISOM to fulfil its mandate.

"I recognise the role our partners are playing in training and creating the conditions necessary for operations to take place. We are implementing the Somali Transition Plan and the AMISOM exit strategy. The progress made so far indicates that we are on track in executing our mandate," he remarked.

At the opening of the meeting, Lt. Gen. Tigabu Yilma Wondimhunegn, the AMISOM Force Commander, attributed the success in operations to enhanced coordination between AMISOM, Somali security forces and international partners.

Lt. Gen. Tigabu noted that joint operations in the Lower Shabelle region had positively impacted on the security in Mogadishu city. "It has significantly reduced incidents of Improvised Explosive Devices explosions and mortar attacks, which Mogadishu had been experiencing," Lt. Gen. Tigabu remarked.

Former President Mbeki visits Somalia to consult on regional integration



The President of Somalia, Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed 'Farmajo,' and members of his cabinet in a meeting with the former President of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki at Villa Somalia in Mogadishu, Somalia. President Mbeki led the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel which also comprised of IGAD and UN officials, on a consultation mission to Somalia.



Ambassador Francisco Madeira, the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the AU Commission (SRCC) for Somalia, receives the former President of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki at Aden Abdulle International Airport in Mogadishu, Somalia on 20 July 2019. President Mbeki led the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel which also comprised of IGAD and UN officials, on a consultation mission to Somalia.

“
We need to focus on three matters; first, what needs to be done to ensure that the Horn of Africa region develops a common security architecture.
”

Mogadishu - On 20 July, the African Union High-level Implementation Panel (AUHIP) led by former South African President, Thabo Mbeki, visited Somalia and held talks with President, Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed Farmajo on regional integration in the Horn of Africa.

The visit was in fulfillment of the mandate given to the panel by the AU, to ensure that countries in the region address issues of peace, security and economic integration in a holistic manner, in order to enjoy the benefits accruing from regional integration.

The panel, comprising officials from the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the United Nations, interacted with the leadership of AMISOM, UNSOM, diplomats and civil society.

In discussions with President Farmajo and officials of the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS), Mbeki said that it was important that in discussing integration in the region, the first point of contact is the countries making up the Horn of Africa.

“One of the matters which the continent needed to look at was the issue of addressing, in a holistic way, the challenges facing the Horn of Africa. A decision (of the AU) said that it would help the Horn of Africa region, but also have a positive impact on

the continent as a whole, if the Horn of Africa moved towards integration,” Mr. Mbeki stated in his remarks in the meeting held at Villa Somalia, which was attended by top AMISOM and UN officials.

The planned integration of the Horn of Africa countries, Mr. Mbeki said, would hinge on three pillars, which would include the development of a common security architecture for the region.

“We need to focus on three matters; first, what needs to be done to ensure that the Horn of Africa region develops a common security architecture. The other one would be about economic integration and what needs to be done with regard to that particular matter and the third would be relating to the political matters that are relevant to this issue of regional cooperation and integration,” Mr. Mbeki explained.

The visit was part of a wider tour of countries in the region, seeking their views on integration. The meeting was also attended by the Deputy Prime Minister of Somalia, Mahad Mohamed Guled; Somalia’s minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Ahmed Isse Awad; HE Lamamra Ramtane, the AU Special Envoy for Silencing the Guns and Dr. Mohamed Guyo, the IGAD Special Envoy for the Red Sea.

Somalia starts process to integrate Ahlu Sunna forces



Ambassador Francisco Madeira, the Head of AMISOM, Hassan Ali Khaire, the Prime Minister of Somalia and Dr. Sheikh Mohamed Shakir Ali Hassan, the Galmudug Chief of Ministers, are briefed on the process to integrate Ahlu Suna Wal Jama'a fighters into the Somali Security Forces in Dhusamareb, Galmudug, Somalia.

Dhusamareb - On 04 July, the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) launched an exercise to incorporate forces of the Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a (ASWJ) group into the Somali Security Forces. Hassan Ali Khaire, the Prime Minister of Somalia, officiated at the launch in the Galmudug state capital, Dhusamareb.

The ASWJ militants will be integrated into the security agencies of the army, police, intelligence service, and custodial corps. The integration involves capturing an individuals' biometrics, supports efforts to build active Somali Security Forces. Prime Minister Khaire called on the integrated ASWJ forces to join in efforts to defend their state and Somalia. "We will not give up on ensuring the achievement of stability in Galmudug," he added.

The ASWJ forces based in Dhusamareb is responsible for kicking the extremist group Al-Shabaab from most parts of the region. In December 2017, ASWJ signed a power-sharing agreement with the state administration. Ambassador Francisco Madeira who represented AMISOM, described the process as a milestone in reconciliation. He praised Somali leaders for the commitment to peace and cooperation and commended the efforts of the government to reach out to all political forces to reach lasting peace and stability in Galmudug.

Ambassador Madeira, who is also the Head of AMISOM, remarked that the integration of ASWJ militants reinforces AMISOM's mandate.



Ahlu Suna Wal Jama'a soldiers attend the launch of a process to integrate them into the Somali Security Forces in Dhusamareb, Galmudug, Somalia.

"THIS INITIATIVE IS A CLEAR TESTAMENT THAT THE JOURNEY TO UNITY, INTEGRATION, AND RECONCILIATION IS IN FULL SWING,"

"This initiative is a clear testament that the journey to unity, integration, and reconciliation is in full swing," remarked Ambassador Madeira, before adding, "We are leaving this place assured that Somalia's future is bright. Somalia is on the path to overcoming challenges."

Dr. Mohamed Ali Guyo, the IGAD Special Envoy to the Horn of Africa, appealed to all stakeholders in Galmudug State to support initiatives that promote peace, reconciliation and stability.

"We look forward to an inclusive process, accommodating all forces that can take the fight to Al-Shabaab and recover the remaining areas," Dr. Guyo said. Dr. Sheikh Mohamed Shakir Ali Hassan, the leader of Ahlu Sunna, commended the federal government for taking the path to peace, reconciliation and unity.

"This initiative will herald a unified Galmudug and Somalia. We are doing this with a clear conscience," said Sheikh Shakir, who is also Galmudug state's Chief of Ministers. Present were the Federal Minister of Interior and Federal Affairs, Abdi Mohamed Sabriye, the Federal Minister of Internal Security, Mohamed Abukar Islow Dualle, as well as lawmakers, military and police chiefs, regional leaders and elders.

On 06 August, Somalia has launched a public awareness campaign to ensure that citizens keep abreast of preparations for the upcoming 2020/21 one-person-one-vote elections. The event was attended by representatives of the Federal Government of Somalia, Federal Members of Parliament, leaders of political parties and civil society groups. The United Nations, Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa (EISA) and the International Republican Institute (IRI) were also represented. Ahead of the elections, AMISOM will facilitate a series of town hall meetings to educate and update Somalis on



A participant speaks during a panel discussion on Somalia's 2020/21 Upcoming Elections in Mogadishu. The forum was organized by civil society organizations with the support of the African Union Mission in Somalia.

Somalia launches public awareness on upcoming elections

the electoral and constitutional process. At the launch event in Mogadishu, the convener and chair of Somali Non-State Actors (SONSA), Mr. Osman Tahlil, listed a series of activities planned to create awareness about the process. He was grateful for the support by AMISOM to SONSA and the Somali Institute of Public Administration and Management (SIPAM) in the planned campaigns. In his remarks, Hon. Abdifatah Kassim, a Member of the Somali Parliamentary Adhoc Committee on the Electoral Law, said the House is expected to pass amendments to the proposed Election Act before the end of October 2019, to pave the way for universal suffrage elections. "We need to be enthusiastic about the changes in the electoral law because we have to change the

mentality of voting via clan-based system which has been in existence

for over 30 years," said Mr. Kassim. He added that Somalia needs to adopt an electoral model that will guarantee the rights of all adults to vote. A commissioner from the National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC), Hussein Abdi Adan, expressed optimism that the next elections will be peaceful and urged the public to participate in the forums to fully understand the process. "We have formulated policies and are currently pushing for the adoption of the election laws. We are also organising public awareness campaigns and identifying potential polling centres. And the Electoral Commission is grateful to have the support of AMISOM through this process," said Mr. Adan. He emphasised that "the town hall meetings will provide an opportunity for the public to familiarise themselves with the NIEC's five-year strategic plan, which outlines a roadmap for achieving universal elections in 2020/21." Speaking at the same event, the Deputy Special Representative of the Chairperson of the

African Union Commission (DSRCC) for Somalia, Simon Mulongo, assured the people of Somalia of AMISOM's support in facilitating the engagement forums, countrywide. "AMISOM and other partners will ensure that all Somalis participate in the upcoming elections by educating and preparing them for the electoral process to ensure democracy is fully implemented in Somalia," said Mr. Mulongo. "We will be having a series of engagement forums, facilitated by AMISOM, involving the Federal Government of Somalia, Federal Member States, political parties' leaders and the civil societies to educate and inform them on the electoral process, the electoral law and constitutional matters," said AMISOM Senior Political Officer, Hajji Ssebirumbi. Mr. Ssebirumbi added that the relevant stakeholders in the upcoming electoral process are in the process of agreeing on election modalities that would help

the country move from the 4.5 clan-based electoral system to a one-person-one-vote system. With support from AMISOM and UN, Somalia is preparing to conduct universal elections, which will be the first of its kind in 50



Hussein Abdi Adan, a member of Somalia's Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC) addresses participants during a public awareness forum on Somalia's 2020/21 Upcoming Elections in Mogadishu. The forum was organized by civil society organizations with the support of the African Union Mission in Somalia.

years. AMISOM is working closely with the federal and state governments to secure Somalia and provide a conducive environment for universal elections.

AMISOM officers donate blood to mark World Blood Donor Day

At AMISOM Level II Hospital, there is always a daily steady stream of local Somalis, among them, mothers seeking urgent medical care for their children, and others seeking surgical procedures that often need blood transfusion.



A Ugandan soldier serving under the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) donates blood at the AMISOM Sector One Headquarters during the World Blood Donation Day in Mogadishu, Somalia.



A Ugandan soldier serving under the African Union Mission in Somalia (MISOM) treats a child at the AMISOM hospital during the World Blood Donation Day in Mogadishu, Somalia.

Mogadishu – Every second, someone in the world urgently needs blood to save his or her life. Globally, blood transfusion saves millions of lives; however, in a country like Somalia where the need for safe blood is higher due to the effect of armed conflict and harsh living conditions, access to the precious fluid is still a major challenge. To help improve access to safe blood in Somalia, AMISOM troops, civilian staff and international partners gathered in Mogadishu to donate blood for use at the AU Mission's Level II Hospital, the Mission's largest medical facility in Somalia. The blood donation drive was part of a series of activities to mark the World Blood Donor Day, which is celebrated annually on 14 June.

The campaign was led by the Deputy Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (DSRCC) for Somalia, Simon Mulongo, who urged healthy individuals in the country to donate blood to help improve its availability in hospitals. "We are here to commemorate World Blood Donor Day, which is held every year. We are here to not only thank those who donate blood but to explain the usefulness of blood. We lose many people because

The blood donation drive was part of a series of activities to mark the World Blood Donor Day, which is celebrated annually on 14 June.

of various occurrences in a Mission like the one we are in and by donating blood, we save lives and that is extremely important," Mr. Mulongo noted. The blood bank at AMISOM Level II hospital serves both AU Mission personnel and residents of Somalia. AMISOM Deputy Force Commander in charge of Operations and Plans, Maj. Gen. Nakibus Lakara, said AMISOM's activities was not only restricted to military operations but also humanitarian activities such as voluntary blood donation campaigns, which are aimed at saving precious lives in Somalia.

"Today's exercise is not about war or fighting. It's about supporting and saving lives by donating blood," said

Maj. Gen. Lakara noted. Lt Col Dr. Lawrence Basaaliza, the Commanding Officer of AMISOM's Level II Hospital, said that initially the hospital was constructed to care exclusively for AMISOM officers, especially soldiers. "However, we soon realised that medical facilities in Somalia were down so we now take civilians for all forms of treatment." Lt. Col. Basaaliza added that most of the blood donated by AMISOM officers is used on civilians and Somali armed forces injured in combat. At AMISOM Level II Hospital, there is always a daily steady stream of local Somalis, among them, mothers seeking urgent medical care for their children, and others seeking surgical procedures that often



Simon Mulongo, the Deputy Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (DSRCC) for Somalia, speaks during the commemoration of the World Blood Donation Day in Mogadishu, Somalia.



Simon Mulongo, the Deputy Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (DSRCC) for Somalia, donates blood during the commemoration of the World Blood Donation Day in Mogadishu, Somalia.

To help improve access to safe blood in Somalia, AMISOM troops, civilian staff and international partners gathered in Mogadishu to donate blood for use at the AU Mission's Level II Hospital, the Mission's largest medical facility in Somalia.

need blood transfusion. As AMISOM soldiers brave the brutal frontlines fighting Al-Shabaab militants, from time to time, some of their colleagues remain behind in the Mission Hospital's detachments, lying down on metallic tables in the shade of green tents, a needle into each one's arm, donating blood to save hundreds of lives in Somalia.

Hussein Abdikadir, one of the many residents who received medical care at AMISOM Level II Hospital was encouraged by service rendered at the medical facility and become a regular donor. "AMISOM officers donate blood often, but this hospital (AMISOM Level II) rarely receives blood from the Somali civilian population. It is the reason why I decided

to start donating blood to help those in need, especially the patients undergoing surgery." AMISOM Level II Hospital accepts voluntary blood donations every day of the week, and also holds monthly blood donation campaigns on a rotational basis at its bases across Somalia.

Joint SNA, AMISOM operations against Al-Shabaab to continue

“Today, partners are helping Somalia generate trained and equipped forces. It is these forces that, with our support, are now holding liberated towns,”

Mogadishu - On 11 August, the Head of AMISOM, Ambassador Francisco Madeira said AMISOM and the Federal Government of Somalia would continue to conduct joint operations to restore peace and security in areas still the control of extremists. This was during a dinner hosted to celebrate the Muslim festival of Eid al-Adha at the AMISOM Force Headquarters in Mogadishu.

“As we celebrate Eid al-Adha, let me congratulate the Force Commander and the Sector One Commander for the important achievements they have made, the recent one being the liberation of Awdheegle,”

Ambassador Madeira stated, adding that the strong working relations between AMISOM and the Somali security forces had made the liberation of bridge towns possible. Awdheegle became the fourth bridge town to be liberated in the Lower Shabelle region, this year by Somali security forces supported by AMISOM troops. Other towns earlier liberated include Sabiid, Bariire and Eel-Saliini. Ambassador Madeira stressed the importance of having sufficient numbers of well-trained national forces to secure Somalia and hold ground in the liberated areas. He praised the Federal Government of Somalia for prioritising recruitment and added that AMISOM would continue to push

for the strengthening of Somali security forces following the recent successes in the joint military operations. “Today, partners are helping Somalia generate trained and equipped forces. It is these forces that, with our support, are now holding liberated towns,” he observed.

Conducting joint military operations, protecting population centres and clearing main supply routes are key activities that AMISOM is undertaking as part of the implementation of the Somali Transition Plan, which has the main objective of transferring security responsibility to the Somali security forces.



“*Awdheegle became the fourth bridge town to be liberated in the Lower Shabelle region, this year by Somali security forces supported by AMISOM troops.*”

AMISOM senior leadership attend a dinner hosted for its Muslim personnel to mark Eid ul Adha in Mogadishu, Somalia. Eidul Adha is an important religious holiday celebrated by Muslims all around the world.

Ugandan Formed Police personnel saluted for service to Somalia

The unit personnel also supported the transformation of the Somali Police Force into an effective and credible institution that adheres to international policing standards.



Ambassador Francisco Madeira, the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the AU Commission (SRCC) for Somalia, hands over a certificate to a police officer during a medal award ceremony for Ugandan Formed Police Unit personnel serving under AMISOM, to mark the end of their tour of duty in Somalia.



Mogadishu - On 30 July, Ambassador Francisco Madeira commended AMISOM Police for their dedication to duty, commitment to the mission and selfless service to the people of Somalia. Ambassador Madeira officiated at a medal award ceremony for 160 Formed Police Unit (FPU) officers from Uganda who completed a year-long tour of duty under AMISOM. "Members of this unit have been exemplary, diligent, committed and dedicated in selfless service to humanity and attainment of peace in Somalia.

In this regard, AMISOM extends hearty congratulations to the officers—men and women—of this unit," Ambassador Madeira said. While on deployment in Somalia, the unit personnel secured key government installations, carried out explosives disposal, secured Mogadishu, manned vehicle checkpoints, conducted joint patrols with Somali Police Force (SPF) and supported SPF through mentoring, advising, recruitment and recruit training. The unit personnel also supported the transformation of the Somali Police Force into an effective and credible institution that adheres to international policing standards.

Ambassador Madeira further said that in implementing the Somali

"I am impressed by the professionalism, bravery and discipline of these officers from Uganda. To serve as peacekeepers in a hostile environment like Somalia calls for individual sacrifice and tenacity."

Transition Plan—an important roadmap to the eventual handover of managing peace and security to Somali's own security forces—AMISOM will ensure that capacity and professionalism is built to help Somali security forces to assume security responsibilities by the end of AMISOM's mandate.

The Acting AMISOM Police Commissioner, Rex Dundun, said the outgoing unit had offered professional support and their contribution towards pacification of Somalia was noteworthy.

"I am impressed by the professionalism, bravery and discipline of these officers from Uganda. To serve as peacekeepers in a hostile environment like Somalia calls for individual sacrifice and tenacity."

The outgoing contingent commander of Uganda Formed Police Unit, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP), Richard Evans Onyait, said the contingent offered round-the-clock support to enable the Somali Police extend authority in liberated areas.

AMISOM supports Somali women in electoral processes

Mogadishu - On 29 August, Somali media practitioners and human rights activists agreed to conduct nation-wide public awareness campaigns on women participation in the 2020/2021 electoral process. In support of the National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC) efforts to raise awareness about the electoral process, the Political Affairs Office of AMISOM, in conjunction with the Protection, Human Rights and Gender Affairs Unit, organised a one-day workshop in Mogadishu.

Youth participants, women's groups, human rights activists as well as female journalists agreed on modalities to use to promote women participation in the electoral and political process. Sadia Shurie, the Management and Finance Advisor at the NIEC urged media reporting to be impartial, truthful and

deliberately intended to create awareness on the importance of women participation in the electoral process. "NIEC has implemented a raft of measures to ensure equal participation of the youth and especially women in the available positions at NIEC. Twenty-four percent of NIEC staff both in Mogadishu and the regions are women. NIEC also conducts regular consultations to promote women participation in the electoral process," she said. Muna Hassan Mohamed, who works as a Political Officer at AMISOM, underlined the importance of conducting nation-wide campaigns to sensitise women on the importance of their participation. "We agreed that sensitisation, through the media, is key in making sure women are cognisant of their role in the electoral process. And as AMISOM, we act as facilitators to ensure success of the awareness campaigns," Muna said. Hinda Dahir Jama, head of the Somali

Women Free Press Association urged female journalists to take the lead in reporting about women participation in the electoral process. "Our discussions centred on how to best report on the elections, while focusing on aspiring women leaders through programming that shows how women are capable of running for elective positions," Jama said. Ms. Mane Ahmed, Gender Officer, highlighted the need for Somali women to get the adequate knowledge on the electoral process so that they are able to fully participate and contribute to the process. Among the issues that the meeting discussed as key to achieving were building on the last achievement, gender equality and increased women participation in the upcoming elections, higher level advocacy forums to engage the ad-hoc committee and the NIEC, visibility for female candidates in the media.

Muna Hassan Mohamed, AMISOM Political Officer, makes presentations during a workshop to discuss the role of the media in promoting women's participation in the electoral process. The seminar organised by the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), took place in Mogadishu, Somalia



Participants in a group photo on the sidelines of a workshop to discuss the role of the media in promoting women's participation in the electoral process. The workshop organised by the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), took place in Mogadishu, Somalia.



Sadia Shurie, Management and Finance Advisor to the National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC), speaks during a workshop session on the role of media in promoting women participation in the electoral process held in Mogadishu, Somalia on 29 August 2019. The workshop was organised by the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).



AMISOM holds cultural gala to promote peace



Traditional dancers perform during a cultural event organised by Ugandan contingent serving under the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), in Mogadishu, Somalia.

Mogadishu - On 31 August, AMISOM Sector One, which is under the command of Uganda People's Defence Force (UPDF) held a gala marked by traditional dance performances and a cultural exhibition to display how peace and unity can prevail in culturally diverse communities.

Held under the theme 'UPDF: a united force in cultural diversity,' the gala aimed to celebrate Uganda's cultural diversity by bringing together soldiers serving under AMISOM to showcase their cultures and the peaceful coexistence between the different communities.

The commander of the Ugandan AMISOM contingent, Brig. Michael Kabango said, "In the African culture, we get an excuse to celebrate, dance, sing, feast, eat. And here in Somalia, we have a very big excuse. For the first time in Africa's history, we have seen a homegrown African mission make great strides in securing the continent's peace." Away from the battlefield and with the military fatigues put away, the soldiers of all ranks and file displayed the rich array of dances from the various communities of Uganda.

Brig. Michael Kabango added, "We are celebrating the success, so far, of this mission. Secondly, the

success would not have been possible, but for those who have sacrificed. So, we are celebrating the lives and sacrifices of our heroes and heroines who have gone through this mission."

Addressing guests present, Uganda's Ambassador to Somalia, Prof. Sam Turyamuhika highlighted the commitment of his country to AMISOM in order to ensure the success of the mission to bring peace and security to Somalia.

"You will agree with me that we have been entertained through a diversity of culture, mainly dances. So, these men and women you see here are not just good fighters. They are also good dancers," added Prof. Turyamuhika. Lt. Mary Sylvia Lamunu who was among the performers at the cultural gala said, "We are diverse as Ugandans. We are of different tribes, but we are one as UPDF. We follow the goals of the mission, which leads us to success."

She added, "In our diversity, we are still standing as one in the name of peace". Besides the music and dance performances, there was an exhibition of cuisines, regalia and artefacts of the various indigenous communities of Uganda.



Brig. Gen. Michael Kabango, the Commander of the Ugandan AMISOM contingent speaks during a cultural event organised by the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), in Mogadishu, Somalia.



Guests tour stalls during a cultural event organised by Ugandan contingent serving under the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), in Mogadishu, Somalia.

A dedicated peacekeeper with a passion to serve

The UPDF soldier is oftentimes found seated in the cabin of her ambulance or beside it, ready to respond to emergencies.

Mogadishu - When Corporal Emilly Kyasiimire was deployed to Somalia in December last year to serve as an African Union peacekeeper her first task was to undertake a mandatory drivers' test to allow her to drive an ambulance. "Naturally I enjoy driving so I was happy to drive an ambulance," says the 35-year-old female peacekeeper from the Uganda People's Defence Force (UPDF). All soldiers who want to drive in Somalia must pass the mandatory driving test to be allowed to handle military vehicles.

"I am happy that I passed the driving test and I am now using my skills to save lives. It is fulfilling," she added while dusting her four-wheel Toyota Land Cruiser ambulance. Corporal Kyasiimire developed an interest in humanitarian work while working as a records clerk in the Special Forces Command in her home country, Uganda. Since her deployment to Somalia, the female peacekeeper has been picking up injured soldiers and civilians evacuated from various parts of the country, and in need of urgent medical care, transporting them to the AMISOM Level II Hospital.

In a conflict environment where the number of casualties arising from security-related incidents is high, an ambulance driver plays a critical role as

his or her actions can to some extent determine the survival of the injured.

Corporal Kyasiimire is well aware that time is of essence and the injured must be rushed to hospital within the shortest time possible. "I feel very useful evacuating patients, especially those in critical condition. When I am able to get them to the hospital for treatment within the shortest possible time and I later see them fully recovered, I feel a sense of pride," she observed. The UPDF soldier is oftentimes found seated in the cabin of her ambulance or beside it, ready to respond to emergencies. She is on call 24 hours a day, which to her is both a blessing and a challenge.

"One of the challenges I face is that as an ambulance driver, I am always on standby 24-hours a day, which is good because I am saving lives. I also don't always work within the AMISOM base camp. Sometimes I drive outside the protected areas to pick up injured soldiers and civilians across Mogadishu," said the 35-year-old. Corporal Kyasiimire recounts one of her moments of pride involving a pregnant woman who had fallen sick outside the protected area. "I remember one afternoon where I had to rush a pregnant Somali woman who had developed serious complications to the hospital. The patient was very sick and would have died due to complications.



I had to rush her to hospital in the shortest time possible while at the same time assuring her that she will be alright. "I followed up later and learned that she survived and had given birth to a healthy baby. It was fulfilling to save a life," explains the UPDF soldier.

The quick emergency response was crucial because Somalia is one of the countries with the highest maternal deaths in the world. In fact, the United Nations Children's Fund estimates that one out of every 12 women dies due to pregnancy related causes. "Being a woman and well aware of the dangers of pregnancy complications especially in a

country still recovering from conflict I had to act fast to save her life and I am glad it went well," she explained. Corporal Kyasiimire is one of the many female peacekeepers serving in AMISOM who are making positive contributions towards peace and security in Somalia.

Over the years AMISOM has been lobbying for more female peacekeepers to underpin the important role women play in peacebuilding, and to serve as champions in protecting women's rights in Somalia. In fact, this year's World Humanitarian Day is dedicated to women humanitarians like Kyasiimire and many others who are working hard to make the world a better place.



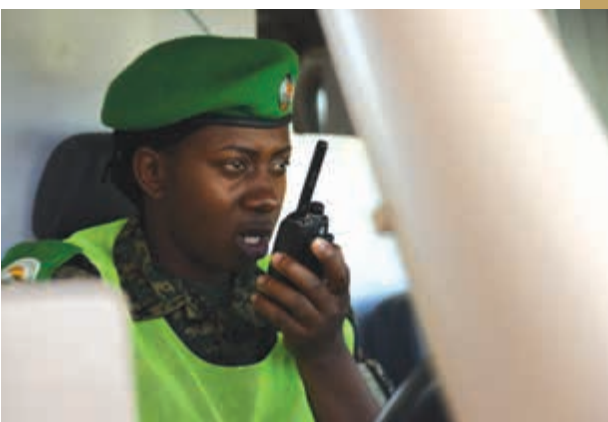
AMISOM Uganda Contingent Commander, Brig. Gen. Michael Kabango speaks during an interview in Mogadishu, Somalia on August 16, 2019.



Though the provision of humanitarian services is not a core mandate of AMISOM, the AU Mission has worked tirelessly to provide a conducive environment for the delivery of humanitarian assistance. Brig. Gen. Michael Kabango is no stranger to Somalia, having served in various capacities prior to taking over as the UPDF Contingent Commander in December 2018. According to him, the humanitarian situation in Somalia has seen remarkable changes since AMISOM arrived in Somalia in 2007.

"When AMISOM first arrived the humanitarian situation was difficult. There was insecurity and there were no hospitals. Mogadishu as the capital of Somalia was isolated from the rest of the country. The only functional hospital became the AMISOM Level II hospital here at the Airport," recalled Brig. Gen. Kabango who served as Uganda's Deputy Contingent Commander in charge of Operations in 2008/2009.

Kabango cites the expulsion of the militant group Al-Shabaab from Mogadishu in 2011 and the eventual opening up of key Main Supply Routes (MSRs) as the game changer that improved the



Corporal Emily Kyasiimire, a female peacekeeper serving as an ambulance driver under the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) communicates while on duty in Mogadishu, Somalia

humanitarian situation in Somalia. "During the 2011/2012 period, Al-Shabaab was expelled from Mogadishu, allowing humanitarian activities to start. AMISOM troops also opened up Main Supply Routes such as Mogadishu-Baidoa; Mogadishu-Barawe; Mogadishu-Jowhar and Mogadishu-Beletweyne, enabling humanitarian aid to come in," Brig. Gen. Kabango explained. Apart from degrading Al-Shabaab and opening MSRs, AMISOM troops, also provide security escorts to humanitarian vehicles delivering food and non-food items to the needy in various parts of the country.

In addition, the AU Mission continues to implement programmes aimed at improving the lives of residents who have

suffered due to conflict and instability. The programmes include free medical camps, food donations, sinking of boreholes, construction of police stations and schools and the rehabilitation of roads among others. "We need to make sure that local communities cooperate with us and we can do this by demonstrating to them that we understand their needs," Gen. Kabango explains.

"The task is a service for humanity and we do it to save lives," he added in reference to the mammoth task of securing Somalia. Corporal Kyasiimire concurs with her commander's sentiments, promising to continue engaging in humanitarian work even after completing her tour of duty in Somalia.

UPDF Battle Group XXV feted for role in peacekeeping



Ugandan soldiers serving under the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) attend their medal award ceremony in Mogadishu on, after they completed their tour of duty in Somalia.

Mogadishu - On 18 July, AMISOM awarded medals and certificates to a Ugandan battle group for its contribution to peace and stability in Somalia.

The officers, belonging to Battle Group XXV, operated in Ceeljaale, Bufow, Marka, Shalambot, Qoryoley and Masla among other areas under the Ugandan AMISOM contingent's area of responsibility.

"During the last 12 months, you have managed to implement the programme of AMISOM by going to your Forward Operating Bases (FBOs) to fight the enemy and bring peace and stability to the residents of Sector One," said Ambassador Francisco Madeira, the Head of AMISOM, who presided over the medal award ceremony.

"The African Union is in Somalia not for any other purpose other than helping to liberate this country from the scourge of a ruthless and destructive Al-Shabaab," Ambassador Madeira added. The SRCC commended the battle group for promoting dialogue and reconciliation among communities residing in its area of operation, for rehabilitating flood control channels in Marka town and providing medical support to local communities. The AMISOM Deputy Force Commander in charge of Operations and Plans, Maj. Gen. James Lakara, lauded the officers for mentoring and supporting Somali National Army (SNA) personnel in the Lower Shabelle region.

The outgoing battle group commander, Col. Paul Muhanguzi, thanked the AMISOM leadership for their guidance and support which he said enabled the contingent to achieve its mandate. "Battle Group 25 supported the Somali National Army to capture Marka, which is the second largest city in the region. The battle group also supported and nurtured the local forces that were later recruited into the National Intelligence and Security Agency," said Col. Muhanguzi.



Ambassador Francisco Madeira, the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the AU Commission (SRCC) for Somalia, pins a medal on a Ugandan soldier during a medal award ceremony for Ugandan soldiers serving under the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), who have completed their tour of duty in Somalia. The event took place in Mogadishu..

AMISOM helps families affected by drought in Dhobley

Dhobley - On 06 September, female soldiers serving in the Kenyan contingent of AMISOM launched an initiative to support families affected by drought in southern Somalia. The troops distributed rice, sugar, beans, biscuits, fruit and other food items to about 150 households. Most of the beneficiaries were widows, orphans, and the elderly. The commander of the AMISOM Kenyan contingent, Brig. Gen. Dickson Ruto oversaw the distribution. Brig. Gen. Ruto said his contingent would partner with community-based organisations to deliver food and medical services to families in need. He added that the AMISOM female troops would jointly implement the initiative with their female counterparts in the Somali National Army (SNA) and Jubbland state security forces.

"There is a serious drought across Somalia. It is important that we focus on the less privileged, particularly widows, orphans, and internally displaced persons who don't have enough food at this very critical moment," said Brig. Gen. Ruto.



Kenyan soldiers serving under the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) donate food items to families in Dhobley, Lower Jubba region.



Kenyan soldiers serving under the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) offload food items donated to families in Dhobley, Lower Jubba region.

The Administrator of Dhobley Town, Siyad Mohamed Hassan was grateful for the initiative, and called for more cooperation between AMISOM and local authorities in order to secure and help develop the area. "We request that such efforts should not stop here. We should collaborate and participate in other areas such as public health and sanitation, sports, education, and rehabilitation of our roads," added Siyad. Nimo Abdi Bule, a member of the Daryeel Women's Group in Dhobley and herself a beneficiary, said, "We are thankful to Allah, and appreciate the assistance from AMISOM." Capt. Lynette Rachi, who commanded the females within the AMISOM Kenyan contingent said the food donation would offer relief to vulnerable families, especially mothers, affected by the drought conditions.

"At the end of the day, all that a mother needs is to put food on the table for her children. So, the little we were able to get from the AMISOM headquarters, we were happy to share and have a great day together," said Capt. Rachi.



Brig. Gen. Dickson Ruto, the AMISOM Sector Two Commander carries a child during a donation of food items to families in Dhobley, Lower Jubba region.



Senior officials from the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and officials from the United Nations in a group photo at the end of a medal award ceremony for Ethiopian soldiers who concluded their tour of duty under AMISOM in Beletweyne, Somalia.

AMISOM troops hailed for clearing IEDs, opening supply



Lt. Gen. Tigabu Yilma Wondimhunegn, the Force Commander of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), pins a medal on an AMISOM Ethiopian military officer who completed his tour of duty under AMISOM, in Beletweyne, Somalia.

Beletweyne - On 31 August, Ethiopia National Defense Forces (ENDF) troops serving under AMISOM were saluted for their dedication, sacrifice, professionalism and commitment to duty. AMISOM held a medal award ceremony at the force's headquarters in Beletweyne, to recognise Ethiopian troops who had completed their year-long tour of duty in Somalia.

AMISOM Force Commander, Lt. Gen. Tigabu Yilma pointed out that in Mahas, Halgan and other areas where the ENDF troops operated, terrorist groups had been pushed out through successful military operations conducted jointly with the Somali security forces.

"You sacrificed a lot in order to support the core values of AMISOM's mandate to enforce peace and security. You mentored the Somalia National Army for the takeover of the security of their country in line with the Somali Transition Plan", Lt. Gen. Yilma told the troops.

"Because of your extreme military professionalism and discipline, you achieved success by conducting various joint operations with the Somali National

Army and the support of the people of Somalia." In attendance at the ceremony was Qurat-ul-Ain Sadozai, Head of United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) in Somalia, who commended AMISOM troops for their hard work in neutralising and clearing explosive devices planted by terrorists along main supply routes. She reiterated UNMAS' continued support to AMISOM in the training, equipping and mentoring of officers who are involved in clearing Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs).

"We know IEDs continue to be a concern and a major threat and will continue to support AMISOM, with contribution from UNSOS, in its endeavours," said Ms Sadozai. AMISOM Sector Four Commander, Col. Mohamed Ibrahim Muse said through the support of the people of Somalia and others partners, the troops under his command had managed to conduct successful operations against insurgent and terrorist elements in the region.

"Our soldiers serve with unwavering dedication despite facing a challenging environment. AMISOM troops in Hiiran area have provided a commendable assistance to the mission."

ETHIOPIAN TROOPS END AMISOM TOUR OF DUTY ON HIGH NOTE

On 24 September, AMISOM held a medal parade for Ethiopian National Defence Force (ENDF) troops who completed their tour of duty. The officers were honoured with merit awards for their contribution to peace and security during their deployment in the South West State of Somalia.

The South West State President, Abdiasis Mohammed Laftagareen, said the AMISOM forces based in Baidoa, had succeeded in protecting the lives and properties of the people of South West, citing the neutralisation of a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device early this year when terrorists attempted to attack Bardere town.

“The impact of AMISOM’s Ethiopian forces are visible. These soldiers have done a commendable job for us in South West State, especially in the areas of peace-building, humanitarian assistance and community integration”, President Laftagareen said.

The Head AMISOM, Ambassador Francisco Madeira said by sending troops to serve under AMISOM, the Ethiopian government had shown commitment to regional peace and stability.

“These forces are a product of a government with a comprehensive vision of what this region should be. So, I want to thank the government of Ethiopia for this important act of solidarity with, and empowerment of, the Somali people,” Ambassador Madeira said.

AMISOM Force Commander, Lt. Gen. Tigabu Yilma, said the ENDF forces had worked hard to ensure that the local population enjoyed a secure and stable environment. “You did a lot to enable the people of this region go about their daily activities. Your sacrifice and endurance is appreciated by the people of Somalia. You stuck to the values stated in our doctrine and in the AMISOM mandate” Lt. Gen. Yilma said.

Head of the UN Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS), Ms Lisa Filipetto, commended the Ethiopian AMISOM forces for their efforts in reaching out to various community representatives to improve security in the region.

“I also wanted to commend AMISOM and the Ethiopian National Defense Forces for the outreach to civil society, NGOs and the community. This helps in improving security, the business environment and development. The UN family is grateful for the support of ENDF and AMISOM in providing security, which then enables us to do our work,” said Ms. Filipetto.



Tigabu Yilma, the Force Commander of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), pins a medal on an AMISOM Ethiopian officer during a medal award ceremony for Ethiopian troops who completed their tour of duty in Somalia.



Jamaluddin Mustafa Omar, the Ethiopian Ambassador to Somalia, pins a medal on an AMISOM Ethiopian officer during a medal award ceremony for Ethiopian troops who completed their tour of duty in Somalia.



Ambassador Francisco Madeira, the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (SRCC) for Somalia, pins a medal on an AMISOM Ethiopian officer during a medal award ceremony for Ethiopian troops who completed their tour of duty in Somalia.

AMISOM trains Beletweyne residents to combat violent extremism



Participants receive certificates at the end of a two-day Training of Trainees on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (PCVE), held in Beletweyne, Somalia. The Training was organised by the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).



Col. Farah Ali Wasuge, the Commander of Somali National Army in Hiraan region, speaks at the Training of Trainees on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (PCVE), held in Beletweyne, Somalia. The Training was organised by the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).

Beletweyne - On 9 July, AMISOM concluded a training for law enforcement personnel, women, youth, media practitioners on how to prevent and counter violent extremism (PCVE) in Hiraan region. The two-day Training of Trainers workshop took place in Beletweyne town and attracted at least 35 participants, of whom 21 were women.

The workshop also attended by AMISOM officers, aimed to equip the participants with skills to prevent and counter violent extremism and radicalisation and strengthen collaboration with security agencies to respond to terrorism in the region. They discussed ways to strengthen trust and collaboration between the communities and law enforcement and use of social Media to counter AS seductive messages and propaganda.

In line with AMISOM mandate, its Protection, Human Rights and Gender Unit, organised the training with the regional PCVE office.

The HirShabelle State's Minister of Justice, Khalif Mumin Toxow, who graced the workshop, encouraged participants to apply the skills and knowledge acquired to make their communities safe.

"Extremism is dangerous and made worse when it turns violent. I hope the participants in this workshop will use the knowledge to guide the rest of the community," said Minister Khalif.

The Somali National Army (SNA) commander in Hiraan region, Col. Farah Ali Wasuge also advised the trainees to utilise the skills acquired to counter violent extremism and mobilise their communities.

"Violent extremism has made Somalia and the youth lag behind and left widows in its trail. I call on participants to join hands to end violent extremism," said Col. Farah.

Nasteho Abdi Ali, a member of the Hiraan Women's Organisation, stated, "I appeal to all women to lead this fight. Those dying are our children, brothers, and husbands. As mothers, we should sensitise our husbands, sons, brothers, and in-laws to address violent extremism."

Ms. Mane Ahmed, the AMISOM Gender Officer, said the training would promote collaboration between law enforcers, the local community, and the media to help counter violent extremist. She added that it is paramount to ensure that youth and women are equipped and participate meaningfully in preventing and countering violent extremism in their communities.

"We expect the participants to continue training on their own. We will return later to monitor and evaluate their progress," Ms. Ahmed remarked at the end of the two-day workshop.



Burundian soldiers serving under the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) on parade at Warsheikh Forward Operating Base (FOB) in Warsheikh District, in Middle Shabelle region. A ceremony to hand over the FOB to the Somali security forces

AMISOM hands over Warsheikh base to Somali security forces



Warsheikh - On 03 September, after five years of controlling and managing peace and security in the area, AMISOM handed over Warsheikh Forward Operating Base (FOB) in HirShabelle state, to the Somali security forces.

Warsheikh FOB, which was a base for the Burundi National Defence Force (BNDF) since 2014, was handed over to HirShabelle Police Commissioner, Hassan Dhiisow Hassan, by AMISOM Deputy Force Commander in charge of Operations and Plans, Maj. Gen. James Nakibus Lakara at a ceremony held in Warsheikh District.

"AMISOM has handed over the Somali National University, Mogadishu Stadium, Jaalle Siyad Military Academy, Via Afmadow in Kismayo and now we are handing over Warsheikh," Maj. Gen. Lakara said.

Maj. Gen. Lakara paid tribute to the AMISOM Burundi contingent for the sacrifice and working with local communities to maintain peace in the area. He urged the Somali security forces taking over the base to observe discipline and secure the area.

Situated about 70kms north of Mogadishu, Warsheikh was captured in 2014 during "Operation Indian Ocean" and it has since served as a key route that secures the Mogadishu-Cadale Main Supply Route (MSR) to enable the free movement of goods and people.

This handover is part of the implementation of the Somali Transition Plan that specifies a gradual transfer of security responsibility to the Somali security forces and the Federal Government of Somalia.

Somalia's Deputy Minister of Internal Security, Abdinasir Seid Musse, described the handover as a testament to the positive trajectory the country is making towards lasting peace, and saluted AMISOM for its efforts to restore peace and security.

"It's clear that the Transition Plan is in full swing and we are here to witness that Warsheikh will, from now henceforth, be the responsibility of the Somali Police Force," Abdinasir, said.

The base will now be under the control of the Somali Police Force who completed AMISOM Police training



in Jowhar and it will serve as the operational base to secure over 50 villages around Warsheikh district.

Warsheikh is the third FOB that the Burundian forces have handed over after Somali National University in July 2017 and Jaalle Siyaad Military Academy in March 2019.

The AMISOM Burundi Contingent Commander, Gen. Richard Banyankimbona urged the Somali Police Force who have taken over the control of the FOB to remain vigilant in order

to secure the FOB and its neighborhood. "I would like to congratulate the Somali authorities for their collaboration, especially in the implementation of the transfer process as dictated by the transition plan and our Concept of Operations," he said.

Hassan Dhiisow Hassan, the HirShabelle Police Chief, who officially received the base from AMISOM, thanked AMISOM for their years of selfless sacrifice in Somalia.

"From today, we, as the Somali Police Force

of HirShabelle, take full security responsibility of Warsheikh, with the support of the 27th Sector of the Somali National Army," Mr Dhiisow said.

The event was attended by senior officials from AMISOM and the Federal Government of Somalia among them the HirShabelle Deputy Police Chief, Hassan Kaafi Mohamed Ibrahim, the Governor of Middle Shabelle Region, Ahmed Meyre Makaraan and the Acting District Commissioner of Warsheikh, Hussein Shiidka.



AMISOM Deputy Force Commander in charge of Operations and Plans, Maj. Gen. James Nakibus Lakara, the Deputy Minister of Internal Security, Abdinasir Seid Musse and Burundi AMISOM Contingent Commander, Gen. Richard Banyankimbona arrive at Warsheikh District in Middle Shabelle region for the handover of Warsheikh Forward Operating Base (FOB) from AMISOM to the Somali security forces in Warsheikh



AMISOM honours former Deputy Commander, Maj. Gen. Maurice Gateretse

Mogadishu - On 14 April, AMISOM paid tribute to Maj. Gen. Maurice Gateretse, AMISOM Deputy Force Commander in charge of Supply and Logistics who completed his tour of duty in Somalia. The Deputy Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (DSRCC) for Somalia, Simon Mulongo, officiated at a ceremony organised to bid farewell to the Deputy Force Commander alongside other AMISOM staff officers. DSRCC Mulongo also awarded a certificate to the outgoing commander Maj. Gen. Gateretse, in recognition of his contribution to peace-building efforts in Somalia.

"It is with a heavy heart that I bid farewell to our dear Major General Gateretse and all the officers who have just finished their mission. One very important thing we think about when our colleagues leave us is this feeling of nostalgia; an emotion related to this departure," said Mulongo. Maj. Gen. Gateretse officially took office on 11 October 2018, succeeding Maj. Gen. Salvator Harushimana who had completed his mission in April 2018.

Mulongo said that AMISOM ensures compliance with the AU policy on succession for the key posts in AMISOM. The policy ensures that all five AMISOM Troop Contributing Countries of Burundi, Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia and Djibouti take turns in the key posts of Force Commander, Deputy Force Commander, Chief of Staff and Deputy Chief of Staff.



Simon Mulongo, the Deputy Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (DSRCC) for Somalia, speaks during a farewell party for Maj. Gen. Maurice Gateretse.



Guests attend a farewell party for Maj. Gen. Maurice Gateretse, the Outgoing AMISOM Deputy Force Commander in charge of Support and Logistics in Mogadishu.



Simon Mulongo, the Deputy Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (DSRCC) for Somalia, pins a medal on Maj. Gen. Maurice Gateretse, the Outgoing AMISOM Deputy Force Commander in charge of Support and Logistics during a farewell party in Mogadishu.

AMISOM Burundi troops celebrate their country's Independence Day

Mogadishu - On 1 July, Burundian troops serving under AMISOM held a ceremony in Mogadishu, to mark their country's 57th Independence anniversary. The celebrations held at the AMISOM Force Headquarters in Mogadishu, were officiated by Ambassador Francisco Madeira, the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (SRCC) for Somalia. Also present were the AMISOM Force Commander, Lt. Gen. Tigabu Yilma Wondimhune, Maj. Gen. Fidza Dlodlu, the AMISOM Head of Mission Support, and members of the international community.

In his remarks, Ambassador Madeira honoured the Burundi AMISOM soldiers who died in the line of duty to stabilise Somalia.

"AMISOM salutes the Government and people of Burundi for the unquantifiable efforts and sacrifice, which has led to considerable stabilisation of Somalia," Ambassador Madeira said. Burundi gained independence from Belgium on 1 July 1962. Burundi deployed troops in Somalia to serve under AMISOM in December 2007. Other AMISOM Troop Contributing Countries include Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda. Ambassador Madeira hailed the government and people of Burundi for responding to an appeal by the African Union to restore peace and stability in Somalia. He saluted the Burundian AMISOM troops for their pivotal role in liberating Somalia and defeating armed opposition groups.

Today, the Burundi contingent secures the Middle Shabelle region, with headquarters in Jowhar town. The Burundi contingent has also been instrumental in mentoring the Somali National Army in support of the Somali Transition Plan.

Lt. Col. Ciza Justace, who represented the Burundian community, provided a history of Burundi and milestones since independence.



Ambassador Francisco Madeira, the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (SRCC) for Somalia, addresses guests during a ceremony to celebrate Burundi's Independence Day, at the AMISOM Force Headquarters in Mogadishu, Somalia.



African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) Force Commander, Lieutenant Gen. Tigabu Yilma, poses for a group photo with senior officers from the sector five contingent of AMISOM during a working visit to Jowhar, Somalia

Burundi troops commended for outstanding role in areas of operation



African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) Force Commander, Lieutenant Gen. Tigabu Yilma, is received by the commander of the Burundian contingent serving under the AMISOM, upon arrival at Jowhar in HirShabelle State, Somalia.

On 23 September, AMISOM Burundi troops were commended for their hard work in clearing main supply routes, training and mentoring Somali Security Forces and cooperating with members of the community in civil-military activities in their areas of responsibility.

The AMISOM Force Commander Lt. Gen. Tigabu Yilma visited the Burundian troops in Jowhar to assess the progress made in executing AMISOM's mandate.

Lt. Gen. Tigabu met with the AMISOM Burundian commanders and other officials and discussed the security situation and the state of civil-military projects undertaken by the AMISOM forces to support the local population.

AMISOM Force Spokesperson, Lt. Col. Charles Imbiakha, who addressed the media after the meeting, said the Force Commander had expressed satisfaction with the work of the Burundian soldiers in stabilising the areas they operated in, and the surroundings.

Lt. Col. Imbiakha said that the Force Commander had accredited the success in operations to the coordination between AMISOM, Somali Security Forces and the local communities.

"The Force Commander expressed satisfaction that BDNF has been able to stabilise the entire area, has contributed to the opening of the main supply routes to Mogadishu and has been able to integrate with society in civil-military operations. BDNF has also been able to mentor, to a large extent, the Somali Security Forces.

He added, "The Burundi troops are now in the process of handing over Forward Operating Bases to the Somali Security Forces as per UN Security Council Resolution 2472, which requires that we mentor and handover the security of this country back to the Somali Security Forces by December 2021." Imbiakha added, "The Force Commander also paid condolences to the families of the soldiers who paid the ultimate price of being here in Somalia for this worthy cause; and wished a quick recovery to those who suffered injuries. This mission is not in vain, but it is for the good of the people of Somalia."

Uganda Airlines joins growing list of international airlines into Somalia

“Uganda comes after Egypt, Sudan, Ethiopia, and Turkey in attracting students from Somalia,”



Mogadishu - With improving peace and security as well as expanding business opportunities across the country, Somalia is witnessing an impressive growth of its aviation sector, which now attracts some of the world's best known international airlines.

Turkish Airlines, Kenya Airways, Ethiopia Airlines, and Qatar Airways operate regular flights into Mogadishu and on August 29, Uganda Airlines joined the list.

The national carrier of Uganda launched its direct flights from Entebbe International Airport to Mogadishu's Aden Abdulle International Airport, joining the growing list of international and regional airlines that fly into Somalia.

When the inaugural Uganda Airlines flight touched down to a water salute at Aden Abdulle International Airport, it was welcomed led by Somali Federal Government officials, officers from AMISOM, Uganda's Ambassador to Somalia, members of the Somali and Ugandan business community, foreign diplomats and the press.

The airline's Commercial Director, Jennifer Bamuturaki said they have started with four flights a week, but expect to increase these.

“We will be flying into Mogadishu four times a week, every Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday, and Sunday. We are expecting two more Bombardier planes in October this year. Once we have the aircraft delivered to our fleet, we will increase our flights to Mogadishu to six times a week,” said Bamuturaki.

Apart from Somalia, Uganda Airlines will also operate flights to Nairobi, Juba, Dar es Salaam, Bujumbura, Mombasa, and Kilimanjaro.



A Bombardier CRJ-900 aircraft operated by Uganda Airlines, taxis after landing at Aden Abdulle International Airport, Mogadishu. Uganda Airlines launched direct flights between Entebbe and Aden Abdulle International Airport, Mogadishu.



“*SOMALIA IS WITNESSING AN IMPRESSIVE GROWTH OF ITS AVIATION SECTOR, WHICH NOW ATTRACTS SOME OF THE WORLD’S BEST KNOWN INTERNATIONAL AIRLINES.*”

Front, left to right: Abdulkadir Ahmed-Kheir Abdi, Somalia’s State Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Jennifer Bamuturaki, the Commercial Director of Uganda Airlines, Prof. Sam Turyamuhika, Uganda’s Ambassador to Somalia, and Abdullahi Godah Barre, Somalia’s Minister of Education, cut a ribbon during a ceremony to launch Uganda Airlines direct flights between Entebbe and Aden Abdulle International Airport, Mogadishu



The Somali Minister of Education, Abdullahi Godah Barre, who was on hand to welcome the inaugural flight, noted that Uganda was a popular destination for Somalis seeking education opportunities and direct flights would further boost the ties between the two countries.

“Uganda comes after Egypt, Sudan, Ethiopia, and Turkey in attracting students from Somalia,” Minister Abdullahi said, adding that the presence of international airlines is testimony that Somalia is consolidating its peace and security, and is open for business.

The Director-General of Somalia Civil Aviation Authority, Ahmed Moalim Hassan said that licensing of international airlines to operate out of Somalia, would help reduce challenges that Somalis endure while traveling abroad, and also enhance regional integration.

The Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Abdulkadir Ahmed Kheyr Abdi cited the previously lengthy transit hours that passengers travelling between Entebbe and Mogadishu had to endure, but now this would be a story of the past.

“We have many passengers who travel, but there were no direct flights and they had to suffer lengthy waiting times and other inconveniences. We are grateful that Uganda joins the international fleet that comes here and will positively impact on the travel experiences of the people of these two countries,” said Minister Abdulkadir.

After more than two decades of conflict, Somalia is on the path to recovery anchored on the effort and sacrifice of AMISOM, whose troops are fighting alongside Somali Security Forces to defeat terrorist groups and restore peace and security.

The expulsion of terrorists from Mogadishu and many other parts of Somalia by AMISOM and Somali Security Forces has boosted investor confidence, opened up business and economic opportunities, facilitated growth in the air and travel industry, seen the reopening of international agencies and foreign embassies and the return of the Somali diaspora who are keen to be part of a new trajectory for their country.

FACILITATED GROWTH IN THE AIR AND TRAVEL INDUSTRY, SEEN THE REOPENING OF INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES AND FOREIGN EMBASSIES AND THE RETURN OF THE SOMALI DIASPORA WHO ARE KEEN TO BE PART OF A NEW TRAJECTORY FOR THEIR COUNTRY.



More than Partners: The Relationship Between EDD and their Handler

“These dogs do an important job. They keep me and other people safe. We cannot underestimate their value. To keep fit and alert, I and my team constantly look after them. We have a daily and weekly routine.

Often dogs are described as man’s best friend, but they are more than that in the context of peace and security operations. They work side by side with the women and men working and providing security in difficult environments. Explosive Detection Dogs (EDD), play an important role in preventive security by providing explosive detection capability and deterrence.

In Somalia, the EDDs play

a key role in mitigating the threat of explosives. As part of UNMAS support to AMISOM, UNMAS provides EDD teams to ensure security and protection at key facilities in Somalia. These teams provide detection capability at entry control points, government facilities, airports and security checkpoints. In May 2019, UNMAS EDD teams searched 48,916 vehicles and 30,049 pieces of luggage in the capital Mogadishu and the Federal Member States.

Each day, handlers take their dogs for exercise and daily walks. They provide ample time for the dog to play and rest. This structured routine helps the dogs stay healthy and fit.

An Explosive Detection Team is comprised of two trained dogs and a dedicated handler. Together, they conduct searches for a variety of explosive materials in different environments. They develop a strong bond and friendship as a team. Through the years, handlers develop a good understanding of the behavior and personality of their dogs. EDDs communicate with their handlers using behavioral signals that the handlers recognise.

"I work with two dogs, Tony and Flabio. I have been working with them for three years now. I have gotten to know their different behaviors and personalities. Flabio is stronger and faster. He is more confident. Whereas, Tony is easy-going and quiet," says Andrew Mironga, who works as an EDD handler for SafeLane Global in Somalia.

Handlers are also responsible for providing the basic care and welfare for their dogs including grooming, feeding, daily health checks, bathing and exercising. They also conduct regular training exercises to keep the dog fit and increase stamina. These exercises are designed to assess the EDD's effectiveness in detecting explosives.

As part of UNMAS' quality assurance procedures, each handler maintains a log book to check the fitness of the EDDs. Each day, handlers take their

dogs for exercise and daily walks. They provide ample time for the dog to play and rest. This structured routine helps the dogs stay healthy and fit. Handlers check on them daily, making sure they are up to the task in detecting explosives. Handlers must recognise the physical and psychological comfort of their dogs to assess their ability.

"These dogs do an important job. They keep me and other people safe. We cannot underestimate their value. To keep fit and alert, I and my team constantly look after them. We have a daily and weekly routine. If I am not on duty working with my dogs on site, I am here feeding, grooming, and playing with them. This routine has become second nature for me," added Mironga.

Like in other workplaces, communication is crucial in achieving productivity. EDDs communicate with handlers through behavioral cues. Different dogs use different behavioral signals when they detect anything suspicious. Some signal the presence of anything suspicious by sitting near a suspected explosive device; other dogs kneel. These cues alert the handlers to that EDD found something suspicious. Good understanding between handler and dog, results in increased levels of detection accuracy.



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Like in other workplaces, communication is crucial in achieving productivity. EDDs communicate with handlers through behavioral cues.

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HirShabelle State graduates 197 police officers



HirShabelle State Police personnel demonstrate skills during a pass-out ceremony to mark the completion of training in Jowhar, Somalia



HirShabelle State Police personnel march on parade during a pass-out ceremony to mark the completion of training in Jowhar, Somalia

Jowhar - On 29 August, the graduation of 197 police officers from HirShabelle State made a vital step in visible policing, which is crucial in maintaining law and order and protection of life and property.

The police officers completed three months of intensive training, conducted by seasoned instructors from AMISOM. The recruits were enlisted into the police following a comprehensive

process that was overseen by a joint committee to ensure equal representation of the various clans living in Hiran and Middle Shabelle regions. The graduation was witnessed by the HirShabelle state president, Mohamed Abdi Ware, Acting AMISOM Police Commissioner, Rex Dundun, the HirShabelle state Police Commissioner, Hassan Dhiisow Hassan, representatives from UN Police, officials from the Federal Government of Somalia and AMISOM.



Mohamed Abdi Waare, the President of Hirshabelle State of Somalia, presents a certificate to a HirShabelle State Police officer during a pass-out ceremony in Jowhar, Somalia

Speaking at the ceremony, Acting Police Commissioner Dundun said that it was important to build the capacity of the Somali Police Force to enable them to carry out effective policing and patrols as part of the Somalia Transition Plan. As part of the Somali exit strategy, the Somali Transition Plan seeks to transfer security responsibility from AMISOM to well trained and capable Somali security forces ahead of AMISOM's anticipated exit in

2021. "The officers trained here are very disciplined, dedicated, and you can see from the personnel parade, they are performing exceptionally well. We are looking forward to this group of officers taking over the internal security policing in HirShabelle state," said Dundun. With the support of AMISOM, European Union, United Nations, the German and UK governments, HirShabelle is on a drive to recruit 800 police officers, with nearly

400 recruited, trained and deployed so far. HirShabelle Police Commissioner Hassan Dhiisow Hassan, said the new police recruits would soon carry out operations to re-open and secure main supply routes in the agricultural-rich region. "These officers will serve the people of HirShabelle by protecting lives and property. They will also clear the main supply routes between Mogadishu, Jowhar and Bula-burde and work jointly with the

Somali National Army stationed in those areas," said Dhiisow. One of the recruits, Abdweli Hassan Jimaale, is a journalist-now-turned-policeman. He was upbeat about his new career in policing and law enforcement assignment. "It is an honour for me to serve my community as a policeman," he said. "I am aware of the challenges ahead, but I am ready to interact with members of society as a dedicated police officer."

Somalia commemorates the Day of the African Child

“Indeed, we are proud to say that we now have a pool of Somali trainers across the country capable of carrying out training on child protection. This is a major milestone in the promotion of human rights in the country,”



Hassan Hussein Haji, Somalia's Minister of Justice and Judiciary Affairs, addresses guests at a ceremony to mark the International Day of The African Child held in Mogadishu.



Simon Mulongo, the Deputy Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (DSRCC) for Somalia, addresses guests at a ceremony to mark the International Day of The African Child held in Mogadishu.

Mogadishu – On 16 June, Somalia joined the rest of the African continent in celebrating the International Day of the African Child with a commitment to uphold child welfare and protection rights across the country. This year's theme was: 'Humanitarian Action in Africa: Children's Rights First'.

Children in Somalia have been the victims of different forms of violations due to the armed conflict that ravaged the country for many years. In 2012, the government of Somalia and the United Nations signed joint action plans to end the recruitment and use of children in armed forces and to end the maiming and killing of children.

The Federal Minister of Justice and Judicial Affairs, Hassan Hussein Hajji, reiterated the importance of upholding the rights of children in Somalia as per the transitional constitution. Mr. Hajji, who was speaking during the Day of the African Child commemoration ceremony in Mogadishu said the Somali government was implementing the transitional constitution which explicitly advocates for the rights and welfare of children in article 29 of Chapter Two. "The constitution says all children should be brought up in an appropriate environment where they have access to quality education and life so that they can have a better future in life," Hussein said.

AMISOM has been carrying out various programmes geared towards the protection of children in Somalia as enshrined in both national and international laws. Speaking at the same event, Deputy Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (DSRCC) for Somalia, Simon Mulongo, said AMISOM has been working closely with the Somali National Army (SNA) and the Somali Police Force in establishing child protection units with the security forces. "We have conducted basic training for about 3,000 AMISOM and Somali security forces on 'prevention of the recruitment and use of child soldiers,'" said Mr. Mulongo.

The DSRCC noted that AMISOM has also trained 70 Somali trainers from the federal government, federal member states and various line ministries on how to prevent the recruitment of child soldiers. "Indeed, we are proud to say that we now have a pool of Somali trainers across the country capable of carrying out training on child protection. This is a major milestone in the promotion of human rights in the country," Mr. Mulongo noted. Recruitment of children as child soldiers is still rampant in Somalia with the main culprits being Al-Shabaab militants. The militants have been accused of forcing parents to give up their sons for recruitment and killing whoever resists their orders.



Guests attend a ceremony to mark the International Day of The African Child held in Mogadishu, Somalia

The United Nations Assistance Mission Somalia (UNSOM) Senior Child Protection Advisor, Michael Ngabirano, who represented the United Nations Resident Coordinator, said that the UN will continue to work closely with the federal government and development partners to ensure those responsible for violations against children are made to account for their actions. "The campaign entitled 'act to protect children affected by conflict' is a national campaign which will be championed by government ministries and departments to ensure children in Somalia are protected," Ngabirano said.

Ngabirano added that the UN and the federal government recently held a consultative meeting to discuss ways of rolling out an awareness campaign on the prevention of violations of children's rights. The participants called on the government to fast-track the

enactment of the Children's Act and the Sexual Offences Act and also ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict (OPAC) to enable the country effectively fight all forms of crime against children.

AMISOM Human Rights Officer, Ulrike Kahbila Mbuton, said this year's celebrations were organised by the UN, AMISOM and federal government ministries responsible for child welfare and protection. The Day of the African Child was established by the Organisation of African Union, the African Union's predecessor, in 1991 following the Soweto uprising in South Africa, where children participating in a peaceful protest were attacked by police officers under the apartheid regime in 1976.



Somali singers perform during a ceremony to mark the International Day of The African Child held in Mogadishu

UN envoy to Somalia pledges collaboration with AMISOM



Ambassador Francisco Madeira (left), the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the AU Commission (SRCC) for Somalia, shakes hands with James Swan, the new Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Somalia, at the end of a meeting at the AMISOM Mission Headquarters in Mogadishu.

Mogadishu - The UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Somalia, James Swan recognised the critical role played by AMISOM troops in ongoing efforts to stabilise Somalia.

Mr. Swan, who was appointed to the position by the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres in May this year, arrived in Mogadishu, Somalia on 25 June to take up his new assignment. In his first engagement, Mr. Swan met with senior officials of AMISOM led by Ambassador Francisco Madeira.

Mr. Swan, who was accompanied by UN officials, said, "We have no more important non-Somali partner than the African Union. This relationship is critical to our collective regional and international efforts to support Somalia and the Somali people." Present in the meeting were Simon Mulongo, the Deputy Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (DSRCC) for

Somalia and the AMISOM Force Commander Lt. Gen. Tigabu Yilma Wondimhunegn.

Other officials included Raisedon Zenenga the Deputy Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General in Somalia and Brig. Simon West the UNSOM Senior Military Advisor, AMISOM Deputy Force Commander in charge of Operations and Plans, Maj. Gen. Nakibus Lakara, and the Acting AMISOM Police Commissioner Rex Dundun. Mr. Swan saluted AMISOM troops for fighting armed groups and pledged cooperation to restore peace in Somalia. In his remarks, Ambassador Madeira said AMISOM would benefit from Mr. Swan's vast knowledge of Somalia.

"We will seek coordination, collaboration, and harmonisation of positions to ensure that aspects of inclusive politics are enhanced in order to yield results," said Ambassador Madeira.



Ambassador Francisco Madeira, the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the AU Commission (SRCC) for Somalia, James Swan, the new Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Somalia and other senior officials in a group photo after a meeting at the AMISOM Mission Headquarters in Mogadishu.



Ambassador Francisco Madeira, the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the AU Commission (SRCC) for Somalia, James Swan, the new Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Somalia, and other senior UN and AMISOM officials in a meeting at the AMISOM Mission Headquarters in Mogadishu.



Officers from the Somali Police Force (SPF), pose for a group photograph during a workshop on Community Policing and De-radicalization organised by the police components of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), held at General Kahiye Police Training Academy in Mogadishu, Somalia

AMISOM trains Somali Police Force to mitigate radicalisation



Lt. Col. Hassan Alasow, Director of Training and Planning of the Somali Police Force (SPF), makes the closing remarks during a workshop course on Community Policing and Deradicalisation organised by the police components of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), held at General Kahiye Police Training Academy in Mogadishu, Somalia.

Mogadishu - On 27 July, at least 20 Somali Police Force (SPF) officers concluded training in community policing and de-radicalisation at the General Kaahiye Police Academy in Mogadishu.

At least 18 officers drawn from 17 police stations across Mogadishu attended the training that was conducted by AMISOM. The weeklong course ended with a call to the officers to cooperate with the community to detect and eliminate extremism.

The training, funded by the Japanese government through the African Union, is to build the capacity of the SPF through continuous mentoring and reform initiatives, in line with AMISOM's transition plan and commitment to improve peace and security in Somalia.

SPF's director of training and planning, Brigadier Hassan Alasow, said the training was important in equipping Somali police officers with critical policing skills meant

to quickly detect and arrest insurgents and radical extremists.

"I wish to thank AMISOM for this training, for imparting skills on how to detect and handle those radicalised by extremists and how to manage the reintegration of some of them into society," said Alasow.

AMISOM Police Commander in Charge of Training and Planning, Senior Superintendent of Police Francis Ndiema, said the training was important to create awareness within the SPF of the dangers of radicalisation and extremism.

"This course is important because it is intended to equip participants with the knowledge and skills in community servicing, but you can only achieve that through effective community policing. The intention is to fight radicalisation and extremism," Ndiema said.

Somalia's electoral officials undergo training on electoral security



Halima Ismail Ibrahim, the Chairperson of Somalia's National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC), addresses participants during the opening ceremony of a workshop on Electoral Security and Dispute Resolution in Kampala, Uganda. The workshop was organized by the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).

"The success of Somalia will be the success of Africa and will ultimately contribute to our continental aspiration of achieving Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want,"

Kampala – To ensure Somalia is fully prepared for one-person one-vote universal elections in 2020/2021, AMISOM organised a workshop on electoral security and dispute resolution for senior government officials involved in election planning and Management. The four-day workshop opened on 16 June in the Ugandan capital, Kampala and aimed at developing a common strategy on how to organise and manage the country's next elections to ensure they are peaceful, credible and inclusive. Uganda's Electoral Commission Chairman, Justice Simon Byabakama, who opened the workshop, emphasised the importance of security in holding successful elections that were peaceful and credible.

Justice Byabakama said the electorates must be secured to enable them to exercise their right to vote. "The entire process of organising and conducting elections is a multi-stakeholder responsibility requiring that each one renders total support and cooperation to all the efforts in place to realise the desired goal," he observed. Somalia plans to hold the next elections through universal adult suffrage, unlike the previous ones, which were based on the clan system. AMISOM is currently supporting Somalia to develop its capacity by training and providing technical support to the National Independent Electoral Commission of Somalia (NIEC) and other critical government agencies in election planning



Participants attend a workshop on Electoral Security and Dispute Resolution in Kampala, Uganda. The workshop was organized by the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).



Simon Byabakama (left), Chairperson of the Uganda Electoral Commission addresses participants during the opening ceremony of a workshop on Electoral Security and Dispute Resolution in Kampala, Uganda. The workshop was organized by the African Union Mission in Somalia



Participants pose for a group photo at the opening ceremony of a workshop on Electoral Security and Dispute Resolution in Kampala, Uganda. The workshop was organized by the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).

and management. Justice Byabakama commended Somalia for its proactive approach in strategising for the next elections and urged those involved to continue working together to overcome challenges associated with the complex exercise. The NIEC chairperson, Halima Ismail Ibrahim, echoed the sentiments, saying security will be a major factor in Somalia's quest to achieve universal adult suffrage in the next elections.

Ms. Ibrahim observed that the electoral commission was currently verifying voter registration centres, adding that the country's security forces will have a major role to play in securing the voting points. "We are undertaking the verification of voter registration centres and we want our security officials to sit together and see whether the areas are safe.

They have to give us direction because without security it will be difficult for elections to take place," she noted. In his remarks, the head of the African Union Commission Department of Political Affairs, Guy Cyrille Tapoko, reassured Somalia's electoral commission

of African Union's continued support as the country prepares for the 2020/2021 elections. "The success of Somalia will be the success of Africa and will ultimately contribute to our continental aspiration of achieving Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want," said Mr. Tapoko. Agenda 2063 is a blueprint and masterplan for

"The entire process of organising and conducting elections is a multi-stakeholder responsibility requiring that each one renders total support and cooperation to all the efforts in place to realise the desired goal,"

transforming the continent into a future global powerhouse to realise inclusive and sustainable development. AMISOM Senior Political Officer, Hajji Ssebirumbi, said the workshop is part of the African Union's capacity building and technical support to the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) to help it achieve universal adult suffrage in 2020/2021, in accordance with the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance. Mr. Ssebirumbi said the AU Peace and Security Council

and the UN Security Council mandated AMISOM to work with the FGS and the United Nations to help Somalia achieve peaceful, free and fair elections. During the four days, participants discussed the electoral disputes that may arise, using previous exercises, mainly the 2012 and the 2016 elections, as

examples. The workshop ended with recommendations on electoral security, which would be reviewed by the Federal Government and partners before a final strategy is published.

The Director General of the Federal Ministry of Internal Security, Yusuf Ali Mohamed, emphasised that the ministry would do everything within its power to ensure there are enough officers to secure all electoral areas. "We learnt that the security forces needed

training on human rights and other basic skills and also need equipment in order to perform their duties effectively. In the coming months we will train about 2 000 police officers to help secure electoral areas," noted Mr. Mohamed.

Dr. Abdi Fatah Tahir, a member of the federal parliament, expressed hope that the 2020/2021 elections will be successful, saying the officials have learned positive lessons from several African countries that experienced similar challenges to what Somalia is currently facing.

"We had good lessons and we can now start forming the Electoral Security Task Force for Somalia and also understand the relationship between the judiciary, the NIEC and the forces and how they can mitigate electoral disputes," Mr. Tahir added.

It was the fourth workshop that African Union was supporting in the build-up towards achieving universal adult suffrage, which will be the first elections of this kind in Somalia since 1969.

AMISOM and civil society to cooperate in securing peace for Somalia

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The civil society are the representatives of the people, the eyes and ears of the Somali people; therefore, there is a need to have a structured formal engagement with the civil society

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A representative from the Somali civil society, speaks during a meeting with senior officials of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) in Mogadishu, Somalia. The conference aimed to promote mutual understanding and information sharing between AMISOM and civil society organizations in Somalia.

Mogadishu – On 25 June, top officials of AMISOM and representatives of Somalia’s civil society agreed to work together to enable the peacekeeping mission to achieve its key objectives under the renewed mandate.

The agreement was reached during day-long discussions, which took place in Mogadishu. The meeting, attended by senior officials of the civilian, military and police components, took the civil society representative through AMISOM’s renewed mandate, which was adopted by the United Nations Security Council in May 2019.

“The civil society are the representatives of the people, the eyes and ears of the Somali people; therefore, there is a need to have a structured formal engagement with the civil society,” said AMISOM’s Head of Protection, Human

Rights and Gender Unit, Kareem Adebayo.

Under the new UN Security Resolution 2472/2019, AMISOM is required to drawdown its troops by 1,000 by February 2020, conduct gradual hand-over to Somali security forces, secure main supply routes, reduce the threat posed by Al-Shabaab and conduct targeted offensive operations that support the transition plan, among other deliverables.

Mr. Adebayo said AMISOM will maintain close working relations with Somalia’s civil society by organising monthly technical meetings as well as quarterly strategic consultations which will involve senior officials of the Mission. “We will use meetings like these ones to identify specific thematic issues that arise from activities in Somalia and see how we can use the civil society organisations to bridge gaps that arise,” he added. The civil society is a key player in peacebuilding in the country and AMISOM plans to work closely with local non-governmental organisations in implementing key activities and programmes under the Somalia Transition Plan.

Speaking at the same function, Acting AMISOM Police Commissioner, Rex Dundun, said there was need for synergy between AMISOM and civil society organisations for the benefit of the people of Somalia who yearn for lasting peace and security. His sentiments were echoed by AMISOM’s Senior Civil Affairs Officer in charge of Stabilisation and Early Recovery Programme, Dr. Opiyo Ododa, who noted that strong relations with the civil society will enable the Mission’s programmes, aimed at uplifting lives, reach the larger Somali population.



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We will use meetings like these ones to identify specific thematic issues that arise from activities in Somalia and see how we can use the civil society organisations to bridge gaps that arise
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“Our intent is to work together with the civil society in Somalia in peacebuilding initiatives to enable the Mission to reach as many people as possible,” noted Dr. Ododa.

The Chairperson of Women, Education and Voicing Entrepreneurship (WEAVE), Asli Ismail Duale, said the meeting discussed issues that need to be addressed in order to strengthen the working relations between AMISOM and the civil society in Somalia.

“Without AMISOM we would not have achieved what we have today, hence it is time for AMISOM and the civil society to work together,” observed Ms. Duale. The chairperson of the Somali Non-State Actors (SONSA), Osman Muhidin Moalim, also expressed satisfaction with the outcome of the meeting, saying the input of the civil society is crucial, especially during the transition period and even after AMISOM exits in 2021.

“The civil society will have to play a major role in peacebuilding during the transition period and even after AMISOM exits,” said Mr. Moalim.

The engagement meeting was also attended by the AMISOM Head of Political Affairs, Babatunde Taiwo, AMISOM Police Coordinator for Operations, Ali Gwambal, and AMISOM Police, Reforms, Restructuring and Development Coordinator, Maxwell Chikunguru.

The meeting was a follow-up from an earlier one chaired by Ambassador Francisco Madeira and took place in April.



Rex Dundun, the Acting AMISOM Police Commissioner, speaks during a meeting with Somali civil society representatives in Mogadishu, Somalia. The conference aimed to promote mutual understanding and information sharing between AMISOM and civil society organizations in Somalia.



Senior officials of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and Somali civil society representatives, in a group photo at the end of a meeting held in Mogadishu, Somalia. The conference aimed to promote mutual recognition and information sharing between AMISOM and civil society organizations in Somalia.



Kareem Adebayo, the Head of the Protection, Human Rights and Gender Unit of AMISOM, speaks during a meeting with Somali civil society representatives in Mogadishu, Somalia. The conference aimed to promote mutual understanding and information sharing between AMISOM and civil society organisations in Somalia.



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