

AMISOM REVIEW

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A BRIGHT FUTURE



Message from the SRCC

Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (SRCC) for Somalia, Ambassador Francisco Caetano Madeira

I welcome you to this edition of the AMISOM quarterly review. The quarter that covered the months of April, May and June 2021, witnessed key milestones in Somalia’s journey to peace, democracy and development. A noteworthy event took place on 27 May, when the country’s leaders, after five days of negotiations, reached an agreement to enable the holding of long delayed presidential and parliamentary elections.

The decision made that day put a stop to a period of violent tension and political uncertainty for the country. AMISOM—as a true partner to the Somali peace process—was present to witness the milestone event, which proved the long-held view that solutions to the challenges we face as Africans will only be solved by us coming together in mutual and respectful discussions and in the spirit of compromise.

Indeed, there are bright prospects for the future as Somalia’s leaders stand united and take full charge of their affairs and continue to rebuild the country. AMISOM stands ready to support Somalia to achieve the national vision for a peaceful and secure Somalia.

The AMISOM police component is member of the National Elections Security Committee. Our police are ready to use its position in this important body to play its part in securing the upcoming electoral process, hand in hand with the Somali police forces at the Federal and FMS levels. Indeed, in response to one of the decisions made during the leaders’ summit to solve the electoral impasse, the Mission is in the process of deploying AMISOM police personnel in Garbaharey town in the Gedo region of Jubaland Federal member state.

Also, during the quarter in review, across the sectors, AMISOM civilian component continued to support various efforts to promote community dialogue and reconciliation, which is vital for peacebuilding, conflict resolution and promotion of national cohesion and unity in post-conflict Somalia. We also worked jointly with the Federal Government of Somalia and the Federal Member State authorities to aid vulnerable communities in our areas of responsibility, supported initiatives to protect children, women and seek to end conflict-related sexual violence.

As part of an ongoing process to realign AMISOM operations in our areas of responsibility to conform them with the revised Somalia Transition Plan, our troops relocated from Marianguwaay Forward Operating Base in Lower Shabelle region to enable the effective provision of security to the Main Supply Routes. We have handed over Afgoye FOB and moved our forces from this location to reinforce security of critical infrastructures and sensitive sites during the violent political crisis in the country, and collapsed Mashaley FOB to reinforce security in the bridge town of Janale in Lower Shabelle.

Health experts advised that vaccination is important in protecting our civilian staff and uniformed personnel against the vagaries of the Covid-19 pandemic and avoid severe illness. Across all AMISOM sectors, with support from international partners and contribution from individual Troop and Police Contributing Countries, we are implementing a COVID-19 vaccination campaign. I appeal to all AMISOM personnel to embrace this campaign and be vaccinated.



Indeed, there are bright prospects for the future as Somalia’s leaders stand united and take full charge of their affairs and continue to rebuild the country.



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Students sit for the national Primary Education Certificate Exams in Mogadishu, Somalia on 26 May 2021.
 Photo | AMISOM

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AMISOM IN PICTURES



27 May 2021 – AMISOM joined Somalia's international partners to welcome the successful conclusion of the Federal Government of Somalia – Federal Member States (FGS-FMS) summit on the country's electoral process in Mogadishu.



12 June 2020 – A peacebuilding and conflict resolution dialogue facilitated by AMISOM and the Banadir Regional Administration, opened in Mogadishu with the aim of fostering cohesion and stability between local communities in Mogadishu and the surrounding regions, notably Afgoye, Warsheikh and Bal'ad districts.



1 June 2021 – AMISOM joined Kenya to celebrate Madaraka Day, which commemorates the day when Kenya attained self-rule from Britain. In a statement, the Head of AMISOM, Ambassador Francisco Madeira, praised Kenya's efforts in contributing to the African Union's peace efforts.



28 May 2021 – Internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Jowhar, Middle Shabelle region received relief items in the aftermath of heavy rains that washed away homes and destroyed crops and livestock. Floods following persistent rains left hundreds stranded in areas prone to water-borne diseases.



11 June 2021 – Fifty-Four (54) recently deployed AMISOM staff officers completed mandatory induction training as part of their integration into the mission.



6 June 2021 – The Djibouti AMISOM contingent celebrated the 44th anniversary of the formation of the country’s military. The ceremony took place in Beletweyne, the AMISOM Sector 4 headquarters.

25 May 2021 – AMISOM marked Africa Day, which brings together African countries to reflect on the continent’s milestones, aspirations and challenges. Africa Day commemorates the founding of the Organisation of the African Unity (OAU) on 25 May 1963 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. It was later replaced by the African Union (AU), under which AMISOM operates.



16 June 2021 – The Head of AMISOM, Ambassador Francisco Madeira, held discussions with the Norwegian Ambassador to Somalia, Ambassador Elin B. Rognlie and Norwegian officials at the AMISOM Mission Headquarters in Mogadishu.

5 June 2021 – AMISOM marked this year’s World Environment Day with a tree planting exercise within the AMISOM basecamp in Mogadishu. The Head of AMISOM, Ambassador Francisco Madeira led the mission in the tree planting exercise.



19 May 2021 – the Head of AMISOM, Ambassador Francisco Madeira, met and held discussions with US Congressman, Scott Taylor, who was accompanied by the President and CEO of SKA Group, Mike Douglas. The meeting took place at the AMISOM Mission Headquarters in Mogadishu

TO THE RESCUE OF VULNERABLE FAMILIES

In May, the AMISOM Humanitarian Liaison Unit presented food and non-food relief items to the Federal Government of Somalia to support Internally Displaced Persons affected by floods in AMISOM's Areas of Responsibility.



The Head of AMISOM, Ambassador Francisco Madeira, hands over relief items to the Federal Minister of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management, Khadija Mohamed Diriye, in aid of flood and drought affected communities living in AMISOM's area of responsibility

At a ceremony, the Head of AMISOM, Ambassador Francisco Madeira, handed over the items to the Somalia Federal Minister of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management, Hon. Khadija Mohamed Diriye.

Ambassador Madeira said food insecurity was likely to worsen across Somalia because of localised floods,

below-average rainfall, and the desert locust infestation.

"It is in response to this that AMISOM as first respondents has purchased dry food and non-food items for all the sectors under its responsibility for ease and quick distribution to the displaced, vulnerable, and needy population along and throughout the Forward Operating Bases," he revealed.

aid, an increase from the previous 5.2 million people in 2020.

Minister Khadija thanked AMISOM for the items and said it would go to people in need and boost the civil-military cooperation with the local communities living in the AMISOM Areas of Responsibility.

"I encourage AMISOM to continue supporting vulnerable communities in your areas of responsibility, and we thank you for working with the SNA to defeat terrorists, and protect civilians living in the liberated areas," the Minister said.

The Head of the AMISOM Humanitarian Affairs Unit, Abdul Diabagate, said the items presented included an assortment of food and non-food relief items to support over 42,000 vulnerable persons. They include rice, vegetable oil, sugar, plastic sheets, mosquito nets, and buckets.



An assortment of relief items donated by AMISOM to the Federal Government of Somalia

He said the worsening humanitarian situation in Somalia, with the rising number of people in need of humanitarian assistance, makes it imperative for all to support and bring some relief to persons in need.

He noted that according to humanitarian partners, 5.9 million people in Somalia would require humanitarian

CALLS TO PROTECT SOMALI CHILDREN

On 16 June, a multitude of people gathered in Mogadishu to commemorate the International Day of the African Child, with a rallying call for government policies to protect children’s rights and welfare.



A cross-section of Mogadishu residents, including traditional elders, police, IDPs, civil society members, and Banadir administration officials attend celebrations to mark the International Day of the African Child

The event, supported by AMISOM, was attended by government officials, civil society activists, political players and ordinary residents to discuss issues affecting Somali children in line with the objectives of the day.

The Day of the African Child is celebrated every year on June 16. The African Committee of Experts on the Rights

and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) recognised the importance of the Day of the African Child as an advocacy tool for promoting children’s rights and advancing children’s welfare.

“We need to discuss issues affecting our children by all means. It is our responsibility to protect the children from acts of violence, stop them from accessing firearms and fight against their recruitment as child soldiers. We need the adoption of policies on early childhood education and free education,” said Mursal Buule, the Child Protection Coordinator at the Somalia Ministry of Defence.

Nuurto Ahmed Mohamed, Human Rights and Gender Officer at the Ministry of Defence said Somalia has made tremendous progress against harmful practices such as female genital mutilation as well as early childhood marriages, both of which violate children’s rights and pose serious health complications to the girl child.

She also praised efforts made at curbing recruitment of child soldiers, which previously was rampant in Somalia but which has now been curtailed due to government interventions.

Khadro Isse Mohamed, a senior official from the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs praised AMISOM and the government for their close cooperation and coordination in ensuring children are protected against abuse.

This year, the day was celebrated under the theme: “30 years after the adoption of the Charter: accelerate the implementation of Agenda 2040.”

Agenda 2040 was established in 2016 by the ACERWC and sets a 25 years agenda, laid out in 10 solid aspirations, to be achieved by the year 2040.

The main objective of the Agenda is to restore the dignity of the African child through assessing the achievements and challenges faced towards the effective implementation of the African Children’s Charter.



A moderator leads a session during the commemoration of the International Day of the African Child

COMMITTING TO ELIMINATE SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN CONFLICT

On 19 June, AMISOM commemorated the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict with a commitment to address conflict-related sexual violence in the country.



AMISOM officers, women groups, traditional elders and members of civil society attend an event to commemorate the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict.

Senior AMISOM officials, women representatives, human rights defenders, peacebuilders, traditional and religious leaders met in Baidoa and Kismayo to commemorate the day.

AMISOM continues to support the stabilisation efforts in Somalia and to strengthen the capacity of the Somali Police Force and communities to address sexual and gender-based violence.

In Baidoa, the AMISOM Police Gender Officer, Inspector of Police (IP) Tracilla Nguzi, said commemorating the day was important to create awareness and to support survivors of sexual violence.

“Conflict exposes women and children

to the risk of sexual violence. In Somalia, victims of sexual violence include women, children, vulnerable and minority groups,” said IP Nguzi.

A youth representative from Baidoa, Mohamed Nur, said the commitment to eliminate sexual violence would safeguard the lives of the vulnerable groups such as women.

“Sexual violence makes life difficult for vulnerable women. So, this day is an awareness-raising day that is worth commemorating in Southwest,” said Mohamed Nur.

In Kismayo, the AMISOM Protection Officer, Gloria Jaase, noted the importance of combating conflict-

related sexual violence, mainly affecting women and girls.

“Sexual violence in conflict is a weapon of war. It is an international crime, and we need to scale up efforts to establish strategies, laws and policies that end impunity and hold those perpetrators accountable for sexual violence against women and girls in conflict,” said Jaase.

She also encouraged the participants to advocate for the empowerment of women and girls, and to address violations against women.

The Director of Children and Family Affairs in the Jubaland State’s Ministry of Women and Human Rights, Abdikadir Abdi Yare, said it was essential to raise



The AMISOM Protection Officer, Gloria Jaase, speaks during an event to commemorate the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict.

awareness about sexual violence to all stakeholders including traditional elders.

“During clan clashes, there is violence against women and girls, including rape and killings. Our elders need to know that this is an international crime, and they should not resolve

such cases through traditional justice mechanisms,” said Abdikadir.

The AMISOM Gender Officer in Kismayo, Oyedele Kaze, underlined the need to end conflicts that increase the risk of sexual violence against women and girls.

Declared in June 2015, the International

Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict is marked to raise awareness of the need to end conflict-related sexual violence. The day also honours survivors of sexual violence and those who devote their lives or die while striving to end these crimes.



Representatives of women groups in Somalia attend an event to commemorate the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict.

TROOPS RELOCATE FROM MARIANGUWAAY FOB

On 20 June, the Ugandan AMISOM contingent relocated troops from Marianguwaay Forward Operating Base in Lower Shabelle region in the Southwest State of Somalia as part of troop realignment to provide more effective security to the Main Supply Routes, MSRs, and the general area.

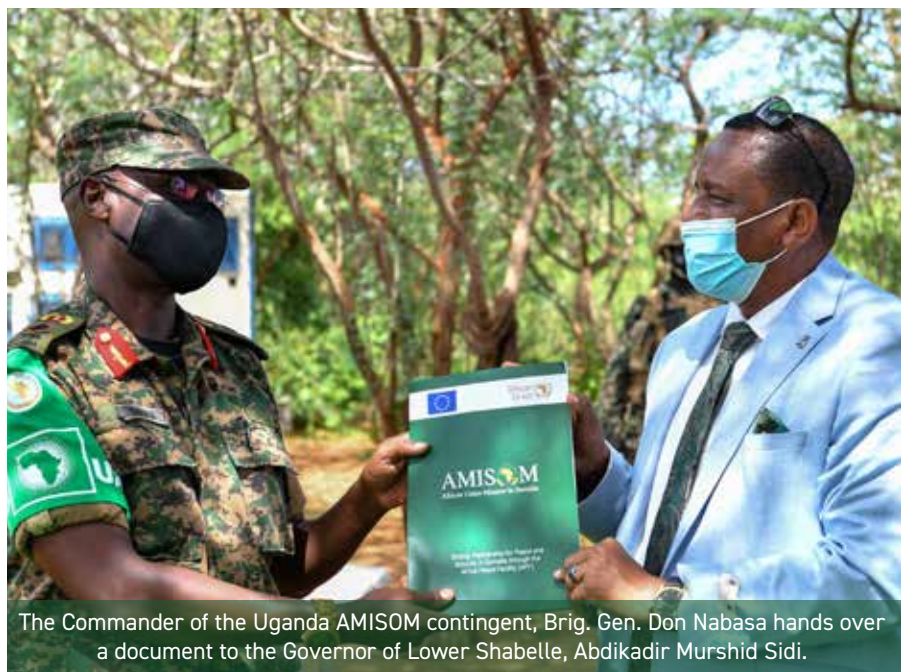


An excavator levels the ground at Marianguwaay Forward Operating Base during the relocation of AMISOM troops.

AMISOM set up the Marianguwaay FOB in October 2014 to ease the movement of troops between the port cities of Marka and Barawe. Following the relocation, the FOB is now closed and the land ownership has reverted to the government.

The AMISOM Uganda Contingent Commander, Brig Gen. Don Nabasa, officially flagged off the FOB relocation. The event to mark this was attended by the Governor of Lower Shabelle, Abdikadir Murshid Sidi and the Deputy District Commissioner of Barawe, Ibrahim Abdinoor.

Also present were the AMISOM Deputy Chief Operations Officer, Lt. Col. Alemayehu Abera Kitila, the AMISOM Joint Support Operations Centre (JSOC)



The Commander of the Uganda AMISOM contingent, Brig. Gen. Don Nabasa hands over a document to the Governor of Lower Shabelle, Abdikadir Murshid Sidi.

Officer, Maximillian Okech, and the Force Spokesperson, Lt. Col. Daniel Mugoro.

In his remarks, Brig Gen. Nabasa said the relocation is part of a harmonized joint operations plan laid out in April by AMISOM and the Somali National Army, to enable Somali Security Forces to assume security responsibilities ahead of AMISOM's exit.

"The recently concluded sector commanders conference guided by AMISOM Concept of Operations harmonized several tasks for execution by Sector one, which included the relocation of troops from Marianguwaay Forward operating Base to another area to beef up security. This will enhance operational efficiency as we pursue the AMISOM mandate," said Brig Gen. Nabasa.

"Marianguwaay has been one of the most peaceful areas. I extend my gratitude on behalf of AMISOM and Sector I to the local leaders and the community for cooperating with our troops," he added.

The Governor of Lower Shabelle, Abdikadir Murshid Sidi, noted that AMISOM joint operations with SNA had weakened the insurgents in the region, making it necessary for Somali Security Forces to take over security responsibilities.

"You have helped us reach great milestones. The transfer of security responsibilities from AMISOM to Somali Security Forces is as a result of efforts and sacrifices made by our African brothers in the fight against terrorist group Al-Shabaab," said Sidi.

As part of the relocation process, Governor Sidi, the local leaders, and other AMISOM officers in attendance inspected the area and signed documents to hand over the community land on which the FOB operated. They also signed an environmental clearance certificate to certify that the troops did not degrade the environment.

Ahead of the relocation, AMISOM troops conducted a clean-up that involved removing structures and levelling the ground to restore the environment

in line with AMISOM's environmental standard operating procedures.

"We have cleaned everywhere to leave the environment the way we found it when establishing this FOB. Now we are set to leave for the next destination," said the commander of the Uganda Battle Group 31, Colonel Francis Aragamoi.

Since 2014, AMISOM troops have jointly operated in the general area of Marianguwaay, significantly improving the security situation of the area before the need to take up security responsibilities elsewhere in line with the ongoing AMISOM and SNA Reconfiguration Plan and the revised Concept of Operations (CONOPS) 2018-2021.

AMISOM and the Somali Security Forces readjust and reorganize troop deployments to revitalize strategies that have enabled the recovery, consolidation, expansion and control of areas of South-central Somalia by the Federal Government of Somalia.



Senior AMISOM officials and local government representatives sign handover documents during the relocation of AMISOM troops from Marianguwaay Forward Operating Base.

FORCE COMMANDER SIGNS OUT BATTLE GROUP 29

In April, AMISOM awarded medals and certificates to Ugandan soldiers for their contribution to the ongoing peacebuilding process in Somalia.

The soldiers, from Battle Group 29, were awarded medals at a ceremony presided over by the AMISOM Force Commander, Lt. Gen. Diomedes Ndegeya, and attended by senior AMISOM military officers and the Contingent Commander of Ugandan troops in Somalia, Brig. Gen. Don William Nabasa.

The soldiers deployed to the mission in December 2019 under the command of Col. Edward Kaddu, and were tasked with securing the coastal town of Barawe and surrounding areas.

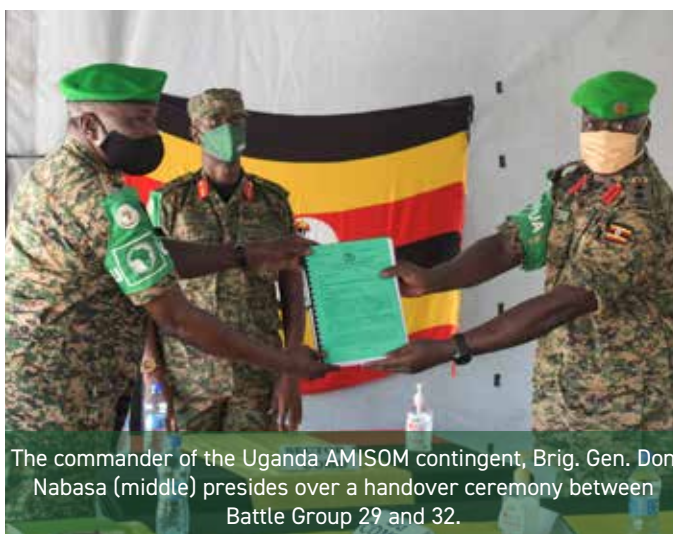
“UPDF Battle Group 29 secured the airfield of Barawe, protected key population centres especially Embresso and Barawe towns, mentored Somali National Army through joint operations and training, and secured main supply routes,” said Lt. Gen. Diomedes Ndegeya.

Present at the function was the AMISOM Deputy Force Commander in charge Operations and Plans, Maj. Gen. William Kitsao Shume.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, only a section of the soldiers took part in the symbolic event held at the Uganda contingent

headquarters in Mogadishu, Somalia.

Lt. Gen. Ndegeya paid tribute to soldiers who lost their lives in the line of duty for their resilience and unwavering courage, to ensure that peace and stability returns to Somalia.



The commander of the Uganda AMISOM contingent, Brig. Gen. Don Nabasa (middle) presides over a handover ceremony between Battle Group 29 and 32.



The AMISOM Force Commander, Lt. Gen. Diomedes Ndegeya pins a medal on Col. Edward Kaddu, commander of Battle Group 29.

PIPPING PROMOTED OFFICERS

In mid-May Ugandan army officers serving under AMISOM received their new rank insignia while in Mogadishu, Somalia.

Earlier in April, seventy-seven (77) officers were promoted to various junior and senior ranks



Brig. Don Nabasa (fourth left), the commander of the Uganda AMISOM contingent, in a group photo with promoted officers.

At a ceremony, the Uganda AMISOM contingent commander, Brig. Gen. Don Nabasa, hailed the promoted officers for contributing to stabilisation efforts in Somalia and urged them to support the implementation of the mission's mandate.

"I implore you to double your effort and perform better as we continue to pursue peace and stability in Somalia and the region," Brig. Gen. Nabasa said.

His deputy, Col. John Winston Mugarura, also told the officers that the new ranks came with responsibilities and urged them to be professional, effective, and efficient.

"As leaders, you ought to understand that the Uganda Peoples' Defence Forces under AMISOM, will require you to be accountable and fulfil the mission's mandate," Col. Mugarura said.

Speaking on behalf of the promoted officers, Col. David Edimu pledged to serve with dedication and commitment.

"We are making our fair contribution to the peace support operations in Somalia. We will walk with our heads high for contributing to peace and stability in the Horn of Africa," Col. Edimu said.

Three officers attained the rank of colonel; twelve Majors were promoted to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. Another

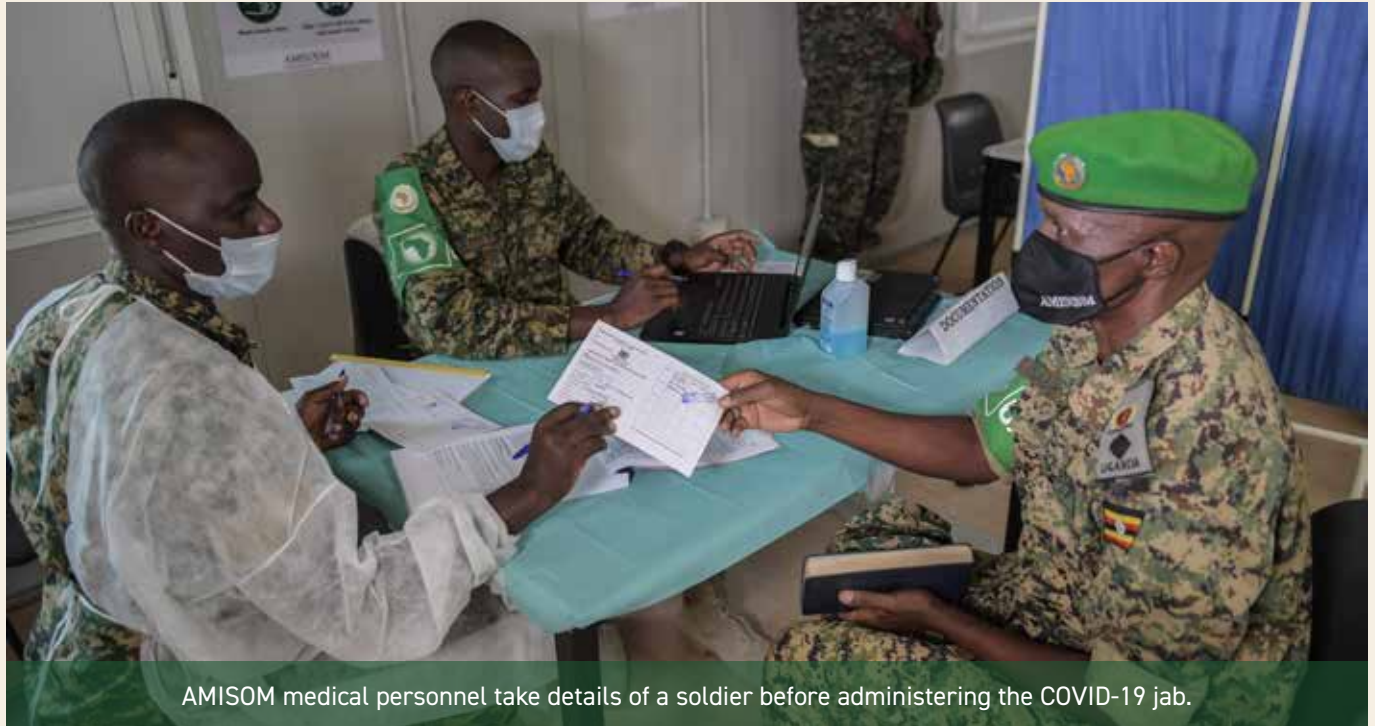
fourteen at the rank of Captain became Majors. Forty-four Lieutenants became Captains, while four Second Lieutenants became Lieutenants.



The commander of the Uganda AMISOM contingent, Brig. Gen. Don Nabasa, fixes a gorget on an officer

EMBRACING COVID-19 VACCINATION

On 17 May, the Uganda AMISOM contingent begun COVID-19 vaccination for its military and police personnel serving in the mission.



AMISOM medical personnel take details of a soldier before administering the COVID-19 jab.

This was after the Government of Uganda delivered 6,500 doses of the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine, to supplement vaccines received from the Federal Government of Somalia under the COVAX programme which was administered to their health care workers and vulnerable groups.

At a ceremony before the troops were vaccinated, the AMISOM Uganda contingent commander, Brig. Gen. Don Nabasa, urged the soldiers to embrace the vaccination exercise.

“The vaccines will save your lives and prevent you from becoming seriously ill if you get infected by the deadly COVID-19 virus. It will also significantly reduce your risk of getting infected and infecting others, so it is important that we all take it,” said the contingent commander.

The AMISOM military Chief of Operations, Col. Allan Kalanzi, welcomed the steps taken by Uganda

which would complement efforts by AMISOM to contain the spread of virus.

“AMISOM Force Headquarters commends the efforts the leadership of Sector one to vaccinate its troops as part of the overall objective to mitigate the spread of COVID-19,” he said.

The deputy commander of the AMISOM Uganda contingent, Col. John

Winston Mugarura, admitted that the coronavirus outbreak had to an extent impacted on military operations, and swift intervention was necessary.

The Commanding Officer of the AMISOM Level II Hospital in Mogadishu, Capt. Dr Gideon Nuwagira, reiterated that the vaccinations would boost efforts to contain the COVID-19 outbreak.



The commander of the Uganda AMISOM contingent, Brig. Gen. Don Nabasa takes the COVID-19 jab.

CHEERING UP THE SICK IN HOSPITAL

In April, Kenyan soldiers serving under AMISOM visited Dhobley General Hospital to cheer the sick and also donate much-needed medicines and an assortment of food items.



Kenya AMISOM soldiers offload medical drugs and food items from a truck at Dhobley General Hospital.

In Dhobley and surrounding areas, the Kenyan troops have over the years undertaken various development projects such as a free medical camp, construction of health centres and schools, clearing main roads, supporting sports centres and youth engagement events as part of AMISOM's civil-military cooperation activities, aimed at strengthening relations with local communities.

"I'm really impressed by the work the doctors and the medical support staff are doing for the people of Dhobley," said Col. Pascal Kitiro, the deputy commander of AMISOM's Kenyan contingent, when he led his troops to Dhobley General Hospital.

"Our relationship as AMISOM and the Somali security forces is very cordial. The reason we are here today is to give out some contribution of drugs for women and children and food stuffs for the local population as they continue with the holy month of Ramadan," he added.

Col. Kitiro said apart from visiting the sick and donating to them, another reason for their visit was to assess the state of infrastructure at the hospital and see how AMISOM can work with the local authorities in order to improve services at the hospital.

Dhobley Town Administrator, Siyad Mohamed Hassan, who was at the hospital, thanked AMISOM for the donation and called for more support from partners to help alleviate the suffering of the vulnerable members of the community.

"We are grateful for the excellent cooperation we have with AMISOM, starting from security, environmental

protection and also in humanitarian affairs. With AMISOM's support we have achieved and accomplished so much. As you can see today, AMISOM has provided medicines to the general hospital meant to treat the members of the local population. They also train health personnel and the other members of the community. For that, we are very grateful," the administrator said.



A doctor at Dhobley General Hospital briefs Kenya AMISOM officers during the handover of medical drugs.



AMISOM AIDS IDPS IN BAIDOA

On 14 June, the Administration of Southwest State of Somalia distributed food and non-food items, donated by AMISOM to internally displaced families in Baidoa.

The humanitarian relief items consisted of mosquito nets, blankets, sugar, oil and household utensils.

The items had earlier been handed over by AMISOM to the Commission of Refugees and IDPs Affairs of Southwest State, to be delivered to the vulnerable families affected by both conflict and climate shocks.

The Chairperson of the Southwest Refugees and IDPs Affairs Commission, Abdikadir Ali Mohamed, noted that the humanitarian, social and economic needs of the IDPs were immense with many facing hunger.

"We are very grateful to AMISOM for always coming to the aid of our people in their time of need. What we have received today shall go a long way in meeting the basic needs of the people. In this camp alone, we have about 548 IDP families, which means that the needs are plenty and this is why such assistance is very welcome," said Ali Mohamed.

Fatma Abdi Kerrow, of Nasib Wanaag 2 IDP Camp in Baidoa, said many of the children in the camp are at risk of various ailments, including waterborne diseases as a result of unsafe drinking water and severe malnutrition due to food shortages.

"What we have received will go a long way to relieve us of the everyday challenges we face as IDPs. I call upon AMISOM and others to continue providing this life-saving assistance to those of us in need. The mosquito nets will protect us from the mosquitos, the blankets will also protect us from the cold and the household utensils will be very useful for all the families," she said.

Mohamed Ahmed Ibrahim, a father of

six from Model 1 IDP Camp said the IDPs also lacked medical services and improved sanitation.

"This camp has no hospitals and schools. We also don't have clean drinking water and sufficient toilets. These are some of the areas in which we would need assistance to help alleviate the challenges we face," Mohamed explained.



Some of the relief items donated by AMISOM, to Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Baidoa.



MARKING THE DAY OF THE AFRICAN CHILD

In Baidoa, Southwest State of Somalia, people gathered to mark the International Day of the African Child with focus on protecting Somalia's vulnerable young people, many of whom are exposed to the effects of war and conflict.

At the event organised with support of AMISOM, representatives of Baidoa women's groups, youth, police,

Internally Displaced People, civil society groups and the Southwest administration renewed their commitment to respecting and protecting the rights of children.

"I am glad we used this day to discuss the problems the Somali child faces. We have a role to play in protecting young people of this country from being recruited by extremist groups

who often take advantage of the lack of education and economic opportunities," said elder Abdimajid Addow Hareed.

"This is an important day with great significance," said Fartun Gedow Hussein, speaking on behalf of a women's rights group. "There are many Somali children facing abuse in homes and in the community," she added.

MARKING DJIBOUTI INDEPENDENCE DAY

On 27 June, Djibouti forces serving under AMISOM celebrated the country's 44th Independence celebrations in Beletweyne, in the Hiraan region of Somalia. Djibouti gained its independence from France on June 27, 1977.

The Djibouti AMISOM contingent commander, Col. Abdullahi Muse Omar, congratulated all Djibouti troops in AMISOM.

"As Djiboutians, we are gathered here to celebrate the day our country gained independence. I wish to congratulate the Djibouti Armed Forces for their continued sacrifice and contribution to AMISOM in the fight to degrade the terror group, Al-Shabaab. I also wish to express immense gratitude to the residents of Hiraan and Galgadud regions for the cordial working relations with our forces," said Col. Abdullahi.

The Deputy Governor of the Hiraan region in charge of social services, Hussein Osman Ali, asked the Djibouti AMISOM troops to intensify their fight against Al-Shabaab and support the delivery of humanitarian aid to vulnerable communities in their areas of responsibility.

"Happy Independence Day to Djibouti. I salute AMISOM and the Djibouti troops for their effort to defeat Al-Shabaab and liberate areas from Al-Shabaab control. We have an excellent co-existence with you and we ask that you continue to offer humanitarian assistance to our communities and families in need," said the Deputy Governor.

The event had a solemn moment when Deputy President of Hirshabelle State, Yusuf Ahmed Hagar, led a delegation to lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier as a mark of respect to all the men and women of AMISOM who have paid the ultimate price in the pursuit of peace and security.

A Djibouti soldier, Awale Abdi Osman, said that

commemorating his country's independence had boosted the troops' morale and made them appreciate the fact that they are on a noble quest for peace and security in Somalia.

"Although we are away from home, on a mission here in Somalia, this is a great day that is worth celebrating as it reminds us of how far we have come as a nation," said Awale.

In a statement, the Head of AMISOM Ambassador Francisco Madeira, saluted the Djibouti Armed Forces for their contribution to the security, stability and peace process in Somalia.

"On behalf of the leadership of AMISOM, I congratulate the government and the people of the Republic of Djibouti on your 44th Independence Anniversary. Your contribution towards building a safe, secure and prosperous Africa is deeply appreciated and we are grateful for the contributions of your soldiers towards a secure Somalia," Ambassador Madeira said in the statement.

Deputy President of HirShabelle State, Yusuf Ahmed Hagar, and AMISOM officials lay a wreath on a tomb of the unknown soldiers at AMISOM Sector 4 headquarters in Beletweyne.



ETHIOPIAN TROOPS AWARDED MEDALS

In Beletweyne, AMISOM recognised Ethiopian soldiers for their contribution towards the restoration of peace and stability in Somalia.

On 1 May, the troops received African Union medals and certificates after completing one year and six months of service in Somalia under AMISOM.

The troops were deployed under the AMISOM Sector 4 where they operated alongside the Djibouti Armed Forces (DJAF) and SNA to degrade Al-Shabaab terrorists.

Col. Abdirahman Riyale Hared, the commander of the Djibouti AMISOM contingent, saluted the Ethiopian counterparts for their gallantry and steadfastness while implementing the AMISOM mandate to secure Somalia.

During the medal award ceremony, Col. Hared noted that the Ethiopian troops were responsible for securing the central town of Beletweyne and the surrounding areas.

Col. Hared was flanked by AMISOM Sector 4 Deputy Commander, Col. Mekonen Wudneh. Also

present was Maj. Assefa Aadane, the Ethiopian AMISOM Contingent Operations Officer.

Maj. Aadane noted that the departing Ethiopian troops collaborated with their Djibouti and Somali counterparts in conducting operations against Al-Shabaab in their area of responsibility.

The Ethiopian troops also implemented Quick Impact Projects that aimed to win the hearts and minds of the local communities living in the liberated areas of the Hiraan region.



AMISOM Sector 4 Commander, Col. Abdirahman Riyale Hared pins a medal on an officer during the medal award ceremony.



ASSISTING THE DISPLACED IN BELETWEYNE

In mid-June, AMISOM troops distributed food and non-food items to vulnerable households in Beletweyne, HirShabelle State of Somalia.

Djiboutian and Ethiopian troops that jointly oversee security in HirShabelle State under Sector 4 distributed the relief in partnership with the Government of India.

At least 960 families displaced by conflict, drought, floods received items that included sugar, rice, mosquito nets, cooking oil, blankets and plastic sheets.

The AMISOM Deputy Sector 4 Commander, Col. Yeshiwas Kerebet, said the assistance would improve the living conditions of the beneficiaries.

“Primarily, our mandate is to secure the

people. But alongside this, we provide this kind of support as AMISOM. We will continue to provide similar support in future,” said Col. Kerebet.

The AMISOM Sector 4 Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) officer, Lt. Ibrahim Yussuf Ahmed, pledged to extend more aid to vulnerable households in other areas within the AMISOM area of responsibility.

“Today, each family received 12 kilos of sugar, 10 kilos of rice and 12 litres of cooking oil. We will extend similar assistance to the communities in Bulo Burde, Dhusamareeb and Mahas towns,” said Lt. Ahmed.

The HirShabelle State’s coordinator in the Ministry of Humanitarian and Disaster Management, Hawo Ahmed

Mohamed, hailed AMISOM for the donation, which she described as timely.

“We appreciate AMISOM for the timely support and request for more support to communities in urgent need of support in the Hiraan region,” said Ms Hawo.

One of the beneficiaries, Damac Haji Ibrahim, said, “We are immensely grateful for the provision of much-needed support and request our brothers for more support.”

AMISOM troops continue to extend humanitarian assistance, including distributing food and non-food items to communities living in the mission’s areas of responsibility in south-central Somalia.



SECTOR 5 COMMANDER VISITS THE FRONTLINE

In June, the AMISOM Burundi contingent commander, Brig Gen. Télésphore Barandereka, visited the frontlines and interacted with troops undertaking operations against the terrorist group Al-Shabaab.

Brig. Gen. Barandereka visited more than 10 Forward Operating Bases, FOBs, located in the Middle Shabelle region, the Burundi AMISOM contingent's area of responsibility under Sector 5.

Brig. Gen. Barandereka visited FOBs in Jowhar, Ceel Egelow, Balad, Ceel Macaan along the Indian Ocean coastline north of Mogadishu city, Bio Cadale, Maslah and Qorilow, among others.

During the visit that started on 7 June and concluded on 15 June, Brig Gen.

Barandereka met field commanders to discuss operations and boost the morale of troops.

"I thank you for conducting joint operations with the Somali National Army and denying terrorists the freedom to attack civilians. As a result, you have foiled multiple attacks on Mogadishu and secured other areas, thus enabling Somalia to advance," Brig. Gen. Barandereka told troops in Maslah.

Brig. Gen. Barandereka urged the troops to remain vigilant against

probing attacks by Al-Shabaab and adhere to established Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) against COVID-19.

"I'm glad to note that you continue to adhere to the mission's SOPs on COVID-19 by wearing masks, sanitising and observing social distancing even on the battlefield. AMISOM has rolled out vaccination, and I urge you to take the vaccine because it is safe," the Sector 5 commander added.



IMPROVING COVID-19 TESTING

In May, the Government of Burundi delivered equipment and accessories to support the diagnosis and management of COVID-19 among the AMISOM Burundian troops.



Medical Laboratory Technologist, Lt. Omer Niyondiko operates Gene Xpert, a PCR-test machine, and its accessories which will be used in diagnosing and managing Covid-19 in Maslah.

The Gene Xpert Polymerase Chain Reaction, or PCR-test machine, was delivered by the government of Burundi through the Ministry of National Defence and Veterans and the Ministry of Public Health.

The equipment was unveiled at the Maslah Forward Operating Base, coinciding with the end of specialised training for eighteen (18) military health personnel to operate the diagnostic equipment.

"Knowing the dangers of COVID 19, we selected the best among us for this training," said the battle group commander, Lt. Col. Leononde Kavamahanba.

He noted that after the training, the medical personnel in the contingent would support the testing and management of COVID 19 cases.

The contingent Senior Medical Officer, Capt Dr. Severin Irambona, commended the military medical team for working

tirelessly to ensure timely testing of COVID-19 among the troops.

He also noted that the delivery of the diagnostic equipment would improve efficiency in testing for COVID-19 in AMISOM Sector 5.

"Initially, to get the PCR test results took between one to five days. Now it will take four hours to get the results which will help us mitigate the spread of COVID-19 among our troops and partners," said Capt. Dr Irambona.



Burundi AMISOM troops pose for a group photo at the end of the specialized training

AMISOM SUPPORTS DISPLACED FAMILIES IN JUBALAND

On 5 June, AMISOM handed over food and non-food items to internally displaced families in Kismayo, Jubaland State.



AMISOM hands over relief consisting of food and non-food items to Jubaland for distribution to IDPs in Kismayo.

The relief items consisting of flour, sugar, oil, rice, blankets and plastic sheets, were handed over to the Jubaland authorities to distribute to the affected families.

The AMISOM Sector six commander, Brig. Gen. Abebaw Seid Yimer noted that AMISOM sought to assist vulnerable communities living in the AMISOM area of responsibility.

“This handover is important because it builds on the cordial relationship between AMISOM troops and the civilian population. AMISOM works closely with the Jubaland State and Kismayo communities to build sustainable peace and security,” Gen. Yimer said.

The Jubaland Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons Commissioner, Mohamed Sheikh Khadar, hailed AMISOM for the timely support as displaced families face multiple challenges.

The chairperson of the Kismayo Internally Displaced Persons, Ubah Hassan Adde, thanked AMISOM for the support, saying it would provide relief to the beneficiaries.

“Since the Coronavirus breakout, Internally Displaced Persons have

suffered greatly. We are in dire need, and don’t always get help,” said Ubah.

The donated items were purchased by AMISOM Humanitarian Unit through funds donated by the Government of India.



Displaced families in Kismayo town Jubaland State of Somalia receive food and non-food items donated by AMISOM.

COMMEMORATING THE DAY OF THE AFRICAN CHILD

On 16 June, the Jubaland State of Somalia joined the rest of Africa to mark the International Day of the African Child, with a commitment from the government to protect the rights of children.



AMISOM Protection Officer, Gloria Jaase, speaks during the International Day of the African Child event in Kismayo

The event was attended by representatives of women groups, traditional elders, Internally Displaced People and members of civil society organisations.

Speaking at the event, the Director of Children and Family Affairs in the Jubaland Ministry of Women and Human Rights, Abdikadir Abdi Yare, noted that his administration has an agenda of promoting children's rights and welfare.

The AMISOM Protection Officer, Gloria Jaase, called on the Federal Government of Somalia to ratify the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

AMISOM in collaboration with Jubaland Ministry of Women and Human Rights organised an event to mark the day under the theme: "30 years after the adoption of the Charter: accelerate the implementation of Agenda 2040 for an Africa fit for children."

The convention, among other commitments, recognises that the child, for the full and harmonious development of his or her personality, should grow up in a family environment, in an atmosphere of happiness, love

and understanding.

"Thirty years after the adoption of the African Charter on the Welfare and the Rights of children, we are also highlighting the need for African Union member states to accelerate the implementation of agenda 2040 and to ensure the protection of children. In Somalia, we are focusing especially on the protection of children in situations of armed conflict. Somalia is already a signatory to the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of Children and AMISOM is taking the opportunity on this day to call on the government of Somalia to speed up the process to ratify the convention," she said.

The Day of the African Child is celebrated every year on June 16. It was initiated by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) now African Union (AU) in memory of the June 16, 1976, student uprising in Soweto, South Africa.



A cross-section of Kismayo residents, including traditional elders, police, IDPs, civil society members, and Jubaland administration officials pose for a group photo at the closing of the International Day of the African Child celebration, in Kismayo.

FORCES TRAINED ON CIVILIAN PROTECTION



Ethiopian AMISOM troops pose for a group photo with course facilitators at the end of a civilian protection training in Kismayo.

At the end of May, AMISOM conducted a civilian protection and human rights training for Ethiopian National Defence Forces in Kismayo, Jubaland State, to reiterate the need to protect civilians during operations.

Conducted by AMISOM's Protection, Human Rights and Gender Unit, the training covered parts of International Human Rights frameworks, Child protection (Children in situations of armed conflict), prevention of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV) and Sexual and Gender-based violence (SGBV).

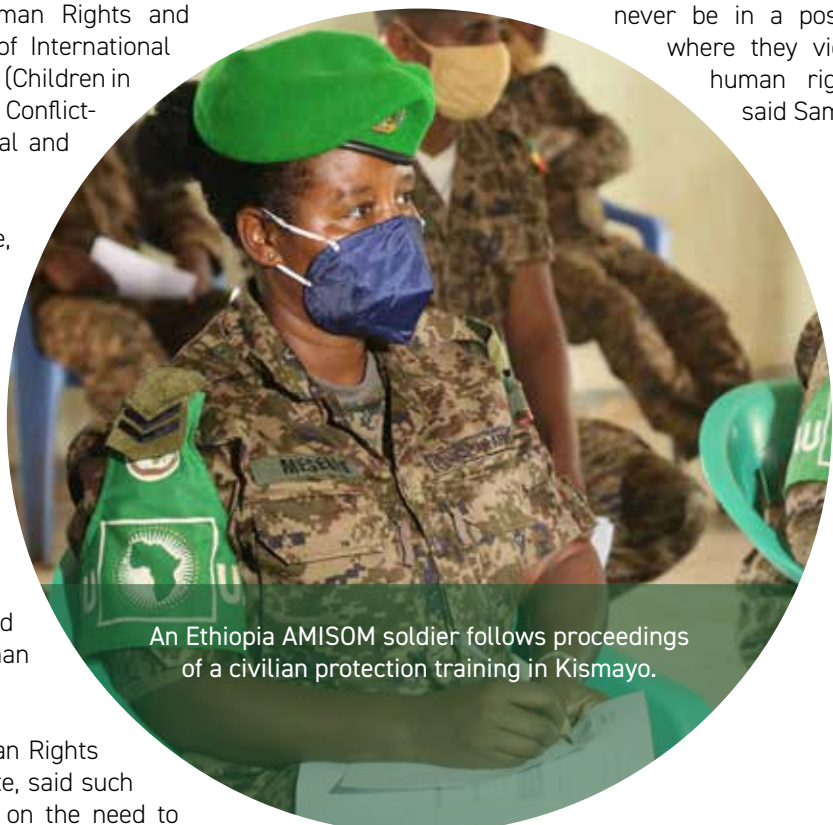
AMISOM Protection Officer, Gloria Jaase, urged the forces to be respectful and fair when dealing with civilians and comply with International Human Rights standards.

"Annually we have officers rotating in and out of the Mission Area so these trainings are important to ensure that they prioritise the safety and protection of civilians in all operations. In particular for this training, we emphasised on protecting women and girls from SGBV, conflict-related sexual violence and respecting their human rights," Jaase said.

Police Inspector Joshua Samuel, the Human Rights Officer for AMISOM Police in Jubaland State, said such trainings are important to remind troops on the need to

protect civilians while conducting their duties.

"The training provides agreed guidelines on protection of children and human rights awareness. We need to keep our troops well informed so they would never be in a position where they violate human rights," said Samuel.



An Ethiopia AMISOM soldier follows proceedings of a civilian protection training in Kismayo.



SEEKING TO END GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

At the start of June, AMISOM trained at least 30 Southwest State police officers to enable them to effectively enforce laws that protect women and girls from sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), and to stem crime.

The training was attended by six female and 24 male officers, drawn from various police stations in Baidoa, the capital of Southwest State.

The training focused on children rights, aspects of child protection and how to handle children offenders among other issues.

The AMISOM Gender Coordinator in Baidoa, ASP Ireen Shaunduba, noted that SGBV usually affects vulnerable and minority members of the community.

The training, ASP Shaunduba added, was important in promoting women and child rights and encourage police officers to effectively address violations that may be reported to them.

"We sensitised the Somali police officers on the dangers of sexual gender-based

violence, and on what to do, once they receive a report of gender sexual-based violence. They have also been trained on what to teach the community about gender sexual-based violence," ASP Shaunduba said.

The Southwest State AMISOM Police Coordinating Officer, SSP Sylvester Kabaso, noted that they had identified the need for the training and was optimistic that the local police will use the skills acquired to address issues of SGBV in their community.

"This training on how to manage cases of sexual and gender-based violence is very important. It is aimed at enhancing the capacity of Somali Police personnel to discharge their duties. It will enable them to sensitise their communities about the effects of sexual and gender-based violence," said Kabaso.

The Southwest State Police officers noted that the training would benefit them, given that the knowledge and skills gained would come in handy as they discharge their daily duties.

"This training will enhance our knowledge and skills and we will pass the insights we learned to the community because we have gained important lessons. There are many things that we did not know before, but we are better prepared to manage GBV cases," said Halima Jim'ale Aden, a female police officer.

AMISOM police regularly conducts capacity building training for the Somali Police Force in line with the Somalia Transitional Plan (STP), as part of efforts to build the operational and institutional capacity of Somali security forces, ahead of AMISOM's anticipated exit.

TRAINING JUBALAND POLICE TO COUNTER EXTREMISM

At the end of June, the AMISOM Police component conducted training for Jubaland State Police personnel on prevention and countering violent extremism and radicalization.

Fifty police officers drawn from various police stations across Jubaland attended the one-day training that also aimed to enable them to identify and combat extremism, especially ahead of the national elections.

The Somali Police Force will lead the National Election Security Taskforce responsible for securing the electoral process while AMISOM Police will provide them with the needed support.

The AMISOM Community Policing Adviser, Chief Superintendent of Police, CSP Daniel Chuks, said the training took participants through the necessary skills to collaborate with the local communities to combat crime to safeguard lives and property.

"We are using the community policing approach to identify and fight terrorism. We expect the trainees to return to their stations and train their colleagues," said CSP Chuks.

The training also provided the Somali Police officers with skills to counter the terrorists' use of social media platforms to misinform, gather intelligence, and recruit violent extremists.

The Communication Information Technology Services (CITS) Advisor to the AMISOM Police, Ibrahim Sini, said, "terror groups are using these technologies to train, recruit, radicalize the youth who spend time on social media."

The spokesperson of Jubaland State Police, Col. Jama'a Ahmed Hassan, thanked AMISOM for the continuous support.

"We are grateful for the timely and effective training that will enable our personnel to perform their duties professionally," said Col. Jama'a.

A police trainee, Ayan Ahmed Omar, said, "We gained good insight, and go back to our work stations better prepared to improve relations with our communities."





SOUTHWEST POLICE TRAINS IN COMMUNITY POLICING

On 18 June, AMISOM Police concluded six days training to enhance the skills of the Southwest State Police personnel in community policing to prevent crime and counter violent extremism.

The training, a collaboration with the Southwest State Administration targeted 25 Southwest State police officers selected from police stations across the state.

The AMISOM Police component has the mandate to train, mentor and advise the Somali Police Force (SPF) and support stabilisation efforts under the Somali-led Transition Plan.

At the end of the training, the Bay Region Police Commander, Col. Amin Mohamed Osman, thanked AMISOM for supporting the capacity building efforts of the Somali Police Force. He urged the trainees to apply the knowledge and skills acquired to protect lives and property.

“The trainees have gained knowledge, and we hope they will apply the skills while performing their duties,” said Col. Osman.

The AMISOM Police Lead Trainer in the Southwest State, Inspector Ezekiel Njagi, said the training was part of ongoing capacity-building support to

ensure Somali Security Forces build relations with the community.

“These officers have acquired skills in prevention and countering violent extremism through community policing. We are building a community-based policing strategy to enable the Somali Police Force to cooperate with the community to maintain safety and security,” said Inspector Njagi.

The AMISOM Police coordinating officer in the Southwest State, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Sylvester Kabaso, said the trainees

were better resourced to perform policing duties.

“We also expect the community to cooperate with the Somali Police Force as they discharge their duties,” said SSP Kabaso.

A trainee police officer, Fardowsa Aden Mohamed, said the training was useful.

“We had been diligently performing our duties, without understanding some of the basic principles of community policing, this training has been very insightful,” said Aden.



Southwest State police personnel in a group photo at the end of a training to enhance their skills in community policing to prevent crime and counter violent extremism.



TRAINING FPU PERSONNEL ON CIVILIAN PROTECTION

In May, AMISOM conducted training for its formed police personnel to help them understand established guidelines that protect civilians as they perform their duties.

Twenty five police officers from the AMISOM Sierra Leone Formed Police Unit, FPU, attended the three-day training held in Kismayo, Jubaland State of Somalia.

The AMISOM Protection Officer, Gloria Jaase, said the training was to build the police personnel’s knowledge and skills on the need to protect civilians in peace support operations.

“This training seeks to remind our commanders of their obligations to protect civilians while they undertake operations in Somalia,” she said.

It covered aspects of International Human Rights frameworks relating to the rights of women and children, prevention of conflict-related sexual violence, sexual exploitation and abuse.

The AMISOM Human Rights Officer, Kahbila Mbuton said, “the training ensures the FPU’s are able to protect civilians in line with the AMISOM mandate, and in compliance with Human Rights protection standards.”

The AMISOM police coordinator for Jubaland State, Stephen Yeje, said the trainees had gained valuable understanding to effectively perform their roles.

“The workshop is a reminder of our duty as peacekeepers to protect vulnerable people including women, children and the disabled. In that light, the training examined human rights with emphasis on the rights of women and children. We have gained knowledge on the roles we can play as Formed Police to ensure the protection of civilians,” said Yeje.

The Deputy Contingent Commander of the Sierra Leone Formed Police Unit, ASP Agnes Murray, said the knowledge would guide the officers in performing their duties.

“The training guides us on our responsibilities to observe the rights of people we protect. We operate in collaboration with civilians and the Somali police to ensure peace prevails,”

said ASP Murray.

Jaase said the outcome of the training would benefit the trainees and the community they serve. “This will benefit the civilians because the mandate of AMISOM as a peace support operation includes the need to protect civilians,” noted Jaase.

Kahbila stated that the civilian protection training would enable the Formed Police Unit personnel under AMISOM to strengthen their relations with the community.

“We have reminded the participants of AMISOM’s mandate to ensure they protect civilians and uphold and comply with the set standards,” said Kahbila.



AMISOM Police officers attend a three-day training on the protection of civilians, in Kismayo.

PEACE BRINGS HOPE FOR SOMALIA CHILDREN



Students sit for a Primary Education Certificate exam in Mogadishu.

Thirteen-year-old Ahmed Abdinur Abukar dreams of being a teacher. This year, in May, he took an important step towards realising that dream and sat for the national Primary Education Certificate examinations in Mogadishu.

The Ministry of Education and Higher Education says over 60 000 students across the country sat for their end of year national examinations for primary and secondary school in May and June, a continuation of a positive trajectory in the education sector – thanks to the return of relative peace and security – after years of war, turmoil and ruin. The improved security continues to remarkably increase student enrolment in school. So, too, an improvement in the quality of education.

We caught up with Ahmed on the day he had sat for his English paper at the Science and Technology campus of the Somalia National University.

The university campus was one of the examination centres in Mogadishu.

“I know I did very well,” he said with unbridled confidence. “I want to go to university to study education. I want to be a teacher.”

The Federal Government of Somalia has invested heavily in education. In the 2021 budget, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education was allocated US\$10.5 million most of which, according to education officials is to rehabilitate and construct schools and offices to accommodate the huge number of school enrolment since the government introduced free primary and secondary school education.

This year 26,688 primary school students from 642 schools in Mogadishu and the Banadir Region sat for their Primary Education Certificate exams, which began at the end of May

at 72 centres and supervised by 1,463 invigilators.

In Banadir Region, Galmudug, HirShabelle, Jubaland and the Southwest States, some 36,143 secondary students sat for Secondary School Certificate examinations.

In Banadir alone, the examination centres were protected by 877 Somali Police Force (SPF) officers, most of whom have been trained and mentored by AMISOM.

A BRIGHT FUTURE

Over many years, Somalia's young people suffered the collateral damage of conflict. As a result, many dreams were stillborn. Mogadishu was a war zone with pockmarked buildings. Schools were deserted, children of school going age were used as child soldiers to fight for Al-Shabaab terrorists and other militant groups.



An invigilator explains a point to a student sitting for his Primary Education Certificate exam in Mogadishu.

In 2009, the tide began to turn, and in 2011, AMISOM peacekeepers liberated Mogadishu from Al-Shabaab and made great strides in peace and security. Subsequently, major Somali cities like Marka, Afgoye, Kismayo, Baidoa, Jowhar, Beletweyne and many other towns were later liberated by the Somali security forces, with AMISOM's support.

In all the liberated areas is a story of hope, revival and development; a construction boom, a changing skyline with new skyscrapers coming up, expansion of commerce and industry, rehabilitation of schools and hospitals and a steady streak of the Somali diaspora returning home to take part in the rebuilding of the country.

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND

Abdirahman Omar Sheikhnur, the Director General of Education for Banadir Regional Administration, says

that in a new Somalia, no child should be left behind.

To that end, his administration put in place adequate measures to accommodate children with special needs to write the final primary school examinations. The May examination had 13 of them who are visually impaired and 15 with hearing impairments. With various information technology tools, these students are able to attend class and progress through school like everyone else.

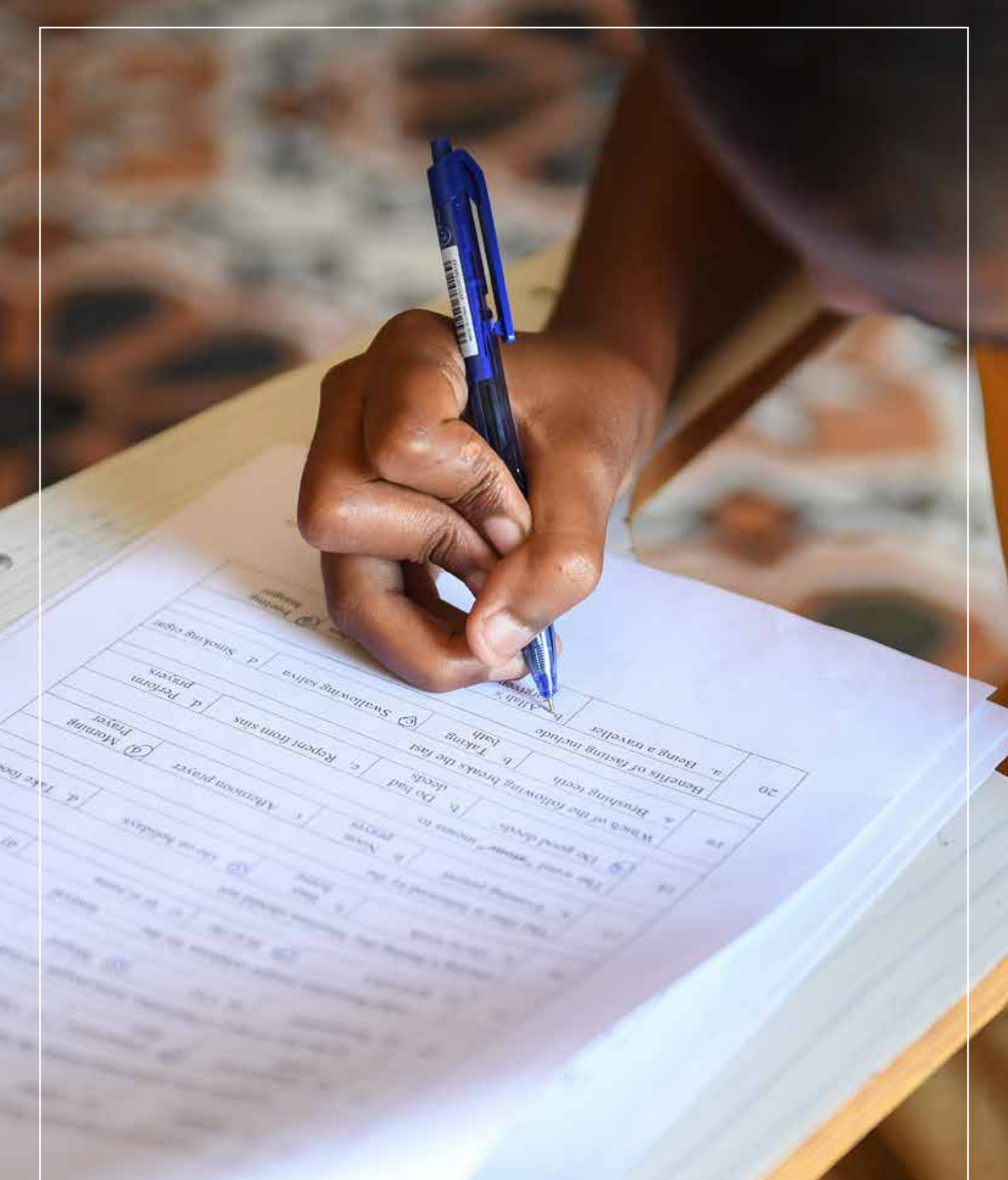
"One area in which we have done well is that we now have a unified curriculum. The curriculum consists of a framework, syllabus, textbooks that are the same for all students across Somalia. All of the students, therefore, write a standardised exam," said Sheikhnur in his spacious office in Hamarweyne district, the old Mogadishu.

"The centralised education system is very helpful because if a student is transferred, for example, from Mogadishu to Baidoa, he or she immediately can continue with their education because the same syllabus is taught everywhere," he added.

After writing her exam at the same centre as Ahmed, 14-year-old Sabirin Ali Mohamud, was resolute that she would be a nurse.

"I hope to go to university to get my nursing degree and then work in order to repay my parents for their support. I also want to support my siblings and help in rebuilding Somalia, my country," she said.

Somali children, with the return of peace and security, can now look to the future with hope and optimism.



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