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PRESS RELEASE

(For immediate release)

AMISOM launches a project worth \$3.2 million

Mogadishu, 15 September 2011- African Union Mission in Somalia has launched the construction of military barracks for TFG soldiers in Mogadishu. H.E. Sheikh Sharif, President of Somalia's Transitional Federal Government (TFG), presided over the groundbreaking ceremony. Also in attendance were the Deputy Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (DRSCC), Hon. Wafula Wamunyinyi, The Deputy Force Commander, TFG's Defense Minister Hon. Hussein Arab, members of TFG military, and AMISOM senior Officers.

The project aims at extending and improving Gesira training center by building additional facilities with a capacity to accommodate 1,100 soldiers. The facilities will include permanent structured living quarters, dining halls, and a parade square once completed. This is part of the implementation of infrastructure development and capacity building as envisaged in the National Security and Stabilization Plan (NSSP).

Soldiers will no longer live in unsanitary conditions far from their duty stations. Their new environment will boost their morale; enhance discipline; which in turn will improve their performance.

In his remarks, Honorable Wamunyinyi thanked the European Union for its support to the African Union Mission in Somalia and more particularly for funding this project.

"Today, we begin to create a new Gesira of the future, a space where the brave soldiers of Somalia can stay and perform their duty, and serve their country with dignity. Despite the extraordinary environmental and economic challenges that their country faces, they have never given up hope for freedom and better life", Hon. Wamunyinyi said.

In his address during the ceremony, President Sheikh Sharif thanked AMISOM and the European Union for their continued support and effort to improve the lives of the Somali people.

“The construction of the facilities for those who defend the nation, is one the most needed projects in Mogadishu. The project is extremely important for the enhancement and safeguarding of our institutions. This project aligns perfectly with this city’s desire to improve the quality of life of our soldiers and strengthen national security system”, said President Sharif.

The construction works are to be completed within six months.

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