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PRESS RELEASE
(for immediate release)

AMISOM receives USIU's International Peace Advocate Award

Nairobi, September 21st, 2011; On the occasion of the celebration of the International Peace Day, the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (SRCC) for Somalia, Ambassador Boubacar Gaoussou Diarra, welcomes the progress made by the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) in helping the Transitional Federal Institutions to stabilize the country.

He said due to the bravery and dedication of Ugandan and Burundian troops serving in AMISOM, the security situation has improved tremendously in recent months. In August this year he says, the AU soldiers supported the Somali transitional government forces to drive Al Shabaab militants from almost all of Mogadishu. More than 90% of the capital has now been secured. Pro-government forces have also secured other areas in the south-central regions of the country.

It is in recognition of its enormous contributions towards peace in Somalia that AMISOM was selected by the Kenya based United States International University (USIU) to receive an International Peace Advocate Award.

Receiving the award on behalf of the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Honourable Wafula Wamunyinyi, Deputy Special Representative, urged the people of Africa, governments, regional mechanisms, private sector, civil society, students and researchers, and other individuals or groups to use this year's commemoration of International Day of Peace to rededicate themselves to constructive initiatives at all levels for the attainment of durable peace on the continent.

Honourable Wafula Wamunyinyi expressed his gratitude on behalf of the African Union Commission to USIU for selecting AMISOM to receive this coveted peace award.

"I am convinced that your choice of the African Union is in recognition of its invaluable contributions to the pursuit of peace and security on the African continent and to global peace as well. We are proud to have been recognized in this way." He said.

The AU's engagement in Somalia is pursued in partnership with the UN, the regional economic communities of IGAD and the EAC, and the larger international community. The African Union, the United Nations, the Inter-Governmental Authority on

Development, the East African Community and other international partners facilitated a very successful consultative meeting of all main Somali stakeholders in Mogadishu from 4-6 September 2011, which culminated in the signing of a Roadmap by TFG and other key Somali groups to end the transition by 20 August 2012. The conference concluded with the adoption of a Roadmap for the transitional process which ends on 20 August 2012, with clear benchmarks and timelines for accomplishing the tasks outlined in the document.

Note to editors

The International Day of Peace ("Peace Day") provides an opportunity for individuals, organizations and nations to create practical acts of peace on a shared date. It was established by a United Nations resolution in 1981 to coincide with the opening of the General Assembly. The first Peace Day was celebrated in September 1982. In 2002 the General Assembly officially declared September 21 as the permanent date for the International Day of Peace. By creating the International Day of Peace, the UN devoted itself to worldwide peace and encouraged all of mankind to work in cooperation for this goal.

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