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PRESS RELEASE

THE AFRICAN UNION STRONGLY CONDEMNS THE KIDNAPPING OF TWO SPANISH HUMANITARIAN WORKERS IN THE DADAAB REFUGEE CAMP, IN KENYA

The AU stresses the need for a more determined action to address the situation in Somalia

Addis Ababa, 14 October 2011: The Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union (AU), Jean Ping, strongly condemns the kidnapping by armed elements of two Spanish humanitarian workers from Doctors Without Borders, in the Dadaab refugee camp, in Kenya, as well as the attack on their Kenyan driver who sustained injuries.

This kidnapping and other earlier similar criminal acts, especially the recent abduction of French and British tourists, as well as the July 2010 terrorist attack perpetrated by Al Shabbab in Kampala, are a further illustration of the threat that the current situation in Somalia poses to regional security and stability. These developments highlight, once again, the urgent need for the international community to take a more determined and concerted action to address the situation in Somalia and assist the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) restore state authority and security, including providing the requisite support to AMISOM to enable it to more effectively implement its mandate and extend its operations beyond Mogadishu, in light of the requests contained in the communiqué of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of 13 September 2011.

The Chairperson of the Commission expresses AU's solidarity with the Kenyan Government and support to its efforts to address insecurity along the border with Somalia. He also commends the humanitarian agencies providing assistance to affected populations both within Somalia and in refugee camps in the neighbouring countries, particularly in view of the challenging security conditions in which they are operating.

