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African Union Mission for Somalia

P.O. Box 20182- 00200; Tel: (+254-20) 271 3755/56/58; Fax: 271 3766, Nairobi, Kenya

PRESS RELEASE

(For immediate release)

AU Special Representative congratulates Somali journalists for their contribution towards the peace process.

Mogadishu - May 3rd, 2012; On the occasion of the World Press Freedom Day today, the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (SRCC) for Somalia, Ambassador Boubacar Gaoussou Diarra has congratulated Somali journalists for their continued contribution towards the peace process despite the harsh environment in which they operate.

Ambassador Diarra noted that through various media outlets, journalists in Somalia continue to provide important information pertaining to peace, freedom of expression and individual rights which he said is necessary to ensuring that the population is kept fully aware and educated on the entire process. He said the current peace process in Somalia can only bear fruits if it has the support of ordinary people hence the important role of journalists is highly appreciated.

The AU Special Representative observed with concern however that the lives of journalists is constantly in danger because of activities of some terrorists who are bent on disrupting the current momentum for peace that Somalia with the support of AMISOM is slowly achieving. "It is encouraging to know the high level of dedication and enthusiasm being displayed by journalists in Somalia despite the dangerous environment in which they operate. Though Somalia remains one of the most dangerous places in the world for journalists, they continue to perform their duty of informing the nation with courage and I salute them for that." He said.

Ambassador Diarra reaffirmed AMISOM's continued commitment to working with Somali journalists in order to ensure the return of peace and stability to the country after two decades of fighting.

For more information, please Contact;

Mr. Eloi Yao, Spokesperson, E-mail: amisommediacentre@gmail.com