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## **PRESS RELEASE**

*(For immediate release)*

### ***AMISOM Police concludes week-long workshop on Gender based violence in support of the Somali Police Force (SPF)***

**Nairobi - June 17th, 2012;** The Police Component of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) has concluded a Gender Based Violence Workshop in support of the Somali Police Force (SPF) which pooled participants from the Somali Police Force, TFG Ministry of Women Affairs and Family Support, the Somali Civil Society, female ambassadors representative from Addis Ababa, Somali public health officials as well as specialists from Sierra Leone and Rwanda.

In his keynote address during the official opening, the Special Representative of the Chairperson for Somalia and Head of AMISOM, Ambassador Boucacar Diarra, thanked the TFG for its continued resolve in working with partners to build the capacity of the Somali police force in order to ensure proper policing in Somalia. He commended the organizers for putting gender-based violence at the forefront of rule and law.

Ambassador Diarra said that the workshop is being organized at a crucial time when the mission is being expanded. “As we expand the mission, the challenges ahead will be many. This will require a well-trained Somali Police Force capable of understanding all aspects of policing and also capable of enforcing the rule of law and protecting its population including women who are vulnerable in conflict environment”, he added.

AMISOM Police Commissioner - Dr. Charles Makono said that the workshop was organized to develop a broad-based, Systematic and coordinated response mechanism that will enable the Somali Police Force (SPF) and other key stakeholders to effectively address issues of Gender Based Violence against women, children and other vulnerable groups including Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs).

“This workshop is within the framework of AMISOM’s mandate to support the implementation of benchmark 1 also known as Security Pillar for the end of the transition period adopted by the

Transitional Federal Government (TFG) of Somalia on 6 September 2011. It is also in line with the new National Security Stabilization Plan (NSSP) which provides for the protection of civilians, women and children rights and minority groups.” He said.

Dr. Makono said that participants to the workshop have developed the framework for the formulation of Systematic Gender Based Violence Strategy for Somalia to involve key stakeholders in the SPF, the Judiciary and Women Organizations. He said; “The workshop has also helped us to develop a framework to establish Victim Friendly Courts (VFC) to handle cases involving Gender Based Violence that will deal with the perpetrators as a way to restore the dignity of victims.”

The AMISOM Police Commissioner added that the workshop also helped to come up with a strategy to enhance safety and security of women, children and other vulnerable groups. The Somali Police Commissioner thanked AMISOM for organizing the workshop. He stressed the importance of protection of the vulnerable groups of society such as women and children. He bemoaned lack of resources to ensure quick implementation of the crafted strategic action plan but said; “we are committed to ensuring the dignity of our people and therefore will endeavor to do what we can with what is available.”

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