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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)

AMISOM Condemns Targeted Assassinations, Urges Action from Somali Authorities

Nairobi, 13 August, 2012-The Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia, Ambassador Boubacar Diarra, has said that Somalia's Transitional Federal Government must do more to stop targeted killings within Mogadishu.

Ambassador Diarra said that although overall violence levels within the capital had reduced markedly since last year, there had been a steady rise in assassinations targeting journalists, government officials and businessmen.

"The Somali authorities must institute investigations into these killings with a view to bringing the perpetrators of these heinous crimes to justice," he said. "AMISOM is ready to provide any assistance it can to help with such investigations," he added.

Ambassador Diarra condemned yesterday's murders of businessman Mohamed Rage as well as those of Yusuf Ali Osma aka Yusuf-farey, the Director of Media Relations at the Ministry of Information, and journalist Mohamed Ali aka Buniste. Their killings bring to 7 the number of assassinations carried out in Mogadishu in the past week.

A week ago, the city marked the one year anniversary since AMISOM helped expel the Al Qaeda-affiliated terror group, al Shabaab, out of fixed bases within it, ushering in the longest period of relative peace it has experienced in two decades.

Despite the targeted killings, this last year has seen a commercial and construction boom in Mogadishu as thousands of residents have taken advantage of the general improvements in security and returned to rebuild their homes and businesses.

The political process has also been re-energized and last month a National Constituent Assembly adopted a provisional constitution for the country, paving the way for the inauguration of a more representative and legitimate government.

For more information, please Contact;

Eloi Yao and Colonel Ali Houmed, Spokespersons,

E-mail: amisommediacentre@gmail.