

## INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION DIRECTORATE

Press Release No: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 2 November 2021

Venue: Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

### AMISOM and Government of Italy begin construction of a 68-bed hospital facility for Somali National Army



The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) with sponsorship from the Government of Italy, has commenced construction of a 68-bed health facility for soldiers and officers of the Somali National Army (SNA).

The construction of the SNA hospital is being implemented under the Early Recovery and Stabilisation programme. Under the programme, AMISOM undertakes Quick Impact Projects to extend services through the construction of schools, health facilities, police

stations, safe water projects, and provide tools of work to the Somali security forces.

The ground breaking ceremony took place at the premises of the old Somali National Army Hospital in Mogadishu, which is also known as Isbitaalka Xoogga. The hospital was built in the 1960s but was destroyed during the years of Somalia's civil war. It is now being rebuilt.

The Deputy Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (DSRCC) for Somalia, Simon Mulongo, said that along with Italy, the choice to fund the construction of the military health facility was because of the potential to transform the facility into a centre of excellence for medical research.

“This hospital is not only going to be a referral facility for the army but should be developed into a research and development facility for the army. The world over, the military provides a step ahead of everybody in identifying challenges to their communities through research and development. Issues of new diseases, new health challenges, we look to the military to give us answers even before the civilian community does so,” said Mulongo.

Speaking at the ceremony, Italy's Ambassador to Somalia, Alberto Vecchi, said the plan to construct the SNA Hospital was a joint agreement with the African Union Commission following a request made by the Somalia Chief of Defence Forces for a health facility for members of Somalia's military.

“Now we are here putting down the first stone of this project that will serve to protect the brave and efficient soldiers of the SNA,” said Ambassador Vecchi.

“It will not be a job finished when the hospital is built. When completed we will keep on supporting and helping the government and the people of Somalia to maintain it. We will find

a way, together, depending on your needs,” added Ambassador Vecchi, as he committed his country’s support to the reconstruction and stabilization of Somalia.

Somalia’s Chief of Defence Forces, Gen. Odowaaa Yusuf, said the request for a military hospital came out of the need for specialised medical equipment and health personnel to address the various health challenges faced by the men and women in uniform.

“In the past, this hospital not only provided services to military personnel but also catered for the civilian population. Now, we will have the 68-bed facility to cater for the military. In the past, Isbitaalka Xoogga was renowned for having the best medical and research experts. We hope to be able to have the best experts here again” noted Gen. Odowaa.

According to the AMISOM Civil Engineer, Andrew Alele, construction of the facility will be undertaken by Deeqa Construction and Water Well Drilling Company. It will take about six months and would include a modern kitchen, laundry, administration, and storage areas.

Present at the ground breaking were senior SNA and AMISOM officers including the AMISOM Force Commander, Lt. Gen. Diomede Ndegeya, and the AMISOM Sector One Commander, Brig. Don Nabaasa.

**For further media inquiries, please contact:**

1. Ms. Wynne Musabayana | Head of Communication Division | Information and Communication Directorate, African Union Commission | E-mail: [musabayanaw@africa-union.org](mailto:musabayanaw@africa-union.org)
2. Ms. Gifty Bingley | Senior Communication Officer, AMISOM | E-mail: [bingleyg@africa-union.org](mailto:bingleyg@africa-union.org)
3. Mr. Gamal Eldin Ahmed A. Karrar | Senior Communication Officer | Information and Communications Directorate, African Union Commission | E-mail: [GamalK@africa-union.org](mailto:GamalK@africa-union.org)

**Information and Communication Directorate**, African Union Commission | **E-mail:** [DIC@africa-union.org](mailto:DIC@africa-union.org)  
**Web:** [www.au.int](http://www.au.int) | Addis Ababa, Ethiopia | **Follow Us:** [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#) | [YouTube](#)