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PRESS RELEASE

(For immediate release)

AMISOM COMMITTED TO PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Nairobi, 09 December, 2012-As the world marks International Human Rights Day, the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia, Mr. Mohamat Annadif, has reiterated AMISOM's commitment to the protection of the rights the Somali people.

"A secure environment free of hunger, violence and intimidation is a necessary precondition for the full enjoyment of human rights. AMISOM is today helping the Somali government and security forces create such an environment within Somalia and to confront those who would wish to deny freedom and liberty to the Somali people," he said.

"As it does so, AMISOM is cognisant of the need to minimize the impact of its operations on the civilian populace. The Mission continuously conducts pre-deployment and in-theatre training for its troops on the relevant aspects of International Human Rights Law and International Humanitarian Law. We have also implemented a policy on the use of Indirect Fire Weapons which includes strict no-fire zones in areas with concentrations of civilians," he added.

Mr. Annadif also noted that AMISOM was working to improve awareness and understanding of human rights within the Somali security forces. "Respect for human rights is a fundamental aspect of our training efforts as we work to build up the capacity of the Somali national security forces," he said.

He condemned the targeted assassinations of journalists in Mogadishu saying that AMISOM was working with the Somali Police Force to improve security and to give the police the tools to catch those responsible. "AMISOM deplores the unlawful killing of any person in Somalia. Our focus is to enhance the capacity of SPF and enable it to serve and protect every citizen," he said.

He noted that the AMISOM Police component was helping to train the SPF in criminal investigation techniques and that regular patrols by the Formed Police Units deployed earlier this year had helped improve the security situation within the city.

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