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**PRESS RELEASE**  
**(For Immediate Release)**

**SOMALIA NATIONAL ARMY AND AMISOM LIBERATE COASTAL CITY**  
**OF BARAAWE**

**October 5, 2014:** The much-awaited liberation of Baraawe town, Al-Shabaab's last stronghold happened today, October 5, 2014, after a joint force made up of the Somalia Army and AMISOM troops, rolled into the coastal town without much resistance from the terrorist group.

The coastal city of Baraawe is located 220 kilometers southwest of the capital Mogadishu. This is the first time in 23 years that its residents will experience a government's presence since the collapse of central rule in 1993. The picturesque city - which is surrounded by orchards and farms - has been captured as part of Operation Indian Ocean. The Operation aims to push the militants out of their bases along mainland Africa's longest coastline, and has so far recorded a string of victories against the crumbling terrorist network.

Acting Head of AMISOM, Hon. Lydia Wanyoto, congratulated the Somali and AMISOM forces for their bravery and resilience in taking over Baraawe and throughout the sustained Operation. She noted that Baraawe was the nerve center for Al-Shabaab and that today's defeat would be the group's most significant loss since being driven out of Mogadishu and Kismayo.

"I wish to share some very good news with the people of Somalia. Al-Shabaab terror capital Baraawe is now under Somali government control for the first time in 23 years, since the last government of President Mohamed Siyad Bare. This is the second major town that has been liberated since the operation resumed," she said.

Hon. Wanyoto added that retreating Al-Shabaab forces tried to mount an ambush in the outskirts of the coastal city.

"The Al-Shabaab ambush was immediately neutralized and our forces walked uninhibited into Baraawe, much to the delight of the locals many of whom thronged the streets to welcome the aligned forces," Hon. Wanyoto said.

The capture of Baraawe is a significant victory for Somalia since the terrorists used the port there to import arms as well as receive foreign fighters into their ranks. The group also

used Baraawe to export charcoal to the Middle East, a lucrative multi-million dollar business that served as their main source of funding.

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