PRESS RELEASE

(For immediate release)

Al Shabaab suffer significant setback as over 200 militants disengage near Jowhar

Mogadishu, 22 September, 2012:

Al Shabaab suffered a significant setback today over 200 militants from the Al-Qaeda linked group and gave themselves up to AMISOM forces in Garsale, approximately 10 km from the town of Jowhar and some 80 km from the capital, Mogadishu. The first fighters disengaged in the early hours of Saturday morning, with a stream of Al-Shabaab militants giving themselves up peacefully to AMISOM forces in Garsale. By the afternoon, over 200 militants had disengaged and were under AMISOM control. The total number is expected to rise to around 250. The events came after in-fighting between militants in the region in which 8 Al-Shabaab were killed by rival militants. The numbers included two senior Al-Shabaab commanders. AMISOM forces recovered over 80 weapons at the scene. The disengaged fighters were peacefully taken into AMISOM’s protection and will be transferred to Mogadishu for rehabilitation.

Deputy Force Commander of operations, Brigadier Michael Ondoga said: “Today’s events confirm that Al-Shabaab is divided and being defeated across Somalia. Somalia is moving towards a secure and stable future free from the scourge of violence and terror. The political transition has ended, and the Somali people have the opportunity to shape together a more peaceful future. “We call on all those who want peace not terror to lay down their arms. A number have contacted AMISOM indicating their wish to cease fighting. We have assured them of their safety if they give themselves up peacefully to AMISOM forces, as those surrendering in Garsale have done today”.

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