PRESS RELEASE

(For immediate release)

AMISOM congratulates Somalia on inauguration of new Parliament

Nairobi - August 21st, 2012; The Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia, Ambassador Boubacar Diarra has congratulated the people of Somalia on the inauguration of a new parliament, the first to be sworn in on Somali soil in over twenty years.

Ambassador Diarra applauded the steps taken so far to end the transition to representative government. “This is a historic moment. Today Somalia has a new beginning with a new political framework based on a popular and legitimate provisional constitution,” he said.

215 out of a total of 275 MPs were sworn in last evening in Mogadishu, substantially more than the 185 required for the new Somali Federal Parliament to convene with a functioning majority. Mr. Musa Hassan Abdulle, a former army general was appointed interim Speaker. The inauguration comes just three weeks after a National Constituent Assembly overwhelmingly adopted a provisional constitution for the country, which replaced the 8 year old Transitional Federal Charter.

Ambassador Diarra paid tribute to the Traditional Elders and the Technical Selection Committee for diligently executing their duties in challenging circumstances. He urged them to complete the important work of appointing and vetting the remaining MPs. He also urged the new Parliament to move expeditiously to elect a Speaker and President.

Ambassador Diarra reaffirmed the African Union’s commitment to supporting the country’s peace process saying that AMISOM would enhance security in Mogadishu during this critical period.

“We will continue to work with the new authorities selected by the representatives of the Somali people to ensure that ordinary citizens can go about their daily lives in peace and security,” he said.

A year ago, the Somali National Army with the support of the AMISOM forces pushed the extremist group al Shabaab from the city, ushering in the longest period of relative peace the capital has experienced since the collapse of central government in 1991.