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PRESS RELEASE

AMISOM LAUNCHES OPERATION ANTELOPE IN HIRSHABELLE STATE

Jowhar, 17 December 2016: The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM)'s Burundi contingent has embarked on an operation code named 'Antelope' to open up key supply routes in the HirShabelle state.

The objective of the operation is to open the roads to facilitate humanitarian access, support the local population to move their crops from farms to markets and assist the military to get access to Forward Operating Bases (FOB) in the sector.

The Sector 5 Commander, Brigadier-General Venuste Nduwayo, said the operation which is already underway will see more than 150 kilometres of roads rehabilitated in the agricultural rich HirShabelle region. These include the Jowhar Airfield to Jowhar Town, Biyo-Adde to Jowhar Town, Mahadaay to Elbaraf, Biyo-Adde to Raga-elle and Raga-elle to Mogadishu among others.

The rehabilitation works began on December 1, after the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (SRCC), Francisco Madeira, visited the President of HirShabelle, Ali Abdullahi Osoble, to discuss matters of security and infrastructure. During the visit, the SRCC promised to support efforts by the regional President to develop local infrastructure.

The operation to rehabilitate the roads in the newest federal state in Somalia is expected to take at least three months with the support of United Nations Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS) and the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS).