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PRESS RELEASE

(For Immediate Release)

Burundi President Visits Somalia and addresses AMISOM troops

Mogadishu, 22 April 2014: Burundi President, His Excellency Pierre Nkurunziza, today, made a historic visit to Somalia to check on his forces serving under the African Union peacekeeping mission, as well as pay a courtesy call to Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mahamud.

During his visit to Somalia, the Burundian President expressed optimism about Somalia's future, and reaffirmed his Government commitment to work in partnership with the Somali Government to promote peace and security.

"I am delighted to have visited Somalia at a crucial time for the Federal Government in their fight against Al Shabaab and terrorism. Burundi Government now has appointed its first Ambassador to Somalia, we also have our troops serving with AMISOM who have been in Somalia since 2007, and the relationship between the two countries is excellent", said President Nkurunziza.

The President had a message to Somali people: "My message to Somalia is that of hope and peace. I encourage the people of Somalia to have hope. Burundi was once ravaged by civil war; however, thanks to the political goodwill of all Burundians, we now live in peace. There is a time for everything – a time for war and a time for peace and development, and now it's a good time for Somalis to think about peace and stability".

During his time in Somalia, President Nkurunziza also addressed AMISOM troops and thanked them for the contribution they have made to the security and stability of Somalia. "We are deeply grateful to AMISOM forces for the sacrifices you have made to help our Somali brothers."

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