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PRESS STATEMENT

THE AU COMMISSIONER FOR PEACE AND SECURITY **ON A VISIT TO BURUNDI**

Bujumbura, 19 January 2017: Ambassador Smail Chergui, AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, within the framework of his working visit to Burundi, arrived in Bujumbura on Wednesday, 18 January 2017. Upon his arrival, Commissioner Chergui proceeded to the Bujumbura Memorial, where he laid a wreath of flowers in honour of the Burundian soldiers of AMISOM, fallen in the line of duty in Somalia. He was accompanied by the Burundian Ministers of External Relations, Security and Defence, the AU Special Representative in Burundi, the Chief of Defence Staff of the Burundian Armed Forces and many senior officers. This symbolic ceremony was an opportunity for Commissioner Chergui to pay a solemn tribute to the Burundian contingents of AMISOM and to thank the Burundian Government for its invaluable contribution to the restoration of peace and stability in Somalia.

After the laying the wreath, Commissioner Chergui held a working meeting with the Human Rights Observers and Military Experts of the AU Mission in Burundi, to whom he expressed his appreciation for the work accomplished within their mandate. In the afternoon, Commissioner Chergui met with the Ambassadors of the European Union, accredited to Burundi, to inform them of the objectives of his visit to Burundi. The Ambassadors reiterated the support of their respective countries to the AU and AMISOM and wished the Commissioner full success in his visit to Burundi.

Commissioner Chergui continues his visit to Burundi with meetings with the Burundian authorities today, on 19 January, which will be followed by a Press conference.