



PRESS RELEASE

THE AFRICAN UNION AND CHINA SIGN AN AGREEMENT ON SUPPORT TO AMISOM

Addis Ababa, 23 December 2011: The Commission of the African Union (AU) and the People's Republic of China today signed an Agreement regarding the provision of further support to the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). Under the Agreement, China will provide to AMISOM equipment and material worth of 30 million RMB (equivalent to US \$4,526,252 million).

The Agreement was signed on behalf of the Commission by Ambassador Ramtane Lamamra, Commissioner for Peace and Security, and, on behalf of the People's Republic of China, by Ambassador Xie Xiaoyan, China's Ambassador to Ethiopia and Permanent Representative to the AU.

Speaking during the signing ceremony, Ambassador Xie Xiaoyan commended the Commission for the role it plays in promoting peace and security in the region, adding that China is committed to continued support to AMISOM and other AU peace endeavors. *"I intend to establish, as my predecessor did, regular contact with the AU, and I look forward to exchanging views with the leadership of the Commission on various issues of common interest and concern,"* he said.

On his part, Commissioner Lamamra thanked China for its continued support to the AU and to its peace and development agenda. *"We believe that we have clearly reached a very important level of understanding and solidarity. China has been very instrumental in supporting us in many instances, as we seek to find African solutions to African problems. Today's donation goes a long way towards consolidating our partnership. We have no doubt that the year 2012 will mark further progress in this partnership".*

It should be recalled that, on 20 July 2011, China donated to AMISOM equipment and material also worth 30 million RMB.

Furthermore, from 13 to 18 September 2011, a delegation of the Peace and Security Council and the Commission visited China to participate in an AU-China workshop on peace and security and exchange with the Chinese authorities on issues of common concern.

Today's donation by China comes at a critical time in the efforts to strengthen AMISOM to enable it further support the ongoing peace and reconciliation process in Somalia. AMISOM and the TFG forces have recorded significant gains on the ground. The PSC is expected to consider and endorse, in early January 2012, the Strategic Concept being currently prepared by the Commission and the UN Secretariat on the next phase in the implementation of AMISOM mandate, before transmission to the UN Security Council for its action as appropriate.

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