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AMISOM GETS NEW FORCE COMMANDER



Outgoing Force Commander Major General Francis Okello (left) hands over to incoming Force Commander Major General Nathan Mugisha (right) at a ceremony witnessed by the AU Special Representative for Somalia Mr. Nicolas Bwakira (in grey suit)

A third Force Commander (FC), for AMISOM has assumed office in Mogadishu. Maj Gen Nathan Mugisha takes over from Maj Gen Francis Okello, whose successful tour of duty has ended in accordance with the AU Commission terms and conditions of service. Major General Okello has been at the helm of AMISOM troops for almost one and a half years now, having taken over office on the 29th February 2008 from Major General Levi Karuhanga, the 1st AMISOM FC.

Maj Gen Nathan Mugisha takes over command of AMISOM Forces a time when the peace process has gained momentum and enjoys overwhelming support from the international community. The UN last year adopted a resolution to provide logistical support to AMISOM. In June this year in Brussels, the international community pledged at least USD 213 million towards AMISOM and the Somali Security Sector. AU continues to mobilize member states to deploy troops in Somalia so as to attain the desired troops levels of 8000.

The Force Commander has the over-all responsibility of command and control of all the troops and equipment in the Mission Area. Only Uganda and Burundi have so far deployed a total strength of over 5000 soldiers.



GENERAL MUGISHA IS NEW FORCE COMMANDER

Presiding over the hand-over-take over on the great achievements with limited ceremony at MISOM Force Headquarters in Hallane, Mogadishu, the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the AU Commission (SRCC), Mr. Nicolas Bwakira said that AMISOM has reasons to smile for the achievements recorded under very difficult circumstances. He added that these achievements have been recognized by the international community.

The ceremony was also attended by the UPDF Commander for Land Forces Lt Gen Katumba Wamala. Gen. Wamala said that Africans cannot continue to sit down and lament about the problems of the continent, but rather look for solutions for the problems with the support of the international community.

The SRCC highly commended the work of the out-going Force Commander and praised his personal and professional qualities, adding that he is one of the best officers in the region. He paid tribute to the officers who had rendered support to Major General Okello during his tenure of office.

Welcoming the new Force Commander, the SRCC observed: "Nathan, you have a tough job to do, but you have got the qualities to deliver to our expectations". He revealed that the international community had called for the reinforcement of the mandate and rules of engagement of AMISOM to enable it do a better job.

The new Force Commander pledged total commitment and emphasized teamwork as a prerequisite to enable him deliver on the mandate. He thanked his predecessor

He emphasized the spirit of unity and oneness of the mission and cautioned the new FC about the spoilers and prophets of doom. He equally commended the achievements of AMISOM, saying that the benchmarks of such achievements should not be looked at in terms of the land area that AMISOM controls, but rather in terms of "how



Commander of Land Forces for the UPDF Lt. General Katumba Wamala (seated 1st from right) talks to outgoing Force Commander Major General Francis Okello during the handover ceremony.



AMISOM HOLDS CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOP FOR SOMALI POLICE FORCE



Special Representative of the Chairperson of the AU Commission for Somalia Mr. Nicolas Bwakira (seated centre) poses for a group photograph with participants to a capacity building workshop for the Somali Police Force.

The African Union Mission for Somalia held a harmonization and coordination workshop on capacity building for the Somali Police Force from 13 to 14 August in Nairobi Kenya.

The two day workshop sort to harmonize all the training programmes given to the Somali Police Force by various countries and organization to avoid duplication.

According to Dr. Steven Kasiima Munanura, AMISOM Police Coordinator for Training, the intention is to understand and appreciate how training programmes for the Somali Police Force will be handled by various stakeholders.

"The main objective of this workshop is to identify linkages between AU,UNDP and other stakeholders regarding training programmes" said Dr. Kasiima.

He further said the workshop will also identify and discuss funding for the training programmes.

Participants to the workshop have been drawn from the Somali Police Force, African Union Mission for Somalia ,United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Department of Peace Keeping Operations and AU's Strategic Planning Management Unit.