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## PRESS RELEASE

*(For immediate release)*

### **The African Union Congratulates Somali People on New Constitution**

**Nairobi, 1 August 2012**-The Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia, Ambassador Boubacar Diarra has today congratulated the people of Somalia on the adoption of a provisional constitution, saying it was a major step forward on the road to national recovery.

An 825 member National Constituent Assembly, which has been sitting in Mogadishu for the last week, today approved the Provisional Constitution, which will replace the 8-year old Transitional Federal Charter and pave the way for the conclusion of the transition process on August 20.

“Today is the culmination of years of hard work by the Somali people with the support of the International community,” said Ambassador Diarra. “The adoption of a Provisional Constitution by a National Constituent Assembly, representative of the people of Somalia, will protect the gains made and provide a legal foundation for Somalia’s new institutions. In this regard I wish to emphasize that the future steps in the political process, the election of the Members of Parliament, the Speaker and his deputies and the President, should be conducted in a fair and credible manner.” he added.

He noted that much of the progress had been achieved in the last year following the ejection of the Al-Qaeda linked al Shabaab from Mogadishu by Somali forces with the support of troops from the African Union Mission in Somalia.

“The AMISOM mandate is to help secure the country so that all the Somali people have the chance to participate in an accountable, legitimate and transparent political process and have a say in their democratic future,” he said, noting that the newly-adopted provisional constitution would be subjected to a nationwide referendum as soon as the security situation on the ground allows.

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