



European Union and UNMAS clear Central Mogadishu of Unexploded Ordnance

MOGADISHU, 9 April 2014

Today, the Federal Government represented by Prime Minister Abdiweli together with the European Union (EU) and United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) declared Central Mogadishu free from all known unexploded ordnance.

In a ceremony attended by the Prime Minister of Somalia and senior officials from the European Union and United Nations, a map showing 13 cleared districts of the capital city was handed over from EU Special Envoy to Somalia, Michele Cervone d'Urso, to Prime Minister Abdiweli. Beginning 2010, the EU together with implementing partner UNMAS, systematically cleared Mogadishu of almost 1,000 items of unexploded ordnance which, over the course of twenty years of civil war, had littered the city, endangering the lives of its inhabitants.

"Through its stabilisation efforts, the EU has contributed to a sharp decline of all the known explosive remnants of war in Mogadishu. With this support, we have helped clear Mogadishu street by street, raised mine awareness of Mogadishu residents and children, and trained the police forces in order to make the fight against explosive remnants sustainable. There is no time for complacency. Clearing Southern Somalia remains a work in progress. We need to continue to clear in all areas affected by unexploded ordnance, to save lives and to make Mogadishu safe for a stable future. This is part and parcel of a comprehensive EU response to enhance the security space in Somalia ranging from capacity support to the Somali National Army, training of police and supporting civilian security and of course the EU's steadfast support to AMISOM – it is a joint effort that can make a difference" said EU Special Envoy, Michele Cervone d'Urso.

This partnership also saw the implementation of several other projects, ranging from Port Security, Police Training, and even the construction of street lights, aimed at bringing stability to Somalia. *"We are particularly proud that the Federal Government, EU and UNMAS trained the first ever Somali Police Explosive Ordnance Disposal teams,"* said David Bax, UNMAS Somalia Programme Manager. *"The job of clearing the country of explosives will fall into the hands of the Somali Security Services. This marks the first step in developing a sustainable national capacity to tackle one of Somalia's most pressing security challenges head-on"*.

UNMAS delivered messages on how to live and work safely in a country contaminated with explosives to over a quarter of a million people, and established a "dial 888" emergency response line for Somalis to report explosive hazards. Under the project, a further 2,500 landmines and unexploded bombs were cleared in Gedo and Hiran, each

