



Senior EU official Pedro Serrano visits Somalia

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Mr. Pedro Serrano, the EU Deputy Secretary General of the EU's External Action Service and in charge of the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy and Crisis Response led a high level EU delegation, including the EU's Managing Director for Africa, Koen Vervaeke, paying a working visit to Somalia on 27 June 2016 to assess EU work there and meet with Somalia officials and EU staff on the ground.

During his visit to Mogadishu and Baidoa Mr. Serrano held bilateral meetings with Somalia President H.E. Hassan Sheikh Mohamud and Foreign Affairs Minister Abdusalam H. Omer in Mogadishu, with international partners and with the regional and AMISOM leadership in Baidoa. The delegation also visited the Police Training Academy in Mogadishu and engaged with members of the EU Training Mission and the EU's Maritime Capacity Building Mission, EUCAP Nestor.

The EU is a key partner of Somalia, investing in the Somali people and a major donor in the security sector. During his stay Mr. Serrano discussed a comprehensive approach to the security sector as well as preparations for the upcoming elections.

Mr. Serrano reiterated the EU's support to Somalia and urged the leadership to use the forthcoming elections to demonstrate to the people of Somalia and to the world that Somalia stands firm in honouring its commitments to build a democratic and stable society. Security is paramount to allow for these efforts to be sustained and the EU, together with Somalia's international partners, will continue to invest in the stabilization of the country.

"I am happy to see efforts ongoing to rebuild the country and more importantly preparations to ensure elections take place in a few months' time. The world is watching Somalia at this critical juncture. As EU we will continue to work towards improving the lives of the people of Somalia. They have suffered for too long. I am confident that with our support to the ongoing state-and peacebuilding efforts, and with the commitment of the Somali leadership and its partners, Somalia will make real progress and lasting peace can be achieved," Mr. Serrano said.