

## AMISOM Commander visits Hiiraan, says Somali Army will be trained

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November 27, 2012 (ADDIS ABABA) - The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) force commander, Lt. General Andrew Gutti, on Sunday made a visit to Belet Weyne town, capital of the Hiiraan region to inspect the newly deployed Djibouti contingent.

The Force Commander commended the Djiboutian troops for the relentless efforts they exerted to assist the local population by providing humanitarian assistance in response to recent flooding.

"I salute you for doing a commendable job, especially during the floods, the invaluable humanitarian assistance you provided to ensure the safety of the population." General Gutti said.

Headquartered in Belet Weyne, the Djiboutian forces have recently taken over security from Ethiopian troops in the area.

Beyond restoring stability and protecting civilians, the Djibouti contingent has also been engaged in local reconciliation efforts as well as in regrouping and training various militias and integrating them into the Somali National Army.

Last week, Djibouti deployed more troops to the strife-torn Horn Africa nation to boost its contingent serving under the AU mission in Somalia.

The latest deployment has brought the total number of the Djiboutian troops and personnel already on the ground in Belet Weyne to over one thousand from 300.

The Force Commander affirmed to the representatives of the Somali Armed Forces that AMISOM will begin a capacity building program to the Somalia national security Forces.

Accordingly, as of January 2013, AMISOM will begin training Somali National Army units inside the country who will be recruited from all regions.

The capacity building program aims to build a militarily well skilled, self-dependent national force able to take responsibility for the security of the entire nation.

AMISOM's mandate in Somalia involves conducting combat operations to stabilize the situation in the country, extend support for humanitarian relief and the provision of medical care.

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