

PRESS STATEMENT BY CS OF THE DEFENCE AMB. RAYCHELL OMAMO ON 17TH JANUARY 2016.

First, may I on behalf of the Ministry of Defence, once again convey our deepest condolences, sympathy and unwavering support to the families, relatives and friends of KDF soldiers who have fallen or been injured in the brazen terrorist attack on the AMISOM base at Elade, in Gedo region of Jubaland, Somalia.

We also express our profound gratitude to all Kenyans who have rallied around the KDF. We thank you for your spontaneous support and encouragement, for your resolve, for your commitment to our soldiers, for your recognition and appreciation of their, courage, their efforts and sacrifices in the defence of our Nation, our freedoms, our constitution, our values and way of life. Thank you for uplifting the spirit the spirit of our soldiers. Thank you for standing with KDF.

We commend our soldiers for their resolve in the face of the existential threats arising from terrorist groups in Somalia and we condemn in the strongest possible terms and barbaric attack that occurred on Friday. The Kenya Defence Forces will continue, in concert with our allies, to face, tackle and fight the enemies of peace and freedom in our region. In this we will not relent.

The Ministry of Defence wishes to confirm the following:

- a. The attack was carried out by terrorists using vehicle borne improvised explosive devices (VBIED), commandeered by suicide bombers;
- b. The soldiers affected by the attack are a company size force;
- c. Search, rescue and recovery operations have been ongoing since the attack and will continue until all our soldiers have been recovered;
- d. The operation Area remains dangerous, volatile, and fluid and soldiers still remain at risk.
- e. Information regarding casualties and the fallen will be availed to affected families directly as rescue, recovery, verification and consolidation operations continue.

f. Support facilities for family members, relatives and friends of our fallen heroes have been established at KDF Barracks at Eldoret, Gilgil and Forces Memorial Hospital. Information and counselling services are being provided to them through this mechanism. We ask that you continue to hold up our soldiers and their families in prayer and to respect their privacy during this time of sorrow and uncertainty.

Finally, I wish to state that this attack will not rest unanswered. We have responded, we have engaged the perpetrators decisively and remain in full pursuit of them. This atrocious terrorist attack, though extremely painful to us as Nation, will not dampen the determination of our soldiers in the fight against terrorism. On the contrary the attack serves to strengthen their resolve in the face of terror and in the Defence of our nation. We are proud of our soldiers. Let us stand firm.

Thank you all and may God bless you.