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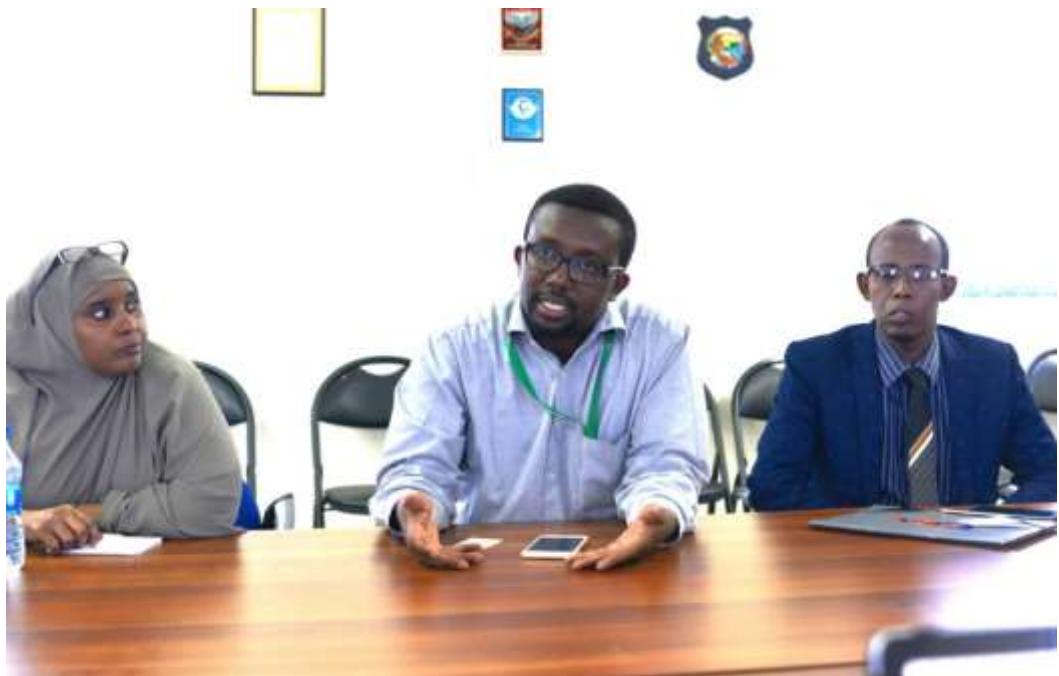
African Union Pre-election Assessment Team Meets with Trade Unions

13 July 2016



A delegation from the African Union on a pre-election assessment mission, ahead of the elections, scheduled for August and September 2016, met trade union leaders as part of their mission to meet different stakeholders. The AU delegation arrived in Mogadishu in order to gauge elections preparedness and identify areas for further support.

Trade union representatives, led by the General Secretary of the Federation of Somali Trade Unions (FESTU) Omar Faruk Osman held discussions with the AU mission and articulated the position of the trade union movement concerning the composition of Federal Indirect Elections Implementation Team (FIEIT), the role of independent civil society in the process, the timely organisation of indirect parliamentary elections in August and presidential elections in September.



The trade unions stressed the need for FIEIT to be apolitical, and not to be perceived to be siding with any particular political group, the need not to delay indirect elections in August and September and there is space for independent civil society groups in monitoring election process without any reprisal from any political force.

“With more than 14 thousand people going to participate in this elections process, we want to see the upcoming elections to be a process that promotes more direct citizen participation in governance, transfer or maintain political power in a peaceful manner, and confer legitimacy and the authority to govern for the incoming administration, said Osman.



FESTU and its leaders appealed to the African Union to ensure that human rights particularly the fundamental freedoms of expression, assembly and association without any intimidation by any group, and minimum democratic values are respected in the election process so that it will inspire confidence in the process, and labour unions further underlined the need for AU observer mission to be deployed as a trusted, impartial witness who speaks the truth.