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PRESS RELEASE

Statement by the IGAD Executive Secretary, H.E. Ambassador Mahboub Maalim, on the hearing of President Uhuru Kenyatta at the ICC, in The Hague.

08 October 2014, The Hague, The Netherlands: IGAD Executive Secretary, H.E. Ambassador Mahboub Maalim said: “My presence here with President Uhuru Kenyatta at The Hague is a show of solidarity by the Greater Horn of Africa and IGAD member states. We would all wish to convey our best wishes and support to President Kenyatta as he attends the hearing.

“But my presence here must not be misunderstood. There is no intent to interfere with or criticise the jurisdiction of the ICC, nor its remit to bring prosecutions where it sees fit.

“Indeed we commend President Kenyatta, currently Chairman of the East African Community and Rapporteur of IGAD, on his display of respect for the rule of law. He has been summoned to answer charges of which he is entirely innocent until proven guilty, and he has taken unprecedented steps within the Constitution of his country to attend.

“Instead, my presence here carries a single intent – to represent the need to preserve the collective strength of our region in our ongoing battle against radical insurgent terrorism in East Africa, a region that faces a clear and present threat to our security, in exactly the same way that has led to a coalition of forces currently bombing ISIL in Iraq.

“The world is fighting a terrible battle against radical insurgent terrorists intent on destroying our way of life. The Horn of Africa and East Africa is a critical theatre in that same war.

“With radical insurgents physically on the march in Syria, Iraq and Libya; with just twelve months since Al Shabaab killed 67 people in the Westgate Mall in Nairobi; with just one month since the interception and prevention of a major terrorist attack aimed at Kampala; and with just one day since a major Somali and AMISOM offensive in Southern Somalia drove

Al Shabaab from their final holdout; I am here to say that this is no time to weaken a country and weaken a region by removing its President for trial.

“We believe that this prosecution, should it be needed, must take place at the end of Uhuru Kenyatta’s Presidency. The evidence and witness statements can be taken and safely stowed away until then.

“But for now, we are in the midst of a critical battle to beat the Al Shabaab terrorists in Somalia and preserve the security of the region by preventing any further spread of this radical disease.

“The International Criminal Court must act now to postpone these proceedings in the best interests of this global battle and the immediate struggle for peace and security in our region of East Africa and The Greater Horn.”

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Note to Editors:

IGAD Executive Chairman, H.E. Ambassador Mahboub Maalim, is in The Hague today 08 October 2014 and available for interviews.

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The Intergovernmental Authority on Development is an eight country security, trade and development bloc in Eastern Africa comprising of Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, Djibouti and Eritrea and was established as it exists today in 1996.

IGAD aims to assist and complement the efforts of the Member States to: promote and maintain peace and security in the region; achieve food security and environmental protection; and achieve greater economic integration and cooperation.

IGAD is the principal supporter of the Federal Government of Somalia through the AMISOM peace and security initiative, and expanded its activities in 2008 with initiatives to improve the investment, trade and banking environments of member states.

IGAD succeeded the earlier Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD), founded in 1986 by Djibouti, Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan, Uganda and Kenya, following recurring and severe droughts and disasters between 1974 and 1984 that caused widespread famine, ecological degradation and economic hardship in the East Africa region.