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AUC HEAD OF SECURITY AND SAFETY SERVICES VISITED AU SAFGRAD OFFICE IN OUAGADOUGOU, BURKINA FASO

Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso - 19 October 2015. ***“It is the responsibility of African Union to protect its staff and their families wherever they work!”*** This was the unmistakable message passed by **Mr. Gebre-Egziabher Mebratu**, *AUC Head of Security and Safety Services*, who stayed in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso from 14 to 19 October 2015.



Mr. Gebre-Egziabher Mebratu, AUC Head of Security and Safety Services, posing with Dr Ahmed Elmekass, AU SAFGRAD Coordinator, and their collaborators.

The purpose of this visit that happened only few weeks after the failure of a military coup in the country was *“to assess the security and safety conditions on SAFGRAD and other AU offices located in Ouagadougou”*.

Mr. Gebre-Egziabher Mebratu, assisted by Mr. Kindi Yosef, Security Officer, held with Dr Ahmed ELMEKASS, AU SAFGRAD Coordinator, and his close collaborators, several work sessions before meeting with all the staff and visiting relevant Burkinabe high officials.

The AU SAFGRAD head of mission took the opportunity of these meetings to update his guests on the political situation of the country and the major security and safety risks on AU Offices and staff in Burkina Faso. He particularly recalled the main safety challenges faced by SAFGRAD Office and the staff during the traumatic moments of the military coup attempt last month. During the exchanges, Mr. Gebre-Egziabher raised many security and safety questions before providing general and precious advices and recommendations. *“Despite recent unhappy events, Burkina Faso remains peaceful country. Nevertheless, one has to be vigilant. Security and safety measures need to be increased when necessary”* he added while talking during a meeting with all the staff. He also confirmed that AUC is working on the increasing of the security and safety system for all its staff and entities regardless of their various locations.

During the mission, AUC Head of Security and Safety Services, paid visit to entities under AUC located in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, including NEPAD ABNE and CIEFFA.

The 5-day mission afforded the AUC Security Head the opportunity to consult with key government Officials. With Mrs Ganou Diaby Kassamba Madina, General Director of Regional Cooperation of Burkina Faso, and Mr. Lazare Tarpaga, Head of National Police Force, Mr. Gebre-Egziabher notably discussed successfully the means of increasing the security and safety of AU staff and entities in Burkina Faso.

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