

SRSG's Statement to the AU Peace and Security Commission:

Addis Ababa, 24 August 2010

Chairperson of the African Union Commission,

Commissioner for Peace and Security Council,

Your Excellencies the Ambassadors and Permanent Representatives,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I welcome this opportunity to brief the Peace and Security Council of the African Union. This is the first time since my recent appointment as Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General that I brief you on the current situation in the Somalia peace process and the role of the United Nations.

I would like to begin by paying tribute to all the partners for their untiring efforts in search of lasting peace and stability in Somalia. In the past few months, the level of coordination among the stakeholders has increased. This facilitates the delivery of assistance to the TFG. There is, however, still much to be done by way strengthening this coordination and partnership. I have been instructed by the SG to work closely and to strengthen the partnership with the AU and IGAD.

The security situation in Somalia, particularly in the south-central regions, remains precarious. The foreign-backed insurgents appear determined to dislodge the legally-constituted Transitional Federal Government (TFG) of Somalia and seize power by force. They are also destabilizing the peaceful regions of Somaliland and Puntland. The twin suicide bombings which occurred in Kampala on 11 July are ample indication that the enemies of peace are poised to destabilize the whole region. This must worry us all. It is abundantly clear that the situation in Somalia is a threat not only to the country, but also to the region and beyond. There are indications that the Al-Shabab is recruiting in the entire eastern Africa region.

The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) continues to play a crucial role in Mogadishu, where it safeguards vital installations. AMISOM is discharging its responsibilities under very difficult conditions, often with limited resources. I, therefore, call upon those partners with the necessary capabilities to increase their support to AMISOM. For its part, UNPOS will continue to advocate for an increase in the allowances of the AMISOM troops to the level of United Nations peacekeepers, as well as for the reimbursement of lethal weapons.

The increasingly proactive role which the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) is playing on Somalia has generated considerable momentum in the search for a solution to the crisis. The 15th Extra-Ordinary IGAD Summit held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 5 July

2010 alerted us all to the urgent need to deal with the deteriorating situation in Somalia. The adoption of the IGAD decisions by the African Union (AU) Summit held in Kampala, Uganda, on 25 and 26 July 2010 shows the determination and unity of purpose under which the regional stakeholders are operating. We support the decision taken by the AU Summit to increase the strength of AMISOM to its mandated capacity of 8,100 troops. We are working closely with our colleagues in the United Nations Support Office for AMISOM (UNSOA) to assist with the deployment of these additional troops. The AU also endorsed the IGAD proposal of additional deployment of up to 20,000 troops.

On the margins of the AU Summit in Kampala, the United States of America held a mini-Summit on Somalia on 26 July, which was attended by the Presidents of Uganda, Kenya, Djibouti, Tanzania and Somalia, as well as the Prime Minister of Ethiopia and the Chairperson of the AU Commission. It was facilitated by Assistant Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Johnnie Carson. The meeting discussed ways of supporting the proposals contained in the IGAD Communiqué and to fast track the implementation of support both to AMISOM and the TFG. In this context, the US has indicated its readiness to facilitate the deployment of the additional 2,000 troops and to work with the AU and IGAD to generate additional troops and lead in mobilizing needed equipment and financial resources.

Mister Chairman,

This meeting is being held at a critical juncture in the peace process. Only twelve months is left before the end of the transition period of the Government in August 2011. We, therefore, face tight timelines by which we must implement the transitional tasks.

Security remains a critical element of the transitional tasks. On 7 and 8 August, Prime Minister Omar Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke and I co-chaired a meeting of the Joint Security Committee in Nairobi, Kenya. Both the TFG and the development partners participated at a high level of representation. The meeting noted the critical security situation in Somalia and the urgent need to stabilize it. It discussed ways and means of improving the security situation and came up with concrete steps for developing the security sector. These include the early completion and adoption of the National Security Stabilization Plan and the Security Sector Assessment. The meeting also discussed and agreed to seriously look into the protection of civilians in the ongoing conflict in Somalia. As part of the follow-up of the Committee's meetings, a dedicated secretariat is to be established.

A meeting of the High-Level Political Committee, which discusses political issues, is being planned for early September. This is the forum at which we intend to discuss in concrete terms a political strategy for the remaining part of the transition period and after. The absence of a clear political strategy on the part of the TFG has created a vacuum which a military strategy alone cannot fill. In this regard, we plan to hold a high-level retreat which will bring together the TFG, AU Commission and IGAD at Ministerial level. The aim is to come up with a clear political strategy which would guide the peace process to August 2011 and immediately beyond it. It is important that any military strategy is part of a wider political roadmap.

I would also like to thank the Government of Spain for offering to host the next meeting of the International Contact Group (ICG) in Madrid on 27 and 28 September. The international community must take advantage of this meeting to coordinate their efforts which could help lead to a successful conclusion of the transitional period of the Transitional Federal Institutions (TFIs) in August 2011 and prepare the ground for the political dispensation which would succeed it.

The internal tensions which have beset the TFIs recently appear to have subsided. The TFIs can ill-afford such wrangling at this critical juncture, and I am working closely with the principals to help resolve their internal issues. The infighting contributed to the weakening of the TFG. It also distracted the Government from concentrating on the implementation of the transitional tasks. I, therefore, call upon the Somalia authorities to resolve any differences that might still be outstanding and harness their concerted efforts towards realizing the transitional agenda.

On 3 July, Prime Minister Sharmarke announced a 39-member cabinet, which includes five ministers from Ahlu Sunna wal Jama'a, a group with which the Government had signed a cooperation agreement in March 2010. The inclusion of Ahlu Sunna wal Jama'a in the cabinet is part of the implementation of the cooperation agreement. I welcome the assurances given by the TFG that the composition of the cabinet reflects its commitment to move forward with national reconciliation.

From 16 to 21 August, I held consultations with a number of leaders and partners in the region. I met with President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni of Uganda, President Jakaya Kikwete of Tanzania and Dr. Tekeda Alemu, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia. They re-affirmed their support to the Somalia peace process and acknowledged the need to take decisive measures towards addressing the threat posed by the insurgents.

I also met with the IGAD Facilitator for the Somalia National Reconciliation Process. I also attended one of the meetings of the TFG and Ahlu Sunna wal Jama'a in Addis Ababa, which showed the commitment of the two parties to move forward with the implementation of the cooperation agreement. The international community must render the support which the two parties need to effectively implement the agreement.

The United Nations remains seriously engaged in the Somalia peace process. The next progress report of the Secretary-General is due for release in early September, upon which I will visit New York for consultations with the Security Council. In addition, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Mr. Lynn B. Pascoe, plans to visit the region in early September for consultations.

Follow-up arrangements have been made for the Istanbul Conference on Somalia, held in May 2010, at which the international community and the TFG reiterated the commitment to improve the lives and security of the Somali people, foster reconciliation, increase access to basic services, initiate reconstruction activities and set Somalia on the path of sustainable peace and development. A meeting which UNPOS co-chaired on 8 June with the Islamic Development

Bank and Turkey established a Task Force to undertake activities in the areas of basic services, livelihoods, infrastructure and energy. Since then the Task Force has held a series of meetings.

The Humanitarian situation: The constitution-making process for Somalia is in progress. On 30 July, the Independent Federal Constitution Commission (IFCC) presented the Consultation Draft Constitution to President Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed. On 14 August the Draft was distributed to the wider TFG leadership, including the Members of Parliament, as well as the partners. Later this week, the Consultation Draft Constitution is due to be officially launched in Mogadishu, south-central Somalia, and in Garowe and Galkcayo, in Puntland. This will mark the beginning of a period of civic education and public consultations. The first Draft Constitution is due to be issued in December 2010.

Mister Chairman,

Upon the invitation of the TFG, a United Nations electoral Needs Assessment Mission visited the region from 26 July to 4 August. The Mission was dispatched to look into the possibility of holding a referendum and/or elections in Somalia, as stipulated in the Transitional Federal Charter. During the visit, the delegation held consultations with a cross-section of stakeholders in the peace process, including the development partners and civil society. The delegation also held in-depth discussions in Nairobi, at a two-day retreat, with the Speaker of the Transitional Federal Parliament, Somali Cabinet Ministers and other senior members of the TFG. During the retreat, the participants explored possible actions with alternatives and timelines, which could fit within the transition period. The delegation also travelled to Puntland for consultations with President Abdirahman Mohamed “Farole” and his senior officials. A report on the outcome of the Mission is being prepared.

We are stepping up our engagement with the autonomous regions of Somaliland and Puntland, which have a crucial role to play in the realization of a federal system of government for Somalia. I have been in touch with the leadership of the two regions by telephone, ahead of my visit in the near future. In addition, we have made plans to increase our presence in the two regions, whose deployments will follow shortly. We further plan to establish a light footprint in Mogadishu to enable us support the TFG on the ground.

Following the Presidential elections which Somaliland held on 26 June, Ahmed Mohamed Mohamoud “Silanyo” of the opposition party, “Peace, Unity and & Development” (KULMIYE), was declared winner. International observers concluded that the elections were free, fair and transparent. The President-elect was sworn-in office on 27 July, and has since appointed an 18-member cabinet composed which awaits Parliamentary endorsement.

In Puntland, targeted assassinations, clan clashes and the killing of officials continues. On 20 July, two policemen were shot dead and one was injured in Bossaso by unknown assailants. On 21 July, a member from the Puntland Intelligence Agency was killed in his home. Some of the incidents of insecurity have been blamed on the insurgents, who seem to be making efforts to establish a foothold in the region. Despite such incidents, the situation remains generally calm.

Mister Chairman,

Like many other fragile states in the world, Somalia needs all the goodwill and international support that it can muster. The TFG remains the only partner which the international community can work with to advance national reconciliation, peace and stability in Somalia. We have all seen how the international community has rallied behind the governments in Iraq and Afghanistan. Somalia is no exception; it requires similar massive interventions to emerge out of the present crisis and be able to deliver services to its people. The international community must rally decisively to confront those elements, both within and outside the country, which continue to support the enemies of peace in Somalia. IGAD and AMISOM have a central role to play in stabilizing the security situation in Somalia and, therefore, need urgent support from the partners in the region. In the final analysis, the people of Somalia bear the primary responsibility to bring last peace and stability to their country. We, in the international community, will continue to play our part to support their efforts. The planned increase of our presence in the country is part of the effort to support the TFIs on the ground.

Thank you.