

**Statement by Augustine P. Mahiga, Special Representative of the
Secretary-General for Somalia to the Security Council
New York, 11 May 2011**

Mr. President,

Let me, once again, thank the members of the Security Council for the support they continue to render to the peace process in Somalia. As members of the Council are aware, the current transitional period in Somalia is expected to end on 20 August 2011, in line with the Djibouti Agreement and the Transitional Federal Charter. The run-up to August 2011 has generated anxiety within the Transitional Federal Institutions (TFIs), confusion among the Somali public and some key stakeholders in the region on how to proceed towards ending the transition. Disagreement over the election issue between the TFIs is causing a political paralysis in Mogadishu. There is, therefore, a need to develop urgently a consensus on the when and how to hold elections and for defining the mandate of the next dispensation while seeking to diffuse the stalemate between the legislative and the executive branches of government.

On a positive note, the seven month-old government of Prime Minister Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed which came in with a high sounding Road-map. The roadmap emphasized good governance and began to put in place an administrative system for its implementation, but it still lacks the capacity for civilian institution-building and delivery of basic services. On the security front, forces of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and AMISOM have made significant territorial gains in Mogadishu. Allied militia forces are also making impressive gains in the central, western and southern frontiers. Political and civilian administrative structures need to be put place by the TFG in the newly liberated areas as the insurgents retreat and are increasingly getting weaker. There is an urgent need for building civilian institutional capacities and delivering basic services, including much needed humanitarian assistance in those areas.

On a not so encouraging note, the process of political outreach for inclusive dialogue and reconciliation by the TFIs has stalled since the signing of the Djibouti Agreement. Efforts by the international community and regional actors to facilitate dialogue have not been fully reciprocated by the TFIs. The High Level Committee provided for by the Djibouti Agreement to promote Somali-Somali dialogue has not met since December 2009, despite my constant call to the TFG for the Committee to be convened.

Agreements between the TFG and the regional entities have not been followed through and civil society groups, such as elders, women groups and the business community have not yet been actively included in the political process. Most regrettable, is the absence of communication and working relations between the Executive and Legislative branches of the Transitional Federal Institutions for the past several months. The President and the Speaker have not been working together since the beginning of February this year. At the same time, the unilateral extension of the Parliament for three years and the decision by the government to defer elections for one year has further polarized relations between the two institutions.

Mr. President,

It is against this background that on 12 to 13 April, in consultation with regional and international partners, I convened in Nairobi, a consultative meeting of stakeholders to encourage dialogue on the transition among the TFIs and to initiate a similar dialogue with the regional entities which have signed agreements with the TFG. The agenda was built around exchanging information on respective responsibilities on implementing transitional tasks between the TFIs, and on sharing experience and improving working relations between the TFIs on one hand and local administrations, on the other. The meeting was intended to initiate a process of consultative dialogue that would be followed by a more substantive meeting in Mogadishu.

Regrettably, and despite my relentless efforts to persuade the leadership of the TFG, neither the President nor the Prime Minister attended the meeting. They

ostensibly objected to the separate invitations extended to Parliament and regional administrations and the holding of the meeting in Nairobi, rather than in Mogadishu. The government complained against the meeting and a section of the Somali media attacked the initiative. I am heartened, however, that the TFG has since the Nairobi meeting decided to convene a meeting of various stakeholders in Mogadishu between 11 and 16 June 2011 to carry on the consultative process. I fully support this initiative of the TFG, and UNPOS will provide the necessary assistance. As this initiative goes on, the issue of elections of the President in July or deferral of the elections for one year has lingered on and has further polarized Parliament and the Executive. The polarization is unfortunately resonating in the Somali public and in the region as a whole.

Mr. President,

I have taken another round of initiatives to encourage the President, the Prime Minister and the Speaker to overcome the deadlock between the two institutions. Belatedly, the President is becoming more amenable to the need for dialogue, but the political will is still lacking. The President has promised to prepare a plan for political outreach, including visits and dialogue with the regional entities. That remains to be seen. I have just held meetings with the leaders of Djibouti and Ethiopia, attended the Peace and Security Council of the African Union and a tripartite meeting with AMISOM and IGAD on how to resolve the current situation in Somalia.

I have requested IGAD and the AU to help in resolving this issue. The Council of the Wise of the African Union will be meeting and take up the issue of Somalia on 12 May and IGAD is preparing to convene a Summit soon to discuss, among other issues, the ending of the transition in Somalia. I appeal to the Security Council to weigh on this issue. The single most divisive issue among the political groups in Mogadishu today is the timing of the elections as provided for by the Charter – and that issue is whether to hold this in July or to defer them to a future date.

Mr. President,

Regardless of the elections date that would be agreeable to all TFIs, UNPOS is preparing a Road-map which will suggest benchmarks for the next government for implementing priority transitional tasks which have not been implemented by the current and previous governments. I will work to ensure that both Parliament and the Executive are engaged as this process must be Somali owned. The road-map will contain suggested benchmarks, timelines and resource requirements. The most urgent issue is to help facilitate the two institutions to resolve their differences on the issue of the elections, and to get them to start to work together.

Mr. President,

Of late, the TFG, with the support of AMISOM, has made significant territorial and military gains against the insurgency. However, continued in-fighting among the leadership of the TFIs can negatively affect the progress which has so far been made on the ground. As most territories are captured by the TFG and the allied forces, it is critical that the TFG moves in partnership with local communities to establish effective administrations in those areas and begin to provide basic services as peace dividends. The United Nations and the international community as a whole, has a crucial role in assisting the TFG and regional administrations in establishing viable administrations in those liberated areas. UNPOS and the country team are stepping up access and presence in those areas.

The role of AMISOM in the stabilization of Somalia is crucial. The current strength of AMISOM is 9,000 with an additional 3000 expected soon from Burundi and Uganda to reach the total authorized strength by this Council to 12,000. I would like to commend Member States for their continued generous support to AMISOM, particularly those that have offered equipment and supplies for the additional troops mandated by resolution 1964. There is, however, still great need for the force enablers and specialized capabilities, in particular the need for helicopters become more evident and pressing during the February offensive.

As the Secretary-General points out in his report, AMISOM continues to suffer critical resource gaps that adversely impact on the Mission's effectiveness. As the offensive against insurgent groups continues and the transitional period draws to an end, it is important that AMISOM receives full support from Member States in order to enable it fully discharge its challenging mandate. In particular, support for self sustainment for troops is required, as well as in-kind contributions to close equipment gaps. Financial contributions without caveats to the Trust Fund in support of AMISOM would also be welcome.

Mr. President,

UNSOA continues to deliver a UN logistical support package to AMISOM comprising basic supplies and equipment, engineering and construction, medical services, aviation and transportation, strategic and tactical telecommunications capability, and so on. Importantly, this support will now include accommodation, offices and supplies for 13 AMISOM civilian personnel who are expected to deploy in Mogadishu this month.

The African Union is still of the view that the Security Council should take more robust action to prevent supplies reaching the insurgents. The port of Kismayo has increasingly become a commercial hub which provides vast revenues to the Al Shabaab with impunity. Action against violators of the UN arms embargo operating through Kismayo harbour and airport needs to be considered and taken by the Sanctions Committee of this Council. Several other fields in south central Somalia continue also to be used by violations of the arms embargo to re-supply Al-Shabab.

Mr. President,

Piracy in Somalia continues to threaten world maritime trade and undermine the economies of Eastern African countries. The work of the International naval coalition to protect shipping and deter pirates is commendable, but has not been successful to stop the menace. The real solution lies on land and in an overall political and security construct to restore peace, security and stability in Somalia. The recent UNSCR 1976 (2011) sets out a number of key deliverables and UNPOS is actively engaged with OLA to urgently prepare a report to the Council on establishing specialized courts to try pirate suspects as well as continuing to develop prosecution and prison capacity throughout the region, as recommended by the Lang Report. We are also taking forward the Council's directive to report on the issue of protecting natural resources, toxic waste dumping and illegal fishing. My office is urgently setting up a Piracy Unit as the UN's focal point to coordinate all of these activities and, more importantly, to actively engage the Somali authorities in addressing this problem through the "Kampala Process". We look forward to your continued support in our assigned tasks.

In conclusion, Mr. President, let me underline, as I have done before, that the humanitarian situation in Somalia is reaching catastrophic proportions. This is exacerbated by the unabated drought and the intensifying fight against the extremists who continue to block provision of critically needed humanitarian assistance to the areas under their control. As they retreat, they are leaving behind landmines and explosives which are slowing down humanitarian access. The UN Mine Action Service is working to facilitate safe access for humanitarian action. We need to provide more support to these efforts, while mobilizing additional resources for the much-needed humanitarian assistance to the people of Somalia. UNPOS is undertaking coordinated action to address the issue of the defectors from the Al Shabab rank which is increasing by the day.

Thank you.