

Opening Statement

By

**H.E. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni
President of the Republic of Uganda**

At the

**19th International Contact Group (ICG)
Meeting for Somalia**

June 2, 2011

***The UN Special Representative of the Secretary General
Amb. Mahiga;***

Excellencies;

Heads of Delegations;

Ladies and Gentlemen.

It gives me great pleasure to open the 19th International Contact Group meeting for Somalia in Kampala, Uganda. I wish to welcome all of you to this meeting in Kampala. Uganda is pleased and honoured to host this meeting.

It is important to note that Uganda, as a leading Troop Contributing Country (TCC), has a vital stake in the stabilization process of Somalia. The views of the TCCs should be taken into account when key decisions are being made with regards to the Somali Peace Process. The International Community in general and the Somali people should take

advantage of the gains being made by AMISOM to stabilize the situation.

I implore the Somali leaders to demonstrate selflessness and be cognizant of the sacrifice taken by the TCCs.

The recovery journey of the Somali people has already started and therefore all actions taken at the local, regional and international levels have to be in line with this recovery process.

With regard to the end of the transition period in Somalia in August 2011, Uganda recommends the following:

- Either the extension of all the Transitional Federal Institutions for one year to enable them complete their transitional tasks on the basis of the proposed benchmarks that include security, dialogue, consensus building on the transition and national reconciliation, constitution making, parliamentary reform, delivery of

basic services and formation of a commission for the implementation of the transitional tasks.

- Or prepare to hold the elections, but mindful of the likely acrimony during and after the elections pertaining to the establishment of an acceptable Government and the risk of having no partner to work with for a period of time. This will allow the extremists ample time to reorganize and reverse the operational gains so far obtained.
- Or allow all the Transitional Federal Institutions to expire, which will leave AMISOM with no alternative but to withdraw. The consequences are too dire to contemplate as we believe Somalia will degenerate into wide spread chaos and anarchy.

However, the win-win situation for all the parties would be the extension of the Transitional Federal Institutions for a period not exceeding one year to allow them complete their transitional tasks on the basis of benchmarks.

Uganda recommends the consideration of the Burundi model for the effective management of the Somali Peace process. This could involve the formation of a Committee composed of IGAD Member State, the Chair of the EAC and the appointment of a special Facilitator to push the process forward.

We need to engage the principal parties in the Transitional Federal Institutions to work together on how to end the transition amicably.

Regional and international players such as Kenya, Ethiopia, Burundi, USA, Italy and Britain should be consulted on the transition to garner the widest possible consensus on the transition.

The idea of benchmarks and establishing a monitoring mechanism is a good one and should be implemented.

The TFG, with the support of the international community, should be called upon to reach out to all other stakeholders by organizing a national consultative process to resolve the current impasse as soon as possible.

Uganda recommends that the international community should provide support for immediate and sustainable institutional building for the TFIs.

Let me address the current situation with regard to AMISOM operations in Somalia. While its operations are going on well, there is need to support AMISOM in the area of air and maritime support capabilities especially helicopters for transport and combat operations to enable easy mobility and reinforcement in the operational areas.

Our request for a no-fly- zone and a naval blockade remains outstanding and we call on the international committee to provide the necessary assistance.

There is therefore urgent need for provision of an additional level two field hospital facility and medical equipment and maintenance because of the mission expansion to meet the new demands.

We also request for the provision of Armored Personal Carriers (APCs) to help in troop mobility and protection and personnel protection kits, (body, armor, helmet) among the requirements. There is need to ensure ammunition re-supply to meet the operational demands taking cognizance of the fact that the force is engaged in a counter insurgency campaign.

The solution to piracy, in our view, lies in addressing the root causes which are on the main land. This involves strengthening the TFG and Security Sector Institutions to take full control over the entire Somalia territory as well as creating economic opportunities that can cater for the many unemployed youths. The vast amount of resources being spent at sea to fight piracy could therefore be more successfully and

effectively used to pacify the situation on main land Somalia where piracy derives its sustenance.

It is also essential that TCCs are timely compensated for use of their equipments through predictable and sustainable funding. Sustainability of TFG regional forces remains wanting yet they continue to do a commendable job in engaging extremist forces. There is need to provide them with sustainable logistical and financial support.

Finally, we call for the increased support for humanitarian assistance to the Somali people.

With these remarks, I now have the honour to declare this meeting open and I wish you fruitful deliberations.

I thank you.

2nd June 1, 2011 - Munyonyo