

OPENING REMARKS BY SRSG MAHIGA-19TH MEETING OF THE ICG-
KAMPALA, UGANDA, 2 TO 3 JUNE 2011

Your Excellency President Yoweri Museveni of the Republic of Uganda,

His Excellency Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, President of the Transitional Federal
Government of Somalia,

Honourable Kutesa, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uganda,

Excellencies and Heads of delegations,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure and an honor to welcome you to the 19th Meeting of the International Contact Group (ICG) on Somalia in Kampala, Uganda. On behalf of my Co-Chairs the United States and Norway and as well as all guests, I thank His Excellency President Museveni and his government for agreeing to have us at this excellent Munyonyo Commonwealth resort. We have chosen this time to come to Kampala to recognize and pay tribute to Uganda's immeasurable contribution to the Somali peace process – as a troop contributing country to AMISOM. It is a contribution paid in sweat, blood and lives of the sons and daughters of Uganda on the soil and streets of Mogadishu in Somalia. With similar respect and gratitude, I welcome for the first time President Nkurunziza of Burundi who will join us tomorrow and the Burundi delegation to this International Contact Group meeting, because Burundi is another troop contributing country together with Uganda, who are paying the ultimate price, on behalf of Africa to bring peace and stability in Somalia. Thank you for your commitment.

Excellencies,

I am particularly delighted that this ICG has been graced with the attendance of key stakeholders who are pivotal in energizing the Somali peace process. I should underscore the significance of the presence of His Excellency the President of the Transitional Federal Government, His Excellency President Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, and the Honorable Speaker of the Transitional Federal Parliament, Honorable Sheikh Hassan Sheikh Aden, the President of Puntland, His Excellency Abdirahman Mohamed Mohamud (Farole) and Representatives of the President of Galmudug. I also welcome and I appreciate their presence. This is a very powerful illustration of common purpose and a positive signal of unity and cooperation among them to the Somali people, which has not been seen for a long time. It symbolizes hope to them which has alluded them for twenty years.

We are meeting here today following our last gathering in Madrid, Spain in September, last year. It has been quite a while since we met. I have postponed convening this meeting several times waiting for positive political developments from Somalia, but they have not been forthcoming except for the encouraging developments in the security field which I shall elaborate on later. However, notwithstanding that, in the meantime we have remained seized of the political situation in Somalia. As time is running out towards the end of transition on 20th August 2011,

I have called this meeting to help break the political impasse and ask this ICG meeting to collectively urge the political leadership in Mogadishu to agree on how to end the current transition and commit themselves on the way forward. Members of the ICG will be well aware that in Madrid, we discussed and agreed on a number of issues to be addressed, especially in relation to the transitional political agenda. We exhorted the leadership of the TFIs to work in a cohesive manner with a team spirit. We have reiterated that completion of the transitional agenda – the key tasks in the Transitional Federal Charter as well as the implementation of the Djibouti Agreement - are what the TFIs should focus their attention as a matter of priority, and their intentions must be synchronized.

In Madrid we requested the TFG to develop a Roadmap within sixty days with prioritized transitional tasks and strategy for its implementation. The Roadmap was prepared within sixty days, congratulations, by the new government of Prime Minister Mohamed Ahmed Mohamed but it lacked a strategy and timelines for implementation.

On the governance side, a budget was prepared but remains without adequate transparency and accountability. Salaries are being paid to civil servants and a 100 days progress report by Ministers was prepared, but it was not programmatically followed through thereafter.

Political outreach, dialogue and inclusiveness has not been pursued vigorously. The High Level Committee- a vital political outreach mechanism provided for by the Djibouti Agreement has not met since December 2009 despite my constant urging. Consequently several political and social groups have not been brought into the political arena as envisaged by the Djibouti Agreement. Since the beginning of February this year, the controversy over extensions by both Parliament and the Executive have virtually paralyzed and frozen working relations between the two institutions. This follows a similar paralysis of last year from August to November over the choice of a new Prime Minister and his government. Near normal working relations were achieved only between November 2010 and end of January 2011. It was against this bleak political background and reality that the United Nations Security Council in its Presidential Statement of 11 May 2011 urged the TFIs “to focus on implementing reforms to build their legitimacy, representativeness and credibility and to reach agreement as soon as possible on the holding of elections of the position of the President and the Speaker of Parliament, without which there can be no extension”.

Excellencies,

The Security Council message was, within days heeded by the two Principals of the TFIs in Mogadishu. After months of virtually no official contacts, the Speaker and the President met four times to talk about timing of elections and sequencing of reforms in ending the transition. This happened before the entire Security Council came to Nairobi on 25 May this year to meet and talk with the leadership of the TFG, regional entities, parliament and civil society. The Council acknowledged the bold initiatives of the President and the Speaker to meet and talk, although it regretted that they did not come to any agreement. It also conveyed its deep dismay with the political paralysis in Mogadishu. The Council forcefully reiterated its message of 11

May and urged all parties to commit themselves to attend the proposed Mogadishu meeting to resolve the outstanding issues of election and reform.

The Council has asked me to convene and facilitate the Mogadishu meeting. It will be recalled that after the 12-13 April Nairobi Consultative meeting which the TFG did not attend, the TFG proposed a similar meeting in Mogadishu in mid June, which will be substantive and decision making in character. I welcomed the proposal and promised to support it because my intention from the very beginning was to follow up the Nairobi meeting with another one in Mogadishu. The Council wants this meeting to be inclusive of all key Somali stakeholders. We have agreed with TFG to form an inclusive preparatory Committee to include Parliament, regional entities and other relevant stakeholders including the African Union and IGAD. I want this meeting to be Somali owned. My role is to facilitate its convening. It should also be noted that we are building on what the TFG had on its own initiative started. The Council has asked me to report to it the outcome of the Mogadishu meeting by the end of this month.

Excellencies,

I sincerely hope that this meeting will provide a political breakthrough with an agreement on the new way forward. I am requesting this ICG meeting to lend its full support to the position of the Security Council and to use the rare joint presence of the President and the Speaker at this meeting to muster their political will to arrive at an understanding to make the Mogadishu meeting a landmark success in the Somali peace process. It can be an opportunity to strike a win-win compromise between the executive, Parliament and above all, the Somali people.

I have flagged to the Security Council and I also wish to propose to this meeting that in order to secure compliance from the future TFIs on implementing transitional tasks we, together with the TFIs should agree on a set of implementable benchmarks, timelines, a monitoring mechanism and mutual obligations in achieving the transitional tasks. Above all, I agree with the proposal that in addition to a coordination and monitoring mechanisms, we need a collective political undertaking in the region to ensure accountability of the TFIs to a regional political body which has successfully been tried in situations like that of Burundi. This approach has never been tried before in respect of Somalia and left the TFIs obligations to meet the transitional tasks open ended. Consequently, we have lost seven precious years of non-compliance without achieving transitional tasks spelled out in the Transitional Federal Charter and the Djibouti Agreement.

UNPOS in consultation with the Department of Political Affairs in New York, the African Union and IGAD is preparing a Roadmap with benchmarks, timelines and compliance requirements which we intend to be basis for discussion with the TFIs in the forthcoming meeting in Mogadishu. We shall continue to discuss extensively with partners on this Roadmap and seek to obtain consensus on its feasibility and application in the next political dispensation once agreement is reached to overcome the current political impasse. I invite members of the ICG to provide inputs to the draft which will be shared subsequently.

Excellencies,

I believe achievement is possible where there is political commitment. The TFG supported by AMISOM has proved that it can perform well with some assistance from the international community. The recent military gains in Mogadishu are testimony to that. Important strategic ground has been won from the Al-Shabaab. The gained territory must be held and the momentum sustained. The TFG forces trained by the European Union and other friendly governments in the region have just reached a total strength of 10,000 and there are 3,500 uniformed police in Mogadishu. As troops are paid with assistance from the United States and Italy, the TFG is supplementing their stipends. Morale is improving and desertions have significantly declined while defections from the insurgents are on the increase every day. However, the need to provide a structured command and control for the TFG soldiers still remains to be addressed adequately.

AMISOM troop strength has reached just over 9,000 with the recent deployment of 1,000 troops from Burundi following the recent successful military offensive. Another 3,000 remain to reach the UN authorized strength of 12,000 are ready to be deployed by Uganda and Burundi if the required equipment are timely made available from partners. I call for expeditious assistance in order to maintain the momentum on the ground as the insurgents' capability is now significantly degraded. In the central, western and north western sector, Ahlu Sunna wal Jamaa and other TFG allied forces are also gaining success and recapturing territory from the Al-Shabaab.

In accordance with Security Council resolution 1863, 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. However, AMISOM continues to suffer critical resource gaps that adversely impact on the Mission's effectiveness. As the offensive against insurgent groups continues to succeed, it is important that AMISOM and the TFG forces are adequate support from Member States in order to maintain the momentum against the international terrorism and regional instability. In particular, predictable funding for reimbursement of contingent-owned equipment, and support for self sustainment for troops.

UNSOA will hold a briefing at 6pm today in the Emerald conference room to highlight some of these critical gaps in more detail. I would encourage participants to attend this briefing.

Excellencies,

In recaptured territory, in Mogadishu and elsewhere, there is need to hold the ground, establish TFG political and administrative presence as well as provision of humanitarian assistance, basic social services and general rehabilitation. It is reported that de-mining is necessary in many areas to permit access and movements by humanitarian workers. The United Nations agencies funds and programmes have sent needs assessment teams for emergency response and long term rehabilitation work requirements.

According to the most recent country-wide needs assessment, 2.4 million people, one in three Somalis, are in need of humanitarian assistance. This is a 20 percent increase in the number of vulnerable compared to the second half of 2010. More than 55,000 people have been displaced due to the drought and the fighting since December 2010. As rain performance was not adequate in most of Southern Somalia, including the main maize producing regions, Somalia is expected to slide deeper into a crisis leading to an increase in the number of Somalis in need of assistance from the current 2.4 million. I do not have to emphasize that additional funding is required from donors to address increasing humanitarian needs in Somalia both from human-caused and natural disasters. I also urge all parties to the conflict to ensure that civilians are protected from being victims of this conflict.

Excellencies,

On 3 May 2011, the Somali Government presented its first Universal Periodic Review (UPR) report for consideration by the Human Rights Council (HRC), in Geneva, a major achievement in terms of the TFG's engagements with the international human rights mechanisms, particularly given the backdrop of ongoing armed conflict. The last time Somalia submitted a report to an international treaty body was in 1984. International support for this engagement was reflected in the high number of presentations by member states. 155 recommendations were made to the TFG, UN and the international community for follow-up. Following the appointment of a new TFG Minister for Women's Development, discussions have been underway with UNPOS, UNDP and other UN entities as well as donors as to how to strengthen and support the Ministry, including through capacity building for human rights institutions to promote an atmosphere and culture for respecting and enforcing human rights.

In conclusion, Excellencies, I want to thank all of you who have been able to come to this meeting. I look forward to an interactive and constructive interactive dialogue to advance the Somali peace process and usher in a new phase after August 2011.