

**Opening Remarks by SRSB Augustine Mahiga to the 20th Meeting
of the International Contact Group (ICG) for Somalia
Copenhagen, 29-30 September 2011**

Excellencies and Heads of Delegations,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure and an honor to welcome you to the 20th Meeting of the International Contact Group (ICG) on Somalia in Copenhagen. On behalf of my Co-Chairs the United States and Norway, as well as all guests, I thank the Government of Denmark for hosting this important event in Copenhagen.

This meeting of the ICG closely follows the Mogadishu Consultative Meeting in which the Somali stakeholders endorsed the Road Map and the Mini-Summit on Somalia last week in New York which endorsed the Road Map. We are meeting here to deliberate on the implementation strategy for the Road Map. Considerable work has already begun, but more is ahead of us in the coming eleven months. I look forward to working closely with you over the next day and a half to see how we, the international community, in partnership with the Somalis, can work together to implement the Road Map and steer Somalia towards lasting peace and stability.

This is a moment of opportunity in the Somali peace process, which must be seized upon, coming as it does when the security situation on the ground is improving. The humanitarian situation is depressing but has brought renewed international attention to Somalia as much as it has weakened the jihadists insurgents. This combination of opportunities and challenges must be met with creativity and resolve to energize the peace process in Somalia.

Thank you.