



## United Nations Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS)

For Immediate Release

### **SRSG warns against intimidation in the selection of the MPs**

Mogadishu, 31 July 2012 – Today is day 6 of the National Constituent Assembly and the anticipation and excitement of tomorrow's voting day is evident. The transition in Somalia is coming to an end. A new, more representative era that the people of Somalia have yearned for over two decades is about to start. The road has not been easy. Setting up the NCA was demanding in both resources and energy but the dedication and the commitment of the Somalis made it happen. Tomorrow their 825 representatives will vote on one of the most important documents, a document that will set the legal base for the next years, the Provisional Constitution.

In that respect, the Elders have done an exemplary work on nominating the 825 members of the NCA as well as finalizing their own list of 135 through their Arbitration Board. The self-assessment exercise has finished and the list was submitted to the Technical Selection Committee. Although some contesting issues still remain I congratulate the Elders on the completion of this important task that moves forward the process. Through their good work, the Elders have proven their reputation as the custodians of the Somali nationhood and demonstrated their respect for a fair and legitimate process.

Now we enter a difficult period. The new Federal Parliament will be the real basis of good governance that we are all looking forward to. It also represents a test of integrity for the Elders, who must nominate the representatives that will work for the interest of the people of Somalia. A lot of good faith and trust has been put on the Elders by the Somalis.

As I have stated before, being a Member of Parliament (MP) and a leader is a vocation, a calling, and a service. Not a career. I trust that those aspiring to be the new MPs will truly abide by these principles.

There have been disturbing reports of undue influence from aspiring politicians in current and former positions. This influence takes many forms including exchange and demands for favors, bribery and intimidation. We should not allow Parliamentary seats to become commodities for sale or items for auction to the highest bidders at a time when we are seeking to reclaim the true stature of a dignified and respected Somali nation.



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Leadership must be earned from the trust of the people and the appropriate competencies and qualifications.

Regrettably, this is more evident with women candidates, who are often more vulnerable and have less resources making them easier to exclude and exploit. The people who are using intimidation and extortion tactics are known. I strongly call on them to stop this practice and respect the rights of women to participate in the political process.

It's inconceivable for the Parliament to begin its new task on such a wrong footing. The people responsible for this kind of undue influence or intimidation tactics will be categorized as spoilers.

Such actions amount to obstruction of the peace process.

The intimidation is extended to the Technical Selection Committee, which has demonstrated its integrity and stands ready to reject the names of people who have a history of violence and obstruction or do not meet the criteria established by the Garowe and Galkayo principles.

We have only one week ahead to complete the list and form the New Federal Parliament.

The nomination of the MPs is a test, not only to the Elders, but also to all the old and new aspirants who wish to give Somalia a new face. The Somali people and the international community expect that the new Parliament will be the basis for a good government not otherwise.

The Somali people are watching you. The whole world is also watching you. In this era of modern technology there is no place to hide or cheat. The subtle methods used so far are already exposed to the eyes and ears of the public. The honorable thing to do is to retreat and to enable the transition to end peacefully without fear or favor. This will be the best qualification for a leader in the next dispensation after August.