



United Nations Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS)

For Immediate Release

PRESS RELEASE 014/2011

SRSB welcomes news of Al-Shabaab vacating Mogadishu

Nairobi, 06 August 2011 – The Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Dr. Augustine Mahiga, has welcomed the news that Al-Shabaab insurgent elements have begun to leave Mogadishu and have already vacated key strategic points throughout the city, including Baakara Market.

“I am very pleased to learn of the progress made over the last several days on the security situation in Mogadishu. There is no doubt that the departure of Al-Shabaab would be a positive development and a step in the right direction for a city that has seen so much misery and devastation.” Dr. Mahiga said, “But as we look forward, it is important that we acknowledge that real security risks, including from terrorist attacks, remain and must not be underestimated.”

Tens of thousands of Somalis have perished as a result of the crisis, almost half of whom are under five years of age. “The immediate priority must now be to focus on the humanitarian situation and I call on all parties, from the donor community to all parts of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG), to do everything possible to ensure and facilitate the immediate delivery of assistance to those most in need.” Dr. Mahiga stated.

The SRSB also called on the TFG to use this opportunity to guarantee the security of its population and do everything in its power to assist and protect the civilian population.

Dr. Mahiga reminded all armed groups of the appeal of the Security Council, expressed in the Presidential Statement of 11 May 2011, to lay down their arms and join the peace process, which is ultimately the key to long term stability in Somalia.