



United Nations Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS)

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SRSG on International Human Rights Day calls upon the TFG to put human rights at the forefront of its agenda

Nairobi, 10 December 2010 – Speaking on International Human Rights Day, which marks the anniversary of the adoption, on 10 December 1948, of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Somalia Ambassador Augustine P. Mahiga, today called on the Transitional Federal Government to put Human Rights at the forefront of their agenda as the end of the transition process approaches in August 2011.

He called on the new Government to ensure that the principles of this time-honoured Declaration are integrated into the nation's road map to the end of the transition.

“The lives of too many Somalis have been irrevocably changed or lost due to the ongoing crisis in Somalia because the principles of the Declaration of Human Rights have been blatantly ignored. Without consideration for Human Rights, peace and stability are not sustainable and the suffering of many more Somalis will continue.

“As the transitional Government now focuses on accomplishing the priority tasks, the cardinal one being to draft a new constitution as the foundation for a return to peace and stability, integrating Human Rights should be at the core of the political, legal, judicial and social actions.

“As I noted in my speech to the Stand-Alone Interactive Dialogue on Somalia in Geneva last September, it is not enough to train police, military, and judicial bodies in human rights; it must be exemplified in the leaders of these institutions, in the policies enacted and in their own performance.

“The Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council on the 01 October 2010, urges the Somali authorities, with the cooperation of the UNPOS, OHCHR and UN agencies and relevant programmes, to set up ‘a sustainable road map with benchmarks... to lead Somalia to the path of lasting peace, conducive to the effective promotion and protection of human rights.’



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“I know that Somalia has some very brave Human Rights Defenders. Today, I wish to acknowledge their devotion and their courage as they challenge those that threaten the most vulnerable or pass sentences of condemnation without due process. Some have paid a heavy price including threats, torture, imprisonment and, even death. Human Rights Defenders should be revered and protected for their contribution to society and they should play a key role in developing the nation’s road map.

“As we look ahead to 2011, let us work together to overcome the obstacles to restoring peace and stability. Let us be guided, in each and every step by the most humane of principles, those enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.”