

Statement of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on the New Federal Parliament (NFP)

Mogadishu, 20 August 2012 – The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia, Dr. Augustine P. Mahiga, offers his warmest congratulations on the remarkable occasion of the inauguration of the new Somali Federal Parliament. He pays tribute to the hard work and dedication of the Traditional Elders for identifying the candidates, the Technical Selection Committee (TSC) for diligently vetting the candidates and to all the Somali people at this moment of hope, optimism and progress. The SRSG also commends the work of the international observers to the TSC for their determination and diligence in assisting the Committee in carrying out its functions.

Some 215 of the total number of 275 Members of Parliament were sworn in, comfortably passing the benchmark of 185 which allows for the New Federal Parliament to convene with a functioning majority. The inauguration ceremony, held at the Mogadishu International Airport, was attended by the President, the Prime Minister and the current Speaker of Parliament. Mr. Mussa Hassan Abdulle, a former army general was appointed interim Speaker of the NFP.

“This historic moment marks the long-awaited end of the transitional period in Somalia. The new MPs, selected after broad-based, grass roots consultations and representing all of Somalia’s clans, have been successfully screened against objective criteria and are now ready to start their important work,” SRSG Mahiga stated.

Careful selection resulted in high number of university graduates, relevant professional experience and a significant number of women although, the agreed upon quota of 30% was not reached.

“Today’s events are the culmination of over 12 months of arduous and contentious political negotiations and mark the beginning of the last phase of the transition which will be completed in the coming days with the appointment of a Speaker, Deputy Speaker and a President.”

The SRSG also takes the opportunity to thank the international partners, including the US, the UK, the EU, Italy and Norway, who visited Mogadishu yesterday to express their solidarity and support at this pivotal moment in the Somali peace process. He recognizes and appreciates the attendance of the Mogadishu-based diplomatic community, mostly from the region, who also participated in the meeting.

“Somalia has suffered through two decades of brutal civil war. Today’s swearing in of a new, more qualified legislature marks a turning point for the nation. The Somali people have met the key 20 August deadline of the Roadmap on ending the transitional period and showed their courage and determination in moving forward on the road to peace and stability,” SRSG Mahiga said.