



UNPOS Quarterly

Advancing Peace & Reconciliation for Somali People

Issue 3, October 2011



Roadmap Adopted

Consultative Meeting on Ending
the Transition

New Somali Cabinet Revealed

Mobile Phones in Somaliland

From the Desk of the SRSG

Welcome to the third edition of the UNPOS Quarterly. This is a remarkable moment for Somalia. On the positive side, over the past few months we have seen the withdrawal of the extremists group Al-Shabaab from most of Mogadishu and the adoption of a Roadmap on ending the Transition during a landmark meeting in Mogadishu. Tragically however the devastating drought and famine continue, creating enormous challenges for the humanitarian agencies.

Currently hundreds of thousands of people are facing famine conditions in Somalia. Thousands have died, many more are at risk. The numbers are staggering. Six districts in the country have been declared famine zones. The UN continues to carry out its relief efforts wherever possible and other organizations are also stepping up. Here, I must also acknowledge the initiative of the African Union which held a pledging conference on 25 August, raising \$ 350 million. Still, much more is needed. Getting these funds now is important, but money can not solve the problem alone. I call on those who are hindering efforts to provide help to these famine-stricken areas, to lay down their arms, open their hearts to their suffering compatriots and allow humanitarian assistance free and unfettered access to these crisis areas.

We must also work together, not only to solve this current humanitarian crisis, but to ensure that this does not happen again. One of the best ways to do this is to ensure that peace and stability return to Somalia and there is a stable, representative Government.

We have taken some important steps towards this end. In early September a high level Consultative Meeting on Ending the Transition was held in Mogadishu.

This would have been unthinkable just a few months earlier—Mogadishu would have simply been too dangerous. However more than one hundred participants, including stakeholders from the international community as well as members of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG), the Transitional Federal Parliament, Puntland, Galmudug and Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a gathered for the meeting which included an opening session in the Parliament building in the heart of the capital city.

The meeting adopted the Roadmap which spells out the key tasks that the TFG must complete within the next 12 months including the finalization and adoption of the draft Constitution; Parliamentary reforms and elections; promotion of good governance and accountability; improved security in Mogadishu and other areas in southern Somalia and national reconciliation and outreach. The Roadmap has specific deadlines and various mechanisms to monitor its implementation including high-level political oversight. The adoption of the Roadmap marks the beginning of the implementation phase of the peace process. Most significantly, the adoption of the Roadmap demonstrates that the Somalis have taken ownership of the peace process, agreeing on what the priority tasks are and committing to accomplishing them within a set time frame.

Much of this political progress has only been possible because of the extraordinary work on the security front. The TFG, supported by its allies and the courageous African Union Peacekeepers, has been able to take control of most of Mogadishu. This has helped to restore some stability although the extremists will continue to pose a threat. It should also allow ordinary Somalis to try to lead a semblance of a normal life in the city.



At UNPOS, we are in the process of expanding our presence inside Somalia, with more of our staff being deployed to Mogadishu, Garowe, and Hargeisa to ensure that we interact more effectively and efficiently with our Somali counterparts. There will be further follow-up consultative meetings so that all those willing to work to promote peace and reconciliation, including, in particular, civil society, will have the opportunity to participate in the dialogue. The international community is firmly committed to backing the peace process, with plans for resource mobilisation underway, but it is understood on all sides that support and involvement will be contingent upon implementation of the Roadmap's priority tasks.

I believe this is truly a golden opportunity for real progress. There is plenty of work ahead of all of us, no doubt, but there has never been a better opportunity to capitalize on our hard won gains. If we are united and stay the course, it is my hope that we can bring about further stabilization of Somalia, alleviate the suffering of the hundreds of thousands Somalis currently in dire need and begin to see the sustainable change so urgently needed in Somalia.

Dr. Augustine P. Mahiga
Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Somalia
October 2011

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UN Security Council discusses Somalia



SRSG at the Security Council in New York
UN Photo/Eskinder Debebe

The UN Security Council held its regular meeting on Somalia in New York on **14 September** following the Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia issued on 30 August which provided an update of the Somali Peace Process over the past four months.

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Dr. Augustine P. Mahiga, briefed the Council on the political situation in Somalia and highlighted the humanitarian crisis. He noted that although aid was now coming in, the Security Council and the international community needed to facilitate life-saving assistance in the famine-stricken areas and to address the whole challenge of drought in the Horn of Africa.

Dr. Mahiga stressed the positive achievements made on the political and security fronts including the Consultative Meeting on Ending the Transition which took place in Mogadishu from 4 to 6 September and the retreat of Al-Shabaab from much of Mogadishu. He appealed to the Security Council to send an unequivocal message of encouragement to the Somali leadership while simultaneously putting them on notice that “there can be no return to political bickering.” He cautioned that there would be “no more extensions” and encouraged all stakeholders to work together to end the transitional period by August 2012.

The Prime Minister of the Transitional Federal Government, Dr. Abdiweli Mohamed Ali, also briefed the Council asserting that his Government was committed to implementing the Roadmap and delivering the

priority tasks of security, constitutional reform, reconciliation and good governance by 20 August 2012. He however noted that many challenges lay ahead and appealed for international support in delivering the humanitarian relief and security that are vital components of stabilizing Somalia.

In his address, the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia, Boubacar Gaousou Diarra, reiterated the appreciation of the African Union to the Security Council for their support and efforts in reversing insecurity and instability in Somalia. He called on the Council to impose a maritime blockade on Kismayo, a no-fly zone over Somalia’s air space and to deploy a UN peacekeeping operation in the country as requested by the Peace and Security Council of the African Union last year.

Member states welcomed the adoption of the Roadmap to end the transition but expressed deep concern over the continuing humanitarian crisis. Members pledged to support the Transitional Federal Institutions as they strived to implement the Roadmap but stressed the need for accountability from leaders.

Somali children are the main victims of the drought and famine

The ongoing drought and famine in Somalia has killed tens of thousands of people, half of them children. Despite the efforts of the international community, there is no end in sight to the suffering. A recent survey confirms that four million people are in crisis nationwide – double the number at the start of the year. Some 750,000 people are at risk of death from famine in the next few months. By the end of September southern Somalia had six famine areas – Southern Bakool, Bay, Lower Shabelle, Middle Shabelle, the Afgooye corridor internally displaced persons’ (IDP) settlement and the Mogadishu IDP community. Those who can have been leaving the worst hit areas, with more than a thousand Somalis arriving in the world’s larg-

est refugee camp, Dadaab, and a further 250 at the Dollo Ado complex of camps in Ethiopia each day. Over a hundred thousand have flooded into Mogadishu putting a severe strain on the already limited resources in the capital city.

Children have been particularly hard hit. In the last two months, there was a 15 per cent increase in the number of child malnutrition cases from 390,000 to 450,000, the majority of which are in the south.

Some aid is getting through – in the first three weeks of September, humanitarian agencies say that food aid reached about 1.85 million people in crisis – almost half of those in need. There are continued limitations to access and it appears likely food prices will continue rising. The famine could spread to other regions by the end of the year.

The UN has warned that the onset of the rains could lead to the spread of cholera, measles and malaria resulting in more deaths in a population which is already weak from the effects of the famine. Again, it is the children who suffer most. Thousands of young boys and girls are getting sick and hundreds of them are dying of simple illnesses such as measles, malaria, pneumonia and diarrhea.

Since July, more than 20,000 malaria cases have been reported, mainly in southern Somalia leading to more than 50 deaths, most of them children. Pieter Desloovere, the World Health Organization (WHO) spokesman for Somalia explained: “The death rates amongst children are rising alarmingly. The bodies of malnourished children and their immune system are just too weak to fight against any disease.”

The humanitarian community is stepping up efforts to save lives. Since early July, more than 960,000 children have been vaccinated against measles. However health facilities are severely overcrowded. Banadir Hospital, in Mogadishu, admits hundreds of sick children every day. Dawn Blalock, from the Office for the Coordina-

tion of Humanitarian Affairs who visited one clinic in the capital, said health workers there were overstretched. "Almost all children admitted in the last few weeks suffer from measles. It is heartbreaking to see that children die of diseases that are so easily preventable and curable."

The humanitarian community is working against the clock to assist those most in need. The revised Somalia Consolidated Appeal requirements increased from US\$561 million to US\$1.06 billion. A significant amount has been received, much from new and non-traditional donors. The UN's Resident Coordinator, Mark Bowden, has warned that the next few months are critical. "This is not a short-term crisis," he said. "We still need funds to continue to scale up our work and sustain the desperately needed support to the Somali people."

UNPOS implements transparent and accountable payment exercise for Somali Police Force



Representatives from UNPOS, UNDP and AMISOM monitor the verification exercise of police stipends

Owing in part to a \$10 million package provided by the Government of Japan, UNPOS, in partnership with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), succeeded in implementing the payment of stipends to the Somali Police force. Working through UNDP, UNPOS began dispersing funds on 29 July to 300 police a day. To date, over 1,120 police officers have received stipends for the last six months.

"I am pleased that the stipend payments were able to meet the needs of the police officers during the month of Ramadan and to support the morale and discipline within the Somali Police Force," said Jonathan Sandy, co-chair of the Police Technical Working Group and Chief of Security Sector Development (SSDO) at UNPOS.

To facilitate the process, the Joint Security Committee Police Technical Working Group established a subcommittee for monitoring, oversight and verification of the payments. The subcommittee, named International Verification Team, is composed of representatives of AMISOM, the European Union, UNDP and UNPOS. Daily situation reports ensure that payments to the Somali Police are dispersed in a transparent and accountable manner.

"My counterpart, Somali Police Commissioner General Sharif Shekuna Maye, is extremely pleased that his men are receiving their stipends. We hope that the international community will continue to support our efforts in strengthening the Somali Police Force," Mr. Sandy said.

Emerging administration representatives meet



DSRSG Christian Manahl

Since late August 2011, the leadership of UNPOS has held a series of meetings with representatives of administrations which are emerging in South and Central Somalia. UNPOS is urging the representatives to discuss with the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) arrangements by which the former could go about establishing regional entities that are officially recognized by the Government.

On 26 August, Deputy Special Representative for Somalia, Christian Manahl, chaired a meeting with 40 representatives from a number of emerging regional administrations, social and political groups from South and Central Somalia. At the meeting, the first of its kind, Mr. Manahl urged the groups to work together with the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) to stabilize their regions, fight extremism and alleviate the effects of the drought in Somalia, noting that, "in politics there is a time for cooperation and a time for competition," and now was a time for the former. Particularly in view of the increased stabilization in Mogadishu, Mr. Manahl said that concerted efforts by the TFG and AMISOM would require allies on the ground to meet the challenges ahead.

The participants welcomed the initiative which, the DSRSG stated, provided a much needed forum to discuss issues of common concern. Given the positive response, it was agreed to convene further meetings and Mr. Manahl pressed the participants to encourage other relevant stakeholders to join the dialogue.

Following the 26 August meeting, the DSRSG convened another meeting on 8 September 2011, which the Somali Ministers of National Security and Reconciliation and Constitutional Affairs attended. During the meeting, UNPOS and the international partners stepped back to allow the Somali participants to discuss among themselves. One of the outcomes of the meeting was a commitment by the TFG to convene a follow-up meeting in Mogadishu.

In carrying forward this dialogue, DSRSG Manahl facilitated a meeting in Nairobi, on 8 October, between representatives of the emerging administrations and the TFG Minister of Constitutional and Reconciliation Affairs. The all-Somali dialogue focused on issues surrounding steps to be taken in the formation of regional administrations, following which they agreed to continue the discussions.

Women activists attend UNPOS-sponsored meeting in Nairobi



Women activists during the gender training

Empowering women who are largely excluded from negotiations and other key political processes was the aim behind a UNPOS-sponsored training workshop that took place in Nairobi. Thirty-six women's rights activists, representing umbrella organizations from all regions in Somalia, participated in the three-day workshop held from 13 to 15 July at the UN Gigiri Complex. Trainers with expertise in the

area of women, peace and security were drawn from UN Women and UNPOS. The training explored such topics as managing, addressing and resolving conflict, mediation, strengthening relationships with stakeholders, leadership and advocacy skills. The course also introduced the participants to innovative strategies to overcome obstacles particularly for women involved in peace and security.

UN agencies working together to combat piracy



French soldiers arresting suspected Somali pirates in the Gulf of Aden. Photo: French Ministry of Defence

Incidents of piracy off the coast of Somalia have steadily increased since entering the global consciousness in 2008, growing into a major trans-national issue, both for security and economic reasons. In the last two years, piracy has spread across the Indian Ocean, as far east as India and stretching as far south as Mozambique and South Africa. The piracy business model has developed into a major criminal enterprise and is showing growing links to insurgents groups. However, due to the ongoing security concerns within Somalia, it has been difficult for UN staff and other organizations to work within the country to address the root causes of piracy.

Under UN Security Council Resolution 1976, UNPOS was given the role as the UN's Focal Point for Counter Piracy in Somalia. UNPOS is leading the effort to es-

tablish a new UN Joint Piracy Unit, which will soon bring on board piracy officers from other organizations such as the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the International Maritime Organization, with others to follow. The new unit will create greater unity and flexibility within the UN, allowing for a swifter and more effective response to piracy-related issues in Somalia.

The Joint Piracy Unit will coordinate the piracy-related efforts of the Transitional Federal Government and Somali regional administrations and across the UN as a whole to maximize the impact of ongoing and future programmes. This includes efforts to improve the capacity of the Somali national criminal justice sector which would allow pirates to be given a fair trial inside the country and see more pirates serving prison terms inside So-

malia. It would also facilitate improvement of pirate-related legal structures and assistance in developing functioning Somali law enforcement entities, including a Coast Guard. Other programmes will include coordination of international military activity; strengthening of the fisheries and environmental management regimes to address Somali concerns regarding illegal fishing and toxic waste, programmes to increase economic opportunities especially regarding employment within the country and public outreach campaigns. With growing levels of violence against the crews held hostage (currently 18 ships and 375 hostages) the Piracy Unit is also involved in raising human rights concerns.

The Joint Piracy Unit programmes will continue to be vetted and funded through an International Trust Fund and bilateral donations. The Trust Fund has proven to be an innovative way to allow donor countries to pool money for piracy-related efforts, and has given UN entities a common source from which to request funding. The fund also provides a truly international response to piracy, as UN and donor country representatives evaluate and approve Trust Fund bids, jointly deciding how best to proceed. The Joint Piracy Unit aims to mirror this level of innovation and cooperation with the UN system to better serve the international community in the fight against piracy off the coast of Somalia.

Consultative meeting on ending the Transition charts a new course forward



Prime Minister of Somalia (far right), President of TFG (second from right), Speaker of the National Assembly (second from left) and the SRSG (extreme left) during the Consultative Meeting in Mogadishu, September 2011

For the first time in years, a major Conference was held in Mogadishu from 4 – 6 September. This important meeting, the Consultative Meeting on ending the Transition, brought together key players in Somalia to discuss the way forward over the next 11 months and resulted in the adoption of a Roadmap on ending the transition period.

According to the Transitional Federal Charter and the Djibouti Agreement, the Transition should have ended in August 2011. However most of the tasks set out had not been completed. By signing the Kampala Accord in June, the President and Speaker of parliament committed to “work together with the international community to establish a Roadmap with benchmarks, timelines and compliance mechanisms for the implementation of the priority tasks”. The resulting Consultative Meeting articulated what tasks must be accomplished over the next 11 months to end the transition and out-

lines a series of implementational mechanisms. Those attending the Meeting included President Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, Speaker Sharif Hassan Sheikh Aden, Prime Minister Dr. Abdiweli Mohamed Ali, President Abdirahman Mohamed Mohamud of Puntland, President Mohamed Ahmed Alin of Galmudug and their respective delegations, three separate groups from Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama’a and a large number of international partners including representatives of the African Union, AMISOM, European Union, IGAD and the League of Arab States. The Meeting was characterized by a willingness from all sides to work together and come to an agreement.

The partially-refurbished Parliament building in Mogadishu was used for the opening ceremony on the first day – an event impossible just a few months ago when Al-Shabaab controlled much of the city. Days two and three of the conference took place within a specially-constructed building near the airport terminal with

an overspill room with video link up for those who could not squeeze into the main conference room. The proceedings were covered extensively by the Somali and international media.

The Meeting concluded with the adoption of a Roadmap, which sets out a number of key tasks for implementation before 20 August 2012 under four broad headings: Security; Constitutional Reform and Elections; Outreach and Reconciliation; and Good Governance. Specific tasks include the approval of the National Security and Stabilisation Plan, measures to prevent piracy, adoption of a new constitution, reform of Parliament, holding of elections, preparation of a National Reconciliation Plan, improved financial transparency and the establishment of an Anti-Corruption Commission. In addition, there was a special session on how to address the ongoing humanitarian crisis. Participants agreed that within fourteen days a Technical Committee would be formed to oversee the Roadmap.

The meeting was organized by a Preparatory Committee comprising representatives of the TFG, Transitional Federal Parliament (TFP) and the regional governments of Puntland and Galmudug which met several times in Nairobi and in Mogadishu. It has also agreed that a second Consultative Meeting with a majority of members from civil society will be held.

The first Consultative Meeting has given fresh impetus to the peace process. There is a new sense of momentum, and optimism. SRSG Mahiga said: “This offers a real opportunity to end the Transition in a responsible and productive manner. It is different from previous efforts because this time there is a broad-based consensus and political commitments. The path ahead is clear.” ➔

Students to benefit from Government Scholarships

The Somali Government showed its intention to invest in its youth and dispel any suggestion of corruption by presiding over an examination to short list candidates for Government sponsored scholarships.

The exercise, the first of its kind to be held outside Somalia, attracted close to 1,000 high school graduates in Somalia, Kenya and Ethiopia. Efforts to hold one in Yemen proved futile owing to security concerns.

Tragically several Somali students who were hoping to benefit from a Turkish scholarship program were among those killed in the suicide bombing on 4 October in Mogadishu as they waited at the Ministry of Education Headquarters.

In Kenya, over 324 students based in Dadaab and Kakuma refugee camps and Nairobi took part in the exam at the former Somali Embassy in Nairobi on 14 June. After the exam, there was a ceremony attended by several dignitaries including the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Somalia (SRSG), Dr. Augustine P. Mahiga.

Dr. Mahiga praised the former Minister of Higher Education, Hon. Abdinur Sheikh Mohamed, for organizing the scholarship selection process in a transparent manner. "He has done something which no-



Hassan Ali Farah, scholarship candidate



Somali students during the examination exercise for government sponsored scholarships

“In my role as the UN Representative of Somalia, from today, I am going to be telling the world to give us education opportunity for young generations”

body has done in the field of education in the last 20 years. There have been scholarships, there have been students, there have been ministers, but he's the first one to extend scholarships in a fair, transparent and equal manner," said Dr. Mahiga. Paying tribute to young Somalis, Dr. Mahiga said, "To me you [young people] represent three things. You represent the resilience of Somalia, whatever the hardships, you can survive. You represent the determination of the Somali people. Nothing can scare you, and you represent hope for a brighter future."

One of the participants, Hassan Ali Farah, a 22 year-old who has been living in Hagadhera, Daadaab camp, since fleeing

Somalia with his family in 1992 praised the initiative saying: "I saw an advert on the internet and forwarded my name. If I'm short listed for the scholarship, I will study Community Development. When I finish, I will return to Somalia if there is peace."

Dr. Mahiga pledged to promote education for young Somalis saying: "In my role as the UN Representative of Somalia, from today, I am going to be telling the world to give us education opportunities for young generations." He promised to approach universities in Europe, Australia, North America as well as the region seeking funds and education opportunities for Somali students. "I want to make sure that you get the best education, because you are capable of the best education and you deserve the best education."

Selection criteria required participants to pass a written test. Out of the 324 who sat for the examination in Nairobi, 90 students passed and will be granted scholarships in Somali Higher Education Institutions or in other countries including Sudan, Turkey, Pakistan and Yemen. ➤

The growing mobile phone industry in Somaliland

By Mustafa Abdi Idan in Somaliland and Esther Njoki Mwangi in Nairobi



Telesom's Head of Public Relations Mustafa Adam Muuse

In a region often characterised by continuing insecurity, a small vibrant city boasts a functioning economy, low crime rate and relative peace. While it has yet to attain the economic status of other major power houses in the area, a booming mobile phone industry is promising to put Hargeisa firmly on the regional map as a strategic emerging market.

In Hargeisa, capital of Somaliland, three mobile phone companies, Telesom, Somtel and Telecom are competing to serve 3.5 million people.

Telesom leads the industry with a customer base of around 400,000 users, (according to recent figures in the *Financial Times*). It is one of the biggest private companies in Somaliland. Established in 2001, the company offers regular services such as fixed-line, internet broadband and international roaming among others.

The company also has other specialized services such as the mobile money service Zaad. This allows subscribers to use the money in their accounts to transfer, purchase, make payment of bills and recharge airtime. Telesom's Zaad service is

the only free mobile money service in the region.

Somtel mobile company is another key market player in Somaliland. The company was started only a year ago and now boasts 120,000 customers. It offers services similar to competitors such as fixed-lines and broadband wireless among others. To compete with the more established Telesom, Somtel has announced its own mobile banking called Edahab which will be launched soon.

Telesom's Head of Public Relations, Mustafa Adam Muuse, attributes the growth of the industry in Somaliland to a free market that has been allowed to flourish. He says this has enabled businesses to import the latest technologies to serve their clientele.

Mr. Muuse is optimistic about continued growth. "We hope to see Somaliland's mobile industry become the largest in Africa or as large as those in Europe and America," he says. His vision is not too farfetched. Kenya, the region's biggest economy, has only four mobile phone companies which serve a population of

around 40 million people. Compare that to Somaliland's three companies serving 3.5 million people.

Somaliland's mobile industry is yet to reach the same level of competition as that of its counterparts in Kenya. However, it is not too far behind considering that the industry in Kenya has a greater investment power, a larger customer base and has been in the market longer.

Multinational companies are taking note of Somaliland's functioning economy and potential. In mid-May, the world's largest soft-drink maker, Coca Cola, issued a licence to invest here. The move by Coca Cola may go a long way in propping up investors' confidence that has been hugely affected by the image reflected by the troubled South.

Somtel's Chief of Operations Awil Sh. Salah says, "The mobile phone industry can benefit investors here; we are in the information age and all industries depend on telephone services." Mr. Muuse from Telesom agrees, "We are happy to note that international companies are aware of Somaliland's potential and seeking to invest here. These companies will also be our potential customers."



UNPOS: On the ground in Somalia

By Kiyoshi Matsukawa

This article first appeared in the UN Department of Political Affairs Politically Speaking Bulletin.

While security constraints continue to pose challenges to working in Somalia, the United Nations Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS) is increasing its presence on the ground as part of a stepped up effort to help bring political stability and recovery to the country and its people.

Led by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Dr. Augustine P. Mahiga, the Mission has facilitated key political agreements between Somalis including the Djibouti Peace Agreement, the Kampala Accord of June 2011, and the Consultative Meeting on Ending the Transition held in Mogadishu in September designed to complete the period of Somalia's transitional administration. UNPOS has also worked in creative ways to promote business investment as an engine for growth and stability in the troubled country.

*In this **first-person account** from a recent visit to Mogadishu, UNPOS staff member Kiyoshi Matsukawa — whose job focuses on planning and coordination of economic development and livelihood generation — provides a glimpse of life and work for the United Nations in the long-embattled Somali capital.*



Kiyoshi Matsukawa, UNPOS Planning Officer in Mogadishu

peacekeepers from Uganda and Burundi of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).

In no time after touchdown, UN security officers hurried us into armoured vehicles to shuttle us away just as one of the numerous commercial flights landed. The choice of accommodation in Mogadishu for UN staff is limited to two places both inside the airport. Located just metres from the runway, my home for the next few weeks was a room in a container, two by three metres, complete with shower facilities, laundry (ironed and pressed), wireless internet, and three meals a day.

As a Programme Planning Officer from UNPOS, I was in Mogadishu to participate in a joint mission with the UN Resident Coordinator's Office to develop the UN Mogadishu Plan, which outlines ways to help development and recovery in the various districts of Mogadishu in areas such as garbage collection, painting buildings and rehabilitating markets.

My specific task was to identify how the business community could contribute in implementing the recovery plan, particularly through small and medium-sized

businesses and private sector development in general. This would involve getting to know the business community, government officials, and NGOs on the ground. The biggest challenge was to find ways to meet people. The choices were limited to either having interlocutors come to Mogadishu International Airport, putting them at personal risk, or going to areas outside the airport that had been cleared by UN security in advance, such as the Prime Minister's Office, in AMISOM convoys. These movements required detailed planning and a constant review of the security situation.

Despite the security and logistical challenges, the meetings proved very successful. The Somalis excel in business, have a wealth of information to share and went to great lengths to accommodate us. We receive many reports on Somalia, but there is no substitute for being on the ground to gain a keener understanding and feel for the situation.

Most of the private sector people we met with were from Somali diaspora-owned businesses working in service industries such as restaurants and hotels, and traders importing household goods. We also had good discussions with the Mogadishu mayor's office, the ministries of public works, telecommunications, and finance. We met with NGOs working on women's issues, human rights and in providing humanitarian aid.

The UN-chartered plane flew in low over dark blue waters, skirting the risk of hostile fire from along the coastline before touching down on a humid tarmac in Mogadishu. I was back in Xamar, as the locals call their capital city, after nearly seven years and much had changed. Back in 2004, when I first came to Somalia for academic research, the main international airport, like the main seaport, was a "contested area" since the warlords could not agree on how to control these areas. Seven years on, the international airport was in the hands of the Transitional Federal Government and the

Clearly it will be up to Somalis to create the kind of environment in which small and medium businesses can emerge, jobs are created and growth sustained. The diaspora needs to feel comfortable about coming to invest in Mogadishu. Business-

“Clearly it will be up to Somalis to create the kind of environment in which small and medium businesses can emerge”

friendly regulatory frameworks need to be created in close consultation with the state, in order to promote the formalization of the business sector. There is a need for stable, cheap, reliable electricity, and the promotion of manufacturing industries in an economy in which nearly everything is imported. Many business peo-

ple we spoke with were concerned about security of ownership and with ensuring a measure of profitability. I was told that for every business venture that succeeds, twenty fail.

In other ways, security has improved in the capital. The Government and AMISOM have taken over several areas from Al-Shabaab insurgents this year. A visit to the main seaport and down-town was truly an amazing experience, as seven years earlier this was a no-go area where the infamous “green line” split north and south Mogadishu between two clans. Streetlights had been installed, road repairs were ongoing on the main strip, and residents were buying glass windows — a sure sign of confidence that security was being restored.

What was once a relatively narrow conflict between warring clans seems much more complicated today, with more guns and an increased number of actors both for and against peace.

Apart from progress on the security front, the peace process is also moving forward. The signing of the Kampala Accord in June helped to bring the Somali leadership together. They are now expected to work on drawing up a Constitution, on reconstruction and development, on a security plan and on a schedule for eventually holding elections.

SRSG Mahiga is committed to working as closely with the Somalis as possible and has himself made numerous trips to Mogadishu. Furthermore, a third of his staff will be moving from UNPOS’ current base in Nairobi to locations inside Somalia including Mogadishu, Garowe in Puntland and Hargeisa in Somaliland. This will allow the staff to engage closely with the authorities and the people, to experience life in Somalia first hand, and to work more effectively for a brighter future for all Somalis. It will be exciting and gratifying to be a part of that process.



AMISOM Soldiers on patrol in Mogadishu

Mama Asha - Mogadishu's own miracle worker

By Esther Njoki Mwangi

There is something unique that draws you to 62 year-old Asha Abdi Dini. It is not just her charm or the respect that she accords you when you approach her. Perhaps it is her appealing smile or the fact that she never frowns or complains. Even when she recounts the day an armed man threatened her, she still manages to remain collected and bubbly.

Asha, or Mama Asha as she is fondly known, heads a charitable organization, the Inter-Community Development Services (ICDS). The organization runs a Mother and Child Health care centre located at Hamar Jajab District, Mogadishu which she co-founded with her husband in 1993 to help the most needy living in the area. "We opened the centre after we realized that a lot of people were coming to us for help," says the qualified midwife and nutritionist.

Now approaching its twentieth year, the Centre serves over 100 patients daily and boasts of departments specializing in children's, Antenatal and Postnatal care. On a normal day, they treat around 40 children under the age of five, 30 to 35 Antenatal patients, around 20 to 25 Postnatal patients and deal with at least 20 emergency cases. Situations that cannot be handled are referred to main hospitals.

The work is made possible by a team of volunteer nurses and midwives. Once a week, a pediatrician and a gynecologist offer their free services to the centre.

ICDS gets its funding from United Nations agencies, mainly United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) which regularly offers assistance in the form of medicine and vaccination campaigns. The World Health Organization and the UN Population Fund, occasionally give a helping hand.



Mama Asha Abdi Dini on the sidelines of the gender technical training in Nairobi

Security is clearly a concern. However, she downplays the incident when a man put a gun to her head demanding money,

“I can see peace is coming near for the first time in 20 years”

saying that she never worries much about her own security as she gets protection from the community she assists.

Her expression turns sad as she says: "Sometimes there are many malnourished children and we have nothing to offer them." Recently, with the current famine, the situation has only become more desperate. "A man fleeing the drought

lost three of his children and did not even have the energy to bury them. Some 15 to 18 people are dying daily."

When she is not running the centre, Mama Asha is a strong advocate of women's rights in Somalia. She is a member of Coalition for Grassroots Women Organization (COGWO), a network of 30 women's organizations established in 1996 to lobby for women's rights which has its headquarters in Mogadishu. She notes that women have been very vocal in the Somali peace process as they often approach opposing sides seeking reconciliation. "We talk to warring sides. They are our sons and husbands. Women are the most affected by the war. They are the breadwinners. Husbands are either dead or have no jobs," she says. Do the war-

ring sides listen when they intervene? She breaks into warm laughter, "No."

Some of their efforts however do bear fruit. After the signing of the Kampala Accord that ended five months of political deadlock between the executive and legislature, Mama Asha was part of a civil society delegation that was tasked with seeking an audience with the President and Speaker. "We talked to them and asked them to come to an agreement. They promised us that they would not fight," she says.

We met Mama Asha in Nairobi where she was attending an UNPOS/UN WOMEN sponsored training course entitled Building Somalia Women's Capacities for Peace from 13 to 15 July 2011. The training was aimed at empowering Somali women and looking at their future engagement with the Peace Process. "We learnt a lot. It has

enlightened us. It will help us train others when we return," she stated.

Mama Asha has a positive approach to life. Perhaps it is this optimism that allows her to believe that the two decade long war in Somalia is nearing its end. "I can see peace is coming near for the first time in 20 years," she tells me. I ask her how she comes to that conclusion. "AMISOM and Government soldiers are pushing back Al-Shabaab fighters. If they continue, Al-Shabaab will be out of Mogadishu," she says. Then she pauses and adds with a smile: "Even the women will help. If Mogadishu is captured, the rest of the regions will be easy."

What makes Mama Asha's story so interesting is that she chooses to stay in Mogadishu when she has the option of living elsewhere. She is the wife of a former Somali Ambassador, Salah Mohamed Ali,

who served in several countries including Italy, China and the UK during Siad Barre's regime. While accompanying her husband on these missions, Mama Asha filled her time studying - nutrition in Rome and acupuncture in China. Mr. Ali, who is a published author, now lives in Cairo.

Mama Asha has a daughter and four grandchildren living in Canada. "I want to be like Mother Teresa. I want to help people. If I live in Europe or Nairobi, I will just help myself," she explains.

It is quite clear that she is restless visiting Nairobi as she constantly makes reference to the internally displaced people she left behind in Mogadishu, many displaced by the current drought, "I feel useless when I'm here. At least when I'm in Mogadishu, I can help," she says before adding: "Please do not forget Somalia. Help Somalia stay on the world map." ➤

Building Women's capacities for Peace



Mama Asha and other women activists during the gender technical training in Nairobi, July 2011

Somalia unveils new cabinet

By Esther Njoki Mwangi

In line with the Kampala Accord signed on 9 June 2011, the Somali President, Sheik Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, named Dr. Abdiweli Mohamed Ali as the country's next Prime Minister. Dr. Ali replaced Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed who resigned to pave the way for the implementation of the Accord.

Like his predecessor, the new Prime Minister unveiled a lean, technocratic and largely politically inexperienced Cabinet of 18 ministers mainly from the Diaspora. None of the new ministers had served in the previous Government.

The Cabinet is based on the 4.5 clan formula and has one woman. With the exception of two Ministers, (Minister of Justice, Religious Affairs and Endowments and also the Minister of Labour, Youth and Sports), the rest are not Members of Parliament.

On 23 July, the Transitional Federal Parliament approved the new Cabinet by a vote of 397 to 21. The UN Special Representative for Somalia, Dr. Augustine P. Mahiga commended Parliament saying: "I am very pleased that the Somali Parliament acted so promptly to endorse the



Prime Minister Dr. Abdiweli Mohamed Ali chairs a Cabinet meeting in Mogadishu

Prime Minister's Cabinet, well within the deadline set in the Kampala Accord. This sends a strong, constructive signal and represents a positive start for the new Somali administration."

Prime Minister Dr. Abdiweli Mohamed Ali

Before his current appointment, Dr. Ali was the Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of Planning and International

Co-operation. He hails from Dhuusa Mareeb District in Galguduud Region, Puntland. He is also an American citizen and is fluent in Somali, Arabic, Italian and English.

Dr. Ali spent his early years in Somalia where he earned a Bachelor of Arts in Economics from the Somali National University. Later, while living in the U.S., he received a Master of Public Administration from Harvard University and a Ph.D. in Economics from George Mason University, while pursuing other disciplines.

Prior to joining the political scene, Dr. Ali was an economist and a professor at Niagara University in Buffalo, New York. He has also consulted widely with international organizations including the United Nations and the World Bank.

On taking up his new post, the Prime Minister said that eradicating corruption and improving the army's welfare will be his top priorities. ==>>



Prime Minister Dr. Abdiweli Mohamed Ali and SRSG Dr. Mahiga at a meeting in Mogadishu

The Cabinet

1		Mohamed Mohamud Haji Ibrahim , Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs	2		Hussein Arab Issa , Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence
Abdiwahab Ugas Husein (Ugas Khalif) , Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Commerce and Industry			3		Ahmed Hassan Gaboobe (Ugaas Bille) , Minister of Justice, Religious Affairs and Endowments.
5		Abdisamad Moalim Mohamud Sheikh Hassan , Minister of Interior and National Security	6		Abdinasir Mohamed Abdulle , Minister of Finance and Treasury
Maryam Juma Aweis , Minister of Women and Family Affairs			7		Abdullahi Haji Hassan Mohamed-Nur , Minister of Agriculture and Livestock
9		Abdiaziz Sheikh , Minister of Health	10		Abdulkadir Mohamed Ahmed (Jahaweyn) , Minister of Information, Posts and Telecommunications
Mohamed Muhuyadin Sheikh Mursal , Minister of Labor, Youth and Sports			11		Abdirahman Sheikh Ibrahim , Minister of Fisheries, Marine Wealth and Environment
13		Adam Abdullahi Adam , Minister of Air, Sea, Land Transportation and Ports	14		Abdirahman Hosh Jibril , Minister of Constitution and Reconciliation
Jaylani Nur Ikar , Minister of Public Works, Housing and Reconstruction.			15		Abdulkadir Mohamed Dhi'sow , Minister of Water, Petroleum and Mineral Resources
17		Ahmed Aydiid Ibrahim , Minister of Education, Culture and Higher Education	18		Abdullahi Godah Barre , Minister of Planning and International Cooperation

At the high level Consultative Meeting on ending the Transition held in Somalia's capital Mogadishu from 4 to 6 September 2011, the leadership of the Transitional Federal Government, Transitional Federal Parliament, Galmudug and Puntland adopted a Roadmap on priority tasks to be undertaken by 20 August 2012. In view of this, we caught up with some Somalis and asked: What would you like to see the Somali leadership achieve in the next year?

Abdirahman , 33, Journalist and Psychologist

The Government should create trust between itself and people at the grassroots. This will help people understand the Government. Somalia has been lawless for 20 years and people have no idea what a government is. It should also stop its internal fighting which is quite common. People living in Al-Shabaab controlled areas should be assured of their safety should they choose to cross into Government-controlled areas. Empower women since women have been breadwinners since the civil war broke out. Prioritize opening all education sectors and implement the Roadmap, constitution and security.

Ahmed, 32, Producer

Complete the Roadmap and the draft constitution by the end of the year. Encourage the formation of new states. Unless there are regional states, there can be no federal Somalia. Formation of political parties which will ensure that elections will take place next year. I would also like to see Al-Shabaab wiped out of Somalia.

Abdifar , 24, Webmaster

To restore peace throughout Somalia as this will help international agencies move back to Mogadishu. I would like the Government to open up education institutions in Somalia so that people can have a chance to study. I would also like to see it wipe out anyone who is not supporting peace and stability and affiliates of Al-Shabaab and Al Qaeda.

Abdulkadir , NGO worker

I would like to see the Government finalize the constitution bill which should be Somali driven. The International Community is interfering with the sovereignty of Somalia and this should come to an end.

Nimo, 20, Jobseeker

I expect the Government to improve security and finalize the constitution. I would also like them to build strong institutions which will in turn help with accountability.





United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Ms. Valerie Amos holds talks with the Somali Prime Minister in Mogadishu.



Delegates attend the Consultative Meeting on ending the Transition in Mogadishu.



Dr. Mahiga (centre) with Prime Minister Dr. Abdiweli Mohamed Ali (left) during the Joint Security Committee in Mogadishu



Under Secretary-General for Political Affairs, B.Lynn Pascoe with President Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed and the Speaker of Parliament Sharif Hassan Sheikh Aden



Above: Prime Minister Dr. Abdiweli Mohamed Ali visiting patients in a Mogadishu Hospital



A ceremony to mark the examination exercise for Government sponsored scholarships



Below: Staff from UNPOS and UN Women follow proceedings during a gender training session in Nairobi



SRSG Mahiga in an interview with journalists in Mogadishu



International delegates during the Joint Security Committee (JSC) in Mogadishu



UNPOS staff with Somali students and other delegates during the scholarship ceremony



SRSG meets diaspora children at a school in Canada



Mogadishu residents walk in Bakaara market following Al-Shabaab's withdrawal from the area