



United Nations Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS)

For Immediate Release

PRESS RELEASE 018/2011

Statement by UN Special Representative for Somalia Dr Augustine Mahiga on the occasion of International Peace Day

New York, 21 September 2011 – United Nations General Assembly Resolution 55/282 calls on all Member States and organizations the world over to commemorate the International Peace Day in an appropriate manner, through various activities, including public awareness, purposefully to strengthen the ideals of peace and alleviate tensions and conflicts.

One of the objectives of our mission is to promote peace and reconciliation in Somalia. The theme for this year focuses on “Peace and Democracy” which is a core value for the United Nations and is crucial for the human rights of the Somali people whose country has been torn apart by war for over twenty years.

Despite the devastating famine that still rages in Somalia, we have recently seen the first hopeful moments in years on the political side. A series of landmark positive developments, starting with the signing of the Kampala Accord and continuing with the successful Consultative Meeting in Mogadishu which resulted in the endorsement of a roadmap for ending the transition. The withdrawal of Al Shabaab from Mogadishu likewise gives us reason for hope.

With these encouraging positive developments in the country I call on all Somalis to contribute their collective resources and energies to embark on outreach and reconciliation initiatives, in particular to those outside the peace process, and to solidify relations with emerging administrations.

Peace is a fundamental right. The citizens of Somalia, the Diaspora, the displaced and refugees have waited two decades and have endured great privations. As we celebrate this Peace Day, finally, we have a reason to hope that there is light at the end of the long dark tunnel of recent Somali history.

The United Nations in general and my office in particular are committed now than ever before to realise the dreams of the Somali people for peace and democracy to prevail as we embrace the changing realities in the political landscape.

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