



United Nations Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS)

For Immediate Release

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SRSR announces increased presence inside Somalia

Nairobi, 10 August 2010 – The UN Special Representative for Somalia, Ambassador Augustine P Mahiga, has said he is hopeful that increased representation from his office inside Somalia will help advance the peace process in the country where the UN has had a constant presence since 1991.

He said that within the next few months, the UN Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS) would have increased numbers of international and national staff based in Garowe, Puntland and Hargeisa, Somaliland to join the national staff from his office who are already there.

“After this, UNPOS will crucially need to be in Mogadishu although for security reasons we will have to take a cautious approach,” he said. “There is much work to be done interacting with the Somali Government, AMISOM, NGOs and other partners as well as collecting information, administration and many other tasks that can only be done on the ground.”

At present, there are more than 60 international UN staff based inside Somalia along with nearly 800 national staff, from various UN agencies, delivering humanitarian assistance and implementing recovery and development programs. The UN has continued to deliver humanitarian assistance to 3.2 million people in Somalia through services such as health and nutrition activities, water and education. Despite the temporary suspension of World Food Program projects in parts of southern Somalia, food aid for 340,000 people is still continuing in Mogadishu, where many of the most vulnerable are located.

At the same time the United Nations Support Office for AMISOM (UNSOA) has maintained a continuous presence in Mogadishu in order to coordinate the delivery of a logistics support including accommodation, food and medical supplies to the 6,100 African peacekeeping troops.

“The UN works hard to be as close to those suffering the effects of the conflict as possible,” said Ambassador Mahiga.