

**UNITED NATIONS ASSISTANCE MISSION IN SOMALIA
UNSOM**

SRSG Nicholas Kay's Briefing to the UN Security Council**New York, 12 September 2013**

Mr President,

Members of the Council,

Thank you very much for this opportunity to brief the Security Council for the first time since assuming my appointment as SRSG for Somalia. I am particularly glad to be here today with Ambassador Annadif of the African Union, representing our close collaboration as we discharge our two mandates from this Council.

This is a good time for some stock-taking on Somalia, one year after the new Federal Government was established, and 90 days after the establishment of UNSOM.

Mr. President,

Before going into some detail on political and security issues, let me start by answering the question all SRSGs probably hear the most : "Are you optimistic?"

The answer in my case is a resounding "yes". Behind the twists and turns, the crises and the standoffs, Somalia has the foundations for progress: the international community is united behind a credible, legitimate federal government; there are resources available to meet the most immediate needs; there is the political will to compromise and manage disputes without resorting to violence. And the Somali people I have met are tired of war and deprivation, fed up with brinkmanship and predatory politics.

The heart of the political challenge is simple to describe, even if rather difficult to solve. After 22 years of conflict, power and control of resources and revenue have fragmented. The strong centralist state has ceased to exist. Different regions and different people now hold different bits of power. That's why Somalis have decided a federal model is the only system that will work in this new reality. The task now is to reconcile and agree amongst themselves exactly how federalism will work in practice. How will they share power, revenue, resources and responsibilities in a way that benefits all Somalia? These are difficult issues. But ones which need political solutions.

That is why in the first three months, I have prioritized the need for progress on the constitutional review and constructive engagement with the regions; travelling to Puntland, Somaliland and engaging closely on the Jubba question.

Mr President,

If a week is a long time in politics, the ninety days of UNSOM in Somalia is an age. Allow me to brief you on a number of important recent developments since the SG's report.

The situation in the Jubba regions was one of the most serious issues to face the Federal Government. In early June, the risks were very high of a collapse in security and political stalemate in Kismayo, as

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well as between the Jubba parties and Mogadishu. However, an agreement was finally reached on 28 August in Addis Ababa, under the active mediation of Ethiopian Foreign Minister Dr Tedros Adhanom on behalf of IGAD, which set out interim governance, security and economic arrangements. I supported the negotiations in the closing stages and attended the signing ceremony in Addis. Some outstanding issues still remain and implementation will require goodwill from all parties and significant support. UNSOM, I'm glad to say, has established a presence in Kismayo to ensure it is able to help as required across all areas of its mandate, working closely with the African Union. We are concerned to hear of the attack today on the convoy of the interim leader of the Jubba Administration, and I have called for calm and restraint from all sides.

To the north, the relationship between Somaliland and Somalia remains sensitive and fragile. Nevertheless, there is progress to report. With the mediation of Turkey, the two parties have had two sessions of talks this year. The agreement on shared management of airspace could be a model for other areas of mutually beneficial cooperation. We urge both sides to focus on solutions, however modest, not problems. The presence of UNSOM in Somaliland is still on hold at the request of the local authorities who do not accept that UNSOM has a mandate in Somaliland. I remain committed to finding a way to break this impasse.

I am also offering my good offices to Puntland for its internal political processes and to assist in confidence-building between the Puntland administration and the Federal Government. I am again working closely with the Chair of the IGAD Council on this.

Mr. President,

One of the key tasks facing Somalia is the agreement of a final Federal Constitution. The UN is supporting a broad process of popular consultations which should clarify several key areas that remain contentious. A long, hard process of consultation and negotiation lies ahead, which we shall support. On 2 September, UNSOM backed the launch of a national political conference, entitled Vision 2016, at which the President of Somalia restated his commitment to a new constitution and elections by 2016.

In less than a week from today, another key building block of Somalia's stabilisation will be put in place. Some 200 delegates will gather in Brussels on Monday, hosted jointly by the EU and the Federal Government. The New Deal Compact is a Somali-led and Somali-owned set of priorities, milestones to achieve them, and an architecture for international support to Somalia, coordination and funding. In Brussels, the Somali Government and the international community will endorse the Compact to confirm mutual commitment to these priorities and how to meet them. The true test of the Compact will be in how it makes a difference in peoples' daily lives, The UN in Somalia will play its part to the full, especially in assisting the government to coordinate international assistance. I thank the EU for their key role in this process and continue to work closely with them in this and other areas of our support to Somalia in general. I hope that we will see real commitment from partners, especially to the new financial and coordination mechanisms that are being proposed.

So on the political front, there is progress. Parliament has shown itself to be a key driver. But there is no room for complacency. There is still time to agree a new constitution through an inclusive process, vote on it and then hold free and fair elections in Somalia. But it is a big hill to climb and we all need to pick up the pace.

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Mr President,

Other than politics, much of the initial focus has been on security. Our presence in Mogadishu is to a large extent only possible because of AMISOM. I pay tribute to the courage, determination and sacrifice of the troop- and police-contributing countries and the leadership of the AU commission. The next phase will require more support. The exact needs for force enablers and multipliers, sufficient and predictable financing and a new concept of operations will emerge from the report of the joint UN-AU benchmarking mission, in October. As you hear from my friend and colleague, Ambassador Annadif, the military and security dimension of defeating Al Shabaab in Somalia is by no means over. The Somali national army is ready to do its part, and must be properly backed. I call on the Council to ensure more priority is given to strengthening the Somali national security forces and their ability to deploy and sustain joint operations with AMISOM. I trust this will be one of the main conclusions of the benchmarking team.

Mr President,

Beyond the challenges of politics and security, the UN is also actively engaged on other issues of vital importance to Somalia and the region: addressing humanitarian needs; human rights; gender equality; and piracy.

Access remains a major impediment and has contributed to the rapid spread of polio. Somalia now has over 160 confirmed cases, over half the world's caseload. Vital national immunization campaigns have taken place with local health care workers negotiating access to hard to reach communities. The pullout of Medecins Sans Frontieres is a severe blow to the health sector and a reminder of the need for all parties to respect international humanitarian law and humanitarian principles. While we have seen some improvements, the food security situation remains precarious. For the first time in 5 years, the number of people in crisis is below one million but the number of people on the margin of food insecurity has increased to 2.3 million people. This may be further exacerbated if the lifeline of Somali diaspora remittances is cut by international banks.

Some one million refugees are hosted in Somalia's neighbouring countries. Whilst there has been a push lately for refugees to return to Somalia, it is not yet time for a large scale repatriation. Spontaneous and voluntary returns in safe areas need, however, to be supported with durable solutions.

We are pleased to be backing the government's human rights road map, their plan of action that will be brought to the Human Rights Commission in Geneva later this month. And as a critical step in this action plan, I have called on the Somali government to ratify the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Childhood in Somalia can be a frightening experience. We continue to monitor with concern, numerous grave violations of childrens' rights. In a more positive note for Somalia's children, a UN-supported Go-To-School campaign was launched last Sunday, which aims at getting one million children into the classroom in the next three years. As a first step, for the first time in a decade, free schooling is being provided by the government to 100,000 children today.

Sexual violence in Somalia is one of the most serious and urgent human rights challenges facing the government and people. The commitment of both the Somali President and the leadership of AMISOM to a policy of zero-tolerance of sexual abuse is encouraging. However it is clear that there need to be much more robust systems of investigation and prosecution, including the protection of survivors and

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witnesses.

While piracy is on the decline, the onshore networks that profited from it have not been dismantled. Law enforcement and corrections systems on land, as well as job opportunities, must be supported so that we treat the root causes of the problem. At a conference hosted by the United Arab Emirates, in Dubai just yesterday, a maritime strategy covering security and sustainable resource management was strongly endorsed. The UAE deserves our thanks for this valuable initiative.

Mr President

I want to thank the Council for its vision in establishing UNSOM. We are making good progress in setting up the mission, with about fifty staff on board so far. Much more capacity is needed to discharge the mandate, but we will expand only at a pace that allows us to be effective and reflects the Government's capacity to absorb our help.

Our effectiveness depends on our relationships. I have focused in particular on our relationship with the Federal Government which I believe is strong. Second is the UN relationship with AMISOM. Ambassador Annadif and I are determined that our teams should work hand in hand. It is not a coincidence we have come to brief you together today. We also work closely with IGAD and I look forward to the IGAD Partners' Forum to be hosted here in New York in the margins of the General Assembly.

Within the UN system I have also focused on relationships, which are key to UNSOM's mandate to provide "one UN door" for the Federal Government. We are on course to be formally integrated as a mission by 1 January, and are already working on rule of law and security, constitutional review and human rights in joint teams. We are already working as a single UN senior management team.

Our UN family in Somalia experienced a dark hour when our UN Common Compound was attacked on 19 June. We lost one UNDP staff member and seven contractors and guards. That tragedy has only deepened my resolve and commitment to this mission. We are reviewing security arrangements for our staff, and I remain urgently in need of a fully functioning guard force capacity as has been recommended by the Council. The AU-UN benchmark exercise looked at some options, which are currently being considered.

I would like to leave you with three key messages for the Council's consideration:

- First: in Somalia the people, the Government and international partners, are on the brink of achieving great things; truly great things. In terms of rebuilding a shattered state and rescuing millions of people from conflict and poverty, we are standing on the very edge of great success;

- Secondly: where we stand is also precarious. Success is not guaranteed. In no sense at all is the Somalia "crisis" over. We cannot afford to lessen our focus or investment – despite the many competing claims for our attention in the rest of the world. If we fail and Somalia slips back and Al Shabaab prevail, we shall feel the security impact from Bamako to Bangui, and beyond Africa. Ideology respects no borders.

- Thirdly, to get over the threshold and achieve great things, we need more. Much has been given in terms of support – and even more promised – but there are three areas in which we need to boost our

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effort if we are not to fail: first, support for the Somali National Security Forces (we have not achieved critical mass in terms of building their capacity); secondly, enhanced capabilities for AMISOM; thirdly, an well-resourced and coherent UN role in the exit strategy for AMISOM (this includes support to UNSOM and UNSOA as well as the work of UN agencies in Somalia). Working in Somalia is expensive. Keeping our staff safe costs real money. Ensuring success will cost more, but not very much compared to what the international community has spent in Iraq, Afghanistan and more recently Mali. Failure in Somalia is, however, still a risk. It is, I submit, a risk we cannot afford.

Thank you for your attention.