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Statement by Ambassador Nicholas Kay
Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Somalia
at the
Reconciliation Conference of the Jubba Communities and Stakeholders

2 October 2013, Mogadishu

Your Excellency Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, President of the Federal Republic of Somalia,

Your Excellency Abdi Farah Shirdon, Prime Minister of the Federal Republic of Somalia,

Honourable Mohamed Sheikh Osman Jowari, Speaker of the Federal Parliament of Somalia,

Honourable Abdikarim Hussein Guled, Minister of Interior and National Security,

Mr. Ahmed Madobe, Leader of the Interim Jubba Administration,

Your Excellencies Members of the Diplomatic Corps,

Honourable Members of Parliament,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to say a few words on behalf of Ambassador Nicholas Kay, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General (SRSG) for Somalia, who is away on duty, but would have wished to be here with us in person. SRSG Kay welcomes the convening of this Reconciliation Conference and has asked me to convey his warmest greetings to you all, as well as his wishes for a successful outcome of the deliberations.

This Conference is a major milestone. It is a manifestation of the collective will of Somali national stakeholders, particularly the Federal Government and the Interim Jubba Administration to give renewed momentum to the implementation of the 27 August Addis Ababa Agreement.

We all recognize that there will be challenges in the implementation of the Agreement, but you have shown commitment in working together to overcome them, as you did in agreeing on the venue for this conference by resolving them through dialogue and compromise. This is a clear sign of the willingness of parties to put aside parochial interests for the greater good of Somalia and its people.

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The success of this Conference will go beyond the Jubba regions in significance. It will set the tone and framework for the successful reconciliation efforts in the rest of Somalia's regions. Furthermore, a successful outcome of this Conference will go a long way to instill confidence in the donors and other partners who are working tirelessly, alongside Somali leaders and the people, for the cause of lasting peace and stability in Somalia.

I commend President Sheikh Mohamoud for the statesmanship shown by visiting Kismayo, as well as the decision of Mr. Ahmed Madobe, Leader of the Interim Administration, to come to Mogadishu; both steps revived efforts to implement the Agreement. I note the encouraging comments that were made by both President Sheikh Mahmoud and Mr. Ahmed Madobe in Kismayo and hope that this sets a positive tone for constructive and forward-looking deliberations at this Conference.

I urge the delegates to approach the Conference with a spirit of compromise, bearing in mind the common good of the people of Somalia. It is my hope that in that spirit, constructive dialogue can be maintained to see this process to its conclusion. Implementing the Addis Ababa Agreement *in toto* is critical. We must all work together in staying the course and overcoming all challenges that emerge along the way. The United Nations, including UNSOM, is ready to assist this through its offices in Kismayo.

Furthermore, the process of reconciliation among stakeholders of the Jubba regions is fully inclusive, take into account the views, interests and aspirations of all the communities that live in this rich and diverse part of Somalia. In moving towards ultimately building a federal state in South Somalia, we have to ensure that all those who live those regions are have a say in the process.

Finally, I should use this opportunity to thank the Government of Sweden, the European Union and the United Nations Development Programme, for their significant and generous financial contributions, together with UNSOM and UNSOA, towards the convening of this Conference. I commend the continued commitment of IGAD in implementing the Addis Ababa Agreement and the critical role played by its Chairperson in supporting this process each step of the way. I further commend the bravery of AMISOM, Ethiopian, as well as the Somali forces and their local militia allies, without whose sacrifices we would not be standing here today opening yet another chapter in the history of a peaceful and stable Somalia.

I, once again, wish you successful deliberations.

Thank you for your attention.