

**UNITED NATIONS ASSISTANCE MISSION IN SOMALIA
UNSOM**

Briefing to the Security Council**by Ambassador Nicholas Kay, Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) for Somalia****11 March 2014**

[AS DELIVERED]

Madam President, Members of the Council,

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to brief the Council from Mogadishu today and for your continued support to Somalia's peace-building and state-building. I am on the ground in Mogadishu and not with you in New York due to the intensity of events at this moment. I hope you understand.

Madam President

The best hope for peace and stability in Somalia, the Horn of Africa and beyond remains a united, secure and federal Somalia. This is achievable. Somalia can reach its goal of an agreed constitution, a nation-wide electoral process and increased security by 2016. But times are tough, and in the short term may get tougher. Insecurity in Mogadishu poses challenges for Somalis, the UN and the international community. 2014 is a crucial year. It is marked, I would say, by security and political challenges, which will be overcome if the Federal Government of Somalia and international partners remain united and if both accelerate delivery of their mutual commitments.

Madam President

As I speak, an expanded AMISOM and the Somali National Army (SNA) are prosecuting a renewed offensive against Al Shabaab, made possible by UN Security Council Resolution 2124. It will be the most significant and geographically extensive military advance since AMISOM started, and there have already been notable successes. I pay tribute to the commitment and sacrifices made by AMISOM and its police and troop contributing states. Under Ambassador Annadif's leadership, AMISOM continues to be the single most important contributor to the security of Somalia, and a vital partner for the Federal Government and the United Nations in peace-building, state-building and stabilisation. Ethiopian troops were officially incorporated into AMISOM earlier this year. The UN has played its part in preparing for the new operations. Supplies of food, fuel and water were stockpiled by the UN Support Office for AMISOM (UNSOA) in all sectors in advance of the operations. UNSOA and UNSOM have been supporting the training of Somali National Army troops. This includes training in human rights and humanitarian law, in accordance with the Secretary-General's Human Rights Due Diligence Policy.

As you will be aware, in Mogadishu the security situation has deteriorated since the last time I briefed the Council in December. A suicide attack carried out on a UN convoy, a complex suicide attack against the Presidential compound in Villa Somalia, and another suicide attack near the National Intelligence headquarters, all in the month of February, are sharp reminders. The risk of further attacks against Somali government and international targets remains high.

The Federal Government and AMISOM have increased their security operations in the city and the Government has developed a new Mogadishu security strategy. I look forward to its early implementation and I hope international partners will actively support it and respond rapidly to requests from the Government.

The UN has taken measures to improve its own security. Planning for the UN Guard Unit, endorsed in February by the Council to protect UN personnel and facilities in Mogadishu, is underway, with the first deployments expected in April. I take this opportunity to thank the Council and the Government of Uganda for their support in establishing the Guard Unit. I would also like to thank AMISOM for their cooperation in facilitating its deployment.

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Madam President

Vital though they are, military operations alone will not achieve sustainable peace-building and state-building. The Government has established a framework for the stabilisation of areas that will become accessible as a result of these operations, including the establishment of interim local administrations. UNSOM has been working closely with partners to support this.

As AMISOM and the Somali National Army begin their offensive, we are all conscious of the need to uphold humanitarian principles and respect for international humanitarian law. We also need resources. I urge donors and partners to contribute to the trust fund for the supply of non-lethal support to the Somali National Army in line with resolution 2124. Such UN support for a national army is groundbreaking, and requires our collective effort and determination to succeed.

Developing strong, professional Somali security forces is essential. Progress is being made, but it is made harder by the continuing insecurity and conflict. UNSOM's work on security sector reform continues. We are, for example, taking some practical steps such as supporting biometric registration and the provision of uniforms. We plan to support the Somali Police Force's recruitment of 2,300 additional police officers in 2014. Somalia's security institutions need urgently to be properly funded. I hope that international partners will work with UNSOM, AMISOM and the Federal Government to work out how to do this in a timely and effective manner.

I am pleased also to report that in February the European Union training mission began its training programmes inside Somalia. This is a significant step that deserves our recognition.

Madam President

Achieving greater security is a vital task for 2014. But the political dimension of state-building and peace-building is equally vital this year. After nearly three months of negotiation, Somalia now has a new Federal Government under the leadership of Prime Minister Abdiweli Sheikh Ahmed. The Cabinet contains experienced and technocratic Ministers whose workplans are built around the priorities identified in the New Deal Compact. On 24 February, President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud and I co-chaired, in Mogadishu, the first meeting of the High-Level Partnership Forum, the body overseeing the implementation of the Compact. The Forum concluded that now was the time for both the Government and international partners to convert plans into actions, pledges into tangible projects and to make real political progress. I am pleased to report that as we meet, the Federal Government is finalising a detailed plan and timetable for a process leading to the formation of Federal States, a final Constitution and democratisation by 2016. I expect this timetable, called broadly Vision 2016, will have concrete and realistic deliverables, to be published in the coming weeks following further consultation with stakeholders, including Puntland and the Interim Jubba Administration. The UN stands ready to play a central role in supporting its implementation.

Strengthened public financial management is another pillar of state-building. Following the resignation of the former Central Bank Governor in November 2013, the Government has made progress towards rebuilding national and international confidence in its financial institutions. A key step has been the establishment of a Financial Governance Committee, involving experts from the government and international financial institutions to advise on financial management. Alongside other key measures, the Federal Government has agreed to share the existing strategic concession contracts with the Committee for technical review and expert advice. Improved transparency and accountability are critical steps in initiating aid flows. The World Bank, I should note, has been intrepid in supporting on the ground the progress we are beginning to see.

Madam President,

The formation of Federal States needs to be accelerated. I said the same in my briefing to you in December. It is even more true today.

In Baidoa, in south west Somalia, the gulf between two rival camps, advocating a six- and three-region state respectively, remains wide. On the 3rd of March, I called on all parties to respect the Constitution and existing agreements of the Federal Government and to resolve disputes through inclusive dialogue. I continue to offer

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UNSOM's good offices to support a Federal Government-led process. The Government has clearly stated its commitment to a three region state, a position that should be respected.

In Southern Somalia, the formation of the Interim Jubba Administration continued with the announcement of ministerial positions on the 20th of February. There have been positive steps towards reconciliation and inclusivity. But the full implementation of the 28 August Addis Ababa Agreement requires continued engagement and compromise. I salute the efforts of Ethiopia as Chair of the Council of Ministers of IGAD and guarantor of the Addis Ababa agreement. UNSOM is working with the Federal Government, the Interim Jubba Administration and partners to mobilise resources to manage an increased caseload of disengaged combatants in Kismayo and to take forward reconciliation initiatives.

To the north, in Puntland, on 8th of January I witnessed, along with several members of the international community, the election of President Abdiweli Mohamed Ali Gaas and the peaceful handover by former President Abdurahman Mohamed Farole. UNSOM supported critical mediation efforts in the run-up to the elections and advocated, among other things, for greater women's political participation. I am encouraged by the new Government's commitment to resumption of Puntland's suspended democratisation process and the restoration of relations with the Federal Government of Somalia. President Gaas has highlighted the difficult budget situation and the shortage of funds to pay salaries of Puntland government officials, including security forces. I hope that donor efforts to find an interim solution will bear fruit.

I am also inspired by the vigour and enthusiasm of Somali women's political advocacy. Twenty-three women's organisations from South-Central Somalia and Puntland have established the Somali Women Leadership Initiative to campaign for increased political participation of women. UNSOM remains firmly committed to enhancing women's participation in national decision-making. Encouragingly in Puntland, President Abdiweli Gaas appointed five women to cabinet, more than any of his predecessors.

Madam President,

Promotion and respect for human rights is at the core of UNSOM's support to the Federal Government. We have been working with both AMISOM and the Somali National Army to provide training on human rights, international humanitarian law and refugee law. A Joint Working Group on human rights due diligence, which includes AMISOM, UNSOA and UNSOM has been established. I hope that in the near future it will also include the Federal Government. The consultative process to create a National Human Rights Commission is still delayed against a background of sustained attacks against human rights defenders and journalists and the continued application of the death penalty. I am also deeply concerned about the ongoing incidence of sexual violence in Somalia. I look forward to the implementation of the recommendations of the Team of Experts on Sexual Violence established under Council Resolution 1888 (2009). The Team of Experts visited Somalia in December 2013.

Madam President,

Despite significant humanitarian crises around the world and within the region, I believe Somalia must remain a priority. The country's humanitarian crisis is among the largest and most complex in the world. An estimated 2.9 million people will need immediate life-saving and livelihood support in the next six months. Recent improvements in the humanitarian situation are fragile and risk reversal if the current trend of low and slow funding for the 2014 humanitarian appeal continues.

There have been reports recently also of displacement as a result of the fighting, especially in Bay and Bakol. As of the 9th of March some 3,700 newly displaced people arrived in Baidoa, mainly due to fear of attacks. As of today they have all started receiving shelter and household items. We also had reports of some 700 previously displaced families that have returned to Hudur after it was recaptured by Somali National Army and AMISOM forces. Humanitarian access due to the volatile security situation remains a major challenge. Humanitarian partners are working to determine urgent needs and how to best respond.

On the 10th of December last year a tripartite agreement was signed between the governments of Kenya, Somalia and UNHCR for the voluntary repatriation of Somali refugees in Kenya. But conditions in Somalia are not

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yet conducive for wide-scale refugee return. Without sufficient preparation, mass returns could in fact cause instability and worsen the humanitarian situation in the country.

As a result of changes in its legislation, in December 2013, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia began deporting Somali nationals as well as other migrant workers. It is estimated that more than 22,000 have returned to Somalia so far. The International Organisation for Migration expects as many as an additional 33,000 people could be deported in the next three months. Such an influx to Mogadishu could exacerbate the plight of the internally displaced in the capital.

Madam President,

Progress in Somalia has been mixed so far, but it is progress. We still have a long way to go. The targets which the Federal Government has set itself, in partnership with the international community, remain relevant and feasible. National reconciliation, federalism, the conclusion of the constitutional process and the rebuilding of security institutions are critical. Despite setbacks and delays, none of these tasks remain out of our collective reach. But time is of the essence. The time for action is now.

Madam President,

To conclude, Somalia and Somalis desperately need improved security. I firmly believe this can be achieved, but it requires a collective effort.

Secondly, national reconciliation must be fast-tracked. The establishment of Federal States is critical to the creation of a cohesive and effective federal structure in Somalia. Reconciliation efforts must continue, and will be an additional tool in the fight against the enemies of peace. Legislation to set the constitutional and electoral processes in motion must be enacted.

Finally, I urge the international community to continue to provide the support necessary to build the Federal Government's capacity to undertake the significant work that remains. Somalis need to see and feel the benefit of increasing peace and security. We need to convert good plans into more concrete assistance, or as a Somali proverb says "A sweet hand is better than a sweet mouth". The Federal Government is frustrated with the slow delivery of tangible assistance. A country broken from decades of conflict has huge needs. Not all can or will be met quickly, especially while conflict continues. But I wonder if together we could not achieve some faster success in rebuilding Somalia's shattered state.

As friends and partners of Somalia, we need to stay the course. Now is not the time to prevaricate. We have to be prepared for setbacks, but remain resolute. After nearly a quarter of a century of wars, state collapse and immense human suffering, Somalis are determined to build a lasting peace. They need and deserve our continued support.

I thank you very much.