



For Immediate Release

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UN Special Representative welcomes further progress of Somali talks

Djibouti, 26 November 2008 – The UN Special Representative for Somalia, Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah, has welcomed the latest developments and progress of the Somali talks on critical issues including Justice and Reconciliation, the Unity Government and Security Issues.

“I am very pleased to see the concerned parties moving forward with the support of the United Nations and the international community in accordance with the Djibouti Agreement,” Mr. Ould-Abdallah said.

With respect to the broad-based Unity Government agreed to on 26 October 2008 by the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and the Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia (ARS), Mr. Ould-Abdallah said: “Today’s decision agreed to by both parties within the High Level Committee (HLC) is very encouraging because it advances the commitment made by both sides to form an inclusive Parliament and Unity Government. In particular, 75 additional seats in the enlarged Parliament represent in practical terms the open nature of the Djibouti Agreement. The Agreement encourages the inclusion of relevant parties in Civil Society, including women and the business community, and the Diaspora, to see their place in the process. Overall, these are important steps to create sustainable peace in Somalia and demonstrate the Parties’ commitment. I thank the Somali people for being patient and for continuing to support the talks in Djibouti.”

Mr. Ould-Abdallah said the parties will now go for additional consultations with their constituencies, allies and leadership before returning to the UN, for further exchanges. The final arrangements should be addressed by all parties after the Hadj and the Eid-al-Adha.”

Discussions on Security are expected to centre on how the ARS and the TFG and other Somali parties will address practical security matters, Mr. Ould-Abdallah said. In particular, he said, this includes final arrangements for the cessation of armed confrontation and the formation of the joint transitional forces. The meeting of the Joint Security Committee will be formally opened in Mogadishu after the successful convening of a workshop in Kenya.

“We hope that the concerted efforts made here and the momentum gained in these last few days continue so that the new year sees Somali leaders working together, wholeheartedly and committed to the dignity of the Somali people,” Mr. Ould-Abdallah.

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