

## Opening of the Istanbul II conference on Somalia

UN Special Representative for Somalia, Dr Augustine Mahiga

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Your Excellency Prime Minister, Your Excellency Deputy Prime Minister, Ambassadors, and distinguished guests.

We last met in this timeless and beautiful city for the first Istanbul Conference on Somalia. We are delighted to return for this important second Istanbul Conference. I would like to thank the Turkish Government for once again hosting us and for its continuing commitment to Somalia and the Somali people.

We are here to renew our commitment and support to the people of Somalia. Today at this unique gathering with the Somali and international private sector, donors, Somali authorities, the UN and civil society we aim to promote a step change in development across Somalia.

Alongside the focus of Istanbul II on recovery and development, we are supporting Somalis to end the political transition. We welcome the achievements of the Transitional Federal Institutions to date and regional administrations in establishing areas of stability in Somalia and the agreements reached in the Consultative meeting in Addis Ababa on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2012. These achievements will be discussed tomorrow.

Together with partners, the UN is working to provide **life-saving humanitarian assistance** to the Somali people. With a strong concerted effort, including from our Turkish hosts, Somalia has just emerged from the worst humanitarian crisis in decades. The Somali people have shown how remarkably resilient they are but we have also witnessed how easily shocks can disrupt the lives and livelihoods of even the strongest Somali families and communities.

The four Partnership Forums being held today will set priorities for resilience, energy, water and roads. Once identified, these priorities will have to be implemented. Structured public-private dialogue will be needed to underpin the development of viable regulatory frameworks.

Somali people need sustained long term investments. A paradigm shift in international assistance will allow partners of Somalia build the **resilience** of Somali households, communities and local institutions against crises in the

medium and long-term. This will take real partnerships, strategic vision and integrated multi-sectoral approaches and reliable multi-year funding.

To move onto a new development trajectory, we need to invest in Somalia's considerable potential in both productive and service sectors. The three Partnership Forums on infrastructure will consider energy, water and roads.

- Expanding access to cheaper and sustainable **energy** is a top priority for Somalia and its partners. Improved access to affordable energy will lift the constraints on economic growth and allow the Somali private sector to expand and flourish.
- Efficient use of Somali's scarce **water** is essential for the well-being and economic development of the population. Coordinated funding that supports common goals should be agreed.
- Investment in the right **roads** can deliver employment, enable equitable development and bolster the much needed investment in resilience.

Across all the four themes, good governance principles to promote a business conducive environment should be applied by the authorities, the development partners and the private sector. Transparency and accountability by all stakeholders will help build the confidence that large scale investments will translate quickly to improvements in the lives of ordinary Somalis.

The preparations for this second Istanbul conference have been comprehensive. The first Istanbul conference two years ago encouraged the Somali private sector to play a positive role in strengthening peace, stability and development and create business friendly conditions. We continue to seek to foster inclusive business practices which can support the recovery and sustained economic development and will explore innovative approaches – such as investment guarantees and diaspora finance – that can expand the range and scope of private investment in Somalia.

In 2011, the Dubai initiative explored opportunities for investments and the need for suitable regulatory frameworks. A series of Mogadishu technical meetings have tried to translate these efforts into concrete proposals to strengthen and scale up existing Somali capacity in key productive and service sectors such livestock, fisheries, infrastructure, energy and banking.

The London Conference in February injected new momentum into the political process; into strengthening AMISOM and helping Somalia develop its own security forces; through helping build stability at local level.

Whilst there have been some substantive achievements in all areas, there is still significant way to go towards equitable economic growth and national stability. Commitments and concrete actions need to be revitalized both from the Somali and the international side.

Istanbul II represents an ideal and powerful occasion in which a renewed international and Somali commitment launch Somalia onto a new development trajectory. The UN stands ready to support the recommendations each Partnership Forum will make today. We are fully confident that the Turkish facilitation will greatly reward the high expectations of the participants.