



**Joint Communiqué of the Federal Republic of Somalia and the United Nations on
the Prevention of Sexual Violence
7 May 2013**

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict (SRSG-SVC) visited Somalia from 2 to 6 April 2013, within the framework of United Nations Security Council resolutions 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009) and 1960 (2010). She met with national authorities including leadership of the national Army and Police, the Chief Justice, the Minister for Human Development and Public Services as well as women's groups, non-governmental organisations and civil society partners, journalists and survivors of sexual violence.

The objective of the visit was to gain first-hand knowledge of conflict-related sexual violence trends as well as challenges and ongoing-efforts to address conflict-related sexual violence in Somalia. The Special Representative seeks to deepen dialogue and cooperation with the Government of Somalia and to agree on a framework of cooperation whereby the United Nations may further strengthen its support to national institutions and initiatives on issues related to sexual violence in conflict, in support of the President's Six Pillar Policy of September 2012: *"Foundations of a New Beginning"*.

The appointment of the Somalia National Government is considered the most significant political development in over twenty years in Somalia and the security gains in south central Somalia including in newly recovered areas presents an opportunity for a new phase of stabilization, statebuilding and peacebuilding. However, very high numbers of incidents of sexual violence have been reported consistently particularly in internally displaced camps and settlements in Mogadishu and surrounding areas. Women and girls are also targeted by bandits and militias while in transit, and upon arrival in refugee camps. There exists a deep culture of silence and fear regarding crimes of sexual violence, which significantly impacts on reporting and response. The Government of Somalia and the United Nations call on all parties to immediately cease such violations and put in place preventive measures.

The Government at the level of the President and the cabinet is committed to address this problem in a comprehensive manner and as a matter of priority. This includes holding all perpetrators to account. The Government also reiterates its commitment to cooperate with the United Nations in strengthening the capacity of the Police and Judiciary on investigating and prosecution of sexual violence crimes, as well as improving service delivery.

Furthermore, as a signal of commitment, and in accordance to United Nations Security Council resolution 2093 (2013), 1960 (2010) and other national and international obligations, the Federal Republic of Somalia, with support from the United Nations, is committed to own, lead and undertake the following measures:

- Issuing through the respective chains of command of the Army and Police, command orders prohibiting sexual violence, and reinforcing the commitment for zero-tolerance of such violations in Army and Police Codes of Conduct.
- Reiterating the clear signal that impunity will not be tolerated by undertaking investigations of alleged violations and ensuring punishment of perpetrators, through the criminal justice system.
- Developing and implementing a comprehensive strategy to prevent and respond to sexual violence, as well as encouraging and supporting the work of service providers.
- Implementing procedures/protocols to ensure the protection of victims, witnesses, journalists and others who report on sexual violence.
- Strengthening the protection of internally displaced camps and establishing measures to protect women and girls in the camps from sexual violence.
- In line with the National Security and Stabilization Plan, establish and professionalize the unit of the Somali Police Force tasked to address the needs of women, ensure training for Somali Security forces on prevention of sexual violence, recruit and train female officers, and undertake efforts to vet all elements being integrated into the national security forces and institutions to ensure that those who have committed grave human rights violations, including sexual violence, are excluded from positions of leadership and responsibility.
- Strengthening the legal framework on sexual violence through enactment, review or harmonisation of relevant legislation.
- In line with strengthening the rule of law, reform the Penal Code on the crime of rape, support the Office of the Attorney General to develop specialized investigation capacity for sexual violence crimes, train magistrates (including women magistrates and other women in the justice sector), build capacity for justice mechanisms at local level, raise awareness for women on legal procedures, and address protection of women in traditional justice systems.
- Ensuring access to services including medical, psychosocial and legal aid to survivors of sexual violence, including in newly accessible areas.

The Government of Somalia designates the National Human Rights Commission as the focal point institution to work with the United Nations on Sexual Violence and the implementation of the commitments outlined above. The Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation will continue to be the point of contact for the SRSG-SVC.

The Government of Somalia and the United Nations will work with AMISOM to strengthen its prevention efforts and response on sexual violence in its activities and operations.

The Government of Somalia together with partners will commit resources for the implementation of the priorities outlined above, and calls on donors to provide additional support as appropriate.

The United Nations will continue to support the Federal Republic of Somalia through the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) and the UN Country Team, as well as the Office of the Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, and the UN Action Network Against Sexual Violence in Conflict. The UN Team of Experts on Rule of Law/Sexual Violence in Conflict, in cooperation with the United Kingdom's Prevention on Sexual Violence Initiative and other relevant partners, will also support the implementation of a framework of cooperation in line with the priorities expressed in this Communiqué. In this regard, the Federal Republic of Somalia will facilitate a follow up technical visit to Somalia by the TOE, to help develop this framework.

Federal Republic of Somalia
Mr. Hassan Sheikh Mohamud
President

United Nations
Mr. Jan Eliasson
Deputy Secretary – General

Federal Republic of Somalia
Ms. Fawzia Yusuf H. Adam
Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign
Affairs & International Cooperation

United Nations
Ms. Zainab Hawa Bangura
Special Representative of the
Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in
Conflict