

Press release from the Office of the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) on Sexual Violence in Conflict

**UN DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL AND THE PRESIDENT OF SOMALIA
SIGN JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ ON PREVENTION OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE**

For immediate release

Date: 7 May 2013

(London, United Kingdom) UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Zainab Hawa Bangura, welcomes today's signature of a Joint Communiqué on the Prevention of Sexual Violence by the Government of Somalia and the United Nations. UN Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson, currently attending the International Conference on Somalia in London, stressed the need to ensure that conflict-related sexual violence is addressed as part of the country's peace-building and state-building process.

“In practice, that means bringing perpetrators to justice, providing assistance to survivors, and making sure the justice system has the capacity to tackle this crime,” said Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson.

The Joint Communiqué was signed by President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud for the Federal Republic of Somalia, and by Deputy Secretary-General Eliasson for the United Nations, and was witnessed by Fawzia Yusuf H. Adam, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Somalia, and SRSG Bangura.

SRSG Bangura noted that her office is committed to increasing the support for survivors, and assisting the Government of Somalia in building its capacity to investigate, prosecute and adjudicate crimes of sexual violence, and developing and implementing the legal framework to criminalize these acts.

The Joint Communiqué lists commitments including the vetting of all individuals being integrated into the national security forces to guarantee that they have not committed human rights violations, ensuring the protection of survivors, witnesses and journalists who report on sexual violence, strengthening the protection from sexual violence for women and girls in camps for the internally displaced, ensuring access to services for survivors and encouraging and supporting the work of service providers, strengthening the rule of law, as well as building the capacity of the justice system to prevent and prosecute sexual violence crimes, including through the training of magistrates.

“We want to ensure that the Government of Somalia has all the tools it needs to achieve its stated goal of building an equitable society in which human rights are respected and communities are safe, secure and free from sexual and gender-based violence. I am

confident that the Joint Communiqué will help us in this endeavour,” concluded Deputy Secretary-General Eliasson.

Please find attached a signed copy of the Joint Communiqué.

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