
UN Secretary-General and World Bank Group President arrive in Mogadishu, pledge support for regional peace, security and development

Mogadishu, 29 October 2014 – United Nations Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, and World Bank Group President, Jim Yong Kim, arrived in Mogadishu to pledge support for Somalia's transition and for efforts to strengthen security and development across the wider Horn of Africa region.

The joint high level visit comes at an important time for Somalia which continues to make significant security gains against the Al-Shabaab insurgency, and is pushing forward essential political reforms with the goal of holding national elections in 2016. The delegation will also include Islamic Development Bank President Ahmad Mohamed Ali and senior representatives of the African Development Bank, the African Union, and the European Union.

“The UN, World Bank Group and indeed the international community as a whole are committed to helping the Somali people. Somalia is on the right track and I am confident that its people will rise to the challenges its country still faces. We are here to tell Somalis that they are not alone and that we will redouble our efforts to help them protect the gains made in recent years,” Ban Ki-moon said.

Somalia faces political, security, development and humanitarian challenges from its over two decades of conflict, but recent advances, including the creation of regional administrations in close cooperation with the Federal Government, are encouraging. Building a more stable Somalia will ensure greater security and economic prosperity across the Horn of Africa.

Somalia's most vulnerable and marginalised communities, including the displaced, returnees, women and youth need to be included in the process of peacebuilding and statebuilding. Continued political unity will be essential for Somalia to meet its goals for democratic transformation.

“Somalia's transition is a unique opportunity for the nation and the wider Horn of Africa region to improve the livelihoods of the people by engaging them in productive economic activities,” said Kim. “Political stability and human security are important pre-requisites for reducing extreme poverty and increasing shared prosperity for the Somali people.”

The United Nations and the World Bank, in cooperation with other partners, are committed to accelerate their programmes on the ground to support Somalia's political, security and development goals, as set out in Somalia's “New Deal” Compact agreed last year. The peacebuilding process and the scaling up of international assistance will require inclusive and transparent efforts by all.

The government and its partners also need to find a more sustainable solution to the frequent drought and famines, which have left the majority of the population poor and vulnerable. Access of the poor and marginalized to economic opportunities is a key priority. In this context, the Secretary-General also called for international partners to help meet the funding gap for humanitarian assistance to Somalia. Over 3 million people in the country are in need of assistance, while the humanitarian appeal for 2014 remains only 34% funded.

The high level delegation will meet with Somalia's President Hassan Sheikh Mohamoud to discuss the country's transition and its critical importance to human security and economic prospects in the region. They will also meet with Prime Minister Abdiweli Sheikh Ahmed, Speaker of the Federal Parliament Mohamed Osman Jawari, senior Government officials and representatives of Somalia's civil society.

The trip marks the Secretary-General's second visit to Somalia - he previously visited in December 2011 - and the first visit for the World Bank President. The Bank has stepped up its engagement in Somalia in recent years, evidence of the country's ongoing transformation after a generation of conflict.

Contacts:

The United Nations:

In Mogadishu: Aleem Siddique, +254 41 350-6862, +252 699 225 783, siddiquea@un.org

In New York: Vannina Maestracci, +1 (917) 367 0293, maestracci@un.org

The World Bank Group:

In Nairobi: Peter Warutere, +254 20 293 6444, pwarutere@worldbank.org

In Washington: Aby Toure, +1 (202) 473 8302, akonate@worldbank.org