



IPI's Special Representatives of the Secretary-General (SRSG) Series Presents:

“Stabilizing Somalia”

Featuring Augustine Mahiga,
UN Special Representative and Head of the UN Political Office for Somalia

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International Peace Institute
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TRANSCRIPTION

Speaker: **Augustine Mahiga**, *United Nations Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Political Office for Somalia*

Chair: **John Hirsch**, *Senior Adviser to IPI President Terje Rød-Larsen, International Peace Institute*

Transcript edited by IPI

John Hirsch:

On behalf of the President of the International Peace Institute, Terje Rod-Larsen, and my colleagues I would very much like to welcome all of you to this meeting on stabilizing Somalia, with a Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia, Ambassador Augustine Mahiga. This is part of IPI's series of meetings with SRSGs which has previously included discussions on Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

It's a really very great pleasure to welcome Ambassador Mahiga here at IPI. In his previous position he, as the Permanent Representative of Tanzania from 2003-2010, became both a great supporter of the IPI Africa program as well as a personal friend. It's just wonderful to have you here with us today. Ambassador Mahiga's distinguished career in addition to his work here at the UN has included assignments for the United Nation's High Commissioner for Refugees, as coordinator of the Refugee Emergency Operation for the Great Lakes in the mid-1990s, as well as assignments in India, Italy, Malta and the Holy Sea. As an academic, he has taught International Affairs and Regional Cooperation at the University of Dar es Salaam.

All this background explains why the Secretary-General selected Ambassador Mahiga for the very challenging task of seeking to achieve the stabilization and reconstruction of the Somali state. As we are all very aware, Somalia's government collapsed 20 years ago as President Mohamed Siad Barre, faced

with chaos and an advancing insurgency, fled from Mogadishu in January 1991; civil war engulfed the country, the capital was heavily destroyed, a famine crisis in southern Somalia not dissimilar from the present one – photos are just identical just 20 years later – was the immediate consequence of protracted conflict and economic collapse. Three United Nations peace operations from 1992-1995 sought valiantly to alleviate the humanitarian crisis and rebuild this state. After complex events with which you are broadly familiar, and I'm not going to recapitulate them for you, United Nations peacekeeping forces were withdrawn from Somalia. That was 16 years ago.

To its credit, the African Union Mission in Somalia has sought since 2007 to stabilize a security situation and to face the challenge from Al-Shabaab to the transitional federal government, but it has been the role and the responsibility of the Special Representative to seek a long-absent durable political solution to the protracted crisis in the country. I would add that this is an issue: the search for a durable political solution has been largely missing, almost totally missing, from the American and international media coverage, which always just focuses on the immediate famine crisis. It doesn't talk about this.

At the Security Council last Wednesday, Ambassador Mahiga offered grounds for some optimism that a new moment for stabilization and coming together of the main Somali political forces may be at hand. "The game has changed" – I think was your remark in the Council. The UN and you personally are very much at the forefront of this effort, so let me congratulate you for all you have done to arrive at this moment. We're all looking forward to hearing your views and I really thank you in advance for sharing your insights with us. So Ambassador Mahiga will talk for 20-25 minutes. We'll then have an opportunity for a Q&A and I turn the floor over to you.

Augustine Mahiga:

All of you, John thank you very much for giving me this opportunity. It's so nice to come back to New York to see so many familiar faces, many friends and colleagues I've worked with and of course to have a platform here at the Institute which has been one of my favorite places during the seven years I was the Permanent Representative of Tanzania to the United Nations.

This afternoon I want to share with you a positive message but I don't want to be overly optimistic but realistic. Somalia is at a crossroad, which presents an opportunity for stabilizing that country as it enters the 21st year of instability and without a central government.

There are three main developments which make me optimistic; they are interwoven and interrelated. The first one is there is a new opportunity of a more inclusive political process which is unfolding in a manner that has never unfolded before. I shall elaborate on that. The second is that the security situation in Mogadishu and Somalia is better today than it has ever been in the past 21 years. The third is an irony. There is an unprecedented famine where the drought in the Horn of Africa has developed into a famine in the Horn of Africa but not in other countries except in Somalia and in the area predominately controlled by the Al-Shabaab.

The famine is a tragedy, but the famine has given an opportunity that feeds positively on the political process and on the security situation; first of all, because it refocuses attention on Somalia. As you said, there is not much attention. Secondly, because the famine has contributed to the weakening of the Al-Shabaab and that helps on the area of security.

Why do I think this is a positive trend which has never presented itself before now? Let me briefly give you a historical perspective on this Somalia crisis. Somalia is the only raging conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa that has continued and abated, and after the solution is held in Sudan which went on for over 22 years, this is the longest running conflict in sub-Saharan Africa. If you include South Africa, it is the second, but in South Africa a solution was found after 50 years, so I'm equally optimistic a solution can be found for Somalia. But Somalia has

reached the stage where it is because, collectively, in the international community we haven't given it the attention it deserves. You have collectively pointed out that after the collapse of the military regime of Siad Barre and his flight from Somalia there was an effort by the international community. It wasn't strictly a United Nations peacekeeping force, but it was a multinational force sanctioned by the United Nations consisting of up to 47,000 troops led by the United States. The primary purpose was to address a humanitarian situation. There was famine then, but it wasn't as bad as it is today.

The political agenda was relegated in the background, but that effort by the multinational force to bring assistance and relief to Somalia ended in a fiasco. Firstly, because the emphasis on the humanitarian was well placed but it forgot to address the political. After the downing of the Black Hawk, literally, that multinational force left – actually left in disarray – and the whole world neglected Somalia. The famine was not addressed satisfactorily; the politics were not even touched. If anything, that presence complicated the politics of Somalia by creating resentment and alienation of the Somali people from the rest of the international community. So it was a negative development. The world left, the Somalis said go and they were left on their own devices.

That neglect was fatal because the raging civil war dominated by warlords degenerated into three dangerous phenomena. One is that warlordism intensified and literally split the country and accentuated what doesn't exist anywhere in Africa: clans. Academics here and politicians and diplomats are familiar with analyzing African conflicts in terms of ethnicity, regionalism, religion, but Somalia stands as a country until you get into it with one religion, with one language and one culture. But beneath it there is clanism, which is far deeper rooted than any ethnic divisions or regional divisions I've seen in Africa. Little did I know that clanism would be such a divisive factor in a situation of political vacuum as it was. So the civil war did feed on the clanism and the warlords; that was a unique phenomenon in African conflicts.

But certainly, that neglect created a vacuum at a time when international terrorism was festering in Afghanistan, in Iraq, in Pakistan, and everywhere. And this was an opportunity for the Jihadists' agenda to look for a foothold and a bridge pad in Africa. Here was the opportunity in Africa.

The 1998 bombing of Dar es Salaam in Nairobi was maybe running trials by international terrorists, organized from Mogadishu. But that was the beginning and it was a fertile ground and that has continued and abated until the first signs of defeat on the 6th of August when Shabaab withdrew from Mogadishu. But I'll explain that also.

The third manifestation of that neglect was that the conflict festered, continued, and has taken another manifestation—international piracy—which nobody really took seriously in the world, security discourse, except in novels and history books of Long John Silver and there—and others. But now it has come back in vengeance, with vengeance in Somalia, all this due to the neglect.

As late as 2005 and 2006, I remember leading Tanzania in the Security Council when the agenda was two-thirds Africa, Somalia received very little attention. At most, there could be a press statement, not even a presidential statement, let alone a resolution. It was only later that we started with the international contact group that attention has begun.

Now this neglect is something that we need to address. The UN came, fortunately, and the Somalis also tried to put something together. But whatever the Somalis did it was to bring together warring factions. If it wasn't the warlords, it was the regional clan leaders who were fighting. And the process in Nairobi was one of the efforts by the Somalis that went on for two and a half years to cobble together some kind of an agreement among the Somalis. They gave themselves five years with a transitional charter and some institutions and some transitional tasks and they hoped in five years there could be stability. But it was an agreement among

warring factions, among warlords.

The parliament that was formed spent two years in Nairobi before it moved to Somalia. The vacuum continued. The Islamic cults started to some semblance, but indeed it was another conflict between the so-called transitional government and the Islamic cults that eventually led to the intervention by Ethiopia, and there was another crisis.

The UN established the political office, not in Mogadishu, but in Nairobi, where it still is. And there was another effort in 2008: the Djibouti Agreement. But this, again, was an agreement between the ARS, the Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia, which was the Islamic cult in exile, and the transition of federal government. But many important actors were left out. It gave itself two years, plus the five years—seven years—which were ending in July this year, and nothing had been achieved.

In that period, there were 15 attempts to form a government. They all failed. Even when the Transitional Federal Government was established in Mogadishu, it was only a few blocks in Mogadishu. When they took over in August last year, I ran deep into another crisis. This was between the President and the Prime Minister.

So my first assignment was to reconcile the President and the Prime Minister. The government of that Prime Minister failed, so we had to form another government. And as I'm beginning on a clean slate, I have a government. Let's get moving, we have nine months before the end of transition in July. I was optimistic. But then a new crisis developed between not the Prime Minister and the President, but the President and the speaker.

For six months there was total paralysis. The speaker and the President couldn't even establish eye contact. Time was ticking; July's the end of the transition. Mr. Mahiga, do something. The Security Council came to Nairobi on the 25th of August. Do something. I said, what is this something? Get them to talk and resolve on how to end the transition.

The dispute was whether to have elections in that July to finish the transition or to extend the period by one year. I tried with the help of President Yusuf Ahmed and we got what we call the Kampala Accord. This was an agreement between the speaker and the President to break the political impasse and they started talking. But to the price of that were two.

One was we need a new government because the new Prime Minister had failed politically to bridge the gap between the executive and the legislature. In fact, it was one of those letters that dismissed Parliament. And Parliament was saying we are going to impeach the government and we are heading to a situation where we're going to have two governments in Mogadishu: a government of President Sharif that refuses to leave, a government by Parliament that was going to be elected. And what do you do? We succeeded to make them talk and we postponed all the elections and gave ourselves one year.

But in that change of government there was another positive thing. We have agreed on a roadmap. What do we do in these 12 months? The transitional tasks that were never accomplished before now have to be distilled from 18 to four, and let us make sure that this road map this time around is not just between factions, but it's signed by the people and the major stakeholders of the political process. This is the significance of the road map which was signed on the 6th of September, not in Djibouti, not in Bagati, but in Mogadishu for the first time in 20 years.

And the signatures were not only Parliament and the executive, but original entities as well, and we are bringing in the process, the Civil Society. It is a Somali-owned process that is representative with a focus on four main areas: security, constitution making, political outreach and reconciliation, and good governance and governors.

But the importance of this are like Bagati or Djibouti is that it is all-inclusive. In the 20 years there is a ground swell among the Somalis of demanding the end of transition and a participation in politics. Diaspora is a generation old with professionals and well organized. It is part of that ground swell. The leadership, as expressed by the Kampala Accord, knows now it cannot procrastinate. So the convergence of a Somali ground swell and a realization by the leadership is what is captured in the road map and that's why, to me, that is optimism.

What is the second source of optimism? It is the security situation. For the first time, Mogadishu is no longer two blocks or three blocks controlled by the TFG. It is 95%. The 5% are really pockets of the Shabaab who didn't withdraw on the 6th of August because they come from Mogadishu. The AMISOM is very optimistic that it is mopping up operation that can secure the rest of Mogadishu in a few weeks. Of course, if the remaining 3,000 troops are deployed and there is a message they convey to the Security Council and deployed expeditiously.

But it's not only Mogadishu that has been secured, there is a swath of territory from central to western and southern Somalia, bordering Kenya and Ethiopia, which has been secured by militias allied to the TFG. These developments spell optimism as well.

Why did the Shabaab withdraw? The war that has been going on in Mogadishu has been a conventional warfare. AMISOM deployment was literally a bridge head in the true sense of the military word. Not even a block landed at the airport and they deployed. And they've been fighting, inching forward in a war of attrition.

Chapter seven, flexible rules of engagement, but, frankly, that has been peace enforcement. The TFG has been training its troops and getting close to 10,000, but you train them with the help of the European Union in **Behanga** or in Kenya or in Ethiopia, literally you bring these boys straight from the training camps to the front line. They have no command, they have no control. They have no initiation, whatever. Everything is on the front line and that war has been going on.

Shabaab has been well resourced. They hired in fighters of Jihad all the way from Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, Yemen—my friend, ambassador, not sponsored by the government—but from all over; even the US, Canada, Scandinavia, Somalis fighting because they're Jihadist. They have resources after they withdrew some of the arsenals that were left behind, are just mind boggling how powerful they were. But AMISOM has driven them out. Where are they? They are still in Somalia. But certainly, tactics are going to change, but the conventional warfare has produced results. So that is the second source of optimism.

The Shabaab who is itself, leadership, is in disarray. The money that they used to get from the Middle East, the Arab Spring has undermined those sources in various ways. The famine has eroded whatever control they had. If the population is not dead or dying, it is walked away from them. It has no population and they are divided among themselves on how to approach this issue. So that is another opportunity.

The humanitarian, as they said, too late, too little, but it's coming. We need to keep world attention for another six months. But there is an opportunity in that this world attention coupled with these positive developments and the weakening of Shabaab can be governized and capitalized on something positive. This is the message I brought to the Council.

We are going to have a meeting here on the 23rd, a mini summit. We want to have a common position to support the roadmap, to mobilize Air Force to support AMISOM, to mobilize resources for the humanitarian effort, and that's why I think cautiously that we have reached a stage where there is an opportunity which has never existed in the past 21 years. But there are also challenges ahead and difficult times which can only be jointly overcome if we work together and the attention on Somalia continues.

Let me stop here, I'm sure, allowing some more questions and clarify more issues. Thank you, John.

Hirsch: Well, thank you, Augustine, very much. And this is a very different message from the one that we certainly read about in the newspapers and the media coverage.

We're going to open the floor to questions.

Abdullah Alsaidi: Thank you very much. I think Augustine does not know I'm no longer the Ambassador of Yemen.

Mahiga: I didn't know.

Alsaidi: No, okay. But in any case I just want to second your argument that Yemen is in Somalia, but in this last battle in the province of Abyan in South Yemen, we captured Somalia's war from Shabaab. So the relationship between the two I think you have to pay attention to. There is a lot of exchange of assistance between the two.

My only question, Augustine, is you spoke very optimistically and you know I follow Somalia quite well. We are always having optimism, but the reversals come very soon after that. I remember during the Islamic courts which controlled piracy and then I think it was a mistake, my personal view, that they were toppled. And incidentally, the leaders of the Islamic courts are the ones who are ruling today in Mogadishu. But are you—are you afraid of a reversal in Somalia?

Hirsch: So let's take Francis, please.

Francis Deng: Well, thank you very much for a very clear, lucid message. And let me say that I share your inclination to be optimistic because optimism is a very important tool for action as long as it is not blind optimism. Pessimism leads to dead end. Now John, this is going to be a speech. It's preceding a question.

Hirsch: That's okay.

Deng: We know that in Africa most of our systems of governance are really from outside: constitutions, constitutionalism, institutions, all of that. And that is probably one of the reasons why they have not always been very effective. We have, in Somalia, the fact that after all these assumptions of homogeneity being a source for unity and strength we discovered, as you correctly said, that clan divisions could be even more profound. Quarrels within the family can be much worse than quarrels with strangers. And that is why, as you say, it has been so bad.

But at the same time, because clanism became more or less the centerpiece, people thought that in Somalia we might have the first African state that was grounded on its own cultural institutions and values. And you could even say that this seems to be the case in Somaliland. We didn't figure in your presentation.

Why is Somaliland succeeding to the point where clan system is being used effectively to govern from the grass roots and Somalia is not succeeding? What is the value of the possibility of building on the clan system to have a genuine culturally based African system in Somalia?

Hirsch: Excellent question. I'm going to take this gentleman here, then Warren will come back.

David Tereshchuk: Thank you. I'm David Tereshchuk from The Media Beat, one less negative part of the media than perhaps you were referring to earlier. But thank you for that very clear exposition of, well, I guess realistic optimism.

I was intrigued when you were explaining the overall context and you drew in, of course, the unavoidable mentions of international terrorism and the bombings in

Dar and Nairobi. I'm wondering, although I know your prime concern is stability and good governance for Somalia itself, I'm just wondering if your optimism extends to the international field and whether international security is now less threatened by Al-Shabaab because of what you were saying.

Hirsch:

Okay, so let's go back please. And then we'll have a couple of more rounds.

Mahiga:

Why is this process different from the others and hopefully won't reverse? I have really three explanations. One is that it is an inclusive undertaking by the major stakeholders. And this is insurance that it is a Somali-owned process. The key players, like the regions, were left out, but that is where viabilities, and they're proven to be viable and they're great players in Somali politics.

The civil society before was left out. And who are the civil society? Elders, religious leaders, business committed, the diaspora, women. They have always been left out in the politics. In the roadmap I've endeavored, we have endeavored, they have endeavored to include these elements. So inclusiveness and we should try to maintain this inclusiveness. In the run up to the Mogadishu conference we had to do a major initiative to bring Puntland president and the Mogadishu Sheikh Sharif to talk and visit

Second, as I said, it is a rare consummation of commonality between the ground swell, the people of Somalia, who want to really to end the transition and to get the peace process moving, and the realization by these leaders who had always retreated and sought to prolong their stay. The Kampala Accord was not only to break the impasse, but to commit them to an undertaking for the road map. That is the second.

The third, never before have there been compliance mechanisms, benchmarks, timelines, and mechanisms, which are at three levels based in Mogadishu technical monitoring group, international in character, at a technical level. A policy monitoring group international in character based in Mogadishu and Nairobi. And for the first time those who have been following the Burundi peace process, original initiative, for the first time the heads of state and government of the eager countries and the East African community have agreed to provide political oversight over the roadmap as they did in Burundi when they told Isaaq you comply or else. This is it. The Security Council has sent a warning. Comply with the roadmap; all future system will be contingent upon the compliance.

We are talking of consequences. We are not waiving the consequences yet, but the Somalia leadership knows that there are going to be consequences. But you don't apply conditionalities before you empower the implementation. So these are some of the issues that we hope will do.

Why has Somalia, Somaliland succeeded? Somalilands, to me, is a role model. Indeed, it is based on a clan, the Isaaq, but the rest of Somalia, although predominately, like Puntland is based on one clan, but they're mixed clans, Mogadishu, Kismayo, and all these places. So you cannot really rely entirely on one clan that is not necessarily determiners with the territory. In fact, clanism could be divisive, especially if it is in an area where there are mixed clans. But the reason why Somaliland is succeeding is because Somaliland has been inclusive.

They have an upper house of elders. They have an elected house. They have arrangements of the various social groups that provide checks and balances. And this is what we are seeking through these inclusive politics. And in the constitutional process we cannot avoid it, but everybody says gone are the days of centralized authority in Somalia. The future of Somalia is a devolution of power. It's in federalism and this is what we seek to achieve out of the constitutional process. But federalism and devolution of power, that is inclusive at the same time. It's a difficult exercise, but this what we are seeking to achieve.

Recruitment is going on. Those who have died in the street of Mogadishu are not only Somalis, they are Kenyans, they are Ugandans, they are Tanzanians, they

are Americans, they are Canadians, they are Scandinavians. And the whole purpose of Jihadism, you should understand--it's a global agenda, and if Eastern Africa can be secured properly, the other area in West Africa starting in Mauritania and that whole bit of Algeria is to link up in an arc. I think there are specialists here on international Jihadism in Africa, but that is, in fact, even if Somalia can be taken care of quickly, it will despair the others. On that score, of course, the international campaign I think has to be intensified. It is not a Somalia agenda only, it is an Eastern Africa and an African agenda so it's a real threat, I agree with you.

Hirsch: So let's take another round Warren and then let's get some people back here in the room.

Warren Hoge: Warren Hoge, IPI. Augustine, I wanted to ask you about two comments you made in your opening statement. One is about the relative security of Mogadishu, which you said is the best it's been in 20 years. Does that mean the United Nations can now function at all from Mogadishu or must you still do your work from your base in Nairobi? And the second question, sort of the same point, is about the Diaspora. I remember a meeting here at IPI a year or two ago in which one of the points that was made was that Somalis, there is a large Somali Diaspora and that Somalis are very talented and that Somalis do very well often in the countries they go to. And so my question is, these Somalis--are any of them coming back to stay, or must there be more assurances of security before you can woo them back?

Hirsch: Great, so gentleman there on the aisle.

Walter Kemp: Walter Kemp, also from IPI. I was just wondering if you could tell us a bit more about links between organized crime and some of the political groups in Somalia, particularly to do with revenues from piracy and Al-Shabaab but other forms of organized crimes as well.

Hirsch: I think his question was about moving your office to Mogadishu. So if somebody else would like to come in here and have a question, I certainly have some questions. Please. Great. Kate, why don't you get up too and introduce yourself?

Kate Hunt: Hi, Kate Hunt from CARE International. Thank you very much for your presentation. Following up on the point about better security now in Mogadishu, clearly people are really anxious to help step up the humanitarian effort which has been very difficult. I'd be interested in knowing how you see the next stage of the humanitarian effort within this security environment such as it is for the moment.

Hirsch: Terrific.

Mahiga: My marching order from the Secretary-General was establish a light footprint in Mogadishu and Somalia. I'm telling the Secretary-General that now I'm ready for heavy footprint. The limitation is the security part of it, I think is being taken care of, although with withdrawal of Shabaab does not mean that the terrorists' threat has been eliminated. They are changing tactics; they are going in what's their best terrorist tactics: urban warfare, side booms and explosive devices. But certainly the territory is much wider that we can operate now and that's why I asked the Security Council last week for a guard force of 300 over and above the 12,000 troops that the Council has authorized to enable us to move around, of course with all the cautions that is necessary and for static guard.

But we are moving and the limitation is just space. At any one time I have six personnel from my office in Mogadishu but there are more UN agencies and more who are going to Mogadishu. Every single building in Mogadishu, every single building, has been destroyed and without exception you need extensive repairs. We can all be accommodated in the army base and at the airport but we are crowded. We literally are queuing to be there. We are present in Puntland, my office is established, 15 staff are there. In Galcaio, 15, where there was none a year ago.

But we want more presence in Mogadishu, and certainly I go to Mogadishu on average every ten days and stay there ranging from one night to three nights. So it's possible to go. The airport is out of rocket range, and certainly we are moving and we have to go. Not only for the sake of presence, because the imperative of politics needed to interact with the Somalis on a daily basis. You cannot operate out of Nairobi, there's no way you can do that, which is linked to the humanitarian. Now the humanitarian situation is compelling that you have to be there and help. But we are very mindful of neutrality and impartiality. Their movements cannot be linked to AMISOM. We have to find – in the broader secure atmosphere are the challenging ways of continuing to provide assistance.

But there are three strategies for the humanitarian. The refugees, who we must continue. Mogadishu, where out of the six districts one is classified famine is Mogadishu itself because of IDPs who have arrived there. In two months we have had an influx of 400,000 from the Shabaab-controlled areas. Third is this buffer area, which is relatively easy to access but is fraught with landmines and ordinances and infrastructure for humanitarian work that's going on. Fourth is this area of stability, Puntland, Somaliland, where there is draught but still there is no famine but you need to provide humanitarian work. The most difficult is the still Shabaab controlled area in rural Somalia. The most effective organization like WFP has been banned from operating there.

There are few selected ones that can still go there, and myself, UNICEF, Red Cross, Norwegian Council. But to monitor what is happening there is still a problem. Access is conditional, security is tenuous. And this is where our biggest challenge is. National staff are working there, international staff of course the high-risk areas in the Shabaab controlled areas—but that is the nature of our work. We have to continue working and that's how we're going. Piracy, I didn't exactly get to.

Hirsch: Okay, you want to ask your question again. I don't think either of us got your question clearly.

Hirsch: I was talking to John when you asked.

Kemp: The question was about the links of revenue generated from piracy and how this has an effect on the political actors, and if there are clear links between certain piracy or other organized crime groups and Al-Shabaab, for example.

Mahiga: As I'm talking, there are 19 ships that have been held on the average for more than 12 months, and 400 people who are—no, actually, 900 sailors who are held as hostages and 400 Somalis who have gone unprosecuted. Some have gone into Paris a second or third time because there is no prosecution. Revenues are lucrative, ranging from five million a ship to ten million, maybe more. If it's an oil tanker, they've been getting more. Our monitoring, United Nations Monitoring Group, is now doing some work to trace the money, where does the money go. All indications show that the money doesn't—that which ends in Somalia is a fraction—the money ends elsewhere, outside Somalia and in all continents. There are many beneficiaries to this.

It has become an industry in league with drug and human trafficking. Piracy is probably the most lucrative, no taxation, readily to risks and very little overhead costs. You only need to feed a few people and you get your money, just be patient. There have been speculations on whether the money gets to some of the leaders—the monitoring has become very, very tight and we don't have that kind of evidence. Does the money go to the terrorists? That again hasn't been established, but they do levy, I think they levy taxes in the ports where there is a piracy infrastructure. By piracy infrastructure, I mean that is where the ships come to prepare, get the fuel before they go to sea and they come while waiting to get ransom. They feed the people who have been—you know it's a very simple infrastructure.

Some of the money—you'd be surprised, it really goes into squandering. I mean the young people who—there is speculation that a lot of money is going into real

estate in East Africa. We are tracing the money in countries like Kenya even, Tanzania and Old East. So we are really doing some homework. But these millions of dollars need to be understood. And there are bosses that are controlling this business. And the next challenge to the monitoring group is to trace the money and where it ends up. But it's really big business. And the deployment of the Navies in the Indian Ocean – the highest concentration of naval aircraft, NATO and the European Union since the Second World War.

With a 24-hour air surveillance and these little boats are now pushing further south in the direction of Tanzania, Mozambique, and South Africa. Others are going further east with the mother ships in the direction of India, but India has become very tough so they are plying along the high seas. The situation has not been—the deterrent has not worked very well. Prosecutions, they're still bickering on whether they should be prosecuted in Somalia or there should be a regional court or they should be prosecuted in the other countries.

We have not yet agreed; the Security Council is seized with this problem. But the problem and solution is on land, a political solution, and that is where law and order begins and the others are real remedial measures. It is the political process that will provide a lasting solution to the problem of piracy off the coast of Somalia and now in the entire Indian Ocean.

Hirsch:

I want to ask you two questions, Augustine, while all of you are thinking about the other questions you want to ask. One is you made a reference to the political support by the heads of state of IGAD and the EAC for the political process, but you've not spoken specifically about the position and policy of Ethiopia and Eritrea and as we all know Ethiopia, instigated by the Bush administration, actually attacked Somalia in about 2006, if I'm not mistaken, made matters by the likes of many people much worse, knocked out the Islamic Courts, which at least some people thought had a role to play, a more positive role to play. So I wonder about that, how you see Ethiopia's position. Have they committed themselves to a sort of a non-aggression policy, or are they kind of holding their options open?

And then my second question, because you called Somaliland a success, which I also think is the case, I had opportunity to visit there in 2001, I was very impressed by what you summarized here. However, as we know, neither the United Nations nor the African Union is prepared to recognize Somaliland as an independent country member state. So what is your thought about that? Would it be desirable, given that they are a success, to cede to their desire to become a member state, or are they somehow to be left hanging out without that opportunity? So I thought as far as you'd like to go, and then can we take one more. Okay, please, the gentleman there.

Thomas Berglund:

Thank you. I'm Thomas Berglund from the Swedish Mission to the UN. Thank you so much, Mr. Mahiga, for being here and to brief us and discuss this important issue with us, and more important for your work for Somalia, not least with regard to the roadmap that was adopted recently. I think we would agree with what you said, it's an important step forward, the roadmap, for the same reasons that you mentioned. It has ownership benchmarks, timelines and mechanisms.

Still it's obvious that I mean the challenges are enormous. One important aspect is likely to be the extent that the TFG is able to do outreach and if you will sell the roadmap and the process to the broader Somalia community. One important aspect here is also the work on the new constitution which, I mean, could be a blessing in disguise in a way since its support of the roadmap and obviously makes outreach a necessity. So I wonder what you see there when it comes to outreach to the broader Somalia community. Do you see any strategy emerging on behalf of the TFG? Thank you.

Hirsch:

We'll take one more. Joanna.

Joanna Weschler:

Thank you, John. Joanna Weschler, Security Council Report. I wanted to ask you, Mr. Mahiga, about the sanctions. Sanctions against Somalia have existed, I think,

for the longest time of any current sanctioned regimes imposed by the Security Council. And in the last couple of years there were some new sanctions added on actors in Eritrea. There has been, this summer, a lot of talk about possibly expanding those sanctions. Is this the way to go, is this something that you see as a useful and potentially promising tool?

Mahiga:

On Ethiopian academics who have written on military regimes in Africa, I'm sure have come up to see the regime of Siad Barre as a class in its own in that it went on an expansion policy, the irredentism of the five-pointed star to redeem northern Kenya, the Ogaden, Djibouti, and of course, Somaliland and the southern Somalia. And the collapse of Siad Barre was precisely because of this irredentism and outwards. Siad Barre was 40 kilometers from Ethiopia from Addis Ababa, 40 kilometers.

The Russians, the Americans say to stop, "Stop there." Siad, "No I have to occupy Addis Ababa." He had covered over 1,500 kilometers, had the best army, the biggest navy, the biggest air force after South Africa. The Cubans had to be brought in from Angola, literally landing as they were fighting and stopped and broke the back. They cut the Somalia Army and it couldn't proceed any further, and that was the end of Siad Barre. The Ethiopians have never forgotten that. What the Islamic Courts did, not only they refused to reconcile with the TFG formed in Nairobi but they threatened, they started a similar policy to reclaim the Ogaden.

I don't know whether it was entirely the United States that said "go," but I think the Ethiopians have never forgotten this. And they saw in the Islamic courts something that was dangerous; it reminded them of the 40 kilometers. But when the United Nations, under my predecessor Ould-Abdallah, called the Djibouti Agreement the ARS, the remnants of the Islamic courts and the TFG, they came together through the Djibouti Agreement, the Ethiopians withdrew. And frankly, in my work, I found Ethiopians really tremendous allies in seeing the stability of Somalia. The policy of the African Union is defined by IGAD and the biggest player in IGAD is Ethiopia. If you are talking of armies of today and all this, it is IGAD. IGAD decides. African Union endorses, believe me.

So Ethiopia is a key player but it is positive and I count on them. The problem with Eritrea, as the sanctions debate here showed in the Council, is that Eritrea had replayed their conflict; their replay is in Somalia which is unfortunate. And I think I don't want to go in the details but the report of the Sanctions Committee did show the extent to which this—surprisingly now, Eritrea is coming around. Eritrea walked away from IGAD. A month ago they walked in in the Council of Ministers and they said, "No, no, you are not welcome." He said, "No, I walked out, I'm walking in." But I said, "No, this has to be decided by the heads of states." I was in Kampala when Isaias was in Kampala, and I said, "President Museveni, can you ask them why they are not recognizing the Somali government? They said, "Tell Mr. Mahiga to continue with the roadmap if it is inclusive enough, we shall." I mean they're the new dynamics that are going on.

So I'm looking for better days. Certainly the Ethiopians are a key player because they have their national interest. But like anything else, the national interest of a neighbor is best in stability rather than chaos. When you don't like your neighbor, you can walk away and arrange another house. But for a country, you cannot walk away. The stability of your neighbor is your stability. So I want to believe that Ethiopia has a vested interest in the stability of Somalia and vice versa.

Somaliland of course is, as I said—you know, Napoleon said don't attack your enemy when he's retreating. Would it really be fair to break Somalia when it is sick? The position of the United Nations is for unity, integrity and sovereignty of Somalia. Let us fix this house. Then this issue can come later. If really the United Nations went in the history that we broke away Somaliland when the other part was mortally sick and in an intensive care unit, we wouldn't go well in history. I think their successes can be a moral boost to the rest of it, let them talk about it.

Somaliland postponed its independence from Britain by a few months to wait for the independence of Somalia under the Italians in order to unite, and that's when they came to the United Nations as one country. It's more complex than Sudan, it is. So I have no answer in military but I think there are merits in buying time. They are very cooperative on issues like piracy, IDP movements, and maritime resources. They work together and certainly there is no hostility between the neighbors. So the potential for them deciding their future is there.

I know in Somaliland, the talk of unification politically is a suicide, but it's an issue that I think the UN has too much on its plate to get involved at this stage. But we have to help Somaliland to continue in the positive way like they're doing: socioeconomic assistance, humanitarian assistance, which has been going on. The new policy of the United States does include Somaliland, assistance to Somaliland, and it has been replicated by other countries. Of course, Britain has a special soft spot for Somaliland, so Somaliland is there.

Recently they visited China, Somaliland President, but when they go to traveling, the Chinese ask them a very simple question. "What passports are you using?" They say they are using Somaliland passports. "Oh no, we don't recognize that." "Oh, what passports can we use?" They all ended up using their Diaspora passports, British, American and all this, even the Chinese did not recognize. They said, "You may come for development purposes but in terms of international status, not yet." And this is the difference.

Hirsch: Let's see, I thought there was one other—you answered Joanna's question.

Mahiga: Joanna, I think the...

Hirsch: She's wondered about the continuing utility of sanctions...

Mahiga: The sanctions, the sanctions on Somalia, were arms sanctions. Not to fuel the conflict, and that is where the sanctions are also applying to Eritrea. Because in that report it shows that Eritrea has been used as a conduit for bringing in arms on behalf of something and even countries supporting AMISOM and the TFG forces have to get an exemption from the Sanctions Committee. So that has worked to some extent, but of course Somalia is awash with weapons, it hasn't sanctioned it. The kind of sanctions, and what now we are calling consequences, the sanctions have never been applied on Somali's spoilers to the peace process. The consequences may, *may* touch that part of it. And there is a clause in the mandate of the monitoring group that alludes to spoilers to the peace process. I think it is clause 22 in the mandate. I'm not quite sure. So that is a potential area where it can be the tools that can be used to ensure compliance against spoilers of the peace process, not only this.

Hirsch:

Neda Mansouri: So we have time for one or two more questions before we conclude. Hi, my name is Neda Mansouri from UNDP. The monitoring group has expressed that the peace process cannot exclude the business component, and that the political process needs to kind of be linked to the business component, especially when you have the business procedures are more flexible in the Al-Shabaab controlled areas, taxes are lower, in general it's more favorable to the population to operate in the Al-Shabaab controlled areas than it is in the TFGs. Can you please shed some light on how you are directly or indirectly trying to make that linkage when you're working with the TFG? Thank you.

Mahiga: I was actually wondering if I didn't answer your question about the entrepreneurial experience of the Somalis. In Africa I know many entrepreneurial people – the Nigerians, the Somalis – maybe if you put them in one room they can compare notes. The Somalis are highly entrepreneurial and they are very successful wherever they are and there are those who are already having – Somalia today, with all the chaos, has the most elaborate telecommunications system. It's among the top five in Africa. How they do it—and it's the cheapest and the most efficient. You can call anywhere in the world if you go to Somalia. You have problems

calling from Nairobi or Dar es Salaam, not in Mogadishu. If I step out in three minutes, I go to transfer. Three minutes, the money's in Mogadishu. The most elaborate banking system. I don't know how they do it.

There is a war economy that is going on around Kismayo and the Shabaab makes a lot of money out of that. We are discussing now on how to stop ships from going to Kismayo and just offload in Mogadishu because it is fitting on the Shabaab. And I've been traveling to the Diaspora; they are ready to go, and among the social groups I'm reaching out to is SRSG, it's a business community, to bring them around the TFG, to work with the government.

When Mogadishu was liberated I got instructions from here, five days later when the Shabaab walked away, that I should meet with the business community in Bakaara Market, which is the hub, and I did. And they came and they met with me. And I said, "I want you to revive Mogadshu." They said, "Give us 30 days, 90 days. You will see vibrancy here." And they are not joking. They can do it. But like all business people, there are those who profit from the war economy, there are those who are waiting for the longer term days, there are those who are afraid of the sanctions so they are not coming up in the open and that's why my strategy is to help them work with the government. But there is a lot of money in the Diaspora.

Today we are talking of famine. That's a side would have collapsed Somalia. You would have been seeing more corpses of dead people, but Somalia is the recipient of \$1.5 billion a year from the Diaspora and that keeps the homesteads ticking. That's how vibrant the Diaspora is. The humanitarian community has now to reckon with food vouchers. You pay the business people to give food to starving people because there is a business community. You tell them to go to Shabaab controlled area. They say, "I'll go," and they send food. That's the kind of risks Somalis can take.

So, it's really... we're there and, frankly, with peace and stability in Somalia, Somalia could recover in less than five years, because that's how entrepreneurial the Somali business community is, and they need to be kept in the peace process rather than alienated. They are afraid of sanctions, so they wouldn't want to go on the wrong side of the United Nations Sanctions Committee. They want to be correct because now they are looking in the future and that's why they should be part of the peace process and we're working around it.

Hirsch:

Terrific, well you're absolutely right about the entrepreneurial class in Somalia. When I was there in the '80s--that was another thing Siad Barre did wrong, was he discouraged them, but there was an effort by these people to come back. They stayed and they've been there.

Well listen, it's been a fantastic hour and a half with you, and I really, on behalf of everybody here, want to thank you very, very much, first of all for your insights and then in your understanding, but also for this kind of encouraging portrait that you have given us of the possibilities that are here for a better Somalia. Certainly I know everybody here agrees, we want to wish you personally and your staff and team a lot of great success in the challenge you meet ahead and for the Somali people. So really thank you, Augustine, very, very much for being with us today.

Mahiga:

Thank you John. Thank you very much indeed.