Beat: Miscellaneous

UN begins new political mission in Somalia

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USPA News - The United Nations (UN) on Monday pledged to support the Government of Somalia and the people of the country in their quest for security and prosperity with its new political mission. The Secretary-General`s Special Representative for Somalia, Nicholas Kay, said he was very pleased to be in Mogadishu, the country`s capital, upon his arrival in the country, in order to "support the federal Government and people of Somalia to bring peace, security and prosperity back to Somalia."

Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) began operations on Monday for an initial period of 12 months, following last month`s unanimous vote by the Security Council to establish a new UN Assistance Mission in Somalia to be based in Mogadishu. "Somalia is a proud country with ancient traditions, a vibrant culture, and strong values," stated Kay. "I will not forget that as I strive to support the Somali Government and people in their quest for peace." As part of its mandate, UNSOM will support State building and peacebuilding with a focus on good governance, security sector reform, rule of law, human rights, providing "good offices" for mediation and political reconciliation and coordination of international assistance, the UN said. "This is an historic moment for Somalia," said Kay, who will lead UNSOM efforts. "The people of Somalia rightly have high expectations. We need to aim high. We look forward with hope towards a national election in 2016. The challenges are tremendous, but we must work hard to seize the moment." Somalia has been torn asunder by factional fighting since 1991 but has recently made progress towards stability. In 2011, Islamist Al-Shabaab insurgents retreated from Mogadishu and last year new Government institutions emerged, as the country ended a transitional phase toward setting up a permanent, democratically-elected Government. Over the next few days Kay will meet with Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud and Government officials, as well as representatives from AMISOM and civil society groups.

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