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PRESS RELEASE

(For Immediate Release)

RAWLINGS CALLS FOR RENEWAL OF COMMITMENT TO PEACE IN SOMALIA

Nairobi, April 20, 2011: African Union High Representative for Somalia Jerry John Rawlings has urged all parties in the Somali peace process to re-new their commitment and work as a unified front to enable us achieve lasting peace.

He also called for the establishment of an emergency Somalia trust fund to stem the looming humanitarian crises caused by the prolonged drought.

President Rawlings said: “While a lot of commitment had gone into the peace process from various parties, the International Community was interested in tangible results and we have an obligation to achieve our targets to justify their support.

“The transitional process reaches a crucial stage in August 2011 and I am encouraged that the recent high-level consultative meeting on Somalia acknowledged the roles the Transitional Institutions had to play in instilling confidence amongst the Somali people as well as the International Community.

“This consultative process towards the conclusion of the current transitional period has to be managed in a mature and cordial manner devoid of uncompromising positions. I am therefore calling on the Transitional Federal Government to endeavour to play its part in the process.

“Our commitment is to a self-governing Somalia complete with internationally recognizable institutions and structures of state, devoid of acrimony and conflict. We can only achieve that if we are ready to compromise.

“I am of the firm belief that the efforts by AMISOM and the TFG to bring peace and sanity within a wider area of Somalia will make it imperative that sooner than later Mogadishu should be the hub for the Somali peace process.

“Somalia is now facing its worst humanitarian crisis in decades,” said Rawlings. “Hundreds, perhaps thousands, are sure to perish unless more international relief comes quickly. That is why I am calling on donor nations and multinational organizations to establish immediately an emergency trust for aid in Somalia.”

AMISOM forces recently launched a project that will dig a series of deep wells in Mogadishu that will tap the water table and provide relief for hundreds of Somalis.

“AMISOM offers relief to Somalis wherever they are,” Rawlings said. “But the crisis is far too severe for any one organization to handle. All of us who have the resources to help must act now.”

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