



In the headlines:

- Security Council unanimously approves new UN political mission in Somalia
- Over 270,000 pedestrians killed on roads every year – UN agency
- April deadliest month in Iraq in five years – UN
- Indonesia must allow peaceful protests in Papua, stresses UN rights chief
- New UN partnership to focus on trade reforms and poverty reduction in Arab countries
- UN regional forum urges greater cooperation among Asia-Pacific governments
- US faces gaps in protecting human rights in business activities – UN experts
- On World Press Freedom Day, UN officials issue call to protect journalists' safety
- Egyptian institution and Ugandan health advocate awarded 2013 UN population prize
- Namibia must address land insecurity of indigenous people – UN expert
- Somalia famine killed nearly 260,000 people, half of them children – reports UN

Security Council unanimously approves new UN political mission in Somalia

2 May - The Security Council today voted unanimously to establish the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia, to be known as UNSOM and to be based in the country's capital, Mogadishu, beginning on 3 June for an initial period of 12 months.

Stressing the need for “effectively coordinated international support for Somalia’s Federal Government,” the Council structured the mandate of the new mission as follows: providing UN ‘good offices’ functions to support peace and reconciliation; assisting the Government and the existing African Union peacekeeping force known as AMISOM with advice on peacebuilding and State building; assisting in coordinating international support; helping build capacity in human rights and the rule of law; and monitoring and helping prevent human rights violations.

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.

Noting that progress, the Council’s decision follows its adoption on 6 March of a resolution extending for another year the mandate AMISOM and partially lifting the 20-year arms embargo imposed on the country. By that text, it also agreed with Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon that the 15-year-old United Nations Political Mission in Somalia (UNPOS) had fulfilled its mandate and should “be dissolved and replaced by a new expanded special political mission as soon as possible.”

Secretary-General Ban followed-up by sending an assessment mission to Somalia and the region from 17 to 29 March, led



Ugandan soldiers serving with the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). Photo: AU-UN IST/Stuart Price

by the Department of Political Affairs. According to a letter sent by Mr. Ban to the Council summing up the assessment, the core function of the new United Nations mission would be to act as an enabler, assisting the Federal Government of Somalia to create the political and strategic environment in which peacebuilding could proceed.

Critically, noting the Somali Government's request a single "door to knock on", the Secretary-General said in his letter that the new mission "will be a platform enabling coherent, integrated support to Somalia by the United Nations system, as well as a stronger strategic partnership and collaboration with AMISOM across all areas of peacebuilding".

By the resolution adopted today, the Council decided that the new mission, UNSOM, will be headed by a Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and will be based in the capital, Mogadishu, with further deployment throughout the country as requested by the Government.

The resolution also says that "with immediate effect," all appropriate activities of the United Nations Country Team should be fully coordinated with the head of the new mission. It also requests the Special Representative to "align closely" and coordinate the activities of UNSOM with those of the Somali Government, the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD).

Beyond its focus on political matters, the Council also expresses concern at the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Somali and its impact on the people of the country. It commends the efforts of the United Nations humanitarian agencies and other relief organizations and aid workers in delivering life-saving assistance to vulnerable populations.

Over 270,000 pedestrians killed on roads every year – UN agency



Photo: WHO

2 May - More than 270,000 pedestrians lose their lives on roads each year, the United Nations health agency said today, calling on Governments to improve traffic safety.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), pedestrian casualties account for 22 per cent of the total 1.24 million road traffic deaths. To draw attention to the needs of pedestrians and generate action to protect them, WHO organized the Second UN Global Road Safety Week, which kicks off on 6 May with events in 70 countries.

"The Second United Nations Global Road Safety Week offers an opportunity to highlight the myriad challenges that pedestrians face around the world each and every day," said WHO Assistant Director-General of Noncommunicable Diseases and Mental Health, Oleg Chestnov.

"We are all pedestrians, and Governments should put in place measures to better protect all of us. This will not only save lives, but create the conditions needed to make walking safe. When roads are safe, people will walk more, and this in turn will improve health and protect the environment," he said, echoing the theme of Road Safety Week, "Make Walking Safe."

Pedestrians are among the most vulnerable road users. Studies indicate that males, both children and adults, make up a high proportion of pedestrian deaths and injuries. In developed countries, older pedestrians are more at risk, while in low-income and middle-income countries, children and young adults are often affected. Children and adults with disabilities suffer higher rates of injury as pedestrians compared to their non-disabled peers.

"More than 5,000 pedestrians are killed on the world's roads each week. This is because their needs have been neglected for decades, often in favour of motorized transport," said the WHO Director of the Department of Violence and Injury Prevention and Disability, Etienne Krug. "We need to rethink the way we organize our transport systems to make walking safe and save pedestrian lives."

WHO and its partners also released a road safety manual for decision-makers and practitioners, which promotes a combining enforcement, engineering and education measures such as: adopting new laws to reduce speeding, curb drinking and driving, decrease mobile phone use, improve roadway lighting and put in place infrastructure that separates pedestrians from traffic.

The agency also contributes to achieve the goal of to the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020. Launched in May 2011 by Governments across the world, the Decade of Action aims to save 5 million lives and seeks to build road safety management capacity in countries, improve the safety of roads and vehicles, enhance the behaviour of all road users and strengthen post-crash care.

April deadliest month in Iraq in five years – UN



Al-Rustumiya, an informal settlement for displaced people on the outskirts of the Iraqi capital Baghdad. Photo: IRIN/Heba Aly

2 May - More people were killed and wounded in violent attacks across Iraq in April than in any month since June 2008, the United Nations mission in the country said today.

According to figures released by the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), a total of 712 people were killed and 1,633 were wounded in acts of terrorism and violence.

The majority of victims were civilians, with 595 people killed and 1,438 injured. A further 117 members of the Iraqi Security Forces were killed and 195 were injured.

Baghdad was the worst affected governorate, with a total of 697 civilian casualties, followed by Diyala, Salahuddin, Kirkuk, Ninewa and Anbar.

Hundreds of people have been killed or wounded in recent clashes across the country, including in Hawija, north of Baghdad, where government helicopters shot at militants hiding in the village, resulting in dozens of people killed or injured.

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Iraq, Martin Kobler, has repeatedly called on Iraqi authorities to take decisive measures to stop the escalating violence, and on Tuesday, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon urged all Iraqis to come together and engage in inclusive dialogue to overcome the “deep political crisis” facing the country.

“It is only through dialogue and full participation in the government institutions that bold initiatives can be taken to overcome the critical phase the country is going through,” Mr. Kobler said.

Earlier today, Mr. Kobler welcomed the return of Kurdistan region ministers to the Cabinet and Kurdistan region members of parliament to the Council of Representatives, following a meeting on Monday between Prime Minister, Nuri al-Maliki, and the Prime Minister of the Kurdistan Regional Government, Nichervan Barzani.

Indonesia must allow peaceful protests in Papua, stresses UN rights chief

2 May - The United Nations human rights chief today expressed concern over the recent crackdown on mass demonstrations in Papua, Indonesia this week and called on the Government to allow peaceful protests and hold accountable those responsible for the violence.

“These latest incidents are unfortunate examples of the ongoing suppression of freedom of expression and excessive use of force in Papua,” said the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay. “I urge the Government of Indonesia to allow peaceful protest and hold accountable those involved in abuses.”



High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay. UN Photo/Violaine Martin

On Tuesday, police reportedly shot and killed two protesters in the city of Sorong who were preparing to mark the 50th anniversary of Papua becoming a part of Indonesia. At least 20 protesters were arrested in the cities of Biak and Timika on 1 May. Many were arrested for raising pro-independence flags.

Ms. Pillay underlined the need for coherent policies and actions to address the underlying concerns and grievances of the local population in Papua. She said that since May 2012, her office has received 26 reports concerning alleged human rights

violations, including 45 killings and cases of torture, many of which are linked to law enforcement officials.

“International human rights law requires the Government of Indonesia to conduct thorough, prompt and impartial investigations into the incidents of killings and torture and bring the perpetrators to justice,” Ms. Pillay said.

“There has not been sufficient transparency in addressing serious human rights violations in Papua,” she said, urging Indonesia to allow international journalists into Papua and to facilitate visits by the Special Rapporteurs of the UN Human Rights Council.

As of March, at least 20 political prisoners remain in detention in Papua. During her visit to Indonesia in November, Ms. Pillay raised concerns over Papuan activists being imprisoned for the peaceful exercise of freedom of expression, and said she was disappointed by continued arrests.

Ms. Pillay encouraged the Governments to implement the recommendations put forward by the National Human Rights Commission, Komnas Ham, and the National Commission on Violence against Women, Komnas Perempuan, regarding freedom of expression, and emphasized the role of these institutions in protecting human rights in the country.

New UN partnership to focus on trade reforms and poverty reduction in Arab countries

2 May - A new partnership announced today between the United Nations and the International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC) seeks to fight poverty and create jobs through trade reforms in the Middle East and North Africa.

“Today we find ourselves at a global turning point, with countries of the South increasingly driving global growth and making rapid progress on poverty reduction and job creation,” said the Associate Administrator of the UN Development Programme (UNDP), Rebeca Grynspan at an event in New York.

According to UNDP, youth unemployment rates in the Arab World are close to 30 per cent in some countries, and region-wide, only one in every four women is active in the workforce. The sluggishness of the economy is partly due to underperforming regional trade.

The ‘Aid for Trade Initiative for Arab States’ partnership seeks to spearhead trade reforms with the aim of bringing about economic growth to poor populations.

“UNDP’s priority in the region is to help Arab countries find the path to sustainable human development, and employment generation is perhaps the most important step on that journey,” said UNDP Assistant Administrator Sima Bahous, who heads the organization’s bureau for the Arab States region.

The initiative was endorsed by the 3rd Arab Economic and Social Development Summit, held in January in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. It is funded by the International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation – a unit of the Islamic Development Bank Group – as well as the Governments of Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Sweden, and UNDP.



UNDP has helped establish small, women-run agricultural business cooperatives in rural Lebanon. Photo: UNDP

UN regional forum urges greater cooperation among Asia-Pacific governments



Under-Secretary-General and ESCAP Executive Secretary Noeleen Heyzer.
Photo: ESCAP

2 May - Wrapping up a development policy forum in Thailand, the head of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission in Asia-Pacific (ESCAP) today called for greater economic integration and cooperation in the region to counter the growing threat posted by severe natural disasters and economic shocks.

“We have entered an era in which South-South Cooperation will play an increasingly important role,” Under-Secretary-General and ESCAP Executive Secretary Noeleen Heyzer told the closing ceremony at a three-day development policy forum in Bangkok.

“While regional economic integration is already an important trend, it is time for us to unlock the real potential of inter-regional cooperation,” she urged more than 300 participants representing 45 countries.

During the development forum, participants adopted a record 17 resolutions aiming to balance the economic, social and environmental dimensions of regional well-being, ESCAP noted in its news release.

“Disaster risk management and better preparedness are key development imperatives,” Ms. Heyzer said summarizing some of the key messages from the forum. “People at every level must be empowered partners in change; political, technical and financial resources must be mobilized before shocks hit; apathy is our biggest risk; and early warnings and early actions save lives and livelihoods.”

Highlighting the need to build more resilient economic and communities, and form greater partnerships between regions and countries in the Southern hemisphere, the ESCAP Executive Secretary said the region is part of the next great transformation: “The true opportunity of rising Asia-Pacific is to change the idea of progress – to prove that people and planet prosper best together.”

The intergovernmental meeting on the increasingly severe natural disaster and economic shocks was the first ESCAP Session since the landmark UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) held in Brazil in June 2012.

Ms. Heyzer said the world body’s annual regional assembly this year offered “the opportunity to grow better, to close development gaps, to build resilience, to end hunger, and to ensure the inclusive and sustainable future we want.”

In yesterday’s session, Ms. Heyzer stressed that policymakers must balance short-term stability with long-term development. “In the midst of a crisis or disaster, we can ill-afford to mechanically apply the conventional norms of macroeconomic stabilization. We need an Asia-Pacific regional framework for resilience.”

US faces gaps in protecting human rights in business activities – UN experts



2 May - Despite progress and innovation in key sectors of the United States’ economy, too many loopholes remain to adequately protect human rights from adverse business practices, a group of United Nations independent experts today warned.

While the US Government has committed to the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, and established a number of relevant initiatives, “it is not facing the challenge of putting them into practice,” said Michael Addo, who along with Puvan Selvanathan, completed a 10-day mission to the US as representative members of the UN

Working Group on business and human rights.

The Guiding Principles outline how States and businesses should implement the UN “Protect, Respect and Remedy” Framework to better manage business and human rights challenges.

The framework is based on three pillars – the State duty to protect against human rights abuses by third parties, including business, through appropriate policies, regulation, and adjudication; the corporate responsibility to respect human rights, which means avoiding infringing on the rights of others and to address adverse impacts that occur; and greater access by victims to effective remedy, both judicial and non-judicial.

From the low wage industries in the services sector, the UN experts met with Government officials, business leaders, civil society and UN organizations in Washington DC, as well as in Florida, California, West Virginia, New York and Arizona.

“The UN experts heard allegations of significant and widespread labour practices that, if correct, would be both illegal under US laws, as well as fall below international standards,” the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) said in a news release.

During the visit, the UN experts noted the range of efforts at the federal, state and local levels, including promotion of better business practice through disclosure requirement, marshalling efforts against human trafficking, forced and child labour, and raising awareness of the Guiding Principles.

Among innovative approaches to address some of these gaps include greater collaboration between trade unions and companies in California and independently monitored mechanism to pay a living wage for tomato pickers in Florida.

“Despite innovative initiatives to address this problem, these seemed insufficient, and the legal and regulatory framework provides weak deterrents to illegal behaviour, too many loopholes to avoid compliance and little incentive for companies to behave responsibly, according to the allegations we heard,” Mr. Selvanathan said.

In West Virginia and the Navajo Nation, the Working Group reviewed issues related to indigenous people in the context of surface mining and noted in particular allegations in regards to “the lack of free, prior and informed consent for projects affecting them and sites of cultural and religious significance to them, as well as issues of discrimination,” according to today’s news release.

“With a few exceptions, most companies still struggle to understand the implications of the corporate responsibility to respect human rights. Those that do have policies in place, in turn face the challenge of turning such policies into effective practices,” Mr. Selvanathan said.

“Much more awareness-raising and education needs to take place,” Mr. Addo underscored. “Effective implementation of the Guiding Principles by companies requires first and foremost a good understanding of the processes involved, mobilization of significant buy-in and commitment from the top of a company.”

In their preliminary findings, Mr. Selvanathan and Mr. Addo stressed that they had no opinion about the deeply divided extracting industry, and were only interested in looking at how actual or potential adverse human rights impacts are identified, prevented, mitigated and addressed.

The Group noted, however, that it heard allegations of impacts on the environment, land and water, and on sites of cultural and religious significance to Native Americans.

Independent experts or special rapporteurs are appointed by the UN Human Rights Council to examine and report back, in an unpaid capacity, on specific human rights themes. The Working Group will present its report to the Geneva-based Council in June 2014.

On World Press Freedom Day, UN officials issue call to protect journalists' safety

2 May - United Nations officials today issued a call to action to ensure the safety of journalists in every country, echoing Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon who declared; "When it is safe to speak, the whole world benefits".

"Every day, freedom of expression faces new threats. Because they help ensure transparency and accountability in public affairs, journalists are frequent targets of violence," said Secretary-General Ban and Irina Bokova, Director-General of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), in a joint message for World Press Freedom Day, observed each year on 3 May.

"Too many media workers also suffer from intimidation, threats and violence. Too many experience arbitrary detention and torture, often without legal recourse. We must show resolve in the face of such insecurity and injustice."

The UN General Assembly designated 3 May as World Press Freedom Day in 1993. This year's theme, "Safe to Speak: Securing Freedom of Expression in All Media", seeks to rally global action to protect the safety of all journalists worldwide and to break the vicious circle of impunity for crimes committed against them.

According to UNESCO, more than 600 journalists have been killed in the past decade, many while reporting in non-conflict situations. Impunity is also widespread as nine out of 10 cases of killings of journalists go unpunished.

Mr. Ban and Ms. Bokova emphasized that press freedom "does not happen automatically," but requires the creation of a safe environment for dialogue, where they can execute their jobs without fear of reprisal.

They also noted that action must encompass both traditional media as well as digital mediums, where news is increasingly produced and consumed.

"Bloggers, citizen reporters and social media producers, as well as their sources, face increasing threats to their safety," they said. "In addition to physical dangers, they are being targeted with psychological and emotional violence through cyber-attacks, data breaches, intimidation, undue surveillance and invasions of privacy.

"Such assaults not only limit the right to freedom of expression and threaten the safety of online journalists and their sources – they undermine the ability of all people to benefit from a free and open Internet."

Mr. Ban and Ms. Bokova reiterated the UN's strong commitment to coordinate action, raise awareness and support countries in upholding international principles and developing legislation for freedom of expression and information according to the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity.

"As we mark World Press Freedom Day, let us pledge to do our utmost to enable all journalists in all media to do their jobs," Mr. Ban said in New York at an event organized by UNESCO and the Department of Public Information on journalists' safety. "When it is safe to speak, the whole world benefits."

Meanwhile, the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) emphasized the importance of securing freedom of the press, as the country prepares for presidential elections in 2014.

"Amongst other checks and balances, a vibrant media, with vigorous debate and balanced coverage can help to a greater extent with the transparency and accountability necessary for true democratic participation," said Ján Kubiš, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan.



Photographer Farzana Wahidy covering a women's empowerment event in Mazar-i-Sharif, in Afghanistan's north. Photo: UNAMA Fardin Waezi

According to the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), Afghanistan is one of the top ten countries where crimes against journalists go unpunished. Iraq, Somalia and the Philippines top the list.

The United Nations notes that in Somalia, journalists risk not just death on a daily basis but also arbitrary arrests, as happened earlier this year when a reporter was accused of fabricating a rape story based on an interview which was never published.

In related activities, UNESCO is organizing a series of events in San José, Costa Rica, over three days, focusing on securing freedom of expression in all media. The events include an award ceremony for the winner of the UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize, which this year will go to Ethiopian journalist Reeyot Alemu, who has written critical pieces on poverty and gender equality. She is currently serving a five-year sentence in prison.

UNESCO is also organizing a three-day festival in Rabat, Morocco, to mark the 20th anniversary of World Press Freedom Day. The festival includes conferences, training sessions for journalists, an art exhibit, and a movie screening, among other activities.

Egyptian institution and Ugandan health advocate awarded 2013 UN population prize

2 May - An academic institution associated with the Al-Azhar University in Egypt and a public health advocate from Uganda are this year's recipients of the annual United Nations Population Award, the UN agency dealing with global population issues has announced.

The International Islamic Centre for Population Studies and Research and Dr. Jotham Musinguzi of Uganda, were chosen by the Population Award Committee, a body administered by the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), in recognition of their contributions to improving public health.



Patients at Nakivale refugee health centre in Uganda. Photo: IRIN/Samuel Okiror

Established by the General Assembly in 1981, the award is given annually to individuals and institutions for outstanding contributions to population concerns and their solutions.

Founded in 1975, the International Islamic Centre for Population Studies and Research conducts population studies and research in Muslim countries and provides accurate information about Islam and dispels misconceptions, particularly regarding population policies and programmes.

The Centre, which integrates family planning and bioethics, works in all parts of the Islamic world, and has been active in efforts to eradicate female genital mutilation/cutting.

Dr. Musinguzi is a strong advocate of reproductive health as a major component of social and economic development. He played a major role in drafting the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo in 1994, and was actively involved in negotiations on the anti-poverty targets known as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

He also played a major role in preparing the Maputo Plan of Action, which was adopted by the African Union in 2006 to help achieve the MDGs in Africa, and contributed to the success of the 2012 London Summit on Family Planning.

The 2012 Population Awards will be presented at UN Headquarters in New York in June.

Past winners include philanthropists Bill and Melinda Gates, Iranian demographer Mohammad Jalal Abbasi-Shavazi and Dame Billie Antoinette Miller, a former foreign minister of Barbados.

Namibia must address land insecurity of indigenous people – UN expert



Special Rapporteur James Anaya. UN
Photo/Jean-Marc Ferré

2 May - Namibia must increase efforts to address the loss of land of indigenous groups and ensure their traditions and customs are preserved without marginalizing them, a United Nations independent expert said today.

In his latest report, the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, James Anaya, stressed that the pervasive loss of land and resources by indigenous groups during colonialism and apartheid has not been overcome.

“By all accounts, indigenous San groups in the country have experienced the greatest loss and resultant social, economic and cultural disruption,” he said, adding that San people in Namibia today use and occupy lands under different kinds of arrangements, “none of which are wholly adequate and without problems.”

Mr. Anaya urged Namibia to step up efforts to address land insecurity issues, while respecting the rights of others, in accordance with their historical or traditional land tenure patterns.

He also called on the Government to strengthen measures that ensure indigenous peoples can survive with their cultures intact, including in regard to their traditional land, authorities, and languages.

“[Namibia] is a country rich with diverse indigenous cultural and ethnic identities including those of indigenous peoples that have suffered marginalization in various aspects of life,” he said, adding that the Government must review and reform its relevant laws and policies “to ensure that they do not discriminate against particular indigenous groups, and that they accommodate to and strengthen cultural diversity and adhere to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.”

In his report, Mr. Anaya also highlights positive developments, including in the areas of health and education. “Since Namibia’s independence in 1990, the Government has made many significant achievements in rolling back some of the destructive legacies left by colonialism and apartheid,” he said.

The report was developed on the basis of research and information gathered, including meetings with Government and indigenous representatives in the capital, Windhoek.

Independent experts or special rapporteurs are appointed by the UN Human Rights Council to examine and report back, in an unpaid capacity, on specific human rights themes. Mr. Anaya is scheduled to present his report to the Council in September.

Somalia famine killed nearly 260,000 people, half of them children – reports UN



Somali families displaced at Dholey near the Somalia-Kenya border. Photo: FAO Somalia

2 May - More than a quarter of a million people died in the famine in Somalia between October 2010 and April 2012, in part because the international community did not act quickly enough, the top United Nations humanitarian official in the country said today.

“The suffering played out like a drama without witnesses,” said Philippe Lazzarini, UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia, reacting to the findings in a new report funded and commissioned by the UN Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO).

Some 133,000 of the Somalis who perished – about half – were children under five, according to FAO’s Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit for Somalia (FSNAU), which carried out the study along with the USAID-funded Famine Early Warning Systems

Network (FEWS NET).

Calling the magnitude of the mortality figures “unsettling”, Mr. Lazzarini said the report confirms “that we could have done more before famine was declared on 20 July 2011” and that it will help ensure “that Somalia never goes through another famine again.”

He added that “warnings that began as far back as the drought in 2010 did not trigger sufficient early action. In the worst affected areas, access to people in need was tremendously difficult.

At the peak of the crises, between May and August 2011, about 30,000 excess people died per month, according to the study.

“An estimated 4.6 per cent of the total population and 10 per cent of children under 5 died in Southern and Central Somalia,” FAO reported. “Lower Shabelle, Mogadishu, and Bay were hardest hit.”

A massive mobilization of the humanitarian community helped mitigate the worst effects of the crisis, once famine was declared, the Humanitarian Coordinator continued. “We reached previously inaccessible areas through innovative programming and by strengthening local partnerships.”

Since then, the UN community and its partners have changed the way it operates, Mr. Lazzarini said, “With 2.7 million people still in need of life-saving assistance and support to build up their livelihoods, we are redoubling efforts to invest in Somalia’s people and communities to break the cycle of crisis and response.”

“We are seeking ways to bridge humanitarian and development work which will be crucial to consolidating the resilience of Somalia’s people and communities,” he added.