

For Immediate Release

President of Puntland inaugurates major new prison facility in Garowe, Puntland.

Garowe, Puntland (2 April 2014) – The President of the Puntland State of Somalia, H.E. Mr. Abdiweli Mohamed Ali, has inaugurated a 500-bed prison facility in Garowe, Puntland. The project was implemented under the Maritime Crime Programme of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and constructed by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS).

The prison opening marks the successful completion of one of the biggest construction projects of its kind, undertaken by UNODC in partnership with UNOPS. The inauguration was attended by senior Puntland representatives, diplomatic representatives from donor states supporting the project (Denmark, Norway, The Netherlands and the United Kingdom), Australia, Turkey and delegates from UNODC, UNOPS, UNSOM and the UN Regional Coordinator's Office for Somalia.

The Executive Director of UNODC, Mr. Yury Fedotov, acknowledged the significance of this occasion, stating: "The opening of the Garowe Prison is an important milestone because it shows that building capacity in law enforcement and criminal justice processes is equally as important as pursuing the pirates at sea. The new prison will provide humane and secure detention conditions in line with international human rights standards. We have also invested heavily in the provision of training, mentorship and oversight to ensure the prison is managed in accordance with best practices."

Rainer Frauenfeld, Director, UNOPS Nairobi Operational Hub (NAOH) spoke on the occasion. "UNOPS is honoured to have been part of this synergistic partnership between the Government of Puntland, UNODC, donors and the local community," he said.

The project represents a highly successful collaboration between UNODC and UNOPS and has also involved collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme and United Nations offices in Nairobi and Vienna. In completing this milestone achievement, UNODC has enjoyed excellent cooperation with national authorities, in particular the Prison Commissioner, the Ministry of Justice and the Office of the President of the Puntland State of Somalia.

The prison has been constructed to provide humane and secure detention conditions in line with international human rights standards. Beyond the construction of the facility, significant

investment has been made in providing training, mentorship and oversight to ensure the prison is managed in accordance with best practice.

The facility will be used to house, amongst others, Somali nationals convicted of piracy in third party prosecuting states, who will be transferred back to Somalia to serve their sentences under the Maritime Crime Programme's Piracy Prisoner Transfer Programme. The construction of the prison facility forms part of the Maritime Crime Programme's wide-reaching counter-piracy and capacity building efforts across the East Africa and Indian Ocean regions.

Funding for the project was generously provided by the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia Trust Fund, Denmark, Finland, Norway, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

Construction and operation of the prison

The new prison facility in Garowe is one of the largest initiatives undertaken by UNODC's Piracy Prisoner Transfer Programme. It will be able to house 500 male inmates and is comprised of 4 blocks for 125 inmates each, a workshop area and an administration building, intake/release area, control tower, kitchen and laundry. Concept designs for the prison began in June 2011 and construction commenced in August 2012. The total cost of the construction project, from start to finish, was \$6 million.

The prison is approximately four kilometres outside the city of Garowe and is adjacent to the already-constructed Prison Headquarters and Training Academy. As a high security facility, it far exceeds the security capacity of any institution of its type in the region.

It has been designed and constructed with a number of specific security features. All security towers have visual observation zones to ensure that there are no obscured areas of the prison. They also all have line-of-site contact with all other observation towers including the main guard control tower located on top of the intake release building. The towers and guard posts have been wired to allow for the later provision of personal address systems, telephones and CCTV systems. Each cell-block contains its own security observation room, which provides a visual site for each of the prison cells. Access to the prison is through a double-gated entrance, commonly known as a 'sally port', which provides an area to hold a prisoner without compromising the security of the facility. One of its four blocks will be designated specifically for high security inmates, which will include convicted pirates and other domestic inmates.

Under the project management and oversight of UNOPS, 4 different local contractors constructed the prison in Garowe. All of the contractors engaged local labour together with foreign workers. Approximately 200 jobs were created through the construction project. Materials for the structural elements for the building were locally sourced, whilst materials for internal and external finishes and the electrical and mechanical components have been imported.

The sheer scale of the project, together with the high standards for construction imposed by UNOPS and limited local capacity posed some challenges during the construction phase. However, these were overcome in a manner that ensured that the facility was constructed to the highest standards and local contractors also benefitted from assistance and oversight. Throughout the construction phase, UNOPS deployed a full-time international engineer to undertake on-site training sessions and monitor quality assurance. Likewise, an international mechanical & electrical commissioning engineer was employed to train local contractors on correct methodology for the installation, testing and commissioning of mechanical and electrical installations.

The facility was designed and constructed to be suited to the local environment. High density insulation boards were used for the roof slabs to increase the thermal weight of the building, thus rendering the buildings more comfortable for the occupants during seasonal shifts in temperature, without the need for mechanical ventilation or heating and cooling. The cell blocks were designed to maximize the use of natural ventilation, thus negating the need for electrically

powered forced air ventilation. The use of septic tanks with soakaways to deal with waste water, in preference to the normal sewerage holding tank or drop latrine approach, was designed to limit the possibility of ground water contamination and the need for continual off-site removal of waste. In addition, the treated outfall effluent is piped to effluent water storage tanks. These tanks are fitted with pumps to enable the effluent to be used for irrigation purposes.

The prison is provided with water from a borehole and receives a dedicated extension of electrical power from the town. It also has a number of generators as a backup power supply.

The Prison was designed and constructed with future sustainability in mind. Measures such as the sustainable borehole water supply will be complimented by planned improvements to staff quarters, alongside a range of measures that will ensure the prison can be effectively maintained in the future. Plans for a prison farm are another important measure that will mitigate prison running costs in the future and increase sustainability.

The first prisoners to be transferred to the new prison are approximately 85 persons currently held at the old Garowe prison. Transferring these prisoners is a priority given the poor infrastructure and sanitation at the existing prison.

In addition, approximately 20 convicted pirates currently serving their sentences in Bosasso will also be transferred to the new prison in Garowe. From March 2014 onwards, convicted pirates transferred from third party prosecuting states throughout the region will be transferred directly to Garowe.

Training, mentorship and oversight

Alongside the construction of the prison a strong emphasis has been placed on training custodial staff and ensuring that the facility operates in accordance with best practices and international standards. This has been achieved in large part through the placement of two prison mentors, who have been seconded to UNODC by the Norwegian Government on a rotating basis since 2012. The mentors provide ongoing training and support in all aspects of prison management, security, handling of prisoners, operational tasks and on-the-job training.

In addition, UNODC also provides a number of commodities for the prison to assist managing running costs at its inception. These include:

- Medical support to inmates and staff
- Education programmes for inmates (literacy and numeracy as well as other areas for the more skilled inmates)
- Food for inmates
- A certified vocational training programme, through training inmates in areas linked to construction, sewing, carpentry, brick making, etc.
- Vehicles for transport of prisoners, water bowser, internet, electricity and regular vehicles for the management of the prison and management of the Custodial Corps
- The provision of a large number of welfare items, medicines and medical tools.

Prisoner education opportunities and vocational training place a strong emphasis on prisoner rehabilitation. UNODC intends to repeat the practice undertaken in other facilities, whereby prisoners who have undertaken vocational training programmes are provided with a toolkit upon release related to their newly-developed skill set. Educating prisoners and instilling them with new skills so that they can find meaningful employment upon release is an integral part of breaking a continuing cycle of crime and disempowerment.

UNODC's Piracy Prisoner Transfer Programme

The Garowe prison project forms part of a number of development projects within the Puntland State of Somalia, Somaliland and Mogadishu. UNODC has also rehabilitated the existing prison in Bosasso, Puntland, with the construction of a new 200 male block and a new 40 female block. In Puntland, UNODC has also implemented the construction of the Garowe prison training academy and a new building for the Ministry of Justice.

Under the Piracy Prisoner Transfer Programme a total of 49 convicted pirates have already been transferred – with their consent – from Seychelles to Puntland. Those serving inmates are currently held in the detention facility in Bosasso. UNODC has also repatriated a number of Somalis who either completed their sentences in third party prosecuting states or were acquitted.

The Piracy Prisoner Transfer Programme has made marked improvements to security, building infrastructure and equipment in the detention facilities in which it works. However, this is only part of the sustainable improvements that UNODC seeks to promote within the prisons it assists. The Piracy Prisoner Transfer Programme also places a strong emphasis on training prison officers on best practices in custodial management. It provides welfare items such as medicines, hygiene items, and devotional items, educational opportunities, recreational facilities and vocational training for prisoners, with a view to their rehabilitation and successful release into society.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Background: UNODC Maritime Crime Programme

The UNODC Maritime Crime Programme started as the Counter Piracy Programme in 2009, with the singular goal of providing assistance to Kenya in dealing with the criminal justice aspects of the problem of piracy off the Horn of Africa. Since then, the programme has broadened to providing criminal justice capacity building support in a number of states in the East African and Indian Ocean regions, as well as in West Africa. The Maritime Crime Programme has also broadened its focus from solely piracy into other forms of maritime crime.

In the East African and Indian Ocean region, the Maritime Crime Programme has provided support to states that have been willing to take on prosecutions for acts of piracy committed on the high seas, in the absence of sufficient criminal justice mechanisms within Somalia to apprehend, investigate and prosecute such crimes domestically. UNODC has provided wide-ranging criminal justice capacity building assistance to such states, ensuring that the trials have been carried out in a fair and efficient manner, in line with international standards. To this end, UNODC has provided assistance to courts, legislatures, police, prison services, coastguards, prosecutors and defense lawyers. In order to ease the burden on prosecuting states and to allow prisoners to serve their sentences in their home countries, if Somali piracy suspects are found guilty, they can consent to be transferred back to serve their prison sentence in Somalia.

Prosecuting crimes of piracy forms only one aspect of countering piracy off the Horn of Africa. UNODC's Maritime Crime Programme, together with other stakeholders, has recognized the need to build Somalia's own criminal justice system to enable it to ultimately deal with piracy and other serious crimes domestically. UNODC's Maritime Crime Programme therefore invests significant resources in capacity development in Somalia; including assistance and training to Police, Coast Guards, and the management of detention facilities where convicted pirates are held. In all of its work in Somalia and the wider East Africa and Indian Ocean region, promotion of international human rights standards is at the forefront of its projects.

Background: UNOPS

UNOPS is an operational arm of the United Nations, helping a range of partners implement around \$1 billion worth of peacebuilding, humanitarian and development projects every year.

Working in some of the most challenging environments, UNOPS provides project management, infrastructure and procurement services to a wide range of governments, donors and UN organizations.

With over 6,000 personnel spread across 80 countries, UNOPS offers its partners the logistical, technical and management knowledge they need, where they need it. UNOPS partners are currently relying on its proven expertise to increase the speed, cost-effectiveness and sustainability of over 1,000 projects.

UNOPS emphasizes the role of national capacity and promotes sustainability, focus and excellence in everything it does.

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