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## Press Release

Nairobi, 23 June 2008

### **UN Somalia Calls for Immediate Release of UNHCR Staff**

On the second day following the abduction of Mr Hassan Mohamed Ali 'Keynan', the UN Resident Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia calls for his immediate and safe release.

Mr Ali, who is head of the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) in Mogadishu was abducted on Saturday night (21 June 2008) from his home in the outskirts of Mogadishu near the displaced population of Afgoye.

Mr Ali's work has been critical in supporting internally displaced persons fleeing from violence and insecurity in Mogadishu, and whose numbers are increasing daily. His abduction threatens the whole humanitarian effort for Somali people in the displaced area and beyond.

"The whole population suffers when we do not have any guarantee of safety for humanitarian workers in Somalia", says UN Resident Humanitarian Coordinator, Mark Bowden.

The UN and indeed the whole humanitarian community are deeply concerned about these continued abductions and attacks at a time when the needs of the Somali people are so great. The recent abduction brings to nine (9) the number of humanitarian aid workers being held illegally throughout the country.

The UN appeals to all Somalis to work towards the immediate release of Mr Ali as well as facilitate the delivery of urgent humanitarian assistance to Somali people in need.

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