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**Newly Appointed UNHCR Somalia Representative Meets Deputy Prime Minister**

**Mogadishu, 4 September-** UNHCR new Representative to Somalia, Mr. Johann Siffointe, has today met the Deputy Prime Minister, H.E. Mahdi Mohamed Gulaid, in the capital Mogadishu.

Welcoming Mr. Siffointe to Somalia, the Deputy Prime Minister reaffirmed the government's commitment to continue working with UNHCR in improving the lives of displaced families.

Meanwhile, the Representative presented his credentials to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Mr. Ahmed Isse Awad.

"I feel honored to be in Somalia. It has been my dream to work in this country for many years and I am delighted to be finally here. I am encouraged by the government's commitment to continue working with UNHCR to improve the lives of refugees, returnees, IDPs and other displaced populations. I am very appreciative of the government's generous hospitality in providing asylum to over 34,000 refugees and asylum seekers despite various challenges faced in Somalia. I am very passionate about the refugee cause and I will strongly advocate for their rights", said the new Representative.

Mr. Siffointe is a French national with nearly 25 years of experience with UNHCR. Prior to his current appointment, Mr. Siffointe served as UNHCR Representative in South Sudan, Papua New Guinea and Kyrgystan. He has also held managerial and technical positions within UNHCR in the recent past including as Deputy Representative in Pakistan and Senior Emergency Preparedness and Response Officer based in Geneva.

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