



Horn of Africa Peace and Development Center
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A Call for Immediate and Effective Action in Somalia

To: H.E. Ban Ki-Moon, Secretary-General, the United Nations
To: H.E. Alpha Oumar Konare', Secretary-General, the African Union
To: H.E. Javier Solana, Secretary-General, the Council of the European Union
To: President George W. Bush

The Horn of Africa Peace and Development Center, a non-partisan, non-profit organization that brings together all the nationalities of the Horn, calls for immediate and effective intervention by the international community to overcome the deteriorating situation in Somalia. Without such intervention, over one million Somalis are at a great risk of suffering a humanitarian disaster that could be worse than Darfur. To have a realistic chance of success, we believe that such intervention must have, at a minimum, the following elements:

- 1) Deployment, within 2008, of an adequate United Nations (UN) peacemaking and peacekeeping force that does not include frontline states. This crucial element needs an effective and a sustained action by the United Nations, the United States, the European Union, the African Union, and the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) to ensure the deployment of the force as a matter of urgency. The continued military intervention by Ethiopia, whose government had undertaken to leave Somalia within "weeks", only fuels the insurgency which has been having a devastating effect on the people of Somalia.
- 2) Simultaneous withdrawal of Ethiopian forces.
- 3) Establishment of a security corridor for humanitarian relief convoys from Merca and Mogadishu ports to the 30km stretch between Mogadishu and Afgoye where over 350,000 people who fled their homes in Mogadishu are braving the elements out in the open.
- 4) A negotiated ceasefire between the warring factions followed by UN assistance in ensuring that a conducive environment prevails for free and fair elections in 2009, when the current mandate of the TFG expires.

Desired Outcome: A Somalia at peace with itself and its neighbors; a Somalia in which its people have the chance to choose their own government; and a Somalia that is able to stand on its own feet and protect its long coastline and borders so as not to become a haven for foreign terrorists.

It is now clearly evident that continued occupation of Mogadishu and southern Somalia by Ethiopian forces would only fuel further violence and exacerbates the humanitarian situation. While Somalis in general are divided over the issue, a significant majority in Mogadishu and the surrounding areas consider the occupation of their capital by Ethiopian forces as the ultimate insult and an affront to their dignity and pride. They will continue to resist it and are willing to take casualties. The relative calm in the Kilometer 4 area of Mogadishu occupied and patrolled by the Ugandan Peacekeeping contingent is a clear indication that Somalis would be more receptive to deployment of forces from non-frontline states. The recent agreement by Nigeria to send a contingent of peacekeeping troops to Somalia is a

positive development. Many more countries are likely to follow suit if urgent and intensive diplomatic pressure is applied and immediate financial and logistical assistance provided.

Background:

Following is a brief chronology of events in Somalia:

- 1) In 1991, Dictator Siad Barre was overthrown, after 22 years of brutal rule. Somalia has not had a functioning government since.
- 2) Over 15 reconciliation conferences failed to bring about peace.
- 3) The current Transitional Federal Government (TFG) was selected in 2004 by participants of a reconciliation conference held in Kenya.
- 4) The TFG has not been able to assert its authority since its inception.
- 5) In June 2006, the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) wrested control of Mogadishu and much of Southern Somalia from a group of warlords that had ruled various enclaves of the capital and the south.
- 6) In December 2006, the TFG, with the help of the Ethiopian army, drove the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) out of Mogadishu and much of the south.
- 7) At the time, most Horn of Africa experts predicted that, based on the history of conflict between the two countries over the years, the direct intervention by Ethiopia was likely to make the situation worse.
- 8) On January 19, 2007, the African Union (AU) agreed to the deployment of an African Peacekeeping Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) to achieve initial stabilization. Several African countries were to contribute troops to AMISOM. However, only Uganda has so far deployed a contingent of 1500.
- 9) On February 20, 2007, the UN Security Council passed resolution 1744 in support of AMISOM and ordered contingency planning for deployment of UN peacekeeping forces to replace AMISOM in six months and aim at long term stabilization and post-conflict reconstruction.
- 10) On November 7, 2007, in a report to the Security Council, Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon concluded that deployment of the planned UN peace keeping force would not be feasible due to the security situation. He suggested a "coalition of the willing" in which individual countries contribute troops to a peacekeeping force.
- 11) On November 20, 2007, the UN Security Council agreed that contingency planning for possible deployment of a UN peacekeeping mission in Somalia should continue.
- 12) Piracy along the Somali coast continues to pose a serious threat to commercial shipping and is preventing humanitarian relief supplies from reaching the 350,000 people who had fled their homes and are camping out in the open in and around Mogadishu and Afgoye.
- 13) On November 19, 2007, French naval vessels escorted ships carrying 3000 tons of relief supplies to the port of Merca.

Sincerely,

Kidane Alemayehu
President

