



Horn of Africa Peace and Development Center
4002 Blacksmith DR, Garland, TX 75044
www.hafrica.org, Email: contact@hafrica.org

**CONFERENCE DECLARATION ON
CONFLICT PREVENTION AND RESOLUTION IN THE HORN OF AFRICA**

November 11, 2011

1. PREAMBLE

1.1 We, the undersigned, having participated in the International Conference on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in the Horn of Africa held at the Southern Methodist University (SMU) on November 11, 2011;

1.2 Having reviewed, in detail, the various elements and challenges prevailing in the Horn of Africa; and recognized the opportunities for peace and development in the region;

2. REGION'S POTENTIAL

2.1 Taking into account, the region's resources that could benefit the people in the region as well as to the interests of the international community, including but not limited to:

- (a) The 115 million people living in the region;
- (b) Its vast agricultural, water and mineral resources;
- (c) Its hydro-power potential that could meet the region's energy needs as well as those of the adjacent nations;

2.2 Its geo-political importance as a major conduit of international commerce in the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean;

2.3 Its contribution to international collaboration as the seat of the African Union Headquarters, the Economic Commission for Africa, and the Inter-Governmental Agency for Development;

3. CHALLENGES FACING THE REGION

3.1 Taking into account the challenges the region faces, including:

- (a) The poverty which affects the large majority of the region's population;
- (b) The absence of good governance: democracy, rule of law, and respect for human rights;
- (c) The pandemic diseases such as TB, malaria, etc. afflicting the region;
- (d) The prevailing anarchy in Somalia becoming a globalized conflict;
- (e) The unresolved conflicts between Eritrea and Ethiopia and Eritrea and Djibouti that continue to be a source of tension;
- (f) The current drought coupled with political instability causing havoc to over twelve million lives of the region, not to mention the destabilizing impact on neighboring countries as well;
- (g) The migration of people, specially the youth, resulting in the "Diasporization" of the Horn of Africa communities;

(h) The focus of the international community on short-term and narrowly defined interests rather than on promoting long-term objectives of democracy and socio-economic development that benefits all;

4. CHALLENGES TO THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

4.1 Taking into account the serious challenges the region poses to the international community, including:

- (a) The spread of international terrorism to the Horn of Africa, especially Somalia;
- (b) The development of piracy in the areas surrounding Somalia and other adjacent locations;
- (c) The economic and security burden the international community shoulders as a result of the tensions in the Horn of Africa;
- (d) The potential danger failed states, such as Somalia, pose as hotbeds of international terrorism and the risk it could spread to other parts of Africa;
- (e) The youth exodus from the Horn of Africa and its serious ramification to the world; etc.

5. RECOMMENDATION

In consideration of the above challenges and opportunities, we, the undersigned:

5.1 Call on the US Government to adopt a more just and mutually beneficial policy towards the Horn of Africa by applying an integrated and sustainable strategy aimed at achieving an enhanced socio-economic development, internal and international security; including the prevention of conflicts, democracy, rule of law and respect for human rights and, for this purpose, initiate the collaboration of the international community by appointing a special envoy for the Horn of Africa;

5.2 Call on the people and governments of the Horn of Africa to think and formulate policies that transcend ethnic, tribal, clan, and narrow nationalistic enclaves and come together through unity in diversity; work towards regional integration through a confederation or federation that will usher in peace, democracy and a sustainable socio-economic development as well as religious tolerance and moral renaissance.

5.3 Call on the other members of the international community, including the European governments, the BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India and China) countries, Japan, and the Arab nations in general to pursue policies that foster partnership, collaboration and long-term mutual benefits.

5.4 Call on international organizations including the EU, UN, AU, IGAD, ADB, etc. to exert their influence to achieve unity, socio-economic development, including gender equality, democracy and as well as the prevention of conflict in the Horn of Africa and, for this purpose, establish special task forces or envoys to address the region's issues in an integrated and sustainable manner;

5.5 Call on the Horn of Africa Diaspora to transform itself from being divisive and ineffective to a constructive, cohesive and an integrated force for the achievement of unity, democracy and socio-economic development in the Horn of Africa and, for this purpose, utilize its substantial advocacy capacity as well as its human and financial resources for the benefit of the people of the Horn of Africa.

Name

Ismail N. Mohamud
Dr. Theodore M. Vestal
Dr. Bereket Habte Selassie
Dr. Ahmed I. Samatar
Dr. Berhanu Mengistu

Organization

Horn of Africa Peace and Development Center
Oklahoma State University