



***Horn of Africa Peace and Development Center***  
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**April 10, 2008**

**A Call for Immediate and Appropriate 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

To: The Secretary General of the Arab League

To: The Secretary General of UN FAO

To: All Governments, Institutions and Individuals  
concerned with humanitarian issues

The Horn of Africa Peace and Development Center ([www.hafrica.com](http://www.hafrica.com)) hereby submits this petition to all organizations, governments, institutions and individuals to alleviate the urgent and desperate humanitarian disaster afflicting Southern Somalia. We present hereunder the current ground realities in the sub-region as well as our proposed urgent measures needed to save the numerous Somalis who are living in a desperate life-threatening situation.

**Ground Realities in Southern Somalia**

- 1 The situation in Somalia is now recognized as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world, according to some UN officials.
- 2 Since the start of the current fighting in December 2006, over 600,000 people fled the capital city of Mogadishu
- 3 Of that total Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), some fled to the border with Kenya, but the majority are camped out in the open, braving the elements around Mogadishu and Afgoye
- 4 With the Kenyan border closed, the Ethiopian border cut-off by the Ethiopian army, and the Indian Ocean tides pounding the coast on the east, the people of Southern Somalia are boxed in and have no where to go to escape.
- 5 These IDPs have become completely dependent on humanitarian aid for their survival. But humanitarian agencies are unable to have free access to the IDPs due to the

security situation, deemed to be the worst in the world. Piracy along the Somali coast is also preventing ships carrying humanitarian supplies to reach the people.

- 6 Christian Balslev-Olsen of UNICEF told the BBC on February 14, 2008 that the UN needs \$6m immediately to keep 110 feeding programmes running. He added that tens of thousands of Somali children are at risk unless emergency help arrives soon. UNICEF reports that life-saving feeding centers will close by the end of March if immediate funding is not received.
- 7 Human Rights Watch reports that “Since early 2007, thousands of civilians have been killed in appalling circumstances: crushed to death in their homes after indiscriminate bombardment; injured by shrapnel from mortars, heavy artillery, and bullets and dying slow, agonizing deaths when they are unable to reach medical care; deliberately executed by members of armed groups on all sides; and caught in ceaseless crossfire in densely-populated neighborhoods. Thousands more have been injured, assaulted, raped, and looted of all their property as they fled the violence in Mogadishu. Each day adds to the toll of civilian deaths and injuries”.
- 8 The promised deployment of 8000 AU troops never materialized; only 2400, mainly from Uganda, have been deployed
- 9 The fighting in Mogadishu and other areas of the South continues unabated. With a determined insurgency, the prolonged occupation of the Ethiopian army, and the apparent lack of will by the UN and the African Union to deploy peacekeeping forces, a terrible stalemate has taken hold.
- 10 The response of the international community has so far been just to watch and wait from afar.
- 11 The international community has failed the Somali people on two fronts: inability to marshal the will and resources necessary to deploy adequate peacekeeping forces to help stabilize the situation: and lack of adequate response to the humanitarian crisis intensified by the conflict.

## SUGGESTED MEASURES

There is an urgent need to respond to this unfolding humanitarian catastrophe.

Such a response should:

- Provide an immediate mobilization of an adequate humanitarian relief to the IDPs and the means to deliver them.
- ⊖ Facilitate an immediate deployment of a UN peace keeping mission;
- Facilitate and arrange a concurrent withdrawal of Ethiopian forces;
- Provide an effective assistance for the creation and training of an adequate Somali force;
- Provide an effective assistance in arranging a genuine reconciliation process by all parties;
- Arrange an internationally monitored free and fair democratic elections for the Somali people to decide on their preferred system of governance and leaders.

## CONCLUSION

Our Center calls upon all UN agencies, the African Union, the European Union, the Arab League, governments, institutions, and concerned individuals to respond urgently and in a practical manner to the desperate plight of the 600,000 Somalis, most of them women and children, displaced by the war.

