



United Nations Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS)

Letter to the members of the Somali Diaspora (No. 5)

New York, 22 September 2008

As-salaamu Alaikum

Ramadan Karim

I am writing to you all once again to keep you informed of the latest developments in efforts to restore peace and stability to your beloved country. At present I am in New York to attend a series of high level meetings on political, security and humanitarian issues in Somalia. I will hold talks with ministers from the African Union, the US, Norway, Sweden, UK, Italy and other key partners. The world's leaders are here to attend the annual debate at the UN General Assembly and we are working to keep the issue of Somalia high on the agenda.

As you all know, we held the second round of meetings of the High Level Committee and Joint Security Committee in Djibouti last week attended by the international community. There was a very positive, productive atmosphere among Committees members who are dedicated to cooperating for peace in Somalia.

In particular I was pleased that they agreed to continue working together in sub committees on a wide range of issues including the constitution, the humanitarian situation, reconstruction and development. The Joint Security Committee received an excellent briefing from the UN's Department of Peacekeeping Operations and came up with concrete proposals. The principle of the Ethiopian withdrawal, outlined in the Djibouti Agreement, is now to be effectively implemented. The Joint Security Committee has not fully come up with the details, but will meet in the next 15 days to iron them out. Despite the efforts of a very few spoilers (who are almost all now known) to derail the process, this is a major achievement and underlines the considerable progress made since the process began less than six months ago.

Once agreement was reached in principle, I had to leave Djibouti to be in New York in time for the meetings. The closing press conference of the meeting was addressed by the Prime Minister and Sheikh Sharif.

The international community continues its efforts to help the Somalis. We held a successful meeting of the International Contact Group on Somalia, which I chaired for the first time, on 16 September. This took place in Djibouti to allow members, which include several key countries and regional organizations, to meet Somalis from the Committees and the leaders of the TFG and ARS. The Contact Group representatives, who came from their capitals and Nairobi, called on all Somalis at home and abroad to fully support the Djibouti Agreement – and urged all parties to join the political process. As always it was a pleasure to work with your brothers from Djibouti who are true friends and allies of the Somali people.

Once again we count on your strong backing for the peace efforts in Somalia and thank you for all your hard work towards making Somalia a stable and successful country which we believe will soon regain its dignity and be free from violence and chaos. I hope to meet more members of the patriotic jaliyadda in the coming months to discuss all these issues in person and will be travelling to Sweden to do so in October.

We will report back on further progress soon.

In the meanwhile, my very best wishes to you all

Your brother,

Ahmedou