



United Nations Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS)

Letter to the members of the Somali Jaaliyadda (No. 15)

Nairobi, 16 June 2009

As-salaamu Alaikum

1. Somalia's recent past has been ruled by the gun – but this must now change to a present directed by dialogue for unity and the recovery of dignity. After years of armed confrontation, change overnight is clearly not possible. Somalis have to give their Government a chance and some time to make things work. The Diaspora is largely represented in all institutions – Government and Parliament. The Diaspora's members should continue to support the state and those most experienced in public finance, reconstruction projects, etc should join to rebuild the country.
2. Today, the priority is to support the legal Government, which is backed by the African Union, European Union, League of Arab States, Organization of Islamic Conference, the United Nations and certain countries including the United States. All co-signed the Djibouti Agreement. That support should be known by you. You should also know that failure is not an option.
3. The Djibouti Agreement laid out a plan for Somalia and the international community through to August 2011. These two years are needed to start rebuilding bureaucracy, the police, army and other national institutions required for a normal state. Time is long overdue to let your country regain a minimum stability and protect your people from insecurity and humiliation which has led to a large proportion of the population being displaced or becoming refugees. After the transition period, the field will be open for anyone to run for office. At present the doors are open, the Government is engaged in a reconciliation process which is open to all Somalis including former war lords, business men or radicals, who are ready to commit to peace and stability and to move forward.
4. Continued anarchy, the ongoing killing of Somalis by Somalis, piracy, etc are forcing your neighbours to either close their borders with Somalia or monitor them vigorously. You confront tighter security checks at airports. Somalia's honest businesses will find it increasingly difficult to operate. In Nairobi and all over Kenya, in Congo, southern Sudan, Uganda and even in the Middle East, Somali businesses may face increased problems. Sooner or later the calls by IGAD and the AU for a blockade of the seaports and a no fly zone will start to affect insurance and business costs.

5. Everywhere – at the AU, EU, IGAD, LAS, OIC and the UN, decision makers agree on the need for a new approach to Somalia’s 20-year-old crisis. All condemn the taking of power by force and coups d’état. In addition, the same small group of Somali politicians, often seen at Nairobi’s embassies and in hotels criticizing their own country and their Government are not helping themselves or the future of Somalia. They are not taken seriously by key diplomats and they may face real problems.

6. All Somalis, especially those with administrative or political experience before 1992 or even after, should help to educate the younger generation and get Somalia out of the vicious circle of violence. You all should look at the next brighter steps. Bring the lights back to Mogadishu and other big cities in your country. See and be seen in the capital. Rebuild it as a place of hope again. As it states in the Holy Koran:

O My Servants who have transgressed against themselves (by committing evil deeds and sins). Despair not of the Mercy of Allah, verily Allah forgives all sins. Truly, he is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (S 39 – 53)

7. The last six weeks were busy with the failed coup in Mogadishu and its consequences in your country along with important meetings in Washington, London and Rome. Once again, despite the assurances that the violence would end once the Ethiopians had left, Somalis have been killing Somalis. This must come to an end. At the same time the international community should continue to give its full moral, financial and technical support to the legitimate Somali Government to ensure there is no repeat of such attacks. It is also important to continue emphasizing that some of those behind this latest violence, who aspire to take over the country, are on the UN list of Al Qaeda and Taleban terrorists and subject to sanctions. To be honest, with such restrictions, how could they rule the country now?

8. As you may have heard, I visited Mogadishu on 25 May and held constructive talks with President Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, the Speaker, Prime Minister and members of the Government. I also saw your security forces and the professional, dedicated forces of AMISOM who deserve nothing but praise

9. One of the most important meetings since my last letter was held by IGAD on 20 May in Addis Ababa, which called for a no fly zone and sea blockade as well as sanctions to ensure that those opposing the Government cannot receive arms and financial aid. This was subsequently endorsed by the African Union. These measures are meant to help stability and are not aimed at hurting civilians or business. Exceptions would be made at the request of your Government. IGAD and African Union are like Sadec and Ecowas trying to do something to help the return of normalcy in the region.

10. Last week I chaired the International Contact Group (ICG) in Rome, which was attended by representatives of more than 35 international organizations and countries. The Contact Group added its voice to the condemnation of “the recent attempt by extremist armed opposition groups to overthrow the legal, legitimate and internationally recognised Somali Government.” The Contact Group meeting fully supported the engagement of IGAD and the AU Peace and Security Council and “called for urgent discussions on the recommendations of their recent meetings.” It

should also be noted that the ICG called for “concerted actions against those individuals, entities and states which obstruct the peace process, including the imposition of necessary measures against those who violate the United Nations Arms Embargo.”

11. We continue to work on the follow up to the Brussels Conference in support of the Somali Security Institutions and AMISOM, which was a great success at the political, diplomatic and financial levels. It is clear that the spoilers were attacking the Government to prevent the pledged \$213 million from coming in. A significant sum has already been disbursed to either the Somali security institutions or the African Union. The Government and the AU should help ensure transparency in reporting on the amounts received. I want to emphasize that these funds are for all Somalis and entities in Somalia, not just for Mogadishu or South Central alone.

12. Still on the security sector, UNPOS organized a meeting of former Somali Senior Military and Police Officers from 4 – 5 June at the African Center for Strategic Studies of the National Defence University in Washington DC. This was an exploratory meeting to look at lessons learned, best practices and the way forward in meeting current and future security challenges in the country. The meeting was aimed at preparing the ground for broader consultations in July or August.

13. Meanwhile, my office continues to engage with you, the members of the Somali Diaspora as far as possible. On 8 June I held a meeting in conjunction with the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office of some 30 Somali Diaspora members drawn from a wide range of backgrounds. The majority of the Diaspora members were keen to become involved in the peace process and to use their skills. The role of Diaspora supporting the TFG is new and encouraging.

14. On piracy – as you know this important issue is being debated in many fora including the International Contact Group on Piracy, which met in New York on 28 May 2009. The international maritime presence is a sign of solidarity with the Somali people and East African population, but we all agree the answer lies in providing land based solutions. Over the coming months piracy will decline as the international community continues supporting Somalia. We are also looking at ways to support the establishment of a coastguard to protect the waters around Somalia against pirates and all illegal activities for the benefit of Somalis.

Yours Faithfully,

Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah