



United Nations Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS)

Letter to the members of the Somali Jaaliyadda (No. 14)

Nairobi, 7 May 2009

As-salaamu Alaikum

1. Since my last letter to you one month ago, significant developments have taken place. Your country is still at a crossroads, though in a better position, and needs your continued attention and support.

2. The conference in support for the Somali security sector on 22 and 23 April in Brussels, co-chaired by the United Nations and the African Union, was a turning point for Somalia, its Government and its people. For the first time, the International Community has attended such a meeting on the highest level, including the Secretary General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-Moon; the chairperson of the African Union Commission, Jean Ping; the President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso; the EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana; the EU Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, Louis Michel; the Deputy Secretary- General of the League of Arab States, Ahmed Benhelli; and the Deputy Secretary- General of the Organization of Islamic Conference, Atta Bakheet Manane; as well as a high number of ministers. In total, about 60 countries and numerous organizations, including IGAD, participated in the conference, whose pledges totalled to more than \$213 million for Somalia's security forces and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). This unprecedented show of diplomatic and financial support is a proof of the International Community's new commitment to peace and stability in your country.

3. Thanks to the Djibouti Agreement, Somalis from inside and outside the country have started returning to their homes. Also the last leaders who fled the country in 2006 have returned. This is an encouraging sign of hope and confidence in the peace process. It is also a proof that you can be patriotic and don't have to resort to violence to prove it. Djibouti Agreement has shown that political differences can be solved through dialogue. Dialogue, not fighting should remain the only source of relations between brothers. In my capacity as Special Representative I reaffirm my availability to help. The era of old style violence should be over. On another level, given the commendable dedication shown by Burundian and Ugandan troops, yesterday's assassination of an AMISOM soldier cannot be accepted.

4. The continued acts of piracy are discouraging, and I reiterate that you should condemn them. Indeed it is the official authorities not individuals who should be

implementing the law concerning illegal fishing activities or waste dumping. It has to be mentioned that one of the main negative consequences of piracy is the association of Somalia with anarchy. As long as piracy goes on, the world will continue to have bad image of Somalia despite its new developments on the political and security side. Due to the high costs which pirates and their backers are facing, piracy will subside in a short time. In addition: economic causes of piracy should be addressed to help communities affected; legal action is to be taken against the pirates; the money trail is to be investigated and finally moral and physical deterrence are to be employed.

5. Following its swearing on 27 February 2009, the Government has been in place now for just over two months. After 20 years of war, this is a short period for the new leadership, to meet all the challenges. All Somalis should give it more time and help it to fully function. At this crucial moment in the history of your country, its institutions need the constructive support of its citizens from within and abroad. You now have the opportunity to proof to yourselves and the world that you care about the image of your country and your people. A new generation of leaders is in the making. Many of the new ministers and parliamentarians have not participated in governments or national institutions before the collapse of the state in 1991 and some have come from the Diaspora. Whatever their background is – they reflect the Somalia of today. They are working together for peace and stability and should be encouraged and supported.

6. Dear friends, your country is still suffering, and needs you. I call on each of you to take your responsibility as a Somali citizen to help your country get back on its feet. Each of you can make a change, and each of you can decide to be part of a change for the better. Somalia should regain its place on the world stage. Each Somali dreams of the day when Somalia is again a normal country like so many others – peaceful, with functioning public and private institutions, embassies, banks, transnational companies and international airlines connecting it to the rest of the world. Many of you now enjoy this normalcy in the countries where you live in. You should also have the right to enjoy these privileges in your country as well. The time to translate words into actions is now.

7. Your people want to put the era of violence behind them. They want to lead normal lives. Those who still want to kill should instead look for a better future for Somalia. I call on you to say NO to continued conflict and to commit your prayers of this coming Friday to peace and dignity in your country, wherever you are.

Yours Faithfully,

Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah