



United Nations Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS)

Letter to the members of the Somali Diaspora (No. 22)

Nairobi, 8 February 2010

As-Salaamu Alaikum,

Dear friends,

1. This is my regular update to the Jaaliyadda and as such I am particularly pleased to share with you the following. Last week I travelled to Mogadishu along with Mr. Ramtane Lamamra, Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union and Ambassador Boubacar Diarra, the new Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia, to hold discussions with officials. The same week I visited Doha where I was honored by a meeting with His Highness Emir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani.

2. I attended the 14th African Union Summit as part of the UN Secretary-General's delegation. I witnessed for the first time a strong determination from the AU Chairperson Jean Ping and many African Heads of State to come up with concrete proposals to help with stability in your country. What is encouraging is the African leaders asserting that they cannot talk of African unity while leaving a founding member state, Somalia, unassisted. The League of Arab States (LAS) and the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) are supportive of this position and we expect soon a meeting at the Executive level of these three Organizations to come up in support of Somalia before the Summit of the Arab League next month in Libya.

3. After condemning the take over of power by force in any country at 1999 and 2000 Summits, African Heads of State this time also strongly condemned any unconstitutional change of government as a threat to peace. This point is about those elected leaders who want to revise the Constitution to remain longer in power. The Summit also adopted the year 2010 as the "Year of Peace and Security in Africa" declaring they would do their best to work towards finding a lasting solution to the Somali crisis in particular.

4. Good news. Finally, many recognize now that Somalia is moving from "*a failed State to a fragile State*". This distinction may seem superficial but the difference between the two terms is important. At UNPOS we have consistently made the point that being always negative is not conducive to progress and therefore, I indicated to the UN Security Council that Somali is a *fragile*, not a *failed State*. Those who agree with us also understand the implications of such an evolution: the need to accept Somalia as a normal State though with serious difficulties. This also implies the importance of respecting and helping Somalia out of its current problems

to the level of a *normal State*. To keep addressing Somalia only as a *case study*, will not help end the crisis. The focus of peace efforts should not be only on security and political issues or food assistance but also and simultaneously on economic development and specifically on job creation, trade, business, etc. We now have to shift the widely held perception that Somalia will always remain in conflict and a *failed State*. Somalia can and must reconstruct itself with appropriate external assistance. Your country like many other *fragile States* has huge Development and Reconstruction needs. The challenge then is attracting the right levels of investments for Reconstruction. I am almost certain that before May 2010 I will have good news for you about this Reconstruction and Development project through a new partnership.

5. The recognition of this evolution from *failed to fragile State* is encouraging and timely since the Government has also made visible progress: works on the port, airport, Parliament, Isbahaysiga Mosque and on Radio Mogadishu. It is heartening to note that in the face of the many challenges, the rehabilitation of Radio Mogadishu is an initiative led, supported and funded by Somalis with little or no assistance from the outside. Even those Somalis who do not support the Government should salute and bring assistance to the rebirth of their national Radio. I hope that it will soon be followed by the national TV complementing the work of the existing private televisions.

6. However, despite the progress, we should remain mindful of the huge political and security challenges to your country. On 14 January, I shared the following with the UN Security Council: *“it should be understood that the extremists responsible for the violence include many foreigners, who seek not only to overthrow the Government by force, but also to oppose the establishment of any Authority. The desire of the Somali people whose basic wish, like all people the world over, is to have peace and a Government that protects them and delivers services.”* It is time for Somalis to know the whole truth about the real state of affairs in their country. It is time for Somalis, especially those of Jaaliyadda who enjoy more security and freedom, to make clear choices on the future of their country to bring it out of anarchy and failure. Today, the real fight should be about regaining dignity and sovereignty. To all I would like to say: *the cost of peace is much lower than that of war.*

7. On the issue of dignity and reconciliation, I have, in previous letters to you, indicated that I am ready and willing to assist those Somalis who would like to reach out to their Somali brothers. Of course, the best solution is for Somalis to speak directly among themselves inside the country. My office will support them in all their efforts. That policy should help normalize the legal situation of those who are on the list pursuant to UN Security Council Resolution 1267 (2000). I have raised this point with you earlier and I confirm once again, my readiness to help those concerned by this UN Security Council Resolution or other political issues.

8. Unfortunately, the problem of IDPs, Refugees, Human Trafficking, brutal violations of human rights and other abuses continue. As you know, life evolves through ups and downs but we should remain determined. *“Many were the Ways of Life that have passed away before you: travel through the earth, and see what was the end of those who rejected Truth”.* Surah 3 Verse 137.

9. I came to know that in general you are resourceful and resilient. You may be suspicious of some people but I don't believe you hate each other. I have no doubt that when Somalis rely upon themselves, they can overcome any challenge. It is then that those of us who want to assist can be most successful. The exercise of channeling external assistance through the international private company PriceWaterhouse Coopers – PWC- is until now working in a satisfactory manner. Regarding suspicions over the printing of a new Shilling denomination thanks to assistance from Sudan, I want to stress that the operation is not financially dubious and I personally spoke with all concerned about it. Always check the rumors before making up your mind. Finally, it is possible that Somalia will soon join the EAC, unlocking vast economic, commercial and financial potential for your businessmen and women. The year 2010 should be much better, the Year of Peace.

Yours Faithfully,
Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah