



United Nations Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS)

Letter to the members of the Somali Diaspora (No. 26)

Nairobi, 28 June 2010

As-Salaamu Alaikum,

Dear friends,

In a few days' time I will end my mission in Somalia and will join UN Headquarters for other activities. I have spent nearly three years working on your country with various national, regional and international brothers and colleagues. It has been a most interesting, intense period of my professional life and has helped me to know East Africa, the Horn and your country a little better. Today I retain the same enthusiasm as on my first day about my mission.

When I arrived to begin my work I had three things in mind. To start with, I felt, and I still feel, many affinities with the Somali people as I share various aspects of your background including an understanding of camels. On a personal basis, one of my best Mauritanian friends, who was also a school mate, married a Somali when they were both students in France. Finally, from my previous experience, I knew of the terrible impact a long civil war can have on people's culture and behaviour, but also their strong desire to survive to see peace return *which generates sympathy for the concerned populations*.

On the eve of my departure I would like to make a few observations:

- a. I thank the many Somalis of all ages, backgrounds and regions that I met for their understanding, friendship and dedication to their country. It is too long and difficult to list them all, but many have different political sensitivities and sometimes are even political adversaries. However they are all patriots and I thank them for their contribution to my work and above all to their country and for their sense of responsibility and dignity.
- b. I would like to thank the TFG leadership with whom I have worked since my arrival. I invite the current leadership to remain focused on essential priority tasks and to have a larger picture of the present and future of the country and their own regime rather than daily and short term priorities. However we should keep supporting them as they represent Somalia to the world. I would like to thank and



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congratulate the Presidents of Puntland and Somaliland for the attention they pay to stability, to economic issues and *to security*.

- c. A number of Governments genuinely want to help your country. However, to be honest, Somalia's public image in Africa and the Middle East has been badly damaged over the years by the overall behaviour of the leaderships (*governments and oppositions*) in Mogadishu. A long, sustained effort is needed to reverse that negative perception. Western democracies such as the EU, Norway and the US are politically tolerant and pay more attention to the situation of the Diaspora for a number of reasons. I think that to maintain continued international attention and especially respect, you, the members of the Diaspora, must continue to adhere to the laws in your new country while helping to put Somalia on the right foot with patience and tolerance. There will never be a leadership unanimously agreed on, but despite the prevailing difficulties, I still think a solution for a stable Somalia is inevitable *through political tolerance*.

So loose not heart, nor fall into despair; for ye must gain mastery if ye are true in Faith.
(Sura 003, Verse 138)

In my first statement on my appointment in September 2007, I said that "Somalia does not deserve to be an international case study on how to manage conflict." As I come to the end of my mission I would like to emphasize the same point again.

Your country made progress in some key areas during my mission. Despite its self inflicted difficulties, we now have a one and a half year old Government as a result of the Djibouti Agreement signed in August 2008. The Agreement, the first of its kind on Somalia not originating from a specific regional state, is fully backed by the United Nations, the African Union, the League of Arab States, the Organization of Islamic Conference, and the European Union. It was also witnessed by the three Permanent members of the UN Security Council, France, the United Kingdom, and the United States, with IGAD actively supporting its implementation. The Agreement in particular led to the withdrawal of the Ethiopian troops but the opposition groups, who stated that they were only fighting to oust these troops, have continued their violence...

Significant progress has also been made with respect to the Constitution, of which a first draft shall be presented by 1 July 2010, to coincide with the 50th anniversary of the country's independence.



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Notable progress has also been made with a mechanism set up by the international accounting firm, PricewaterhouseCoopers, to allow donors to transfer funds to the TFG in a transparent, accountable manner. This mechanism allows funds to be disbursed to your country with greater speed and flexibility. *It also gives partners a greater choice of ways to disburse external assistance.*

Moreover Somalia is again high up the international agenda. As you may recall, the Brussels pledging conference, held in April 2009, was chaired by the UN Secretary General and the Presidents of the EU and AU. This was followed in May this year by the Istanbul Conference, co-convened by the UN Secretary General and Turkey *which attracted many Somali and international businessmen and women.* Both meetings were attended by high level international figures including several foreign ministers.

Peace will take time due to important vested interests local and also international including illegal trade, fishing, dumping of waste and piracy. But a determined Government, accepted or tolerated by Somalis and supported by the international community, can make irreversible progress towards stability. It should be noted that the International Community has in the past supported weak and fragile Governments during civil wars, such as in Bosnia, Cambodia, Kosovo, Liberia, and Sierra Leone, etc. Somalia deserves similar treatment for its stability and that of the region as we all share an interest in seeing peace in your country. To that end the TFG should be more proactive *and the international community, especially the UN, must move to Mogadishu to be close to the victims without delay. Concerning the victims – more work needs to be done to address impunity. I have always maintained that justice delayed is justice denied.*

The objective is to end the transition in a peaceful manner and to work closely with the African Union, the League of Arab States, the Organization of Islamic Conference and especially your brothers in the region in IGAD. *My office now has an established working group with the AU and IGAD.*

Verily never will Allah change the condition of a people until they change it themselves (with their own souls). (Sura 013, Verse 10)

The new SRSG Augustine Mahiga, of Tanzania, whom I know will bring a vast experience from both in and outside his country and he will get strong regional backing to help liberate Somalia from the violence and anarchy.



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In saying goodbye to you, and in accordance with our Moslem tradition, I would like to ask forgiveness from all those I may have hurt one way or another. If that has happened, it was never my intention to harm and I would like to ask them forgiveness/*Semah*. On my side, I forgive those who, one way or another in my presence or absence, made negative statements about me.

Our Lord! Condemn us not if we forget or miss the mark (Sura 002, verse 285)

Thank you once again for all your help and support

Your brother

Ahmedou