

Remarks
OIC Contact Group on Somalia
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The Federal Republic of Somalia
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Introduction

- It is a great honour and privilege to address the OIC Contact Group on Somalia on the sidelines of the 71st UN General Assembly here in New York
- To you all brotherly members and distinguished chair, I say Asalama Alleykum Wa- Rahmatullahi Wa Barakatu and a belated Eid Mubarak.

Your Excellencies and dear brothers, The Somali Government and People are grateful for the continued assistance and support of the OIC and each and every member state which has contributed to our progress. Jazaka-Allah.

I welcome the statement of the Secretary General read out by the Chair and I welcome its positive outlook and optimism regarding our national progress. I also acknowledge the challenges we still face to fulfill our national promise and potential.

I would like to start with some good news: Somali hosted the first IGAD Summit of Heads of State and Government since it helped to form the organization nearly 30 years prior.

We were pleased and honoured to welcome the Their Excellences the Presidents of Uganda and Kenya and the Prime Minister of Ethiopia as well as the delegation from the brotherly states of Djibouti and Sudan who helped to champion the Summit from the offset.

Carrying on with the good news Somalia sent 3 Olympians to the Olympics and Paralympics this year and they did tremendously well and we are proud of them.

The Somali Diaspora are returning in large numbers to invest and capacitate our public and private institutions.

I had the honour of welcoming the OIC's new Ambassador to Somalia H.E. Ambassador Mohamed Idris Saban. During our discussions we spoke at length about our national expectations of a closer partnership and effective delivery of support from the upgraded OIC office in Mogadishu. Needless to say, there was common agreement.

Our Government is arranging the best time to welcome H.E. Iyad Madani, our generous and visionary organizational leader to his second home, Somalia. H.E. has shown his absolute commitment to visiting us and seeing our national progress with his own eyes. We stand ready to welcome him with open arms and the warmth he deserves from his brothers and sisters in Somalia.

Situation in Somalia: Security

- Somalia has turned the corner towards stability and progress. Now, hope and confidence characterize our national mood.
- I am proud to say that our Government, in cooperation with our people and valuable partners, has made tangible progress on the key issues of elections, state formation, security and economic development.
- Somalia is winning the war against international terrorism and we thank all our valuable partners, including Turkey and the UAE for supporting the security sector reform and capacity building in Somalia.

- Over the past four years, the Somali National Army and AMISOM have regained key towns and cities. Today, Al Shabab controls less than 10 per cent of territory in the country. In recent months many of their key leaders have been killed, others have defected and their violent ideology is truly shunned by the Somali people. The Somali National Forces and AMISOM have proven that Al-Shabab is vulnerable, divided and can be defeated through coordinated military action.
- As a result of the success of the joint operations of the Somali National Army and AMISOM, Al-Shabab has turned to small-team asymmetric warfare tactics to conduct terror attacks against soft targets in Somalia and increasingly in neighboring countries. In response, our Government is working with partners and neighbours to enhance security cooperation to enable us to respond to the threat together and swiftly.
- Where, before 2012, AlShabaab was engaged in open warfare with the Somali Forces and AMISOM, today they are limited to infrequently and opportunistically undertaking desperate suicide attacks on mosques, hotels, restaurants, businesses and carrying out assassinations against innocent citizens. This is the best evidence of their moral bankruptcy and ideological falsehood.
- The only way we can truly achieve long term stability and development both in Somalia and across the region is to have a well-trained, equipped and funded Somali National Security Forces. There is agreement and full understanding of the importance of an inclusive political agreement on the future of Somali security arrangements, and the urgency of building up effective Security Sector Reform in Somalia, ahead of the agreed AMISOM draw down in 2018.

- To enable security sector reform and progress the New Policing model and National Security Plan and the National Strategy and Action Plan for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism have been completed and nationally approved in Somalia. We urge all OIC member states to assist however they can in the implementation of our security strategies for the common protection and advancement of not just Somalia but our Islamic values and cooperation.

Elections

- The Federal Government of Somalia, in consultation with the federal states, has adopted credible, transparent, and inclusive electoral mechanisms.
- All the mechanisms and organs to implement the elections successfully are now in place.
- The aim of the Federal Government of Somalia is to ensure a smooth, peaceful, inclusive and enhanced electoral process for a peaceful democratic transition in November 2016 with no extension.
- The State building process in Somalia, which is central to elections, is almost complete with only one state in the process of formation. The formation of Hiiraan and Middle Shabelle state is ongoing and this process will not jeopardize the agreed electoral process which will be implemented in accordance with the agreed timeline, as stated earlier.
- All the above achievements were not achieved easily. Democracy is a difficult journey and we will learn more as we progress towards the 2020 electoral process.

Economic Development

- The Government is also working very hard for economic recovery and development.
 - Somalia needs investment and not just aid to economically develop.
 - SFG has held many meetings with OIC member states on investing in Somalia and we would like to reiterate this vital support from all of you in this critical point in our developmental journey.
 - We have a competitive investment law, enormous sea and land based resources and a young and vibrant population. Please come and invest in all of these.
 - We thank the Turkish companies that have already invested in Somalia and we hope many more from the OIC nations will follow soon.
 - Somalia has completed its most recent **National Development plan** which contains our national priorities, including investment, education and skills for inclusive and sustainable national development. We kindly ask all our brothers within the OIC and its member states to strongly support it.

Somali Refugees

SFG successfully negotiated the Tripartite Agreement with Kenya and UNHCR for the safe and voluntary return of Somali refugees home. Visiting the Dadaab camp with H.E. President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, injected a further urgency into the process and we are more determined than ever to return our people home safely and to better prospects with support and public services.

Conclusion

Somalia sees the OIC and all of its brotherly members as valuable allies and friends. We recognize what you have done for us and we appreciate you all. As Foreign Minister I want to thank all of your leaders and delegations who have visited Somalia since 2012. This is the best sign of solidarity and the best way we can change the narrative on Somalia. In this regard, I kindly request that those OIC member nations without an Embassy in Mogadishu open one soonest and all of you visit your second home Somalia.

I would like to extend an invitation to you which we had all agreed in the past and this is for this Contact Group to hold its next session in Mogadishu.

Asalama Aleykum Wa Rahmatullahi Wa Barakatu.