

**Remarks**  
**High-level Meeting “Sustaining Peace: Mechanisms, Partnerships and the Future of  
Peacebuilding in Africa”**  
**H.E. Dr. Abdusalam H. Omer**  
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**The Federal Republic of Somalia**  
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**UN Headquarters, New York**

**Dear Excellences, Ladies and Gentleman and Colleagues,**

It gives me enormous pleasure to be participating in this timely and very important meeting focused on sustaining security in Africa.

I thank the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) and the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (OSAA) as well as the Permanent Observer Mission of the African Union to the UN which have convened this High-Level Meeting on the theme “Sustaining Peace: Mechanisms, Partnerships and the Future of Peacebuilding in Africa”.

Given that the overall goal of this meeting is to sustain and expand the political momentum for peacebuilding in Africa and discuss ways to advance the implementation of the General Assembly and the Security Council resolutions A/RES/70/262 and S/RES/2282 (2016) on the Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture, adopted on 27 April 2016,

I am glad all the key stakeholders including those from civil society and the developmental financial institutions are present.

Sustaining peace in Africa and everywhere else is not and cannot be the task of just the Government or the UN or the International Community: it is the job of each and every citizen who will truly benefit from this too.

It is sad that while the world moves on we in Africa are in some respects still caught in the poverty trap caused by insecurity and poor governance.

However, despite the challenges and our relatively young national ages, the situation is improving in Africa. That said, we cannot be complacent - much needs to be done to make lasting peace, progress and prosperity permanent in Africa.

The Somali Government welcomes the efforts of the UN through the dedicated Peacebuilding Architecture consisting of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), the Peacebuilding Support

Office (PBSO) and the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF).

Somalia, during some of its most difficult hours, has benefitted from UN Peacekeepers like many other African nations present today. Indeed, this is clear evidence of the UN's commitment to building and sustaining peace in Africa.

However, as the reports commissioned by the UN itself on its own performance in sustaining peace outline, there is still a wide gap between the aspirations and achievements for sustaining Peace in Africa.

The report of the **Advisory Group of Experts (AGE)** published in June 2015 is truly comprehensive and its findings which support partnerships at all levels for sustaining peace and more crucially, locally led and owned peacebuilding processes, are welcome.

Somalia has experienced one of the most painful and longest civil wars in Africa. Today, as we leave this dark past behind on our route to stability and progress, I would like to make very clear that a key lessons from our experience is that peacebuilding must be led and owned by the people it concerns on the ground.

It is they who are most affected and understand the main issues and solutions to their disputes best. The UN, AU and regional organisations must act as facilitators of dialogue and encourage this to conclude successfully for the benefit of the country.

Indeed, peace building discussions and efforts are mainly dominated by those that have been directly involved in the actual conflict and this must not be the case.

Those that are also affected such as civilians, regardless of their gender and age, must also be represented and have their voices heard in the peacebuilding processes.

Partnership for peacebuilding are fundamental and the UN, AU, IGAD, Arab League, OIC and individual UN member state partners have and continue to be instrumental in supporting Somalia to sustain our precious peace.

While we are grateful, I must stress the importance of cross sectoral and agency working with central Governments as a guide and lead on the developmental policies and interventions that will sustain peace. There cannot be silo thinking and a one size fits all approach.

There cannot also be overlooking of national institutions and their capacity building if peace and development are to be sustainable.

I understand that some agencies within the UN and other partners adopt country-specific

programs for development and peacebuilding but this is still not coherent and joined up with national government and regional organisations strategies and priorities in most cases.

Without local input, guidance and partnership again, throughout the programs, there will be limited success if any at all.

Sustaining peace in all situations requires vision, and moral and political courage as well as credibility on the part of all stakeholders. Inclusivity of processes, open Government and outreach and UN and other partner's successful collaboration can build and sustain credibility and development momentum in post conflict states.

I am proud to announce that the Somali Government has recently launched the **Open Government Initiative** endorsed by H.E. **President Hassan Sheikh Mohamoud**. This is clear evidence of our Government's commitment to transparency, consultation and inclusive Somali led peace and development.

Most peacekeeping programs are a sudden response to tragic media headlines which, after the cameras lenses are pointed elsewhere, are left to fester as was the case in Somalia after 1992.

Peacekeeping in Africa needs real commitment and an understanding that it may not be over by the next funding cycle. Peace building requires patience, listening and then moving forward to enacting a program of agreed actions.

This must be recognised and supported by all stakeholders otherwise the credibility of the whole process will be questionable.

Financing for development is important and often discussed in this Chamber in most meetings. Ideas are great on paper but implementation requires resources of which financing is among the most important. Yet as the AGE report found "financing remains scarce, inconsistent and unpredictable."

One of the key reasons is the formation of trust funds which rely on generous contributions from Member States and given that some Member States already provide bilateral and multilateral support through other non-UN mechanism, sometimes the incentives are not there that would encourage further contributions. Success will encourage investment in further success.

As part of investing in success, Somalia agrees with the UN that the developed nations must meet their ODA agreed contributions. This is necessary to overcome the common challenges facing the world – what happens in Africa affects the developed nations too.

The Government of Somalia has started the process of once again cooperating with the International Financial institutions such as the World Bank, IMF, the Islamic Development Bank and the African Development Bank.

We understand the empowering and enabling role these valuable partners can play in unleashing the potential of the Somali economy so that we can develop our nation and achieve lasting peace.

In Somalia, we are actively strengthening our **Public Finance Management** mechanisms and we are encouraging Member States of the UN to use the country's systems to firstly develop them further and secondly, cut the cost of aid so that the finances required for development and sustain peace reach the people more quickly and are used effectively.

More importantly than all the above for financing development is investment. Somalia, like most African States, is rich in diverse and untapped resources including agriculture, energy and fisheries but to name a few.

The Somali Parliament has also passed a competitive Investment Law which is among the most liberal and flexible in the world to facilitate investment into Somalia.

We have a young, aspirational and increasingly more educated human resource too both at home and in the Diaspora.

Therefore, a holistic developmental approach which includes investment is required to cut the cost of aid and empower national economies and people to sustain peace through the attainment of social and economic progress.

Sustaining peace in Africa is important because without peace our beautiful and rich continent will never fulfil its potential.

Somalia is evidence that we can all turn the corner and sustain peace. However, our national experience is that sustaining peace in Africa requires partnership, good governance, dialogue, local ownership and leadership as well as sustainable financing.

**I thank you Chairperson.**