

SOMALIA

Between Devils and Deep Sea

Mohamed Osman Omar

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Also by Mohamed Osman Omar

Diplomacy and Protocol (in Somali)

The Road to Zero
Somalia's Self Destruction

SOMALIA
A Nation Driven to Despair

The Scramble in the Horn of Africa
History of Somalia
(1827-1977)

Mohamed Osman Omar

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2004

For the Somali People

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Contents

<i>Publisher's Note</i>	vii
<i>Preface</i>	ix
<i>Acknowledgment</i>	xiv
1. Somali Dilemma	1
2. Towards Restoration	20
3. The Revival of the State	32
4. The Beginning of a Difficult Journey	55
5. Back to the Ruined Capital	71
6. The Roadblocks	87
7. Unprecedented Success	103
8. Somalia under Attack	106
9. The TNG and the Reconciliation	140
10. The TNG Position	154
11. Split in the TNG	164
12. Ethiopia Exposed	175
13. The Turning Point	185
14. Plot to Overthrow the TNG Failed	200
15. Non-recognition of Statehood	219
16. The Dismemberment of Somalia	227
17. Conclusion	234
<i>Appendices</i>	243
<i>Index</i>	267

Publisher's Note

This book deals with the real events in the Horn of Africa and particularly the painful situation that prevails in Somalia since the collapse of the Military regime of Major General Mohamed Siyad Barre, who governed the country from October 21, 1969 to January 26, 1991.

It is based on facts and is the true story of what has happened and continues to happen in the region and in Somalia in particular. We have to examine our conscience as to what extent we have helped or hindered the search for a solution to the situation in Somalia.

We are passing through an extremely difficult period in our life which I thought; should be recorded for posterity. It is true as the Somali proverb says, "*Wixii qoran baa quruuma haree, muxuu hadal qiimo leeyahay*", which is similar to what the others also say, "Words fly, and script remains". My heart bleeds for the beloved motherland and I know I can do little to help, as I cannot defend her from the enemies that have reduced it to the present state of affair.

While we were quarrelling with each other, the country has been taken over by others. Ethiopia claimed that it had the mandate by the IGAD, OAU, the Arab League and United Nations "in order to settle the internal conflict in Somalia". At the same time, as the United Nations Panel of Experts reported, "Ethiopia has played an overt military role in Somalia. Not only has Ethiopia been a major source of weapons to a number of groups ..." In fact, it only aggravated

the internal conflict in Somalia by proliferating factions rather than settling it.

In the meantime, the UNDP Somalia is also playing the role of administering power, claiming to have been mandated by the Secretary General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan. It collects all the revenues from the International Aircrafts overflying the airspace of the Somali Republic. It collects donations and other contributions from other countries in the name and on behalf of the Somali people. Ethiopia claimed to have been mandated by the IGAD, OAU, Arab League and United Nations to find solution to Somalia's internal conflict. Judging by these facts, it is clear that Somalia has become a no-man's land and everyone who can do so, claims to have a license issued by the UN or the IGAD, to exploit every situation. This is like stealing the cloth from the dead in the grave.

The people have had enough and can no longer bear humiliation and moral and physical torture. We have to go back to our conscience and think that for our deeds, knowingly or unknowingly, this country and people have suffered immensely. Let us all say, enough is enough.

PREFACE

After the deep crisis we witnessed during the dying days of the regime of Major General Mohamed Siyad Barre, the Somali people were hoping to see a smooth change in the political situation and orderly transfer of power to those who were claiming to be fighting against the regime in the interest of the masses.

In 1991, when the so-called "Freedom Fighters" entered the capital with their militias, the entire capital fell into their hands. However, instead of protecting the lives and properties of the people, the "Freedom Fighters" went on rampage and indiscriminately killed innocent people and looted everything they laid their hands on including government institutions, hospitals and schools.

The most damaging impact of the civil war unleashed by the private militias was the psychological scar inflicted upon the nation. Thousands of men, women, children and elders, who were forced to flee their homeland in search of peace, still suffer from the nightmare they were subjected to during the tragic period of their life.

It is unfortunate that the leaders of the militias could not understand and foresee the consequences of their destructive behaviour. What they destroyed belonged to the nation and not to Mohamed Siyad Barre or his regime. When the regime collapsed, all fell into their hands but they miserably failed to protect it. In their madness they plundered and destroyed everything.

For ten years the nation remained in a state of turmoil. With each passing day the situation worsened due to the intransigence of the Political Leaders who saw peace and normalcy as a hindrance in their pursuit of power. The blatant interference in the internal affairs of Somalia by our neighbour, Ethiopia, also aggravated the already inflamed situation.

For a long time Ethiopia claimed to have been entrusted by the OAU with the task of finding a solution to the Somali problem. Between 1991 and 1997, nine of the 12 conferences were organised by Ethiopia. However, as it has been part of the problem in Somalia, Ethiopia has always worked to the detriment of Somalia.

The only successful conference in 12 years of crisis was the 13th conference organised by Djibouti in 2000. Its deliberations bore fruit in the form of setting up the Transitional Authorities. It succeeded because of the absence of Ethiopia and the factions it supports. But of course, Ethiopia could not swallow the success of Djibouti Conference and hence it embarked upon to destroy its gains.

According to the Report of the Panel of Experts of the United Nations dated 24 February 2003:

"In March 2001, Ethiopia sponsored the creation of the Somalia Reconciliation and Restoration Council during meetings at Awasa, Ethiopia, in large part to undermine the Transitional National Government, which it believed to be hostile to Ethiopian interests".

Since 2002, Kenya has been holding a Somali Peace and Reconciliation conference under the sponsorship of IGAD. It has been heavily influenced by Ethiopia. After 17 months of deliberations it has reached nowhere near its assigned task of finding a solution to the Somali crisis. So far, the only 'progress' that the management can claim to have made is to create differences between those who were together and widened the gap between those who were already divided.

What they wanted to do but miserably failed has been

their efforts to topple the Transitional National Government (TNG). The Chairman (Kenya) and Ethiopia (a Member of the Technical Committee now Facilitation Committee) spared no effort to make Somalia a country without a government.

The TNG has been a symbol of Somali Nationhood. What Ethiopia and Kenya perhaps want is to see that the TNG and Somalia are wiped out from the world map. They also fear that Somalia might claim its territories under their illegal occupation.

The former President of Kenya, Daniel T. arap Moi publicly revealed the feelings of Kenya and Ethiopia while on a visit to USA when he stated:

"Regional suspicion of Somalia's expansionist dreams has been cited as a drawback in that country's peace efforts.

"Its neighbours feared that a reunited and prosperous nation might resurrect Somalia's territorial claims." (The Nation (Nairobi) 19 September 2003.)

The problem Somalia faces today is caused by shortsighted Somalis who are used by enemies disguised as friends, who give false promises which they would never fulfil. The Somalis working for them are used as stooges to attain the nefarious objectives of the enemies of Somalia.

In fact, an important person, who also realises the existence of outside hand to whom I mentioned about the foreign country blocking the progress of the Nairobi Peace Process, said: "we see only Somalis".

Somalis have soft spots. Threat is used to deal with some while others are cajoled and persuaded. Others walk over to the enemy looking for favours. A person is accepted on condition that he should only talk of his personal interest or conflict with others and never of the good of his own country or people. Of course, we have also seen some get off the trap once they discovered the hidden agenda of their host.

The war against the Somalis is being waged on many fronts. The enemies from within working in collusion with enemies from without are working overtime to block any

solution to the Somali problem. They want to keep Somalia under the tutelage of its ambitious neighbours and warlords. It is like the period before Arta, when another country in the IGAD claimed to be responsible for Somali affairs.

The plan of our enemies is that Somalia should not have a government and stability. They want all economic activities to come to a halt and to create shortage of food, resulting in man-made hunger and famine. As we are not allowed to have our own government, stability and income-generating projects, those who remain in the country are fed with the remittances from refugees coming through the *Hawala* (money transfer) groups operating between different parts of Somalia and countries where they are living as refugees.

The easy acceptance of Somalis in Europe and the Americas, meant to encourage the migration of the Somalis must be seen as part of the plot to encourage naïve Somalis to take their children to these countries for readily available amenities.

Hundreds of Somalis are attracted by the good life in Europe and the Americas (US and Canada). Parents spend thousands of dollars to send their children to migrate to Europe. Hundreds of Somalis perish while illegally crossing the Mediterranean Sea, between North Africa and Europe and others die in the Red Sea, between Somalia and Yemen. Some die in the desert between the Sudan and Libya.

Probably the reason for not finding solution to the Somali problem lies in the hidden design of forces inimical to Somalia to see that the country is eliminated through slow death. If we want that to happen then we should allow enemies of Somalia and stooges of its ambitious neighbours to wreck peace initiatives. But for the sake of our people and this beautiful land, let us genuinely work for a solution.

What I am trying to say in this book is not new to knowledgable readers. Much of it is a familiar story. I am recording here what happened during this period of my life, which I wanted to share with my fellow brothers and sisters; particularly with those who had no chance to be there where

these events were taking place. We owe an explanation to our future generation as to what we have done with our time and what we have done for our country.

Mohamed Osman Omar
Mogadishu, Somalia, 2004

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1

SOMALI DILEMMA

After the collapse of the military regime led by Major General Mohamed Siyad Barre in 1991, and the ensuing civil war which claimed thousands of human lives and the destruction of public and private properties including state institutions, the Somali people finally saw the light at the end of the tunnel when various sections of society decided at the Arta (Djibouti) Peace and Reconciliation Process in 2000 to establish a transitional authority for a period of three years. But what happened during the ten years prior to the Peace and Reconciliation Conference at Arta?

During the ten years of the civil war, prior to the Arta Peace Conference, there were several attempts to establish an administration, but due to the rigid stand and intransigence of certain faction leaders, who claimed that they were the only legitimate leaders, nothing came out of such peace initiatives. For a decade, these so-called leaders, instigated by an outside power, not only objected to each other's claim to power, but also confronted each other with heavy arms and indulged in indiscriminate killing and looting of people who had nothing to do with the power struggle. They toppled Siyad Barre government, but could not give the people and the country an alternative or a stable political order.

Apparently for the factions, the success came too soon

in the day and they had no blueprint for the shape of things to come.

It is the good old story across the continent where power was taken by force through military coup. During the early 1960s, the continent of Africa saw many changes in the system of government. These were the years of what was called the "Revolutionary Era". Grounds for military intervention or *coup d'états* were prepared in many parts of Africa by the civilian governments which had taken over power from the European colonial administrations during the 60s, who soon thereafter were mired in corruption that threw the countries into deep economic and political crisis.

At that time the National Army was seen as a saviour. In nearly ten years after independence Somalia sank into deep political and economic crisis. That is why the Army staged the so-called "Bloodless Revolution" on 21 October 1969. It was welcomed by the masses with green leaves. The people saw the army as an important force to protect the country from total collapse, if not be its saviour.

Like most other military regimes, it did well at the beginning, but then it became as corrupt as the regime it had toppled. The nepotism and acts of omission and commission, which were the hallmarks of the civilian governments, seemed minor acts of malfeasance as compared to those practiced by the so-called Revolutionary Government.

During the civilian administration there existed some sort of a democratic system in the country. It may not have been the best system, but it was better than any other system. The fact is that any government, which overstays in power and suppresses democratic process is bound to create a problem for itself. This has been a common phenomenon in all African countries where leaders manipulated the political system to foist themselves on the country. But in the end all those who overstayed in power had a disgraceful end. The latest examples of Somalia's Mohamed Siyad Barre and Zaire's President Mobuto Sese Sekow are still fresh in mind. Both, after being in power for decades, were forced to flee

their countries and died in exile. Siyad died in Nigeria and Mobuto died in Morocco.

They met with a tragic end. They could have been heroes if they had behaved well in their countries and respected the human rights of their own people. The lust for power ultimately landed them in trouble resulting in their exiles. They died unsung and unhonoured.

In Somalia, besides the fighting of the opposition against the government forces, there was also passive resistance from the people. But what prolonged the agony of Somalia was the people's indifference towards the malpractices of the administrations.

During the early days it was the military which safeguarded the interests of the nation and acted against the misdeeds and misuse of power by civilian governments. But then, when the military itself became corrupt the people lost all faith in the system.

In 1990, when I came back home for a few weeks' working trip, I noticed a change in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. At the weekly orientation conference of the Staff, there was a noticeable hostile attitude and verbal attack on the revolutionary administration by some officials in the presence of the highest authority of the ministry. That showed the weakening of the one time powerful system.

At the end of the meetings at the government offices, people stood up and sang the ritual song dedicated to the "Father of the Revolution", Major General Mohamed Siyad Barre "*Guul Wade Siyaad*" (The bearer of the victory). But this time, when the moderator of the meeting said: "We stand up and sing our song, ... one, two, three", to my surprise, the people started singing another song, "*Soomaaliyey Toosoow*" (Somalis Stand-up).

That was a great revolution against the "Revolutionary Government" which showed how people were already at the end of their passive opposition. The minister and the representative of the Somali Revolutionary Socialist Party (SRSP), *Wakiilka Xisbiga Hantiwadaagga Kacaanka Soomaaliyeed* were

in the ministry and seemingly accepted their own defeat.

The Somali opposition groups crossed the border into Ethiopian-controlled area or went to Ethiopia proper, to look for support from the Addis Ababa regime to fight against the forces of their own government. Ethiopia was always ready to help any one who opposed the government in Somalia. What Ethiopia wanted was to create as much hostility as possible against any government in Mogadishu to disturb peace. For it the very existence of Somalia is an anathema and it cannot tolerate a stable and peaceful Government to emerge in the country.

After the independence in 1960, Somalia had a fairly democratic and pro-west government which enjoyed good relations with all those countries that had relations with Ethiopia. All the same the Ethiopian rulers did not allow Somalia to live in peace.

In 1964, Ethiopia attacked Somalia, which was still in its infancy and with no defence capability. It was during the first election in post-independence Somalia that the then Prime Minister, Dr. Abdirashid Ali Shermarke emphatically asserted that Somali people would defend their territory and their democracy by holding the gun in one hand and the ballot in the other.

After the change of guard in Addis Ababa, no one knew whether the new Ethiopian leader, Col. Mengistu Haile Mariam, who had captured power in 1974 after toppling and eliminating Emperor Haile Selassie was honest or just blackmailing the opposition movement in the northern part of Somalia, SNM (Somali National Movement), who were fighting the government forces. He claimed that his government had its hands tied by the peace treaty which he had signed with the Somali President, Mohamed Siyad Barre in Djibouti in 1986. He told the SNM leaders that he was not able to help those who were opposing Siyad Barre. He reportedly advised the SNM leaders to go back to their country to face their enemy, or if they so wished he would help them seek asylum elsewhere. So the SNM leaders found

themselves between a rock and a hard place.

The SNM was in a big dilemma. They were in a tight corner in which they had to choose between two undesirable courses of action—to abandon the struggle and to go into exile or go back to the country to fight for their cause. The SNM chose to return to Somalia and confront the government forces. Their aim was to liberate their region from the military dictatorship.

The leaders of the movement mobilised their supporters and organised surprise attacks on the mighty government forces in Burao town at midnight of 27 May 1988. They dealt a heavy blow to the military, killing a large number of government troops, including numerous high-ranking military officers.

Following the attack the Government decided to bombard the capital of the region, Hargeisa and brought to the district of Burao, which was originally under the command of Hargeisa, an additional army division separate from the Hargeisa Command. A new Chief was appointed for Burao.

At that time the rebellion was fairly widespread in the country but the Northern, Northeastern, Mudug and Galguduud regions were witnessing greater unrest and violence than other areas. There were three forms of rebellion: armed rebellion, vocal protests by community leaders and opinion makers and widespread apathy of the common people.

The government was pushed in to a tight position, but to save its skin, it resorted to harsh methods including the use of brute force against those who were challenging it both in the North as well as in the South. To suppress the opposition in the North, the Regime used not only national troops, but also Oromo nationals, who had come to Somalia as refugees to escape from Ethiopia's oppression. According to sources close to the government, at one time a delegation of high-ranking military officers travelled from the capital to the North and met with the refugees somewhere in the region in order to recruit and organise them as a special force to be used

against what the Government called "anti-revolutionaries."

Knowledgeable sources described the refugees as mainly Muslims, not well educated but versed in the Islamic Holy Book, the *Qur'aan*, although they did not understand well the meaning of the verses.

The leader of the army delegation sent to recruit the Oromo refugees told them that the Revolutionary regime was waging religious war against infidels. He spoke in Somali which was translated into Oromo. During the course of his speech, he repeatedly asked a religious person sitting next to him, to recite verses from the *Qur'aan* to impress the Oromos. They might not have understood the meaning of what was being recited; but as they understood the *Qur'aan*, they continuously shook their heads in approval. They were told that they (the Oromos) were Muslims fleeing from a Christian country and they had religious duty to fight against those (the SNM) who were trying to escape from a Muslim to a Christian country. The speech incited them to violence against the government's opposition.

Convinced about the veracity of the statement of the leader of the delegation, the leaders of the Oromo refugees mobilised more than five hundred of their followers within twenty four hours and joined in the special battalion of the Somali Government Army. They had their heads shaven and were put in training camps. In a few weeks they were employed to fight against the SNM.

On 9 June 1988, the National Air Force bombarded the capital of the North. A Somali pilot who was ordered to bomb the northern towns refused to do so and when he took off, he just defected to the neighbouring country, Djibouti, landing his Mig aircraft at the beach of Dooraale. However, the Government already had mercenary pilots hired from South Africa. They were four pilots, three men and a woman. They were brought to Hargeisa from Baidoa, Bay Region of Somalia where they had been staying for sometime.

On the surface the opposition forces in the South and in the North had been portraying their struggle as nationalistic,

a struggle meant to save the country from what they called "the dictator". But deep inside there was a profound division. Each group had a separate agenda, ranging from personal animosity towards the President to personal ambitions of the different actors to gain power for themselves. Neither they had any nationalistic agenda nor they were prepared to take over power, should their struggle succeed in overthrowing the dictatorship of Siyad Barre. They neither loved the country nor the people. Any other movement fighting for power should have organised a shadow cabinet during the struggle to make the take-over as smooth as possible. If they were sincere towards their declared cause the least they should have done was to form appropriate committees under able and qualified leaders who could accomplish the task of organising appropriate teams to take over the responsibility of the country.

Thus when the "dictator" abandoned the Presidency on 26 January 1991, the factions, particularly those in the South, failed to fill the power vacuum. The military group saw itself as the legitimate heir to the ousted regime whereas the civilian leadership believed that they should take the reins of power to spare the country another period of military rule. The deep mistrust between the military and civilian groups brought the country to a dangerous precipice.

The factions brought in the youths from the interior who were trained just to kill, rape and destroy. They were brain-washed and trained to become ferocious murderers having no mercy for anyone, whether women, men or children. The militias were comprised of fearless and mindless hooligans. During the course of their operation if any one got injured he would beg his friends to finish him off. They were killed by their own colleagues. Sometimes no one came to their rescue as no one cared for them, even those who used them did not have time and resources to look after them. Their life had value only as long as they could serve the purpose. They were not properly trained and were unaware about their responsibilities towards the civilians and the public, and

private properties. They knew nothing about human values and apparently no one taught them about the importance of human life.

The militias rampaged and burned the city of Mogadishu and its citizens. Like freebooters and marauders they freely roamed around the street and lanes all over the city indiscriminately killing and destroying homes and offices as though everything belonged to Mohamed Siyad Barre. And the leaders tacitly approved the action of their militias.

Mohamed Siyad Barre, the President of the Supreme Revolutionary Council from 21 October 1969, abandoned the capital, Mogadishu, on 26 January 1991, hidden in an armoured car. The power fell into the hands of the opposition but instead of taking it over in orderly manner they started fighting among themselves until the situation was out of control. No one could establish a measure of control as they failed to reach a consensus on any issue. There was no one who could arbitrate or help them reconcile their differences. All the faction leaders were engaged in the power struggle and every one wanted the top position. The South thus remained in the grip of terror for ten years. North too had its share of turmoil. There were two conflicts, from 1992 till 1993 one in Burao and the other in Berbera. But it was resolved peacefully in Burao and Shaikh towns. After the Borama meeting in 1993 a new conflict started and lasted four years. Following the reconciliation conference held in Togdheer, peace has prevailed in the region.

Ethiopia played a major role in the political crisis in Somalia on the pretext that it was protecting its national interest. It trained and armed the opposition groups against the regime of Mohamed Siyad Barre. This was in breach of the peace treaty signed between Mengistu Haile Mariam, Ethiopian leader and Mohamed Siyad Barre, during the establishment of the regional organization IGADD (Inter-governmental Authority on Drought and Desertifications) in Djibouti in 1986. At that time the two sides had agreed not to support each other's opposition.

No matter what agreement they signed or promise they gave, the Ethiopian leaders, from Menelik to Meles, always acted against the Somalis. And since independence in 1960, the dissident groups of Somalis, whether political or military, have always turned to Ethiopia for support against Somali government. Ethiopia's "open heart and hand" has always been ready to help the Somali opposition groups not because Addis Ababa had any sympathy for them but to simply create trouble and destabilise Somalia.

In fact, it was Col. Mengistu Haile Mariam who signed a peace agreement with General Mohamed Siyad Barre in Djibouti in 1986, promising to refrain from extending any assistance to Somali dissident groups opposing Siyad Barre's administration. Notwithstanding the Peace Agreement between the two countries, Ethiopian government assisted the opposition groups to plan the strategy and extended the maximum logistic support to them in order to topple the military regime in Somalia. On the contrary, Siyad Barre though faced with a desperate situation implemented the agreement in letter and spirit and dismantled the main opposition group in the Western Somalia, the Ogaden, WSLF (Western Somalia Liberation Front) and stopped supporting them.

Both Mengistu and Siyad Barre shared the ideology of socialism and both were military dictators. And yet, Ethiopia continued to pursue a hostile policy towards Somalia.

At the time he was conspiring the downfall of the President in Somalia, Mengistu himself was facing growing threats of war from his opponents. Mohamed Siyad Barre had to fight on two fronts, the opposition in the North and in the South. The same was also the case with Mengistu who was confronted with growing unrest in the country and demand for national self-determination in Eritrea.

The SNM strengthened its struggle against the government, but the pressure from the army was so high that the Movement was forced to flee to an area bordering Ethiopia. Mengistu knew that the SNM was having difficulties in going

back to Hargeisa because the military in the region was determined to suppress the Movement. Presuming that the SNM had no other choice but to obey Addis Ababa's dictates, Ethiopian leaders requested the leaders of SNM to join the Ethiopian forces in their fight against Eritrea.

The SNM leadership found themselves in a difficult position: either to reconcile, in other words, surrender to the military regime of Mohamed Siyad Barre that they were opposing or accept Ethiopian dictator's request, rather blackmail, to join them in the fight against Eritrea.

The SNM rejected Mengistu's blackmail, and their leadership started thinking how to reconcile with the regime they were opposing rather than joining Ethiopia in the fight against Eritrea. It meant surrender to the enemy at home. However, the need for reconciliation did not arise as the government army attacked their position. In that operation the Movement got the upper hand inflicting heavy casualties on the government forces.

Five months after the collapse of the regime of Mohamed Siyad Barre, the SNM unilaterally declared secession of the Northern regions from the Republic of Somalia on 18 May 1991 and called the region "the Republic of Somaliland." But for twelve years, no country recognized their declaration of independence.

Former Ambassador, Abdurahman Ahmed Ali "Tuur" who was the first President of the breakaway Republic of Somaliland, was quoted by the Reuter news agency on 18 November 1991 as saying:

"Somaliland is here to stay. We are not going back on this. We have been separated by colonial powers for 70 years and our ways of doing things are completely different." But when he was defeated in the "Presidential contest in Borama on 23 March 1993, the same Abdurhman Tuur spoke of "unity and brotherhood of the Somali people".

Those leaders in the Northern region who advocated the separation of the region from the rest of the country claimed that the regime of Mohamed Siyad Barre had done great

injustice to the people of the North. They further felt that the people in the South did not raise their voice, when the regime was destroying the region and killing the people.

Although the people in the North had a point, it is equally true that the people in the South themselves were suffering under the same regime. Similar tortures, killings, intimidation and humiliation also took place in the Central region of the South. When the SNM was fighting the regime, the Southerners were also engaged in the war to topple Mohamed Siyad Barre. In fact, United Somali Congress (USC) also cooperated with the SNM leadership. The defeat of the regime in the South where the capital of the country is located facilitated the liberation of the Northern regions from the shackles of the military dictator.

There was no reason for the North to breakaway when the dictatorial regime of Siyad Barre collapsed. The most reasonable course to take should have been to place all their claims on the table for discussion on power sharing with the other partners in the Republic. After all it was the same regime that caused the problem to both the sides. There are no differences between the Southern and Northern people. Those who advocate the partition of the Somali Republic claim that the former British Somaliland was an independent territory (26/6/1960) when it joined with the former Italian Somaliland on 1 July 1960 after the latter also obtained its independence.

It is true! But one should ask the question, what compelled Great Britain to grant independence to its former Somali Protectorate, four days earlier than the other part of the Somali territory.

It was Britain itself that had proposed on 4 June 1946 to bring all Somali territories together. In his speech at the British House of Commons the then British Foreign Secretary E. Bevin made the following statement:

"In the latter part of the last century the Horn of Africa was divided between Great Britain, France and Italy. At about the same time we occupied our part, the Ethiopians occupied an inland area, which is the grazing ground for nearly half

the nomads of British Somaliland for six months of the year." Similarly, the nomads of Italian Somaliland must cross the existing frontiers in search of grass. In all innocence, therefore, we proposed that British Somaliland, Italian Somaliland, and the adjacent part of Ethiopia, if Ethiopia agreed, should be lumped together as a trust territory, so that the nomads should lead their frugal existence with the least possible hindrance and there might be a real chance of decent economic life, as understood in that territory."

Bevin further added:

"But what attracted M. Molotov's criticism was, I am sure, that I suggested that Great Britain should be made the administering authority. Was this unreasonable?"

In the end the British Foreign Secretary said: I hope the deputies at the Paris Conference will now consider a greater Somaliland more objectively".

But probably influenced by Molotov's criticism or pressure from other quarters, Ernest Bevin stated:

"We must consider it objectively. If the Conference does not like our proposal, we will not be dogmatic about it; we are prepared to see Italian Somaliland put under the United Nations trusteeship".

The British made an complete about-turn. It not only ignored the question at the Paris Conference in 1946 but also succeeded in keeping British Somaliland under its control and only the Italian Somaliland was placed under the UN Trusteeship in 1950.

Britain's refusal to let the British Somaliland be placed under the UN Trusteeship together with the Italian Somaliland and the UN's tacit approval of the British decision are the questions that need to be carefully and objectively analysed. Following this decision the two regions were treated separately as if they were two different countries!

The international community including the United Nations, the African Union, the League of Arab States, the Organisation of Islamic Conference, the Non-Aligned Movement all reiterated their commitment to the unity,

sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Somali Republic. After two decades of independence Somalia was gripped with corruption, nepotism, violence and inter-regional conflict. Ethiopia, the traditional rival of Somalia, encouraged and assisted various Somali factions and groups to wage war against the regime of Mohamed Siyad Barre.

Ethiopia controlled nearly all the warring factions and had the ability to dictate to them whatever it wished. If it wanted to help the Somalis to settle the political crisis it could have easily suggested the name of any one, say Col. Abdullahi Yusuf, General Aden Abdullahi Nur Gabiow, General Mohamed Said Hersi "Morgan", Colonel Hasan M. Noor "Shaati Guduud", the young Hussein Mohamed Farah Hassan Aideed, or former diplomat Abdullahi Shaikh Ismail to lead the country and force the rest to obey him.

It did not want to do that, because Ethiopia has always sought a weak and disunited Somalia which should never have a stable government. It fears that a strong Somalia would renew its claim to the Somali territory, the Western Somalia or Ogaden occupied by Ethiopia.

Ogaden or Western Somalia, was given to Ethiopia by the British in 1897 and the treaty for the hand-over of this territory was signed for Queen Victoria by Her Majesty's Special Envoy Rennell Rodd and for what was called at that time Abyssinia, by Emperor Menelek on 14 May 1897 and ratified by the Queen on 28 July 1897.*

On their part, the leaders of factions only fought for their petty narrow self-interests and sold the independence, unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of their country to the arch enemy of Somalia.

Addis Ababa told each one of them the same thing that he was the greatest and the only one that deserved to be the President of Somalia. Ethiopia assigned certain areas of

* See the full text of the Treaty: *The Scramble in the Horn of Africa*, Pages 598-605 by Mohamed Osman Omar, Somali Publications, 2001.

the country to each of them to fight and conquer. Without questioning, the faction leaders took the guns supplied by Ethiopia and blindly implemented the sinister plan: killing their own brothers and sisters. Like robots the faction leaders follow and execute the orders as their masters dictate them. In fact, most of the orders come through remote control, via radio contacts, from Ethiopian Godey Command center to each and all faction leaders in Mogadishu and other towns.

The Ethiopians consider the suppression of Somali nationalism as one of the main goals of their foreign policy. Whatever they do against the Somali people they believe is an important task in the realisation of "their national interest". Their Officers who are involved in Somalia spend time and money to study the behaviour and psychology of Somalis closely. They choose those who are spineless and morally corruptible for carrying out orders. They distinguish between those who are nationalists and those who are not. They treat them differently. The Ethiopians talk to and entertain only those who are not nationalists or do not care about the country and are willing to collaborate, have the habit of chewing *Khat* and who are fond of drinks. The Ethiopian Security officers, attached to the faction leaders also learned how to speak the Somali language. They mingle with the Somalis and act casually in the *Khat* and drinking sessions. They pretend to be the well-wishers of Somalis.

The Ethiopians did not like those leaders/factions who understand their hidden agenda or those who, they think are nationalists. Even if they do not give information, Ethiopians do not openly harm or antagonise these people; they just let them stay in the country but keep them at a certain distance. No intimacy, nothing to share with them until the day they decide to leave the country on their own. Considering that they are against their enemy, Ethiopia treated them as per an old saying that the "*enemy of my enemy is my friend.*"

An Ethiopian General, who mainly dealt with the Somalis, is reported to have described the Somalis as "neither

nationalists nor religious but money-lovers. They lean on the shoulders of those who have the money". The Ethiopians do not expect anything from these people but keep them as pawns to blackmail the government. They reduce these faction leaders like empty shells, but useful for keeping Somalia at war with itself.

The Security agents of the Ministry of Defence of Ethiopia visited almost all parts of Somalia with the help of their "*friends.*" An expert on Ethiopia told me, "they (the Ethiopians) know Somalia better than most of the Somalis. They entered Somalia at any time they wished and went anywhere they wished, without let or hindrance."

After the fall of the regime of Major General Mohamed Siyad Barre, and during the civil war, Ethiopia gained a lot of information about Somalia from top-level military sources. A good number of former Defence Ministers and high ranking military offices defected to Ethiopia at different times.

During their meetings with the Somalis, the Ethiopians showed high emotions and spoke about generous help the Somali governments extended to them during their struggle against the Mengistu Haile Mariam regime. Very often they narrated with emotion that without the support and help of the Somali government they would not have succeeded in forming their government after the fall of the Mengistu's regime. They admit that the Ethiopian people owe a lot to the Somalis and Somalia. But in fact they think that the Somali Government helped the TPLF (Tigrean People's Liberation Front) not for the love of the opposition groups in Ethiopia, but because they were fighting against Mengistu Haile Mariam.

The Somali Government gave Somali passports to a number of Amharas, Tigreans, and all those who were oppressed by their regime. A large number of Ethiopians were educated in Somalia. No doubt the Somali government supported the Ethiopian opposition groups against their government but it also gave them assistance and support on humanitarian ground.

As Ethiopia considers Somalia its enemy, it used high ranking military and security officers to deal with the Somali issue. General Abbandula, who is now the Minister of Defence of Ethiopia, was promoted from the post of Chief of Security specialist on Somali affairs in the Ministry of Defence. He was promoted for the good and useful services which he rendered to his country's national interest. General Mesfin, who was the Chief of Security of the Eastern Region of Harar, was also a specialist on Somali affairs. He was promoted to the rank of First Commander of the Ethiopian Army. Col. Jemal Abbasse, was elevated to the rank of full Colonel in the Security wing of High Command. Col. Abbasse was educated in Somalia at the Jaalle Siyad Military Academy in Mogadishu. There is also Tsfaye Mamo, the Security Officer in charge of the Somali region of Bay and Bakol, with his headquarters in Godey, the Ogaden.

All these officers were successful in dealing with the Somali situation. Their promotion shows how much their work was appreciated. They are the officers who scrutinized the faction leaders and other Somalis who opposed the government in Somalia. They know everything about leaders of various factions, their likes and dislikes and weaknesses. The Ethiopians are highly sophisticated people and their security department avails everything that a human being would love to enjoy. Their wells never get dry for those who destroy Somalia's existence.

For ten years the Addis Ababa regime played the game of "divide and rule". It divided the country, it divided our people and set them against one another; it manipulated and fooled the leaders of factions to the extent that they made them blindly follow the orders and instructions of their masters in Ethiopia.

Ethiopians are very astute people. They pose as good friends of Somalis. Even when they speak about Somalia with other leaders in Africa, they pretend to be genuine well-wishers who want to help bring peace and stability in Somalia. But all hides their real motives.

Ethiopia is the only country that openly encourages and supports the breakaway Northern region and works for the dismemberment of Somalia.

Nobody raised an eyebrow, no one questioned the intentions of Ethiopia. The self-appointed leaders of Somalia were busy fighting among themselves and killing thousands of people for the sake of power. They failed miserably to provide even a measure of political order and fundamental administration to avoid chaos and the resultant power vacuum in the country.

After the collapse of the military regime in Somalia, Ali Mahdi Mohamed became the interim President in 1991. When his administration failed to survive, he made a fervent appeal for the formation of a Provisional government at the Reconciliation conference in Addis Ababa in 1993. He said:

"Provisional Government to carry out the political, social and economic reconstruction programme must be agreed upon as our last noble goal within a time frame which can allow us to be represented in the next (UN) General Assembly as a Nation."

However, his plea fell on deaf ears and Somalia plunged into an unprecedented crisis with the total collapse of the administration.

Taking advantage of the vacuum created by the lack of a central administration in the country, the Ethiopian regime claimed that it was mandated by the regional organisation, Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), to look after Somalia. It established a special office in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Addis Ababa and appointed an officer of the ministry to be in charge of the Somali affairs. The Officer worked like an administrator and, in the name and on behalf of Somalia, Ethiopia presented to various international and regional conferences reports on the Somali situation praising its own efforts in search of solutions to the Somali crisis.

Even if it was not physically present in Somalia like Italy in 1950, during the UN Trusteeship period, Ethiopia's claim that IGAD mandated it to look after Somalia, was a dream come true. In 1949, during the discussion on Somalia at the UN General Assembly, Ethiopia wished to act as the administering authority in Somalia, under the UN Trusteeship. Its dream was dashed when the UN mandated Italy to administer the territory from 1950 until independence in 1960.

However, there is a difference between the two phases of Somali history: while Italy came to the country to stay for ten years from 1950 to 1960, Ethiopia implemented the mandate claimed to be given by IGAD from a distance, as non-resident administrator. It gained three advantages:

1. It worked to ensure that Somalia got no government;
2. It claimed to represent the interest of Somalia and in the name and on behalf of Somalia addressed various international and regional conferences and forums;
3. All the funds for Somalia from the International Community, the NGOs and donor countries, were channelled through Ethiopia. Probably IGAD knew how these funds were spent. It is known that it did not spend all the funds it received for the purpose.

But one curious question arises here. Did IGAD or OAU themselves have the mandate to mandate Ethiopia? Because, according to Article 78 of the UN Charter, "The trusteeship system shall not apply to territories which have become members of the United Nations, relationship among which shall be based on respect for the principle of sovereign equality."

In 1997, before Egypt organised a conference for the Somalis, Ethiopia was supposed to hold one in Bosaso, North-eastern Somalia. And for that meeting, it is said that Ethiopia asked the international community, to give a sum of three million US Dollars as the necessary expenses for that meeting. But to their dismay, the Somalis went to the

Cairo Conference. It was on the verge of success and the crisis was nearly resolved. At the last moment, the Addis Ababa regime recalled two of its "friends" to torpedo the conference.

When the final resolution was issued, the Ethiopian government accused Egypt of "diplomatic hijack." Why Ethiopia accused Egypt of hijacking the conference when what Egypt had done was in the interest of the parties? And what made Ethiopia angry? For the Somalis it was a brotherly gesture and there was nothing wrong with it. There must have been something that made Ethiopia so angry and that the Somalis did not know. Did Ethiopia feel jealous of Egypt or did it have some other sinister motives to criticize the Government of Egypt? Ethiopia wanted to keep the Somali pot boiling.

In the end, those who did not want a resolution of our problem prevailed to block the implementation of the decision adopted at the Cairo Conference. Therefore in the absence of any authority the chaos and lawlessness continued. The outlaws, known as *Moriyans* grew in numbers. The killing, kidnapping and looting became the order of the day.

The faction leaders became more powerful both in military and economic sense. They became kings and each one of them developed his own army with heavy guns, some even controlling areas having ports and airports. They established their fiefdoms.

Surely these faction leaders do not have any interest in the restoration of a national government.

Both Ethiopia and the factions are responsible for the national disaster in Somalia. Ethiopia worked incessantly to eliminate Somalia from the face of the earth, and the faction leaders made its task easier of removing the Somali national flag from the world forums. After three decades of independence, enjoying the status of a full member of the United Nations and the Organisation of African Unity and League of Arab States, and all other international organisations, the Republic of Somalia was described as a "failed state".

2

TOWARDS RESTORATION

For ten long years, Somalia remained in the grip of violence and anarchy. The international community led by the United States just ignored its existence. Earlier the US had a bitter experience during the peacekeeping operation in Somalia from 1992 to 1995 during which a number of soldiers including 18 Americans had lost their lives.

Consequently in 1995 the United Nations withdrew its peacekeeping forces from Somalia. Since then the civil war continues unabated. It would not be an exaggeration to say that the turmoil in the country, has further worsened since the withdrawal of the International Peacekeeping Force.

Even friends have abandoned the Somalis to their fate. What happened thereafter in Somalia was worse than what happened when the international community led by the United States had come to Somalia to help. It was the President of the United States, George Bush Sr. who on 4 December 1992 decided to send troops to Somalia to assist in Operation Restore Hope. But after the failure of that mission the whole world purposely ignored Somalia and left the people at the mercy of the faction leaders and their *Moriyans*.

Suddenly a ray of hope again appeared on the horizon when while addressing the UN General Assembly in September 1999 President of the Republic of Djibouti, Ismail

Omar Guelleh, announced that his country was willing to hold a peace and reconciliation conference for the Somalis in his country.

There were many sceptics who doubted the capability of a small and poor country to convene such a meeting and succeed in its efforts.

It was a positive step and most of the peace-loving Somalis and their well-wishers welcomed the proposal of the President of Djibouti. The Somalis were tired of war and instability in the country.

Of course, as expected, one of the neighbours of Somalia, namely Ethiopia, which had manipulated the factions during the preceding ten years and kept the flame of the conflict burning expressed its opposition to the proposal of the President of Djibouti. Some other countries also expressed their reservations but President Ismail insisted that his country was determined to host such a conference. And ultimately he succeeded in his efforts.

After a long and dark decade Somalia had a new government which was accorded recognition by the world community. It was a great relief for the Somalis who saw it as a rebirth of their nation.

The new President Dr. Abdikassim Salad Hassan was elected on 25 August and sworn in on 27 August 2000 at a ceremony attended by several foreign dignitaries and representatives. The Heads of State and Government who were present at the ceremony included, besides the host country's (Djibouti) President, the President of the Republic of Yemen, Ali Abdalla Salah, President of the Sudan, Omar Hassan Al-Bashir, President of the State of Eritrea, Esias Afwerki and Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Meles Zenawi.

The following dialogues between two educated Somalis on the formation of the new government after the success of the Arta Peace Process captures the mood and feelings of most of the Somalis who had borne the brunt of the collapse of the Administration in the country.

ALI: Soon after he took over power, the newly elected

President, Dr. Abdikassim Salad Hassan, travelled to Mogadishu, where he and his entourage were warmly welcomed by hundreds of thousands of Mogadishu inhabitants. From Mogadishu, the President went to Baidoa, the capital town of the Bay and Bakol region where he was received with similar enthusiasm.

It was a highly successful and significant tour. The opposition was threatening to attack if the President or anyone associated with Arta Peace Process comes to Mogadishu. However, the atmosphere was very different from what the opposition to the peace process was trying to portray.

The warm welcome given to the President in Mogadishu and Baidoa showed how much the people wanted to have a government and political stability.

OSMAN: An air of hope pervaded the atmosphere. Immediately from his fresh visit to Mogadishu, the new President, embarked on his first journey abroad beginning with Cairo, where he was welcomed by the League of Arab States and then he proceeded to New York to attend the Millennium 2000 Summit and the UN General Assembly.

The world welcomed the newly formed government of Somalia. The United Nations, the League of Arab States, the Organisation of African Unity, now African Union, the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) and regional organisation such as IGAD (Intergovernmental Authority on Development), all welcomed the representatives of the new Government.

Oddly enough, Ethiopian Prime Minister who had participated in the inauguration ceremony of the President of the Republic of Somalia at Arta (Djibouti) on 27 August 2000, made an about turn and started campaigning against the new government that he had blessed with his presence. To show his opposition, Meles Zenawi called some of the leaders of the factions who had not attended the Arta Process to form an opposition front at a place called Awash. They formed an organisation called SRRC (Somali Reconciliation and Restoration Council).

Ethiopia started discrediting the new Government. Not only that, it embarked on creating trouble by increasing the supply of arms and ammunition to the factions which were already on its pay-roll. It directed them to vehemently oppose the formation of any kind of government in Somalia born out of the peace process at Arta.

Some people found the Ethiopian line to their liking; they are the people who make money in times of chaos, lawlessness and national disaster and see peace as a threat to their interest.

ALI: What do you think about our situation? Why do some factions oppose the much needed solution of our decade-long conflict. We all know how much the masses have suffered due to the civil war. Are they not the ones that were claiming to be fighting what they called the dictator and bloodsucker and promised to provide a better life for the nation etc.? There are so many questions one could ask, if only answers could be found.

OSMAN: Well, you are right. They are the same ones who were bombarding the masses with propaganda from within the country and from foreign broadcasting radios against the regime that was in power. They killed and looted the people after they entered the capital with their militias.

ALI: You are right. Instead of taking the reins of power in an orderly manner, the factions and their militias stormed the city of Mogadishu and went on rampage, committing violent and unprecedented crimes against the peaceful inhabitants of the city. I cannot understand why they went against the people and also destroyed the country itself. It seems they did not plan to have a government of their own; otherwise they would have organised themselves in advance. They toppled the government but were unable to establish a better one.

OSMAN: But why it is so? What for they were fighting, if not for the formation of government? Just to kill innocent children and women and destroy the religious places and private homes?

ALI: These are the questions that still remain to be answered. Many common people ask whether the faction leaders explained to their militias the aims and objectives of their struggle.

OSMAN: I don't think so. It seemed that the so-called leaders told their militias that whatever you find on your way, like houses, shops and cars etc. are yours and whoever you see moving is your enemy.

ALI: Do you mean everything, including innocent civilian people, children, women, elderly people, hospitals, schools, industries and government institutions?

OSMAN: Oh yes! Didn't you hear about the sugar factory in Kisimayo? They dismantled it and reduced the whole factory into rubble and took the machinery out of the country and sold it as scrap material. They also stripped the corrugated aluminium and the asbestos from the roofs of the private homes to make money. Thousands of homes in Mogadishu were left without roof. The doors, especially the wooden ones, and woods used on the roofs of the stone houses were sold by the looters. As there was shortage of charcoal in the capital these were sold in the market as firewood. The iron doors were safer as they were not useful for fire.

There were talks that the roof materials stripped from the private homes, were taken to Ethiopia. Some cars with Somali number plates were also seen on the roads of our neighbouring country.

ALI: I heard people saying that the office equipments, including computers were taken out of the country during the crisis. I heard that factories were dismembered and sold as iron scrap. Even the Statues of the Great Hero Mohamed Abdullah Hassan, whom the British called the *Mad Mullah*, *Dhagax Tuur* (The stone throwing) were removed and taken abroad and sold as scrap metals. This statute represented the figures of Somalis throwing stones against the British Military Administration in 1949 demanding the end of the occupation. The fate of the statue of freedom fighter Hawa Taako was no different.

Have you seen the Parliament building, I mean the new People's Assembly (Golaha Shacabka)? and old Parliament House?

ALI: My goodness. I have seen it. They took away all material/furniture, including the Chairman's chair and benches and tables of the members. If you see the main hall, you will be shocked. It looks like a ghost house. I don't talk about the old Parliament, which was used by the local government.

It too suffered complete damage. After looting the furniture and destroying the documents, the marauders embarked on pulling down the building brick by brick. The old Parliament house is flattened to the ground and we will only remember that once upon a time there was a Red Brick building that hosted the First Constituent and National Assembly before and after independence of the country. The Italians called it "*La Casa del Fascio*" (The House of the Fascist). It was build for Benito Mussolini, but he never saw it, as he never came to Somalia.

The faction leaders who were fighting against the regime were themselves responsible for the misdeeds of their own militias. Thousands of innocent people who had nothing to do with the government were killed and many more thousands were forced to abandon their homes and flee to the neighbouring countries by very risky means.

OSMAN: I know. The problem is that the factions, who caused all the damages and destruction have offered no regret or apology to the nation. Perhaps, they believe that whatever they did was right.

ALI: You think, we should have a Truth and Reconciliation Committee, similar to the one in South Africa so that all those who were involved in the civil war could be brought to justice?

OSMAN: It is a good idea. I think, we also need to have a War Crimes Court, like the ones constituted for Rwanda or for former Yugoslavia, as the crimes committed against the people in Somalia's civil war are no less serious than those committed elsewhere.

ALI: It is true. After all, someone has to be held responsible for the killing of innocent people. The killers should not be allowed to go unpunished.

OSMAN: Mohamed Siyad Barre governed the country for over two decades and earned so much respect for his achievements during the early years of his administration. He should have given way to a civilian administration after five or ten years. But, like any dictator, military or civilian, he felt that he was the only one who could do things better for the country. I wish to remind you the famous proverb which says: "power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely".

ALI: Yes, we have seen whosoever overstay in power, does not realise his follies and growing incompetence. He is often surrounded by corrupt and incompetent sycophants who always give him wrong and anti-people advice. As a result, the gulf between the ruler and ruled grows and the opponents or the enemies of the regime emerge.

OSMAN: It is not a Somali phenomenon alone. This has been the fate of most of the dictators. For example, take the case of Iran. The Shah who was an absolute monarch, and had all the powers at his command was chased out of the country and could not even find a place to die. All those who were his good friends when he was The *Shahan Shah Aria Mehr* rejected him after he was deposed. He could not even stay in the house he bought in foreign countries. He was forced to fly from country to country until one day the late President of Egypt Anwar Al Sadat offered him shelter in Egypt, where he died. This applies also to those rulers who underestimate or ignore the power of the people.

ALI: I remember Mobuto Sese Sekow. He too was kicked out from his own country, former Zaire, where he was President for over thirty years. He too was refused shelter in Europe where he had castles which he bought with the money he stole from the state treasury. It is said he had over 6 billion dollars in his private foreign accounts. And his country had foreign debt of an equal amount. He died in

Morocco after late King Hassan allowed him to land there. Wasn't it a disgrace that after being President for over thirty years one dies as a refugee?

I don't have to tell you what happened to Mohamed Siyad Barre. Every one knows where he finally ended up. After 23 years of being President of his country, in the end no one wanted to give him shelter. When he was deposed, Mohamed Siyad Barre crossed over to Kenya, but the Government of Kenya asked him to leave the country and look for some other destination. In the end the Nigerian President offered him a refuge. He died in exile in Nigeria on January 1, 1995.

I am saying all these things to convince you as well as convey this to our future rulers that whatever respect a leader enjoys is thanks to his own people's faith in him. When he loses the faith of his own people he also loses the respect and honour the world community bestows on him.

OSMAN: Now, let's come back to the present situation in Somalia. What do you think we should do?

ALI: Our problem is that we have few people who understand the meaning of nationhood. We are attached to our tribal connection more than, say, even to our religion. And it is the tribalism that destroyed the country and the nationhood. Very few people talk about what they can do for Somalia. While many abandoned it, others, including intellectuals, who should be supporting a single, strong and united Somalia, are today leaning towards divisive policy. Even if they think of the clan diversity in the society, at least the intellectuals or like-minded persons should think of unity in diversity. I know there are people in the country that would never forgive those who killed and maimed their people, those who raped their loved ones and looted their properties and so on.

OSMAN: It is true, as a result of the civil war some people now refuse to accept the fact that we are one people, with one language and one religion. But what happened is not the fault of the country or the common people. The country belongs to all of us. Nobody can refute this fact.

ALI: Let us discuss the problem of the Northern Region. Some brothers in the region claim that they broke away from the Republic of Somalia, because of injustice done to them by the regime of Mohamed Siyad Barre. They unilaterally decided to call the region "the Republic of Somaliland", following the collapse of the Military regime in 1991. They made their own Constitution. But so far no government has recognized them. What do you think?

OSMAN: I think that those who advocate the breaking away of the region have gone to an extreme. Their complaint was that the region had not been treated fairly by the government or the other part of the Republic, i.e. the Southern region. They further complain that the Northern region was not given the right ministerial portfolios in the Government. Although the Prime Minister before the military coup in 1969 was from the North, the brothers in the North still insist that they did not get their fair share in the government and in other matters, such as development and other funds.

In fact, a young man I met recently on board of the Daallo plane from Hargeisa to Djibouti, told me that the "Somaliland Republic" will never join again with the rest of Somalia. He was one of the diaspora who was going back to Europe after spending sometime in the country. Looking at me angrily he said: "What the North was given was just the post of the Minister of Education" adding the usual charges and complaints articulated by those who are strong believers of the dismemberment of the republic: "Somaliland has been independent before the Italian Somaliland and we joined the Italian Somaliland while we were already a separate Republic". He also said to me that all the southern people are corrupt and so on.

Calmly and without making him angrier I replied him as follows:

All that you said is true. But the people and country have nothing to do with what happened. The people and country

have done nothing to you. We are all victims of the military and dictatorial regime that spared no one else. We are sorry for what happened to you and we sympathise with you. However, for the misdeeds of the dictator and his regime one cannot justify the decision to break the republic into pieces.

ALI: But no one should curb or suppress the opposition which is an important part of any democratic system. Democracy without opposition is unthinkable. We all fought for democracy. The opposite is *dictatorship* and it is what the people wanted to change.

We all remember that opposition launched its struggle against the regime of Siyad Barre who they called "blood sucker", both in the North and in the South. The opposition was promising to provide better governance and good life for all.

But in reality they demolished the whole system and the state machinery. This is the only country in the whole world where the administration disappeared. Elsewhere in Africa, such as, Rwanda or DR of Congo or Uganda, and Asia like Iran, Vietnam, Cambodia and Afghanistan and even in Europe like Romania, Albania or former Soviet Union where violent change of government took place, there were always groups who were able to establish some form of Government.

For over ten years various factions and groups in Somalia just kept on killing and maiming one another and their own people and destroying the national assets and institutions.

Following the collapse of the previous regime until the Conference on Peace and Reconciliation held at Arta, Somalia became the first ever country which had no administration. For over a decade the country remained without any government. It fell into the hands of unscrupulous faction leaders who established little enclaves under their jurisdiction. Each one of them became a king of his tribal kingdoms with his own militias as bodyguards. They lived on what they could

loot from the unarmed masses who lost all their possessions.

At the start of their struggle against the regime of Major General Mohamed Siyad Barre, the faction leaders were claiming that their struggle was for democracy and against the dictator. But after the power fell in their hands, they turned their guns against the people they said they were working for. They destroyed all the state properties, including hospitals, schools and offices and looted all the assets of the state.

Mohamed Siyad Barre is reported to have told the people who advised him to quit: "I am sitting on a container full of honey bees and if I leave, these bees will cause unimaginable damage". He meant honey bees that will not produce honey, but destroy the country and all that is in it. Of course, he did not quit on his own. He was forced to quit by the barrel of the gun. But what he said turned out to be true. The so-called liberators not only stripped the country of all its wealth but also what belonged to the citizens and caused the death of thousands of people, including women, elders and children.

Mohamed Siyad Barre, who governed the country from 1969 to 1991, did both good and bad things. But those who replaced him did only bad things. If he had given up power voluntarily to a civilian government at any time, he would have been respected as a great person. Despite his monumental blunders, he will be remembered and praised forever for one thing, that is, creating and developing a script for the Somali language.

And what did the factions that replaced him give to the people: A nightmare !

They turned the country into a lawless jungle. No one cared about the people. Thousands were forced to leave for the neighbouring countries by land and sea and many escapees died in the sea when their overloaded boats capsized on their way to Mombassa, Kenya.

As there was no government in Somalia, no faction or group of factions even thought to establish an *ad hoc* administration to safeguard the sovereignty and the

territorial integrity of the country. In Ethiopia although the leadership had its own Tigre militias, it proved "cleverer" than the Somali leaders as it did not only form their own government but also established an office in their Foreign Ministry in Addis Ababa, looking after the affairs of Somalia.

In collaboration with the OAU and the United Nations it organised the so-called reconciliation conferences for the Somalis, as well as seminars on the conflicts in Somalia. But there have never been any positive outcome.

For ten years, the fate of the Somalis was in the hands of the Ethiopian government. As it enjoyed both economic benefits and political advantage for maintaining the *status quo*, it manipulated the factions that were fighting each other for hegemony. It is clear that Ethiopia never wanted the faction leaders to succeed in their endeavours to find solution to the problems of their country.

Ethiopia destroyed Somalia physically and politically, but cleverly shed crocodile's tears when discussing Somali situation with other leaders, Arabs or Africans. In fact, it acted like a mouse, biting while blowing cold air.

Some people said, rightly or wrongly, that the Somali faction leaders who were implementing the Ethiopian plan to demolish Somalia should be blamed, because Ethiopia was only doing what was in its national interest.

3

THE REVIVAL OF THE STATE

The Arta conference was attended by about 3000 people and lasted over five months ending with the approval of a provisional Charter, the establishment of a Transitional National Assembly and election of the President.

I was among hundreds of Somalis who wished to see some sort of authority to emerge from the Peace Process held in Arta, a small town on the hills of Djibouti, situated about 30 Km southwest of the capital from February to August 2000.

The morning of 27 August 2000, was the swearing-in day of the newly elected President of the Republic of Somalia after ten years of civil war which divided the country and devastated the whole infrastructure of the State. Abdikassim Salad Hassan, a 58-year-old politician, was elected President by 245 members of the Transitional National Assembly on 25 August 2000 for a three year transitional term.

This day (27 August, 2000) at least to me, was like the day the Somali republic was born when for the first time our national flag was hoisted over the building of the National Assembly. I happen to be among those who witnessed that event. I was also there when the election and swearing-in ceremony of the first President of the newly born Republic of Somalia took place. Those were the happy moments of our life. But following the collapse of the military regime which

had taken power from civilian government in 1969, a dark decade descended on the country.

I was watching the ceremony from one of the tents erected for the general public. It was facing the dais on which the swearing-in ceremony took place and behind that was the main tent where the whole process spread over five months took place. Nearly 3000 people representing various sections of the civil society participated in it. The VVIPs were seated in a special tent, close to the dais where the newly elected President of Somalia, Dr. Abdikassim Salad Hassan and the host, Ismail Omar Guelleh, President of Djibouti, stood together with the Chief Justice, who was there to administer the oath of office.

Outside the tent it was extremely hot, although Arta is situated on the highest hill in Djibouti. On my right hand side there was a big tent for the high authorities and dignitaries, as well as the newly elected or selected members of the Transitional National Assembly and other guests of honour who came to Djibouti to grace the occasion.

The President of Djibouti was sitting in the front row together with the President Ali Abdalla Salah of Yemen, President Omar Hassan Ahmed Al-Bashir of Sudan, President Esias Afwerki, of Eritrea and Meles Zenawi, Prime Minister of Ethiopia. French President was represented by a Minister. David Stephen, Head of the UN Office in charge of Somalia, whose office was in Nairobi, Kenya, represented the Secretary General of the United Nations.

David Stephen Head of the United Nations Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS) assisted by Dr. Babafemi Badejo Senior Political Advisor had worked very hard for the success of the Process. They temporarily moved their office from Nairobi to Djibouti to follow the process closely. Stephen read out the congratulatory message of the Secretary General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan who congratulated the new President, Dr. Abdikassim Salad Hassan and the President of Djibouti, Ismail Omar Guelleh, for the successful conclusion of the conference.

Kofi Annan in his message said that the inauguration of the new President in Somalia marked an "important milestone" in the endeavour to re-establish the country as a member of the community of nations.

He said:

"Let us hope that the building of national institutions will give added momentum to the peace process and encourage those who have remained outside it to join your common endeavour."

"We are also mindful that the peace process belongs to the Somali people and that no outside party can replace their genuine commitment to building lasting peace and reconciliation," he said.

It was a scorching day, as the sun seemed to be down on the roof of the tents. We were luckier than those who were outside in the open air, watching the ceremony. But definitely no one minded the weather as all were in festive mood and hardly cared for a seat or the heat. For most of us, the outcome of the Arta Process has been the revival of the Somali nation and the first step towards the restoration of state administration.

While watching the ceremony and looking at the masses waving the Somali and Djibouti national flags, my mind went back to the decade of civil war during which the Somali nation lost its voice in all international forums, where once my country had played its role as an important and respected member state. I was thinking of the ill treatment some of us encountered in some foreign countries and on arriving at certain international airports with a Somali Passport. Having been for so long without a government, we lost our national prestige. With the emergence of the new government, I was looking forward to regaining the respect and improving our image which we had lost in the eyes and minds of the international community.

I was not among those who were attending the Conference, but just as a concerned Somali who longed for

peace and stability in our country. But I was happy to learn from the media the statement made by the President of Djibouti, Ismail Omar Guelleh at the United Nations General Assembly on 22 September 1999 offering to host a conference for the Somalis to settle their problems.

Immediately I sent a long message to his office and to the BBC (as we usually pass our messages to the Somali audience) thanking the President of Djibouti for his speech at the UN and extending my good wishes to him. Besides, Osman Jama Ali "Osman Kalluun" and I were the first to join a talk show organised by the BBC's Yusuf Garad in support of Djibouti President's offer. Our friends Ahmed Idaajaa in Rome, Italy, and Prof. Hubero in Nairobi, Kenya also participated in the programme.

Among those who called included a person from somewhere in Europe (Denmark?) who accused President Ismail Omar Guelleh of interfering in the internal affairs of Somalia. He was the type of person, who was afraid of peace; who thought that if peace reigned in the country, he would lose the refugee status privilege that he was enjoying because of the crisis in his country.

I threw the question back to him. "Do you have anywhere to interfere", I asked him. In fact, in Somali language we use the word "*fara gelin*" (Putting fingers in) for "*interference*". For ten years the world completely ignored our existence and no one even bothered to ask about us, let alone "putting their fingers" in what that fellow Somali called "*arrimaha gudaha ee Soomaaliya*" (the internal affairs of Somalia) in such a positive way. Such persons love and never condemn those who really interfere in our affairs by pouring arms and ammunition which deepen the crisis. These are the type of people who are shocked when they hear of peace or stability. They do not see how much damage the crisis has done to the Somali society and the children who have nearly lost their culture and customs.

The moment was right because the country was almost abandoned by the international community and the Somali

nation and state were close to disappear from the world map. In less than ten years, the civil war, perpetrated by unscrupulous faction leaders, decimated everything that was built during the preceding thirty years, including our independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The people of Djibouti, from the President to the laymen extended warm hospitality to thousands of Somalis including Sultans, Garaads, Boqors, Malaaqs, Wabers, military officers, the diaspora as well as high ranking officials in the former governments, who spent a total of seven months in Djibouti. They were accommodated in schools, government houses, hotels as well as in private homes, both in the capital, Djibouti, and in Arta town for their happy and comfortable stay.

It was amazing to see how much pain the people of Djibouti had taken to make the stay of so many people comfortable and make them feel at home. The whole nation had contributed in the form of financial support and in the form of material, i.e. the supply of livestock, such as camels, cows, sheep and goats. Breakfast, lunch and dinner were properly and promptly served at various places where the delegates to the conference were staying. The Jatwallas (the kat sellers), mini bus drivers, vegetables seller, shop owners and nearly every body who could afford contributed towards the expenses of the conference.

The Arta Peace Process succeeded simply because Djibouti leadership and its people sincerely worked for the resolution of the Somali crisis. The sceptics, who were many, had under-estimated the ability of Djibouti to hold a conference for such a complicated people. Earlier the international community, including the United Nations and regional organisations had given up hope of resolving the crisis.

President Ismail's plan was to invite the civil society to the conference. It was open to all the Somalis including the faction leaders provided they attended as representatives of their clan affiliation and not as faction leaders or wearing

faction leaders' cap. His aim was to ensure that this conference did not meet the fate of earlier twelve conferences held for nearly thirty so-called movements. President Ismail believed that as the factions had failed to achieve anything in 12 conferences it was therefore time to try without them or with them but as part of the civil society.

In his speech at the inauguration of the new Somali President of Somalia, President Ismail Omar Guelleh, said:

"Almost a year ago, on September 20, 1999, I endeavoured to draw the attention of the United Nations General Assembly on the immense suffering and pains caused by years of civil strife in Somalia the unleashing of forces of evil that plunged millions of families in utter trauma and disarray." He continued: "Against the climate of despair and hopelessness that prevailed for prolonged period, it was no surprise, therefore, that my statement at the UN would be met by scepticism and indifference. However, deep in my soul, something was telling me that this initiative would see the light of the day, and the yearnings of the distraught Somali people fulfilled."

But I felt that the idea of having a conference for the "civil society" meaning clan representatives and clan chiefs, whom we call "Traditional leaders", was not going to be a recipe for success, as the "clan business" in Somali politics never yielded good results.

I sent a personal letter to the office of the President of Djibouti during the preliminary conference of the intellectuals, which preceded the main Process. In the first place I congratulated the President on his initiative and also appealed for two things to be considered: First, to keep the clan issue far from the conference and second, not to let the faction leaders out of the process.

The clan is the main factor that caused the destruction of the entire system of administration and it was the tool used by the faction leaders to deepen the crisis, which brought the country to the present state of affairs. It is true

that clan does not build a state but on the contrary, destroys it. And to bring in the Process the faction leaders so that they can be part of the deal and not to give them pretext to spoil the outcome.

The Arta ceremony that I was witnessing was like a birthday celebration of a newly born baby. We were all in festive mood, but inside me there were both fear and hope. My fear was whether an administration, parliament, government or even president established on the basis of clan, would be viable for a country that has been devastated by the same. However, after having gone through a decade or so of civil war which caused immense loss of human lives and destruction of all that was built for over thirty years; a wind of hope was blowing in the midst of an uncertainty.

The destruction of the whole nation was not brought about by political differences between politicians, although some people portray our crisis as such. Political differences are solved through political process, referendum, elections or any other form that does not involve indiscriminate shootings and killings of innocent people.

For the first time, the Somalis in the country and outside followed the whole process through Djibouti Television (RTD), which transmitted live, via satellite from day one.

Besides the Somalis, who wished to see their country back to normal and active among the international community, there were also our regional friends and the neighbours who should have been relieved by the emergence of an authority in Somalia, after having been burdened with the flow of thousands of refugees in their countries during the civil war.

Those who would gain most would be the Somalis who were suffering for so long for lack of government in the country. We reached a point of near extinction, risking to lose even our identity. In fact, in certain cases, the Somalis were not even looked at as human being. Some countries were already calling Somalia a failed state.

Of course, all that happened or is happening to the

Somalis is not just of our own making. There were and still are external hands in our affairs, hands that were actively and openly participating and continue to participate in the destruction of the Somali society.

One of the most dangerous enemies that directly supported and encouraged politically, economically and by supplying arms to the evil-doers in the Somali society was the Ethiopian regime. Its Prime Minister Meles Zenawi was sitting in the first row in the tent of VVIPs attending the inaugural ceremony for the swearing-in of the new President and celebrating the successful conclusion of the Peace Process held at Arta, Djibouti. One could notice from his face, marks of disapproval and disbelief with his eyes fixed on the podium watching something he never thought would materialise.

The secret of the success of Arta Process was not because of how much food and accommodation Djibouti people and government provided to host the conference or even the moral and material contribution that other friendly countries might have given, but it succeeded because of invaluable efforts made with complete sincerity and goodwill. Something which cost very little to them but it meant a lot for the Somalis. Simply, they were sincere and wished to see solution to the Somali crisis. They wanted the Somalis to find the way out of the decade long impasse. When there were problems among different clans, the organisers helped them by talking to them and persuaded them to talk to each other.

The people of Djibouti never stopped praying for the success of the conference. In the streets, on the buses, in the coffee bars in the market and at Place Raimbow or Place Mohamoud Harbi the people of Djibouti kept wishing their brothers and sisters well. They were crying along with their brothers who were longing for peace unlike certain neighbours who were shedding crocodile tears while stabbing the Somalis in the back.

The road to peace was not smooth. It was full of obstacles. From time to time, some people opened old wounds generated by clan conflicts, causing serious dis-

ruption to the Process. Of course, the longer the conference went on, it was better for co-habitation among the antagonistic clans.

There was a day when most of the people thought that the entire project would collapse and all the efforts already made would be in vain. So much time had been spent. The conference was nearly five months old. President Ismail was determined to make it a success, no matter how long it would take.

The Somalis drove him crazy. He had to give all his attention to the Process. He had to do reconciliation within reconciliation. There were people who were continuously quarrelling for one reason or another. Nearly all the cabinet ministers were involved in the Process. Among those who were also playing active and prominent role were the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ali Abdi Farah, the Chief of Cabinet of the President, Ismail Tani and the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Djibouti at the United Nations, Roble Olhaye, to mention only a few. Of course many others were working behind the scene for the success of the conference.

The Government of Djibouti knew that the enemies and saboteurs of the conference were not in short supply both among the Somalis as well as among the foreign elements. Those who wanted to sabotage the conference could even be among the participants in the conference itself, and pretending to be supporting it. The faction leaders or the other elements who were left out or who declined to attend the conference were on the other side of the fence waiting to hear that things were not going on well. Hiding themselves among the well-wishers might also have been those who tried to work for the failure of the conference. It was difficult to identify such elements because, in public, they sang the same nationalist song: "*Soomaaliyey Toosooy, Toosooy isku tiirsadayee, Hadba kiina taag daraneey, Taageera Weligiinee*" (Oh Somalis stand up, Stand up and sustain each other, and those who are weaker, support them for ever). When the crowd shouts: "*Soomaalya Hannolaato*" (Long Live Somalia) they also do the same. Sometimes the evil minded

persons exhibit greater nationalist appearance than the true nationalist. But, as they could not hide their true colours, one heard them saying from time to time, to others or even while talking to themselves that "Nothing will come out of this". They kept whispering in the ears of the people all negative things such as "this is just waste of money and time."

Of course these sentiments were exactly what the arch enemy of the Somali people, Ethiopia, also entertained and propagated.

Looking at the VVIP area I observed the movement of Meles Zenawi, the Ethiopian Prime Minister, but could not make out his attitude and feelings. The outcome of the Arta Process was welcomed by the United Nations, the Organisation of African Unity, and the regional organisation IGAD of which Somalia was also a founding member state.

During the ten years of conflict in Somalia Meles manipulated the political situation, continuously adding fuel to the fire. He swore to do everything to keep Somalia without a government ! Therefore to observe the inaugural ceremony of the rebirth of Somali government must have been very painful to him; he had ceaselessly worked to sabotage any attempt aimed at establishing an administration in Somalia. He had supported the faction leaders with money and material to implement the sinister game plan of Ethiopia.

Here he was present at a ceremony held to celebrate the birth of an administration established without his patronage. He had witnessed something he had never wished to see during his life time: Somalia having a government !

In public or when he had conversation with others about the situation in Somalia and the importance of peace and political stability in Somalia Meles Zenawi, almost shed tears to show how sad he was to see the sufferings of the Somali people. Only the Almighty knows what was in his heart and mind as he was sitting among thousands who really longed for peace in Somalia. But he himself knows that he is the

main architect of the destruction of the Somali Nation. Will the Almighty one day punish him for the wrongs he has done to the Somali people?

He was at the Arta's main square arranged for the occasion. In the centre there was a long pole with Somali National Flag: Sky Blue with five-pointed Star in the centre. He was looking at the dais; he might have been thinking how to overthrow the new President. Looking at the flag he might be thinking how he could tear it down. He and people of his ilk let Djibouti carry on the Process, because they did not expect it would succeed. They believed that like the previous twelve conferences it would also end in failure. But to their dismay the Arta Process was crowned with success.

Meles had kept many faction leaders in Addis Ababa's hotels away from the venue of the conference. Against his inner feelings, the Ethiopian Prime Minister had accepted the invitation of the President of Djibouti to attend a ceremony that he wanted to abort, only if he could. I would not have been surprised if Meles did that, because he used to sabotage the conferences organised by him, if he felt that the outcome would lead to the establishment of a government for Somalia. He knew that soon a delegation led by Abdikassim Salad Hassan would be attending the Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the regional IGAD (Intergovernmental Authority on Development) to take up its rightful seat which remained vacant for over a decade.

The nefarious activities of Ethiopia against Somalia continues unabated. The international community, the United Nations and other regional organisations should monitor the border between Somalia and Ethiopia. They should also take effective steps including imposition of economic sanctions to send a clear message to the Ethiopian government to stop its interference and dismantle its terrorist network operating in Somalia.

The Arabic Newspaper Al Khaleej, wrote on 13 June 2002 that while attending the World Food Conference in Rome the Meles Zenawi stated that:

"the interference in Somalia of his country will continue until a government which controls the whole country is established."

Earlier, the late Representative of Ethiopia at the United Nations was quoted by the Reuters New Agency on 21 February 2002, as saying:

"If the Somalis don't solve their problems then we will do it for them... We won't wait forever." "If we find a majority of players do not want to play the game, we will change the rules of the game."

About the non-participation of some groups in the Peace Conference, President Ismail Omar Guelleh, in his speech at the inaugural ceremony said:

"We could not expect power-hungry individuals to achieve peace and reconciliation through their merciless act and misguided ambitions".

On the negative role and attitude of some of the faction leaders President Ismail said :

"No one can deny them the claim to have been the very ones who were instrumental in causing twelve peace conferences to fail."

Most of the past conferences failed because of two negative factors. One was that the participants were mainly drawn from various warring factions. There were about 3 to 4 dozens and all of them wanted to become President of the Republic by any means. Their motto was : either I will be the President or I will not allow any one else to become the President!". The second factor was the machination of Ethiopia, an arch enemy of Somali peace and stability. It considers interference in Somalia's internal affairs as its legitimate right.

Even after a decade of armed conflict and fratricidal war, no one from the principal participants could overcome the deep suspicion and mistrust of each other or persuade the

opponents to resolve the conflict on the basis of an honourable peaceful settlement of their disputes. In the beginning it was difficult to assemble them all in one place and those who attended such conferences threatened to leave or walk out on petty issues. The enemies of conference were not only from outside, but from within our own society. Some clan leaders threatened to leave the country and some others boycotted the meetings.

Two camps: One camp was Ethiopia which believed that any settlement of Somalia's crisis would be detrimental to its interest. Therefore it always pretended to organise a reconciliation conference but in the end it worked overtime to sabotage it. In fact such initiatives were doomed to fail, because the majority of the conferences held for the Somalis were under the patronage of Ethiopia and nearly all the participants in those conferences were the faction leaders supported by it and it could dictate the direction and the required solution. The conference that Ethiopia organised was a futile exercise meant to deceive the international community.

The other camp was Djibouti and Egypt. Djibouti tried twice during the early 90s following the collapse of the military government. Djibouti one and Djibouti two, both did not go far because of outside interference. Egypt did try it in 1997, but in the end Ethiopia sabotaged it by calling to Addis Ababa some of the faction leaders friendly to it and accused Egypt of "diplomatic hijacking". Ethiopia claimed that it had the monopoly or the exclusive right as well as the mandate of the former OAU "to look after Somalia's interest." But in reality this so-called mandate gave Ethiopia the right to look after only its own interest in Somalia, which was to keep Somalia in perpetual crisis.

The Arta Peace Process was the thirteenth conference to solve the Somali problem and the third attempt by Djibouti. Taking advantage of the internal conflict, the enemies of the Somali nation were busy hatching new plots to sabotage it. Djibouti was very patient with the thousands of delegates

with different agendas. It was more concerned about our fate than many Somalis. The faction leaders and the war mongers wanted the chaos to continue as they benefited from the civil war and fattened themselves on the booty and established their own clandoms with their *Moriyans* on *technicals* (militias on pick-up cars mounted with anti-aircraft gun).

The ceremony for the swearing-in of the new President was a successful culmination of the hard work, which took months of hectic negotiations among people who had been fighting one another for over a decade. Hatred and mistrust were the two factors that prevailed among the so-called "superior clans" who were in continuous collision with each other throughout the history of the country. The rest of the people of the country were not even allowed to have their regional names but given the discriminatory name "others" to underestimate their existence and human value. Here George Orwell's idea propounded in his book "*The Animal Farm*" that "all are created equal, but some are more equal than others" aptly depicts the human nature.

In Somalia's case, some of those classified today as "others" were in fact the ones who insisted that colonialism must end and opted for independence in 1948 and in 1949.* While those claiming to be the *Laan Dheer* (The Long Branch)—the superior clans—were calling for the colonial power to prolong their stay.

The so-called "superior clans" though small in numbers demanded greater share, approximately two thirds of the seats and resources. All the rest of the population put together were to be allowed only half the share. But, of course, when it came to payment of taxes they say everyone should pay equally, whether privileged or otherwise. I, like many other thinking Somalis feel ashamed that we have reduced a majority of our people to a state where their

* See *Yearbook for the United Nations 1948-49*, p. 268, UN publications.

traditional identity has been wiped out and are even without a name.

If size is the criteria, the so-called "others" would be definitely equal to one or more than any one of these so-called "superior clans". A fair decision should have been equality of all. But if the heavyweight clans claimed a lion's share, then the combined groups should have been given a share equal to that given to one of the so-called "superior clans".

The region that many people and I claim to belong has been the biggest and most prosperous in the country, before the military dictator, Major General Mohamed Siyad Barre dismembered the country and made 18 regions out of the eight original ones. It is called Benadir and used to comprise of Mogadishu, Merka, Brava, Balad and Jowhar and their surroundings, towns or villages up to Ras Kiamboni. To minimise the importance of Benadir region, the military regime cut all the economic zones from the Region and left only the capital, Mogadishu, with the Seaport. All the agricultural areas, which originally belonged to Benadir were removed from the map of the region and given other names.

Was it for the hatred of the people of the region or to reduce the importance of the region or to satisfy certain clans in exchange for whatever Mohamed Siyad Barre, stripped Benadir region of all its agricultural and industrial areas? Marka, which was the second important city of Benadir, was made the capital of what he called "Lower Shabelle". Brava which was another important city of Benadir and Afgoy, Wanle Weyn, Qoryoley, Shalambot, Sablaaleh etc. were placed under Merka as their head of the region of Lower Shabelle. Jowhar was named the headquarters of Central Shabelle and Balad, Warsheikh Aden Yawal, Adale and Mahaday etc. were placed under Jowhar. And Mogadishu, the Capital of Benadir Region as well as the capital of the Republic, was reduced to the city limit.

The four so-called major clans have been allocated 44 seats each to divide up among sub-clans; the Alliance of

what they called others or the 5th has been given 24 seats nearly half of the number of the so-called major clans and the Women's group has been given 25 seats. This was decided neither on the basis of statistics nor by elections; it was just a malicious system designed to hurt other peoples' feelings. No one knows on what basis this "proportional representation" has been done.

I would not blame anybody if I do not win at all or win a small number of seats in an election to parliament or to local government council if we accept the rule of one man one vote and hold free and fair elections. All citizens, irrespective of their religion, creed, ethnicity or profession should be given equal rights.

How can one justify discrimination on the basis of one's social, cultural, regional or professional background in the contemporary times. In today's world respect for human rights and equality in front of God and before Law, is of paramount importance. Do men or women have to suffer such humiliation because of his/her colour or creed and the type of his/her hair or because someone is by profession a shoemaker, a barber, butcher or a fisherman?

From the initial stage of the conference I personally objected to the very idea of clan based solution to our problem because I believed that what destroyed the country cannot be a means to reach a solution of our problem. In a letter I sent to the organisers before the start of the Process, I also emphasised the necessity of the presence of all the factions and groups at this crucial meeting. I know they were evil doers, but they could not be ignored. If they were ignored then they would not rest idle but would create all sorts of hurdles. I also appealed to avoid discriminatory procedures.

For the President of Djibouti, it was not an easy and smooth ride. He was personally involved in the negotiations and mediations among the various quarrelling clans.

He knew how difficult it was to reconcile the Somalis who were at loggerheads over the governance of the country

from its independence in 1960 until the collapse of the regime of Mohamed Siyad Barre in 1991. Throughout the history of Somalia, clan conflicts were the root cause of our problems and the main reason for the present disaster. And Djibouti President gambled his reputation when in September 1999 he offered to host a Somali reconciliation conference in his country.

At that time even the United Nations had forgotten the agony of Somalia because of its bad experience in the early 1990s when its Peacekeepers led by the US were forced to withdraw from Somalia in 1995. This had a serious effect on the future of the UN Peace keeping in Africa. However, no member, including the United States, openly rejected the Djibouti offer, but adopted an attitude of "wait and see".

The forces which did not wish to see the recovery of Somalis accused President Ismail of meddling in the Somali affairs, and of "having personal interest" in holding the conference for "ulterior motives" that he had a "hidden agenda" and so many other things. Those who were afraid of peace were calling him everything just for having offered his country as a venue for the conference on peace in Somalia. The Satan was at work in the minds of the evil mongers who were posing as angels but in fact, they were there to sabotage the conference.

One day President Ismail called for an unexpected meeting of all the representatives in the huge tent at Arta. Even those of us who were not included in the list of delegates were there to listen to what he was going to say. It was nearly the fourth month since the commencement of the conference.

No one could imagine what was the purpose or objective of the meeting, but some were speculating that he may withdraw his government's sponsorship of and support to the conference. For Djibouti it was really frustrating to find out that the Somalis, who were going to be the main beneficiaries by the settlement of their ten-year-long crisis in their country, were causing so many problems. If that was

the case then it was good news for the Ethiopian regime which continuously worked to undermine the Process. For the faction leaders and the other evil forces it would be an advantage to continue their strangulation of the masses and profit from the chaos and lack of a proper administration. Some of us were really worried about a possible breakdown of the Process. If this conference failed, no one else would try to help the country.

In this huge tent, both sides were there; the perpetrators of the crimes and their victims who were unwilling to see eye-to-eye.

I was sitting next to an old colleague of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other friends and colleagues. We were all nervous and tense like students waiting for the results of the final examination. We knew there were problems with some of the groups, but no one could imagine what prompted the President of Djibouti to convene an emergency meeting. We were praying for peace and stability while some were continuously working to block the whole process unless they were given dominant position and major role in the decision making process. Some were even ready to see the collapse of the Process; they did not care about the fate of the country and the nation, as they had already amassed wealth taking advantage of the non-existence of any administration.

Optimists, though victims of the civil war want an end of the chaos and the peaceful solution of the crisis. Whereas, the pessimists view peace and restoration of administration and reconciliation of disputes as a threat to their selfish interest. They believed that if normalcy returned to Somalia they would lose the illegally gained wealth and patronage of their external masters.

After a long and worrisome wait the President of Djibouti accompanied by some of his cabinet ministers came from the rear entrance and took seat at the podium facing the huge audience who were anxiously waiting for some time. Tension mounted as no one had a clue about what the President was

going to say. Everybody knew that the organisers were fed up with the behaviour of certain delegates as also the machinations of the enemies of the conference. He knew the enemies would be happy if the Process failed.

President Ismail Omar Guelleh took this responsibility fully aware of the difficulties of holding such a conference for the Somalis. He knew there were certain circles that would celebrate if he abandoned his well-meaning attempt and leave the Somalis to their fate. The collapse of the Process would fulfil the expectation of the enemies of peace in Somalia. It would also mean victory for those who worked overtly or covertly to abort the Arta Peace Process.

The "super clans" were complaining that justice had not been done in the distribution of the parliamentary seats. In fact those who were making so much noise for more seats in the new parliament were the ones who got the bigger shares. They were threatening to withdraw from the conference if their demands were not met. The President of Djibouti Ismail Omar Guelleh was quite upset with the behaviour of some delegates who had apparently been sent there just to spoil his well-intentioned efforts.

Contrary to all our expectations, the President maintained a dignified and cool profile. Swallowing his emotions he behaved as if he was a physician who was treating a chronically ill patient unwilling to take medicine.

We held our breath and some held each other's hand praying for the positive. Some of us knew we could not afford to lose this chance which had come after a decade of civil war and absence of government in Somalia. No one can bring back the lost lives but those of us who survived ask for nothing more than the right of the present and future generations to live a normal life. Even those who were forced to flee the country during the civil war and were settled in the more prosperous countries, enjoying better life were saying "Neither East nor West, Home is the Best".

There was a silence in the crowded hall and a *Shaikh* was asked to recite verses from the Holy Qur'an at the

opening of the meeting and before the speech of the President of Djibouti. The verses of the Qur'an are recited at the beginning and at the end of all gatherings and the reader usually chooses verses that suit the occasion.

The moment had finally come for President Ismail's speech spelling out his assessment of the progress of the conference. Every one in the hall was eagerly awaiting to listen to his address.

With deep emotion, President Ismail Omar Guelleh, appealed humbly: "*Ii hiiliya*" (Support me), he said. At this moment nearly the whole tent was in tears. Men and women, friends and foes shed their tears in sympathy with President Ismail. Ladies sitting next to me started cursing those who caused the unbearable situation which might lead to the failure of the conference had President Ismail would not have been such a strong believer in search for peace for his brothers and sisters. He made a highly emotional speech.

In Somalia's civil war those who suffered the most were women. They were the ones who shouldered all the responsibilities of the family. Everywhere, at home and abroad, women held families together while men roamed around or sat at home. There was a radical change in the family norms and values as women became the bread-earner in the family and men sat at home and in some cases just wasted the little income that women earned. They became addicts of the Khat. In a male dominated society women forced their way to play a positive role to hold the conference together.

The President reminded the delegates of his pledge at the United Nations General Assembly in September 1999. He was hoping to go to the UN Millennium 2000 Summit and General Assembly 2000, hand in hand with the new President of the war-torn Somalia, elected at the Peace and Reconciliation Process held in his country. The emotional call "*Ii hiiliya*" (Support me) really worked as a magic and the Process went on as smooth as it could be.

There were many other instances that could have troubled the conference. The critics were saying that "the

13th clan-based attempt was doomed to fail". They accused Djibouti President of "interference in the Somali affairs". This conference at Arta, was the third trial for Djibouti out of twelve conferences held for the Somali reconciliation. Majority of those conferences were organised by Ethiopia. And those who accused Djibouti of "interfering in the Somali affairs" did not utter a word about Ethiopia. Were they sincere in their attempts or kept the conflict alive through their stooges? I would have loved to hear that "we the Somalis can solve our own problem". Why no one raised his eyebrows on its interference in our affairs? And why were there never any positive results? We all know that fraternal people of Djibouti and its President made sincere efforts to help Somali brothers and sisters to solve their decade-long crisis. The day will come when those who used to criticise him will realise their wrong deeds.

With patience and perseverance of the organisers and the unswerving support of the Head of UNPOS, Ambassador David Stephen and his Senior Political Advisor Dr. Babafemi Badejo, the conference finally met with success. The 13th Process was considered by peace-loving people of Somalia, both inside and outside the country, a good omen for the future of Somalia.

Since the overthrow of the military regime of Mohamed Siyad Barre in 1991, Somalia was ruled by rival faction leaders who were also responsible for the death of hundreds of thousands of human beings and the devastation of the country's public and private infrastructure as well as the demolition of a thirty-year-old administration.

In his brief statement at the inaugural ceremony, the fourth President of Somalia, Abdikassim Salad Hassan said among other things:

"I will serve all the Somali people according to my ability. I will defend the territorial integrity of Somalia and I will talk to the regions that are currently in peace but did not join the Somali peace initiative."

The self-declared republic of Somaliland declined to

attend the conference saying it would be an act of "treason".

Most of the Somalis, wherever they were, hoped that the conclusion of the Arta Process would be the beginning of the end of the ten years civil strife. At the beginning, I was against clan based solution because I believed that the main cause of the conflict in Somalia cannot be the means of its solution. But for the sake of restoration of administration I thought that some sort of administration, however weak, would be better than no administration at all. After all, the Somali nation longed for an administration that would take care of their interest: "*A bad government was better than no government*".

When a friend of mine called me up from Columbus, Ohio, USA, who knew my position on the clan-based system of administration and asked me how I could accept a government born out of a system that I was against all along, I answered him that it was a bitter pill which I had to swallow for the sake of a government to provide a semblance of administration to our country. I told him that I didn't recognise clan but I believe that it was necessary to lay the foundation of a new state—call it rebirth of Somalia. At that time what I had in mind was that since for a long time we had no government in place, people would get used to it and the situation would gradually normalise.

I then told him the famous Somali anecdote about the daughter who heard her mother invoking Shaikh Abdulqadir every morning while lifting her camel and one day the daughter asked her mother: "Mother, who is this Shaikh Abdulqadir you are invoking every morning? The mother replied: "He is nothing for me; but I just invoke him to raise my camel".

So I said: "clan is nothing but a means to achieve our goal to establish a government and that can help us out of the crisis".

Only the naïve and those who lack self-confidence believe that they can profit from *clanism*. I believe in the correctness of what the poet Abdullahi Suldan Tima Adde said about it:

"*Dugsi ma laha qabyaaladi waxay dumisa mooyaanee*" (roughly meaning: Clanism builds no shelter, but only destroys).

The 13th Somali Reconciliation ended successfully but it was incomplete as one of the most important region—the Northwestern region—had boycotted the conference. However, despite the boycott of the Authorities, representatives from the region attended the Process.

4

THE BEGINNING OF A DIFFICULT JOURNEY

Two days after his election the new President of Somalia flew to Mogadishu at a moment when the faction leaders who had boycotted the Peace Process in Djibouti, were threatening to use force to stop the return to Mogadishu of all those who had attended the peace conference in Djibouti including the new President.

Somalia had no government for a decade and the new President, elected after such a long period had to demonstrate that the new administration was not a government in exile but a government that would function from its national capital. On 30 August 2000, when the 58 year-old Dr. Abdikassim Salad Hassan arrived in the capital, he was accorded a hero's welcome.

Quoting eyewitnesses, IRIN (UN-Integrated Regional Information Network) said that "militiamen and *technicals* from faction leaders Atto, Aideed and Mohamed Qanyare all came to welcome the new President despite the faction leaders having earlier described his election as "illegitimate".

The President was not intimidated by the threat from factions who were holding some parts of the capital to ransom. His plane landed at *Balledogleh* Airport, 105 km Northwest of the capital. It was heavily guarded by the government supporters. From the airport to the city of Mogadishu, the

presidential entourage drove about an hour and a half, the same time as the flight time from Djibouti to Mogadishu. *Balledogleh* was a military airport built by the former Soviet Union during the good old days, when the two countries enjoyed special relationship blessed with the Treaty of Friendship. The two sides clashed and ended the Treaty when the Soviet Union decided to switch its support to Ethiopia following the conflict over the Western Somali territory, known as Ogaden, between Somalia and Ethiopia in 1977.

The National Airport in Mogadishu was destroyed during the UN intervention in Somalia in the early nineties. Since then it was under the control of one of the opposition faction leaders. The entourage drove from *Balledogleh* through Wanle Weyn and Afgoye villages. People lined up along the roads, some armed with machine guns and others just carrying sticks and still others waving the Somali flag. This region was famous for its fruits and I felt nostalgic for the wonderful mangoes, papayas, grapefruits and bananas grown in the area.

All along the way from *Balledogleh* to Mogadishu, there were no hostile militias. In fact later we were told that even the soldiers or militias of some the faction leaders opposing the government had joined in large numbers and were waving green leaves to welcome the President. The faction leaders did not disturb the visit, most of them had gone into hiding. They may have thought that behind the courage with which the President travelled to Mogadishu, there must have been a force that supported it. The lack of hostile action on the part of the factions opposing the government gave the impression that the city was ready to welcome the newly elected President.

While we were still in Djibouti, certain faction leaders had threatened to attack any delegation that was connected with Djibouti Process. However, this happened to be a hollow threat. The entourage of the President went directly to Mogadishu stadium where hundreds of thousands of people had gathered, not only inside the stadium but also outside,

waiting for long hours to give a tumultuous welcome to the President.

The huge crowd assembled at the ground of the stadium was bursting at the seams. Many of us found it difficult to listen to the speech of the President. He took the microphone, but his voice was drowned in the noise and excitement. The people of Mogadishu had demonstrated their love for a government; any government that could free them from the clutches of the gangsters. While for the faction leaders, who were holding the whole nation hostage, to have a government meant the loss of their anarchic power. For them, stability and order were enemy number one, because they were piling ill-gotten wealth.

Prior to this occasion I had never seen so many guns in the hands of people who were not in military uniforms. I could not believe that I was among thousands of friendly teenagers holding AK47s. Probably the joy of seeing a President made every one even the anti-establishment forces adopt a neutral stance. Looking from the high podium of the stadium I could see a sea of humanity chanting national songs and waving to the new President, each person probably hoping to attract his attention. We were lifted up by the crowd surrounding us, officials, security or just the ordinary men and women who had gathered to welcome the new President.

The crowd assembled at the National stadium since early morning consisting of general public, students from private schools and youngsters who had only experienced anarchy that prevailed in the capital during the ten years of civil strife. Some of them might have been young when the last government vanished and as soon as they became teenagers faction leaders recruited them in their private militias to loot and kill. They were being used by them and reduced to being hunting animals. The young militias are generally of the same clan as the faction leaders. They were brainwashed in believing that what they were doing was right for the defence of their clans' prestige and interests.

That may have been partly true. But, in fact, their job was to defend the interest of the warlord who employed them and gave them the gun. They were not paid salaries, as regular soldiers, but the incentive they enjoyed most, was the supply of the addictive drug leaves *Khat* that the "Masters or the Bosses" supplied them to paralyse their thinking faculty and transform them into willing instrument for looting or killing. For them that was the normal life. They had, perhaps, never thought of going to schools or getting a decent job. Besides the *Khat*, the militias discovered another green leave which grows wildly in Mogadishu and has stronger effect on its consumers in terms of stimulation. That kind of green leave is not known yet to the world, but for the *Moriyans* and the militias this was a new discovery for their lust for drug.

In Somalia, as in many other Least Developed Countries, illiteracy was already a major problem for the masses and a decade of non-government and the destruction of all state schools increased the number of people who had no chance to get even primary education. The militias are the worst affected. They are young-men who had no opportunity to attend schools or learn anything about other professions except mutual killing. Those who have survived have deep scars of wounds inflicted by gun-shots.

Ten years of civil war have worsened the already miserable conditions of the masses because of the increase of mass killer diseases like cholera and other water-born diseases. During this period, hundreds of thousands of people, mainly children, died for lack of medical care. In some cases death became a relief for the distressed families who had difficulties even to get the minimum necessities for their and their children's survival.

Most of the militias brandishing the AK47s were either from the interior of the country where facilities for education were non-existent. They grew up in militia's camps run by the so-called liberation movements, fighting against the regime of Mohamed Siyad Barre.

After the collapse of the regime of Mohamed Siyad Barre,

all the stores of the National Army were looted by the opposition groups who distributed it to their supporters or the clan militias. After more than ten years of wanton destruction and chaos the country needs a complete reconstruction; and the people who suffered mental trauma and turned homeless desperately need rehabilitation.

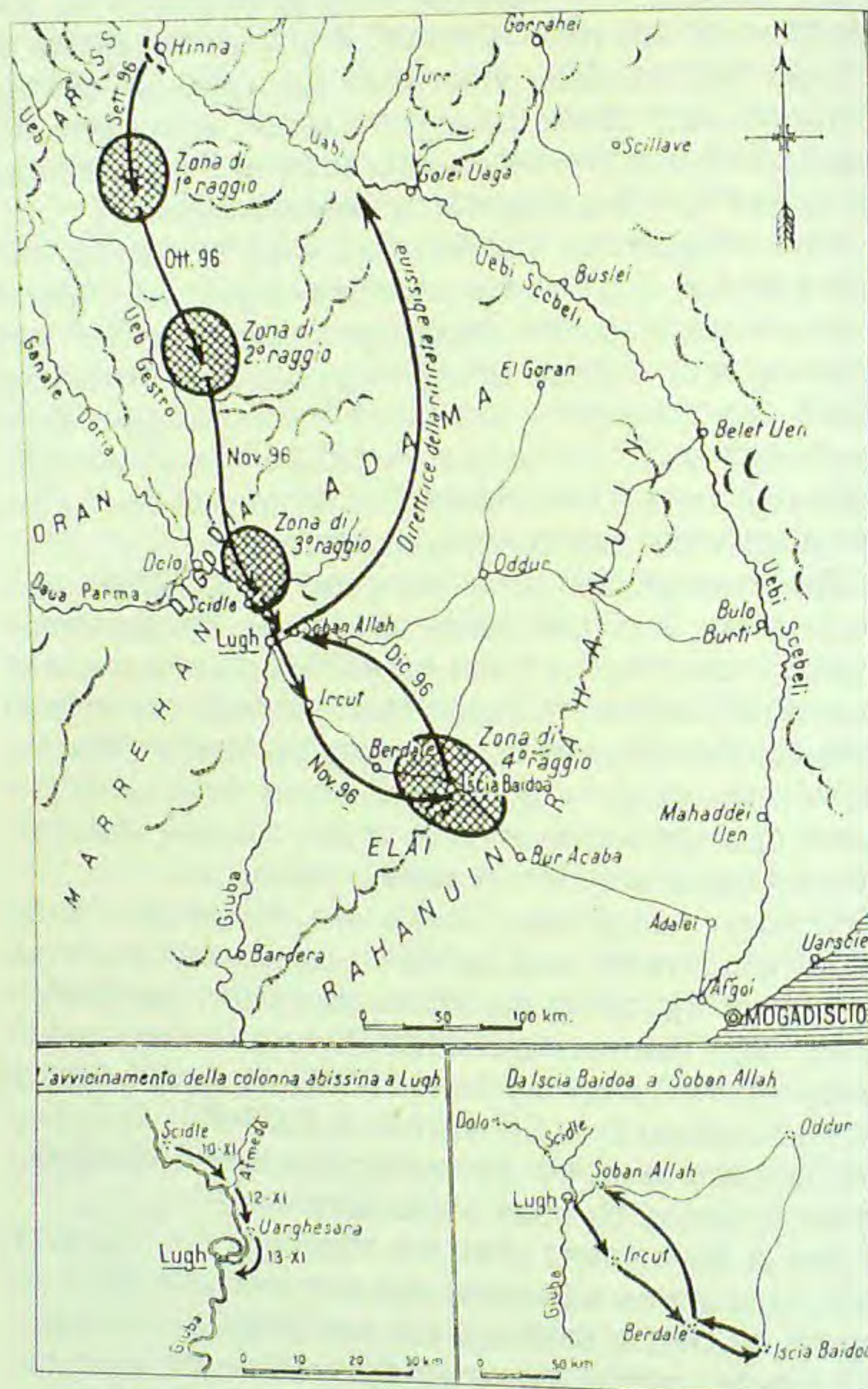
From Mogadishu, the President went to Baidoa, the capital of Bay region where the population gave him a rousing welcome. Earlier, the delegates attending the Peace Process at Arta, Djibouti agreed on 19 July 2000 on making Baidoa the provisional capital of the new transitional government until the security in Mogadishu improved. People of the region were overwhelmed by the idea of having the capital moved to their town, even temporarily.

The choice of Baidoa was not a bad idea politically, as it is one of the important towns of Somalia. No one should have objected to it, but it was not an ideal place as a seat of the central government due to its proximity to the *de facto* or the artificial border between Somalia and the Somali territory occupied by Ethiopia. It would have given the Somali opposition groups an issue that the new President had no national base for his administration.

Besides, historically Baidoa was one of the towns periodically invaded and looted by the Abyssinian forces (now Ethiopia), during the nineteenth century (see sketch map p. 60; "The incursions of the Amhara on Lugh and in Baidoa in 1896", from the Book: "*SOMALIA, Dalle Origini al 1914*", Ministero della Guerra, Roma, 1938-XVI). Over one hundred years later, the military incursions of Addis Ababa regime continues unabated in the same area.

And at the moment when the attitude of the regime of Addis Ababa was so hostile and unpredictable vis-à-vis Somalia, to choose Baidoa as the seat of the new Government was like putting the neck of the government under the guillotine of the enemy.

Mogadishu was not a safer place either as most of it was under the control of the opposition factions armed by



THE INCURSION OF THE AMHARA ON LUGH AND IN BAIDOA
IN 1896

Ethiopia. But it was slightly better than Baidoa because of its distance from the *de facto* border with Ethiopia. The Ethiopian forces could easily penetrate and disturb peace in Baidoa. However, as it was determined to sabotage the new government it used the local factions to wage a proxy war with the aim of destabilising the newly established provisional administration.

Mogadishu can hardly be compared with any other place in the country, as most of other towns are inhabited by specific clans while Mogadishu is the home for a multitude of clans. It is a metropolitan city. It is the key to the entire Somali crisis. If only Mogadishu would be at peace all the rest would follow. The claim by certain quarters in the international community that the rest of the country is peaceful is right but the question is why it is so. The answer lies in the fact that the faction leaders are not there, and even if they were, no one would have noticed them and they would not be popular. Now Mogadishu is a ghost city, but certainly if peace returns no one will stay in other parts of the country including Hargeisa, Bosaso, Galkayo, Baidoa, Kisimayo and so on. Mogadishu is the cultural and historical city and, above all, a cradle of civilisation.

The first hurdle was passed with relative success. The visit to Mogadishu, although short in terms of time, was politically significant for the new President and moral defeat for the enemies of peace and stability in Somalia.

The newly elected President, Abdikassim Salad Hassan embarked on the most important journey of the decade. For the first time in ten years on 4 September 2000 the Somali Head of State arrived in New York to join the world leaders and to attend the UN Millennium 2000 Summit.

The IRIN reported that the Somali flag was raised at the UN headquarters for the first time in 10 years as Abdikassim Salad prepared for his speech before the Millennium Summit. His presence in that august institution finally ended a decade of diplomatic isolation of Somalia.

No matter what the enemies of peace in Somalia thought about the Arta Peace Process, the presence of a Somali delegation led by the newly elected President among the community of nations was a historic event and a matter of pride for the peoples of Djibouti and Somalia.

On 8 September 2000, the President of the Somali Republic took the floor in the United Nations General Assembly which had the largest ever gathering of world leaders. All of us (Somalis) who happened to be in the General Assembly felt deeply touched by the warm applause extended to the Somali President. The applause and welcome were not so much for the President or the delegation but was a mark of welcome to the Somali State among the family of nations.

In his maiden speech President Abdikassim said: "I am so happy that we are back here after over 10 years of absence from the international scene." He stated that his primary task was to unite a country deeply divided along clan lines. He also apologised to the UN for the bloody clashes between the UN peacekeepers and Somalis in the 1990s. "Mistakes were made on both sides but I would like to apologise to the United Nations and the world for the errors committed by the Somalis", he said. He appealed to the United Nations and global community to let "bygones be bygones" and provide rehabilitation funds for Somalia.

The new Somali President further said: "The Somali people have spoken and their principle desire is to have a government of unity", Reuters reported. President Abdikassim went on to add that "Somalia at peace with itself and its neighbours will be a valuable member of the United Nations."

During his stay in New York President Abdikassim held meetings with other Heads of State and Government and a large number of the Somali communities in the United States and Canada who had come to New York to meet him. Those who came there, represented those who could not come either because of exigencies of their jobs or were unable to take the journey. They welcomed the President and the re-

establishment of an administration in Somalia.

They were very enthusiastic and displayed a high sense of patriotism. They kept hugging each other and wishing the newly established administration well. The President himself was overwhelmed by the warm reception given to him and his delegation by the Somali communities. His speech was transmitted live through the Somali Broadcasting System organised by the community to all the continents. It was a moment of pride for those who loved to have their own government and to see their flag flying along side the flags of other countries at the United Nations Headquarters in New York.

Thousands of Somalis who are now in foreign countries had been granted asylum in the absence of a functioning government in their homeland where the peoples' lives were threatened. However, the general feeling among majority of the diaspora was the need for a government in the country that they could lean on. There are numerous families who wished to return home and to bring back their kids who otherwise would be facing the danger of losing their identity, culture and traditions. No matter what kind of life they lead, in their "adopted country", the cry for homeland has become common among the Somalis all over the world. They see the danger in the attitude of their children towards their families and society; they see the alien waves taking them to an unknown future.

Some of the Somali diaspora might have adopted the new ways of life and might be unwilling to come back home, but a large number of them long for and would abandon anything for the sake of their motherland. No matter what wonderful life their adopted countries offer, the Somalis generally have nostalgia for their own country.

The disaster that struck our country has wreaked havoc on both the country as well as the people. Even where some people see it as positive and advantageous, it has caused serious damage to the present and future generations. The hundreds of thousands who fled the country during the civil war are now settled abroad. On the one hand this has caused

the dismemberment of the families but on the other hand the refugees have become the source of financial support for the rest of the members of extended families. During the last decade or so nearly all the people in Somalia, North and South, depend mainly on the money which the refugees or the settlers abroad remit through the hawala (money transfer) companies.

The civil war left the country in the ruins. It destroyed the whole apparatus of the Administration which was the main employer in the country. The salaries that the civil servants and the uniformed personnel in the government received maintained not only their immediate family members, but also a relatively high number of people who depended on them.

Those who benefited most from the civil war and absence of administration were a section of business community who exploited the situation. All the money received from abroad was pocketed by them. They owned the money transfer companies; they also imported cheaply printed counterfeit bank notes and sold to the people at a rate arbitrarily decided by them in exchange of the US Dollars that the people received from their relatives abroad. They imported cheap or sometimes even expired medicines and foodstuff from abroad through makeshift seaports owned by them; they destroyed the environment by cutting the trees and burning them for charcoal and exported to foreign countries.

To maintain the *status quo*, the businesspersons paid certain "tax" to the faction leaders who were opposing the re-establishment of any government. They are the only beneficiaries of the unending violence and chaos. Their interest coincided. They extorted whatever little money the people who were themselves displaced persons in their own country received for their survival from relatives abroad.

There is another school of thought that maintains that had the people been politically conscious and challenged the unscrupulous businesspersons and their supporters the situation would not have deteriorated to the extent it did. The

apathy and abject submission of our people to the evil-doers were largely responsible for the success of the oppressors.

Coming back to our main theme, while it was the year 2000, it seemed as if it was the year 1960 when for the first time Somalia's National Flag was hoisted at the United Nations. From 1991 until the re-birth of the State in August 2000, our independence and dignity had lost their value and caused the banishment of the country from all international organisations with the exception of the League of Arab States which maintained the membership of Somalia despite the non-existence of a Government in the country.

On his way to New York, the new President visited Cairo, on 2 and 3 September 2000, delivered a speech at the Foreign Ministers meeting of the League of Arab States and met with Egyptian officials. He was accorded a warm welcome by the Arab Foreign Ministers and through them the President conveyed his greetings and best wishes to their respective Kings, Emirs and Heads of State. He also visited Saudi Arabia, Libya, and Yemen.

While in New York, a visit to Ethiopia was discussed with the Ethiopian officials. The Ethiopian Permanent Mission to the UN even issued visas to the members of the Somali Presidential delegation. However, while we were in Saudi Arabia, back from the General Assembly, the Ethiopian Embassy in Djibouti informed us by telephone that the Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Meles Zenawi would be out of the country and therefore requested that the visit of the Somali President be postponed. That was not a friendly gesture on the part of the Prime Minister of Ethiopia, because at least, he should have suggested an alternative date for the visit, unless he was suggesting that his attendance at the inaugural ceremony of the new President at Arta, Djibouti on 27 August 2000, was just a bluff.

According to unofficial sources Ethiopia felt that the new President of Somalia should have visited Addis Ababa first before going to any other country. Probably for that reason Meles Zenawi wished to show his unhappiness with the new

President. It was impossible for the new President to go to Ethiopia immediately after the election, as he wanted to show the world that he could travel to the national capital, Mogadishu, before visiting any other country.

The new President inherited a country divided and destroyed by unscrupulous militias and completely reduced to bankruptcy. All the expenses on the peace and reconciliation process were borne by the Government of Djibouti, with very little help from others. When he was sworn-in as President, the country had no banking institutions, as the deposits, if any left in the National Bank, were looted during the civil war.

There were no foreign banks in Somalia. Before the collapse of the regime of Mohamed Siyad Barre in 1991, the Somali Government had accounts in foreign banks; whether there were funds or not, it is another matter. But as far as it is known, in July 1990, the Somali Embassies abroad were given their quarterly allocation from Somalia National Bank's foreign accounts.

The maiden journey of the new President culminated in a stop-over at the Holy Shrines in Saudi Arabia for performing *Umra* and a visit to Libya to meet with the Leader of the Jamahiriya, Col. Moammar Al-Qaddafi. The Libyan Leader, who has been involved in the Somali situation for a long time, thought to arrange a meeting between the new President and Hussein Mohamed Farah Aidid, who was one of the faction leaders that did not attend the Peace and Reconciliation Process held in Arta, in order to bring him on board and join the newly established Transitional National Government.

The faction leaders, including Aideed, opposed the Arta Peace Process because they felt that the organisers should have entrusted them with the task of conducting the entire process. But the Somalis know the fate of the previous 12 meetings. It is for that reason that the organiser, the President of Djibouti, deemed it right to involve the Civil Society and the unarmed Somalis and whoever wished to

work for solution of the crisis. Others were also welcomed. The reason for the failure of the previous 12 meetings which preceded Arta process was because each one of them wanted to be "the Leader" of the country and the rest to line up behind. Their case was like the Arabic proverb says: "*I am the King; You are the King and who is going to lead the donkey*".

It must have been the initiative of the Leader of the Jamahiriya, Moammar Qaddafi to arrange meeting between the new President and the faction leaders who had boycotted the reconciliation Process. Libya had good relations with Somalia before the collapse of the Government and even had some joint economic ventures in the country. After the collapse it continued to be involved and kept helping various groups during the civil war.

Nothing was prearranged but Aideed and the other leaders who accompanied him—Ahmed Omar Jees, Vice Chairman of the SNA and Abdikarim Ahmed Ali, Secretary General of the SNA—were already in Libya for their own programme. While they were in Tripoli, the Libyan Leader also invited the newly elected President, Abdikassim Salad Hassan, who was at the time in Saudi Arabia to visit Al-Jamahiriya. For the President himself a visit to Libya was a necessity as he needed financial support. He too was probably thinking to visit Leader Qaddafi. An invitation was received together with the hint that a meeting was also planned with SNA leaders.

But Aideed, accompanied by two other leaders of the SNA (Somali National Alliance) and an aide were not informed of the planned meeting with the new President of the country whose election the SNA had refused to recognise. After completing their own assignments for which they had come, the faction leaders decided to leave Libya for the United Arab Emirates. A few minutes before the take-off of their plane Hussein Aideed and the members of his entourage were called for an urgent meeting by the Leader. None of them could imagine what was going on. The airport

staff immediately took the luggage tags and returned their suitcases. An official told them that he was from the Presidency and asked them to follow him. Many things came to their mind but none of them could guess the reason for this sudden and urgent message !. They had no choice but to follow the man.

No time was wasted. The cars drove to a hotel in Tripoli. No one knew what would happen . After a brief interval they were informed that their plane was ready, but still, no one knew where they were being taken. Half an hour after the take-off it landed at the city of Sirte, a newly developed town, especially designed and developed for big political conferences and activities. It has a huge and a modern conference centre with the latest equipment.

From the airport, the SNA leaders were driven along the wide highway in the heart of the desert to the compound where Heads of State and Government were accommodated during the summits or other African meetings. On the way they noticed the flags of Libya and Somalia flying along the highway up to the residential area of the delegation. At one moment, they thought the flags were hoisted for their welcome.

As they were being driven towards the place where they were supposed to stay, they noticed at the entrance of the compound the Somali flag flying in front of the house. There were also a dozen motorcades, usually used to accompany a President when he moves. At the beginning they did not know what was going on, but soon they realised that the President of Somalia was there and the flags they saw were for the President.

Libya was among the first countries to recognise Abdikassim's election as President and also had good relations with the factions that existed in the country for ten years. Without any preliminaries the Libyan Minister in charge of Organisation African Unity Affairs, Mr. Ali Triki tried to bring the two sides together in a meeting.

The SNA was asking for the enlargement of the Parliament and the TNG could not accept the request as this

required the amendment of the Charter. But it was willing to offer positions in the Government. For Minister Triki it was a dilemma, as he had already informed his Leader that everything was going on smoothly. He too got such an impression from the Libyan Charge d'Affairs in Mogadishu Mr. Maatug In the end he succeeded in convincing the SNA delegation to accept a joint declaration to be issued with the government delegation. Both delegations were received by the Leader who blessed the accord that was reached. During the meeting with the Leader, Minister Triki reported that Hussein Aideed dropped the condition regarding the enlargement of the Parliament and accepted to join the government. The Minister was speaking in Arabic which Aideed did not understand. The other two members of the SNA delegation, who spoke Arabic very well, were taken by surprise on hearing that Aideed had accepted or agreed to drop their demand. They thought Aideed had concluded a secret agreement with the government. However, they did not react, and preferred not to raise the issue in the presence of the Libyan leader.

But when they returned to their hotel, Jeas and Abdikarim started quarrelling with Aideed, accusing him of betraying them by dropping the condition of the enlargement of the Parliament without their knowledge. Aideed replied that he did not drop the condition and denied having reached any agreement with Abdikassim. Jeas and Abdikarim told him that "what they understood from the Minister's report to the Leader was that you dropped the demand for the enlargement of the Parliament".

When Aideed admitted that he did not understand what the Minister told the Libyan Leader, they decided to write a letter to the Leader explaining to him that there was no agreement between them and the TNG. When the delegations left Sirte, Aideed made statement that there was no agreement between his movement and the TNG. There was just an unsigned declaration which said that the two sides had met in Libya.

For the TNG, it was the first experience with faction leaders and for the Libyans it must have been a great disappointment as they tried to help the TNG to get the support of one of the important opposition groups. It would have opened the door for others to follow suit.

Another attempt to reconcile the TNG and the opposition groups was made by the President of Yemen, Ali Abdalla Salah, who organised two meetings in San'a. But both attempts failed.

Both Libya and Yemen failed because both the countries had no experience in dealing with such negotiations. But, according to a former adversary of the government, even the TNG must share part of the blame for the failure. "We were wondering why the TNG side just waited for the outside mediators to do the job, and did not even try to approach us directly during the break or in the evenings when we were just at ease," said a former opposition leader, adding "During the informal or casual meetings the people are more flexible than when they sit in a formal meeting in which outside mediators are involved. There is also a factor of individual interest." "We are in an alliance, but each one of us had his own interest to look after. The TNG was always tight and that kind of behaviour made it impossible to win the hearts and minds of its adversaries."

5

BACK TO THE RUINED CAPITAL

After paying homage at the Islam's Holiest shrines in Mecca, visiting the UN Headquarters in New York, and the ancient and cultural city of the Pharaohs, Cairo as well as Libya, the President returned home to Mogadishu, the most devastated city on earth, ruined by civil war. The capital of the Somali Republic has been reduced to a ghost city. Everything that belonged to the nation including hospitals, schools, hotels, museums, Cultural House, the National Sports Stadium complex and its hotel, the Parliament House and all government ministries and other buildings have been destroyed and their furniture looted. Wild trees have grown everywhere. The Monument of the Unknown Soldiers was pulled down and the statues of the heroes Sayid Mohamed Abdulla Hassan nicknamed "Mad Mullah" by the British and Ahmed Gurey, Dhagax Tuur, and Hawo Tako, were all pulled down and taken out of the country and sold as metal scrap in foreign market.

Where is the former government building (Ufficio Governo)? Where is the National Museum (Museo della Garesa)? Where is the Ex-Parliament building and where is the new Parliament building. Where are the National Bank and all other commercial banks which existed in the capital? They have all been devastated, disfigured or have simply disappeared. Doors, windows and even the corrugated roofs

and wooden ceilings have been removed. No one can justify the madness of the faction leaders who ordered their supporters to destroy whatever came in their way.

In short, nothing pleasant could be seen in the city, which at one time, was referred to as the Pearl of the Indian Ocean. During the conference in Arta, Djibouti, the delegates agreed to make Baidoa, the seat of the Transitional National Government, until Mogadishu becomes safer. But President Abdikassim thought it would boost the image of the government if he could make Mogadishu the headquarters of the TNG. The Presidential entourage arrived in the city on 14 October 2000, instead of going to Baidoa, as decided earlier by the Djibouti Conference.

Reporting from Baidoa, on 3 October 2000, IRIN said that "optimism in Baidoa for the newly elected Somali government is turning into disappointment because the interim President, Abdiqasim Salad Hasan, is planning to bring the new parliament to Mogadishu instead of making Baidoa as a temporary capital".

Baidoa was under the control of one movement, the RRA (Rahanweyn Resistance Army) and it was enthusiastic about having the Transitional capital in their town. It was not like Mogadishu, where many different factions had their enclaves. The problem with Baidoa is that it is too close to the border, just a stone's throw from the Ethiopia occupied Somali territory. Ethiopia can attack directly with its forces using their tanks and heavy guns. Although it could still destabilise the government by proxy using the faction leaders allied to it, Ethiopia will not dare to attack directly if Mogadishu is the Somali capital. Knowing the attitude of Ethiopia towards the new government, it would have been too risky to have the seat of the government close to their doorstep. Neither the new Government nor the RRA has the capability to counter the Ethiopian interference.

Soon after the return of the President, the RRA Chief who was a member of the President's delegation took his passport and boarded a plane to Addis Ababa, joining

Ethiopia in opposition against the new Somali government. Later on the RRA itself split into two camps; a camp with Ethiopia and the other in favour of the Somali Government.

At that time it would have been difficult anyway to land at Baidoa, when the main leader of the area gave up his position in the new government and for whatever reason went to Ethiopia. Some close friends of his later said that he did so due to misunderstanding between him and the new President. The question is what would have been the situation had such a thing happened after the settlement of the new government in Baidoa? What could be the fate of the new government when the people who were supposed to defend it turned against it and joined hands with its arch enemy?

So the President landed at *Balledogle* airport, 105 km northwest of Mogadishu. It is far from the capital, but there was no other choice. The international airport of Mogadishu was closed since the departure of the United Nations forces from the country in 1995. They had made it useless, and since then it had become children's playground. There were three other airstrips, but they were owned or the areas under which they fell were controlled by faction leaders who were refusing to recognise the new government and threatening to block the entry into the city of the President and the parliamentarians involved in the Arta Peace Process.

The people gave the President a hero's welcome but they had no power to persuade the faction leaders not to oppose the new government. The Somali people wanted a government but were not organised to defend it. Those who could organise the people were abroad enjoying freedom and democracy in other parts of the world.

To be in Mogadishu was important for the President even if he was not allowed to reside in the Presidency (*Madaxtooyada*), by faction leader Hussein Mohamed Farah Aideed, whose forces were occupying it since the collapse of the previous regime. For the President to stay in the Presidency would have been symbolic, but the fact that he along with the

parliamentarians and other government members were in the capital was already a challenge to those who were threatening to block their entry. The status of all other official buildings was, more or less, similar. They were either in an area where the government had no access or were occupied by internally displaced people. The President stayed at Hotel Ramadan.

An illiterate Somali would rightly or wrongly blindly support member of his or her clan. But this phenomenon is unfortunately valid also for some of the literate persons. They latter initially think like a patriot, but with little pressure from the clan, they can easily be persuaded to forget the national identity in favour of his/her clan affiliation. Even in foreign countries, the Somalis look for the places, bars and restaurants, where his or her own clansmen gather. After the civil war in the country, the Somalis have become more conscious of their clan identity. They feel insecure among the people of other clans. Today, Somalis of different clans are afraid even to talk to each other openly or freely on matters relating to their own country. Though it is a sad commentary, we have failed to evolve and consolidate our common national identity and fallen back to the by-gone era when there were no nation-states.

The task before the government was immense. The first priority was the security of the city and that was not an easy task. There were some known leaders of factions/groups and a number of unknown groups and freelance militias which required to be controlled or neutralised. The factions were armed to the teeth and already settled in different quarters of the city with their militias. They were well-off and behaved as if they were running the administration. They collected taxes at gun point from the shopkeepers and public transports and their militias used roadblocks to collect money from drivers of any four wheeler that passed through areas under their control. Some groups controlled natural harbours and airstrips. They all shared one common objective: to prevent the stabilisation of the new government.

There are freelance militias who take order from no one.

They rob, rape, kill, kidnap and indulge in criminal activities. They spare none, whether a child, woman or an elderly person or even a medical doctor whose services they need so urgently. Constantly surrounded by bodyguards, the faction leaders are afraid even of their own guards whether they are at home or outside in the field they feel insecure. They are in constant fear. When they drive from place to place, their escort includes anti-aircraft guns mounted on Lorries and on pick-up cars with nearly fifty die-hard youngsters, continuously chewing Khat. These are the elite force of the Chief. To keep them under control the faction leaders are forced to supply to each and every one of the bodyguards a bunch of Khat every day otherwise they run the risk of rebellion by their own bodyguards.

Some of the faction leaders holding estate are running them as profitable projects. They have good income out of which they pay salaries to their private army, but those who do not hold domain, their income is generated from road-blocks or kidnappings for ransom.

Although the Government does not control the whole city of Mogadishu, it was politically important for the new President to return to the country before embarking on the journey to foreign countries to attend international meetings. Otherwise if the trip would have started from Djibouti, it would have looked like a government in exile, operating from outside the country. The brief journey to the capital gave a moral blow to the factions that were giving the impression that they were capable of preventing the entry of the new President into the capital.

After successful participation in the two very important Summits—The Millennium 2000 and the United Nations General Assembly—the President and the Transitional National Government had a good beginning.

The opposition groups that were holding the city at gun point were not sure of their next action. The government which they threatened to block from entering the capital had not only landed but drove a distance of 105 kilometres and

with people lined up all the way from Balledogleh airport to Mogadishu city to welcome the newly elected President. At that time even the militias of the opposition factions, who were also among the crowd waving green leaves probably wished they were the army of the new government. When the entourage of the new President was turning left on the cross-road on the way leading to the *Digfer* Hospital, it was saluted by the militias of warlord Osman Hassan Ato. In fact they stood on their Lorries carrying the anti-aircraft guns just on the other side of the road. From there the entourage took the right turn just before *Digfer* Hospital, towards the Rally ground (*Tribuna*), then right to the house which was made the Presidential Palace (*Madaxtooyada*). It was not clear if their bosses had brought them there to intimidate the new President and the hundreds of members of the new Transitional National Assembly who came with him to the capital. Even on top of the windowless houses on the way, there were the opposition armed militias.

The common Somali people accepted the government from the moment the President arrived in the capital. The militias and those who were not linked with any strong faction were afraid to be caught by the government. So they were also ready, if they were called. Some people later said that had President Abdikassim shown his authority right from day one he would have enjoyed the support of the people. The people were there but lacked someone to make use of them. For them a government was something big and superior to others, so it should have acted like one. Some say the President should have gone down to the people or even erected a tent at Mogadishu harbour or the airport field and put before the public his action plan for the restoration of peace and stability. As soon as the news of the arrival of the government was heard in the capital, even those who had indulged in looting felt apprehensive. They believed that sooner or later the government was going to search their houses and confiscate their hidden booty.

At the time of the President's arrival in Mogadishu, some

of the faction leaders were in San'a, Yemen at the invitation of the President of Yemen, Ali Abdalla Salah who was working for reconciliation between the government and the opposition. The reception evoked memories of the good old days. Green leaves and applause by thousands of well wishers including the militias of the opposition, lined-up all along the roads. Some faction leaders who were threatening to boycott the arrival, had given orders to their subordinates to take action against the government. And yet no single bullet was fired, even in the air, let alone the entourage of the President being disturbed. The lack of reaction on the part of the supporters of faction leaders shows that their influence was waning or was being rapidly neutralised. Some of the faction leaders sensed that sympathy and support of the masses towards the new government was growing.

One of them, Haji Mussa Suudi Yalahow, commented over the radio saying: "*Miney (DKMG) bac ku sitaan, waa bujiheynaa, miney bir noqotana, waa raacaynaa*" (If they are carrying (the TNG) in a plastic-bag we will blow it; and if it becomes iron, we will follow it).

This was the reality. The government should have shown strength right from the beginning. The show of force or even a bluff was needed to subdue the opposition who, like ostriches, kept their heads buried in the sand, at that stage they were morally down and their supporters' allegiance was tilting towards the government. So what was needed was a final blow to knock them out, a K.O., as it is said in the boxing game. Because the opposition were already wondering about the hidden force and the moral courage that made the government venture to land in Mogadishu despite the threats by the faction leaders. It is true the Government did not get any material support from those who were morally supporting it. But the word "Government" itself had already attracted the sympathy of the masses.

During the period of absence of any government, the faction leaders, the militias and the *moriyans* (the freelance killers, kidnappers, and those who raped old and children

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During the period of absence of any government, the faction leaders, the militias and the *moriyans* (the freelance killers, kidnappers, and those who raped old and children

and looters) and some groups of the business community made the lives of the masses miserable or created a situation which forced the people to leave the country. The masses had no choice but to stay and obey the dictates of the faction leaders.

There were two categories of people who stayed behind. One group was more vulnerable than the other. The most vulnerable people were those who were not armed, mainly the *Banadiris*. They were the easy targets of the armed gangs. They lived in very precarious conditions and were under constant threat. Their houses were occupied by gunmen by force. The other category comprised of people who belonged to the same clan as the faction leaders of the area. If these groups were attacked by other groups, they had the power or the possibilities to counter attack. But the unarmed *Banadiris* could only curse those who harmed them and pray to the Almighty that He shall take revenge for them, as they had no power to fight back. They kept praying for peace and stability.

During the first few months, when the staff of the Presidency contacted others for business by phone and would say: "This is the Presidency speaking", some genuinely and others sarcastically exclaimed: "Which Presidency?" (Madaxtooyadee?). Both were right because in Mogadishu, there was also Aideed who claimed to be President of the Republic and, in addition, occupied the official headquarters of the President. Some would ask whether it was the Presidency of Abdikassim or Aideed? Slowly but surely, the people, friends or foes started to accept that the Presidency was that of Abdikassim Salad Hassan.

The problem was not only with the symbolic House, "Villa Somalia", which could have enhanced the image of the President; but all important places like the airport and the harbour were not under the government control. The international community, including regional organisations, recognised the new government politically, which was important for the TNG's legitimacy. But to strengthen its

legitimacy the government needed, besides the political recognition, material support from the international community for disarming the factions and their militias and support for the liberation of the economically vital places like the Mogadishu sea-port and the airport from the hands of the factions. The opening of the seaport and airport, coupled with the disarming of the factions and securing the safety of the capital, would have given the government much needed credibility in the eyes of the people, as well as of the international community. And this could not be achieved because the international community ignored the government's appeal for help. The government alone could not succeed in doing these things as it did not possess the necessary power to counter the factions and their militias and to disarm the *moriyans*.

As the Somali proverb says: "*Meel hoo u baahan, Hadal wax kama taro.*" (Where practical help is required, talk would not help). If the international community was keen to help the Somalis to get rid of those who were oppressing the people for over ten years, it should have simply kept them out of the country and incommunicado.

But the international community, after having left the Somalis to their fate and in the hands of the unscrupulous elements, for reasons best known to them, followed a policy of wait and see and let the newly established government to sail alone in a troubled sea. In many other countries faced with a similar situation, the international community extended a helping hand. For instance in Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast and Liberia the international community intervened both with massive financial help as well as with military support.

The United Nations withdrew from Somalia in 1995 when 18 US Marines were killed after their Black Hawk Helicopter was shot down by local militias. Since then the United States has taken the incident as an attack on itself. The people who lost their lives were not only 18 Americans, but there were thousands of Somalis who were killed or maimed by the US

Marines and many more were mal-treated by other UN forces. There were Pakistanis and Indians as well others who were in the same peacekeeping mission who lost their lives. It was not as smooth as it should have been, although the people of Somalia hoped the UN mission would bring peace and stability and were not at all against the United States or the United Nations. The United Nations does a lot to help the world but sometimes its work is full of risk. The nature of the work of the peacekeepers involves dealing with different people. Some who believe their interests are being threatened while others see them as defenders of their interests. Mistakes were made not only by the local people, but also by some of the peacekeepers who went beyond their terms of reference.

The withdrawal of the Peacekeepers from Somalia has left a mark on the United Nations Peacekeeping Operation and since then it has become the subject of discussion and a negative example whenever the question of sending Peacekeeping Forces to Africa is taken up. It is high time the United States, which is believed to be behind the UN vendetta against the Somali Nation, lifted the sanctions imposed on the Somali people who have paid a high price for an act committed by individuals who opposed the UN operation.

The United Nations recognises the Transitional National Government, but deals more with those who are holding the country at gun point, the opposite of what is done in a similar situation in other countries. In fact, when the UN Resident Representative and Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia, in Nairobi, Kenya, Maxwell Gaylord wanted to visit Mogadishu, the American working as Security officer of the UN, first approached the faction leaders and arranged "courtesy calls" on them before approaching the Government. Even during his visit to Mogadishu, once in a blue moon, Gaylord hardly talked on any substantial issues with the TNG leaders including the President. His visit was nothing more than an exercise to justify the expenses from the UN budget allocated to Somalia.

My sources may or may not be very reliable but I only wish that one day the Secretary General of the United Nations, whose name is involved in all such activities, would send an auditor to find out how and where the development and humanitarian funds were spent. Some one should check if the UNDP-Nairobi in charge of Somalia had spent the funds on the right projects. What we know is that the UNDP organised seminars and sent experts to areas without accountability. At one time, the Security officer who used to okay the visits of UN officials to Somalia, especially to Mogadishu probably had a problem with his "friends" there. Therefore he advised UN and other officials from international organisations not to proceed to Mogadishu. In an internal memo, allegedly written and circulated by him to various concerned offices in Nairobi, he said that Mogadishu was like "a sea full of sharks." But the question is how could he come earlier and also sometimes later, with delegations and "swim" in the same sea which had the "sharks"? The closest answer would be that the "sharks" were either caught, which was not the case here, or fed with baits without hook, which made them friendly to him. However, during his last visit to Mogadishu, the Security officer made critical comments on those faction leaders with whom he used to enjoy intimate friendship.

While I was working on this book, I came across a statement issued by the UNDP Somalia that, "The Zayed Foundation for Charitable and Humanitarian Activities, based in the United Arab Emirates and UNDP Somalia signed today (26 May 2004) in Abu Dhabi to provide USD 2 million to the Programme for Water Supply in Somalia."

According to the statement the Programme will be executed by UNDP Somalia's Reintegration of Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons Programme. The Zayed Foundation which provides the money would have nothing to do with the way it would be spent or whether the Water will really be supplied to the needy people or not. This is a blank check to the UNDP and not a donation to the Somalis.

The UNDP Somalia has already been exploiting the difficult situation in the country. To be provided with such an amount of money is like winning a big lottery. The Zayed Foundation must really be naïve to trust UNDP with USD 2 million. Even if the UNDP were given bottled water for distribution to the Somalis, who are dying of thirst, one cannot be sure if that life-saving liquid would reach the people.

Somalia is the kind of place where UNDP and other international expatriate workers make fortunes. It is classified as hardship post. A Book to be published by three field workers "Emergency Sex & Other Desperate Measures" speaks of "first hand accounts by three UN staffers who worked in hotspots like Cambodia, Somalia and Rwanda".

The CNN's Deborah Feyerickis in her comment on the Book states: , "Among the strongest allegations in the book is the one that says some U.N. officials demanded local workers hand over 15 percent of their salaries."

The UNDP Somalia is overwhelmed by the fact that "the agreement has been signed less than five months after making initial contact with the Zayed Foundation, and demonstrates that UNDP is a credible and effective partner." Here too, it sounds like the UNDP Somalia scored a goal.

If the Zayed Foundation really means to help Somalia or the Somalis, it should send its own staff or hire trustworthy people in the country. The Somali people are in dire need of help and if the brothers in the United Arab Emirates wish to help them, their help should not pass through those who are thirstier than they are. The UNDP Somalia is like a waterfall which is thirsty.

The policy of the UNDP Somalia in Nairobi was very much in line with the policy of the factions. Both worked for the continuation of the chaotic situation so that there should be no authority that would check their activities or coordinate with it. The United Nations has accepted the Transitional National Government right from the beginning and welcomed the Somali President at the Millennium 2000 and the General

Assembly and since then there has been no contrary decision.

If the arbitrary decision of the UNDP not to interact with the government of Somalia was because it did not control the whole country, it is contrary to the policy of the United Nations and the Secretary General's as well. For instance, the UN recognised the Government of Burhanuddin Rabbani of Afghanistan, which was a Government in Exile and the whole country except the Panjsheer Valley, was controlled by the Taliban government. Earlier in Cambodia, Prince Norodom Sihanouk's government was recognised as the legitimate government of Cambodia, while he and his government were in exile in Beijing.

The TNG, whose existence the UNDP in Nairobi is trying to deny is in the capital, whether it controls half or a quarter of it. There are opposition factions in the same city, but the government is not in exile. We have similar cases of Afghanistan, Ivory Coast and in Liberia, where the governments have been established in the same way like Somalia through mediation and peace process and still have warring factions active in certain areas of their countries. But there, unlike Somalia, the United Nations fully supports the governments that are established in those countries.

There must be some reason as to why the United Nations or the US treat the Somali situation differently from the other countries with similar crisis. Although it is well known the US Administration believes that an American life has more value than those of other nationals, the 18 US Marines killed in Mogadishu could not be the main reason for which the US Administration decided to punish the Somali people. In the Vietnam War, America did not withdraw its troops even after it lost tens of thousands of GIs. In collaboration with its allies, the US helped set up a government in Afghanistan; a government which is now defended with the lives of American and other nationalities. The US is claiming to bring "democracy" and "Liberty" in Iraq. It waged war unilaterally and tried to bulldoze the UN into supporting its unilateral

invasion. To Somalia, George Bush, Sr. sent a US Task Force in the beginning with necessary UN Resolutions. Soon it was joined by the United Nations Forces composed of nearly thirty countries.

On the eve of the landing of the thousands of marines on Mogadishu Beach, George W. Bush, Sr. declared that his Administration has formulated a program called "Operation Restore Hope". Among other things he said:

"The people of Somalia, especially the children of Somalia, need our help. We are able to ease their suffering. We must help them live. We must give them hope. America must act."

The Operation Restore Hope, started with US Unified Task Force on 9 December 1992, which was later transformed into UNOSOM comprising participants from all the continents and all religions. Many countries joined the operation because it was America that said it was a right move and the rest of the world followed. In today's world it is America that matters and not the UN. If that was not the case, when the United States decided to abandon the Somali people and left them at the mercy of the unscrupulous faction leaders and *Moriyans*, the rest of the international community would have continued with the job. Thus most of the countries were just following the USA. Perhaps, they do not have their own will or conscience to intervene in Somalia on humanitarian grounds.

The former Secretary General of the United Nations, Dr. Boutros Boutros Ghali, reacted strongly to the arbitrary behaviour of the US Administration and said: "The United States could not invent its own rules for serving in the United Nations peacekeeping force."

According to a report in the *New York Times* on 16 October, 1993 Dr Ghali told the United States: "You have already confused the military situation, and now you want to confuse the political situation too."

He refused to be used as a stooge. He realised that the Secretary General of the United Nations would have to

sacrifice his own job if he did not obey the big powers, especially the United States, which usually uses the UN as a means to fulfil its foreign policy objectives. He said:

"To put it bluntly, I have no power, no independence. You are free to send the troops or not to send the troops. You are free to pay the money or not to pay the money. So unless I obtain your goodwill, I will not be able to do your work."

He wanted to make the UN free from the influence of the United States and to do so he had to face the American ire. His quarrel with the US Administration cost him the customary re-election as the Secretary General of the organisation. Dr. Ghali stood up against the US administration. He wanted the UN to be the real supreme organisation in the world and not a subordinate tool of a super power or a group of powers. He wanted to show that the Secretary General was not just a figure head but someone who should defend and uphold the supremacy and the legitimacy of the organisation of the family of nations.

His successor, Kofi Annan, was elected to continue the term of the Secretary General which was due to Africa. However, his election did not lead to an end of the US boycott against the Somali people for about eight years, despite their sufferings at the hands of the faction leaders. The UN Staff, including the Resident Representative to Somalia who reside in Kenya have been collecting handsome salaries and all kinds of allowances without being in the place for which they are paid. Once in a blue moon, the Chief or his representative visits a remote village, or organises a one day seminar, to report to the Secretary General in New York, who, in turn, presents the same report in his name to the Security Council.

Since the withdrawal of the UN Peacekeeping forces from Somalia in 1995, the Security Council has by and large ignored the situation in Somalia, except issuing from time to time resolution 733 (1992) of 23 January 1992 which established an embargo on delivery of weapons and military

equipment to Somalia. The same resolution is repeated each time the Security Council takes up the Somali situation without proposing any practical steps about its violations. It is a permanent subject on the agenda of the UN Security Council.

6

THE ROADBLOCKS

After being in coma for over a decade, Somalia re-emerged following the establishment of a new Transitional National Government at Arta, Djibouti, in the year 2000. The rebirth of the government in Somalia was hailed by all the members of the United Nations. Even the United States at least publicly did not raise any objection against the participation of the newly elected President in the Millennium 2000 and the General Assembly.

Although it did not give its full support, the State Department spokesman, Richard Boucher, said at his daily briefing on 1 September 2000, "we're encouraged by results of the Peace Conference that was held in Djibouti ... The establishment of a transitional government for Somalia, including the election of the President, are positive developments."

"We think Somalia deserves peace and that everybody should cooperate in bringing peace to the country," he said.

The reason for the refusal of the United State to accept the new government in Somalia could not just be due to the death of the 18 Marines in Mogadishu on 4 October 1993. In fact, it is not even clear why only 18 are mentioned, while there were many more Marines or GIs were killed during the operation. The records reveal that the first Marine was killed in action on 12 January 1992 while on patrol in Mogadishu. A

Special Force member died on 3 March 1992 in a landmine blast. On 8 August 1993 four US GIs were killed in action when a landmine blew up their HUMVEE in the suburb of Medina. On 26 September 1993 Three GIs were killed when a Blackhawk helicopter was shot down by an RPG.

The battle during which the 18 Marines were killed took place on 3-4 October 1993 at Bakhara Market. This is how it was recorded:

"Oct 03-04—Battle at Bakhara Market. Bravo Company, 3rd Ranger Battalion, 75th Regiment, Delta Force members, pilots of the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment, Companies A and C 2nd Bn. 14th Infantry 10th Mountain Division, and Company C, 41st Engineer Battalion, battle 1000 Somalis in Mogadishu. 18 US KIA, 78 WIA. Somali loss is estimated at 300 killed and 600 wounded."

The Blackhawk downed and the death of the 18 Marines were portrayed by the US media as the most disastrous and humiliating event in the history of the United States and dramatised it by a Film called the "Blackhawk Down."

As compared to the loss of the American lives, the Somalis killed by the Marines during the Operation Restore Hope were hundreds of times more.

In an Article "Compassionate Killing" by Kevin Kelley (source: www.antiwar.com 3 January 2002):

"Every instance of American military intervention since the collapse of the Soviet Union has been utterly self-interested, in Chomsky's view. Thus, the 1992 Marine landing in Somalia, allegedly to rescue thousands from starvation, was actually an elaborate effort to showcase US military capabilities. Operation Restore Hope may also have taken as many Somali lives (between 7,000 and 10,000, the CIA estimated) as it saved (10,000 to 25,000, according to the US Refugee Policy Group)."

Former President Bill Clinton's view on what happened in Somalia has been summarised in the following interview with

the *New York Times* on December 28, 2000:

**Interview of the President
by
The New York Times, Nov. 30
Dec. 28, 2000 | 3:44 p.m.**

To: National Desk

Contact: White House Press Office, 202-456-2580

WASHINGTON, Dec. 28 /U.S. Newswire/—The following transcript was released today by the White House (4/6):

Q Talking about foreign policy for a second, I wonder if I could talk about Somalia and ask you—given your experience in **Somalia** when **Colin Powell** was still the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs in 1993, do you think that made you overly hesitant to go into Rwanda and Bosnia? And, given your successful intervention in Kosovo last year, what advice would you give to the new administration in similar situations?

THE PRESIDENT: First of all, I know you all have a lot of questions and I'm trying not to give long answers, so I'll try to—

Q You saved us our speech there. (Laughter.)

Q I'm happy for a long answer. (Laughter.)

THE PRESIDENT: But the short answer to your question on Somalia and Rwanda and Bosnia is that I do not believe what happened in Somalia affected Bosnia, and really not Rwanda very much, and let me explain why.

What happened in Somalia was as follows: General Powell came to me one day, very near the end of his term, and said, **Aidid's** crowd killed these Pakistani peacekeepers who were there with the Americans. We are the only people in the mission there that have the capacity to arrest Aidid. They want us to approve the Americans who are otherwise there as peacekeepers having some people devoted to try to—his apprehension and arrest. I said, what are the chances of success? He said, I think we've got a 50-50 chance to get

him, probably not more than a one in four chance to get him alive, something like that.

But, he said, I think you ought to do it. So I said, okay. I asked him if he thought I ought to do it, and he said yes, I do, on the balance I think you should, because you can't just walk away from the fact that these Pakistanis were murdered.

What happened was, that was the extent to which anybody ever asked me about any of this, that in terms of the operation—we learned a lot from that Somalian thing in terms of what kind of operational control we should have in United Nations missions. I don't think we learned that we should never be involved in U.N. missions and work with other people and all that; I don't believe that. But from my point of view, I thought it was sort of a *sui generis* thing. I didn't believe it meant that we could never go anywhere else.

The problem in Bosnia was trying to develop enough of a consensus with our European allies to get something done. And, lamentably, we were making progress and then—but the massacre of Srebrenica basically galvanized our NATO allies, and they were willing to support a more aggressive approach that we and the British had favored all along.

But I think the important thing for me in Bosnia was that the United States should not be acting unilaterally there, we should be going with our allies and we should be doing everything we can to move. I wish it hadn't taken two years to put together a consensus, but it's worked out pretty well now, given how messed up it was when we started.

In Rwanda, I think the real problem was that we didn't have a ready mechanism with which to deal with it, which is why after Rwanda, we started working on this Africa crisis response initiative and why we were working on training all these Africans to do —Sierra Leone—we were going to work with them and help them, and I also frankly think that it happened so fast.

As it turns out, in retrospect, maybe we and the British

and French could have—four or five others—gone in there with a relatively small number of troops and slowed it down. But if you think about it, all those hundreds of thousands of people who were killed in 100 days and hardly anybody had a gun, and I think that we were not really properly organized to deal with it and respond to it.

I hope and believe now that we are and, were such a thing to happen again, we would be able to play our proper role. I also think the Africans, you've got to give them a lot of credit. They're doing a lot better, too. They wanted to be part of this training for Sierra Leone. Mandela got all those people together to try to head off another Burundi, and tribal slaughter, and it might work yet. I went over there to help him, as you know, in Arusha.

So I don't think that Somalia, if you think I made a mistake in either Rwanda or Bosnia, I don't think that Somalia is the reason we did it. Because I always thought that Somali thing was just—had much more to do with the fact that we hadn't worked through the command and control and policy-making issues when we were in a U.N. mission that had one mission and then all of a sudden had a very different one when we had to go try to arrest somebody.

I think whatever the problems in Somalia are, they need to be viewed on their own bottom, and I don't think at least for me they weren't some demonic nightmare that kept me out of these other places."

The following is former President Bush's reaction to Clinton's statement:

August 6, 2002

Clinton's Black Hawk History

"We wish Bill Clinton a quiet retirement, if only he'd return the favor. But when the former President distorts history for the sake of political advantage, someone has to clean up afterward.

Responding to Bush Administration suggestions that some of today's corporate scandals first got out of hand

under his watch, Mr. Clinton recently shot back: "These people ran on responsibility, but as soon as you scratch them they go straight to blame. Now, you know, I didn't blame his [President Bush's] father for Somalia when we had that awful day memorialized in 'Black Hawk Down.' I didn't do that."

We can understand Mr. Clinton wanting to defend himself, but as usual he can't get his own facts straight. His introduction of Somalia here is one of those breathtakingly brazen attempts to dodge responsibility for which Mr. Clinton is justly famous. Here's the real history:

President Bush the Elder sent U.S. forces into Somalia in December 1992 to aid the United Nations in relieving a massive famine. In May of 1993, four months into his term, President Clinton declared that mission accomplished and pulled out most of the U.S. forces. In a speech on the South Lawn to associate himself with the effort, he extolled the decision to intervene: "If all of you who served had not gone, it is absolutely certain that tens of thousands would have died by now." It was a "successful mission," he said, and "proved yet again that American leadership can help to mobilize international action ..."

But back in Somalia, with no U.S. deterrent, Somalia's faction leaders began fighting again. After a series of bloody attacks on U.N. peacekeepers, Mr. Clinton launched a new mission: In August 1993, he sent in a force of Rangers and Special Forces units to capture the brutal warlord Mohammad Farrah Aidid and restore order.

That force asked for heavy armor—in the form of Abrams tanks and Bradley armored vehicles—as well as the AC-130 gunship, but the Clinton Administration denied those requests. On October 3 on a mission to pick up Aidid, two Black Hawks were unexpectedly shot down; in the ensuing urban gun battle, 18 American soldiers were killed and another 73 injured.

Many military experts believe that if the U.S. forces had had armor, fewer would have died. Secretary of Defense Les

Aspin resigned two months after Somalia, having acknowledged that his decision on the armor had been an error. A 1994 Senate Armed Services Committee investigation reached the same conclusion. But perhaps the most poignant statement came from retired Lieutenant Colonel Larry Joyce, father of Sergeant Casey Joyce, a Ranger killed in Mogadishu: "Had there been armor ... I contend that my son would probably be alive today ..."

Mr. Clinton's responsibility in Somalia doesn't stop there. Despite the mistakes that October day, Aidid had been struck a blow. The U.S. military, with 18 dead, wanted nothing more than to finish what it had started. Mr. Clinton instead aborted the mission. The U.S. released the criminals it had captured that same day at such great cost, and the U.N., lacking U.S. support, was powerless to keep order. Somalia remains a lawless, impoverished nation. Worse, the terrorists of al Qaeda interpreted the U.S. retreat from Somalia as a sign of American weakness that may have convinced them we could be induced to retreat from the Middle East if they took their attacks to the U.S. homeland.

Those are the facts. The reason Mr. Clinton can't blame the events of "Black Hawk Down" on President Bush's father is because those events had nothing to do with him. They were Mr. Clinton's responsibility, and his alone."

In Vietnam, The United States lost 58,202 GIs but at the end of the war, it accepted and established relations with the government against whom it had bitterly fought a bloody war. Why not with Somalia? It is still unclear. It was the lawlessness that created the conflict and it has nothing to do with a government established to bring peace and stability in the country which the majority of the people longed for. The US Administration's attitude of not accepting a government for the country coincided with the attitude of the Ethiopian regime and the Somali faction leaders who considered the establishment of an administration as a threat to their interest. Logically, the European Union had to follow

in the footsteps of the US administration on foreign policy towards non western nations. Had the US said yes to the new Government in Somalia, there is no doubt, that the EU too would have accepted and supported the government in Somalia. However, despite the boycott of the United States and the European Union, the TNG successfully fulfilled its international duties by re-establishing its relations with the majority of the international community.

Even after the new government was re-admitted to the United Nations certain governments were still holding their acceptance on condition that it had to be accepted in the regional organisation, IGAD, which comprises countries in the Horn and East Africa of which Somalia was a founding member. To the utter dismay of Ethiopia, which was lobbying for the rejection of Somalia's re-admission in the organisation, claiming that the Process from which the TNG emerged was incomplete. The 2001 Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the IGAD member states held in Khartoum, the Sudan, welcomed the Somali Republic to its rightful position in the regional organisation.

A Panel of Experts was appointed by the Secretary General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan on 30 April 2003, to collect independent information on violations of the arms embargo and mandated by the Security Council to identify those who continued to violate the arms embargo and their active supporters.

In the Executive summary, the report of the Panel says:

"The Panel of Experts has found a clear pattern of violation of the Arms Embargo on Somalia. Weapons, equipment, training of militia and financial support to Somali factions have been given regularly by neighbouring states and others since the Security Council adopted resolution 733 (1992) on 23 January 1992."

And the first country mentioned in the report was Ethiopia. The report said:

"Ethiopia has played an overt role in Somalia. Not only has

Ethiopia been a major source of weapons to a number of Somali groups—at first privately (early 1990s) and then later mostly Government-sponsored—Ethiopia has also invaded and occupied parts of Somalia. Ostensibly, and perhaps legitimately, the first direct military involvement of Ethiopia in Somalia, in 1996 and 1997, was in response to al-Itihad al-Islam activities, including terrorist attacks, in Ethiopia. Ethiopia's incursions, however, crushed al-Itihad's military capacity and since then the threat of al-Itihad (and its tenuous links to al-Qaeda) have been used more as an excuse for Ethiopian involvement in Somali internal affairs, rather than for legitimate national security concerns."

"In March 2001, Ethiopia sponsored the creation of the Somalia Reconciliation and Restoration Council (SRRC) during meetings at Awasa, Ethiopia, in large part to undermine the TNG, which it believed to be hostile to Ethiopian interests. Since then, Ethiopia has supported members of the SRRC with training and limited supplies of arms and ammunition. Hussein Aideed, also a Chairman of the SRRC, has acknowledged that Ethiopia gives arms and ammunition to all the SRRC member militias." (Page 19).

Reporting Ethiopia's military activities in Somalia prior to the establishment of the Transitional National Government in Arta, Djibouti, in the year 2000, the Panel of Experts said:

"The Ethiopian presence in Somali grew even more in early June 1999, when a small brigade of Ethiopian troops, reportedly supported by tanks, several batteries of artillery and attack helicopters, in conjunction with more than a thousand RRA militia attacked Hussein Aideed's Somali National Alliance (SNA) and Oromo Liberation Forces (Ethiopia rebels) in Baidoa. The combined Ethiopian and RRA forces drove Hussein Aideed's troops out of Baidoa and effectively ended his control of much of southern Somalia.

"Most of these forces later withdrew from Somalia, but some Ethiopian forces remained and Ethiopia continued to engage militarily in Somali affairs. One of the latest

incidents occurred when Ethiopian military personnel seized two international aid officials, an officer working for Save the Children (UK) and an officer of FAO's Somalia Food Security Assessment Unit, together with their driver and two armed guards in the Somali village of Deefow, located 35km north of Beletweyne and 10 km from the Ethiopian Border. The agency personnel were on an official and routine monitoring mission to assess the food security situation in the Beletweyne district of which Deefow is part. They were released unharmed and without conditions on Friday 9 August 2002.

Quoting International observers in Nairobi, Kenya, 11 January 2002 and in London, UK, 18 September and 26 October 2002, the Report of the Panel of Experts of the United Nations indicates:

"Ethiopia's military presence in western Somalia is significant and Ethiopia continues to provide military assistance to various factions of the Somali Restoration and Reconciliation Council (SRRC). One international observer (*in Nairobi—Ed.*), who has visited Baidoa, Somalia, saw ammunition boxes with Amharic writing on it in July 2002. Other international observers (*in London—Ed.*) reported seeing and even meeting Ethiopian military officers."

The Report further added that:

"Ethiopia has several times conducted fairly large-scale operations in Somalia. The first large-scale attack reportedly occurred in August and December of 1996 when Ethiopian units attacked al-Itihad camps in the Gedo region in Somalia. According to Col. Bihi, Ethiopian forces returned on June 1997 and established permanent bases in Dolow, Luuq and Beledhawa districts of the Gedo region, Somalia until February 2001." (Page 18).

The nearly fifty page report clearly identified the suppliers and the receivers of the arms and ammunition flowing in Somalia. Ethiopia is the first country mentioned in the report

as the "major source of weapons to a number of Somali groups." (Page 4). According to the Report Ethiopia trained the militias belonging to the faction leaders, collectively as members of the SRRC and separately. Ethiopia began training RRA militia-members at their request in 1996. This training expanded, and in August-September of 2001 (*By this time the TNG already existed*) seven Ethiopian military officers trained some 3000 RRA militia-members for a two-week period at a camp in Manaas, Somalia.

Since the adoption of Resolution 733 (1992) on 23 January 1992, every subsequent resolution regarding Somalia issued by the Security Council routinely included a permanent paragraph which neither mentioned nor condemned any one, but only said:

The Security Council

"Acting under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations,

"*Reiterates* to all States their obligation to comply with the measures imposed by resolution 733 (1992), and urges each State to take the necessary steps to ensure full implementation and enforcement of the arms embargo."

Despite the clear indications of who are the violators of the Security Council Resolution, the UN Security Council in a press statement issued on 20 August 2003 by the Deputy permanent Representative of Syria, Fayssal Mekdad lamented that :

"Members of the Council reiterated their deep concern about the persistent flow of weapons and ammunitions to Somalia."

In all its subsequent resolutions since the adoption of Resolution 733 the Council constantly avoided to name the country or the countries responsible for the violations. Its own Panel of Experts has identified the violator of UN resolution 733, but for one reason or another, the Security Council would not condemn it. Strangely enough, even the Panel of Experts in its final "Observations and Recom-

mentations" did not name Ethiopia.

One wonders as to why the Security Council established the Panel of Experts to identify the violators of the resolution on arms embargo in Somalia, if it had already determined not to condemn them and take necessary measures. During the period it was deliberately violating the UN Resolution, Ethiopia was the country that was allegedly mandated by the OAU, IGAD, UN and Arab League to settle the internal conflict in Somalia.

On 8 September 2000, the European Union issued a statement saying among other things: "The European Union hopes that the election of Mr. Abdulkassim Salat Hassan as President of Somalia by the Transitional Assembly meeting in Arta will contribute to restoration of the State, to preservation of national unity and to the territorial integrity of the country, as longed for by the Somali people and desired by the international community. The Union wishes the elected President every success." It was not surprising to see the European Union issuing a statement similar to that of United States.

Both the statements, the American as well as the European, sounded positive but were negative in substance as they did not indicate a clear-cut support for the TNG. For the TNG a mere expression of good will was not enough as it needed a strong political support from the United States and the international community which would have encouraged other countries to come forward in its support.

The President of the Republic of Djibouti, Ismail Omar Guelleh, who did all he could to consolidate the foundation of the TNG. He mobilised the support from various quarters which he thought would enhance the position of the new government and simultaneously his government successfully frustrated the plots orchestrated by those who opposed the outcome of the Arta Peace Process at various international forums.

The birth of the new government for Somalia was not simply the re-establishment of a government, it was more

than that. It was the revival of the state of Somalia and restoration of its status in the family of nations, the symbol of sovereignty; the dignity and the respect. A country which was independent for thirty years lost its membership at the United Nations and found its flag removed from the poles at the UN headquarters as it had never existed. Since the collapse of the Military regime of Mohamed Siad Barre in 1991, Somalia was without a government, simply because the faction leaders failed to agree on the establishment of any kind of government.

They fought against the regime of Mohamed Siad Barre claiming that they would bring prosperity and better living for the masses. But they not only failed to do so, they pulled down the national flag and tore the nation into pieces. The success of the Arta Peace Process, which was the 13th of its kind, was due to the fact that the organisers decided to hold a conference of the Civil Society and kept the faction leaders out of it.

The first two—Djibouti one and Djibouti two—were organised by the Government of Djibouti; nine by Ethiopia and the twelfth by Egypt. All the past conferences were attended by the faction leaders who were fighting each other with the weapons and ammunition supplied to them from a single source: Ethiopia.

Ethiopia succeeded in aborting all the past conferences held before Arta Process because it did not want Somalia to have a government. Even the nine conferences it organised in Ethiopia were just an eyewash. The participants in all those conferences were the leaders of factions who were getting weapons and support from Addis Ababa. If Ethiopia were sincere in its efforts it could have easily dictated to them to form a government. But it had no such desire or plan. It used the factions as stooges to fulfil its own gameplan.

The Arta Peace Process succeeded because neither Ethiopia nor its allies—the faction leaders, were involved. But Addis Ababa embarked on a policy to place roadblocks in the way of the first Somali Government fulfilling its duties

towards its people and the country. It is still doing everything to tarnish the image of the new government.

From the very beginning the newly elected President Abdikassim Salad Hassan has been saying that the TNG is a government of reconciliation and has invited all those who did not attend the Arta Peace Conference to join the Process. He was fully aware that there was a lot to be done to achieve peace and stability in the country. The question of the breakaway "Republic of Somaliland" is there with the advocates of the partition of the territory showing no sign of changing their position.

The faction leaders have placed roadblocks in the capital, denying the government the access to important areas, particularly to take possession of the seaport and airport. The Government kept negotiating with the clan leaders in Mogadishu in order to bring on board the faction leaders, but to no avail.

A negative aspect of the Arta Peace Process has been the recognition of clan system. This is coming in the way of the regrouping of the former members of the National Army to raise afresh the National Army for the defence the nation.

During ten years of civil war, the mentality of the members of the dispersed Armed Forces has changed. They have become more loyal to clan and the phenomena have reached all over the country, touching each and every angle of the society. The new government has been striving to raise a defence force to meet the domestic challenges to its authority and to restore law and order in and around Mogadishu. But as yet, it has made no breakthrough in its efforts. The functionality of clan system has always been controversial. It is very difficult to organise a modern state on the basis of clan system. Sooner or later it must give way to national loyalty or the state will collapse. In all traditional societies clan/tribal loyalties are very strong. But for the sake of political stability modernising forces in the traditional societies try to form coalition of clans/tribes. But if such attempts fail it is very difficult to restore confidence of disparate clans in the new state. The new

government of Somalia based on clan system is confronted with this problem.

To begin with the members of the Transitional National Assembly (TNA) or the Ministers in the Government do not show solidarity and unity. As they are chosen on the basis of clans, their allegiance lies with their clans and feelings of nationalism are still very weak. When clan leaders meet with the President of the Republic they rarely pronounce the word "country" or what is necessary to be done for the reconstruction of the devastated motherland. They are yet to cultivate and acquire nationalist orientation.

The weapons used by the factions to block the government's march towards success came from Ethiopia and the money to maintain the factions and the militias came from the business community. Both Ethiopia and the business community use the faction leaders to prevent the government from opening the airport and seaport. Ethiopia knows if the airport and seaports are open it will be the end of the isolation of the Government. The business community knows that once the two facilities were in operation that would put an end to their illegal trade. For the faction leaders, the opening of the airport and seaport will bring about the closure of the illegally established airstrips and makeshift harbours as well as the end of extortion and the collection of illegal road taxes.

The Government has been trying to prevent the export of charcoal from the country which is causing incalculable damage to the environment. But as the people involved in the burning of the trees are heavyweight syndicates, who care only about material benefit and not the protection of the environment, the government has not yet succeeded in its efforts. Another important and vital problem, according to UN expert on Human Rights, Ghanim Alnajjar, is "the unlawful fishing, toxic-waste discarding and people-smuggling which are widespread in Somalia's waters."

Alnajjar said that foreign fishing vessels were unlawfully exploiting the fish in the country's coastline. "From the

information I have, the majority of these ships are European",* he said.

Since the collapse of the government in Somalia in 1991, there is no one who protects the Somali national resources, both in the interior and in the sea.

The faction leaders themselves have become the tools to serve the interests of others. In the game, they have no aim. They do not discuss the need of a government. That is not in their agenda. What they know is that a Government, any government, is their enemy and they have to fight it. If they had the interest of the country in mind the faction leaders could have done it earlier or could have established an alternative government. They call the TNG "Arta Government" or "Arta Faction".

The blood of the innocent will not go waste. Some of those who committed the crime against the Somali people have already been killed by the same means which they used to kill innocent people. Some others have been maimed and are now disabled for life; those who are still torturing or exploiting the people are already hostage to their own guards who will one day turn the guns against them. They are now sucking the blood of the innocent people but that is not going to last for ever. The day is not far when they too would face the God's wrath. Their own supporters would rebel against them.

The TNG has failed to act against any of these faction leaders who are holding parts of the capital and operating their own airports and sea ports while the government is helplessly watching. The elders come to the President and say good things but when they leave him act contrary to what they promise. They care more about what they can gain for their own benefit rather than reconstruction of this devastated country. What is missing is the national spirit and a commitment to promote common national interest. And as long as clan or personal interest remains uppermost in the minds of the so-called leaders, national interest will suffer.

* Arab News, 5 September 2003.

7

UNPRECEDENTED SUCCESS

Usually success in foreign policy depends on the success of domestic policy of a country. But in our case, the Transitional National Government has achieved an unprecedented success in international field. It was welcomed in almost all the important forums starting with the Millennium 2000 Summit and the United Nations General Assembly which took place less than two weeks after the election of the new President, Dr. Abdikassim Salad Hassan.

That was a positive beginning for the new government. Dr. Abdikassim Salad Hassan, arrived in New York on 5 September 2000 to attend the UN Millennium Summit, ending more than ten years of diplomatic isolation for the country.

He said: "I am so happy that we are back here after over 10 years of absence from the international scene," adding: "The message we bring is one of peace for Somalia, peace for the Horn of Africa and for Africa as a whole. Let bygones be bygones and let us start a new relationship between ourselves, with neighbours and the international community."

The Somali national flag once again flew at the United Nations signalling an end to the country's isolation.

The result of the Arta Process has been widely accepted by the international community. The Organisation of African Unity, the Organisation of Islamic Conference, the Inter-

governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the Organisation of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), the Organisation of Cen Sat (Sahel and Sahara) and all other international organisations welcomed it. The Somali Republic has participated in all the conferences of these organisations, both at the level of Summit meeting and that of Foreign Ministers' conferences.

However, the enemies of the Somali people are unable to hide their disapproval. They cannot see Somalia sitting, side by side, with other countries at international conferences. The only government which openly attempts to block Somalia's participation in international conferences is the Ethiopian government. It is yet to reconcile to the flag of Somalia flying at the conference venues and on the desk at the conference hall.

The same applies to certain persons, claiming to be Somalis, who hate to see the national flag appear on the television screens. In appearance, they look like Somalis, but their attitude and behaviour are similar to those of the enemies of the Somali people.

Ethiopia politically supported the SRRC, lobbying for their acceptance in Africa and elsewhere. In fact, during the 37th Summit of the Organisation of African Unity, held in Lusaka, Zambia, 2-12 July 2001, Ethiopia sponsored a group of so-called SRRC to travel to Lusaka in order to challenge the legitimacy of the Transitional National Government, which had taken the Somali seat in the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) after 11 years. There, the Ethiopian sponsored group failed miserably, as the OAU admitted the delegation led by President Abdikassim as the legitimate representative of the Somali people.

Ethiopia's intrigues failed to bear fruit and was frustrated when the OAU spokesman Desmond Orjiako said at a press conference on 9 July 2001 that "the interim government in Somalia has been widely recognised by the international community." This was a big blow to Ethiopia which had been actively working behind the scene and openly using the

Somali factions to undermine the legitimacy of the new Government.

It was an unprecedented victory for the newly established government over those who planned to cut its life short. This was the first OAU Summit that the TNG was attending since its establishment and could have received a grievous blow to its legitimacy if it was rejected by the credentials committee.

Somalia was a founding member of the Organisation of African Unity in 1963. It was represented at that time by the first President of the Republic, Aden Abdulle Osman. And again Somalia was among the countries that was represented at the Durban (South Africa) Summit for the launching of the African Union, 9 July 2002. At Durban Summit, Somalia was represented by Dr. Abdikassim Salad Hassan, President of the Somali Republic.

With all the obstacles at home created by faction leaders who opposed the emergence of the government and despite Ethiopia's interference in Somalia's internal affairs by supplying arms and ammunition to the anti-establishment elements in the country and to torpedo the Somali government internationally, the TNG has succeeded in holding aloft the symbol of the Somali nation.

At multilateral level, the Transitional National Government has been widely welcomed, but bilaterally a few influential international powers, such as the United States, and European Union, have yet to openly cooperate with it. Sooner they help it, the better for peace and stability in the region.

8

SOMALIA UNDER ATTACK

While it was already having problem with its giant neighbour, Ethiopia, Somalia, one of the tiniest and most powerless countries, came under attack from the mightiest and the only Super Power, the United States after September 11, 2001 attack on New York's twin towers and the Pentagon. The President of the United States expressed his determination to extend what he called "war against terrorism" to include countries such as Iraq, Somalia and Yemen.

In fact, the United States has not been able to forget the loss of 18 Marines who were killed in Mogadishu in 1993. And after September 11, 2001 Somalia was placed on Washington's list of countries that harbour terrorists.

The regime of Meles Zenawi in Addis Ababa, which has been for a long time engaged in the destabilisation of the country and in spreading malicious propaganda against the Transitional National Government, thought that the American statement would give them a chance to invade Somalia on the pretext of fighting terrorism. It immediately offered its services to the US and declared itself ready to spearhead any attack on Somalia. For Ethiopia, this was what it was already doing openly but unofficially. Now, the attack on Somalia would be legitimate and justified on the basis of the so-called war against terrorism.

Ethiopia welcomed America's decision to widen the "war

on terrorism" which also included Somalia. It provided Ethiopia a pretext to implement its own agenda to topple the Transitional National Government. In fact, the people of Somalia have themselves been terrorised by Ethiopia and the groups it supported with weapons and ammunition for thirteen years.

Commenting about the attitude of Mele Zenawi, Prime Minister of Ethiopia vis-à-vis the new Somali Government "*Bildhaan*", an International Journal of Somali Studies, Volume 3, 2003, (Editors: Ahmed I. Samatar and Abdi Ismail Samatar) said:

"The first signal of trouble was the transparently unhappy face of the Ethiopian Prime Minister, Meles Zenawi, among the dignitaries during the inaugural ceremony to congratulate Abdiqasim Salad. Within six months, Ethiopian strategy became clear. It at once started to stress the incompleteness of the peace process since the faction leaders were absent and declared that Islamists of the *Al-Itihad* orientation dominated the interim government."

Somalia had no government since the collapse of the military regime in 1991 until the establishment of the Transitional National Government at Arta, Djibouti in August 2000. During the long period of absence of government the country fell into the hands of the faction leaders who killed people indiscriminately and applied the law of the jungle. As they were united in faith, the religious groups started introducing the Islamic Shari'a in the South of the Country and applied it against criminals who committed homicide and robbery as well. They had power to influence but were not strong enough to execute the faction leaders for the crimes they were committing against the nation. As the system of education was destroyed by the civil war and there was no government to take care of thousands of children who were growing on the streets of the capital, and the faction leaders would not care about the education or social services, the religious groups became the only organised body that cared

to appeal for external help in the field of education. The response from Islamic governments or organisations from Islamic countries was positive.

At one time, the image and power of the Islamic groups in Somalia were exaggerated to the extent that they were even compared with the Taliban in Afghanistan. If that were the case, they would not have hesitated to destroy the faction leaders or taken over the power from the Government. When the Transitional National Government came to power in the country, the religious groups were absorbed in the judicial system of the country.

Only one year after its existence, the Transitional National Government, which was already having problems with the faction leaders and its neighbour, Ethiopia, came under attack from the most powerful nation on earth, the United States of America. It accused it of harbouring terrorist groups. The US statement was echoed by the faction leaders who were being maintained by the regime in Addis Ababa and some of those who were in Mogadishu. They claimed that there were terrorists in Mogadishu and others said that there were terrorists in a place in the North East of Somalia named Shimbirale. Pictures of people selling bread in the Bakaraha market in Mogadishu and a market in the North East, claiming that they were terrorists in Somalia were sent to Addis Ababa for the Americans to verify. They were all proven to be lies. Just because they were against the President of the TNG, Abdikassim Salad Hassan, certain opposition groups were calling for the bombardment of Somalia.

An article entitled "US mounts spy mission in Somalia" Adrian Blomfield and Michael Smith in *Telegraph* (Filed: 11/12/2001) wrote that "American officers have secretly entered Somalia in the first indication of President Bush's determination to extend the war against terrorism."

"Five military personnel reached the heart of the country and met a rebel movement in Baidoa, 150 miles west of the capital Mogadishu, in search for terrorist camps", they said,

adding: "The Americans in Somalia held talks with the leaders of the Rahanwein Resistance Army (RRA).

The writers quote Paul Wolfowitz, the American deputy defence secretary as saying: "Washington was spreading its net to Somalia and other countries where the al-Qa'eda network could offer Osama bin Laden an opportunity to hide from justice."

In the meantime, in Mogadishu, we could see surveillance aircrafts flying over the capital both in the day time and at night. Suddenly, Somalia became very popular for the international press and most of the important media organisations started pouring into Mogadishu. Some went as far as Shimbirale or Ras Kyamboni in the South to look for camps where al-Qa'eda people were supposedly hiding.

After so much of talks and continuous threats from America and its allies in the area, coupled with the US navy ships illegally sailing in the Somali territorial waters, Indian Ocean and the Red Sea, and surveillance planes abusing the air-space of Somalia, the Somali people, especially the inhabitants of the capital, wondered if there was any international legal authority which protects the rights of the weaker and powerless nations being abused or bullied by the stronger and powerful nations.

Jean-Louis Peninou of *Le Monde Diplomatique* in an article dated December 2001 writes:

"The Ethiopia government immediately offered to mount its own campaign against al-Ittihaad. There could be no better illustration of the ambiguity of the international war against terrorism. The benefits for the Ethiopian government are clear. A war against the Somalis would be popular and not entail any great military risks. It would be a domestic policy gift to a government with a better image abroad than at home. It would also reinforce Ethiopia's policy over the last years of keeping Somalia broken up into four or five clan-based micro-states."

"If the US decides to intervene in this way through

government in the region, it will be surprised to find itself in the same camp as Hussein Muhammad Aidid, its sworn enemy in 1993. This leading Somali warlord, previously allied with al-Ittihaad, now sides with the Ethiopians. Like them he is opposed to the transitional government set up after Arta conference, backed by the UN international agencies, even if the UN itself does not officially recognise it," the article said.

Nothing happened. In fact, the report was positive and probably helped to convince the Bush Administration that there was neither al-Qa'eda nor any other terrorist organisations in Somalia. Although it was in a mess and the TNG had no control over most of the country, it could not be an attractive place for al-Qa'eda and does not also have hiding areas like Afghanistan. Besides, any strange or new comer will easily be recognised and exposed by the people, especially those of the interior who are not used to living with foreigners, no matter of what religion. Somalia could hardly be a place to hide, let alone to establish training camps for terrorism, without being noticed by the local people. Besides, the Somalis, wherever they may be, like to talk about what they see or what they hear. Just imagine, Osama Bin Laden and other leaders of al-Qa'eda, crossing the Red Sea or Indian Ocean by boat without being detected by the naval ships patrolling the seas, whose fault would it be?

President Abdikassim Salad Hassan in his meetings with foreign visitors constantly emphasised the fact that Somalia would be a safe haven for the terrorists if it lacks a government which is capable of controlling its territory and the coastal areas; but if only a fraction of the billions of dollars spent on the patrol of the sky and seas of Somalia would be spent to strengthen the Transitional National Government and its infrastructure, no terrorist would dare to enter the Somali territory either by land or by sea.

Dan Connell of Global Policy Forum in an Article "War Clouds Over Somalia" (March 22, 2002) among other things, said:

"If the US were to move to strengthen the TNG's capacity to police its own territory and to reassemble the country, while restraining Ethiopia from intervening in Somalia's internal affairs, such action might be a significant contribution to stability and development in the Horn of Africa. But the war clock in Washington appears to be ticking ever faster, foreclosing the possibility of such constructive engagement. If US ships and German overflights are indeed gathering intelligence for Washington planners of military action in Somalia, the questions are: when, under whose auspices, at what level, for how long and with what specific objectives?"

As the country had no government since 1991, any person could issue a licence to foreigners for any sort of activity. They had given the so-called licence for fishing in the Somali Sea and allowed foreigners to dump nuclear waste in the sea and probably even on land. Some even sold mining lands and areas for oil exploration in the country signing treaties with foreign companies.

The problem with the US administration was that it was taking as credible the information supplied to them by the Addis Ababa regime knowing that Ethiopia would do anything that could harm Somalia. That was the best chance Ethiopia had to implement its plan aimed at destroying Somalia's hope to return to normalcy. Being part of a coalition that would hit the Somali people hard was the greatest opportunity that Addis Ababa could ever have. When America announced extension of the war on terrorism to include Somalia, Meles Zenawi started beating the drum much louder than the Americans themselves. He immediately announced his country's readiness for eventual invasion of Somalia and embarked on making the list of important targets and personalities to be hit.

When the terrorists attacked the Israeli Hotel in Mombasa, Kenya, on 28 November 2002, Meles Zenawi was the first to announce who the attackers were, even before the Kenyan and Israeli intelligence and security, who were

involved in the investigation reached any conclusion about the attacks in Mombasa.

The BBC correspondent in Addis Ababa, Martin Plaut, who interviewed Meles Zenawi on 7 December 2002, at 22:59 GMT, after the terrorist attack on Israeli Hotel in Mombasa, Kenya, reported:

"Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi has said he has indications that a group operating out of Somalia may have been behind last month's attacks on Israelis in Kenya.

"Mr Meles told the BBC that the Somali group with links to al-Qaeda—known as al-Ittihad—may have traveled to Kenya by boat to carry out their operation.

"He offered no evidence to substantiate these views.

"But with senior US officials due in Addis Ababa next week, Mr Meles will have every opportunity to convince them that the group had a hand in the attacks.

"The prime minister was speaking after his return to Addis Ababa from the United States, where he said he had discussed security matters with President George W Bush.

"Our indications seem to suggest that the terrorists may have started from Rascomboni in Somalia and gone to Mombasa using boats that were launched from Rascomboni."

The question is how Meles Zenawi already knew what the Israelis and Kenyans were still looking for. He knew who the attackers were and from where they launched their attack. He named "the Somali group with links to al-Qaeda" and "Rascomboni" (Ras Kiamboni) as the place from where Meles claimed the terrorists to have launched their boats from where they carried out attacks. Meles sounded so sure of who they were and where the attackers started from, while people allegedly involved in the case were said to be Kenyan nationals. The Somali proverb says: *Meel bukta iyo farta ayaa is og'* (The wounded place and the finger know

each other). As nothing of what he claimed turned out to be true, it was clear that Meles's aim was to embarrass Somalia, but he failed. Neither Meles nor his mentors could prove the involvement of any Somali national in the terrorist activities.

Another correspondent of the BBC, Greg LaMotte, reported from Cairo on 8 December 2002, at 18:14 GMT that:

"The al-Qaeda terror group is reportedly claiming responsibility for attacks that claimed 13 victims last month in Kenya." He also reported that "Israel had named al-Qaeda as the prime suspect in the attacks."

Ethiopia continued to harass the Somali people and to spread malicious propaganda against the Transitional National Government labeling some Somali leaders including the President of the Republic, as members of the Islamic fundamentalist group al-Ittihad, but Meles Zenawi could not produce evidence to substantiate his allegations. He even organised through his stooges in Somalia a few cases of kidnappings of innocent people who were just selling bread in the market. The people were photographed and their photos were taken to Addis Ababa to convince the Americans about their cooperation in the so-called war against terrorism. Ethiopian venture was intended to win American support against the TNG particularly its Prime Minister missed not a single opportunity to topple the Government in Somalia. Justice prevailed. The American Security Officers in Addis Ababa who were there to scrutinize the connection of the people kidnapped from Somalia with Al-Qaeda found them innocent. But no one either apologised or compensated these people for the probable physical torture, harassment and the violation of their human rights.

Ethiopia tried every crude method to provoke the Americans against the Somali people. On 21 February 2002, Reuter's correspondent in Addis Ababa, William Maclean reported from the Ethiopian capital:

"Abdulmejid Hussein says the scar on his throat tells a

worrying story the international community should heed in the wake of September 11.

"The scar, from a bullet fired in a 1996 assassination attempt claimed by a Somali Islamist group, stands as a warning of the potential for extremist violence in the Horn of Africa if Muslim fanatics take control of Somalia," says the Ethiopian diplomat, himself a Muslim and of Somali origin.

Speaking like the Super power of the region, the Ethiopian diplomat boastfully said: "If the Somalis don't solve their problems then we will do it for them ...We won't wait forever," adding:

"We will be patient as long as it's necessary but if we find that there are those who really want to hurt us, we will act."

But in an interview with the BBC Somali Service while he was still in an Israeli Hospital undergoing medical treatment, late Dr. Abdimejid stated, that he was not a Somali when he was asked if he could visualise his attacker. The problem with late Abdulmejid was that he was holding the highest position in the Government of Meles, the Ministry of International Cooperation where all the foreign aid and financial supports poured in. He was too close to Meles Zenawi and so powerful that he attracted strong jealousy and probably also enmity, from those who believed that they were the legitimate persons, with right tribal connections or otherwise, to have such a position. His strongest rival was the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Seyum Mesfin, a powerful person in the governing group Tigray Peoples' Liberation Front (TPLF) who may have insisted that the Ministry of International Cooperation should have been a department in his Ministry and that he should have been the Minister dealing with economic cooperation with foreign countries.

In the end, even his closest friend, Prime Minister Meles Zenawi decided to remove Abdulmejid Hussein from the elite

post which he held for about five years and appointed him to one of the least important Ministry—that of the Railways. That was already a moral degradation and in 1996 some quarters tried to take him out of circulation. So far the propaganda was to the effect that responsibility for the attack had been claimed by "Somali Islamic group". But it would have been proper if investigation was undertaken by "his government" or by an independent commission to find out the truth.

Since the anti-Somali and particularly anti-TNG campaign by Ethiopia was at its peak, the Ambassador felt it very convenient to blame the Somalis and by extension sought to embarrass the Transitional National Government in Somalia.

Ethiopia is taking advantage of the American sensitivity on terrorism and their present attitude towards Somalia. Addis Ababa would be only too happy if US invaded Somalia so that it could occupy parts of the Republic on the pretext of holding them for its national security. So far Addis Ababa regime has succeeded in partitioning Somalia into enclaves with the support of certain groups whose ambitions are to gain personal benefits. All the noises it is making i.e. linking Somalia with terrorism is but a ploy to achieve its nefarious political goal aimed at blocking any kind of peaceful solution to Somalia's problems. Ethiopia is extremely happy to see Somalia pressurized and intimidated by the presence of the mighty powers of the United States, Germany, Portugal, Spain and France and other forces in the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea.

According to deputy commander, Rear Admiral Don Bullard of the USS Mount Whitney, the United States-led task force in the Horn of Africa, will detect, disrupt and eradicate terrorism in the region.

He said on 18 December 2002: "The task force will try to eradicate terrorist activity in Kenya, Yemen, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Sudan and Somalia. In addition to the 400 task force troops aboard the command and control ship, some 900 US troops, including special forces, are based in Camp

Lemonier in nearby Djibouti.

The Combined Joint Task Force of the Horn of Africa formally opened for business on 13 December 2002, when the USS. Mount Whitney arrived in the Gulf of Aden.

Walter H. Kansteiner, US Assistant Secretary for African Affairs told a Senate committee on 6 February 2002, that Somalia is a "failed state" because of "civil war, external intervention, clan conflict, and poverty."

Commenting on the link between weak states and terrorism, Kansteiner said: "Where there should be a nation-state, there is vacuum filled by faction leaders. What better place for seeds of international terrorism and lawlessness to take root."

In an Article "War Clouds Over Somalia", Dan Connell (Global Policy Forum, March 22, 2002), described Ethiopia as follows:

"The first US client state in sub-Saharan Africa was Ethiopia, whose armed forces served in US-led missions in Korea and the Congo in the 1950s and 1960s. For nearly a quarter-century, more than half of all US aid to Africa went to Ethiopia, which gave the US basing rights in the newly annexed territory of Eritrea in exchange."

According to Dan Connell, of the Global Policy Forum the US policy in sub-Saharan Africa is built around the concept of "anchor states." These states are the main focus of US aid and diplomacy and serve as hubs through which the US seeks to influence events in surrounding sub-regions. Since September 11, the main thrust of US initiatives in the Horn of Africa has been to strengthen relations with Ethiopia, stepping up military cooperation with Addis Ababa despite unresolved conflict with neighboring Eritrea.

At the early stage, the people of Somalia, especially the inhabitants of the capital, were not taking the American threats seriously; some were even sarcastically saying: "What does the Angel Gabriel take from an empty house?" while others said jokingly: "if Americans bomb us, they will

construct our country." A number of foreign journalists, mainly from Western countries, themselves taking the matter seriously rushed to Somalia probably wanting to be the first to report the US F16s dropping bombs on Bakaaraha Market or on congested huts used by internally displaced refugees or even on herds of camels heading towards the water wells mistaken for transport animals loaded with anti-aircraft guns or so on. When the CNN's Christiane Amanpour arrived in Mogadishu to know the feelings of the inhabitants of capital, her arrival was interpreted as a signal for an imminent attack by the American forces.

People remember Christiane Amanpour's first arrival in Mogadishu in 1992 was immediately followed by the landing of the American forces at Mogadishu beaches. But of course that landing was for the mission "Operation Restore Hope". This time the people associated her arrival with imminent bombardment or attacks from all directions: US marines from the sea, Ethiopian pawns invading us across the artificial border, supported by French and German aircrafts. Usually the US administration gives advance information to the CNN before an operation is mounted.

Amanpour met with all kinds of people, government and non-government as well as people in the market places and in the streets. She found the people genuinely concerned about the claim that there were terrorists in Somalia as they were aware of the fact that neither Bin Laden nor his militias would venture to come to Somalia, as they would find no shelter among the Somalis, who are a type of people who would not sacrifice their interest for others, no matter what. Somalis are deeply religious people, but not fundamentalists or fanatics.

I, like many others, believe that journalists can play both dangerous and positive role. Amanpour is the type of journalist that the Americans respect and take what she says more seriously. If she says these things are bad the Administration considers them as bad and if she says the opposite, decisions are taken accordingly. Before she came

to Mogadishu, Somalia seemed to be on the brink of being bombed by the United States, but after her visit all the noisy rhetoric disappeared. I don't know what she whispered in the ear of the Americans, but the situation eased and the Somalis thought that, either she brought luck, or she told the US don't waste your expensive bombs, as there is no sign of the existence of Bin Laden or his followers in Somalia.

We believe that the Almighty Allah decides the fate of the people, but Christiane Amanpour might have been the catalyst that convinced the Bush Administration that it was wrong to believe that Somalia was harbouring terrorists.

The main factor that saved Somalia from harm is Allah's wish. He is the saviour and the only one that can cause anything that happens on earth. The Bush Administration was threatening to destroy Somalia after it finishes with Afghanistan and Iraq. If Somalia's sin is that it is an Islamic country, then it placed its fate under Allah's wish. The Bush Administration, overwhelmed by the feeling that it is the sole Super Power became more arrogant. But we believe that only Almighty Allah is the most powerful and knowledgeable.

Man proposes and God disposes. America swore to attack Somalia after finishing with Afghanistan and Iraq. Somalis trust the Almighty as He is the only power that saved them so far and *Insha-Allah* in future too He will protect them.

Allah gives power to people to be used for the benefit of all and not to be used to destroy. Those who believe themselves to have grown bigger than other human beings and try to play God will pay a high price. If Bush and his cohorts thought that they could destroy Islam and Muslims even those who are Americans on the pretext of "the national security of America", they are mistaken because the might is not necessarily right. Arrogance never pays.

Afghanistan, Iraq and Somalia are Islamic countries and all the Muslim countries that Americans used as allies in the past are now threatened by it. The Bush Administration is not saying that it is helping to develop their economy or improve the lives of the poor but it is threatening to attack

Muslim countries in the interest of "America's national security."

It was possible to believe that Somalia could have been a safe haven for terrorists, as the country lacked a central government that could control or prevent them from taking shelter in it. That may have been so, but it was also clear to the terrorists that Somalia was not like Afghanistan where they could hide in the caves or even in the houses of their sympathizers. Besides, it is a long way from Afghanistan to Somalia;—countries and the seas to cross. Would they take all these risk just to be caught on the way by the American spy satellites or by the US or allied navies in the Red Sea or the Indian Ocean?

Besides the distance and the risk involved in trying to come to Somalia, there is also the environment which is not conducive for a possible escape of the terrorists to Somalia. Unlike how the Ethiopians describe, the Somalis are not fundamentalists; they are religious, practicing Muslims, but tolerant. Somalis believe that if a fellow Muslim does not follow the tenets of the religion, it is between himself and his Allah i.e. the person will answer to the Almighty Allah.

But the people Ethiopia accuses of being religious fundamentalists, or whatever name it may wish to give, are people who are fighting for the end of Ethiopia's occupation of the Somali territory. They are doing what Meles Zenawi himself was doing during his own struggle to liberate his home region Tigray from the regime in Addis Ababa. What stopped him from breaking away is the fact that he found the whole country under his control when Mengistu Haile Marian was convinced by the "friends of Ethiopia" to avoid civil war and vacate the seat and leave without causing bloodshed and destruction. With his sham democracy, Meles managed to hold on to the chair since 1991 but the emerging situation in the country shows that he is on the verge of collapse as the chance of cheating another election seems to be very slim.

The liberation struggle of the Somalis in the Ogaden and the Oromo people's struggle for independence have nothing

to do with religion. They are legitimate struggles for self-determination, same as the struggle waged by the TPLF prior to the collapse of the regime of Mengistu Haile Mariam. Besides the Somalis and the Oromos, there are also the Amharas who are waging war against the government of Meles Zenawi. These people are asking precisely what Mr. Meles Zenawi was asking for his own people during his TPLF's war. Various organisations toppled the Mengistu regime in 1991 and achieved victory over "the dictator" or "the oppressor". Now as he himself has become an oppressor like his predecessor, Meles Zenawi's end will not be different.

Meles played a clever game when he took over power in Addis Ababa. As he knew he would not be accepted to rule as a leader of Ethiopia, if he would use the name of his real organisation TPLF, which was fighting only to "liberate Tigray" and not entire Ethiopia from the tyrannical regime, cleverly adopted a new organisation called EPDRF (Ethiopian People's Democratic Revolutionary Front) which contained the letter "E" for "Ethiopia" to enable him to reign the whole country.

Even after grabbing power Meles had to take a precautionary measure in case he loses control in the centre. He put in place a constitution which superficially seemed to be valid for all, but in fact is meant only for his own region and for the implementation of his own long term ambition of breaking away the Tigray from the rest of Ethiopia, if need be.

Article two of the Ethiopian Provisional Government's Charter states:

"The right of nations, nationalities and people to self-determination is affirmed. To this end, each nation, nationality and people is guaranteed the right to:

"Para "C" Exercise its right to self-determination of independence, when the concerned, nation/nationality and people is convinced that the above rights are denied, abridged or abrogated".

Meles Zenawi did not include such provisions in the

constitution for the sake of the Somalis or the Oromos who are fighting for the right to self-determination but in his own interest. If the provisions of that Charter had been for all the territories, he would have granted that right to the Oromos and/or the Somalis who were ceaselessly struggling for their independence. Instead, he put an end to the so-called local administration and put the territory under his direct control.

In case of collapse of his regime in Addis Ababa, the constitution will allow him to declare independence of Tigray, which he has developed by devoting more than half of the entire foreign assistance given to Ethiopia. As a result other areas remain neglected and under developed for shortage of funds. Thus, Meles has already arranged his own place of refuge if he eventually loses power in the centre.

Now returning to the accusation and allegation that Somalia has become a safe haven for Al-Qaeda fugitives a Voice of America Staff reporter from Addis Ababa said on 11 December 2002:

"While Pentagon officials have said most of that activity is targeted against terrorists in Yemen, there are multi-national maritime patrols intended to prevent terrorists or weapons from crossing from the Middle East into Africa, especially to Somalia.

The VOA reporter further added:

"That ungoverned country is believed to have become a shelter for some al-Qaida who fled Afghanistan. Somalia is the home of a radical Islamic group called al-Ittihaad al-Islamiya which US officials say has been linked to al-Qaida.

The question is if the Pentagon and VOA's allegations were true, how can al-Qaida terrorists who "fled Afghanistan" could cross all these territories and seas while "there are multi-national maritime patrols to prevent terrorists or weapons from crossing from the Middle East into Africa, especially to Somalia?"

Besides the maritime patrols, there are also aircrafts patrolling the airspace of Somalia day and night as well as

spy mission infiltrating into Mogadishu and other towns of the country organised through Ethiopia in collaboration with the local elements. But what have they found so far? Nothing! If there were al-Qaida people in Somalia, the US satellite could easily pinpoint them, as they do not look like Somalis. Nearly all of them wear turbans and grow beards while very few Somalis, or nearly none of them, wear turban. As for beards, although the Muslims should follow and observe the sayings and doings (practices and traditions) of Prophet Mohammad, not all the Somalis grow beard and those who do, prefer to trim it. This is a matter of choice, if one does grow a beard he gains Allah's reward and if not, there is no punishment.

The Ethiopian leader earlier claimed that the attackers on Mombasa Club had started from Ras Kiamboni, Somalia, but he could never offer any concrete evidence to substantiate his claim. Again during the visit of US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld to Addis Ababa in December 2002, Meles described the terrorist problem in the Horn and East Africa as a serious one and expressed fear of more attacks like the recent bombing in Mombasa in neighboring Kenya.

So far neither he nor his mentors could prove the involvement of Somali nationals in any of the attacks or in any other terrorist activities either in the Horn of Africa or in other parts of the world. He could not substantiate the alleged connection between the group called "al-Ittihad" and al-Qaeda.

The fact is that Ethiopian regime in Addis Ababa failed to counter the opposition movements which are fighting against the occupation of the Western Somali territory, the Ogaden, and therefore to attract foreign support, particularly that of the US Administration, it dubbed all those who were resisting his rule as terrorists. The Addis Ababa Regime is playing the tune that the Americans like to hear that there are terrorists in the Horn of Africa, exploiting America's sensitivity to al-Qaeda.

The present Tigrinian leadership in Ethiopia has miserably failed to pacify the other nationalities, the Amharas, the Somalis and the Oromos who are opposing the dictatorship of the Meles Government. He only succeeded in capturing power because of the lack of an alternative group prepared to take over after the collapse of the military regime. Power came to TPLF rulers on a silver plate. He knew that if he grabbed power in the name of TPLF, which represented Tigray province, people would oppose him as it had no relation with the revolution in Ethiopia. He therefore cleverly invented a fictitious organisation called EPRDF (Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front) which was said to comprise Amhara National Democratic Movement and Oromo People's Democratic Organization. However, after fifteen years of manipulation and rigging of what were already superficial elections, the honeymoon is nearing its end, with the emergence of high profile dissidents, political parties and human rights organisations, open rebellion of students against the police brutality and violation of human rights on the campuses in the country.

Usually, when dictators are faced with internal difficulties, they "cry wolf" by inventing the existence of external threat to divert the attention of the people and to win the sympathy of the masses as well as to get help from external masters.

The world has seen disgraceful end of dictators such as Shah of Iran, Marcos of the Philippines, Ceausescu of Romania, Mobutu of Zaire, Siad Barre of Somalia, Mengistu of Ethiopia and so on. All these powerful dictators could not hold on to power by gun or by intrigues after the majority of the people turned their back on them or as it is said voted with their feet. After nearly fifteen years in power, Meles Zenawi and his comrades find themselves in the same situation walking on the same track that leads the oppressors to their downfall.

Since violations of human rights are so rampant in Ethiopia under the rule of the (TP) Liberation Front, the government could not find a political reason to win the

support of the people. It has therefore thought it fit to create external crisis to divert the attention of the people. It went to a border war with Eritrea causing thousands of deaths and another fictitious war on the so-called "Islamic terrorism." However, it has miserably failed in both.

The way Ethiopia is acting today is not a new trend of the twenty first century but is an old habit followed by almost all the past Abyssinian/Ethiopian rulers.

Abraha, the Abyssinian, invaded the Holy Makka with a large army supported by elephants. The Abraha army was destroyed by birds coming in large flights and throwing stones at the army. This happened two months before the birth of Prophet Mohamed (pbuh). Sura Al-Fil or The Elephant 105 Ayat 1-5 Juz 30:

- "1. Seest thou not How thy Lord dealt With the Companions Of the Elephant?
- "2. Did he not make Their treacherous plan Go astray?
- "3. And He sent against them Flights of Birds,
- "4. Striking them with stones Of baked clay.
- "5. Then did He make them Like an empty field Of stalks and straw, (Of which the corn) Has been eaten up."

Emperor Theodore who was said to have been a fanatical Christian believed that he had been sent on a divine mission to wipe out Islam from the world and to conquer Jerusalem and reign over a world that would be entirely Christian. This prophecy fired his imagination, and he adopted the name of Theodore when he was crowned in 1855.*

Menelek, the King of Kings the Lion of Juda, in his circular letter dated 10th April 1891 to the Heads of European States, said among other things:

"Ethiopian has been for fourteen centuries a Christian island in a sea of Pagans. If Powers at a distance come forward to

* Ethiopian Realities by Major Polson Newman—London George Allen & Unwin Ltd 1936.

partition Africa between them, I do not intend to be an indifferent spectator.

"Formerly the boundary of Ethiopia was the sea. Having lacked strength sufficient, and having received no help from the Christian Powers, our frontier on the sea coast fell into the power of Mussulman.

"At the present we do not intend to regain our sea frontier by force, but we trust that the Christian Powers, guided by our Saviour, will restore to us our sea-coast line, at any rate, certain points on the coast."

Emperor Haile Selassie, not only refused to free the Somalis under the Ethiopian rule, but even called upon the French not to give independence to the former French Somali Coast, which is now the independent Republic of Djibouti, since 27 June 1977.

The Emperor was quoted by the BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) Radio on 28 August 1966 as saying:

"If Somalia renounces its claim over French Somaliland, Ethiopia will thank God. I wish that France will remain in French Somali Coast for ever."

The history is repeating itself. Today in the Horn of Africa the same anti-Islam plan of the past Emperors of Ethiopia is being openly implemented by Meles, who although does not carry the imperial title, is practically fulfilling the wishes of his ancestors by suppressing and working to wipe out Muslims from the Horn of Africa on the pretext of waging war against terrorism.

During his visit to Addis Ababa on 11 December 2002 US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, with Prime Minister Meles by his side, told reporters, that there was no question but that terrorists, including members of al-Qaida were in the Horn of Africa region, many having fled the US offensive in Afghanistan. Meles concurred with his assessment describing the terrorist problem in the Horn and East Africa

as a serious one and expressing fear of more attacks like the bombing in Mombasa in neighboring Kenya.

But the Ethiopian leader said his country would not be what he termed half-hearted in fighting terrorism. He pledged to do whatever was necessary to combat the problem. Ethiopia is sharing intelligence with the United States on terrorist activities in the Horn region. Prime Minister Meles suggested there should be greater and more effective intelligence cooperation in future. So far there has been no proof of the existence of terrorists in the Horn of Africa. But the US continues to shower praise on Ethiopia saying that the US Administration "is confident that with the help of the countries like Ethiopia, the effort to root out and destroy terrorist networks, the effort will ultimately be successful."

The hunt for the "terrorists" in the Horn region, is on for a long time now, involving the most sophisticated spying electronic devices and equipment that man can ever avail himself including satellites and aircrafts which can pinpoint even a needle in a well as well as the employment of the intelligence gathering spies. Have they found even a trace of the so-called terrorist presence in Mogadishu or even in remote areas of the country? If they had found any such proof they would certainly have decimated Somalia which has no government that controls the entire country. Somalia has proved itself to be free from terrorism and it was high time that the US recognise the fact that what the Ethiopian regime reported about Somalia was intended to provoke the US to destroy Somalia.

The US knows the situation in Ethiopia. As the crisis in that country deepens, the Meles regime is resorting to heavy handed suppression of the various nationalities in the country. Fearing an uprising of the masses, the government has now spread a network of spies and informers among the population to report to the government about the movements of the dissidents. But this has created fear even among the informants themselves. People have started fearing even their own shadows.

The situation is so explosive that people have already started moving out of the country in search of safety. People say: "clouds are the sign of rain." In Ethiopia, those who voted with their feet speak of widespread fear and frustration and are predicting the collapse of the regime of Meles Zenawi sooner than later.

America's military cooperation with Ethiopia at present contradicts the US policy of opposing dictatorship and encourages the violation of human rights perpetrated by the regime of Meles Zenawi. General John Abizaid, Commander of the US Central Command on 29 July 2003, declared that his government was providing training and technical support to the Ethiopian Defense Forces. He noted that the U.S. government was working to wipe out terrorism in the region and bring about peace and stability. However the danger is that Ethiopia will use the said American trained Defence Force against its own dissidents and opposition groups. If the US trained Ethiopian forces are used against the people of the country the US will become an accomplice in the crime.

Meles is taking advantage of the issue of terrorism and making use of his relations with the Americans to consolidate his grip on power. During a meeting between Meles and General John Abizaid, on 29 July (2003) the issue of military cooperation in the fight against international terrorism was discussed. The two parties noted that the cooperation between Ethiopia and the U.S. in military and other areas had gathered momentum in recent months. But behind the war against "terrorism", the real motive had been spelled out by the US Army's General William "Jerry" Boykin who has long considered himself a holy warrior and whose mission is to protect his "Christian nation" from the so-called "insurgent Islam". This is not a new phenomenon. After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 which Reagan described as "the Evil Empire" the idea of targeting Islam and Islamic countries was floated.

General William Boykin is not only a devout Christian fundamentalist but has an anti-Islamic bias. The fact that he

is allowed to deliver speeches at Christian function while in uniform shows that the Bush Administration is in full agreement with the General's public statements directed against Islam. Although the administration uses abstract diplomatic phrases such as "a battle between good and evil," its action tells the real story.

The Secretary of Defence, Donald Rumsfeld awarded General Boykin another star by raising his status to the Deputy Undersecretary of Defence for intelligence. Rumsfeld's Chief of Staff spoke of the General's "impressive military achievements and cited a speech the general made embracing freedom of speech and freedom of religion."

However, President Bush distanced himself on 24 October 2003 on board Air Force One and said: The opinion of Lt.Gen. William G. Boykin, "just does not reflect what the government thinks," but it seems that he accepted what the General said because he did not categorically refute the General's statement or did not ask him to step down. General Boykin seems to be a strong supporter of President Bush and was quoted as saying at the Oregon congregation "George Bush was not elected by a majority of the voters in the United States..." "He was appointed by God." It seems that the General has spilled the beans of the hidden agenda of the government.

In 1993 Gen. Boykin commanded the famed "Black Hawk" raid in Mogadishu. He was wounded by mortar fire while serving in Somalia. It is probably Boykin who has caused all the misunderstanding between the US and the Somali faction leaders. With his anti-Islam attitude he transformed what was meant to be "humanitarian mission" into religious mission.

In an article dated 23 October 2003 the *Washington Times*, wrote:

"In one speech, the general referred to an Islamic guerrilla in Somalia who said U.S. forces would never catch him because Allah would protect him. 'Well, you know what I knew, that my God was bigger than his. I knew that my

God was a real God, and his was an idol," Gen. Boykin said."

Does the General know that Islam never had an idol and the Muslims never worshipped man-made objects? No, he doesn't.

Writing in the *Los Angeles Times* on 16 October 2003, William M. Arkin, a military affairs analyst, made a compelling case that Boykin is an "intolerant extremist." He also said: "Boykin has made it clear that he takes his orders not from his Army superiors, but from God, which is a worrisome line of command."

This is not a mental case. The general enjoys the support of both the President Bush and Defense Secretary Rumsfeld who otherwise would not let him make such outrageous speeches. It seems that he is being used to say what the President and Defense Secretary have in their minds. A government cannot disassociate itself from an action or speeches of one of its highest ranking officers unless it condemns or dismisses the person from the post. It seems that all that has happened and is happening has been instigated and provoked by such elements in the American administration. To condone such a senior officer who is openly waging war against Islam could be interpreted that the US "war on terrorism" is in fact a war on Islam.

Gen. Boykin is instigating religious conflict among the people in the United States as well as creating misunderstanding between the U.S. and the Muslim world. Unless the General's activities are part of the administration's policy, the sooner he is removed from the scene, the better. But if Bush or Rumsfeld want to irritate the Muslim world then the general is the best person to dispatch to the area.

As Islam has become the fastest growing religion in the world and particularly in America, it has been attracting a large and growing number of converts. Experts in the United States say people are attracted to the relative simplicity and clarity of Islam's religious beliefs, to the traditional moral values, and to its emphasis on family and community.

Since 11 September 2001, America has embarked on a campaign against Somalia in collaboration with its arch enemy, Ethiopia, which from ancient times has been engaged to "wipe out Islam from the world" (Theodore 1855) and "Ethiopia has been for fourteen centuries a Christian Island in the Sea of Pagans" (Menelek 1891). Meles is deeply involved in a war to destroy the unity, to interfere in the religion and culture of the Somali people. It appears to be part of a wider campaign against the Muslim countries in the world. Meles Zenawi of Ethiopia is given the task to spread Christianity in the region of the Horn of Africa. He has sent missionaries to the Northern region of Somalia who opened a Christian school after September 11, 2001, claiming that it was English language school. A year later, the local police discovered that the school was a religious one and arrested two Ethiopians who were posing as ordinary teachers but were in fact Christian priests.

The problem with the US is that it has not learnt any lesson from its past mistakes. It was the US that trained, armed and probably even financed Bin Laden group when the US wanted to use them against the Soviet forces in Afghanistan. Afterward they turned their guns against the Afghan people. After the war against the Taliban, the same groups which were helped by the US have been fighting against the US and its allies in Afghanistan. The US is making the same mistakes in the Horn of Africa by providing training and technical support to Meles forces to fight against the so-called international terrorism, which he, like Bin Laden, will eventually use against his own people and others who are opposing his rule.

Any one can say that there are Muslims in Somalia and he will not be wrong because the entire population of Somalia is follower of Islam. They follow the Qur'an and the Hadith as required. If that is an offence, then the rulers in Addis Ababa have good reasons to claim that Somalis are, what they call, "fundamentalists", simply because they follow their religion in the true sense of the word. Meles Zenawi is the

most outspoken anti-Muslim of the 21st century in the Horn of Africa. He decided to carry out the task that his ancestors left behind unfinished.

Meles was forced to accept the independence of Eritrea from Ethiopia, following the collapse of the Mengistu Regime in 1991. He himself was fighting for the secession of his own territory, Tigray, from Ethiopia and would have broken away, if Mengistu would have stayed in power or other forces, such as the Oromos or Amharas would have taken Addis Ababa. Meles is convinced that the liberation of Eritrea would set a precedence for the execution of TPLF's cherished plan for future secession of his own territory of Tigray, if in future such need arises. He has already prepared the ground in the so-called "Constitution" of the Democratic Federal Republic Ethiopia which gives the right to self-determination to the people of the different provinces such as the occupied Somali territory of Ogaden.

Since he is in power for the time being, Meles wants to dominate the rest of the countries in the Horn of Africa with the help of outside powers using religion as means to achieve that goal, like his ancestors did in the 19th century. He works as a surrogate of foreign powers and constantly briefs the USA and other like minded countries about the alleged threats by the Muslims in the Horn and calls for concerted action to eliminate that threat."

Meles said the all-embracing cooperation between his country and the United States has reached an outstanding level. He also remarked that the Ethiopian government was making maximum efforts to help in bringing about peace in the region, as areas of conflict can provide an environment within which terrorists can operate.

The first part of his statement may be correct, because he needs to satisfy the Americans so that they come to rescue him from his internal problem. To stay on, after nearly fifteen years in power, the TPLF government needs to find new ways to hold on to power and to curb the opposition's pressure which are mounting on the regime in Addis Ababa.

These new ways are border conflict with Eritrea and the so-called "war on terrorism" which imply war on Somalia.

Every one understands the problem confronting the leaders in Ethiopia, particularly Meles Zenawi. He found himself between the hammer and hard place and many of his compatriots accuse him of betrayal of the Ethiopian interests. After a long and bitter struggle, Eritrea successfully won its independence from Ethiopia in 1993. This made Ethiopia a land-locked country again after having used the Eritrean port of Assab as its outlet for over half a century. In Ethiopia, some people believed that Meles himself seemed to have supported Eritrea's right to self-determination.

Belai Abbai, former Ethiopian Minister of Land Reform and senior staff member of the World Bank and Zeku Kehishen, of Free University of Amsterdam, in an article in July 2000 criticised Meles by saying that "Meles and his group single-handedly requested that the UN recognise Eritrean independence in the name of Ethiopian government, without any public debate in Ethiopia. In effect Meles is once again ensuring that Ethiopia remains a landlocked country..."

They also said: "Unfortunately Meles's previous policy decisions leave no room for doubt that he has all along protected Eritrean interest while simultaneously sacrificing vital Ethiopian security and economic concerns at the same time."

Belai and Zeku continued: "No Ethiopian should forget the geopolitical reality of his country. If Ethiopia is forced once again to be land locked by Eritrea and Somalia, the very same staging posts used by Ismael's Egypt to destabilize the country during the later part of the 19th century, the entire Horn region would be fraught with danger." Then the writers themselves admit: "In effect Meles is once again ensuring that Ethiopia remain a landlocked country, legitimizing a goal that the colonialists and the historical enemies of the country had failed to achieve Assab by war."

Historically Ethiopia has always been a landlocked country and usurper of other people's countries. In 1887

Menelek invaded and occupied Harrar. He sent the following letter to the British Consul in Aden:

"From—Menelek, King of Shoa and of all the Galla, good and bad.

"To the English Consul at Aden.

"How are you?

"By the Grace of God, I am well. Amir Abdillahi would suffer no Christian in his country.

"He was another "Gragne" but by the help of God I fought him, destroyed him, and he escaped alone on horseback.

"I hoisted my flag in his capital and my troops, &c., occupied his city. Gragne died: Abdillahi was in our days his successor.

"This is not a Mussalman country as every one knows."

The British Consul at Aden replied to Menelek's letter on 10 February 1887:

From—Major F.M. Hunter, Political Agent and Consul for the Somali Coast,

To—King Menelek, Negus of Shoa, Efat, and the Gallas, &c.

"After compliments—We have received Your Majesty's friendly letter informing us that you captured and occupied Haïrar and hoisted your flag there.

"There can be no need to recall the terms of the treaty concluded with Her Majesty the Queen in 1841 by Your Majesty's predecessor King Sahela Selassie, Negus of Shoa, Efat and Galla.

"Your Majesty may rest assured of the continued friendship of the British Government, and we hope that under Your Majesty's protection may revive and the trade route be safe.

"On all the Somali Coast from Gubbet Kharab, and especially at Zaila, Bulhar and Berbera, where our troops are now stationed, we shall always be glad to further Your Majesty's interests."*

This was how Ethiopia "conquered" Harrar and the rest of the Ogaden region was given to Abyssinia by Britain's Queen Victoria through her Special Envoy, Rennell Rodd, who signed the Treaty on behalf of Her Majesty and on behalf of Abyssinia it was signed by Emperor Menelek II at Addis Ababa on May 14th, 1897.

The King of Kings, the Lion of Juda told the Heads of European States in a circular letter dated 10th April 1891 (14th Mazir, 1883) that:

"Ethiopia has been for fourteen centuries a Christian Island in a sea of Pagans. If Powers at a distance come forward to partition Africa between them, I do not intend to be an indifferent spectator."

And the British Special Envoy of the Queen Victoria, Rennell Rodd, supporting the claim of the Abyssinian King, Menelek, said in a report to his government in 1897:

"....undisputed; confident, moreover, that a Christian African Power, his claims to a sphere of influence were better founded than those of Powers whose seat of Government is in another continent.."

As far as the outlet to the sea is concerned, Abyssinia, later called Ethiopia, used to receive their goods through the Somali ports of Zaila and Berbera which were under British occupation. At one time the British thought of awarding the Somali territories to Abyssinia.

* *The Scramble in the Horn of Africa*, Mohamed Osman Omar, Somali Publications, 2001, p. 107.

* Mohamed Osman Omar, *The Scramble in the Horn of Africa*, Mogowlisu Somali Publications, 2001, pages 193, 598.

British official, Lee Warner, Political and Secret Dept. India Office, in a report dated 25 November, 1896 regarding the Somali Protectorate, spoke about abandoning the Somali territories to Abyssinia retaining the ports. "If that will not secure peaceful occupation, we can give Abyssinia one of our ports," he wrote. He added: "If events prove that we cannot remain on the coast without a strong military establishment there, we might retire altogether, making a treaty with Abyssinia that live-stock shall be exported free, that imports and exports from Zaila and Berbera shall not be charged more than present, and that the ports shall not be given to any European power without our leave."*

Abyssinia never had an outlet to the sea. They tried to get the French Somali Coast, now Republic of Djibouti. In April 1893, by order of Menelek, Ras Maconen visited Djibouti and had discussions with M. Legarde, French Administrator of the territory, on the question of the boundary and of the establishment of the bases of an agreement which would make of Djibouti a "Port of equipment at the entire disposal of the Emperor of Ethiopia."

Finally, Eritrea, which had been placed under British military administration in 1941 after the Italian surrender, was federated to Ethiopia by the United Nations on 15 September 1952, and annexed by Emperor Haile Selassie in November 1962, when the Eritrean Assembly, many of whose members had been accused of accepting bribes, voted unanimously to change Eritrea's status to that of a province of Ethiopia. But in 1993, when Eritrea chose to become an independent state, Ethiopia went back to its original status: landlocked.

Somalia is not an enemy of Ethiopia as Belai Abbai, and Zeku erroneously categorized it. It is the leadership of Ethiopia that so far governed this country are the sources of our conflict.

* *The Scramble in the Horn of Africa*, Mohamed Osman Omar, Somali Publications, 2001, p. 69.

Somali people entertain brotherly feelings towards the people of Ethiopia. But the Somali people reject bullying or intimidation; they are people proud of their independence. The conflict that exists between Somalia and Ethiopia is because of the occupation of Somali territory by Ethiopia since 1897 (Ogaden) and in 1954 (Haud and Reserve Area) when it was given to them by the then colonial power, the British Empire. It was like a time bomb. By giving the Somali territory to Ethiopia, the colonialists were sowing the seeds for a future conflict between these two neighbouring countries; conflicts that we have already seen in the past forty years.

Although he was serving his own interest, Meles Zenawi's constitution, if applied to all the regions, is a document that can stop forever the long standing conflicts in the region of the Horn of Africa. It shall end the domination of one nation over the other. It will also be a final blow to the long-term sinister plans of the colonialists.

Each government which came to power in Somalia supported the right to self-determination of the suppressed and colonized people in Africa and elsewhere including the people of the Western Somalia, the Ogaden and the Oromo people. But since the ruling government in Ethiopia led by Meles Zenawi, adopted a Federal Constitution, that gives to the people the right to self-determination, the Transitional National Government had made it clear that it is up to the people concerned to decide their destiny in accordance with the said constitution.

Although observers who follow the political situation in Ethiopia know that the authors of the Charter or the Constitution intended it to be for the TPLF if and when they are voted out of power by election or by *coup d'état* in Ethiopia still others can invoke the same document. Knowing that the Eritrean people would break-away anyway, Meles could have justified his decision by claiming that he had applied the Constitution and similarly he could grant this right to what they call Zone Five (Ogaden Somali) and to the Oromos if they so wished to exercise their right to self-determination,

if he was not discriminating against these territories:

After the fall of the Mengistu regime, the Oromo Liberation Front and the Western Somalia Liberation Front or the Ogaden Liberation Front, should have also declared their independence from Ethiopia as they were all, including Meles Zenawi's TPLF, struggling to break away from the Empire. Meles too would have done the same if Mengistu would have remained in power or if any other group would have taken it. What stopped the Tigray breaking away from Ethiopia is the central power that had fallen in the hands of the TPLF and Meles Zenawi, who became the monarch with absolute power.

The independence of Eritrea threw the "King of Kings and Lion of Juda" into a cage, having lost the access to the sea. Everything returns to its original place. During the 19th century all the goods to Abyssinia passed through the ports of Djibouti, Berbera and Zeyla. For sometimes past Ethiopia has been using Djibouti for most of its imports.

Belai Abbai and Zeru Kehishen said in their article: "Meles has repeatedly stated in a number of interviews that Assab belong to Eritrea, even before the negotiations on boundary demarcation had begun. The purpose of such statements is to pre-empt any further discussion of Ethiopia's claim to Assab and her right to a sea outlet."

These people talk about the right to sea outlet. Just think of the future of Ethiopia as a whole. Where will Ethiopia be when the TPLF breaks away Tigray region and the country goes back to what Ethiopia was between sixteenth to nineteenth centuries before Menelek's expansion from 1887-1891 and before 1897 when Ogaden was given to Menelek by the British.

The Somali people have suffered at the hands of the Abyssinians and later were denied their rights by Emperor Haile Selassie, Mengistu Haile Mariam and now by the Meles Zenawi. As it is said "the right is might" and not the other way round. Soon we hope to see the light at the end of the tunnel. We will see immense turmoil in the Horn of Africa

and particularly in Ethiopia, but the upheaval will only end when Ethiopia will be forced to free its colonies.

As the Ethiopian Constitution is a quasi federal, an identical copy of the Constitution of former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, it is inevitable that the destiny of Ethiopia is heading in the same direction as that of the former Yugoslavia. Soon every region will enjoy the joy of freedom and independence and soon we will also see those countries that were harshly divided coming together and united as one. The Somalis who had to bear the burden of colonialism and dismemberment for over a century will soon enjoy the fruits of their struggle.

In an interview with IRIN dated Addis Ababa 29 October 2003, Meles declared:

"If the Ethiopian Somalis want to secede they are free to do so any time of the day. That's the constitution of Ethiopia. If the Somali people of Ethiopia wish to do so, that's fine with me. That's not an issue at all now."

The Somalis wished to do so since 1897 when the British colonial power placed them under the Abyssinian domination and they have never stopped their struggle to secede from Ethiopia till today. It is clear that the Prime Minister of Ethiopia's generous offer is meant to prepare the grounds for his own region's secession as he sees the beginning of the end of his rule in the centre. During the decade and so of controlling the wealth of the Empire of Ethiopia, Meles must have already developed his region, Tigray. However, for the Somalis, they finally look forward to seeing their long struggle come to a happy conclusion.

Everything will go back to its original position. The former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, former Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics (the Soviet Union) and former Czechoslovakia, as they were of different nations or nationalities have fallen apart and each of them formed its own separate State. Ethiopia, which falls in the same category with different nations and nationalities, is now heading to break apart

including the Solomonid Kingdom (1883) if Tigray secedes. The Solomonid Kingdom in 1883 comprised of Tigray, Amhara, Wallo, Gojam and Shoa. The rest of territories have been conquered by Abyssinia from 1883 to 1935.

The formerly divided nations like Germany, Vietnam, and the Yemen were united as one. Similarly the Somalis and the Koreans which are also homogenous nations, are bound to unite sooner rather than later. In the case of Somalia, the people, wherever they may be, are more united than ever before and if the main and the deadly obstacle, Ethiopia, give way to the freedom of the Somali territory under its occupation, their stooges in Somalia who are obsessed with power by creating internal divisions will also disappear in the midst of the crowd celebrating the birth of a united Somalia.

Meles may prove to be a blessing in disguise for the Somalis. His action might cause the union of Somalia and by extension it might realise the proposal of Ernest Bevin, the British Foreign Minister when he said in the British House of Commons, on 4 June, 1946: "I hope deputies at the Paris Conference will now consider a greater Somaliland more objectively." And for the Somalis, it will be a dream come true.

Only recently, Meles stripped the Administration in the Somali Region of all the powers and placed it under the rule of the centre. But this time, Meles' statement must be different from those usually made in the past for public relations because this time he himself must be contemplating that his region (Region 1) Tigray, should secede from the rest of Ethiopia.

THE TNG AND THE RECONCILIATION

Since his election in August 2000 as President of the Somali Republic, Dr. Abdikassim Salad Hassan has continuously spoken about completing the Reconciliation with the factions which had earlier refused to attend the Arta Peace and Reconciliation Process.

A Transitional National Assembly and a Transitional National Government have been established for the first time after ten years of absence of an administration in the country. For ten years Somalia was run by faction leaders who had established themselves in different enclaves forcing the people to submit to their will. They were operating illegal "administrations" and collecting taxes at gun point.

The new President knew that the success of the Arta Peace Process would depend on appeasing the Ethiopian leader Meles Zenawi, who controlled most of the Somali faction leaders who did not participate in the peace process.

He sent a high level delegation to Addis Ababa led by Abdullahi Ahmed Addow, a prominent leader and the runner-up of the presidential election at the Arta Process. The delegation included Omar Hashi Aden, a senior politician, well known to the Ethiopian leadership and Yusuf Hassan Ibrahim, former Ambassador who was later appointed as the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

They returned from Addis Ababa highly impressed by

the "warm reception" accorded to them by Prime Minister Meles Zenawi. What impressed them most was the two hours of discussion they had with him, who, they said, had to come out of an important meeting in the Parliament for their sake.

The Somali delegation sounded over optimistic about their meeting with the Ethiopian leader and seemed to believe every word he told them. The delegation was talking about establishing a friendship and good-neighbourliness, but Meles was already digging the grave of the Transitional National Government. For the President of the Transitional Administration the mission was a step to avoid any ill-feeling from our neighbours, particularly Ethiopia. Initially, the TNG was rather comfortable with Kenya as it did not openly support opposition groups that could cause trouble to the new government. Djibouti, being the sponsor of the Peace Process, not only supported it, but put everything at the disposal of the TNG so that it could succeed.

Most of the conferences were arranged by Ethiopia and nearly thirty faction leaders participated in them. But unlike all the past conferences, the Arta Peace Process was the only gathering in which Ethiopia had no hand and it was not attended by the faction leaders enjoying its patronage.

The goodwill mission was rightly satisfied with the reception and seemingly cordial conversation it had with the Prime Minister of Ethiopia, whose support was important to reduce the pressure of the faction leaders on the newly established Government. Ethiopia was their main source of weapons with which the faction leaders were terrorizing the nation. But instead of lending support to the Arta Peace Process, Meles Zenawi, did all that he could to cut its life short. He hastened to organise an anti-government meetings of all the groups who opposed the Arta Peace Process at a place called Awasa (Southern Ethiopia People's Administration capital) and helped them to establish a front named SRRC (Somali Reconciliation and Restoration Council) and increased its arms supply to them to challenge the new Government and destroy the chance of building peace and

stability in the country. Ethiopia used SRRC as a tool to sabotage all the activities of the Transitional National Government both inside and outside Somalia.

The new President of the Republic called his government "the Government of Reconciliation" and on 16 May 2001, started the journey for peace and reconciliation. He flew to Kenya and met with his senior counterpart, President of the Republic of Kenya, Daniel T. arap Moi in Nakuru. President Abdikassim requested him to help organise a meeting to reconcile the Government and the opposition groups who did not attend the Arta Peace Process. Mr. Moi welcomed the request and on 1-4 November and 13-17 December 2001 he arranged meetings between the TNG and the opposition groups. As usual the pro-Ethiopia factions were stopped by Ethiopia from attending but a number of faction leaders who refused to listen to Ethiopia's orders attended these meetings. In fact the members of the opposition who took part in those reconciliation meetings later joined the Government.

President Moi proudly presented his report on the outcome of the two meetings held in Kenya to the 9th IGAD Summit of Heads of State and Government held in Khartoum in January 2002. At the beginning, these meetings were not part of the IGAD agenda, and certain member states were even discouraging the participants. As it had been endorsed, the Summit also decided to hold further reconciliation conference on Somalia in Nairobi, within two months under the leadership of President of Kenya as a coordinator of the front line states.

As it was the desire of the TNG to complete the reconciliation between the Government and those parties who did not attend the Arta Peace Process, it welcomed the decision of the Summit. But for Ethiopia the call for a further reconciliation gave it the chance to finally overthrow the new Somali government.

Despite its participation in most of the world conferences, including the Millennium 2000 Summit at the United Nations,

the UN General Assembly in 2000 and the Summit of the then Organisation of African Unity in Lusaka, certain quarters were spreading the rumours that the government would have little credibility if it was not accepted by the IGAD of which Somalia was in fact a founding member.

Ethiopia could not swallow the fact that Somalia now had a government. It did everything to block its progress. It even questioned the name chosen for the government. It was irritated even to see the word "National" in the title of the Transitional National Government, claiming that the new government was not a "National" government. It should have been of no concern to Ethiopia what title or name the Somalis gave to their interim Administration. But it had to interfere in the Somali affairs to impose its will.

It was true, the TNG was not covering the whole country, knowing that the Northern Regions were administered by local authorities and North-East was also managed by a local authority. But the government included representatives from all the regions including the North and North-East. Ethiopia was the architect of the dismemberment of the Somali Republic.

To the chagrin of Ethiopia and those who denied Somali people any kind of Government, and to the joy of the Somali people and their friends, the newly established Government of the Somali Republic was welcomed by the 8th IGAD Summit of Heads of State and Government held in Khartoum on 23 November 2000. Ethiopia wished it could stop that process, but of course, it is not Ethiopia's habit to expose its negative feeling in public. Publicly it puts on friendly demeanour but privately it acts adversely against the Somali interest. It operates like a mouse which blows cold air while biting. In public Ethiopia would say all the good things and how much it supports Somalia's unity and territorial integrity, while behind the scene it is actively engaged in the dismemberment of the Somali Republic.

After preparing the ground for the long awaited conference for the Somalis, the Kenyan Special Envoy, Mr.

Mwangale, on behalf of his government and as the leader of the front line states comprising Kenya, Djibouti and Ethiopia, sent invitations to those he thought should participate in the conference which was due to open on 15 October 2002 in the town of Eldoret.

The Kenyan Envoy, probably influenced by the Ethiopian government, worked out a system that would make the conference an entirely new one and not the continuation of the Arta Peace Process, similar to the previous conferences held by President Daniel T. arap Moi, in November and December 2001. In fact this was the Ethiopian agenda of burying the Arta Peace Process and starting the Kenyan conference from the scratch as a new meeting.

Mwangale sent invitation also to the President of the Republic, Dr. Abdikassim Salad Hassan inviting him to attend the conference as the leader of 65 member delegation of the TNG, similar to the invitation sent to the various factions. The invitation did not ask the President to send the Government delegation to the conference, but asked the President himself to be part of the TNG delegation. The TNG rejected the invitation telling the Kenyan Envoy that Dr. Abdikassim Salad Hassan was the President of the Republic and

a) should be invited by the host President and

b) the meeting should be reconciliation between the Government and the opposition groups which did not attend the Arta Peace Process and the President would send the TNG delegation representing the Government. Mwangale was diplomatically reminded that there are certain protocol procedures that he should follow.

The TNG already knew the game Ethiopia was playing within the Technical Committee and particularly behind the curtain of the office of the Chairman of the Technical Committee, Mr. Mwangale. Ethiopia's calculation was that once Abdikassim sat with the faction leaders and rest of the delegates; it would be the end of the Transitional National Government and his claim to the Presidency of the Somali Republic. Ethiopia thought this would be the best way to

bury the fruits of the Arta Peace Process and Somalia would be back to square one.

Ethiopia was deeply angered by the fact that Djibouti Peace Process produced a government for Somalia something which it always wanted to prevent. So it decided to bring it down and to undo the gains of the Process. When the TNG accepted the holding of the reconciliation conference in Kenya, Ethiopia felt that Somalia had fallen in the trap and it would give the Ethiopians again a chance to force the Somalis to submit to its will.

Few days later, an invitation letter signed by the President of the Republic of Kenya, Daniel T. arap Moi, was sent to the Somali President, Dr. Abdikassim Salad Hassan, asking him to participate in the Somali Reconciliation Conference to be held at Eldoret on 15 October 2002. The President acknowledged the receipt of the invitation, and the Somali Foreign Ministry enquired about the place the President would be seated during the opening ceremony. Protocol wise, Somalia, being a full-fledged member of the IGAD, its President would sit with the other IGAD Presidents and while the members of TNG delegation would take their seats with other delegations.

No reply to the question of where the Somali President would have his seat in the conference hall during the inaugural ceremony came. They knew that their sinister plan had been discovered and therefore preferred to ignore the question as if nothing had happened. And on the TNG side, to avoid any chance to create confusion and misinterpretation, the President decided not to attend and let the delegation, led by the Chairman of the Transitional National Assembly and the Prime Minister attend the meeting.

It is true that we were keen that the conference took place but not at the cost of our sovereignty. Ethiopia and the Kenyan Envoy, Chairman of the Technical Committee, Mwangale, had ganged up as they wanted to throw Somalia into chaos and confusion by making the President sit along with the faction leaders. Their propaganda, dubbing the TNG

as "The Arta faction" would have succeeded.

Ethiopia's abuse of power in the IGAD Technical Committee, in charge of the Somali Reconciliation Conference, continued unabated, and it was not clear if the Kenyan Government knew about the behaviour of their Envoy and if it knew, why was it closing its eyes? Both the Ethiopian delegation to the Conference and the Chairman of the Technical Committee, were in agreement to use the conference as a forum to launch propaganda against the Transitional National Government.

The opening day came, but the delegation of the TNG refused to enter the hall protesting the absence of the Somali National Flag among the flags of the IGAD member states which were hoisted on the opening day of the Somali Reconciliation Conference. All the members of the Government delegation stayed outside the conference hall calling for the Somali flag to be hoisted alongside the flags of Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan and Uganda otherwise the TNG delegation would boycott the Conference.

It must have been embarrassing for the Kenyan government not to hoist the Somali flag alongside other IGAD member states' flags. They did it purposely but it did not pass unnoticed. They had to borrow from the famous Somali nationalist, known as the "Calan side" (Flag carrier). After the flag was raised, the members of the Somali Government delegation, holding hands, walked together in the hall, singing the national song: "*Soomaaliyey Toosoy*" (You Somalis stand-up). Moved by the TNG's action all the people in the Hall, including those who did not want to see the flag, as they saw the TNG through the flag, had to stand up and to join the TNG delegation and others who also stood up and started singing "*Soomaaliyey Toosooy, Toosooy isku tiirsada, Hadba kiina Taak daran, Taageera weligiina.*"

(You Somalis, stand-up; and stand-up shoulder-to-shoulder and support those of you who are weak)

The TNG delegation proved to others that the flag was symbol of Somali nationhood. Ethiopians wanted not only

the TNG to disappear, but also the flag to be removed from the face of the earth. The Addis Ababa regime sees the five pointed star in the middle of the sky blue flag, as a threat to its rule of the Somali territory under its colonial rule.

The Ethiopian delegation in the Technical Committee of the IGAD played an active role and interfered in the day-to-day activities of the conference. In fact it campaigned for the group that used to implement the brutal agenda of denying the Somali people their right to have a government of their choice. During the early stage of the conference, the Ethiopian delegate at Eldoret even brought delegates from outside and bought them badges from the Secretariat, until former President of Kenya, Daniel arap Moi, called for an end to such malpractices. In fact, the former President reminded those who were buying the badges that there was no point having numerous people, as there were no elections for the nomination of a future President.

Originally each group was allocated a certain number of delegates to be nominated, but, as Ethiopia wanted the groups who were allied to it to have an upper hand over the TNG and its supporters, it started distributing money and promised positions if their group secured more seats in parliament and their man won the Presidency. Nothing was hidden; people spoke openly about their satisfaction with the Ethiopian generosity.

Nearly two weeks after the start of the process the Transitional National Government and the faction leaders signed a temporary Ceasefire Agreement on 27 October 2002, promising "to suspend all hostilities for the duration of the Somali national reconciliation Conference."

For the TNG, this agreement was a step forward, if it were to be implemented and peace returned to the country. But as it was just a "temporary" and not a binding document, it could easily be considered as one of the many agreements signed by the faction leaders during the decade of civil war in the country.

In fact, before the ink was dry, the faction leaders were

already fighting one another and terrorising the masses in different parts of the country including Mogadishu. If these faction leaders, who had been hanging on since the collapse of the regime in 1991, were willing to bring peace to the country, Somalia would not have suffered so much. It would have been naïve to expect to see the end of the killing and looting since the people who signed it were the same old folks. It was naïve to believe that war would stop if agreement was signed because for the faction leaders war is the means to their survival, in terms of financial income and in terms of bargaining for an alternative position.

After signing the agreement the faction leaders, carrying the title of "faction leaders" in the document, were promoted by the Technical Committee, under the influence of Ethiopia, to the rank of the "decision making body" of the conference. Soon the whole conference was converted into an anti-TNG gathering. Ethiopia was involved in all the activities of the conference, dictating what agenda to be tabled and who should attend and who should be eliminated. It grabbed the leadership of the conference and the group that implements the Ethiopian policy within Somali society.

Both the Representative of Ethiopia in the IGAD Technical Committee and the Kenyan Special Envoy, the coordinator of the conference, found a common denominator. As they manipulated the number of delegates and created a majority mainly belonging to the "Made in Ethiopia" council—SRRC—that they knew would obey their orders, the two representatives, using the name of the Technical Committee, planned to make the delegates sign a declaration renouncing the Somali claims over the territories under the Ethiopian and the Kenyan rules—namely the Ogaden and Haud and Reserve Area, given to Ethiopia by the British respectively in 1897 and 1954 and the NFD (Northern Frontier District) given to Kenya by the British in 1963. Their plan failed to materialise.

The third representative in the Technical Committee, Djibouti, was genuinely working for the success of the conference insisting that the conference should not deviate

from its right course. Unlike the other two members of the TC, Djibouti wanted the Committee to work on the basis of the mandate giving to it by the IGAD Heads of State and Government, which was to play the role of "Mediator" and its members to be neutral "mediators" and not to create new agenda. For Ethiopia and Kenya, Djibouti's role was blocking their way for misusing the conference to the detriment of the Somali national interest.

Soon many Somali leaders discovered that the conference was not heading in the right direction and certainly not in the interest of the Somali people. Among the well known Somali leaders were the former Prime Minister, Abdirizak Haji Hussein and Ali Mahdi Mohamed, former President of the Republic after the collapse of the military regime of Mohamed Siyad Barre who publicly declared their dissatisfaction with the way it was handled and the Ethiopia interfered in the conference.

Prof. Ahmed Ismail Samatar and Prof. Abdi Ismail Samatar, the latter was the Chairperson of the Harmonization Committee of the future Constitution for Somalia, strongly criticised the role of Ethiopia in the conference. In an article the two Professors wrote that "the TNG assumed the neutrality of Kenya. Sadly, this naïve presumption enabled Ethiopia and representatives of the international community to change the nature of the conference from one of reconciling the TNG and the faction leaders to a completely new one. The generation of lists representing three groups—i.e., the TNG, faction leaders, and civil society—and the appointment of a Kenyan, E. Mwangle, well known for his proclivities toward venality—set the stage for a disheveled and Ethiopian-dominated process."

"In addition the "mediators," including the graduate student who held the title of an "advisor" to the Chair, created warlord-dominated "leaders' committees" as the paramount decision-making organs of the conference. Again, there was no input from either the Somalis (except the warlords) or scholars specializing in Somali society. The upshot of all these

compounded occurrences was this: Ethiopia and its allies continued to try to gerrymander both the composition and quantity of the delegates," Professors Ahmed and Abdi Ismail Samatar said in their article.

According to the Rules of Procedure the IGAD Technical Committee for Somalia, which comprised Kenya, as the coordinator, and Djibouti and Ethiopia, were supposed to be "Mediators" even if the representatives of the "Mediator" would chair the sessions of the Plenary. Unlike the Arta Peace Process, where the management of the conference was under the Somalis, in Kenya the Somalis were reduced to passive participants and followers of the orders of the Chair, i.e., Kenya and Ethiopia.

At the very early stage, when the Transitional National Government (TNG) noticed the biased attitude of the Ethiopian delegation, a member of the Technical Committee with the tacit support of the Kenyan Envoy, the President, Dr. Abdikassim Salad Hassan, immediately brought the matter to the attention of the then President of Kenya, Mr. Moi, in his capacity as the Co-ordinator of the conference and requested that Ethiopia be removed from the Technical Committee as it could not act as an honest broker. Similar letter was also addressed to some other leaders who were interested in the Somali problem. But unfortunately, the former Kenyan President who was the coordinator of the conference took no action to remedy the situation.

In fact, being the main villain in the Somali drama, it was hard to believe that Ethiopia would do anything positive to help resolve the conflict in Somalia. But the worst insult was inflicted on the Somali people by those who were collaborating with Ethiopia and waging a proxy war on the same nation that they claimed to be part of it.

Otherwise, if Addis Ababa wanted to help Somalia to have a stable and peaceful government, it could have done it all the past years prior to the Arta Peace Process and could install anyone from among the two dozens "faction leaders."

What pains me most is that these grown up people,

mostly in the army or politics for decades, who held important positions in the former Military and dictatorial regime of Mohamed Siyad Barre, do not realise that they are used as an instrument to fulfil the agenda of Ethiopia. When they become irrelevant or when they are not useful to Ethiopian masters they will be thrown into the dump. Besides, how could they think that the Somali people would trust them being the puppets of the enemy of this nation?

The problem was that the members of international community, who were observers at the Eldoret Somali Peace and Reconciliation conference, witnessed the wrong doings of the Ethiopian delegation and its meddling in the internal affairs of the conference and yet they turned a blind eye to it. The TNG was frustrated as it saw enemies on all corners. The Chairman, together with Ethiopia's member in the Technical Committee hijacked the conference and converted the IGAD conference into a forum where the interests of the two countries were being safeguarded while the interest of promoting peace in Somalia was totally ignored.

In the meantime President Daniel T. arap Moi, lost his position in the Kenyan general election of 27 December 2002 and Mr. Mwai Kibaki came to power as the new President of Kenya. He too pledged to continue the Somali Reconciliation Conference. The incoming government appointed Ambassador Bethwel Kiplagat as its Special Envoy for Somalia to replace arap Moi's Special Envoy, Elijah Mwangale.

The new Special Envoy, too pursued the same policy as his predecessor, i.e. to achieve the political goals of Kenya and Ethiopia at the expense of the Somali interest.

Prof. Abdi Ismail Samatar mentioned in an article jointly written with Prof. Ahmed I. Samatar in the *International Journal of Somali Studies, Bildhaan*, Vol. 3, 2003, that "...on one occasion, the Ambassador (Kenya's Special Envoy Kiplagat, Ed.) confided in another diplomat that he "did not want to fight Ethiopia," adding: "This sentiment was reinforced by another statement he shared with him (Prof. Abdi) to the effect that "the interests of Ethiopia and Kenya

should be looked after during the conference."

At one time it looked that the Somalis were caught in a trap.

The new management moved the venue to the Nairobi University compound in the area of Mbagathi, that is in the outskirts of the Kenyan capital Nairobi. Many delegates were also accommodated in the students' dormitory of the compound.

To be accommodated in a student hostel was considered by many as discourteous to the delegates. In the previous town of Eldoret, the delegates stayed in a hotel. It could be both: disrespect to the delegates or diminution of the importance of the conference. But the Somali proverb says: "*laxda halkay is dhigto ayaa lagu gowracaad*" which means "the sheep is slaughtered on the spot on which it collapses." The Somalis got what they deserved. If one behaves in an undignified way, he will be treated the same way.

The Kenyan officials who were responsible for the delegates noticed the way the Somalis were behaving during their stay in Eldoret. They noted the so-called leaders holding their plates and queuing up for meals as one does in boarding school cafeteria or army mess arguing with the waiters for more food like beggars in charity homes. A person is valued in accordance with what he or she is. Had the Somalis behaved with dignity, the Kenyans would not have denied them Iftar during the Holy Month of Ramadan. Would a real leader or a genuine delegate accept such humiliation? That was indeed disgraceful action on the part of the host government and an unacceptable treatment especially to people who were fasting all day.

Mbagathi, where the delegates were accommodated was a shocking place for most of the Somalis after they encountered pigs freely grazing and roaming around in the compound. The Somalis had to accept, as they had no other choice, to live together with pigs in the same compound; and as no one respected them or listened to what they said, Somalis were forced to accept humiliation. No one who

respects the Somali culture would place pigs and Somalis in the same compound.

Being good at giving names or nicknames to anything new that surprise them, the Somalis, when they saw the place looking like breeding ground for pigs, instantly named the place "Doofaarey" (Doofaar means pig), meaning the place of pigs. Some wondered if the pigs were slaughtered and served as their lunch in the restaurant. It was lack of respect on the part of the Kenyans, not to have considered the sensitivity of the Somalis towards the animals which it is considered Haraam (untouchable) by Islam. But then, as there was no one protesting about it, the Kenyans might even think that if the restaurant served it, they would just close their eyes to it.

Ethiopia calculated that once the conference was held the TNG would be eliminated, but that plot failed because TNG had already established itself in the international forums and it was the only state organ recognised as the legitimate representative of the Somali Republic. Ethiopia tried to sabotage the TNG in each international conference whenever it was invited to attend, but their malign efforts on all such occasions failed miserably.

THE TNG POSITION

Right from the start, the Transitional National Government (TNG) directed all its efforts to build peace and stability in the country. Both in private and in public, the President of the Republic Dr. Abdikassim Salad Hassan maintained that his government was a "government of reconciliation" and that his objective was to work for the inviolability of the country's sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity. Abdikassim vigorously emphasised the need for dialogue among the Somalis to find a lasting solution to the country's problems. He met nearly with all the faction leaders in Mogadishu and outside with the exception of one or two and discussed with them all national issues including how to restore peace to the country. He met with most of the traditional leaders in the country and tried to establish contact with the officials of the administration in the Northern and North-eastern regions who claimed to have established their own separate states.

The TNG is the only government established after the fall of the government of Mohamed Syad Barre in 1991 and survived until the end of its three year term. It is the establishment of the TNG that brought back the lost national flag and the name of the Somali Republic and returned the country to the comity of nations. Of course it shocked the enemies but filled the hearts of millions of Somalis with joy

and satisfaction. What some people do not understand is the difference between the country, its sovereignty and territorial integrity and who is the President or the Prime Minister.

After a decade of difficulties, turmoil and miseries, the Arta Peace Process succeeded in setting up a Parliament, a President and Government. It might not have been the best system to establish an administration, but that was better than the one without a government. It should have paved the way for the return to normalcy leading to democratic elections. This is how things have shaped in other countries facing a civil war. In Africa we can mention here Burundi and Liberia, and in Asia Afghanistan where processes similar to that of Arta produced interim Governments until a viable political system was established in the country.

Ethiopia opposes the establishment of a government in Somalia because it believes that:

- a) A strong and united Somalia would claim the territories it is colonising; and as Ethiopia is a landlocked country, it fears that a strong Somalia will have the upper hand in the region;
- b) The Somalis who support its policy will have no chance to achieve any political position in democratic and free elections in a country where justice, law and order will prevail. The faction leaders are "lords" only as long as the war culture prevails.

At the start of the peace conference in Eldoret, the TNG refused to participate unless the Somali national flag was hoisted at the conference venue where the flags of other IGAD members were hoisted on the occasion. The flags are symbols of sovereignty, independence and membership of the country in international and regional organisations. The TNG insisted on the flag being among the sovereign countries of IGAD and the delegates of Ethiopia and Kenya wanted to deny the existence of Somalia by removing the Somali flag from its rightful place. Ironically certain so-called leaders were

sitting in the hall supporting the removal of the flag.

The TNG tirelessly made it clear to the world that it will never accept the dismemberment of the Somali Republic and insisted on the participation of the representatives from the Northwest (former British Somaliland). The Technical Committee of the conference, particularly Kenyan and Ethiopian representatives, tried to ignore the TNG's call for the participation of the breakaway region. The Chairman of Technical Committee, the Kenyan representative, Ambassador Bethwel Kiplagat, plotting with the Ethiopian representative, of Somali origin, kept the conference moving ahead without the presence of the region's representatives making the conference as it was only for the Southern region. The Kenyan and Ethiopian members of the TC tried to make the issue of the breakaway "Republic of Somaliland" as a *fait accompli* and tried to work to push forward the conference, so that it could end without the Northern Regions.

In its statement issued on 6 July 2003 in Nairobi, the TNG stated:

"The TNG has on numerous occasions, in writhing and orally, requested the Technical Committee to facilitate the participation of Northern Regions but to no avail. The absence of the traditional leaders from the northern regions de-legitimizes the entire process.

"The absence of traditional leaders from the Northern Regions of Somalia enhances the perception that, first, this conference is for Southern Somalia and second, that the North is completely a separate entity. This is inconsistent with the resolutions of the UN and regional organisations that reiterate respect for the unity and territorial integrity of Somalia."

The TNG also strongly argued that the Constitution or the Charter, was to be adopted by the future government in Somalia and could not be prepared by foreigners. It strongly asserted that it must be drafted by Somali experts and based on the 1960 Constitution. Since the start of the conference

on 15 October 2002, The Technical Committee prepared five drafts which seemed to have been compiled by Kenya and Ethiopia. In the article regarding the State and Religion the authors separate the two, but Somalia, being a Muslim country, Islam is the religion of the State and the two are inseparable. The draft mentions "Lakes" and not Seas. Somalia has no Lakes. Here it shows that Ethiopia had a hand. While the article dealing with the Powers and Functions of the President, they wrote:

"The President shall appoint persons to be High Commissioners, Ambassadors, Diplomatic or Consular representatives to foreign countries on the approval of the Council of Ministers."

Somalia is not a member of the Commonwealth; therefore the President shall appoint "Ambassadors" and not "High Commissioners", because High Commissioners are appointed by the President of a country that is a member of the Commonwealth like Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania to countries which are also members of the Commonwealth. Ambassador Kiplagat who has been a Senior Diplomat should have known the distinction between the two.

A very serious matter which Ambassador Kiplagat wanted the conference to adopt was a Charter or a Constitution that practically divides the country. He legitimised the faction leaders and named them "Leaders" in order to make their signature valid for all political decisions, including the renunciation of the claim of the Somali territories under alien occupation. In this regard, both Kiplagat and Ethiopian representative in the Technical Committee were working to create a majority of so-called "faction leaders" in the conference who could easily be persuaded to sign documents regarding the abandonment of the Somalia's claim over the Ogaden and the Northern Frontier District (NFD). They wanted to use the conference as a forum to advance their national interest, which included the dismemberment of the Somali Republic, and to recognise the breakaway "Republic

of Somaliland", to topple the Transitional National Government and to have a pledge by the conference that Somalis will never again claim the territories under alien domination.

As Ethiopia and Kenya insisted that only their draft be considered, the Committee charged with the reading of the draft constitution was asked to suspend whatever they had in their hand and compelled to read the 5th Draft prepared by Ambassador Kiplagat and his allies. They even rejected the report prepared by the Chairman of Harmonisation committee, Prof. Abdi Ismail Samatar, because Ethiopia did not like Prof Abdi. For Ethiopia a person who cares about Somalia's interest, is a traitor and anti-Ethiopia. But one thing is sure; if Ethiopia calls a Somali person a "good friend" he is definitely implementing a plan detrimental to the Somali interest." And the vice-versa is also true.

Ethiopia did not like Prof. Abdi's harmonisation report which the remaining members of the Technical Committee and the international partners commended for its overall professional quality, more particularly, the draft charter that could cater to the common interest of the Somali people. Most of the Somalis in the country and abroad, including Kenya, supported the Charter of the Harmonisation Committee. There was no logic in not supporting that. The people who worked on it were highly qualified scholars, who knew very well the custom and culture of the Somali people.

The Ethiopian representative, who was supposed to be a "mediator" and whose Government had been continuously claiming to accept whatever the Somalis decided for themselves and their country, walked out of the meeting before reading the report or even hearing its verbal presentation. That action of the Ethiopian Ambassador testifies that the document prepared by Prof. Abdi Ismail Samatar was definitely good for the Somalis, because if it were detrimental to the Somali interest, Ethiopia would have endorsed it. In fact, as I said earlier, Ethiopian Ambassador in the Technical Committee called Professor Abdi Ismail "traitor" and we know that all the real traitors are their good

friends.

The Chief Counsel, Chambers of Justice, Ababu Namwamba, Advocate, described in his critique prepared for NOVIB-Somalia the Charter Drafted by Kiplagat among other things as follow:

"My third and final preliminary observation is a conclusive advisory: the document as drafted is, with all due respect to the drafters, such a flawed piece of draftsmanship that to attempt to ascribe to it the term "charter" would be a classical misnomer. The draft reflects badly on the intelligence, commitment and wisdom of IGAD, the delegates and all other parties that have invested so much time, thought and effort in the peace negotiations. The mere act of discussing this draft, let alone considering its adoption, would be a bitter insult to those involved and would amount to washing down the drain the months of gruelling work that has gone into the negotiation for the rebirth of the Somali Republic."

This was the kind of Charter Mr. Kiplagat and his ally Ethiopian Ambassador to the Technical Committee wanted the Somali to have. Advocate Ababu Namwamba suggested "the best way out of this constitutional rut is to discard the draft in its entirety and convene a panel of experts to proceed on a retreat to come up with a draft worth presenting to the delegation for discussion."

As I said earlier the Conference was proposed by the 9th Summit of the IGAD Heads of State and Government in January 2002 and named former President Moi as a co-ordinator of the frontline states—Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya—to continue the peace process in Somalia. Ten days later, on 26 October 2002, the Technical Committee issued the Rules of Procedure as follow:

- i) "Mediator" means the IGAD Technical Committee for Somalia and the representatives of the mediator who chairs the sessions of the Plenary or the Reconciliation Committee.

- ii) "IGAD" Technical Committee" means the IGAD Frontline states, the IGAD Secretariat and the Somali Advisory Group.
- iii) "Conference" means the Eldoret Phase of the Somalia National Reconciliation Process.

The IGAD 9th Summit of Heads of State and Government in Khartoum, "decided to hold reconciliation Conference on Somalia in Nairobi within two months, under President Moi as a coordinator of the frontline states to continue the peace process in Somalia and to report to IGAD"

The Heads of State and Government's Resolution named Kenya "as a coordinator of frontline states to continue the peace process" and did not decide who should chair the Conference; as it was obvious that, since the conference was for the Somalis to reconcile, it was left to them to chair it. But the Technical Committee having the intention to steer the conference to the direction of their choice and to implement their national agenda, they have included in the Rules of Procedure an article (see (i)) that gives them the power to chair the sessions of the Plenary and the Reconciliation Committee. In fact the correct description of the Technical Committee is in Article (ii) of the Rules of Procedure.

It was realised that the Technical Committee neither mediated nor reconciled but destroyed the relative peace that existed among some groups. The Chair and its ally Ethiopia embarked on dividing the people as much as possible, setting one against the other and the conference became the site of confrontation and not of reconciliation as the Leaders of the IGAD hoped to see when they were charging Kenya's former President with the task "as a coordinator of the frontline states to continue the peace process in Somalia etc."

At the outset of the conference, the TNG called for the ownership of the conference to be transferred to the Somalis. It was not correct that at a Somali conference there had to be a Somali translation of what the so-called "Chair" was

saying to the participants who were all Somalis and each word that the Somalis said, even to each other, had to be translated into English. Professors Ahmed and Abdi Ismail Samatar commented: "As the conference commenced, non-Somalis started to make the agenda."

Djibouti, also a member of the Technical Committee, dissociated itself from the biased and autocratic manner in which the Chair, in collaboration with Ethiopia, was conducting the work of the conference.

"Bizarre as it may sound, during this conference there have been more divisions," Djibouti Ambassador to Somalia, Ismail Goulal Boudine, told a press conference in Nairobi after withdrawing from the conference.

Answering a question put to him by Novib regarding the withdrawal of Djibouti from the Technical Committee, Ambassador Ismail said:

"It is a clear and definite withdrawal not only from the technical committee but any other structure within the framework of the frontline States, because we consider that they have failed and we must have the courage to admit this and then pass the responsibility to the international community or some African countries (or even the African Union central organ). In any case, if this remains within the Frontline States, Djibouti will not take part."

Ambassador Ismail said: "In fact, we were already pessimistic when we saw the approach of the technical committee, contrary to our initial mandate to build on the previous achievements that the conference would start from the scratch. According to us, this diversion resulted in confrontation."

In a letter sent to the Executive Secretary of the IGAD, Dr. Atalla Al-Bashir, dated 16th October 2003, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Djibouti, Ali Abdi Farah confirmed the withdrawal of Djibouti from the Technical Committee and said:

"Most importantly, it was crucial to ensure that the process be as inclusive as possible for any political agree-

ment that is perceived as disenfranchising a Group of leaders, a region or a section of the Somali participants will certainly ruin the hope of establishing an all inclusive, broad based Government in conformity with the mandate that was given to the IGAD Council of Minister on Somalia by the Summit held in Khartoum in January 2002."

"We repeatedly urged the Chairman of the Technical Committee, along with the international observers, to demonstrate the required level of neutrality, to be perceived as a honest broker that is best positioned to reconcile and bring together contending parties".

The Minister added:

"Regrettably, the Chairman has unilaterally decided to make moves that stand in eloquent and stark contrast with the mandate of the IGAD Technical Committee. He used his powers to frustrate the desire of the Somalis to engage into a meaningful dialogue that can enable them to find a comprehensive political solution, one that can achieve lasting peace in Somalia."

Foreign Minister of Djibouti also said:

"Mr. Kiplagat, virtually alone, in the Technical Committee exercising an evident desire to derail the collective efforts of Somalis, IGAD and the international community, has left the process with appalling problems and challenges."

"As a direct consequence of the facts stated above", the Minister said in his letter, "Djibouti can not take the responsibility of endorsing a process that, if not corrected, will certainly trigger renewed fighting between Somali brothers and revive clan hatred and division and take us back in the extremely volatile political situation of 1992."

The Minister sent his letter to the IGAD Executive Secretary and copies to the Chairman of the IGAD Council of Ministers, Dr. Mustafa Othman Ismail, Foreign Minister of the Sudan and the representatives of the African Union, United Nations, Arab League, United States, EU Member States and European Commission.

For nearly a year, and a half the only document that the

Chairmen of the IGAD Technical Committee, first Mwangale and later Kiplagat, both Kenyans, in collaboration with the Ethiopian representative in the Committee, could come up with was the so-called "Ceasefire Agreement" signed by the "Leaders committee". The agreement turned out to be a flop as it was broken in to time by the group supported by Ethiopia.

11

SPLIT IN THE TNG

The plot to overthrow the Transitional National Government, started when earlier the invitation to the President of the Somali Republic arrived from the Kenya's Special Envoy and not from the President of the Republic, H.E. Mr. Daniel T. arap Moi. But any how, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kenya realised that the TNG understood the message and made the necessary protocol correction. That was a blow to those who probably were behind the game or collaborated with them.

The letter was not asking the President to send a TNG delegation, but invited him to personally attend, as a participant, in the conference, like other factions. That was Ethiopian hope to reduce the TNG to a mere faction, as they kept calling it "Arta faction" and not Somali Government.

The President ignored the intention of the authors of the letter and took the essence of it. Together with the Chairman of the Transitional National Assembly, Abdalla Deerow Issak and the Prime Minister, Hassan Abshir Farah, the President nominated a 65 member delegation headed by the Chairman of the National Assembly and including the Prime Minister to represent the TNG at the Somali Reconciliation Conference to be convened at Eldoret, Kenya, on 15 October 2002. They were the two top most leaders of the Transitional National Government, after the President, and were chosen to

demonstrate that the TNG's aim was to give the conference the maximum importance.

The groups sponsored by Ethiopia complained about the absence of the President from the conference and the Somalis knew that these elements were being asked by Ethiopia to do so. The TNG's position was correct and only on very special occasions, like the inauguration or witnessing the signature of significant documents, together with other Heads of State and Government of the IGAD or the Organisation of the African Union, the President could be present. In other meetings the Government is represented by delegations appointed by the President.

The TNG delegation played its role very positively and showed high level of leadership at the beginning of the conference. At a certain moment when things were going wrong for the conference, it was the TNG delegation which was commended by the international community as the most organised, responsible and serious delegation to help to find solution. It was true because the TNG saw the conference as a vitally important process to maintain the independence, sovereignty and unity of the Somali Republic, while for the others, the factions and their supporters saw the positive solution of the conflict as a threat to their interests.

As in any other conference of similar nature, the official delegation, from time to time, goes back to the country for consultation with the government to evaluate the results so far achieved and to plan new strategy for the next stage of the conference. The others go to where their base is to consult with their supporters. Some are recalled by those who command them to receive new instructions.

Departing from this routine practice, President Abdikassim Salad Hassan, sent a written message to the leaders of the TNG delegation, Abdalla Deerow Issaq, Chairman of the TNA and Hassan Abshir Farah, Prime Minister, asking them to return to the country for consultation and to exchange views on the progress of the conference and other related matters.

The behaviour of the two highest authorities of the TNG was rather unwarranted. Instead of discussing the matter discretely with the President, they publicly and angrily behaved like people who had erred and feared being recalled from the conference. They appeared to ask "We are doing good work, we are doing this and that, and we are working in the interest of the nation, why are we recalled?"

It was a shame that they did not think in a positive way. Travelling for "consultation" should have come from them, as they could see for themselves that even the faction leaders were going back and forth, some to Addis Ababa and some to their bases wherever they were. They should have understood that Eldoret or Kenya was not their permanent place and it was also awkward to be seen not going home for consultation.

The unnecessary harsh reaction of the two leaders to the letter of the President could not have been motivated by the mere fact that they had been asked to come to Mogadishu for consultation. There must have been some other reasons behind to warrant the refusal to return to the country, rather than "the fear of the landlords who were not paid the rents of their houses" or "they were busy with the work of the conference". But responsible leaders understand that the consultation with the headquarters, from time to time is also part of the business.

What they did not understand was that their work was important and their presence was worthwhile, because they represented the strongest participant in the conference—the government. The respect the delegates receive is not personal but is due to the organisation they represent.

Their refusal to come home for consultation created an unpleasant situation for the Transitional National Government particularly for the President. Their action amounted to split in the TNG. Those who wanted to undermine the existence of Transitional National Government saw a window of opportunity opening up. They saw the crack in the leadership as the beginning of the end of the TNG. All the

enemies of the TNG stood behind the breakaway group led by the Chairman of the Parliament and the Prime Minister.

Ethiopia started pouring money at the conference venue to buy supporters among the members of the TNG Parliament and government to reinforce the rebel camp. They thought that the time of the disintegration of the Transitional National Government and the end of Abdikassim's era had finally arrived. The Chairman of the Technical Committee, Ambassador Kiplagat openly worked to destroy President Abdikassim Salad Hassan and what he represented. Kiplagat embarked on marginalising and harassing the members of the TNG delegation who supported President Abdikassim, making Hassan Abshir Farah and those who followed him the only legitimate delegates.

Kiplagat and the Ethiopian representative in the IGAD Technical Committee, who had already succeeded in dividing the Somalis into various antagonistic groups, found the best chance to demolish the first government established after ten years of no administration in the country and in consequence to bury the fruits of the Arta Peace Process. They managed to garner support of the international community present at the meeting as partners and providers of the financial support to the Kenyan Government for running the conference.

Here the Somalis were also divided into three categories:

- a) Those who fight for nationhood and sovereignty and maintain their dignity, integrity and respect;
- b) Those who want to gain power and are willing to pay any price; and
- c) Those that have their mouth always open and follow whoever puts something in.

In the past the people acting as the last category were known to be Abyssinians and not Somalis. In 1896, the British Assistant Resident of Zaila, Lieut. J.L. Harrington during a tour to a part of the Somali territory, met in one of the villages with the Ughaz of the tribe who offered him a

couple of goats as present, but the British official declines to accept the animals from the Ughaz. He reported to his superiors:

"In the course of the discussion, the Ughaz dropped the remarks that: when the English visit his country, they say they want nothing, whereas when the Abyssinians come, they always say their mouths are empty and come to him to fill them."^{*}

Having in their hands the running of the conference and the propaganda machinery of the conference under their control, the Chair and Ethiopia's delegate in the Technical Committee also succeeded in marginalising Djibouti, a member of the frontline states. They created their own TNG, led by the Chairman Abdalla Deerow and the Prime Minister Hassan Abshir, the two dissident leaders and made them so powerful that if they needed something from the conference management they would easily get it by a simple letter signed by them to show the people that Abdikassim had no more power.

Probably the letter of the President could have been just an excuse for them to exhibit their inner feeling towards their own government spirit that they may have been entertaining while being part of the government.

The two leaders were doing every thing that the Chair of the Technical Committee and Ethiopia wanted them to do. The Chair, Kiplagat and the Ethiopian delegate to the Technical Committee were in the meantime using the names and the signatures of the rebellious Chairman of the Somali National Parliament and the Prime Minister to legitimise documents and declarations alleged to have been approved by the fake Plenary Session of the Somali Reconciliation Conference.

The Chairman of the TNA, Abdallah Deerow and the

^{*} Mohamed Osman Omar, *The Scramble in the Horn of Africa*, (Mogadishu), Somali Publication (2001), p. 117.

Prime Minister, Hassan Abshir, consciously joined with Ethiopia and the factions in the subversive activities against the official TNG position. They signed any document prepared by Ethiopia, no matter how detrimental it was to the national interest. Of course, once they broke with the Transitional National Government they had no other alternative, like most of those who crossed the border and turned their sword against their own people. Ethiopia knows that the Somalis are not known for great patriotism so they welcome them to Addis Ababa as it serves their aim to destabilise Somalia.

Taking advantage of the split in the TNG, the Chairman of the Technical Committee, Kiplagat kept claiming that all that which was opposed by the official TNG was approved by the so-called "leaders committee." The pro-Ethiopian groups, including SRRC and others behaved as instruments of Ethiopian policy aimed at destroying the Somali nationhood; never questioning the motives behind the Addis Ababa action. Some of them thought that it was Ethiopia that could make them "king" while others were just selling their services for earning butter for their bread and had no political ambitions or had no chance to get anything from the Process. Ethiopia spends a lot of money to keep the groups under its control in order to have a sizeable number of Somalis to oppose the TNG or to use them, if necessary, in areas where they can make the quorum to achieve the desired objectives.

The Transitional National Government was put in a tight corner. The power behind the opposition to its policy was so strong that it could hardly cope with it. Even the delegates of the TNG at the conference were facing harsh treatment by the Chairman and Ethiopian representative in the Technical Committee. To discredit Abdikassim, the TC Chairman and Ethiopia openly supported Hassan Abshir and Deerow and gave them VIP treatment. The Technical Committee in conjunction with Ethiopia completely isolated the President and gave Hassan Abshir and Deerow camp far greater importance than President Abdikassim.

Here the proverb "Ishiis laga arkaa; Ushiis lagu tumaa" (Seen through his eyes; is beaten with his own stick) comes to mind. Thinking that President Abdikassim was unable to take action against them, Hassan Abshir and Deerow not only acted in defiance of the official policy of the TNG but also accused the President of sabotaging the reconciliation conference openly siding with Ethiopian and Kenya's Envoys who were already using the conference as a means to destroy the independence, unity and territorial integrity of the Somali Republic.

Having brought under their wings Hassan Abshir and Deerow together with their followers, a number of delegates to the conference and some members of the TNA, Ambassador Kiplagat, using the name of the Technical Committee, dictated the agenda. He claimed the approval of the articles of the so-called Charter or any signing of political statements/declarations affecting the fate of the Somali nation by the "leaders committee" even if there were no meetings or no official TNG delegates present. To make it look or sound legal all that was done, illegally or with the connivance of fake representatives, the manipulators of the conference only needed to place the alleged "decisions" in the conference's website called the Somali Reconciliation Conference. Even when the conference was officially suspended, Kiplagat kept placing daily agenda on the Website, showing "business as usual." The agenda was like a fixed menu of a restaurant: The meeting of the "Arbitration Committee", although it had never arbitrated anything the item 'time for Lunch,' for some, was more important than what was happening in the conference itself. For the organisers of the conference this kind of activities helped them to justify the expenses to those who provided the funds for the conference. The Chairman could show the balance sheet of the budget but could hardly claim any positive result. On the contrary, all that could be seen was divergence rather than convergence among the delegates.

At one point President Abidkassim felt that enough was

enough, and called on the Transitional National Assembly to take action against those who were collaborating with the forces working for the dismemberment of the TNG and trying to throw Somalia back to the situation before the Arta Peace Process. In other words, the idea was to call for the vote of no-confidence, in order to strip the positions that the Chairman of the TNA, Abdalla Deerow Issaq and the Prime Minister, Hassan Abshir Farah were holding, as they had publicly betrayed the confidence and the trust bestowed on them. They had violated their oath that they had taken by placing their hands on the Holy Qur'aan and swore to obey the laws of the land and to defend the country and the people of Somalia.

The Parliament met for the purpose of dealing with the rebels, but while speeches justifying the dismissal of the two leaders were forcefully delivered, and many MPs were already geared-up to vote against them, negotiations and mediation were going on behind the scene to cool the passion and in a few days, the mood changed and the duo escaped from a possible dismissal, and no confidence vote took place after all the efforts to reconvene the session of the Parliament. Some of the parliamentarians were furious about the outcome, considering the damage the two leaders were causing in the Nairobi conference by aligning themselves with the anti-TNG forces. For some the replacement of the two rebels was not only to protect the national interest, but also to safeguard the unity of the Transitional National Government.

It was a Somali culture to apply mediation (dhexdhaxaadin), apology (Hooyasho) or reparation given (Xaal la bixiyo) to settle differences. But in old days, once settled, differences, even in the case of causing death of people, hardly recurred. But in today's Somalia or even in the world, all such acts are used as a means to achieve certain goals.

Those who mediated might have genuinely hoped to reconcile the sides, but immediately after returning to Kenya, Hassan Abshir and Abdalla Deerow, continued their claim of

being the representatives of the TNG and even intensified their campaign against President Abdikassim. With the moral and material support of Mr. Kiplagat and Ethiopia, Hassan Abshir and Deerow were allowed to bring to their side, any number of members of the Transitional National Assembly who were in Mogadishu and considered to be on the side of the President.

The two top leaders embarked on an open political war against the same Government that they were supposed to represent at the National Reconciliation Conference in Kenya. They were strongly supported in their campaign to stage a *coup d'état* against President Abdikassim Salad Hassan.

Although he was the CEO (Chief Executive Officer) of the conference, Ambassador Kiplagat's decisions were always, influenced by the Ethiopian delegate in the Technical Committee of the conference who played the role of a super-power. In fact, even the International Committee, some of whose members were not sympathetic towards the Transitional National Government, realised Addis Ababa's meddling in the affairs of the conference.

The *coup* of Chairman of the Transitional National Assembly, Abdalla Deerow and the Prime Minister Hassan Abshir seemed to be successful when the Chairman of the Technical Committee, Kiplagat, allowed them to bring to Nairobi about fifty members of the Transitional Parliament who were in Mogadishu. To make the pro-government members of parliament and ministers jealous, and to attract more, Hassan Abshir claimed that "the majority of the parliamentarians were in Nairobi and not in Mogadishu" implying that Abdikassim had no support of the majority of the members of the Assembly.

But despite all their machinations, the anti-establishment groups could not achieve any meaningful results. Because the loyal members of the TNA and the TNG had their feet on the ground and faithfully defended the sovereignty of the country. They refused to bow to the pressure of the enemies of the people.

In Nairobi, the Loyalists were looked down upon and sometimes humiliated by the officials of the Office of the Chairman of the Technical Committee. But they stood by their oath to work for the interest of the Somali nation and maintained their dignity and honour unlike those who had given themselves up to Kiplagat and Ethiopian junior "Diplomat" and security officers at the Ethiopian Embassy in Nairobi.

The amazing thing is that the two leaders of the Government delegation to the Somali Peace and Reconciliation conference in Kenya became the fire to be used for burning their own homes. Many people, Somalis and others, questioned the reason behind the action of the former Chairman of the TNA and the former Prime Minister of the country. Many believed that they were just hungry for power.

Soon after the start of the Conference Abdalla Deerow and Hassan Abshir, probably calculated that the TNG's chance to come back to power would be nil and believed that the only way for them to have position in the future administration was to join the anti-TNG camp controlled by Ethiopia and supported by Kiplagat. Unfortunately, not only they, but even some people in the so-called "civil society" considered Ethiopia as the only power center that could decide the future of Somalia.

For those who remember the history of reconciliation of the Somali conflict know that Ethiopia managed nine out of twelve conferences, and none saw successful conclusion. Each conference organised by them was aborted by the Ethiopian authorities. Ethiopia has always achieved great success in dividing Somalia and the Somalis. The latest, the division of the TNG ranks, was the most important act in their endeavour to demolish the dreams of the Somali people.

Now, neither they are respected by those who used them nor by the Government they were part of. Besides they also lost the respect of the people they claimed to represent. The people who lost most are the ones who believed that the

dissident leaders could help them gain positions in the next administration that ended up in the streets of Nairobi after being thrown out of the hotels. Here it is pertinent to apply the famous Arab proverb: "*Damac kathiir, ya muut fi'ttariiq*" (Too much greed lands one in the street).

12

ETHIOPIA EXPOSED

The Transitional National Government has stood up against all odds, both internally and externally. So far it has succeeded in resisting the internal difficulties posed by the groups that opposed the government since its inception and placed all kind of obstacles in the way of government to restore law and order in Mogadishu. Although it has failed to bring the regions that opted out of the Arta Peace Process, such as the Northwest, (self-declared Republic of Somaliland) and the so-called the Punt-land State under its command, in one form or another, the TNG so far has succeeded in providing the string that binds the country together against stronger forces that have been threatening to break the republic into pieces.

Since the beginning of the Somali Conference in October 2002, the TNG has been insisting that the host country, Kenya should also invite the Northern Regions (former British Somaliland) to the conference to make it inclusive in accordance with the IGAD resolutions.

When they were endorsing the peace initiative for Somalia of President of Djibouti, Ismail Omar Guelleh, the Heads of State and Government of IGAD had noted:

"that some parties in Somalia, including the self administering areas of the country with relative peace and stability, have not participated in the national reconciliation efforts"

and in their resolution of the 8th Summit, the IGAD Heads of State and Government on 22 November 2000 urged:

"The Transitional Government and all parties and administrations of Somalia to create the environment that would bring into the process those that did not participate at the Arta conference with the objective of widening and deepening the process of national reconciliation."

The 9th Summit the IGAD Heads of State and Government on Somalia dated 11 January 2002 decided:

"to hold reconciliation Conference on Somalia in Nairobi within two months, under President Moi as a coordinator of the front states to continue the peace process in Somalia and to report to IGAD Chairman"

Ethiopia's opposition to the Arta Peace Process was based on the fact that the conference was not "inclusive" and it repeatedly called for a new and inclusive conference. Ethiopia's argument was not entirely baseless as the TNG could not expect to achieve any meaningful solution to the country's problem without involving all parts of the country in the national reconciliation efforts. It was President Abdikassim who approached the former President of Kenya, Daniel arap Moi, during the former's visit to Nairobi on 16 June 2001 and asked him to host a reconciliation conference in Kenya.

But with deep regret, Ethiopia and Kenya, two of the three members of the so-called front line states, forming the Technical Committee, deviated the conference from its original course which was, as the above paragraph of the IGAD clearly states, *to continue the peace process*, to a completely new conference.

The third member of the Technical Committee, namely Djibouti, realised the mismanagement of the conference and the abuse of office by the other two members, but its call for the respect of the IGAD decisions was not heeded by the other two members. The Media and Cultural Centre of the

Conference were monopolised by the Chairman and the Ethiopian delegate and the pro-Ethiopian participants.

The TNG continued to draw the attention of the international community including the representatives of African and Arab organisations present at the conference as observers who were not only ignoring the statements of the government, but sometimes even accusing the TNG of sabotaging the conference. It was frustrating for the TNG, because it felt that the referees too were taking part in the game, and siding with those who were using the conference to undermine the sovereignty and the territorial integrity of Somalia as well as harassing the Transitional National Government.

For the TNG this was the case. It had to fight alone against all odds. It had a right case but no one was there to listen to it. The conference was reduced to a forum to stage a *coup d'état* against the TNG and not a conference where people should reconcile. It produced more differences than reconciliation. Besides fighting for the maintenance of the unity and the territorial integrity of the country, the TNG had the problem of its own survival. Certain people believed that the condition for winning a seat in the future government was to oppose the TNG and to be on board of the train run by Ethiopia. But that notion is wrong, because a politician should know that a position given to him by a foreign power without the consensus of the Somali people will be hard to enjoy it.

President Abdikassim kept writing to the world leaders about the difficulties Somalia was facing due to the interference in its affairs by its biggest neighbour, Ethiopia. Unfortunately neither Africans nor others gave due consideration to his appeal to remove Ethiopia from the Technical Committee as it was only adding fuel to the fire instead of helping to bring about peace among the Somalis. Even a common man could notice the destructive role of the Addis Ababa, but the international community turned a deaf ear to his request for help. Their attitude was, although not

openly or officially pronounced, to support anything that would remove Abdikassim from the power.

Certain visitors to Mogadishu in their conversation with him did not show normal courtesy usually extended to the leader of a country. They talked as if they doubted his intention by raising issues, such as, whether he would relinquish power if a new person is elected by the reconciliation conference. The President's answer was always "yes", without ambiguity. The problem was not the questions as such, but what was behind the questions. They wanted to apply psychological pressure on him.

His perseverance and patience paid off when the Panel of Experts set up in accordance with resolution 1474 (2003) of the United Nations mandated to investigate the violations of the arms embargo in Somalia, exposed in its Report dated 24 February 2003:

"Ethiopia has played an overt military role in Somalia. Not only has Ethiopia been a major source of weapons for a number of Somali groups, Ethiopia has also invaded and occupied parts of Somalia. Ostensibly, and perhaps justifiably, the first direct military involvement of Ethiopia in Somalia, in 1996 and 1997, was in response to the activities of al-Ittihad al-Islami, including terrorist attacks in Ethiopia. Ethiopia's incursions crushed al-Ittihad's military capacity. Since then, however, the Government has used the threat of al-Ittihad as an excuse for Ethiopian involvement in Somali internal affairs, rather than for legitimate national security concerns."

The Panel of Experts confirmed what President Abdikassim was saying since the establishment of the TNG in August 2000. But the most unfortunate thing is that even when the Panel identified the culprit, the United Nations Security Council failed to reprimand, let alone condemn, the violators of the UN resolution. In his statement dated 14 April 2003, the Security Council President, Ambassador Adolfo Aguilar Zinser of Mexico made the usual, vague,

diplomatic statement avoiding to name the violator. He said:

"Council Members expressed their deep concern about this continued flow of weapons and military equipment from sources outside Somalia and called on all Member States to support and cooperate with the Panel in the implementation of its mandate."

"The Council members reiterated their deep concern about the persistent flow of weapons and ammunition to Somalia; stressed the responsibility of all Member States to fully implement the arms embargo in Somalia; and reiterated its call upon all Somali and regional parties, as well as government officials and other actors contacted outside the region to cooperate with Panel of Experts in the discharge of its mandate. (Press Release SC/7849 Afr/690 of 20/08/2003)"

At the head of the Somali delegation President Abdikassim Salad Hassan attended the Second Ordinary Assembly of the African Union Heads of State and Government held in Maputo, Mozambique, from 10 to 12 July 2003.

Before he delivered the speech, the President was approached by friendly delegates who were trying to arrange a meeting between him and Prime Minister Meles Zenawi. It was same old tune that we heard from the Ethiopians when the President was in Durban, South Africa, for the OAU/AU Summit in 2002. On that occasion too the same friends opined that Meles was genuinely willing to have a meeting with the Somali President to discuss matters of mutual concern. The Durban meeting between President Abdikassim and Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, took place in the presence of the Head of State, who was involved in the Process. But the outcome was zero. Meles used the tactic to create a false impression that the two sides had positive encounter making it difficult for the Somali President to make statement against Ethiopia. Having that in mind, the President was not in the mood to accept any false rapprochement. However, he told the mediators that he accepted the idea,

but only after he gave his speech at the plenary meeting of the Heads of State and Government.

In his short speech he reminded the African leaders about the role of Somalia in the African liberation struggle. He also spoke about the difficulties Somalia was facing due to the civil war and the naked aggression and the interference in its internal affairs by the government of Meles Zenawi. He quoted the Report of the Panel of Experts "*mandated to collect independent information on violations of the arms embargo on Somalia*" in which it is said:

"Not only has Ethiopia been a major source of weapons for a number of Somali groups, Ethiopia has also invaded and occupied parts of Somalia." (Page 17)

"In March 2001, Ethiopia sponsored the creation of the Somalia Reconciliation and Restoration Council during meetings at Awasa, Ethiopia, in large part to undermine the Transitional National Government, which it believed to be hostile to Ethiopian interests". (Page 19)

Strangely enough, the same paragraph in the Report of the Panel of Experts has been changed with the following version:

"After the establishment of the Transitional National Government, Ethiopia helped to establish the Somali Reconciliation and Restoration Council, which is made up of factions hostile to the Transitional National Government and its allies. (S/2003/223—page 20)

The line: "*..... in large part to undermine the Transitional National Government, which it believed to be hostile to Ethiopian interests*" has been deleted. (Page 19).

The following paragraph appears on page 13 of the Report of the Panel of Experts:

In March 2001, after extensive deliberation in Arta, Djibouti, a nominal central government, the Transitional National Government, was established, which is accredited by the United Nations and a number of regional organizations,

such as the African Union and the League of Arab States, but so far enjoys little bilateral recognition.

Just for the information of the UN Panel of Experts, the Transitional National Government was not established in March 2001. If that was the case, the President, Dr. Abdikassim Salad Hassan would not have been at the Millennium 2000 Summit and the General Assembly of the United Nations in September 2000.

The Ethiopian Prime Minister, Meles Zenawi, knew the Somali President would speak and he may even have had an advance knowledge of the content of the speech, as the copy of each speech was passed on to the Secretariat of the AU prior to the delivery for the translators' to read it while the speech is made.

While waiting for the moment of the President's speech, Meles might have had hundreds of cigarettes, puffing one after the other, in the "Smoking area" of the conference building. He may have even been given hint as to when the Somali President was scheduled to speak. As he wanted to make sure that he would not miss the President's speech, Ethiopia's Prime Minister, Meles Zenawi, took his chair and followed the speech until the end. He then pressed for his right to reply. The Chairman, the President of the Republic of Mozambique, Joaquim Alberto Chissano, gave Meles Zenawi the floor.

He looked physically calm and composed, but inside, he must have been burning due to the exposition of his government's role by the Somali President. After the preliminaries, Meles boasting like a Super Power, said:

"What he is saying is not true. "He wants me to recognise him (turning his eyes on the Somali President); that is what he wants".

The Somali Government has been complaining about Ethiopia's interference in its internal affairs to the African leaders and through the international media, but this time the complaint was substantiated by the Report of the Panel

of Experts of the United Nations.

Meles was among the official guests present at Arta, Djibouti, for the investiture of the President of Somalia on 27 August 2000. In their comment about his attitude at that time, Professors Ahmed I. Samater and Abdi Ismail Samatar, stated:

"The first signal of trouble was the transparently unhappy face of the Ethiopian Prime Minister, Meles Zenawi, among the dignitaries during the inaugural ceremony to congratulate Abdiqasim Salad. In retrospect, Zenawi's presence belied his hidden agenda about what he desired to become of Somalia."

At the African Summit in Maputo in July 2003, the Ethiopian Prime Minister finally revealed his true colour declaring in front of African Heads of State and Government that he "will not recognise" the Somali government, while the AU, the mother organisation of the Continent, recognised it, and each and every African leader present at the Summit, wished the Somali people well and prayed that Somalia will hopefully come out of the dilemma. The Ethiopian leader gave the impression as if the survival of the Somali Nation depended only on his recognition.

He must have been looking at his right in the Conference Hall, where a Somali delegation led by its President and the Somali national flag over the table, was sitting and pretended not to notice the same flag among the African Nations' flags in the hall and the same flying outside the conference building and in the streets of the city of Maputo. He also forgot that he himself had welcomed the President of the Somali Republic in Addis Ababa at the Extraordinary Summit of the African Union early February 2003 and played for him the Somali national anthem.

At that time, also the Ethiopian Cultural Troupe welcomed the Somali President and his delegation with a Somali song entitled "*Keene Gar-darrar*"? (Which one of us is wrong?).

The TNG has been accepted by the entire world. It is a full-fledged member of the United Nations, the African Union, the League of Arab States, the Organisation of Islamic Conference, the Non Aligned Movement, the Cen Sat (Sahel and Sahara) organization and the regional organization IGAD. But if the Panel of Experts of the United Nations underestimated or downplayed the relations of the Somali Republic with the members of all these organizations, then the one may conclude that it is again dancing to the tune of Ethiopia and other enemies of the Somali nation.

For the Somali people, there is nothing more important than being among the family of nations, i.e. being member of the international community. As for bilateral relations of countries it is the prerogative of each country. It would also depend on the agenda of the concerned country. Sometimes the world recognises a government created abroad, i.e. a "government in exile".

Somali crisis was similar to the crisis in Afghanistan and Liberia. In all the three countries the people who claimed to be defending the peoples' rights were fighting to take power and all of them successfully toppled their Heads of State in 1991. In Afghanistan, Najibullah, in Liberia Samuel Doe and in Somalia Mohamed Siyad Barre, were removed from power by the barrel of the gun. But in all the three countries, those who removed the incumbent governments failed to establish an alternative and better administration for over a decade. They only caused more hardship to the population they claimed to be representing. Their succession was marked by death and destruction.

In Afghanistan a President was imposed from outside during a small conference held in Germany. The conference was small in size but it had the support of the only super power on earth, the United States of America and other allied governments, especially the West, just lined up to declare their support. Similarly in Liberia, the incumbent President, Charles Taylor was not only forced out of power but also out of his own country. Although in both countries the govern-

ments imposed by foreign countries did not have the overwhelming support of their populations, they were protected by foreign forces and all the necessary funds for their reconstruction were promised. While in Somalia the Government elected by much bigger congress of the representatives of the people was not even given the right to function properly, simply, because it was not blessed or certified by the West, particularly by the United States of America.

The TNG did not get help for the disarmament of the militias and freelance armed gangs and the necessary international support to fulfil its mandate. On the contrary, the Transitional National Government was attacked from all sides with guns supplied by its biggest neighbour to those who were opposing the establishment of any kind of government in Somalia.

It was the only government which, after a decade of chaos, was elected through the best possible democratic system, at a highly transparent process, witnessed also by the United Nations and the regional organisations. Unlike those arranged for Afghanistan and Liberia, Somalia's conference was attended by nearly 3000 people from all walks of life. Unfortunately, the new government, did not win the support of the Western Powers, and some forces are still engaged in efforts to destroy it by all means.

The difference between the conferences on Afghanistan and Liberia and that of Somalia, was that while the former had the backing of the big and powerful states even though the participation was small, the latter was hosted by the poorest and smallest state on earth. So, importance was not based on how democratic the process was, but who arranged it and who supported it.

13

THE TURNING POINT

Ambassador Kiplagat, who behaved like a robot controlled by Ethiopia worked throughout to undermine the peace and reconciliation process. He and his ally, Ethiopia, frustrated and even humiliated President Abdikassim when on 15 September 2003, they completely ignored his presence in Nairobi even though he had been persuaded to come to Nairobi by the international community, particularly the members of the IGAD Partners Forum. While waiting in his hotel to be informed about the programme, Kiplagat declared that all the works regarding the "Charter" which, in fact, was the most contentious part of the whole process, had been concluded.

This was a deliberate attempt to undermine the TNG and especially President Abdikassim. It surprised and angered the international community which appreciated Abdikassim's return to Nairobi and viewed it as a positive move. The President had accepted the invitation to return to Nairobi with good intention, but Kiplagat and his partners had other sinister designs.

Abdikassim was told that there would be a meeting during which the so-called "Charter" would be re-examined. This was what President Abdikassim was requesting since the so-called Technical Committee claimed to have prepared a "Charter" after having rejected the draft submitted by the

Harmonisation Committee chaired by Prof. Abdi Ismail Samater. The invitation to the President of the TNG was just a bluff. Kiplagat was against the TNG and Abdikassim in particular. At a press conference in July 2002 when President Abdikassim declared the withdrawal of the TNG from the Reconciliation Conference at Mbaghati, Ambassador Kiplagat ridiculed the Somali culture and tradition by repeating words like "I am ..." mentioning name of a Somali clan like a laughing matter. He was using the clan issue as a joke; an issue that for the Somalis is the most serious in the conflict that has devastated the whole country.

When a journalist asked him about the effect President Abdikassim's departure from Nairobi would make on the conference, Kiplagat replied that he was not worried, sounding like he would not care about it and that "he (Abdikassim) comes from his own clan adding jokingly: "I also come from my clan." "The door is open for him; he can come at any time." He talked with such arrogance in a room jam-packed with TV cameras and reporters as well as diplomats and Somalis. But somehow I believe that the Somalis gave him the chance to speak or behave like the only person who has our fate in his hands. Sometimes I think that we, the Somalis, deserve the kind of treatment we get from such a man. Had we not brought ruin to our country, we would have been the masters of our own fate.

To those of us who were well acquainted with the way the grey-haired, soft-spoken Ambassador was running the show, were not surprised with the statement. No one expected him to apologise to Abdikassim, because he thought that if he needed the TNG's signature to legitimise anything, he had already some.

Mr. Kiplagat would not care about TNG's withdrawal, because he and those behind him used the names and the signatures of deposed leaders of TNG.

Since the start of the conference, the TNG noticed that the conference was hijacked and derailed from its original track but no one heeded its call to save it from failure. The

way it had been conducted was far from achieving the desired aim. Unfortunately the TNG's call for help to save it was completely ignored by the African and international community. The reason why the TNG's complain was not heeded was because, the group called IPF (IGAD Partners Forum), an important group, which could speak out against the injustice, supported Ethiopia's policy to undermine the TNG, right from the beginning of the conference when, as Prof. Abdi I. Samater put it:

"Moreover, the TNG assumed the neutrality of Kenya. Sadly, this naïve presumption enabled Ethiopia and representatives of the international community to change the nature of the conference from one of reconciling the TNG and the faction leaders to a completely new one."

Occasionally, when the negative role of Ethiopia in the conference, became too obvious the international community tried to raise its voice, but the Ethiopian member of the Technical committee would silence it by accusing it of interfering in the affairs of the Committee. Once the Ethiopian Ambassador told a representative of the international community during a meeting: "You are destroying what we are doing." They defended their role as "stakeholders", indicating that they are the ones who are investing in the process. This was probably the only serious clash between Ethiopia and the IPF.

The IGAD Partners Forum, particularly those who are members of the European Union and the United States did not have bilateral relations with the Transitional National Government (TNG). The rest, like the representatives of United Nations, the African Union and the Arab League, play the role of observers and sometimes persuaders.

They were not supporting the TNG but opposing the mismanagement of the Chairman and the manipulation of the conference by Ethiopia. On those occasions, the IPF defended its position by saying that they are stakeholders and had the right to point out the Technical Committee's

mistakes. In general, however, the IPF was too partisan to the anti-TNG stand at the conference although it knew that the TNG was the only legitimate authority in Somalia.

The referees called to officiate the game were four: The three frontline states—Djibouti, Kenya and Ethiopia and the IPF (IGAD Partners Forum). Besides the UN, AU and Arab League could not be totally ignored which at very late stage started exerting their pressure on the Technical Committee after the IPF realised that without the TNG no outcome would have legitimacy. The majority of the IPF which were from the European Union countries realised that they should change their attitude to neutral active partners and to stop denying the legitimacy of the Transitional National Government. Djibouti insisted that the process be returned to its original path of reconciliation between the TNG and those factions that did not attend the Arta Peace Process. The other two Ethiopia and Kenya, were totally biased and used the Process to implement their own political agenda. They consumed all the energy and money solely in operations aimed at toppling the TNG.

The European Union and the United States adopted a two-tier policy vis-à-vis the Transitional National Government. They did not object to the TNG representing Somalia at the United Nations and other multi national forums but withheld their own recognition of the TNG. They neither supported the TNG nor opposed others dealing with it. As far as the recognition of the TNG by the EU was concerned, it would have come through if the US had taken the first step in that direction.

In 1992, it was America that gave a trumpet call for the whole world when it joined the UN Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) to help Somalia in what George W. Bush Sr. called "Operation Restore Hope." The majority of the members of the United Nations heeded the US call. Similarly when the US decided to walk out of Somalia, everybody else followed suit.

However, there was some positive element within the

negative attitude of the United States towards the TNG. While America itself did not recognise the TNG, it let others do what they wanted to do with the TNG. The US was capable of stopping the TNG from taking the seat of Somalia at the UN directly or through the Security Council. The fact that it did not do so is in itself a positive step.

As we all know, after the 9/11 terrorist attacks on New York and Washington, Ethiopia tried to use the power of the US against Somalia by falsely alleging that Somalia was harbouring Al-Qaeda or Somalis themselves were terrorists. America was not as naïve as those who were used by Ethiopia to wage a proxy war. If the TNG was in the box of the accused, it would have been a disaster if the US would have taken seriously the words of a witness known to be the arch enemy of the accused. It was a turning point as Ethiopia miserably failed to convince the US to wage a proxy war for it.

The TNG's patience paid off. The tide turned in its favour when the former President of Kenya, Daniel T. arap Moi, speaking about the ongoing Somali Peace and Reconciliation conference in Nairobi admitted:

"Regional suspicion of Somalia's expansionist dreams has been cited as a drawback in that country's peace efforts.

"Its neighbours feared that a reunited and prosperous nation might resurrect Somalia's territorial claims."

Mr Moi was speaking at the American Defence University in Washington.

(The Nation (Nairobi) September 19, 2003.)

Former Kenyan President's statement that "*neighbours feared that a reunited and prosperous nation might resurrect Somalia's territorial claims*" gives the impression that the neighbours, including Kenya, were blocking the return of normalcy in Somalia. If one follows that logic, the conclusion should be that Mr. Moi's acceptance to host Somali Peace Process was just a ploy to trap the Somalis in a never-ending dialogue between them and to continue the destabilisation

of the country and the agony of Somali people. Were Ethiopia and Kenya like a relay race (team) passing the baton from one to another. Was Moi having second thoughts on Kenya/Somalia future relations?

For ten years Ethiopia manipulated the Somali politics and successfully worked to create conflict where there was peace and added fuel where there was already fire. It successfully implemented the policy of balkanisation of the country and supported breakaway regions; constantly aborting any attempt aimed at reconciliation in Somalia.

During the same period, Kenya had maintained a friendly attitude towards Somalia and extended all possible co-operation to the TNG. It allowed hundreds of thousands of Somalis to seek refuge in the country and permitted thousands of others to do business there. On their part, the Somalis have earned a lot of respect of the government and the people of Kenya. Somali entrepreneurs are found throughout the country, particularly in the capital. They created "Little Somalia" in the East Leigh district of Nairobi, making it the most popular and the best business area in the Kenyan capital. Somali businesspersons made easy to shop for a large part of the population, who, otherwise, could hardly afford to buy anything in the market.

When in 2001 Daniel arap Moi accepted the request of President Abdikassim to help in reconciling the TNG and those who opted out of the Arta Peace Process the former Kenyan President could only have had two things in mind. One thing could be to keep the Somali situation at death's door as long as possible pretending that something was being done for them and the second could have been just to let us rot in the war ravaged country. But by making such a strong statement in a place like the United States, Mr. Moi, must have had an entirely different idea on what to do for Somalia. He revealed the internal policy and the way of thinking of what he called, "the neighbours", undoubtedly meaning his own country and Ethiopia, with which Kenya maintains a Defence Treaty against Somalia.

In the earlier reconciliation meetings that he arranged for the TNG and the opposition from 1-4 November and 13-17 December of 2001 respectively he played very positive and fair role of a mediator. It was for that reason that the subsequent IGAD's 9th Summit in Khartoum highly commended Kenya's role and further requested President Moi to coordinate a follow-up meeting for the Somali reconciliation together with Djibouti and Ethiopia the so-called "frontline states".

When he himself handled the above mentioned Somali reconciliation process, Mr. Moi was not oblivious of Somalia's claim over the Northern Frontier District (NFD) occupied by Kenya. The territory was given to Kenya by the British colonial Administration as recently as in 1963, contrary to the outcome of a Referendum organised by the British and conducted by an "independent commission". The Commission appointed by Britain was composed of two members, a Nigerian Judge, G.C.M. Onyiuoke and a Canadian, Major General, M.P. Bogert.*

Angered by the British decision, the Somali Government broke off diplomatic relations with Britain on 12 March 1963. The people of the NFD started liberation struggle against Kenya and the Somali Government supported with radio and press propaganda the NFD freedom fighters. The Kenyans called these freedom fighters "Shiftas" (Bandits).

According to a recently declassified top-secret documents published by Nairobi *Sunday Standard* of 25, January 2004:

"On the morning of January 8, 1965, three Cabinet ministers arrived at State House, Nairobi to see President Jomo Kenyatta—and jointly tabled an important document before the Cabinet marked "top secret".

* See Report on NFD dated 7th of December 1962 published by the British Government.

"The three, Defence Minister Dr. Njoroge Mungai, Home Affairs' Daniel arap Moi and Information and Broadcasting's Achieng Oneko told Kenyatta and the stunned Cabinet that 'there appears to be no purely military solution to the [Shifta] problem.'"

The paper quoted the declassified document:

"The Shifta menace would not be eradicated without a multi-million shilling propaganda war waged in North Eastern Province.

"But even as the broadcasting equipment and station was being set up the top military brass and intelligence officers knew one thing. They were fighting a guerilla war in a terrain they hardly knew about."

"Inside intelligence circles, Radio Mogadishu was worrying the Kenyatta government more than the Shifta," the Sunday Standard wrote.

Sunday Standard wrote:

"In public Kenyatta was to maintain a hardline stance against the Shifta and on October 20, 1965, as he drove to Kamukunji Stadium for the first Kenyatta Day, then organised by Kanu, he told the cheering crowd that Kenya had 'sufficient forces to deal firmly with any situation.' 'It was a lie.'"

On the caption under the photo of then Defence Minister Njoroge Mungai atop a military tank, the paper wrote: "The Shifta war worried the Government more than it was willing to admit."

Despite the media and radio propaganda, the two countries did not go to an open war. Before the end of 1965 with the mediation of the late President of Tanzania, Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, Somalia and Kenya agreed to improve their relations. At the meeting of the African Heads of State and Government in Kinshasa, Congo, the following Declaration was issued:

Kinshasa Declaration on Kenya-Somalia Relations

The Assembly of Heads of State and Government meeting in its Fourth Ordinary Session in Kinshasa, Congo, from 11 to 14 September 1967.

Desirous of consolidating the fraternal links that unite us.

Recalling resolution CM/Res.17 (II) of 29 February 1964.

Recalling further the attempts that have been made by the Governments of Kenya and Somalia at Arusha in December 1965, through the Good Offices of His Excellency President Julius K. Nyerere of the Republic of Tanzania,

Mindful of the new and welcome initiative taken by His Excellency Kenneth D. Kaunda of the Republic of Zambia in Kinshasa during the Fourth Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Heads of State and Government;

Notes with pleasure the joint Declaration mutually and amicably reached between the Governments of Kenya and Somalia, as represented by Vice-President Daniel arap Moi and Prime Minister Mhamed Ibrahim Egal, respectively, through the Good Offices of the President of Zambia, which reads as follows:

1. Both Governments have expressed their desire to respect each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity in the spirit of paragraph 3 of Article III of the OAU Charter;
2. The two Governments have further undertaken to resolve any outstanding differences between them in the spirit of paragraph 4 of Article III of the OAU Charter;
3. The two Governments have pledged to ensure maintenance of peace and security on both sides of the border by preventing destruction of human life and property;
4. Furthermore, the two Governments have agreed to refrain from conducting hostile propaganda through

mass media such as radio and the press against each other;

5. The two Governments have accepted the kind invitation of President Kaunda to meet in Lusaka, during the later part of October 1967, in order to improve, intensify and consolidate all forms of cooperation;

Resolves to express its sincere gratitude and congratulations to President Kenneth Dr. Kaunda of Zambia as well as the Governments of Kenya and Somalia for their positive efforts to overcome differences in a fraternal manner.

Requests the Governments of Kenya and Somalia, as parties to the Declaration, and the Government of the Republic of Zambia, as host convenor, to submit a progress report on the proposed meeting in Lusaka to the Secretary-General of the OAU. **(Ref. : OAU records)**

Three months later the two countries signed another agreement to improve the relations in Arusha, Tanzania.

The Arusha Memorandum

Meeting in the Arusha Town Hall, the Kenya President and the Somali Premier expressed their desire to consolidate the Kinshasa Declaration on Kenya-Somalia relations and recognised the need to restore normal and peaceful relations between Kenya and Somalia.

They have towards this end reached agreement on the following points:

The following Memorandum of Agreement was signed by the President of Kenya and the Somali Prime Minister on 28 October 1967 in Arusha, Tanzania:

1. Both Governments will exert all efforts and do their utmost to create good neighbourly relations between Kenya and Somalia in accordance with the OAU Charter.
2. The two Governments agree that the interests of the people of Kenya and Somalia were not served by the continuance of tension between the two countries.

3. They, therefore, reaffirm their adherence to the Declaration of the OAU conference at Kinshasa, a copy of which is attached to this Memorandum of Understanding.
4. In order to facilitate a speedy solution to the dispute and to ensure the maintenance of continued good relations, both Governments have agreed to:
 - a. The maintenance of peace and security on both sides of the border by preventing the destruction of human life and property.
 - b. Refrain from conducting hostile propaganda through mass media such as radio and press against each other; and encourage propaganda which promotes development and continuance of friendly relations between the two countries;
 - c. The gradual suspension of any emergency regulations imposed on either side of the border;
 - d. The re-opening of diplomatic relations between the two countries;
 - e. The consideration of measures encouraging the development of economic and trade relations;

The appointment of a Working Committee consisting of Somalia, Kenya and Zambia, which will meet periodically to review the implementation by Somalia and Kenya of the points agreed in this document and also to examine ways and means of bringing about a satisfactory solution to major and minor differences between Kenya and Somalia.*

For Kenya, the signing of the above mentioned Agreements or Memorandum of Understanding, was a big relief as it could hardly cope with the guerilla war of the NFD Liberation Movement.

With the signing of these Agreements for Memoranda of Understanding, Kenya gained all the advantage. Politically,

* Case Studies in African Diplomacy, University College, Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, 1969, pp. 82-83.

to the satisfaction of the Government of Kenya, the then Government in Mogadishu practically abandoned the case of the Somalis in the area, who were looking upon it as the main supporter of their legitimate rights to self-determination. The Kenyans were so desperate, that they were not even able to find any Somali who was willing to work for their broadcasting to counter what was coming out of Radio Mogadishu. Ethiopian Government promised to send two reliable Somalis to help in broadcasting and monitoring before the station opened in March 1967. In August 1967, Andrew Omanga, the PS Home Affairs wrote to Gachathi (PS Information): "With regard to Somali broadcasters ...some of them are known to be sympathizers of the Somali secessionist movement." The *Sunday Standard* wrote: "Behind the doors", declassified papers now show, "there was desperation within the military."

The Kenyan Government found nothing in their favour in the territory which was passed on to them by the British in 1963. According to the recently declassified documents the Director of the Intelligence reported that "Somali announcers at the Voice of Kenya are disloyal and disaffected towards the Kenya government." "*The military were fighting a guerrilla war in a terrain they hardly knew about*".

Somalia itself was just five years old, two years older than Kenya, which attained independence in 1963. But if merely radio propaganda and what the Kenyan called Shifta (Bandits) could cause so much desperation in both political and military circles, with little more military pressure from the NFD liberation movement, Kenya would have given up its occupation of the territory.

There must have been a sigh of relief on the part of the Kenyan Government when in 1967 the Somali government easily accepted the mediation of the President of Tanzania, Julius Nyerere and signed the Kinshasa and Arusha agreements in 1967 to normalise the relations between the two countries. What Kenya needed was peace to continue its hold over the territory.

In 1960, two parts of the Somali territories—former British Somaliland and the Italian Somalia—attained their independence and formed the Somali Republic on 1 July 1960. Other territories—the NFD and the Ogaden were still under Kenya and Ethiopia respectively. After gaining independence on 27 June 1977, Djibouti chose not to join the union of the other two parts. Djibouti, which was originally called the French Somali Coast or *Cote Francaise de Somalie* became the Republic of Djibouti.

After the overthrow on 21 October 1969 of the civilian government that signed the Kenya-Somali Agreements, the Military Government led by Major General Mohamed Siad Barre, declared that it would honour all the international treaties entered between Somalia and other countries. With Kenya, the Somali Revolutionary Government decided to uphold the agreement signed by the deposed civilian government and to let the time heal the wounds and the people in the Northern Frontier District had no alternative but to accept the new situation. For Kenya it came as a great relief as it saved multi-million shillings that it used to spend to counter the Liberation Movement and the mass media war from Radio Mogadishu.

Already 36 years have passed since the Arusha Agreement was signed in 1967 between Somalia and Kenya to stop media propaganda between the two countries. The Agreement also included the end of Somalia's support to the NFD Liberation Movement. But by signing a military defence treaty with Ethiopia against Somalia in the 70s, Kenya might have automatically invalidated the MoU it signed with Somalia.

The former Kenyan President's statement saying that: "*Regional suspicion of Somalia's expansionist dreams has been cited as a drawback in that country's peace efforts*", rightly reflects the way Ethiopia was manipulating and the Chair, Kenya, was dragging the Process for over a year and diabolically applying the policy of *divide and rule*, aggravating the already precarious situation, instead of helping find positive solutions and constantly increasing the gap between the Somalis instead of bridging it. All the signs were that Mr. Moi

himself, who signed the Memorandum of Understanding with the Somali Prime Minister, Mohamed Ibrahim Egal, was genuinely happy with the way his country's relations with Somalia has developed following the signing of the MoU between the two countries 36 years ago. Although the dispute has not been solved, the Somalis in the territory have, for the time being, accepted the Kenyan status, hoping that one day a final settlement will be reached between the two countries.

So far Kenya and Somalia have succeeded in maintaining the *status quo* and a comfortable relationship exist since 1967 between the Kenyan Government and the inhabitants of the NFD. Besides, the Government of Kenya allowed thousands of Somalis to establish business in Kenya, creating an environment conducive to better understanding among the peoples of the two countries.

The Somalis felt comfortable with Kenya. However, it seems that Ethiopia's delegation and the Chairman of the conference, Kenya's Envoy, Mr. Mwangale, tried to poison the good relations by bringing their own agenda to the conference.

In fact, when some of the groups attending the conference signed the so-called Cessation of Hostilities agreement on 27 October 2002, the Chairman of the Technical Committee (Kenya's Elijah Mwangale) and the delegate from Ethiopia were trying to convince or compel the same groups or others to sign a declaration that Somalia would never again claim territories in the neighbouring countries; meaning that future Somalia should never claim the territories under Ethiopia (Ogaden) and NFD, under Kenya. The idea was taken up by some "Presidential Candidates" who included in their election manifesto a pledge that they would not claim territories under the neighbours, if they were elected President of Somalia.

Mwangale and later on Kiplagat and Ethiopia were working out a formula to attach the renunciation of the occupied territories by the Somalis as a condition for any progress in the reconciliation process. The idea of giving the

title of "Recognized Leaders", "Leaders Committee" or "Plenary" was meant to create a kind of a body that could be used as decision-making body which the so-called Technical Committee, mainly Ethiopia and the Chairman (Kenya), could make them sign a "Declaration" or adopt a "Resolution" which they could claim as legally binding and to read it at the UN Security Council, so that the forged documents, could automatically be legitimized by their inclusion in the Security Council Documents.

PLOT TO OVERTHROW THE TNG FAILED

For fifteen months the Chair and the delegate from Ethiopia spent time and money to destroy the Transitional National Government (TNG) and to deepen the discord among the Somalis. The Technical Committee planned to create a vacuum of government in Somalia at the expiry of the three-year mandate of the TNG—August 2000 to August 2003.

They naïvely thought that on 12 August 2003, the TNG's mandate would expire and Somalia would end up without a government. The anti-establishment Somalis and the enemies of Somalia publicly celebrated on that day. Some even approached the Chairman of the Technical Committee asking him to "take over the administration of Somalia." This was a plot to overthrow the TNG, but failed to materialise.

Earlier, at the start of the conference in the city of Eldoret, on 15 October 2002, we saw some people opposing the hoisting of the Somali National Flag, the symbol of independence and sovereignty, at the conference venue. On 12 August 2003, when the mandate of the TNG came to an end some "leaders" were celebrating in the compound of the Mbagathi, Nairobi. They did not care about the fate of the country whether it had a government or not. The majority of the people in Somalia never wished the country to be without a government again even when they were not satisfied with

the performance of the government. They would say: "A bad government is better than no government." People fought to liberate their country from colonial powers; but at Mbagathi, opportunists were supporting power-vacuum and calling on those organising the Reconciliation conference to take over the country.

As far as the organisers of the conference were concerned they wanted to dismember the existing government in Somalia. But their evil designs were frustrated when at the 10th Ordinary IGAD Summit held from 20-25 October 2003, in Kampala, Uganda, the TNG was invited to attend it. Due to the intervention of President Abdikassim the Summit endorsed the following recommendations of the 22nd Session of IGAD Council of Ministers:

- a) Expand the Technical Committee now renamed as the Facilitation Committee on the Somali Peace Process led by Kenya to include Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Uganda and Sudan (Sudan subject to confirmation).
- b) Direct the Facilitation Committee to meet on 28 October 2003 at Ministerial Level in Nairobi to review the status of the Peace Process and report to the Chairman of the Summit.
- c) Request the current Chairman to evaluate the Peace Process on Somalia in order to decide on measure that would remove any obstacle to the Process.
- d) The African Union through the Chair and the commission to assist IGAD in its effort to facilitate the Reconciliation Process in Somalia.

The decision to expand the Technical Committee was taken after a strong statement made by President Abdikassim Salad Hassan at the Summit. He said:

"Neither my government nor I will be part of a process that is aimed at the dismemberment of our country". He further remarked that he "will not be a silent spectator to a process that is flawed." He said that the so-called Frontline

States—Kenya, Ethiopia Djibouti “should no longer manage the Somali Reconciliation Process” and asked for more neutral parties to administer it.

For Ethiopia the decision to expand the Committee was a great shock because it knew that this was the end of the destructive game it played along with Kenya, as, from now on, there would be other members who would observe their actions. For this reason Meles decided to withdraw his country from the Facilitation Committee.

At the 2nd IGAD Ministerial Facilitation Committee Meeting on the Somali Peace Process held in Nairobi on 8 December 2003, Ethiopia, which was angered by the decision taken at the Uganda Summit, sent to the meeting a junior diplomat working at its Embassy in Nairobi named Yemane Abdi. While Kenya was represented by the Foreign Minister, Hon. Stephen Kalonzo Musyoka, Chairman of the IGAD Ministerial Facilitation Committee, Djibouti was represented by Foreign Minister, Mr. Ali Abdi Farah, Uganda was represented by Hon. Augustine Nshimye, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Eritrea was represented by the Minister for Agriculture Mr. Arefaine Berhe.

The President of Uganda, Yoweri Museveni, who took over the Chairmanship of the Assembly of Heads and Government of the regional organization IGAD realising how serious the matter was, wanted to take the matter in his hand. He wanted to take over the whole Process. He invited the Somali leaders to Uganda for what was called “Consultations” on 24 December 2003. But the idea of holding a meeting in Uganda was tantamount to damaging the image and prestige of Kenya. It was worrisome to Kenya, as it was afraid to lose the whole conference. The Foreign Minister of Kenya, Musyoka, had to rush to Kampala in order to convince President Museveni to change the plan and to come to Kenya and meet the Somali leaders in Nairobi.

To save Kenya's face, Museveni accepted the Kenyan request and flew to Nairobi on 8 January 2004 and next day he met the President of the Somali Republic, Dr. Abdikassim

Salad Hassan and the faction leaders at the Safari Park Hotel. Museveni was like a real judge. To collect information from the actors of the process, he had to sit and listen to each delegation.

The TNG felt at ease with President Museveni, because it wanted to liberate the process from the grip of Kenya and Ethiopia who had reduced the conference to a forum where only the seeds of hatred were being planted. However, it was obvious that the President of Uganda would not go as far as to harm his country's relationship with Kenya, for a case in which there was no assurance of success.

The compromise between Kenya and Uganda was that the meeting would take place in Kenya and President Museveni would preside over the meeting. Those who called for a change were not satisfied with this arrangement as it gave only a ceremonial presence to the Chairman of the IGAD Assembly of Heads of State and Government at the conference which would still be run by the Kenyans after the Ugandan President concluded his inaugural speech and went back home to Kampala.

On 9 January 2004, the conference hall was ready for the inaugural ceremony and name plates were placed on top of each table. The TNG sign was on the first row on the right hand side of podium and all other Somalis were behind the TNG on the tables marked “Somali Leaders”.

I went to the Conference hall prior to the arrival of the Presidents to see where the Somali President, Dr. Abdikassim Salad Hassan and TNG delegation would sit. I saw the TNG sign placed on the table and I stood by the table. I had with me a small Somali flag for the table to place in front of the President. Frankly speaking, I decided to remain there so as to keep a watch on the flag because I had the feeling that someone would remove it.

The inauguration meeting was scheduled to start at 11:00 in the morning, but until after midday there was no sign of the arrival of the three main figures of the Conference, that is, the President of Kenya, Mwai Kibaki, Chairman of the

IGAD Facilitation Committee on Somali Reconciliation Process, the President of Uganda, Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, Chairman of the IGAD Assembly of Heads of State and Government and the President of Somalia, Dr. Abdikassim Salad Hassan. They were in the Hotel waiting until everything was properly arranged at the Conference Hall.

Sometimes past midday, the Secretary General of the Somali National Salvation Council Abdullahi Ahmed "Black" suggested to me that we could go to the restaurant and have lunch. I took the flag with me and left the TNG name-sign and off we went to the restaurant. While we were still having our lunch, news came that the conference was going to start. I rushed to the Hall and proceeded to the place where the President was supposed to take his seat.

The seating arrangement was made by the IGAD in the morning and I was already there and stood by the table in order to give the President the indication as to where his seat was.

From the entrance, I went straight to the same place, and saw that the TNG name-sign had been removed, the seats were taken over by former TNG leaders. I did not say a word but just made a U-turn. While I was close to the exit, I heard someone calling my name. I turned back and saw one of the Somali staff, who told me that they had changed the place and showed me where the new seat of the President was, a new place and with no TNG name-sign on the table.

At that time, I realised that there was a dirty business going on. I had no problem with the place, because, in fact, it was better and central position, straight in front of the podium where the other two Presidents—Kibaki and Museveni—were seated.

"Where is the TNG sign?" I asked Ambassador Kiplagat; "Where is the TNG sign?" I asked again. No reply. All the Staff is there including the same old guardian of IGAD Technical Committee now the Chairman of the newly renamed IGAD Facilitation Committee, Bethwel Kiplagat,

looking at me wondering what I would do.

I went to him and asked him the same question again. "Where is the TNG sign and who took it? No answer. I repeated the question, again, but no one answered. I approached the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Ambassador Mohamed Abdi Afey who were also there and asked them the same question. Instead of answering my question, the Deputy Minister told me:

"The Presidents are ready", please call your President to come. He was referring to the Presidents of Kenya and Uganda. On my part, I asked him about the TNG sign.

The Hall was ready and all the invitees including government officials, Somali delegates, the IPF (IGAD Partners Forum) and the press, local and international were all there.

Even when the 10th IGAD Summit in Kampala called for a change in the manner in which the conference was conducted for over one and a half year, under Kenyan stewardship, Kenya's, particularly Kiplagat's attitude, remained the same. No help, only hindrance.

Kiplagat's plan was to embarrass the President of Somalia in the presence of dignitaries and diplomats. He knew about the removal of the TNG table sign, he himself might have ordered or removed it probably under pressure from certain quarters. He calculated that Abdikassim would refuse to take seat if he wouldn't find TNG sign on the table. As a result, he expected, the TNG would be blamed for the eventual failure of the ceremony in front of the Chairman of the IGAD Assembly of the Heads of State and Government, President of Uganda, Yoweri Museveni and the Chairman of the IGAD Facilitation Committee, President of Kenya, Mwai Kibaki, as well as in front of the IGAD Partners Forum and other dignitaries and the cameras.

The deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Mr. Kiplagat tried to pressurise me:

"Tell your President to come to the Hall, the other Presidents are ready".

"He will only come after I see the TNG sign on the table", I replied to them.

The Deputy Minister said "Bring the President; the sign will be on the table".

And I said: "Bring the sign first, and then the President will be here".

At that moment, I phoned a colleague who was with the President and told him: "Do not move until I give you a signal".

Kiplagat was adamant and I was stubborn. I knew he wanted to find reason to blame Abdikassim for any eventual blunder, but decided not to give him the chance to spoil the party.

Again, I approached Kiplagat and insisted to know from him the reason why the TNG sign was removed from the original place. In fact, he knew the President was there for the function, but allowed the dissident group to have the TNG seats. With low voice, he told me, looking at the direction where former leaders of the TNG were sitting: "They are also claiming to be representing the TNG". That was the problem he had. Probably he promised them that he would do all he could to stop President Abdikassim from taking the TNG position.

He asked in my presence his assistants, including his deputy, Kiboi and the Somali staff to bring the sign, but apparently also gave them a signal not to bring it.

The guests were waiting and wondering what was happening. Nevertheless, they could see me moving up and down of the podium where Kiplagat was standing. On the other hand, the Presidents were also waiting for a signal to come. I wondered whether the Minister, Mr. Musyoka knew Kiplagat's action or Ministry itself was involved in the conspiracy to sabotage the function.

I went outside the hall where the Secretariat had their computer to print the signs for the inaugural ceremony. I stood by the secretariat desk where also Kiboi and the Somali

collaborators were. They apparently told the woman secretary not to do anything or just to pretend to be doing something. She was holding the Floppy Disk but moving her hand so slow towards the Floppy Disk Drive that really forced me to say something.

"You can go as slow as you like", I said, adding "But just remember that the Somali President will not be coming to the Hall unless this thing is on the table first".

"We will write 'Somalia' on the card" one of the Somali staff said. In fact, also the Somali staff were in line with the policy of their "Boss": to sabotage the TNG.

"If you do not write 'TNG', the President will stay where he is", I replied.

At this moment I realised that Kiplagat and Company were working out a way to cause the anger of President Abdikassim and to force him to withdraw from the inaugural ceremony of the "Consultations" or "Retreat". At first, President Museveni wanted to hold the Consultation in Uganda at the end of December 2003, but that did not work, because the Kenyans felt humiliated to let the Process go out of Kenya. The second option was to hold the Conference at what was called "Retreat" in the coastal city of Mombassa, sponsored by the British Government, but in the end, it was decided to hold "Consultations" at the Nairobi Safari Park hotel to be sponsored by the Governments of Britain and Sweden.

They understood that I was not giving in to their sinister design, so the Secretary took the floppy disk, which was already there, but trying to apply the delaying tactic, hoping that the Presidents would come to the hall without placing the sign on the table of the President of Somalia. She kept in her hand the floppy disk, but did not insert it into the floppy disk drive. After a while, a signal came and she started working on it. I went back to the hall, stood by the table, and soon afterward came the TNG sign. That was the end of the game and then President Abdikassim arrived together with the Presidents of Kenya and Uganda.

Kiplagat, who dragged the Somali Peace Process for months without any positive outcome, planned to sabotage even President Museveni's endeavour to save the Somali Peace Process. For me, it was very clear that Kiplagat wanted to create a chaotic situation in the Hall so that the Chairman of the IGAD Assembly of the Heads of State and Government, President Museveni, would see that neither Kenya nor the Technical Committee were to blame for the failure of the Process, but President Abdikassim.

The TNG, particularly President Abdikassim continuously denounced the IGAD Technical Committee for their lack of fairness and neutrality. But his statement at the 10th IGAD Summit in Kampala quoting the former Kenyan President, Daniel arap Moi's speech in the USA that Somalia's "neighbours feared that a reunited and prosperous nation might resurrect Somalia's territorial claims", had caused outrage among the Heads of State and Government attending the Summit who decided to change the three Fronline States Technical Committee into the Facilitation Committee comprising all the IGAD member states.

Since the start of the Process, in Eldoret city, on 15 October 2002, the Kenyan government representatives—first Mwangale and then Kiplagat—never entertained positive attitude but only animosity towards the TNG and President Abdikassim. After the 10th IGAD Summit in Kampala, their attitude became even more hostile.

Kiplagat was desperately trying to spoil the inaugural meeting—a very important function—in which, for the first time, the IGAD Summit decided to involve directly all the member states; a decision that had given the Somalis some sort of confidence in the process, but of course, angered those whose aim was to destroy it. Kiplagat was apparently thinking to deny the Ugandan President and Current Chairman of IGAD the credit for any eventual success. However, my stubbornness foiled his sinister attempt to undermine the efforts of the new Chairman of IGAD and to create a situation that may have forced President Abdikassim to

withdraw from the meeting.

In the end, after the TNG sign was brought in, the ceremony went on smoothly with speeches delivered by President Museveni and President Mwai Kibaki, with the participation of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kenya, Stephen Kalonzo Musyoka, who was acting as Master of the Ceremony.

In his speech, President Museveni said that the civil war in Somalia was like a slow genocide. He said: "The bloody civil war threatened to wipe out an entire generation of youthful Somalis," and urged the warring factions to embrace dialogue and bring peace in the country. He said what is happening in Somalia "is a slow genocide because when children are not immunized for 10 years, what does it mean? It means you are destroying a generation of young people in Somalia."

In a surprising move, Museveni asked the faction leaders, "to shake hand with President Abdikassim". On hearing the call, President Abdikassim was the first to stand up from his seat and moved towards the Somali leaders. At that time, almost all the faction leaders got up from their chairs and moved forward to hug President Abdikassim, one after the other. It was an atmosphere full of emotion. The leaders circled the President and hand-in-hand they raised their arms chanting the national song.

Such sentiments and emotional expression were shared many a times in the past but failed to produce any positive results. While hugging the President, the faction leaders were saying: "Cafis iyo musaamax" (forgiveness) and the President was reciprocating the gesture. Museveni's magic word excited everyone, including the foreign observers, who, during the preceding fifteen months did not witness any progress. Museveni himself must have thought to have done a miracle. It was like hypnotizing everyone, as those who were saying "No" for over a decade to any solution to the Somali crisis, were seen suddenly standing up and saying "Yes" in unison and holding hand with the President that they opposed for three years. It was surely a surprise to

anyone who followed the Somali situation. For the Kenyans and the Ethiopians it must have come as a shock, as they did not want to see anything that looked like ending the crisis and the Somalis settling their differences.

The President of Kenya, Mwai Kibaki in his opening speech said that "Kenya is an honest and neutral broker." That must have been an honest statement by the President, but apparently, either he did not follow closely or blindly trusted the activities of his Envoy Kiplagat, whose action was neither honest nor neutral.

Kiplagat was doing all that he could to destroy the opportunity for peace while his President said:

"As neighbours, we wish to see peace and security restored in Somalia and the entire Horn of Africa. The search for a lasting and durable peace and stable government in Somalia is a matter of great national interest to Kenya."

The event was called the "Launching of the Consultations" and it was concluded on 29 January 2004, with a highly elaborate function held at the State House, which culminated in the signing of a "Declaration" by the Transitional National Government and the faction leaders.

After signing the "Declaration" and delivering their statements, the various representatives moved towards their rival groups to shake hands with them. That scene looked like an end to our crisis. President Museveni, who inaugurated the "Consultation", was not present at the ceremony to witness the conclusion of his work.

Amidst the continuous applause Muse Sudi Yalahow went to shake hands with his adversaries Omar Filish and Mohamed Omar Habeeb; Mohamed Qanyare Afrah, shook hands with President Abdikassim and then went to shake hands with Ahmed Omar Jess; Aden Madobe shook hands with Mohamed Ibrahim Habsade and Abdullahi Yusuf with Jama Ali Jama.

Light hearted remarks were being exchanged when Abdillahi Yusuf approached Jama Ali Jama who apparently showed reluctance to shake hands with him. Abdullahi was

quoted as saying: "Don't embarrass me, people are looking at us". That could have been a joke made by the people.

There was an anecdote: President Abdikassim was sitting with the President of Kenya, Mwai Kibaki in the Presidential tent, while all the others were sitting in the opposite tent. Abdikassim entered the State House from the main gate, by the official car with the Somali National Flag, while the faction leaders were brought to the State House in a bus as a group and entered through a back gate.

A member of one of the factions commented: "Why were they (faction leaders) telling us that Abdikassim was not the President, if he is sitting now with the President of Kenya?"

Another one said: "If I knew he sits where the Presidents sit, I would not fight him all this time."

The morale of the joke is that the faction leaders were telling their followers that Abdikassim was nothing and the TNG was just another faction called Arta Group. Now these people found that his status was equal to the other Presidents, while the faction leaders were seated in a common place or as some one even said, "they were searched by the security at the gate".

Of course, the respect given to Abdikassim was due to his status and position as the leader of Somali people including the faction leaders who deny him such a privilege. Although he has no control over the whole country, or even the whole city of Mogadishu, the fact is that he is accepted as the legitimate President of the country. Since the collapse of the last regime in Somalia in 1991, he is the only President recognised by the international and regional communities. For both, the Somalis and the international community, a bad government is better than no government. Only the enemies of Somalia would deny its existence, otherwise, this war-torn country has for the first time, in more than a decade, a duly formed government. On 29 January 2004, an amended Charter was accepted and signed by the Transitional National Government and by all groups who were at the Consultations held at Safari Park hotel from 9 to

29 January 2004. It was not an easy and smooth exercise. The success achieved in this secluded Hotel was like climbing a rocky and slippery mountain, knowing that the participants of the Consultations were those who were physically fighting with each other and killing the innocent people.

The world hailed the signing of the "Declaration". The UN, AU, EU, Arab League all expressed optimism over it and called it a step forward. It was some sort of a miracle. What could not be achieved in fifteen months in Eldoret and Mbagathi, was achieved in fifteen days in a hotel located far from the town.

On 25 February 2004 the UN Security Council welcomed the signing of the Declaration. The statement also said: "The Security Council condemns those who obstruct the peace process, and stresses that those who persist on the path of confrontation and conflict will be held accountable. The Council will continue to monitor the situation closely."

The situation seemed positive, because throughout the Consultations the atmosphere looked relaxed as the leaders crossed each other's boundaries, exchanging visits and so on.

However, before the signing ceremony the faction leaders, particularly the so-called signatories of Eldoret Declaration of 27 October 2002 on Cessation of Hostilities were continuously threatening to boycott the conference if others were brought in. Their objection was to the inclusion in the list of the participants of the Somali National Salvation Council, led by Haji Musse Suudi Yalaho. They kept insisting that the participants should be restricted to what they called 24 plus 1. Twenty-four being their group and one President Abdikassim; for them, the National Salvation Council did not exist. The TNG supported the inclusion of the NSC in the list of the participants.

Of course, this position to oppose the NSC was advocated by Ethiopia and Kenya, but in the end following a heated debate over the matter between the Kenyan Foreign Minister, Stephen Kalonzo Musyoka and the Foreign Minister of Djibouti, Ali Abdi Farah, who strongly supported the

recognition of the National Salvation Council it was decided to include the National Salvation Council.

In fact, during the verbal encounter between the two Foreign Ministers, Ali Abdi Farah, angrily accused the host of trying to legitimise a group or individuals who did not hold even an inch of land or have a place to return to in their own country.

As usual, the factions started again grumbling over the prominence given to President Abdikassim during the signing ceremony on 29 January 2004 at the State House, Nairobi. As a President, Abdikassim was seated next to the President of Kenya, Mwai Kibaki, while all other Somali leaders were seated in a common tent. They disliked the special protocol given to Abdikassim by the Kenyans, but the Kenyan Ministry of Foreign Affairs that was in charge of the protocol arrangement had no choice because Abdikassim, whether they liked him or not, is the only person recognised as the President of the Somali Republic by the United Nations, the African Union, the Arab League and other international organisations including IGAD, on whose behalf Kenya is co-coordinating the Somali Peace and Reconciliation Process.

Kenya found itself between the hammer and a hard place. Both Kenya and Ethiopia hated to see Abdikassim getting the treatment of a President and at the same time, they could not openly declare their position, because they knew he is the only person recognized as the President of Somalia. They tried to do all they could to undermine the position of Abdikassim to satisfy the desire of the faction leaders who oppose the TNG.

Before the ceremony of the signing of the Declaration on 29 January 2004, the Kenyan Team, led by the Foreign Minister, planned to place President Abdikassim on par with the faction leaders by asking him to sign the Declaration in person. This was another attempt to downgrade his position. However, President Abdikassim rejected their suggestion and insisted that for the TNG the Prime Minister will sign the Declaration and he (Abdikassim) would sign as a witness,

same like the President of Kenya, Mwai Kibaki. The Prime Minister had the credentials signed by the President, delegating him to sign the document for and on behalf of the Somali Government.

What the Kenyans, Ethiopians and others with the same political position do not understand is that the Abdikassim Salad Hassan, is not the President of the Transitional National Government (TNG) but the President of the Republic. The President of the TNG is the Prime Minister, because the TNG is the Executive Organ.

The Foreign Minister, Hon. Musyoka, turned to his Advisers that included Ambassador Bethwel Kiplagat, the architect of the anti-Somali policy and consulted them for their approval of the Credentials. They told him that it was alright and Kiplagat took the Declaration to the office of the Secretary of the President and corrected it accordingly.

The ceremony passed off smoothly and for the TNG everything was perfect. However, the usual evil forces started operating from behind the scene. They were opposing the role played by Abdikassim, i.e. signing as a Witness, similar to that of the President of Kenya, Mwai Kibaki. They forced Foreign Minister Stephen Kalonzo Musyoka to reduce the prominent position given to the President of Somalia during the signing ceremony of January 29 Declaration.

A week after the signing of the Declaration, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kenya, Stephen Kalonzo Musyoka issued on 4 February 2004 a statement in which he followed the same line as Ethiopia and the Somali faction leaders do, opposing the President.

In paragraph 14 of the Press Statement issued on 4 February 2004, the Kenyan Foreign Minister, Stephen Kalonzo Musyoka said:

"For purposes of clarity Mr. Abdikassim Salad Hassan witnessed the signing of this Agreement as the President of the Transitional National Government and H.E. Abdullahi Yussuf signed as the President of the Puntland State of Somalia".

Another interesting observation is that for President Abdikassim, Minister Musyoka used "**Mr**" while for Abdullahi Yussuf, he used, "**H.E.**" This was also part of the political war that Kenya was waging against the President of the Somali Republic.

It was clear that Kenya kept supporting Ethiopia's policy by undermining President Abdikassim and upgrading Ethiopian allies and armed factions.

Sometime in July 2003, when I met him in his office at Mbaghati to deliver a letter from the President in which he requested for invitations to the Traditional Leaders to be sent, Kiplagat told me that "the TNG should not forget that, the conference is only for those who carry guns."

He also told me "Col. Abdullahi Yusuf asked me why did I go to the Airport to welcome Abdikassim?"

I told him: "Why didn't you tell him that Abdikassim is the only recognised President of Somalia."

Then he said: "Now, Col. Abdullahi Yusuf, is asking me that I should bring here 10 people from his own group."

I realised that the man appointed to mediate and bring peace to the Somalis was himself siding with the faction leaders and working for the implementation of the agenda of his country and that of Ethiopia. I was annoyed with his behaviour; and the way he treated the Somalis. However, I could do nothing but to swallow my anger. Whether the Somalis were in Eldoret or at Mbagathi, they were being treated like slaves, forcing them to queue for food like prisoners and if they were not on time, they would miss the meal.

When I heard people talking about the ill treatment it reminded me of a story of the bad old days when the British colonialists were in Somalia in the 1940s and the East African soldiers (Swahilis) were lashing the Somalis when the people queued for the collection of the grain distributed each morning.

Each morning people used to go together in groups, after the morning prayers, to queue up for an amount of maize, equal to approximately a kilogram. The administration was

rationing the grain as there was shortage of food in the country.

I heard people telling the story of those days and one of the songs made for that humiliating event said:

"Suuskoo, sababtiisa Sawaxililee sarartaada ha kuu sirbeeyo,

"Samir aan ka qabaa, Sitaarkey aan ka sugaa, waa seexaha".

(For only one kilogram of grain, a Swahili lashes your ribs, I would rather sleep and wait for the Almighty)

The moral of the story is that he refused to be humiliated by a Swahili, referring to the colonial soldiers brought in to Somalia from Kenya or Uganda by the British colonial administration, who were lashing the people queuing up for the grain distributed by the Military administration early 1940s when British defeated Italy and also occupied the southern part of Somalia. That was physical lash, but here what Kiplagat does is moral lash, humiliation.

Britain was already in the North since 19th century and stayed in the South from early 40s until 1950 when the territory was handed over to the United Nations Trusteeship Administration, which administered the country until independence in 1960. Britain also left the Northern part on 26 July 1960 and the territory joined with the South to form the present Somali Republic on July 1st 1960.

After three decades of independence, the Somalis went back to the same situation that they faced in the 1940s, humiliated and abused by people like Mwangale, Kiplagat, Kiboi and others who lashed the Somalis with words and coupons and forcing them to queue for meals; the same situation which the old man refused to accept.

The President of Uganda, Yoweri Museveni, who is also Chairman of the IGAD of the Assembly of the Heads of State and Government, understood the wrong doings of the Kenyan-led Committee and tried to take matters in his hands. However, the Kenyans resented his intervention and asked him to let Kenya do. Only God knows whatever they told

Museveni, but the result was that he just kept quiet and let the Kenyans continue to have their way.

The 29 January 2004 Declaration signed at the State House, Nairobi, was supposed to be the culmination of the "Consultations" which Mr. Museveni inaugurated at the Safari Park Hotel on the 9 January 2004. But unfortunately, the same government, Kenya, which was supposed to insist on its implementation, started to look for pretext to cause its failure.

Since the beginning of the Peace Process in the Kenyan city of Eldoret on 15 October 2000, people were questioning the honesty and neutrality of the Kenyan arbitration. During the entire period, the Kenyan Representative, who acted as the Chairman in the Technical Committee, first Mwangale and then Kiplagat, in collaboration with the Ethiopia's representative, only worked for the failure of their own effort.

In the end, when the IGAD Chairman, President of Uganda, Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, tried to take the matter in his hands, the Kenyan Foreign Minister, Musyoka felt embarrassed to accept that and therefore, with the help of the Foreign Minister of Djibouti, Ali Abdi Farah, produced the Declaration signed on 29 January 2004 at the Nairobi State House.

Was he sincere in all that he did in such a short period? In only fifteen days of "Consultation" in Safari Park Hotel, Musyoka was capable of producing a unanimous agreement of all the Somalis, while the "renowned broker and Ambassador of peace", Monsignor Kiplagat, could not produce in fifteen months? In a brief speech, at the Minister's "lunch" at Safari Park Hotel, Kiplagat asked forgiveness for the past. He kept asking for forgiveness. He knew he has done something wrong but would not say now. However, as a "good" believer, he will eventually reveal his sins in future confession.

People doubted the sincerity of Minister Musyoka. If he was honest and sincere, the first thing the Minister would have done was the removal of the rotten apples, Kiplagat,

Kiboi and company. He should have told Ethiopia to stop interfering in the affairs of the management of the conference and so on.

All that he did was nothing more than window dressing. Regrettably we had believed that this was the end of all our trouble. In less than a week he started pulling down brick-by-brick, the house he himself had built, by issuing Press Statement after Press Statement denouncing same articles that he had forced the Somalis to sign.

He issued statements in support of what the faction leaders were calling for and which was in contrast with the Declaration of 29 January 2004 that he so eloquently presented at the ceremony attended by important dignitaries including his own President.

During the ceremony at the State House in Nairobi, Ethiopia was not present. However, a few days later, the hidden hands started resurfacing. Ethiopia embarked on pressurising those who represented its interest in the Somali crisis. It was physically absent from the Consultations but Ethiopia's interest was forcefully represented by those certified by Kiplagat as the "faction leaders" supposedly recognised by the international community.

With the knowledge of Minister Musyoka and Kiplagat, their allies set out to sabotaging the outcome of the conference. They left the venue and started holding anti-conference gatherings in Jowhar, Godey, in the occupied Somali territory and elsewhere. There was no reaction from the Kenyan side to force these people to abide by the agreement signed in Nairobi on 29 January 2004 that was supported by the UN Security Council and the international community at the conference, the IPF (IGAD Partners Forum) etc.

This clearly showed that behind the arrogance of the faction leaders, bigger forces were operating. In this case, the visible force is Ethiopia, but who is behind Ethiopia itself is a matter of speculation. However, the bitter truth is that the enemies of the Somalis are the Somalis themselves, because others are only doing what is in their interest.

15

NON-RECOGNITION OF STATEHOOD

The Somali situation was in every sense similar to the one in Afghanistan in every sense. A Government was formed after deliberations in a duly constituted Peace Conference in which various Somali groups participated and on the conclusion of the Conference a President was elected. Initially it received all the support and the necessary backing to start again. The world's most powerful country, USA gave a call for the revival of the State and called on others to join it.

The TNG, however, could not meet the expectations of the people of the country due to lack of support from the United States and the United Nations which itself came under the American influence. Its refusal to recognise the new government in Somalia dealt a heavy blow to the TNG's hope of gaining confidence of the people. It encouraged those who were opposing the revival of any kind of government and who gained from the absence of Administration.

Besides, the TNG was also boycotted by the United Nations' offices in Nairobi, especially the UNDP that were supposed to collaborate with the Government. In fact, the UNDP and the UN Specialised Agencies continue to maintain close relationship with the opposition groups.

The UN Resident Humanitarian Coordinator or UN Res. Rep. Maxwell Gaylard, visits Mogadishu not for the purpose of discussing bilateral cooperation with the TNG but just to

use the visit as a "field tour" and to include that in the periodical report to justify the expenditure out of the funds allocated to Somalia and other income collected as fees charged the aircrafts for overflying Somali airspace. Gaylard maintains close relationship with the faction leaders rather than with the TNG that he is supposed to deal with. No one knows the content of the talks between the Chief of the UN and the faction leaders in the country, but what is known is that the two sides' relations never regress and the more the factions cause trouble the better for those whose daily bread lies in the continuation of the conflict situation. It is obvious that, the people who have vested interest in keeping the situation on the boil would not even attempt to make any peace.

Certainly, the TNG had no power to control Mogadishu or to cope with the faction leaders who were holding parts of the city but the minimum support of the United Nations or encouragement from the international community, would have given at least moral boost to the TNG and would have reduced the influence of the outlaws who were undermining the government.

While claiming to be working in the areas where there was peace and stability, the UN Agencies virtually rendered TNG redundant. Contrary to all the known norms, the UN office in charge of Somalia, was closely dealing with those who are known to be responsible for the destruction and disorder in the country.

The UNDP Somalia openly objected when in October 2002 the Somali Government started the operation of the Air Traffic Control in Mogadishu and refused to transfer the services from Nairobi to Mogadishu claiming that the Ministry of Air Transport of Somalia had no staff capable of running such a service. Contrary to the claims of the UNDP-Nairobi, the newly established Air Traffic Control in Mogadishu handled over a thousand aircrafts flying over the Somali Air Space or landing in Somalia in less than a month of operation.

The question was not whether Somalia could do the job

or not. The fact of the matter was that the UNDP and others who were financially benefiting from the project did not want to lose the illicit gains they were making from the services they were rendering to the aircrafts using the Somali Air Space. The stakes are big and probably the stakeholders are also big in position and in number and therefore their aim is to hold on as long as they could.

Letters came from the Secretary General of ICAO, through UNDP Somalia, and even by the Head of the Delegation of the European Union in Nairobi, who had nothing to do with matter, but for reasons best known to him, lined up with the UNDP and against the legitimate action of the Transitional National Government of Somalia. They claim that CACAS (Civil Aviation Caretaker Authority) was established with the authority of the UN Secretary General, Mr. Kofi Annan, but when the TNG asked for the proof of the existence of such an authority, the ICAO, UNDP and EU preferred to ignore the question.

In a letter, SU/EB/2286 dated 11 November 2002, addressed to the President of the Somali Republic, the EU Head of Delegation, Gary Quince, even alleged that,

"I wish to draw your attention to a serious incident, which occurred on 4th November 2002 when two aircrafts almost collided as a result of misleading information broadcast from radio station in Mogadishu. Only prompt action by ICAO prevented what could have been a serious accident."

This was a serious allegation. But in Mogadishu the Air Traffic Control, on that day, had no record of such an incident alleged by the EU Head of Delegation. It was just a false allegation to intimidate the Somali Government. In fact, he was officially asked to substantiate his allegation that he could not do.

The EU Ambassador continued: "in 1995, on the authority of the UN Secretary General, the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) established the Civil Aviation Caretaker Authority (CACAS) to act on civil aviation matters

with respect to Somali airspace". While the UNDP itself stated that CACAS was "formed in 1996".

It was normal as long as the ICAO or UNDP intervened in the matter, but no one understood on what basis the Head of the Delegation of the European Union, had to enter in an argument which was purely a matter to be sorted out between the TNG and ICAO or UNDP.

Arrogantly wrote Gary Quince to the Somali President:

"These responsibilities remain with CACAS until such time as the UN Secretary General authorises another body to assume responsibilities for Somali airspace."

In his concluding remarks EU Chief tells the President:

"Accordingly the Delegation requests that you intervene to close down this operation, which is jeopardising the safety of aircraft in Somali airspace. In addition the Delegation would be grateful to be informed as soon as possible regarding the action taken."

The Somali Government rejected all their arguments. It believed that what it did was its prerogative. However, to reach to the bottom of the truth, the TNG asked all of them for the copy of the letter allegedly written by the UN Secretary General so that it could verify the exact nature of the letter, the time frame and condition of the service, but all failed to produce it. The only conclusion I could reach is that either the letter did not exist at all or it went against the way the said offices were acting, or even contained other instructions that should not be seen by TNG or the Somalis.

It is a normal procedure that, in cases which involve legal problems, particularly in such important matter that these offices, ICAO, UNDP and EU produce relevant documents to support their contention. But they failed this normal and standard procedure. As the Somali saying goes: *"Wixii la Qariyoba Qurun ayaa ku jira"* (In whatever is hidden, there is dirt).

The ICAO Secretary General, R.C. Costa Pereira, said in his letter, dated 15 November 2002, to the President that,

"the Civil Aviation Caretaker Authority for Somalia (CACAS) established by ICAO under the authorization from the Secretary-General of the United Nations operates and maintains essential services and facilities to ensure the safety of international air transport operation within the Mogadishu FIR."

But to assume the control of its own airspace Pereira tells the President,

"Should the TNG wish in any way to change the current situation regarding CACAS, it must approach the United Nations, including the Security Council, for decision." Not just the same Authority that issued the initial Authorisation, i.e. the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Mr. Pereira urged the President *"to take all necessary measure to put an end to interference by the Mogadishu radio station which seriously compromises the safety of air navigation in the area"*

A document relating to the CACAS clearly states that the Centre should be transferred to the government which will be established in the country unless the government requests the services of the Centre for six more months. The TNG was established in August 2000 and when the Mogadishu FIC was set up in 2002, CACAS's mandate had already expired on February 2001 and therefore its operation had no legal base.

The TNG was capable of handling such a service without big effort, as Somalia still had man-power for such a service and rejected their call to close down the Mogadishu traffic control and the claim that it would endanger the safety of civil aviation in the airspace for which the responsibility for the provision of air traffic services has been allocated to Somalia.

The Somali Civil Aviation Department started in mid October 2002 the service with highly professional staff that was already in Mogadishu, and operated the Air Traffic Control with adequate equipment. What CACAS claims to have been doing is the rehabilitation of airports. In Somalia, there are four

known airports—Mogadishu, Kisimayo, Hargeisa and Berbera. I am not sure if they rehabilitated Hargeisa and Berbera. It is not clear what they do with the money allocated for Mogadishu and Kisimayo airports. The CACAS claims to have rehabilitated what they called airports in Borama, Kalabeyed (Kalabeydh), Bossasso and Belet Weyne. They give the name of airports, probably for accounting purposes, but these are airstrips meant only for small aircrafts bringing to the country the deadly drug Khat or other things from either Kenya or Ethiopia to Somalia or something from Somalia as well. And for the implementation of these activities at different "airports", which are in fact nothing, but dust lands where only small and uncontrolled air planes carrying UN and other International staff can land. The UNDP/CACAS deal directly with the locals with no accountability; where the payments could be inflated as desired and delivery papers signed without receiving goods. These are all hypothetical facts, but are matters that deserve investigation..

In Somalia, we are at the receiving end and therefore, people do not even have the right to question what is provided to them. People cannot refuse what they are being given. They have to take it, because they need food, medicine and education. Somalis never needed food in the tins or expired medicines, but today the situation has come to such a pass that the so-called humanitarian organisations distribute packages containing biscuits together with Bible and the Cross to the school children.

Somalia has been so far known to be an independent and a sovereign state but after the collapse of the regime in 1991, while the different factions of Somalis are quarrelling with each other, there must have been an arrangement put in place, an indirect and discreet UN Trusteeship Administration under the management of the Head of the UNDP in Nairobi. The Head of the UNDP, Gaylard, in his capacity as the Head of the Administration might even have accepted Credentials by foreign Ambassadors accredited to Somalia with residence in Kenya.

After its establishment, the TNG had the duty of re-establishing as far as possible its authority over government institutions which deal with various state matters including the Civil Aviation Department that controls the territory's airspace.

In 1996, as there was no government in Somalia, and the National Civil Aviation had been completely destroyed during the civil war, an Air Traffic Control centre called "The Civil Aviation Caretaker Authority for Somalia (CACAS)" was established in Nairobi and, as claimed by ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organisation), under the authorisation of the Secretary General of the United Nations. However, there was no UN Security Council Resolution placing the Somali Republic under the UN care.

In the absence of the government in the country and lack of interest of its people, somewhere outside the United Nations a plan to control Somalia might have been arranged without the knowledge of the UN Security Council and the Somali people.

In August 2000, the TNG of Somalia was established and it was welcomed by the Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr. Kofi Annan and the Security Council. It was therefore the duty of all UN Agencies to work under the new Government and not to act as the Administering Authority.

As we have already stated, there was no UN Security Council resolution placing Somalia under the UN care, although the country had no government, even a weak government like the TNG, but all the indications are that UNDP Somalia, is either relying on certain decisions emanating from somewhere or the system has no control over the activities of its Agencies abroad. It would not be a surprise if the UNDP Somalia Team acted arbitrarily. However, I only hope that someday, someone will appoint auditors to investigate the damage inflicted upon the Somali people during its difficult moments and how the financial allocations for it were spent by those who were entrusted with its management.

The double standards of the international community is too stark to be missed. The Afghan Government led by President Hamid Karzai is supported by the East and West as the legitimate administration. However, in Somalia, the Government born out of a similar process which saw a larger number of participants than that of Afghanistan, is not given the status and position it rightfully deserves.

The difference is that Afghanistan Government has been created with the support of those who have the wealth and the muscle while Somalia's Government came about with the support of the smallest, poorest and voiceless nations of the world.

Despite all the difficulties, the TNG has done its duty to hold the mantle. It is normal that it should continue until another Government is duly elected or nominated to avoid a power vacuum. If it has failed to deliver what the people expected it is not because of lack of efforts or good-will, but absence of any support from the international community, including the United Nations disarming of the militias and the constant interference in its internal affairs by Ethiopia.

Any future government, which might emerge from the ongoing Peace and Reconciliation Process in Kenya, will face the same fate unless it is allowed to function properly and sustained by the international community. The Somali people deserve to have a government of its own and deserve its right to exist among the free nations.

16

THE DISMEMBERMENT OF SOMALIA

Right from the beginning of the Conference the efforts to dismember the Somali Republic was on top of the agenda of the two most prominent members of the IGAD Technical Committee assigned to supervise the Somali Reconciliation Process—Kenya and Ethiopia. The third member, Djibouti, was genuinely supporting the reconciliation of the Somalis in its entirety, including the so-called breakaway "Republic of Somaliland".

Kenya and Ethiopia are afraid of the unity of all the Somali territories including those which are under their illegal occupation. They feel that once Somalia is stable and strong it will again lay claim to its territories as it did in the past.

The two territories forming the present Republic of Somalia were under British and Italian administrations before they were united and soon after their independence the former British Somaliland (26 June 1960) and the Italian Somaliland (1 July, 1960) joined together and formed the Somali Republic.

The Republic of Djibouti, which was also one of the Somali territories under French rule "chose" not to join the union of the Somali territories for reasons beyond our control and was kept as a separate state after it gained its independence on 27 June 1977. This was also another plan not to let the Somalis grow in size and power in the area which

would have made Somalia an important power in the region.

Even the former colonial power, Britain, advocated in June 1946 the union of all the Somali territories.

For one reason or another, Bevin did not pursue his proposal at the Paris Conference. But here one cannot ignore the fact that Britain had been influenced by certain connections with Abyssinia.

Having been described by certain quarters as the Big Power of the region, Ethiopia speaks of "protecting its interest in the region". The disaster that struck Somalia gave it fertile ground to cultivate its influence. It found people whose ears are highly receptive to Ethiopia's music.

As they are desperate for recognition, the Leaders of the so-called "Republic of Somaliland" hope that Ethiopia can help them achieve that. In fact, so far Addis Ababa is the only country, which accepts the passport issued by the breakaway republic. However, when they travel beyond Addis Ababa, the people of the Northern Region can only go with the Somali Passport, or with the passport of their adopted foreign countries.

What is happening today in the Northern Region where the Leaders of the so-called "Republic of Somaliland" are ritually calling on Addis Ababa whenever they travel to other countries, for, as they always claim, "to strengthen the relations of the two countries". This is not Somali culture and besides, it is unimaginable that Ethiopia acts in the interest of the Somalis.

At the Somali Reconciliation Process in Nairobi, both Kenya and Ethiopia worked out a plan to support the claim of the Administrators of the Northern Regions that they are "an independent territory and are not concerned about what is going on in Kenya and the Reconciliation Process is for the South of Somalia, i.e. the former Italian Somalia."

The Transitional National Government's insistence that the Leaders of the region be brought to the conference table fell on deaf ears although they were giving positive, but false,

promise by the Technical Committee. It was clear that the managers of the conference were trying to pursue delaying tactics and ignored the call of the TNG and the Somalis who believed in a united Somalia and that the conference should be inclusive, meaning that all the regions, including the former British Somaliland or the Northern Regions be brought to the Conference table.

Our biggest neighbour, Ethiopia, supported the policy of the breakaway "Republic of Somaliland" but in public, it swears that "Ethiopia loves Somalia and supports its unity and so on". Out of all the countries in the world, Ethiopia is the only country that indirectly recognises the "Republic of Somaliland". It also accepts the passport issued by the latter.

The advocates of the division of the Somali Republic are trying to gain benefit out of the crisis in which the Somali people find themselves. The politicians of Northern Regions do not realise that Ethiopia's support for their secession is the long-standing policy of opposing the unity of the Somalis. Ethiopia finds it convenient to use of the Hargeisa Administration to implement its divisive policy.

Right from the beginning, on 15 October 2002, the organisers were trying to keep the conference purely as a conference of the Southern Regions. All the documents emanating from conference were signed in the absence of representatives of the Administration of the Northern Regions. So far, the conference has been restricted to the problems of the South as if it has nothing to do with the North.

No matter what the TNG and others who believe in the unity of all the Somalis may feel, the Nairobi Conference is virtually all heading towards the acceptance of the situation in the Northern Regions as a *fait accompli*. Mr. Kiplagat is openly working for limiting the scope of the conference to the problems of the South. He publicly told those who believe in unity, "you are unionist, you are not wanted here." That is what the end result is going to be.

Ethiopia, which is encouraging the leaders in Somaliland in their endeavours to secede is said to be anxiously waiting

for an opportunity to recognise the so-called "Somaliland Republic". Others are expecting the Nairobi conference to end, no matter in which way. If the conference ends in failure, the sympathizers of the North will say that "Somaliland" cannot wait any longer for those who do not wish to solve their region's problems; and if it succeeds, they will say, "The Southerners organised the conference for their own region and left the North out of the conference". In both cases, "Somaliland" will try to justify its decision to secede and blame will be on the so-called "leaders" of the South.

That will be a victory for Ethiopia and Kenya, particularly for Kiplagat; and a disaster for the Somalis, wherever they may be and whatever their thinking may be. As for those who helped the enemy to succeed must be prepared to bear the consequences of their action. History will judge those who betrayed the poor and helpless motherland: Somalia.

Of course, that is not the end of the world. Somalis will rise up again and fight for their right to regain their dignity and unity. Somali people will not accept a new form of colonialism in their own backyard. Those who are plotting to divide Somalia and long to rule it are doomed to fail. Instead, we might see the Almighty bring all the Somalis together, strengthening the unity of the present Somalia, and also bring Djibouti Republic in the union and other missing territories and islands to join hands with the rest of the brothers and sisters.

Former British Somaliland gained its independence on 26 June 1960 and on 1 July 1960, when the South became independent, the two sides jointly formed the Republic of Somalia. The reason for giving the Northern part of Somalia its independence four days before the South, was meant to give the former British Protectorate its own, separate, date of independence, but could anyone imagine that the colonial power could foresee that a day will come when the Region would decide to breakaway and reclaim its right to independence on the basis of that decision?

The colonial powers planned our destiny long before

Somalia's independence that even if the five parts of Somalilands got united, it did not guarantee that these would not break up like former British Somaliland and the Italian Somaliland. What history has taught is that artificial divisions of one people may last for some time, but in the end all would eventually reunite as it happened in Vietnam, Germany and Yemen. The world is moving in a different direction. States in Europe are merging their countries and working towards a pan European identity. Sooner or later this realisation will dawn on Somali people.

Those who support the secession of Somaliland now argue that, "the former British Protectorate was independent before merging with the former Italian Somalia—and that what is now necessary is to rescind the voluntary merger that they had entered then."

However, it is ironical that even the African Union is indirectly supporting the breakaway region. In its latest Communiqué, issued at the end of its 6th Session on 29 April 2004, the African Union deliberately omitted the call for the participation of the Northern Regions in the ongoing Somali Peace and Reconciliation Process in Mbaghati, Nairobi to share power with their brothers. Paragraph Six of the Communiqué merely says that the Council:

"Welcomes the continued stability in the region of Somaliland and encourages the Chairperson of the Commission to continue to engage the authorities of that region, with a view to securing their support to the ongoing efforts to promote reconciliation in Somalia and restore the unity of the country;"

The Council which was supposed to emphasise the inclusiveness of the conference and insist on the participation of all the Somalis, including those in the North, has now, perhaps, decided to change its position in favour of the separatists and of the others who advocate the partition of Somalia.

The AU should have encouraged the leaders in the North

to join the Conference and not just ask it to support. The leaders of the Administration in the North never opposed the conference as long as it was held for the South. By not asking the North to join the conference, the African Union practically supported their decision to stay away from the Process in Nairobi.

At the monthly meeting of the African Heads of Mission in New Delhi on 5 May 2004, I questioned the position of the African Union on the participation of the Northern Regions in the conference, during the discussion on the "Progress Report on the African Union" presented by the High Commissioner for Mozambique, Carlos Agostinho do Rosario. The High Commissioner mentioned the statement issued by the AU on the Somali Peace and Reconciliation Conference in Kenya. In the same day, I gave the High Commissioner my question in writing by e-mail.

On 28 July 2004, I received from the High Commissioner a letter dated 26 July 2004 in which he informed me that his government made contact with the AU on the matter and received the following reply:

"1. The African Union (AU) does not recognize the Somaliland State, because the AU defends the principle of a united Somalia;

"2. The African Union recognizes that nowadays in Somaliland prevails a certain stability and there is an interlocutor with whom the African Union is touch (*sic*);

"3. The main conflict is taking place in Southern Somalia;

"4. Due to the reasons above-mentioned in 2 & 3 paragraphs, the African Union defends that the Somali question be solved in two phases. First of all, by attaining stability in Southern Somalia, through the establishment of a government. The second phase of the process should be constituted by bringing the two parties of Somalia (Northern and Southern) to start a dialogue on the future of whole Somalia;"

"4. Calling for the participation of the factions from

Northern Somalia in the ongoing Somali Peace and Reconciliation Conference now exactly when the Southern factions are not united should mean transporting the instability from the Southern to the Northern Somalia. The government of Somaliland does not object the unification of Somalia but it says it does not have a valid interlocutor from Southern Somalia." (For full text, please see appendix n. 7)

The declared policy of the authorities in the breakaway "Republic" is:

"The Somaliland Government has made it clear that when the problem of the South is resolved and a national government is established it will have no objection to holding dialogue, as two equal partners, on issues of common interest and to identify future areas of cooperation".

The people in the Northern Regions deserve to be complimented for their efforts to bring peace and stability to the regions. They are also not short of clans, or differences, but they understand better than others that conflict can not bring prosperity and happiness to the present and future generations.

When the dust settles down, the troubled water calms down and peace reigns in our minds, Somalis shall sit down under the trees to talk about how to rebuild the society and to open a new page in history.

CONCLUSION

After having been boycotted by certain member-states for some time, the Kenyan Foreign Minister, Stephen Kalonzo Musyoka, has finally succeeded in holding the Ministerial Facilitation Committee Meeting on Somali Peace Process in Nairobi on 7 May 2004 at the Grand Regency Hotel. The attendance was extremely encouraging as the Foreign Ministers of all IGAD countries were present. It was in a way both encouraging and disappointing. Encouraging because the attendance was impressive and disappointing because it seems the meeting was held not to talk about how to face the final phase of the peace Process, but to claim or recover the budget deficit incurred by the organisers.

Besides the Foreign Minister of Kenya, who is the Chairman of the Facilitation Committee, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Djibouti, the Sudan, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Minister of State of Uganda as well as the Executive Secretary of IGAD and AU Commissioner for Peace and Security attended the meeting. It was a big show of solidarity with Kenya.

There is nothing noteworthy in the Joint Communiqué issued on 7 May 2004 at the conclusion of their meeting, besides the call for the financial support to the conference. The communiqué states that "conference was operating on a 52 per cent budget deficit as the pending bills continue to escalate."

By "coincidence" on the same day of the conference, a news report stated that delegates at the Somali Process "have not been fed for five days because the organisers of the talks have not paid their bills". This was the second time since the start of the Process. At Eldoret, to convince the donor countries that money was needed, Somalis were starved. Without prior notice, they were denied food during the fasting month of Ramadan.

Kenya's Envoy to the conference, Ambassador Kiplagat said that peace negotiations had a budget deficit of \$10 million. Had there been accountability Kiplagat would have been made to answer where and for what the money was spent during the seventeen months since the start of the conference. So far, we know that in terms of productivity there is nothing positive to show to the world or to justify before the donor countries what the conference has achieved. The only document which the organisers continue to claim credit for is the one, that was signed on 27 October 2002, regarding the Cessation of Hostilities. That too, was discarded and made useless only a few days after it was signed. In terms of reconciliation, the result is zero.

In fact, what we see is widening of the divergence rather than convergence. The Chair can claim success only in dividing those Somalis who were earlier united and creating discord among the Somalis rather than helping them to solve their problems.

During the very early stages of the conference, two prominent Somali statesmen, former Prime Minister Abdirizak Haji Hussein and former President Ali Mahdi Mohamed, after smelling the rat, expressed pessimism about the process and made it clear that the Somalis should not expect any positive outcome from what was going on in Nairobi. Prof. Abdi Ismail Samater, who worked hard in the Harmonisation Committee to produce a suitable Charter or Constitution for the country, was discredited by the Ethiopian and Kenyan (Chair) delegates in the Technical Committee, for his positive opinion and attitude towards the Somali national interest.

It was apparent that the conference did not have the interest of the Somalis in mind. On the contrary, it was intended to undermine Somalia's interests. It does not take great political wisdom to judge the role of Kenya (Chair) and Ethiopia in the management of the conference.

If there is any one to blame for the deficit or over expenditure, it is, primarily, Kiplagat or by extension the Kenyan Government, particularly the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Kiplagat was the person after Mwangale who was entrusted to run the conference and oversee the expenditure.

Kiplagat was allowed to bring hundreds of extra delegates to represent the factions and permitted Ethiopia to bring to the conference as many people as it wished. Such a decision was aimed at bolstering the groups opposed to the TNG. They were apparently given free access to "the political fund" to build a force that could counter the Transitional National Government. As far as their political activities were concerned, transparency and accountability were given a go by. There was already a case of accountability during the early months of the conference, when the donor countries demanded to see how the money they gave was spent.

At the beginning of the conference in Eldoret, people were accommodated in a hotel, but in Nairobi the largest number of the delegates were staying in dormitories of the KCCT (Kenya College of Communication Technology), Mbagathi, which the Somalis had nicknamed the place as "Doofaareey" (the place of the pigs). Those who stayed outside the compound of Mbagathi were taken by public transport to the meeting place.

To blackmail or win the sympathy of the IPF (IGAD Partners Forum), particularly the European Union, the Kenya, thought it fit to starve the Somalis. For five days, the Somali delegates to the conference were denied food, "Because organisers of the talks had not paid their bills." The hotel or the shops that supplied the provisions to the KCCT eatery

might not have been paid. If Ten million US dollars is just deficit then what is the total expenditure authorised for the Somali Peace Process.

I believe that we do deserve such humiliating treatment. But it is the price we pay for our deeds! We destroyed our own country and now we beg others to help us solve our problems. Mbagathi made us forget even our own homes. Many people live on such conferences and may even care less about the country. They do not seem to bother much about the solution or reconciliation. The only time they seem to be united was when Kiplagat starves them. The people who do not mind such a humiliation are called "Shir ku nool" (Those who live on conferences).

It is indeed ironical that the organisers receive money in the name of Somalia and yet starve Somali delegates. Ethiopia did collect money in our name for ten years prior to Arta Peace Process and I hope Kenya is not also envisaging the same. The problem is that if the Somalis stay another seventeen months or more, in *Doofaareey* (Mbagathi) and the situation in Somalia continues as it is now, Kiplagat and Ethiopia will have reason to celebrate their success.

Material benefit from our tragedy may be negligible for Kenya and Ethiopia, but they have succeeded in their nefarious design to keep Somalia in a state of permanent turmoil and in constant conflict with itself.

Experience shows that the Arta Peace Process which had six times bigger participants than the one in Mbagathi, was concluded in six months including the preparatory conference of intellectuals which started in February 2000. The other difference is that at Arta, each step was result oriented, unlike in Eldoret or Mbagathi.

If the Somalis had the ownership of the conference, they would also have a say in the manner in which its funds are spent. Every thing is done in our name, but we have neither control over it nor are we being consulted.

Even the so-called 27th October 2002 Cessation of Hostilities Agreement signed at Eldoret, is now in the dumps

the dumps. Whatever the organisers may claim, resolutions adopted by the so-called Plenary of the "faction leaders" were nothing but fake documents produced through corrupt methods. The press statements and the communiqués issued by the Minister of Foreign Affairs made little progress. It was so ridiculous. Each time a Press Statement or Communiqué was issued, there was immediately another that contradicted the previous one.

In their Joint Communiqué issued in Nairobi on 7 May 2004, the IGAD Ministers of Foreign Affairs declared, "the process should come to a successful conclusion latest by the end of July, 2004. While in his Press release dated 23 April 2004, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kenya, Stephen Kalonzo Musyoka listed seven-point agenda for the conclusion of the Process and its paragraph five clearly said: "The swearing-in ceremony will take place on the 19 of June and the new government will be inaugurated here in Nairobi on 1 July 2004."

This is how things have been since the start of the peace Process in Kenya. Former President of Kenya, Daniel T. arap Moi, in a statement at American Defence University in Washington in September 2003, said rather frankly:

"Regional suspicion of Somalia's expansionist dreams has been cited as a drawback in that country's peace efforts.

"Its neighbours feared that a reunited and prosperous nation might resurrect Somalia's territorial claims."

This is the second time that Somalia went under tutelage: From 1950 to 1960, the country was under the Trusteeship Committee of three member countries: Italy, Egypt and Philippines and now Somalia is under Technical Committee of three member countries: Kenya, Djibouti and Ethiopia.

During the civil war, something happened somewhere while we were in coma. The Resolution of the 8th Summit of the IGAD Heads of State and Government confirms Ethiopia's claim that it was mandated to look after Somalia. The second preamble of the Resolution reads:

"Considering further the commendable efforts made

by Ethiopia, the country mandated by IGAD, the OAU, the Arab League and the United Nations in order to settle the internal conflict in Somalia".

This is a very serious matter and in breach of Art. 78 of UN Charter. If the United Nations mandated Ethiopia, it means that Somalia has returned to the 1950 situation, when the U.N. mandated Italy, to look after Somalia. However, the fact is that Somalia, while it is a member of the United Nations, was placed under the control of Ethiopia, no matter in what form, a country known to be traditionally hostile to the Somali nation.

The UN knew that Ethiopia and Somalia were in a state of war since the Ogaden conflict in 1977 and a long-standing dispute exist between the two countries over the Region. It was something like asking the Apartheid regime in South Africa settle the Biafra civil war in Nigeria or the Arab League asking Israel to settle a conflict in a Arab country.

This is a Somali problem and the Somalis alone have the responsibility to find a solution. Despite the precious time having already been wasted since the collapse of our State, there is still hope that we can pick up the pieces and stitch together a framework of peace, which can work. As Ismail Omar Guelleh, President of Djibouti, said when he decided in 1999 to hold Reconciliation Conference for the Somalis, "Cidna uma Maqna, Ceelna uma Qodna" (There is nothing at their disposal and there is no one thinking of them). The people must bear the ultimate responsibilities to free the country from the shackles of new colonisation, because Somalia is between Devils and Deep Sea. Arta Peace Process restored the dignity of the nation and the Transitional National Government has done all it can, to keep the flag flying, despite all the difficulties.

With each passing day, we are adding many more new problems. We are slowly but steadily losing our identity and nationality. A growing number of countries including Kenya which is hosting our conference reject Somali passport or travel document which are the documents of our identity.

If we do not come to our senses and solve our problems as soon as possible; most of us are going to be stateless or the citizens of the United Nations and compelled to travel on UN Travel Documents issued by the UNDP Somalia, as we are slowly, but steadily going back to the situation similar to that of 1950s.

This is the situation in which we find ourselves and sooner the people realise this and demonstrate their opposition to the internal or external forces that are holding the country hostage, the better for all. The longer the *status quo* continues, the better for the enemies of Somalia to implement their sinister plans. It is a slow extermination of our nation. With the help of the Almighty, we shall preserve our independence, unity and territorial integrity at all cost.

May the Allah help us find the right path. Aamiin.

IGAD Countries





The inaugural ceremony for the Somali President Dr. Abdikassim Salad Hassan at Arta, Djibouti on 27 August 2000 with the President of Djibouti H.E. Ismail Omar Guelleh (right).

Photo: Djiboutiweb



Dr. Abdikassim Salad Hassan with H.E. Ismail Omar Guelleh, President of Djibouti (on his right), just after taking up the Presidentship of Somalia at Arta, Djibouti on 27 August 2000. Photo: Djiboutiweb



Celebrations after successful conclusion of Arta Peace Process, August 27, 2000. Photo: Djiboutiweb



H.E. Meles Zenawi, Prime Minister of Ethiopia (left) attending the ceremony for the inauguration of newly elected Somali President, Dr. Abdikassim Salad Hasan at Arta, Djibouti. On his left is President of Sudan, H.E. Omar Hassan Al-Bashir. Photo: Djiboutiweb



Somali President Dr. Abdikassim Salad Hassan (left) was officially welcomed at Addis Ababa by the Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Meles Zenawi in February 2003 on the occasion of A.U. Summit. Photo: SONNA



UN General Assembly: President of Djibouti H.E. Ismail Omar Guelleh announcing his offer to host a Conference for the Somalis—September 1999.

Photo: UN Photo



Newly elected President of Somalia, H.E. Dr. Abdikassim Salad Hassan, addressing the Millennium 2000 Summit at United Nations on 8 September 2000.

Photo: UN Photo



Dr. Abdikassim Salad Hassan, President of Somalia (Centre) hand-in-hand with Somali Leaders at Safari Park Hotel on 9 January 2004.

Photo: SONNA



Dr. Abdikassim Salad Hassan, President of Somalia (Right) with the President of Uganda at the Safari Park Hotel, Nairobi, Kenya on 9 January 2004.

Photo: SONNA



The President of Somali Republic, Dr. Abdikassim Salad Hassan at the signing ceremony of the 29 January 2004 Declaration at the State House, Nairobi, Kenya with the President of the Republic of Kenya, HE Muai Kibaki.

Photo: SONNA



President of Somalia (Centre) at lunch with Foreign Minister of Kenya, first on the right with some Somali leaders at Safari Park Hotel, Nairobi, January 2004.

Photo: SONNA



The UN Trusteeship Committee
Members of the Committee: Italy, Egypt, Philippines in Somalia in 1950-60. Also seen here Mr. Aden Abdulle Osman (second from right)

Photo: Not Known



The IGAD Technical Committee from 2001:
Kenya, Djibouti and Ethiopia.
Seen here from Right: Kenyan Foreign Minister and Djibouti Foreign Minister at Safari Park Hotel, Nairobi, Kenya
January 2004

Photo: SONNA



The author of this book (Left) in conversation with Ambassador Kiplagat. Kenyan Foreign Minister Musyoko and Ambassador Mohamed Abdi Affey are seen in between.

Safari Park Hotel, January 2004

Photo: SONNA

Appendices

Appendix 1 RESOLUTION OF THE 8th IGAD SUMMIT OF HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT ON SOMALIA

We, Heads of State and Government of IGAD member states meeting in Khartoum on November 23, 2000 on the occasion of the 8th IGAD Summit.

Considering the decade-long crisis in Somalia aggravated by the absence of a central government in that country.

Considering further the commendable efforts made by Ethiopia, the country mandated by IGAD, the OAU, the Arab League and the United Nations in order to settle the internal conflict in Somalia.

Reaffirming the crucial role of, IGAD in the settlement of the crisis and the restoration of peace in Somalia and the sub-region.

Applauding the initiative of H.E. Ismael Omar Guelleh, President of the Republic of Djibouti to promote peace and national reconciliation in Somalia by convening the Arta Conference leading to the establishment of a Transitional Government for Somalia.

Recalling the resolution of the 7th Summit of the Heads of State and Government of IGAD member states endorsing the peace initiative for Somalia of H.E. President of the Republic of Djibouti.

Noting that some parties in Somalia, including the self administering areas of the country with relative peace and stability, have not participated in the national reconciliation efforts so far:—

1. **Affirm** that the Arta Peace Conference that resulted in the establishment of the Transitional Government for Somalia, constituted a major achievement in the Somali peace process.
2. **Urge** the Transitional Government and all parties and administrations of Somalia to create the environment that would bring into the process those that did not participate at the Arta conference with the objective of widening and deepening the process of national reconciliation.
3. **Insist** that the peace process in Somalia must continue and be completed through dialogue and not by resorting to the use of force.
4. **Encourage** Somalia's neighbours and the current Chairman of IGAD to establish a mechanism that would enable them to continue to assist the Somalis to achieve full peace, national reconciliation, and unity.
5. **Affirm** the need for all necessary measures to be taken to ensure that the territory of Somalia is not used as a springboard by groups inimical to the peace and security of the sub region.
6. **Reaffirm** IGAD's commitment to the unity and territorial integrity of Somalia.
7. **Welcome** the participation of the Transitional Government of Somalia in the deliberations and activities of IGAD, bearing in mind that regular and continuing evaluation of progress toward peace and national reconciliation in the country will be carried out.
8. **Urgently** call upon the international community to support the rehabilitation in Somalia through direct assistance to the Transitional Government and the regions which had established peace and stability through self administration, as long as they are committed to the peace process.

Appendix 2

RESOLUTION OF THE 9th IGAD SUMMIT OF THE HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT ON SOMALIA

11 January 2002

1. The 9th Summit of Heads of State and Government of IGAD, after examining:
 - a. The report from the Special Envoy of President Al Bashir, the Current Chairman of IGAD, about Joint IGAD Mission to Mogadisho and Hargessa and other activities to bring peace to Somalia.
 - b. The report from Kenya about Nairobi meetings from 1-4 November and 13-17 December 2001 respectively.
 - c. The report from the Transitional National Government of Somalia about the current situation in Somalia.

Endorsed the following recommendations:

1. Reaffirmed IGAD's commitment to the Unity and territorial integrity of Somalia.
2. Under the IGAD Chairman's supervision called upon Kenya, Ethiopia and Djibouti to coordinate their efforts for National Reconciliation in Somalia.

3. Decided to hold reconciliation Conference on Somalia in Nairobi within two months, under President Moi as a coordinator of the frontline states to continue the peace process in Somalia and to report to IGAD Chairman.
4. Ministerial Committee from IGAD Foreign Ministers mandated to prepare for the coming Nairobi Conference.
5. Urging the TNG and all other parties to commit themselves to Combat Terrorism in its all forms.
6. Call upon the International Community to join IGAD for establishing peace on Somalia.

Appendix 3



Somalia National Reconciliation Process Eldoret, Kenya

Declaration on Cessation of Hostilities and the Structures and Principles of the Somalia National Reconciliation Process

WE, the undersigned,

GUIDED by the common desire of the people of Somalia for peace;

AWARE of the prevailing poverty of the Somali people and their humanitarian needs;

DESIRING to bring an end to the continuing conflict in Somalia;

COMMITTED to the improvement of regional security for all Somalis and the regional states;

WELCOMING the commitment of the international community to respect the sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and unity of Somalia;

HON. E.W. MWANGALE, BGL

OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL
ENVOY FOR SOMALIA
P. O. Box 30551,
NAIROBI.



APPRECIATING the leading role of the IGAD Frontline States (Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya) in this process;

APPRECIATING further the efforts of the international community in promoting national reconciliation in Somalia;

ACKNOWLEDGING that the Somali authorities have the primary responsibility for ensuring the well being of civilians in Somalia;

HEREBY SOLEMNLY UNDERTAKE the following commitments:

Article 1 Federalism

- 1) To create federal governance structures for Somalia, embodied in a Charter or Constitution, which are inclusive, representative, and acceptable to all the parties
- 2) To endorse the principle of decentralization as an integral part of Somalia's governance structures
- 3) To ensure the rights, representation and protection of all Somali individuals and groups

Article 2 Cessation of Hostilities

- 1) To abstain from the conduct of hostilities in Somalia from 27 October 2002 and to maintain this state of affairs during the peace process, its implementation and subsequently
- 2) To use only peaceful means in the resolution of all disputes between political, military and other groups and the communities they represent

HON. E.W. MWANGALE, BGH.

OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL
ENVOY FOR SOMALIA.
P. O. Box 30551,



3) To ensure that all political, military and other groups maintain only defensive military positions and capabilities, and refrain from any military provocations

4) To implement fully the United Nations Arms Embargo for Somalia (UN Security Council Resolution 733 of 1992)

5) To invite the international community to undertake field-based and remote monitoring of the arms embargo, and to guarantee their representatives unimpeded and safe access

Article 3 Enhanced Safe Access for Aid

- 1) To respect the rights of the people of Somalia to receive humanitarian assistance
- 2) To guarantee the security of all humanitarian and development personnel and installations, including those of the United Nations Agencies, non-governmental organizations, ICRC and donor governments and organizations
- 3) To ensure that the safe access to aid for all the people of Somalia is enhanced

Article 4 Endorsement of Outcomes of the Peace Process

- 1) To undertake political negotiations and technical discussions in good faith and in a spirit of cooperation during each phase of the Somalia National Reconciliation Process
- 2) To abide by the conclusions resulting from the Somalia National Reconciliation Process

HON. E.W. MWANGALE, BGH.

OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL
ENVOY FOR SOMALIA.
P. O. Box 30551,
NAIROBI.



- 3) To implement all the resolutions of the Process in good faith and in a timely way

Article 5

Combating Terrorism

- 1) To combat all forms of terrorism, and to cooperate with the international community in the fight against terrorism pursuant to UN Security Council Resolution 1373 of 2002

- 2) To prevent the use of Somali territory as a base for any terrorist activities

Article 6

Monitoring of the Declaration

- 1) To invite IGAD, the African Union and the international community to support and monitor the implementation of this declaration and all further agreements reached

- 2) To support the establishment of enforcement mechanisms for the safe delivery of humanitarian aid and implementation of this declaration and all further agreements reached in the interest of the people of Somalia.

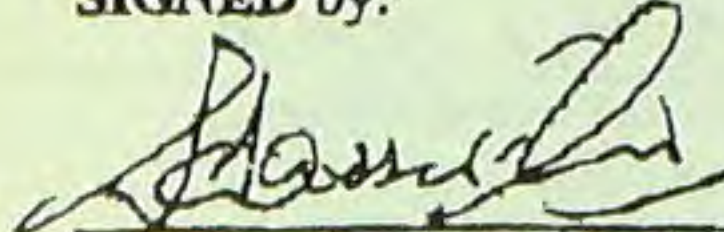
DONE at Eldoret, Kenya, on Sunday, 27 October 2002.

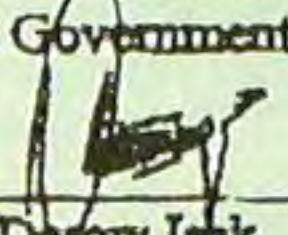
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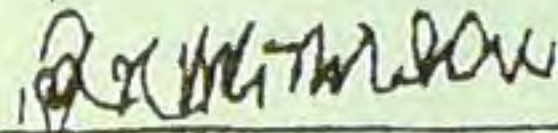
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ENVOY FOR SOMALIA,
P. O. Box 30551,
NAIROBI



SIGNED by:

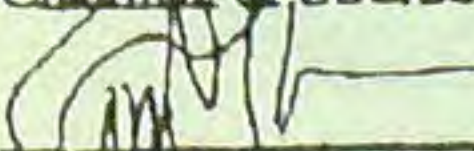

Hassan Abahir
Prime Minister of Transitional
National Government

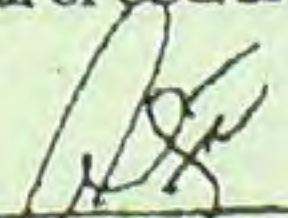

Abdalla Darow Isak
Speaker of the Transitional
National Assembly


Col. Hassan Mohamed Nur
'Shatigudud', Chairman of RRA


Col. Hassan Abdulla Qalad
Chairman of HPA


Musa Sudi Yalahow
Chairman of USC/SSA/SRRC


Osman Hassan Ali 'Atto'
Chairman of USC/SNA/SRRC
Nakuru

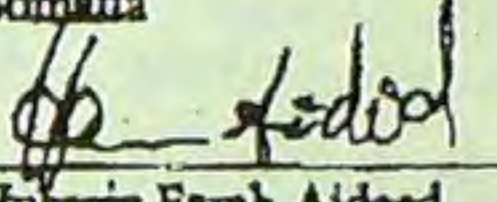

Col. Abdirizak Isak Bihi
Chairman of SNF

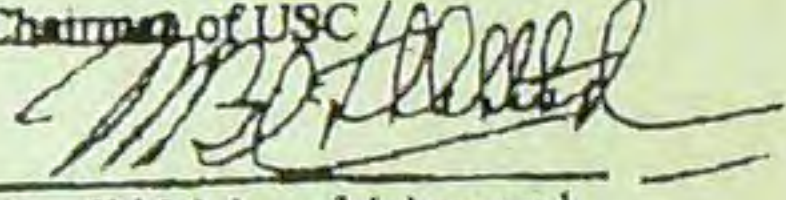
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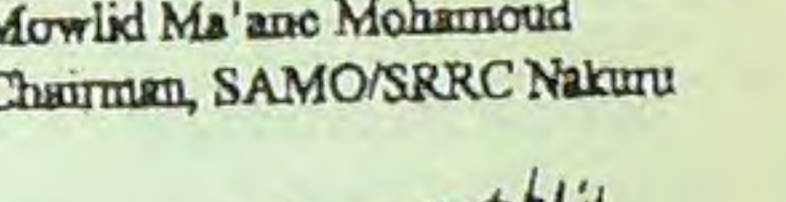
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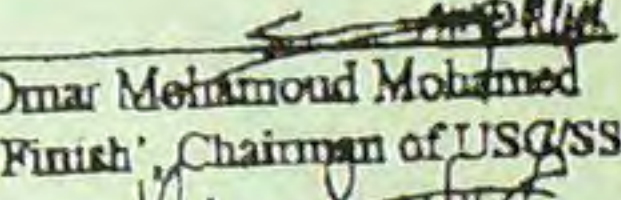



Abdullahi Yusuf
President of Puntland State of
Somalia

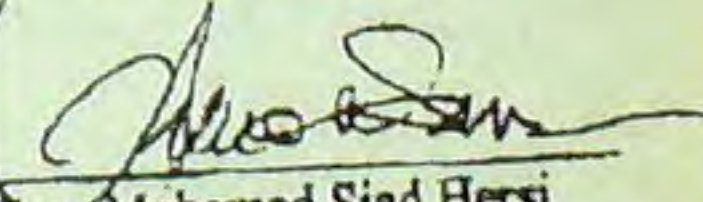

Hussein Farah Aidood
Co-Chairman of Somalia
Reconciliation and Restoration
Council (SRRC)

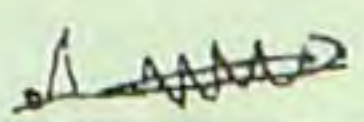

Mohamed Qanyare Afrab
Chairman of USC

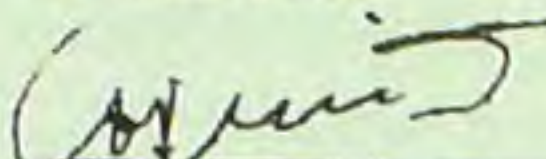

Mowlid Ma'ane Mohamoud
Chairman, SAMO/SRRC Nakuru

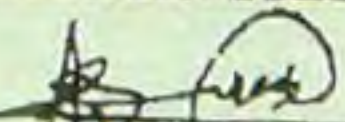

Omar Mahmoud Mohamed
'Finish', Chairman of USC/SSA

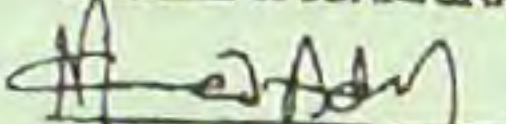

Mohamed Sayyid Aden
Chairman of SNF/SRRC

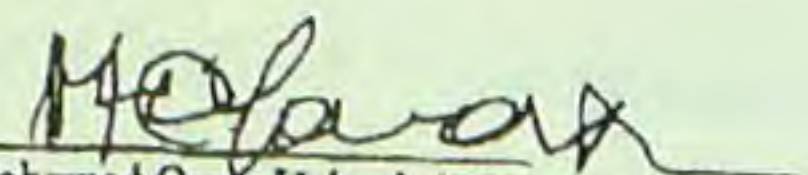

Gen. Mohamed Siad Hersi
Morgan, Deputy SPM Chairman

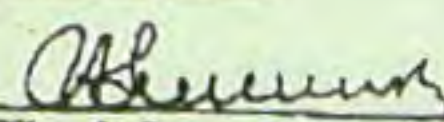

Bare Aden Shire
Chairman of JVA


Abdullahi Sheikh Ismail
Chairman of SSNM/BIREM

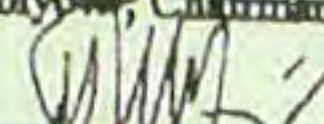

Abdulaziz Sheikh Yousuf
Chairman of SSNM/SNA


Mohamed Aden Wayel
Chairman SPM/Nakuru


Mohamed Omar Habeeb 'Dhere'
Chairman of Jowhar
Administration


Hilowle Insum Omar
Co-Chairman of SRRC


Gen. Abacha Abdullahi Nur
'Gabiyyow', Chairman of SPM

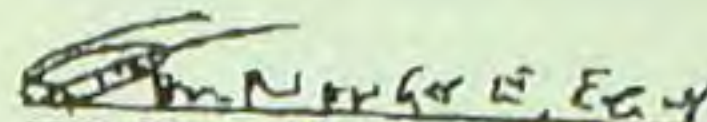

Dr. Sharif Salah Mohamed Ali
On Behalf of Civil Society

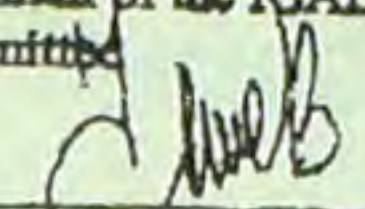
HON. E.W. MWANGALE, EGH

OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL
ENVOY FOR SOMALIA
P. O. Box 30551,
NAIROBI



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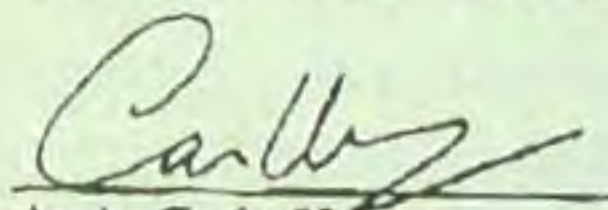

H.E. Hon. Elijah W. Mwangale,
H.E. President Daniel arap Moi's
Special Envoy for Somalia and
Chairman of the IGAD Technical
Committee

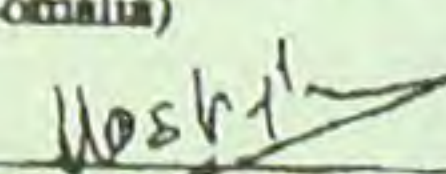

H.E. Amb. Ismail Goulal
Boudine
Ambassador of the Republic of
Djibouti to Somalia

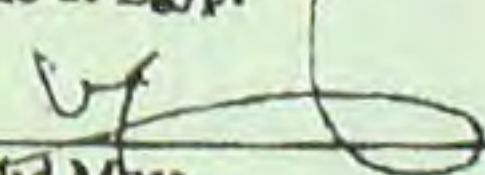

Dr. Atalla Al-Bashir
Executive Secretary of IGAD


H.E. Amb. Abdulaziz Ahmed
Special Envoy of the Federal
Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
for Somalia

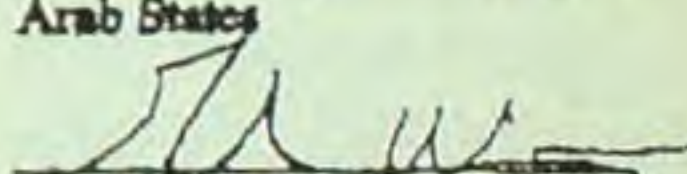
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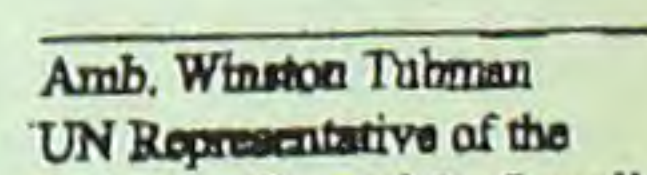

Amb. Carlo Ungaro
Special Envoy of Italy (Chair of
IGAD Partners Forum for
Somalia)


Amb. Mostafa Khedre
Deputy Assistant Minister for
Foreign Affairs of the Arab
Republic of Egypt


Dr. Walid Musa
European Union and European
Commission Delegation in
Kenya


Amb. Mohammed Salim Al
Khussati
Special Envoy of the League of
Arab States


Mr. Glenn Warren
Embassy of the United States in
Kenya


Amb. Winston Tubman
UN Representative of the
Secretary General for Somalia

HON. E.W. MWANGALE, EGH

OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL
ENVOY FOR SOMALIA
P. O. Box 30551,
NAIROBI



Appendix 4

COMMUNIQUE BY THE 10th ORDINARY IGAD SUMMIT

1. The Tenth ordinary summit of the Heads of State and government of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) was held at the Nile International Conference Centre, Kampala, Uganda from 20-25 October 2003.
2. The summit was chaired by H.E Yoweri Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda and was attended by the Heads of State and Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, The Republic of Kenya, The Republic of Somalia and the Republic of Sudan.
3. The President of the State of Eritrea was represented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the State of Eritrea. The President of the Republic of Djibouti was represented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation in charge of Relations with parliament of the Republic of Djibouti.
4. H.E Joachim Chissano, the President of the Republic of Mozambique attended the summit meeting in his capacity as Chairperson of the African Union.
5. The following IGAD Development Partners attended the IGAD Summit. H.E Hilde Fradjord Johnson, Minister of International Development of Norway; Senator Alfredo Mantica, Italian Deputy Minister of Foreign

- Affairs/Co-Chairperson of IGAD Partners Forum; H.E Mrs. Agnes Van Ardenne, Minister for Development Cooperation of the Netherlands; H.E Mrs. Laila Freivalds, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden; H.E Mr. Mohamed Sahnoun, Special Advisor to the United Nations Secretary General, H.E Amb. Mchumo, Deputy Secretary General of the East African Community, H.E Mr. Sindiso Ngwenya, Assistant secretary General of COMESA and Mrs. Ndioro Ndiaye, Deputy Director General of International Organization for Migration.
6. H. E Yoweri Museveni extended warm welcome to the Heads of State and Government, and expressed appreciation for being honoured to chair the Summit of IGAD for the next one year.
 7. The Summit commended the achievements and the role played by the Sudan during her tenure of office as Chairperson of IGAD (January 2000 to October 2003)
 8. The Summit noted progress so far made in the Sudan peace process, notably; The Machakos protocol of 20 July 2002: The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on cessation of hostilities of 15 October 2002 and its addendum of 4th February 2003. The Agreed aspects in both power and wealth sharing of 6th February 2003 and the agreement on security arrangement during the Interim Period of September 2003.
 9. Following the Naivasha Declaration of 22 October 2003, the Summit welcomed and urged the parties to conclude the Final Peace Agreement by the end of the year.
 10. The summit welcomed and encouraged all parties involved in the Sudan Peace Process to continue with the process of dialogue in order to resolve the remaining outstanding issues as agreed.
 11. The Summit committed itself to support the reconstruction and peace building effort in the Sudan and urged the IGAD Secretariat to formulate in collaboration with International Organizations and

- Development Partners, a workplan to that effect.
12. Following discussions and exchange of views on the current complications encountered in the Peace Process between Ethiopia and Eritrea, the Summit decided that current IGAD Chairman and the current Chairman of the African Union be engaged in the implementation of the Algiers Agreement.
 13. The summit endorsed the Resolution of the 22nd session of the IGAD Council of Ministers on the IGAD future vision for integration and security as proposed by Sudan.
 14. On Somalia Peace Process. The summit endorsed the following recommendations of the 22nd Session of IGAD Council of Ministers.
 - (I) Expand the Technical Committee now renamed as the Facilitation Committee on the Somali Peace Process led by Kenya to include Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Uganda and Sudan(Sudan subject to confirmation)
 - (II) Direct the Facilitation Committee to meet on 28th October, 2003 at Ministerial Level in Nairobi to review the status of the Peace Process and report to the Chairman of the Summit.
 - (III) Request the current Chairman to evaluate the Peace Process on Somali in order to decide on measures that would remove any obstacles to the Process.
 - (IV) The African Union through the Chair and the commission to assist IGAd in its effort to facilitate the Reconciliation Process in Somalia.

P.S: You can get the full report at the Media & Cultural Centre

Appendix 5

Somali National Reconciliation Conference The Nairobi Safari Park Declaration

Declaration on the Harmonization of Various Issues Proposed by The Somali Delegates at the Somali Consultative Meetings from 9th - 29th January 2004.

WHEREAS WE the delegates to the Somali Consultative meetings representing; Transitional National Government, the National Salvation Council, the Somali Reconciliation and Restoration Council the Group of Eight, Civil Society Organization having been invited by the Hon. Stephen Kalonzo Musyoka the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kenya, on behalf of H.E Mwai Kibaki President of the Republic of Kenya and Chairman of IGAD Facilitation Committee for consultations on issues relating to our National Reconciliation in the interest of the people of Somalia from 9th January 2004 to 29th January 2004 at the Safari Park Hotel, Nairobi.

WE the delegates have agreed to be bound as follows hereunder:

- That the name of the Charter shall remain as adopted – *'The Transitional Federal Charter of Somali Republic'*.




- The name of the Government shall remain as adopted in the Transitional Federal Charter.

'Transitional Federal Government of the Somali Republic'.

- That there should be added to Article 11 of the Draft Transitional Federal Charter of the Somali Republic a new Clause 11 (3), to read as follows

"11 (3a) While the new Constitution is being drafted, a National Census shall be undertaken simultaneously".

"11 (3b) An internationally supervised National Referendum shall be undertaken to approve the new Constitution."

"11 (3c) The Transitional Federal Government will request the International Community to provide both technical and financial support"

- That existing clauses 3 to 10 of Article 11 of the Draft Federal Charter shall be amended 4 to 11.

- That Article 24 Clause 9 of the Draft Transitional Federal Charter of the Somali Republic should be amended by the deletion of the sentence:

"This does not apply to non-Muslim Schools."

- That Article 29 of the Draft Transitional Federal Charter of the Somali Republic should read:

"29 The Transitional Federal Parliament of the Somali Republic shall consist of Two Hundred and Seventy Five (275) Members of which at least Twelve Percent (12%) shall be Women."

- That Article 30 of the Draft Transitional Federal Charter should read:

"30(1): The Parliament envisaged under Article 28 above shall be selected by the sub sub sub-clan Somali political Leaders invited to the consultation meetings in Nairobi as from 9th January 2004, comprising: Transitional National Government (TNG); National Salvation Council (NSC); Regional Administrations; Somalia Restoration and Reconciliation Council (SRRC); Group-8 (G8) Political Alliance and Civil Society and must be endorsed by genuine traditional leaders.

30(2): Any Vacancy that arises after the coming into force of this Charter shall be filled through the same procedure as stated in Article 30 (1) above."

- That Article 31 of the Draft Transitional Federal Charter of the Somali Republic should be amended by the deletion of Clause 1(e)

- That Article 32 of the Draft Transitional Federal Charter of the Somali Republic should read:

"32: The term of the Transitional Federal Parliament shall be Five (5) Years."

- That Article 51(2) of the Draft Transitional Federal Charter of the Somali Republic should be **deleted**.
- That We shall take the above agreed proposed texts to the Plenary of the Somali National Reconciliation Conference at Mbagathi, Nairobi to seek its endorsement and thereafter request the endorsement of the TNA
- That thereafter We will proceed to Phase III of the National Reconciliation Conference to appoint a new Transitional Federal Parliament.

And **WHEREAS** in Eldoret on 27 October 2002 Somali Leaders signed a Declaration relating to Cessation of Hostilities, We hereby state Our commitment to that Declaration and to a Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement.

Signed at Nairobi on this 29th Day of January Two Thousand and Four in the presence of His Excellency Mwai Kibaki, President of the Republic of Kenya and Chairman of IGAD Facilitation Committee.

[Handwritten signatures]



Mr. Mohamed Abdi Yusuf

H.E. Col. Abdullahi Yusuf

Mr. Mohamed Qanyare Afrah

Mr. Mohamed Dreere

Mr. Adan Mohamed Nur "Madhobe"

Mr. Musa Sudi Yalahow

Mr. Sharif Salah Mohamed Ali

Mrs. Asha Haji Elmi

Witnessed by

H.E Dr. Abdikassim Salad Hassan
President of the Somali Republic

H.E Hon. Mwai Kibaki CGH, MP
President and Commander in Chief of the
Armed Forces of The Republic of Kenya

[Handwritten signature]

Appendix 6

**PRESS STATEMENT ISSUED BY HON. STEPHEN
KALONZO MUSYOKA, MINISTER FOR FOREIGN
AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA AND
CHAIRMAN OF THE IGAD MINISTERIAL FACILITATION
COMMITTEE ON THE CURRENT SITUATION OF THE
SOMALIA NATIONAL RECONCILIATION CONFERENCE
4th FEBRUARY, 2004**

1. The Declaration on the Harmonization of the various outstanding issues on the Transitional Federal Charter of the Somali Republic signed on the 29th January, 2004 and witnessed by H.E. Mwai Kibaki, President of the Republic of Kenya represents a momentous achievement and a landmark breakthrough in the long and intractable search for lasting peace in Somalia.
2. Special thanks to H. E. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, the Chairman of the IGAD Summit of Heads of State and Government for his commendable role in the achievement of the breakthrough.
3. The momentum acquired has signaled a renewed and positive spirit of goodwill that was demonstrated by all the Somali leaders who signed this milestone agreement.
4. The Agreement has not only raised hope for all but also finally opens the doors to the final solution that we have all been waiting for.

5. I wish to applaud, the courage, patience and commitment to make concession and compromises which resulted in this breakthrough, particularly those who have patiently remained in Mbagathi for the last 14 months.
6. We urge these leaders to stay on course by concerting and intensifying their efforts towards realizing the aspirations of the Somali people.
7. As we move to the third and final phase of the Conference, leaders must refrain from any precipitative or hostile, propaganda, animosity and mutual suspicion that could trigger any setback. The International Community led by the IGAD Partners Forum (IPF), including United Nations, African Union, European Union, League of Arab States have given unflagging support to the process and embraced the outcome of this agreement. I thank them for their overwhelming endorsement of this agreement, as an important international guarantee to the final political settlement.
8. In this regard, we appeal to the United Nations Security Council to embrace this significant agreement signed in Nairobi on 29th January, 2004, and take appropriate steps to facilitate its consolidation.
9. The Peace and Restoration of Stability in Somalia which has suffered for over a decade of human and material destruction is of great concern not only to the region but also to the International Community as a whole.
10. The road map towards the successful conclusion of this process must not be held hostage by any single interest or issues or by any individual or groups. The International Community will not stand by and watch these efforts undermined or derailed by any group or leader bent on promoting their selfish and narrow interest.
11. We call upon the leaders of Puntland and Somaliland to exercise maximum restraint by reducing tension that could escalate into a fresh conflict and I thank the African Union Central Organ on Conflict Prevention,

Management and Resolution for formally pronouncing itself on this matter.

12. We would also wish to remind the leaders that the International Community would not hesitate to take decisive punitive measure including the application of targeted sanctions regime to enforce the will of the Somali people to regain their rightful place within the community of nations.
13. I have instructed the Special Envoy to move with speed to assemble all traditional leaders including those in Somalia to participate in final phase of Conference, which involves the selection of members of the Somali Transitional Federal Parliament of the Somali Republic.
14. For purposes of clarity Mr. Abdigassim Salad Hassan witnessed the signing of this Agreement as the President of the Transitional National Government and H.E. Abdullahi Yussuf signed as the President of the Puntland State of Somalia.

I thank you.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
NAIROBI

4th February, 2004

Appendix 7



HIGH COMMISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE
ALTO COMISSARIADO DA REPÚBLICA DE MOÇAMBIQUE
NEW DELHI, INDIA

No.230/HCMZ/2004

New Delhi, 26 July 2004

Excellency,

I am writing in the sequence of my letter dated of May 5, 2004 responding Your Excellency's E-mail of the same day, regarding the ongoing Somali peace and reconciliation process, which was included in my "Report Progress on the African Union" presented before the African Head of Diplomatic Missions in India, in May 2004.

As I had the opportunity to inform your Excellency, your letter was forwarded to H. E. Joaquim Alberto Chissano, during his tenure as Chairman of the African Union, and subsequently, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Government of Mozambique contacted the relevant Institutions of the African Union and it received from them the response as follows:

1. The African Union (AU) does not recognize the Somaliland State, because the AU defends the principle of a united Somalia;
2. The African Union recognizes that nowadays in Somaliland prevails a certain stability and there is an interlocutor with whom the African Union is touch;
3. The main conflict is taking place in Southern Somalia;
4. Due to the reasons above-mentioned in 2 & 3 paragraphs, the African Union defends that the Somali question be solved in two phases. First of all, by attaining stability in Southern Somalia, through the establishment of a government. The second phase of the process should be constituted by bringing the two parties of Somalia (Northern and Southern) to start a dialogue on the future of whole Somalia;
5. Calling for the participation of the factions from Northern Somalia in the ongoing Somali Peace and Reconciliation Conference now exactly when the Southern factions are not united should mean

transporting the instability from the Southern to the Northern Somalia. The government of Somaliland does not object the unification of Somalia but it says it does not have a valid interlocutor from Southern Somalia;

6. Paragraph 155 of Chairperson of the African Union Commission's Introductory Note presented before the IV Session of the Executive Council, in March 2004, clearly indicates that "... Somaliland does not participate in the Somali Reconciliation process. (...) the Commission stressed that the Somali reconciliation peace and process is progressively moving towards to a positive result and conclusion which will create new opportunity and a good environment for the participation of all Somali people in the dialogue, in the future, aimed at finding solutions for the current issues afflicting their country. In this context, the Commission stressed also that the African Union must wait for the results of the Somali reconciliation process and it will be directed by the decisions to be reached by the Somalis about the future of their country and the status of Somaliland, instead of supporting unilateral actions".

Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurance of my highest consideration.



His Excellency
Mr. Mohamd Osman Omar
Ambassador of the Republic of Somalia
New Delhi

C.C.

- H.E. Mrs. M. E. Nkoana-Mashabane – the Dean of the African Head of Diplomatic Missions;
- H.E. Mr. Abdal Mahmood Abdalhaleem Mahammad, Ambassador of the Republic of Sudan and Sub-Dean of the African Head of Diplomatic Missions;
- H.E. Maj. Gen. Charles Dickson Ndaxu P. Namoloh, High Commissioner of the Republic of Namibia and Coordinator – "The African Head of Diplomatic Missions".

NEW DELHI

Index

A

- Ababu Namwamba, 159
 Abbandula, Gen. 16
 Abdalla Deerow Issak, 164, 165, 168, 169, 171, 172
 Abdi Ismail Samatar, 107, 149, 151, 158, 182, 186, 234
 Abdikarim Ahmed Ali, 67
 Abdikassim Salad Hassan, 21, 22, 32, 33, 42, 52, 55, 61, 62, 67, 76, 78, 98, 100, 103, 105, 108, 110, 140, 144, 145, 150, 154, 165, 167, 172, 179, 185, 201, 203, 204, 209, 211, 213, 214
 Abdirashid Ali Shermarke, 4
 Abdirizak Haji Hussein, 149
 Abdullahi Ahmed Addow, 140
 Abdullahi Ahmed Black, 204
 Abdullahi Shaikh Ismail, 13
 Abdullahi Yusuf, 13, 214, 215
 Abdulmejid Hussein, 114
 Abdurahman Ahmed Ali, 10
 Abizaid, John, 127
 Abraha, 124
 Abu Dhabi, 81
 Abyssinia, 13, 124, 138
 Aden Abdullahi Nur, 13
 Aden Adbulle Osman, 105
 Affey, Mohamed Abdi, 205
 Afghanistan, 29, 83, 110, 117, 130, 183
 African Union, 12, 19, 22, 31, 103, 105, 182, 201, 231
 Ahmed Gurey, 71
 Ahmed Ismail Samater, 107, 149, 151, 158, 182
 Ahmed Omar Jees, 67
 Aideed, 55, 67, 69, 93
 Air Traffic Control, 220, 225
 Albania, 29
 Ali Abdalla Salah, 21, 33, 70, 77
 Ali Abdi Farah, 40, 161, 202, 217
 Ali Mahdi Mohamed, 17, 149, 234
 Amanpour, Christiane, 117, 118
 Amhara incursion, Map, 60
 Amhara, 139
 Amir Abdullahi, 133
 Amsterdam, 132
 Anwar al Sadat, 26
 Arta Peace Process, 1, 21, 22, 34, 41, 44, 50, 59, 62, 98, 99, 100, 107, 140, 142, 150, 176, 237, 239
 Arusha Memorandum, 194, 197
 Assab, 132
 Atto, 55, 76
 Awash, Awasa, 22, 95, 141

B

Babafemi Badejo, 33, 52
 Baidoa, 6, 59, 61, 71, 73, 108
 Bakhara, 88, 108
 Bakol, 16
 Balad,
 Balledogle, 55, 56, 73, 76
 Banadiris, 78
 Bay, 6, 16
 BBC, 35, 112, 113
 Beijing, 83
 Belai Abbai, 132
 Beletweyne, 96
 Benadir, 46,
 Berbera, 134, 135
 Biafra, 238
 Bildhaan, 107, 151
 Black Hawk, 79, 88
 Bogert, M.P., 191
 Borama, 10
 Bosaso, 18
 Bosaso, 61
 Boucher, Richard, 87
 Boutros Ghali, 84, 85
 Boykin, Gen. William, 127, 128, 129
 Brava, 46
 British House of Commons, 11
 Bulhar, 134
 Burao, 5, 7, 8
 Burundi, 155
 Bush, George, 20, 84, 108, 110, 117, 128, 188

C

CACAS, 221, 223, 224, 225
 Cairo, 19, 65, 71
 Cambodia, 29, 82
 Ceausescu, 123
 Chissano, Joaquim Alberto, 181

Christian African Power, 134

CIA, 88
 Clinton, Bill, 88, 93
 CNN, 82, 117
 Columbus, 53
 Commonwealth, 157
 Congo, 29
 Czechoslovak, 138

D

Declaration, 210, 212, 213
 Deefow, 96
 Digfer, 76
 Djibouti, 6, 9, 33, 35, 36, 39, 42, 44, 47, 52, 55, 66, 75, 87, 99, 107, 115, 125, 135, 141, 159, 161, 162, 168, 188, 227, 230
 Do Rosorio, C.A. 232
 Doe, Samuel, 183
 Don Bullard, Rear Admiral, 115
 Dooraale, 6
 Dooraarey, 153
 Durban, 105, 179

E

Egypt, 18, 44, 132
 Eldoret, 144, 145, 152, 155, 164, 208, 217, 235, 236, 237
 EPDRF, 120
 Eritrea, 10, 21, 33, 115, 116, 124, 131, 132, 135, 146
 Ernest Bevin, 11, 12
 Esias Afwerki, 21, 33
 Ethiopia, 4, 9, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 31, 101, 104, 106, 111, 132, 138, 141, 144, 146, 151, 155, 158, 159, 167, 228, 233, 237
 European Union, 94, 98, 105, 212

F

Facilitation Committee, 201, 234
 Fil, Al-Sura, 124
 France, 11, 227

G

Galguduud, 5
 Galkayo, 61
 Gaylard, Maxwell, 80, 219
 Ghanim, Al-Najjar, 101
 Global Policy Forum, 110, 116
 Godey, 14, 16
 Gojam, 139
 Gragne, 133
 Great Britain, 11, 12
 Gubbet Kharab, 134

H

Haile Selassie, 125, 135
 Harbi, 39
 Hargeisa, 5, 6, 10, 229
 Harigeisa, 61
 Harmonization, 149
 Harrar, 16, 133, 134
 Harrington, 167
 Hassan Abshir Farah, 164, 165, 167, 168, 169, 171, 172
 Hassan M. Nur, 13
 Haud and Reserve Area, 136
 Holy Month of Ramadan, 152
 Horn of Africa, 11, 94, 103, 110, 115, 116, 122, 126, 130, 131
 Hunter, F.M. 133
 Hussein Mohamed M. Aideed, 13, 73

I

ICAO, 221, 222
 IGAD Partners Forum, IPF, 185, 187, 188, 205, 218, 235

IGAD, 17, 18, 22, 41, 42, 94, 98, 142, 143, 145, 146, 150, 155, 159, 160, 162, 165, 175, 176, 187, 191, 201, 202, 204, 208, 217, 227, 233, 237

IGADD, 8,

Index last

Indian Ocean, 72, 109, 115, 119

Interview, Clinton, 89-93

Iran, 26, 29, 123

Iraq, 83, 106, 117

IRIN, 55, 61, 72, 138

Islamic Shari'a, 107

Ismail Goulal Boudine, 161

Ismail Omar Guelleh, 20, 33, 35, 37, 43, 48, 50, 98, 175, 239

Ismail Tani, 40

Israeli, 111, 112, 113, 238

Italian Somaliland, 12

Italy, 35, 237

Ittihad, al, 95, 107, 113

Ivory Coast, 79

J

Jamahiriya, 66

Jemale Abbasse, Col.16

Jerusalem, 124

Jowhar, 46

K

Kampala Summit, 201, 203, 205

Kansteiner, Walter, 116

KCCT, 236

Kenya, 27, 30, 33, 115, 141, 158, 188, 202, 210, 214, 216, 237

Khaleej, Al, 42

Khartoum, 94, 142, 162

Khat, 14, 75

Kibaki, Mwai, 203, 209, 210, 211, 213, 214

Kiboi, 206, 216
 King of Kings, 124
 Kinshasa Declaration, 193
 Kiplagat, 157, 158, 159, 163,
 167, 168, 169, 172, 173, 185,
 186, 198, 204, 205, 206, 208,
 210, 215, 216, 217, 218, 229,
 230, 235, 236, 237

Kisimayo, 61

Kofi Annan, 33, 34, 85, 94

L

Le Monde Diplomatique, 109
 League of Arab States, 12, 22,
 65, 212

Legarde, 135

Liberia, 79, 183

Libya, 67

Lion of Juda, 124

Los Angeles Times, 129

Lusaka, 104

M

Maatuq, 69

Madaxtooyada, 73, 76

Maputo, 179, 182

Marcos, 123

Marines, 79, 83, 87

Marka, 46

Mbagathi, 152, 200, 215, 231,
 236, 237

Mecca, 71

Meles, 9, 21, 33, 39, 41, 65,
 106, 107, 110, 112, 113, 120,
 125, 127, 130, 139, 140, 141,
 179, 181

Menelik 9, 13, 124, 130, 133

Mengistu Haile Mariam, 4, 8, 9,
 10, 15, 120, 123, 137

Mesfin, Gen. 16

Military Academy, Syad, 16

Millennium, 51, 61, 75, 87, 103

Mobuto Sese Sekow, 2, 3, 26,
 123

Mohamed Abdullah Hassan, 24,
 71

Mohamed Ibrahim Egal, 198

Mohamed Siyad Barre, 1, 2, 3,
 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 15, 26, 27,
 30, 46, 48, 52, 58, 66, 99,
 149, 151, 154, 183

Moi, Daniel arap, 142, 143, 145,
 147, 151, 159, 164, 176, 189,
 190, 238

Mombassa, 30, 111, 207

Morgan, 13

Moriyans, 19, 20, 45, 58, 79

Morocco, 3

Mozambique, 179, 181, 232

Mudug, 5

Museveni, Yoweri, 202, 203,
 204, 207, 208, 209, 217

Mussa Suudi Yalahow, 77, 212

Musyoka, Stephen Kalonzo,
 202, 206, 209, 212, 214, 215,
 217, 234, 238

Mwangale, 144, 149, 151, 198,
 216, 236

N

Nairobi, 33

Najibullah, 183

Nakuru, 142

NAM, 12, 104

National Salvation Council, NSC,
 212

National Stadium,

Negus of Shoa, 133

New Delhi 232

New York Times, 84, 106

New York, 22, 62, 65

New York, 61, 85

NFD, 148, 157, 191, 197, 198

Nigeria, 3, 27, 191, 238

NOVIB, 159, 161

Nyerere, Julius, 196

O

Ogaden, 9, 13, 16, 119, 122,
 131, 135, 137, 198, 239

Ohio, 53

OIC, 12, 22, 103

Olhaye, Roble, 40

Omar Hashi Aden, 140

Omar Hassan Al-Bashir, 21, 33

Onyuke, G.C.M., 191

Operation Restore Hope, 20, 84,
 188

Orjako, Desmond, 104

Oromo, 5, 6, 119, 123, 131,
 135, 137

Orwell, George, 45

Osama Bin Laden, 109, 110, 117

Osman Ali Jama, 35

P

Pakistanis, 80

Panel of Experts, 94, 96, 178,
 180, 181

Panjsheer Valley, 83

Paris Conference, 12

Peacekeeping, UN, 85

Pentagon, 106, 121

Perera, Costa, 222

Philippines, 237

Prophet Mohamed (pbuh), 124

Puntland, 175

Q

Qaddafi, Moammar, 66, 67

Qaeda, al, 93, 95, 109, 110,
 112, 113, 121, 122, 125, 189

Qanyare, 55

Qoryoley, 46

Queen Victoria, 13

Quince, Gary, 221, 222

Qur'aan, 6, 50, 51, 130, 171

R

Rabbani, Burhanuddin, 83

Radio Mogadishu, 192

Ras Kyamboni, 109, 112, 122

Ras Maconen, 135

Red Sea, 109

Rennel Rodd, 13, 134

Retreat, 207

Reuters, 43, 62, 113

Roma, 59

Romania, 29

Rome, 35

RRA, 71, 73, 95, 97, 109

RTD, 38

Rumsfeld, Donald, 122, 125,
 128

Rwanda, 29, 82

S

Sablale, 46

Safari Park Hotel, 207, 211, 217

Sahel and Sahara, 104

Saudi Arabia, 65, 66, 67

Security Council, 86, 97, 178

Shah, 26

Shaikh Abdulqadir, 53

Shaikh town, 8

Shalambot, 46

Shiftas, 191

Shimbirale, 108

Shoa, 139

Sierra Leone, 79

Sihanouk, 83
 SNA, 67, 68, 95
 SNM, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11
 Somaliland, British, 11, 28, 100,
 155, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231,
 232
 South Africa, 105
 Soviet Union, 56, 138
 SRRC, 22, 95, 96, 97, 104, 141
 SRSP, 3
 State Department, 87
 State House, 210, 213, 218
 Stephen, David, 33, 52
 Sudan, 94, 146
 Sunday Standard (Newspaper),
 191
 Syria, 97,

T

Taliban, 83, 108
 Tasfare Mamo 16
 Task Force, 84
 Telegraph, 108
 Theodore, 124, 130
 Tima Adde, Poet, 53
 TNA, 32, 33, 76, 101, 165, 168,
 172, 173
 TNG, 6, 70, 75, 77, 78, 87, 94,
 85, 98, 100, 102, 105, 108,
 112, 141, 142, 144, 145, 146,
 147, 153, 154, 155, 156, 160,
 164, 165, 172, 177, 183, 186,
 189, 200, 203, 206, 213, 219,
 223, 224, 229
 TPLF, 15, 114, 120, 123, 131,
 135, 137
 Triki, Ali, 68
 Tripoli, 67

U

Uganda, 29, 157, 202, 207

Ugaz, 167
 UN Trusteeship, 12
 UN, 12, 51, 62, 71, 79, 80, 98
 UNDP, 81, 82, 83, 219, 220,
 222, 224, 225, 239
 United Arab Emirates, 82
 United Somali Congress, 11
 UNOSOM, 84, 188
 UNPOS, 33, 52
 US, 48, 79, 83, 106, 108, 111,
 126, 130, 219

V

Victoria, 134
 Vietnam, 29, 93
 Villa Somalia, 78
 VOA, 121

W

Wallo, 139
 Wanle Weyn, 46
 Warsheikh, 46
 Washington Times, 128
 Washington, 109
 World Food, 42
 WSLF, 9

Y

Yemen, 70, 77, 106, 115
 Yugoslavia, 25, 138
 Yusuf Hassan Ibrahim, 140

Z

Zaila, 134, 135
 Zaire, 2, 26
 Zambia, 104
 Zayed Foundation, 81, 82
 Zeku Kenishen, 132
 Zinzer, Adolfo, 178



MOHAMED OSMAN OMAR was born in Mogadishu, Somalia, in 1937. He studied in Mogadishu as well as abroad. He began his career at a very young age during the UN Trusteeship as a Civil Servant at the General Post Office, reaching the post of Chief Controller of the main Cash Department. He was among the first Somalis who took up posts held by the Italians during the period of what was called "the Somalisation". After the Post Office, he worked at the Constituent Assembly during the preparation for the country's independence. In 1962, he worked as a journalist in the Ministry of Information. In 1967, he joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and served as a Diplomat at the Somali Embassies in London, Beijing, Teheran, Dar-Es-Salaam, Khartoum, Belgrade (former Yugoslavia) and New Delhi. The last three posts as his country's Ambassador. He is still Somalia's Ambassador to India and concurrently accredited to Sri Lanka and Singapore.

For six years, Ambassador Mohamed Osman Omar was Chief of Protocol in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He speaks several languages, including Italian and Mandarin Chinese.



Somali National Flag

This flag was carried to the moon on board Apollo 14, January 31 through February 9, 1971. It is presented by Rear Admiral Alan B. Shepard, Jr. United States Navy, delegate to the 26th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

"Almost a year ago, on September 20, 1999, I endeavoured to draw the attention of the United Nations General Assembly on the immense suffering and pains caused by years of civil strife in Somalia, the unleashing of forces of evil that plunged millions of families in utter trauma and disarray. Against the climate of despair and hopelessness that prevailed for prolonged period, it was no surprise, therefore, that my statement at the UN would be met by scepticism and indifference. However, deep in my soul, something was telling me that this initiative would see the light of the day, and the yearnings of the distraught Somali people fulfilled."

Ismail Omar Guelleh

President of the Republic of Djibouti

"Regional suspicion of Somalia's expansionist dreams has been cited as a drawback in that country's peace efforts."

"Its neighbours feared that a reunited and prosperous nation might resurrect Somalia's territorial claims."

Daniel T. arap Moi

Former President of Kenya