



European Union Training Mission Somalia

PRESS SUMMARY

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Somalia: A former electoral delegate among 3 killed in Mogadishu

SOMALIA

By STAFF REPORTER, Garowe Online

09.07.2018, 14:31

MOGADISHU, Somalia - At least three people, including a former Somali electoral delegate, were shot dead in separate attacks in Somalia's capital Mogadishu on Monday, Garowe Online reports.

Hussein Abdi, a tribal elder who among the Electoral College who voted for members of the 10th parliament has been killed by pistol-wielding Al-Shabab assailants at Dabka area in Mogadishu's Hodon district.

The assassins have managed to flee the scene before the arrival of police authority. Late Abdi has taken part the election of the Federal lawmakers from the regional administration of Southwest state in December 2016.

The Islamist militant group al Shabaab has claimed responsibility for the Elder's killing after it threatened to kill every clan elder participated in 2016-2017 parliamentary election.

In a separate incident, suspected Al-Shabaab gunmen were reported to have killed two Somali government soldiers in the capital's Yaqshid district, the latest in series of attacks targeting Somali security force personnel in the past few months.

This comes amidst high-security measures imposed in the city by the government which assigned a joint task force drawn from the Police forces, army and intelligence agency to stabilize the capital.

Last Saturday, at least 20 people, including soldiers and civil servants were killed and dozens injured in a massive car bomb and gun attack on Otto Otto building which houses ministries of Interior and security.

The Al-Qaeda-affiliated Al-Shabaab group has claimed responsibility for the deadly siege that sparked confusion and led to the arrest of 14 Somali security officials as an investigation is underway.

<https://www.garoweonline.com/en/news/somalia/somalia-a-former-electoral-delegate-among-3-killed-in-mogadishu>



Security Officers Arrested In Connection With Mogadishu's Twin Blast

09 July 2018

Reports indicate that officers from police and National Intelligence and Security Agency (NISA) have been arrested in connection with the Saturday's heinous attack, which targeted Interior and Security ministries' building. The 14 arrested officers, who were manning security checkpoints leading to the buildings, also include district security commanders. Minister of Security Mohamed Abukar Islow ordered the arrest of the officers and has launched an investigation on the matter.

Reports indicate that some officers were suspended from work for allegedly facilitating the attack, while others have been accused of neglecting the security checkpoints. The arrests come following a security meeting between the Minister and commanders of the security forces and the Banadir regional administration.

Often, when an incident occurs, only security officers face arrest for allegedly helping or neglecting the security. Many questions have emerged over the attack at the headquarters of Interior and Security ministries, considering that the area is highly secured with a heavy security presence. Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for Saturday's attack, which claimed more than 10 lives and injured dozens.

<http://somaliamediamonitoring.org/july-9-2018-daily-monitoring-report/>



Somali PM Visits Injured Blast Victims in Mogadishu

08 July 2018

Somali Prime Minister, Hassan Ali Kheire, has visited victims of the Interior Ministry explosions that injured over 16 people. Two suicide bombers drove two cars laden with explosives into the headquarters of Somalia's Interior Ministry before gunmen forced their way into the building. The attack, which was executed by Al-Shabaab fighters, was concluded hours later by the security forces. Over 12 people, including senior staff members of the Ministry, were killed in the attack.

The Prime Minister visited Madina Hospital, where he met with several of those who sustained injuries. During the visit, Mr. Kheire pledged the government's readiness to take victims who need further medication outside the country: "The wounded persons whose conditions cannot be treated within the country will be flown abroad for further treatment." The Prime Minister Kheire offered his condolences to the bereaved families over deaths of their loved ones. "I condole with the families of those who were killed in the heinous Al-Shabaab attack. We pray that God comforts and strengthens the families and friends of those killed," he said.

Al-Shabaab has claimed the responsibility for Saturday's twin blasts. The group, which wants to topple Somali government, has been fighting the Somali National Army backed by continental troops since 2007. The Prime Minister condemned the group's attacks on the government institutions and hotels. Mr. Kheire urged the public to cooperate with the Somali government in the fight against Al-Shabaab

<http://somaliamediamonitoring.org/july-9-2018-morning-headlines/>



Kahda Traders Count Losses As Fire Razes Six Shops

09 July 2018

Traders at the Kahda market in Mogadishu today woke up to losses after a fire razed down property worth thousands of US dollars. The fire is said to have started late last night. According to the traders, the cause of the fire is still unknown. Mohamed Sheikh Ali, a shop owner, said he lost property running into thousands of US dollars: “The fire burnt six shops and mine was one of them. I don’t know if I may ever recover from this loss any time soon.”

Witnesses said they suspected an electric fault. But police said they are yet to ascertain the cause of the fire. Local residents and firefighters arrived at the scene hours later and helped put out the fire. No casualties have been reported in the incident.

<http://somaliamediamonitoring.org/july-9-2018-daily-monitoring-report/>



Roadblocks in Mogadishu again

July 9, 2018

The Somali federal government security forces have recently blocked all the major roads in the capital Mogadishu.

Although it has not been announced why the roads were blocked, heavy security forces were seen in the main roads just before noon refusing the transport and private vehicles to use the roads.

Makkah Al-Mukarrama the capital mainly heart road is blocked with no any means of movement.

Many vehicles are stuck in the main roads of the capital Mogadishu which caused heavy jams in all the streets, the roadblocks at this time of the day were not previously been designated to the residents.

A day earlier, al-Shabaab launched an attack on a suicide car at Otto Otto headquarters in the Somali security and interior ministries in the Somali federal government, resulting in a variety of casualties.

The Somalia-based al-Shabab, an arm of al-Qaida, often targets high-profile areas of the capital, Mogadishu.

<http://goobjoog.com/english/roadblocks-in-mogadishu-again/>



Somali minister sacked after 2 months in office

Monday July 9, 2018

Somali Prime Minister Hassan Ali Khaire on Monday sacked the country's religious affairs and endowment minister Hassan Moalim Hussein, who had been in office for less than two months.



Khaire in a decree issued in Mogadishu said the dismissal took immediate effect and that Hussein's deputy will take over until the appointment of the new minister.

The prime minister did not give reasons for the drastic action on Hussein who is also a Member of Parliament.

Sources linked Hussein's sacking to failure to implement a government policy on religion matters.

https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2018/July/158994/somali_minister_sacked_after_2_months_in_office.aspx



Rape and armed attacks on Somali women uncontrolled in Baidoa IDP camps

Monday July 9, 2018

Safiyo, 26, lies in a hospital bed in the southern Somali town of Baidoa, recovering from multiple stab wounds after a brutal attack on 22 June.

Safiyo – whose real name we have concealed to protect her – told Radio Ergo a man sneaked into her house in Tawakal 2 Diinsoor camp on the outskirts of Baidoa, and locked the door. Her husband was away at the time, having returned to their home in Daynunay, 30 km away, to see if it was possible to return to their farm. Her sister was also out. Safiyo was alone with her three children. She was badly injured in an attempted rape that left her with three deep knife wounds, one of which is on her left breast. As she is on a ventilator now, and talking is difficult, her sister took up the story with Radio Ergo's local reporter.



"The man attempted to rape her, and when she tried to defend herself he attacked her and stabbed her and stole some of her belongings. As he was leaving she started to scream for help, but he came back in and attacked her again," Safiyo's sister said.

Safiyo is living in fear of another attack, as the camp has no security.

According to the director of the South-West state's Relief and Disaster Management Ministry, Liban Sheikh Shuaib, 120 women are reported to have suffered violent attacks in Baidoa's numerous IDP camps since January.

He said the insecurity is due to the fact that the camps live on the outskirts of the town where there are no police stations.

Radio Ergo spoke to another displaced women, Amina – again not her real name – from drought-hit Buush-Madina village, in Buurhaka. She said a man broke into her house on 1 June armed with a knife and raped her. She was unable to protect herself. Her screams finally brought help from her neighbours, who prevented the attacker from further injuring her.

Amina is a single mother of seven children living in Buula-Gomor camp. She asked for assistance from human rights groups or anyone else who can help her. Most women, she said, fear to share their stories of rape because of the stigma it attracts.

Amina said she came forward and chose to share her story to try to raise awareness of the need to improve security in the camps to prevent so many attacks taking place.

https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2018/July/158993/rape_and_armed_attacks_on_somali_women_uncontrolled_in_baidoa_idp_camps.aspx



How civil initiatives will help to defeat al-Shabaab

On Saturday, militants of the terror group al-Shabaab set off two bombs and attacked a government building in Mogadishu, the capital of Somalia, with at least five people killed and 21 injured. This is another incident challenging the capacity of the Somali government and its allies to resolve the problem.

A number of African countries have been fighting al-Shabaab for more than a decade, but now Western nations are leading this campaign. Late last year, US-led air strikes against al-Shabaab increased, with the civilian death toll rising, *The Guardian* reported early this year. This was due to a new directive, signed by US President Donald Trump, which relaxed the rules aimed at preventing civilian casualties. And here is the other side of the coin – civilian casualties actually give legitimacy to the terror group as a resistance movement.

International assistance is important, but when it comes to combating terrorism, relying on military force seems to be a questionable practice. This is especially true for terror groups entrenched in the region and counting on support from a certain portion of the local population. This is where a “soft power” approach proves to be effective.

Al-Shabaab, one of the most lethal terror groups in Africa, clearly illustrates the complexity of the problem. This jihadist fundamentalist group has a largely domestic focus, taking advantage of people’s discontent with the Somali authorities. Although al-Shabaab’s capabilities are now limited and the group has suffered military losses, it still controls a significant portion of the territory.

In this context, supporting and developing civil initiatives will be an invaluable contribution to conflict settlement. The Hiraal Institute, a research organization focused on security problems facing East Africa, particularly Somalia, was established for this reason.

I contacted Richard Barrett, a former British diplomat and intelligence officer, who is one of the world’s top experts in counterterrorism. He sits on advisory boards of a number of

institutions, including that of Hiraal Institute. Barrett has pointed out that these problems are complex and all too often the people explaining them are not themselves Somali.

"The Hiraal Institute, which is staffed entirely by Somalis based in Mogadishu, is able to add the cultural dimension that is often missing from other analysis," Barrett said. "The institute relies on local networks throughout the country as a research base to get at the facts on the ground. It also aims to help the federal government of Somalia and its international partners make better policy decisions based on both factual evidence and clear analysis."

According to the think-tank, at present, al-Shabaab controls territory in 11 of the 18 Somali regions as well as parts of Kenya's Coast and North Eastern provinces. As for attacks, since the beginning of the year, more than 200 security incidents have been recorded in Somalia, with the bulk of them carried out by al-Shabaab.

Promoting itself as an alternative to the government, al-Shabaab offers security to populations in the areas under its control, operates courts and settles disputes. When it comes to local conflicts, such mediation becomes a good way to avoid violence. And people are appreciating this.

In addition, the group offers protection to marginalized clans, something that provides it with support from the locals as well. All this helps al-Shabaab integrate into communities and survive a sustained crackdown from the government. And this is not to mention its ideological influence extending far beyond its territories.

The group is remarkably adaptive. After withdrawing in 2011 from Mogadishu, al-Shabaab has been restructured with an emphasis on organizational security and reducing risks to the fighters. Primarily, this is about the group's intelligence unit – the Amniyat, described as a "secret service structured along the lines of a clandestine organization within the organization."

As Michael Horton, a senior analyst at the Jamestown Foundation, wrote, "Amniyat operatives remained behind in the cities, towns, and villages from which al-Shabaab had retreated." So a network of Amniyat informants was set up throughout Somalia, including government ministries.

As Barrett has noted, the threat from al-Shabaab is seen as steady. "But its rise and fall depend more on the efficiency and effectiveness of the Federal Government of Somalia than on its own efforts. Al-Shabaab faces many internal and external difficulties, and although it remains a lethal organization, it is not likely to capture major areas that are currently under government control. It does threaten Kenya as well as Somalia," the expert stressed.

A painful blow was delivered to the group with the death in 2014 of its leader Ahmed Godane, a charismatic orator and effective manager. That same year, Ahmed Dirie, popularly known as Abu Ubaidah, was named as the new al-Shabaab emir, but he is no match for the previous leader in all respects. In June, news media announced that Abu Ubaidah had died from a kidney disease, but a pro-al-Shabaab website has denied these reports.

"Godane was indeed charismatic, but the present leader, who is, in any case, ill, is more inclined to rule through a tight clique of supporters who are suspicious of others and prefer to rule through fear than through the projection of visionary or inspiring leadership," Barrett said.

Now, what have we learned from all this? Al-Shabaab is very resilient, sophisticated, adaptive and creative. In June, the group took quite an innovative approach. It banned single-use plastic bags, calling them a "serious" threat to humans, livestock and the environment. As Hussein Sheikh-Ali, chairman of the Hiraal Institute, noted in a tweet, that move would make al-Shabaab "the first environmentally conscious terror group and the first authority in Somalia to ban materials harmful to the environment."

Let's face it: In order to defeat al-Shabaab, first and foremost, it is necessary to be twice as creative, twice as sophisticated and as close as possible to people and their needs.

<http://www.atimes.com/how-civil-initiatives-will-help-to-defeat-al-shabaab/>



Africa.direct.news

UK To The Rescue, But Amisom Troops Still Starved Of Airpower

07 July 2018

The United Kingdom has come to the rescue of African Union Mission in Somalia (Amisom), donating 49 pieces of heavy equipment worth \$7.4 million to help in clearing the main supply routes in the war-torn country. Amisom Force Commander Lt Gen Jim Owoyesigire received the equipment which includes tractor trucks, bulldozers, backhoe and front end loaders, forklifts and module dump tippers, to be used by the contingents from Uganda, Kenya and Burundi.

The machinery will also be deployed in the mission enabling unit, which is based in Mogadishu.

While handing over the equipment, the United Kingdom ambassador to Somalia, David Concar, said his government is committed to supporting Amisom in its efforts to stabilise Somalia. "What we are doing today, transferring 5.6 millions pounds worth of equipment is, we hope, going to make a difference to the ability of Amisom to clear roads and supply routes and to press ahead with stabilising Somalia," said Mr Concar.

The mission, which is implementing the transition plan to hand over the full security mandate to local security agencies, however, remains starved of equipment to deploy in airborne combat. The Force Commander said the equipment will come in handy as the 21,000 strong Amisom force tries to push Al-Shabaab from the key areas that the Somali terrorist group still occupies

<http://somaliamediamonitoring.org/july-9-2018-morning-headlines/>



Somalia: 'The Queen of UK Pays for My Children's Bills Not Somalia' Interior Ministry Spokesman Vents Frustration On Govt Over 11 Months Delayed Salaries

Interior Ministry Spokesman Abdiaziz Ibrahim on Saturday opened up on the frustration he has had to undergo as a government official claiming he had not received his salary for almost one year. "We have not received our salaries for 11 months and if I die my children needs will be taken over by the Queen of UK" Ibrahim said at a briefing on the Alshabaab Friday attack on the Interior Ministry Headquarters. "Am a father and I want to teach my children that they have a country but it's the Queen that pays for their bills." Ibrahim who is also a British citizen and has lived in the UK for more than 20 years said. Ibrahim believes the Friday attack was a direct outcome of frustration on security agents and officials by the Somalia government. "It's not possible for Alshabaab to easily pass the security blocks while we know that an expectant mother and school children are prohibited from using this road." Ibrahim said. He now demands that top security officials be questioned over the attack accusing the goverent of failing Somalia nationals. "A politician with personal interest will give empty promises and unfulfilled pledges" the spokesman said. "No top official has resigned over failure to secure the citizens. We are tired of apologies everytime attacks happen" he added. He accused some politicians of being "thieves" overriden by personal interest at the expense of national priority. He accused some politicians as thieves who have not been doing their jobs but filling their heavy bags according to him Radio Dalsan is yet to confirm on his claims on salary delays. Ibrahim was author and controversial blogger before he was appointed Spokesman is reportedly has he haver been able to maintain his stay at the expensive Jazeera Hotel in Mogadishu.

<https://allafrica.com/stories/201807090914.html>



Ethiopia and Eritrea agree to end two decades of war

AFRICA

By DAVID PILLING, Financial Times

09.07.2018. 20:43

ASMARA - Ethiopia and Eritrea have signed a declaration formally ending their 20-year-old war in an effort of blitzkrieg diplomacy that could radically alter the political and economic landscape in the Horn of Africa.

The two countries, which have never implemented a peace deal that was meant to have ended their 1998-2000 border conflict in which 70,000 people died, have also agreed to open up diplomatic, trade, telecoms and transport links.

Apart from starting air routes between the two countries, landlocked Ethiopia will gain access to two Eritrean ports, Massawa and Assab, giving it an alternative to transporting goods through Djibouti or Somalia.

Yemane Gebre Meskel, Eritrea's information minister, said on Twitter that the agreement ushered in "a new era of peace and friendship".

"This is a huge deal for both countries," said Ahmed Soliman, an expert on the Horn of Africa at Chatham House, a UK think-tank. "This is not just a peace deal between two disputing leaders but one between countries with so many commonalities: culturally, ethnically and linguistically."

Hallelujah Lulie, a regional security analyst based in Addis Ababa, said the end of hostilities could lead to "a meaningful peace dividend in the subregion".

The rumbling conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia had spilled over into Somalia, whose recent efforts at political and economic stabilization could be bolstered by the agreement between Asmara and Addis Ababa, he said. Ethiopia might also now act as a mediator in a long-running border dispute between Eritrea and Djibouti, he added.

The peace deal marks rare progress towards stability in a volatile neighborhood, one that includes an Islamist insurgency in Somalia, a war in South Sudan and, until recently, waves of political unrest in Ethiopia.

For Ethiopia, the peace deal is the culmination of three months of a rapid change that has followed the election of Abiy Ahmed as prime minister and Africa's youngest leader. Mr. Abiy has implemented a breakneck agenda, releasing political prisoners, lifting a state of emergency, opening up the economy and pushing for stronger links with neighbors and with Gulf states.

For Eritrea, where continued hostilities with Ethiopia had provided cover for conscription and a deeply repressive political regime, analysts wondered whether the peace deal might spark a change of direction. "Ethiopia has been positioned as providing an imminent threat to national security for Eritrea," said Mr. Soliman. With that threat gone, it was hard to predict what might happen to Eritrea's political system, he said.

Mr. Lulie said the biggest effect of the peace deal would be on the imagination, especially when thousands of families separated by the war were reunited. "Eritrea has always captured the imagination of Ethiopia's poets and artists," he said. "The social and emotional element of all this is definitely the most overwhelming one."

Eritrea was part of Ethiopia until it won independence after a 30-year war and a 1993 referendum after the overthrow of Ethiopia's Marxist Derg regime in 1991.

Last month, Mr. Abiy agreed to cede land occupied by Ethiopia for two decades to cement a formal end to hostilities.

<https://www.garoweonline.com/en/news/world/africa/ethiopia-and-eritrea-agree-to-end-two-decades-of-war>



Resident in Galkacyo started constructing main roads in the town

July 9, 2018

Galkacyo administration of Mudug region has started improving some of the main streets in the city, which have been severely damaged by the heavy rains.

The roads that are currently being built are the ones most commonly affected by floods which also influenced by the traffic movement in the city.

Hirsi Yusuf Barre, the mayor of Galkayo, said the people of Galkacyo are required to pay taxes so that they could provide essential services for the society.

“Galkacyo people have now settled from the drought, and now peace and the hostility can be reached in the city’s development and taxes to be paid out so that we have a lot to spare,” said the mayor of Galcayo.

Some of the main roads in Galkayo town have been severely damaged by the heavy rains in the past months, but residents and the administration have started reconstructing these roads to bring back the beauty of the city.

<http://goobjoog.com/english/resident-in-galkacyo-started-constructing-main-roads-in-the-town/>



5th Parliament session of the Southwest state opens today

July 9, 2018

The 5th parliament session of the Southwest of Somalia opens today at Baidoa capital in the southwestern Bay region of Somalia

South West State President Sharif Hassan Sheikh Adan will open this session in the Baidoa the headquarters of the state.

Also, the Somali federal parliament speaker, Mohamed Mursal Sheikh Abdirahman who arrived Baidoa yesterday for two days visit is also expected to present in the session.

Mursal's is his first visit to Baidoa since he was appointed for the new office as a Somalia Federal parliament speaker will have a various meeting with the stakeholders in Baidoa town.

Security in Baidoa has been tightened, with this session being overshadowed by the administration

<http://goobjoog.com/english/5th-parliament-session-of-the-southwest-state-opens-today/>



Somalia is of immense strategic significance

The tendency to dismiss the country as a lost cause after the latest Al Shabaab attack is misguided

July 9, 2018 - For most of the 27 years since President Siad Barre was overthrown, liberating warlords to cleave the country apart, Somalia has been the quintessential “failed state”. Despite the formation of a new internationally-



backed government in 2012, there is today an implicit recognition that the central government's authority does not stretch beyond the capital, Mogadishu, with different states, among them breakaway Somaliland, taking ever greater control over their own affairs.

As a result, a unified response to one of Africa's worst insurgencies at the hands of Al Shabaab has fallen short. Add to that a faltering economy, high unemployment, poor health and educational outcomes and wizened infrastructure and it is plain to see why Somalia has become such fertile ground for terrorism.

And terror struck again on Saturday, when nine people were killed and at least 13 injured in a car bomb attack at the gates of the Interior Ministry in Mogadishu. Al Shabaab claimed responsibility for the attack – kindling memories of a truck bombing last October that left more than 580 people dead.

Some progress has been made in recent years. With the assistance of the UAE and others, Somalia has all but stamped out piracy, with which it was once synonymous. African Union troops and US drones have made some strides against Al Shabaab.

Meanwhile many were hopeful when Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed – US-educated and bureaucratic – was sworn in as president early last year. But he has struggled to refute the narrative that Somali states are best off alone.

Support from its allies will not be enough alone to stabilise its economy and security environments, as the military campaign against Al Shabaab consumes Mogadishu's energy and resources.

Yet, after decades of conflict and failed governance, there is a tendency to dismiss Somalia as a lost cause. Doing so overlooks the country's immense strategic importance. Sitting on the Gulf of Aden – one of the world's most important shipping routes – tens of thousands of vessels pass through Somali waters every year.

The UAE – which recently pledged Dh11 billion to neighbouring Ethiopia – operates a major port at Berbera, in Somaliland, and will soon acquire another at Bosaso, in Puntland. For years, the UAE army has trained a successful maritime police force. Meanwhile, Somalia's regional importance is underlined by its seat at the Arab League.

Somalia's myriad problems make it one of Africa's biggest challenges. And from a humanitarian standpoint, its 10 million inhabitants deserve greater security and prosperity. But chances of a resolution will continue to be spurned until the world recognises Somalia's strategic importance, as the UAE and other Middle Eastern nations have done.

<https://www.thenational.ae/opinion/editorial/somalia-is-of-immense-strategic-significance-1.748550>

Wire Service

Canadian Free Press Release & Media Distribution Service

Somalia and Ethiopia Can Prosper Together and Heal from Past Wounds of Their Relationship

The new prime minister of Ethiopia, Abiy Ahmed on June 16th this year visited Somalia's capital, Mogadishu, and met Somalia's president Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed (Farmaajo). On social media, certain Somali intellectuals mostly in the diaspora, whose naming does not matter in context, criticized the two leaders for calling Ethiopia and Somalia brotherly countries. Those intellectuals based their view point on the two nations' history as one big factor why the two nations should remain life-long enemies; according to my inference of their understanding of such history, the intellectuals cited the 1977 Ogaden and Ethiopia's constant interference into Somalia sabotaging the emergence of a stable and strong Somalia after a three-decade old civil war.

Sources estimated the Ogaden War causality 109,000. And about 840,000 Somalis refugees from the Ogaden fled to Somalia. Hundreds of thousands wounded and maimed. As the war ended in March 1978 and the Somali army withdrew the Ogaden, what the outside world had called the forgotten war continued in the Ogaden with Western Somali Liberation Front (WSLF) and subsequently the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) fighting the Ethiopian forces inside the Ogaden, which culminated into the two countries gaining nothing from the war. The Greater Somalia proponents, however, believe the Ogaden belongs to Somalia and the Greater Somalia theory should continue despite Somalia's current multifaceted weaknesses, because those proponents argue, the European colonists divided Africa in a disharmonious way, which Somalis need to overcome now. Ethiopia believes the Ogaden is an Ethiopian territory simply because the world recognizes the Ethiopian territorial integrity including the Ogaden, a notion backed by the Organization of African Unity in its 1964 Cairo submit stipulating that Africa would not redraw borderlines left by the European colonialists.

Ethiopian invasion of Somalia in 2006 to prop up at that time the weak Somali transitional government of Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed is one of the main points quoted by Somali objectors of Ethiopia to conclude that Ethiopia is untrustworthy. Although the extent to which Ethiopia

was involved with Somali warlords over the years is murky, those objectors conclude that the Somali warlords were Ethiopia's pawns to keep Somalia stateless after the collapse of Somalia's military government in 1991.

We do not need to figure out whether Somalis and Ethiopians are biologically brothers and sisters. Maybe they are not. However, brotherhood is more than a biological connection and encompasses bond, collaboration, and mutual interests. For instance, the two countries are neighbors, share a 1,600 km border and cannot alter their geographical map. They should work together somehow, whether they like it or not.

Somalia and Ethiopia can recover from past wounds of their past relationship by developing a new productive one where they can call each other brotherly countries. President Farmaajo and prime minister Abiy Ahmed must achieve a peaceful and prosperous coexistence between the two states. Nevertheless, calling each other a brotherly country does not mean anything of value if not coupled with substance; what kind of relationship the two leaders have or willing to develop to bring the two countries together in a balanced connection.

We do not dismiss the past with a "forgive and forget" rationality; Somalia and Ethiopia need to discuss the past. Nations learn from it and move on. Pondering over it is a waste of time. Somalia and Ethiopian can reshape their future now. The past cannot mirror the future; for example, let us say, hypothetically, Mr. X was your enemy yesterday and can be your friend today. Once he became an enemy, he can either stay being an enemy, or he can become a friend. Insisting rekindling friendship is impossible is a logical fallacy. One rational path to take is to explore why you do not want past animosity to continue and why you need it to change into friendship no matter what preceded the status quo. To move away from a constant animosity and towards a needed friendship that can create the needed atmosphere to heal past wounds, it should happen through a bilateral process. All you need at this point is to open your doors for talks with other party; what president Farmaajo and prime minister Abiy Ahmed did reflects that.

Somalia applied for membership in Common Market for Easter and Southern Africa known as COMESA, an economic organization consisting of 19 countries, established in 1994 and the 8th regional economic communities recognized by the African Union. Somalia will

benefit from being a member of COMESA. Removing barriers by a means of regional economic interrogation would help trade flourish between member states. Ethiopia, Kenya, and Djibouti are members of COMESA and Somalia's membership of COMESA would apply one way or the other to trade done with the neighboring COMESA member states. President Farmaajo's vision of doing business with the region, including Ethiopia, should not have preconditions based irrelevant notions of the past.

<https://www.wireservice.ca/index.php?module=News&func=display&sid=23618>



China pledges support to Somalia's official news agency

MOGADISHU, July 9 -- China on Monday promised assistance amounting to some 22,600 U.S. dollars to the Somali News Agency (SONNA) to modernize operations at its Mogadishu office.

Qin Jian, Chinese Ambassador to Somalia, told Xinhua that the money, which will be used to buy office equipment, is part of China's assistance to Somalia.

He also hailed SONNA for playing an important role in promoting relations between the two countries.

"We have already facilitated a media delegation from your beautiful country full of potential to visit China this year," he said, adding that China supports Somalia's peace and reconstruction process.

Abdulahi Sheikh Abdirahman, Director of SONNA, hailed the Chinese Embassy for the support, saying that the financial assistance will go towards buying of office equipment like cameras and computers.

http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-07/10/c_137312930.htm



Farmajo promises to resume talks with Somaliland

On four occasions the president of Somalia Mr.Mohammed Abdillahi Farmajo has announced at different functions that he is ready to kick start the stalled Somaliland/Somalia talks that have been boycotted by the president of Somaliland H.E Musa Bihi Abdi. From the outset the Somalia government was vehemently opposed to the tripartite agreement between multinational DP world and Somaliland including Ethiopia. The Somalia government has engineered a confrontational attitude from different perspective to makes sure Somaliland does not benefit from the deal. It has partly succeeded since development projects the UAE government was implementing in Somaliland have stalled because of a vote by the Somalia handpicked parliament.

The last time Somaliland and Somalia met for talks was in 2015, and then the talks were stopped prematurely because in the Somalia government delegation there were some Somaliland nationals. Somaliland government refused to talk with her citizens on the table and saw this as a ploy of Somalia to undermine her on the negotiation table.

The talks were put on hold by the former presidents of Somaliland and Somalia who were on their last leg of tenure so it was prudent for them to wait for elections so that the newly elected head of states to continue with the talks where they left.

It was hoped that the talks should start earnestly in March this year however following Somalia war on Somaliland the government of Somaliland decided to pull out of the talks. The president of Somaliland and his Somalia counterpart were expected to start talks in a third country hence Djibouti was chosen as the talk's destination.

The president of Somalia Mr. Farmajo recently bulged to kick start the Somaliland/Somalia talks following exerted pressure from the international community. He spoke in different venue his willingness to start the talks with Somaliland. A letter addressed to the president of Somaliland by the UN explicitly stated that it is ready to facilitate the talks.

Up to now we do not have official confirmation from the Somaliland government in response to the president Somalia Mr.Farmajo call to initiate with Somaliland.

The first question that comes to mind is that the Somalia president calls for a talk with Somaliland does it have any significance in terms of interest for Somaliland to commence the talks?

The answer is simply yes, the time is right for Somaliland to return to the negotiations table. Time has come for president Bihi of Somaliland to positively accept the calls from Somalia to begin the talks.

The talks at this time are very important for Somaliland when looked from different perspectives. Diplomatically the talks will eliminate the political suspense and will invite any party that is interested in the well being of the two sides.

The talks will open doors for Somaliland to negotiate her chunk of share for development aid that Somalia government is withholding will also be an opportunity for Somaliland to negotiate concerning the management of her airspace. It is a golden chance of Somaliland to initiate contact with other international partners. For now the pressure is on the Somalia government since Somaliland is unrecognized country.

It is important for a well thought venue for the talks and in this respect president Bihi needs expertise to come up with a neutral country to host the talks. Another thing to note is that the Somaliland delegations should go to the talks with well prepared propositions to negotiate the interest of Somaliland. Also the agenda of the talks should be prepared by intellectual who are averse with negotiation tactics and updated with how the world ticks in the 21st century. If Somaliland goes to the negotiation table well prepared fruitful results can come out of the talks.

It is important for the country hosting the talks be a neutral one which will listen to the two sides in an impartial manner. Not only is the hosting country important but also the arbitrators should come from different country that have stake in the talks so that whatever comes out of the talks can be implemented by both sides. The participating countries will act as witnesses of the deal that is signed by Somaliland and Somalia.

Diplomatically the talks are important because it will leave room for negotiation open this will help Somaliland's foreign policy to chart new ways forward. The country's foreign policy has lost direction and needs to be navigated back to track.

Mr. President you have to come with a solid diplomatic agenda for Somaliland to start talks with Somalia a foreign policy that can pass the litmus test of verbal propaganda that is broadcasted through the media. You have to start the Somaliland/Somalia talks but before hand you should come up with a comprehensive plan that can sell itself.

<https://www.somaliaonline.com/community/topic/105028-farmajo-promises-to-resume-talks-with-somaliland/?tab=comments#comment-1057185>



Losing battle: MP files petition to pull KDF out of war-torn Somalia

Jul. 10, 2018

An MP has petitioned National Assembly to order the immediate withdrawal of Kenya Defence Forces from war-torn Somalia.

Mandera East lawmaker Omar Maalim wants the soldiers who have been in Somalia for seven years recalled.



He says they should be deployed to secure the country's 'porous' borders instead.

The petition, if successful, will see the more than 4,000 KDF officers battling terror group al Shabaab back in the country after nearly seven years in the troubled land.

PEACE AND STABILITY

He acknowledged the initial government intention to deploy KDF to Somalia was in the interest of peace. "We are concerned this objective is no longer being achieved, with Kenya suffering more terror attacks from al Shabaab than before," Omar said.

KDF was deployed to Somalia in 2011 under the Operation Linda Nchi initiative.

Since then, Omar says, Kenya has born the brunt of terror attacks on police stations, vehicles and religious gatherings, resulting into loss of lives and properties.

He cited the 2013 Westgate attack that claimed 67 lives, Mpeketoni attacks of 2014 where 60 people were butchered and the 2015 Garissa University attack where 149 students were killed.

The war has been costly to Kenya as billions of shillings have been razed in the war. Many soldiers families are still mourning the death of their sons.

Police records put at 155 the number of terror related attacks in the country since 2012.

The attacks are concentrated in Nairobi, Garissa, Wajir and Mandera. Omar said the move to put KDF under the Africa Union Mission in Somalia has worsened the situation as Kenyan soldiers lost control of deployment of troops in Somalia.

MORE HARM

"The secondary effects of the terror attacks have included decline of health, education, economy and living standards due to desertion by health workers, teachers and other migrant workers."

The government has insisted KDF soldiers will continue staying in the neighbouring country until they flush out the terror group.

The petition was filed on June 25 and will be formally presented when the House resumes from its two-week recess.

In May, Ainabkoi MP William Chepkut called for a review of the strategies KDF uses to fight terrorists as many of them have been killed in Somalia. Chepkut said the government needs to employ modern security strategies and equipment.

https://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2018/07/10/losing-battle-mp-files-petition-to-pull-kdf-out-of-war-torn-somalia_c1784372

NEW ZEALAND FOREIGN AFFAIRS & TRADE

New Zealand humanitarian assistance for South Sudan, Ethiopia and Somalia

09 Jul 2018

New Zealand has approved \$5.2 million in humanitarian funding to address significant humanitarian needs in South Sudan, Ethiopia and Somalia.

The ongoing conflict in South Sudan, and prolonged drought, recent heavy rains and pockets of violence in Ethiopia and Somalia, have contributed to deeply concerning humanitarian situations in all three countries.

New Zealand's support will be delivered through the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in South Sudan and Somalia, and the UN World Food Programme in Ethiopia.

It will address critical humanitarian needs such as food insecurity and acute malnutrition, and help prevent the risk of famine.

The New Zealand Government remains committed to doing our part to help address global humanitarian needs, particularly those arising from conflict and food insecurity

<https://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/media-and-resources/news/new-zealand-humanitarian-assistance-for-south-sudan-ethiopia-and-somalia/>

