



Presidential Press Office

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Press Release - Council of Ministers of the Republic of Somaliland

The 123rd session of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Somaliland was held under the chairmanship of H.E. President Muse Bihi Abdi and in presence of Vice President Abdirahman Abdilahi Ismail (Sailici). The session focused on the issues concerning the Horn of Africa region and particularly latest developments in Somaliland and Somalia.

It is historically known that the Republic of Somaliland, a former protectorate of the British Empire from 1884 to 1960, gained independence on June 26, 1960, as the 17th independent country in Africa. At the time of independence, Somaliland had international borders, a recognized government, constitution, and parliament, similar to other countries that achieved independence.

The illegal union between Somaliland and Somalia on July 1, 1960, was born out of the desire for the unification of the five Somali territories in the Horn of Africa. However, Somaliland immediately rejected the union process and instead proposed the Act of Union to bring the two sides together. Unfortunately, the Somaliland Act was rejected, and the Somalia Act was voted for, leading to the majority of Somaliland people rejecting the referendum on the 1961 constitution.

Since then, the people of Somaliland have endured significant violence and widespread genocide. In 1988, 50,000 civilians were killed, and huge damage and destruction was inflicted on the infrastructure in both urban and rural areas while one million people fled to neighboring countries as refugees as testified by the UN report in 2001 and acknowledged by Somalia leaders.

Following the collapse of Somalia, the people of Somaliland, led by cultural leaders, intellectuals, politicians, and scholars, decided to reclaim their independence on May 18, 1991. Since then, Somaliland has not been part of any of the governments formed by Somalia over the past 33 years. The constitution created by Somalia only applies to their five regional administrations and governments.

The independence of Somaliland was reaffirmed at the Burco conference in 1991 and through a referendum that saw 97% of the population vote in favor of the constitution on May 31, 2001. This restoration of independence aligns with the

1963 African Union Charter, which states that colonial borders should not be changed. The Fact-Finding Commission sent by the African Union to Somaliland in 2005 confirmed this and recommended recognizing the Republic of Somaliland.

Somaliland has fulfilled all the requirements of an independent country according to the Montevideo Convention of 1933. It adheres to the four principles of government building outlined in the convention.

Today, during the Council of Ministers' session, several key points were addressed:

1. The Republic of Somaliland, with its territorial and maritime independence, has the authority to enter into agreements in accordance with its Constitution Article 12, Paragraph 3, and Laws. Notably, it has already established agreements with international organizations and countries, including Somalia.

2. In alignment with the Constitution of Somaliland, specifically Article 10, paragraph 4, the Republic of Somaliland is committed to promoting consensus and reconciliation as an alternative to the longstanding conflicts among the countries in the Horn of Africa.

3. The practice of approving and leasing naval bases is not uncommon among the countries in the Horn of Africa, including Eritrea, Djibouti and Somalia.

4. In line with the Memorandum of Understanding signed on January 1, 2024, between the governments of the Republic of Somaliland and the Federal Republic of Ethiopia, both parties have reached an agreement for the lease of a military base from Somaliland to Ethiopia. This agreement carries great significance as it includes Ethiopia's recognition of the Republic of Somaliland.

It is worth noting that the naval base in question is being leased to Ethiopia, not sold, for a specified period of time. The official signing of the agreement will be subject to approval from the respective legislative councils.

5. The Republic of Somaliland has achieved commendable success in stabilizing security within its borders. Moreover, it has played an active role in enhancing the overall security of neighboring countries and the entire region.

6. The Somaliland government is appealing to nations across the globe to acknowledge the Republic of Somaliland, emphasizing its potential for bringing strategic and security benefits not only to the region but also to the entire world, with a specific emphasis on Africa and the Horn region.

7. The Republic of Somaliland requests the support of the international community to bolster the security and stability of the region. It emphasizes that any decline in security measures could have far-reaching consequences for the ongoing peace

process. Furthermore, the Republic of Somaliland urges the international community to exert pressure on the Somalia government to halt the conflict it is currently perpetuating in the Horn of Africa.

8. The government of Somaliland brings to the attention of the international community that the government of Somalia has intentionally reneged on all agreements made with Somaliland. These agreements encompassed cooperation on security matters and the commitment to avoid spreading divisive and hateful rhetoric. The government of Somaliland urges the international community to ensure that these agreements including air space control, along with other witnessed agreements, are upheld in an impartial and equitable manner.

9. The leaders of Somalia have openly endorsed the Al-Shabaab terrorist group, encouraging them to execute terrorist attacks in the Republic of Somaliland. They have spread various unfounded allegations, such as the claim that the presence of an Ethiopian naval base in Somaliland would result in our people forsaking Islam. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that Ethiopia already maintains a base in Somalia and other Muslim countries.

10. During these ongoing disputes, Somalia asserts its right to engage in the maritime agreement, as they have already done so. They do not oppose the agreement itself but object to allowing the Republic of Somaliland to participate in it. However, the resilient Somaliland government staunchly rejects this decision, showcasing their unwavering dedication to fulfilling the aspirations of their people.

11. We strongly urge the Somali government to cease the dissemination of misleading information to the Somali people and to halt their involvement in inciting violence and supporting extremist organizations.

12. The Republic of Somaliland stands resolute in its decision to refrain from entering into any negotiations concerning its nationality and sovereignty over its land and sea. It remains dedicated to safeguarding its territorial integrity and asserting its rightful control over its land and maritime boundaries.

13. The government of the Republic of Somaliland sincerely recognizes and commends its vigilant citizens for their unwavering dedication to safeguarding the nation. Additionally, the government urges the people to exercise caution and remain vigilant against statements made by the government of Somalia and those who pose a threat to the Republic of Somaliland.

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