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NEWS FROM AFAR!

THE WAY FORWARD FOR SOMALIA

By Abdirahman Mohamed Abdi, PhD, CPA

Fairfax, Virginia, USA

amabdi77@gmail.com

@Badbaado_Qaran

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Editors Note: Somalia's transitional government that was established in 2004 ended on August 2012. A new permanent government was established consisting of an executive branch led by President Hassan Sheikh Mohamoud and a prime minister he chose and a federal parliament along with a Provisional Constitution to be revised and put into a referendum in 2015. Further, the Provisional Constitution mandated the new government to prepare the country for a free and fair election by August 2016 in a political process that is transparent, inclusive and fair. Three years in office, the government announced on July 28, 2015 it has failed to undertake the critical work necessary to hold one man one vote election in 2016 and the prospect of a revised Provisional Constitution put into a referendum is even more elusive. The question is, was it obvious from the beginning that the newly formed permanent government was in a position or had the capacity to undertake the necessary difficult tasks and complete related benchmarks? Dr. Abdirahman Mohamed Abdi Hashi, a former candidate for the presidency of Somalia in 2012 foresaw with clarity the pitfalls and consequences of rushing to form a new permanent government in 2012 for Somalia; that in hindsight mirrors the current predicament of the country. WardheerNews would like to share with Abdirahman's unpublished position paper of 2012 and is of the opinion that the issues the paper raises and the solutions it offers are more relevant and pertinent today than before.

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ACRONYMS

ACPA	Accra Comprehensive Peace Agreement
AMISOM	African Union Mission in Somalia
ARS	Alliance for Re-Liberation of Somalia
AU	African Union
CIA	Central Intelligent Agency
EAC	East African Community
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EITI	Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority for Development
ICG	International Contact Group
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NTGL	National Transitional Government of Liberia
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OIC	Organization of Islamic Countries
SRSG	Special Representative for the Secretary General of the United Nations
SSC	Sool, Sanag and Cayn Regions
TFC	Transitional Federal Charter
TFG	Transitional Federal Government
TFIs	Transitional Federal Institutions
TFP	Transitional Federal Parliament
UIC	Union of Islamic Courts
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNDP	United Nations Develop Programme
UNPOS	United Nations Political Office for Somalia
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
WFP	World Food Program
WHO	World Health Organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The international community is pushing forward their efforts to force a permanent government in Somalia by August 2012. Rushing to form a permanent government where corrupt and inept leaders could return to power would be catastrophic. The result would be greater disintegration and disenfranchisement in the country and would lead to an even more fragile and unstable environment.

The purpose of this position paper is to provide a brief overview of the current initiatives imposed upon the Somali people and why they would fail, highlight the consequences of rushing the country to form a permanent government prematurely, provide a sensible alternative to ending the transitional period by August 2012, and make recommendations for the type of government that will ensure a politically stable and economically strong Somalia.

Since the eruption of the Somali civil war more than two decades ago, a central government in Somalia has been nonexistent. Several transitional governments were established; however due to pervasive conflict, de-stabilizing effect of meddling neighboring countries, and more importantly corrupt and inept leaders with no vision or interest for the future of the country, Somalia has been a dysfunctional state. The political instability of the country has additionally been perpetuated either by inaction or wrong actions of the international community, entailing a series of failed initiatives intended to bring political stability back to Somalia.

During the last decade, the international community's initiatives, originating from the United Nations' Security Council (UNSC) and executed through the United Nations Office for Somalia (UNPOS), were done in a manner that lacked transparency, and, in the eyes of Somali people, excluded significant stakeholders. The majority of these initiatives discounted the politically difficult and thorny issues that were critical in restoring peace and stability to Somalia. Furthermore, many of UNPOS's initiatives that were deemed highly relevant set

either unrealistic deadlines and/or did not provide the necessary resources and were endorsed by a handful of politicians who did not take the views of the Somali people into account. Many agreements or outcomes from these initiatives already failed and others in play now are most likely to fail because the international community did not commit the resources and time required for the initiatives to succeed.

If the formation of a permanent government were to be imposed in August 2012, unless all the factors that could hamstrung it are first addressed and dealt with, its destiny may not be better than those preceding it if not worse, ensuring a perpetuation of the instability and warfare that has overwhelmed the country over the last two decades. The consequences of rushing to form a permanent Somali government will likely include:

- Corrupt and inept leaders returning as part of the government for five more years;
- Revolt by the public and regional provinces against a highly corrupt government;
- Tension due to the divergence of interests created by winding down African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) operations;
- Continued infighting, incompetence and corruption possibly leading to the division of the Somali state; and
- Exploitation of wealth potential from oil by current corrupt leaders.

The groundwork to reestablish the Somali government is challenging and demands a political process that is fair, inclusive and representative, that will enable the country to build its institutions and human capacity, establish the rule of law, good governance, and have transparency.

The initiation of a new two-year transitional government is recommended. This allows Somalia to accomplish the goals necessary to ensure it is prepared, has the capacity to effectively undertake democratic elections and form a new permanent government when the transitional period ends. It also provides a reasonable timeframe for the educated, skilled and

professional individuals in the diaspora to return to the country and contribute to the formation of a new permanent government.

At a minimum two conditions must be strictly enforced by the international community:

- Barring leaders of the transitional government and transitional parliament from participating in the next government and parliament; and
- A commitment by the international community to a political process for the stabilization of Somalia that takes on the difficult and hard work necessary to get the job done without cutting corners.

The lead role in assisting Somalia in this endeavor under the two-year transition should be led by an entity that has first and foremost the confidence and support of the Somali people and secondarily the international community given UNPOS's lamentable track record. The consensus among Somalis, in particular the diaspora, is that the government of Turkey, should play this central role because it has the trust and confidence of the Somali people. Expanded humanitarian assistance and commitments to additional development by Turkey have reestablished strong ties with Somalia. Turkish credentials, as a fellow Muslim and democratic country which has created a dynamic and fast growing market economy gives it a unique role to play in the revival and rehabilitation of the Somali State.

While the United States and NATO Western countries are now working for Somalia's stability, this objective is unlikely to be achieved so long as they use Ethiopia as their main surrogate in the Horn of Africa in the global war against terror over the last decade; Ethiopia's interest on the other hand is to perpetuate Somalia's failed state instability and, which has worked to ensure that Somalia remain unstable, fearing a stable Somalia may provide sanctuary for its separatist and dissident ethnic groups. Thus, the West and Ethiopia's respective interests in Somalia are incompatible. It is not Ethiopia that can bring the West's long-term objectives in Somalia – a return to a stable, democratic and united

Somalia – but Turkey which has a stronger affiliation and affinity with Somalia. Apart from anything else, it will be free from the suspicion and hostility many Somalis have towards western countries and their surrogates in the region, a sentiment that feeds the support for radical groups like Al-Shabab.

The following recommendations for selecting members of the new Transitional Federal Institutions (TFI) are vital to avoid a repeat of the current unsuccessful transitional process. This transitional process includes a constituent assembly or parliament that does not exceed 175 members, ensures members level of literacy is beyond the ability to read and write the Somali language, elects the president and speaker by the constituent assembly, facilitates the appointment of the prime minister by the president, guarantees full control over the selection of the cabinet (no greater than twelve members) by the prime minister, and requires written platforms by candidates reflecting their vision for the country and articulating their qualifications to lead the country.

Critical tasks that the new transitional government should complete *before* the two-year transition ends include the following:

- Train and equip the Somali military and police forces
- Develop criteria for the formation of regional administrations
- Develop infrastructure to competently carry out a national census
- Inform and educate the public about democratic elections
- Form, train personnel, and secure resources for a National Election Commission
- Prepare and draft a *new* national constitution in a transparent and inclusive manner
- Create a database of educated, and skilled Somalis abroad and at home.

These tasks, along with the previously mentioned TFI selection process and Turkey's lead role, will result in the formation of a credible permanent government that is stable. They will also provide Somalia with the essential foundation to build a democratic country that

peacefully co-exists and trades with its neighbors. In conclusion, this path will put Somalia in a stronger position to tackle the mounting problems of terrorism and piracy which will help restore Somalia's image, achieve political stability, promote economic growth through trade and commerce, and take its historical position as the gateway to East and Central Africa.

INTRODUCTION

Albert Einstein famously defined insanity as doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results. The Addis Ababa Communiqué of May 23, 2012 produced by the “Consultative Meeting of the Somali Signatories of the Process for ending the Transition” is seen by many Somalis as another foreign -managed meeting with little or no ownership on the part of the Somali people and therefore enjoying little legitimacy. It is a product manufactured for their ends by key participants, namely: the Special Representative for the Secretary General of the United Nations (SRSG) for Somalia Mr. Augustine Mahiga), and on the Somali side corrupt and pliant leaders of the TFG (Transitional Federal Government - the president and prime minister), the ousted former speaker of the Transitional Federal Parliament (TFP), the presidents of the regional administrations of Puntland and Galmudug, and the armed religious faction of Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama. The aim of this meeting held outside Somalia was to force the establishment of a permanent government by August 20, 2012 without their consent and to ratify a secret, *incomplete* and *non-deliberated* constitution that is still opposed in its present form by many Somalis across the board. As will be explained later in the paper, Somalis do have a choice other than the one now being imposed on them by the international community which among other things is unrealistic given that basic security, law and order, and the bare minimum capability and capacity of the government to function effectively are not in place.

Needless to say, the same group that fathered the Addis Ababa Communiqué are the same so called Somali Signatories of *Garowe I and II Principles* under the “Somali National Consultative Constitutional Conferences” held in Garowe, the capital of the Puntland administration, on December 21–24, 2011 and February 15-17, 2012 respectively. As their title implies, the Garowe meetings were supposed to be consultative in nature, and to make a significant headway on the issue of how the draft constitution prescribes the selection of members to the constituent assembly, which is one of the four benchmarks mandated by the

Roadmap (the product of the *Mogadishu Agreement* September 4-6th, 2011). Instead, the Garowe I conference resulted in an agreement – the *Garowe I Principles* – which unilaterally prolonged the transition to permanent political order for four more years, until 2016, totally contradicting the *Roadmap*'s plan of ending the transition period in August 2012.

These hasty and arbitrary momentous decisions had and will have profound adverse ramifications for the country's future. Somalia's small band of corrupt and inept leaders, including their mostly illiterate cronies, simply have no vision and ambition for the country, other than self-enrichment on a grand scale and a determination to stay in power whatever it takes¹.

But it is the wrong actions of the international community, or lack of them, that play a large part in prolonging the current perpetual political instability. One thing all initiatives from the international community have in common is that they are expedient, simplistic, self-serving, and are imposed upon the Somali people through manipulations, working with corrupt Somali counterparts by UNPOS through its SRSG for Somalia. From the time of the *Djibouti Agreement* of 2008, and through the *Addis Ababa Communiqué* of May 2012, the post of the SRGS has been held by two individuals - first by Mr. Ould-Abdallah of Mauritania, and currently by Mr. Augustine Mahiga of Tanzania. At every opportunity, these SRSGs have publicly proclaimed that all the initiatives they oversee are the result of extensive consultations with the leadership of the TFIs when in reality they have been first forged mostly in Nairobi and only subsequently rammed down the throat of the TFG in Mogadishu in processes that were far from fair and transparent, and in ways that excluded important stakeholders such as civil society, traditional leaders and the diaspora, among

¹ The 2009-2010 audit report by the Public Financial Management Unit (PFMU), which is part of the TFG's Ministry of Finance, revealed that during the relevant period; bilateral assistance to the regime was \$76.5 million, but only \$2.785 million could be accounted for. The findings of this report were presented before a hearing of the U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, and Human Rights. U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee on Africa, "*Assessing the Consequences of the Failed State of Somalia*", July 07, 2011.

others. In other words, there was never any Somali ownership.

Most of the agreements these initiatives produced already failed and others underway are likely to end up in the same way. This is because the international community, dominated as it is by donor countries guided by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and by extension the United Nations Political Office of Somalia (UNPOS), have failed to come up with the commitment, resources and time that their declared objectives deserve. The groundwork required is difficult and demands a political process that is fair, inclusive and representative; that will enable the country to build its institutions and human capacity, and to establish the rule of the law, good governance, and the transparency seriously needed by a fragile nation emerging from famine, war and conflict.

The way the international community responded to the rehabilitation of Liberia contrasts so glaringly with the ad hoc and perfunctory way it is addressing the problems of Somalia.²

Liberia, like Somalia, was emerging from a prolonged and exceptionally destructive civil war around the end of 2003; to the extent the international community considered it a failed state. To quickly recap, a fragile peace was restored in Liberia by the ECOWAS force (a West African regional force led by Nigeria and supported by the United Nations), which was parallel to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) force. The international community and the aid agencies on the ground came to accept – from their varying perspectives – that the peace in Liberia was fragile and that the Accra Comprehensive Peace Agreement (ACPA) of September 2003 was only the beginning of a protracted stabilization effort.

The international community stepped forward, willing to accept the responsibilities and risks associated with stabilization, and put forward a plan for a transitional government – the National Transitional Government of Liberia (NTGL) – mandated under the ACPA to rule

² Giovine, Luigi. *“Holding on to Monrovia”*. World Bank, July 2010. (Giovine)
http://wdr2011.worldbank.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/WDR_2011_Case_Study_Liberia_0.pdf

for two years from January 2004 up to the simultaneous presidential and legislative elections scheduled for 2006. Crucially, members of the NTGL were barred from participating in the 2006 presidential and legislative elections. Why? Because the international community; ECOWAS included and understood three key points: that the peace in Liberia was fragile, that the overriding priority was peace-consolidation and that the level of corruption displayed by the NTGL could precipitate a resumption of war prior to the 2006 democratic elections. In other words, government leaders and members of parliament were highly likely to use the two-year transition period to focus their energies and efforts on ways to misappropriate public funds through corruption and fraud in order to get re-elected in 2006 to the permanent government, if they are not barred from doing so beforehand.

It would not be an overstatement to say that this simple pre-condition on the part of the international community was the greatest gift they bestowed on the people of Liberia. It is also precisely what has been *missing* from *all* the agreements and/or roadmaps the international community has imposed on Somalia. If the same pre-condition were incorporated into the Transitional Federal Charter or the *Roadmap* from the beginning, the transitional government would have more likely attracted highly motivated and qualified Somalis whose main ambition was to serve their country in its hour of maximum need.

In the rest of this section, I will briefly review the key features of the UNPOS initiatives imposed unilaterally on Somalia since 2008, and why they flopped. I will start with the *Djibouti Agreement*, *Garowe I & II Principles*, what the recent *London Conference on Somalia* failed to address and will end with the most recent *Addis Ababa Communiqué*.

The Djibouti Agreement

This agreement made in 2008 was between the TFG and the Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia (ARS). It brought the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) faction, led by Sheikh Sharif Ahmed, into the TFIs, all of which was masterminded by the former SRSG, Mr. Ould-Abdallah, who was representing the international community. The initiative followed

the resignation of TFG president Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed. To accommodate the ARS, Ould-Abdallah recommended that the number of TFP members be doubled from 275 to 550, which culminated in the election of Sheikh Sharif Ahmed as the president of the TFG. This doubling of the TFP size was not only unconstitutional but was also done in a secretive way that was neither fair, transparent nor inclusive. Furthermore, this decision resulted in the TFP becoming chaotic and effectively dysfunctional.

The Kampala Accord

TFG president Sheikh Sharif Ahmed and TFP speaker Sharif Sheikh Hassan Aden struck this 2011 accord in order to resolve the political discord between the two of them that had brought the functioning of the TFIs to a complete halt. The president of Uganda and the SRSG for Somalia, Mr. Mahiga, oversaw the signing of this accord. The articles of the agreement denied the authority of the TFP by severely limiting its ability to amend it. The accord was also in conflict with the Transitional Federal Charter and in effect undermined Somalia's sovereignty by placing the country under some kind of trusteeship. Like the *Djibouti Agreement* before it, the *Kampala Accord* was the work of Mr. Mahiga, this time joined by the Ugandan president, with no input from other important stakeholders in Somalia such as traditional leaders and civil society.

The Roadmap

The *Roadmap* is the outcome of the *Mogadishu Agreement* made September 4-6, 2011, which touted four key benchmarks to be met by the end of the transitional period in August 2012. It included issues that were not a priority to Somalia especially considering it was in the midst of its worst famine in sixty years. Examples of these issues are the reduction of Somalia's Economic Exclusive Zone (EEZ) from 200 nautical miles to 12 nautical miles, and the imposition of a new constitution which was hastily put together without regard for the thorough and rigorous deliberation process this serious endeavor deserves.

On the other hand, even though several other benchmarks of the *Roadmap*, such as those

aimed at securing peace, good governance, and political inclusiveness and reconciliation are laudable and appropriate benchmarks, the time frame and deadlines set for most of these tasks were unrealistic, which even strong proponents of the *Roadmap* acknowledged. As was the pattern for prior agreements peddled by the SRSGs for Somalia, the *Roadmap* was exclusively drafted in Nairobi and lacked real input from Somalis. It is hard to believe, but up to now the Transitional Federal Parliament has never been given an opportunity to deliberate the merits of the *Roadmap* that is at the center of all current discussions about Somalia's future³.

The Garowe I Principles

The Garowe Conference held on December 21-24, 2011 was supposed to be a follow up meeting for approving the draft constitution, the second benchmark on the *Roadmap*. A key issue to be resolved was the reduction in the size of the parliament, which was to be elected by ballot at the end of the transitional period in August 2012. Instead, what the Principals produced essentially disenfranchised the Somali people.

The following is a summary of the major decisions a handful of politicians made at Garowe, that denied the Somali people their right to select future leaders after the end of the current transitional period, all under the guidance of Mr. Mahiga, the SRSG for Somalia:

- The *Garowe Principles* give the president and prime minister of the TFG, the speaker of the TFP, the leaders of the Puntland and Galmudug administrations and Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama the authority to guide the selection process and empower “stakeholders” who will be members of the new constituent assembly, and subsequently who will directly elect future political leaders.
- These so called “stakeholders” are not representative of the wider Somali public and their appointment in an ill-defined process with *no* Terms of Reference (TOR) would

³ The recently ousted speaker of the TFP, Mr. Sharif Sheikh Hassan Aden, consistently refused to submit the *Roadmap* for deliberation by the TFP. This was one of the main reasons parliamentarians almost unanimously decided to remove him from office. For a parliament by all accounts considered dysfunctional, this was no mean feat!

severely undermine any trust and confidence the Somali people might have in the new government.

Among the signatories to the *Garowe Principles* is the former speaker of the parliament, Sharif Sheikh Hassan Aden, who was overwhelmingly voted out of his post in December 2011. UNPOS, under Mr. Mahiga chose him to represent the TFP and sign the agreement as the speaker of parliament. This decision of Mr. Mahiga is a clear example of the arbitrary use of his authority on behalf of the international community. He constantly abuses his authority by making decisions that have long-term ramifications for the future of the Somali people without taking their views into account.

The Garowe II Principles

The UN's three day meeting from February 15 to 17, 2012 also held in Garowe, Puntland produced the *Garowe II Principles*. The meeting was designed to move the *Kampala Accord* and the *Roadmap* forward and end the transitional governance by August 2012 and form a permanent government. This completely contradicted the *Garowe I Principles* which called for a provisional or transitional government for four more years until 2016. Apparently, the *Garowe I Principles* were not deemed acceptable to the donor countries even though they and the UN initially publicly endorsed them. They are now aggressively pushing for the formation of a permanent government by August 20, 2012 whether Somalis are ready or not.

Just like the Garowe I conference, seven men exclusively made the decisions in this meeting. This group consisted of the two leaders of the TFG, the speaker of the TFP (even though deposed overwhelming by TFP members, he was present at the insistence of the president, prime minister of the TFG, Mr. Mahiga, of UNPOS, and donor countries despite the vociferous protestation by the overwhelming majority of TFP and civil society members), the presidents of the Puntland and Galmudug administrations and the representative of Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama. This means that just like all the previous UNPOS initiatives, the *Garowe II Principles* will be overseen by individuals hell-bent on returning to power with tasks that cannot be completed in one year assuming even the rosier scenario. This is nothing but a farce!

The London Conference on Somalia

By and large, most items on the communiqué of the London conference on Somalia were positive and should be welcomed by all Somalis. However, the conference sidestepped the thorny issues and was vague on others. For example, the international community, as reflected by the statements of US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, British Prime Minister David Cameron and UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon, vigorously insisted that the future of Somalia will be determined *solely* by the Somali people. These speakers repeatedly asserted that the success or failure of the country's future rests with the Somalis and not the international community. Yet, all these distinguished speakers vowed that a permanent government should be formed by August 20, 2012, and there will be no extension of the transitional governance, whether this is in the best interest of Somalis or not.

Despite protestation by the international community that Somalis are the only ones who can determine the country's future, in reality, the international community reserved for themselves what is acceptable and what is not. If Somalis deem that it is in their best interest to extend the transitional governance for two more years, since all the necessary and pre-requisite groundwork of selecting the constituent assembly and ratifying the draft constitution cannot be completed within a few months, would the international community agree?

Additionally, and more disturbingly, this critical process will be guided by the same self-interested, inept and corrupt leaders of the TFIs, the leaders of the Puntland and Galmudug administrations, the Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama armed faction (backed and trained by Mr. Meles Zenawi of Ethiopia), and the SRSF who unilaterally decided to marginalize input and participation from curial stakeholders in Somalia such as members of the civil society, traditional leaders, the diaspora and women.

As many keen observers of the London Communiqué noted, the international community decided to disregard or say nothing on how all these extremely difficult and complex tasks will credibly be undertaken before the artificial deadline of August 20, 2012. The logical conclusion one can draw is that all the international community cares about is a permanent government to be formed by the imposed deadline and any spoilers (whom they refused to define) will be dealt with severely. This means Somalis who point out that the emperor has no clothes could be labeled as spoilers by the SRSG and his international backers by the other inept and self-serving leaders - some publicly beholden to regional governments, other financial interests, or external forces eager to exploit the natural resources of Somalia. By taking advantage of a weak permanent Somali government that has the power or capacity to enter into long-term contracts, that surely will be one-sided and cannot be abrogated, is why in the eyes of many Somalis the London conference did not meet their expectations.

The Addis Ababa Communiqué

When it became apparent to the six Somali Signatories plus Mr. Mahiga that they cannot meet the deadlines set by the Roadmap, Garowe I and II principles coupled with the usual infighting and mistrust among these individuals, as well as the overwhelming opposition of the draft constitution by most segments of Somali society in the country and the diaspora, the Addis Ababa conference of May 22 and 23, 2012 was hastily convened to rescue the goal of forming a permanent government and ratifying the secret final draft of the constitution.

Not surprising and in line with all previous initiatives from UNPOS and the six Somali Signatories, the Addis-Ababa Communiqué calls for a new set of benchmarks with deadlines that are extremely difficult to meet by the deadline of August 20, 2012. Furthermore, the communiqué vests all the powers of the Transitional Federal Parliament in the hands of the President of the TFG to have the authority by fiat to ratify the draft constitution upon consultation with the traditional elders. This final act of making mockery of whatever was left of Somalia as a sovereign state and for all practical purposes disregarding the will of the

Somali people is the natural and expected trajectory Somalia has been on since the Djibouti agreement.

What is breathtaking about this culmination is the ease and boldness with which the six Somali Signatories, Mr. Mahiga and the donor countries took these measures. One thing is clear, this will not work just as the previous initiatives did not because it is not in the interest of these parties to undertake the necessary, transparent and inclusive political process which is a pre-requisite for reaching a credible and lasting solution for Somalia's vexing instability.

In sum, given the fiasco of all the initiatives from the international community in the last decade or so, and for the reasons stated above, it is clear that the time has come to adopt a *new* and *bolder* homegrown approach.

In this paradigm shift, the international community must strictly enforce at a minimum two conditions that have always been discounted. The first, which has already been discussed, is the necessity of barring the leaders of the TFG and TFP from participating in the next government and parliament. The second element, which is the focus of the rest of this paper, is that the international community should commit itself to a political process for the stabilization of Somalia that takes head-on the difficult and hard work that is necessary to get the job done. As part of that process, the international community should also provide the necessary resources required, and above all ensure that the changes are made in a manner that is fair, transparent and inclusive so as to ensure ownership by Somalis.

A central requirement of the role of the international community is the question of who among them should be playing the lead role, entailing that whoever is chosen must have the trust and confidence of the Somali people, which has *always* been the missing ingredient. For reasons that will be explained in the following pages, there is consensus among Somalis, the stakeholders, that Turkey is the one most suitable and equipped to play this important and critical lead role.

The next section will attempt to show why Somalis would support Turkey to take this lead role. Then I will make the case for why it is well advised that the United States and NATO-member Western countries support Turkey to assume the lead role in Somalia's stabilization. Finally, I will give the rationale for the rest of the international community, including the United Nations, Arab League, African Union (AU), and the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), also to support Turkish leadership on this issue. I will then conclude with some final recommendations and observations.

WHY SOMALIS WOULD SUPPORT TURKEY TAKING THE LEAD ROLE IN STABILIZING SOMALIA

Turkey recently re-established its strong ties and friendship with the people of Somalia when Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan visited Mogadishu on August 19, 2011. Almost four hundred years ago, the Ottoman Empire came to the aid of Ahmed Gagn (known to most Somalis as Ahmed Gurey) in his war against Emperor Galawdewos of Ethiopia – who was receiving support from the Portuguese – by sending Gagn 900 battle-hardened pikemen and 1000 foot musketeers⁴. The rekindling of this strong bond of friendship was triggered by the plight of the Somali people who were facing their worst famine in nearly sixty years. The people of Turkey and their prime minister were deeply moved by the searing television images of the suffering and the plight of hundreds of thousands of Somalis filling the refugee camps in Somalia and on the borders of neighboring countries (Kenya and Ethiopia). Most of those who died in the refugee camps, or on their way to them, were children, women, the elderly and the sick.

In addition, Mr. Erdogan and the people of Turkey were also disturbed by the lack of a timely response from the international community in general, but particularly Western

⁴ Malone, Barry. “*Troubled Ethiopia-Somalia History Haunts Horn of Africa*”, Reuters.com, December 18, 2011, and Wikipedia. (Malone)
<http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/12/28/us-ethiopia-somalia-idUSTRE7BR0E520111228>

governments, as the prime minister stated in his speech to the United Nations General Assembly in September 2011. The prime minister pointed to the irony created by the contrast of the Somali situation as compared with the speed and resolve of Western countries when deciding to wage or galvanize wars in other countries – mostly Muslim countries such as Iraq and Afghanistan – when they deem it is in their national, security and economic interests.

In waging these wars, NATO and Western countries spend hundreds of billions of dollars, not to mention the hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians killed in these wars. Equally sad and disappointing has been the slow and reluctant response from fellow Arab League countries, who, by Allah's blessing, have accumulated large amounts of wealth from oil and natural gas. The Western countries have been conspicuous for their lack of will to help Somalia to overcome its humanitarian, economic and political problems. The League of Arab States and its members have done even less when they were expected to do more given their wealth and the close ties that are supposed to tie them with Somalia.

Prime Minister Erdogan, during his visit to Mogadishu, and upon further assessment of the dire situation in Somalia, decided to expand significantly the level of humanitarian assistance for the displaced people in the camps in Somalia and made commitments to additional development projects that included building roads, hospitals and schools, digging water wells, undertaking major renovations of Mogadishu's international airport, offering scholarships to hundreds of Somali students to study in Turkey, and more.

What is striking and noteworthy about the Turkish projects is that construction of many of them started within few weeks. Compare this to the United Nations, which has earmarked several hundred million dollars for development projects in Somalia in the last five years. There is not a single tangible, completed project in Mogadishu that you can point to. The only projects that have been completed are a couple of small-scale projects in Puntland. As a matter of fact, and as shown by the 2010 and 2011 performance audit evaluations of the

UNDP, most of the funds earmarked for development in Somalia have been squandered, mostly on corruption, but also as a result of mismanagement and lack of coordination, notwithstanding that the report does not explicitly state this.⁵ This is corroborated by press reports, which say that Prime Minister Abdiweli Mohamed Ali recently remarked that almost all of the funds raised in the name of Somalia by the UN are spent in Nairobi and never reach Somalia.

In the end, under the direction and leadership of Prime Minister Erdogan, the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) convened in Istanbul and obtained pledges of over six hundred million dollars to ease Somalia's plight, out of which Turkey contributed 350 million dollars.

Turkey's unconditional humanitarian support for Somalia in its hour of existential need has made a deep impression on all Somalis irrespective of regional or political affiliation. Somalis' appreciation of, and reservoirs of goodwill, towards the people and government of Turkey has manifested itself in many forms. Those in the diaspora expressed it by visiting Turkish embassies around the world and delivering flowers and traditional gifts to the ambassadors and in the expression of warm words of friendship and gratitude towards the people of Turkey.

Somalis, like many in Islamic countries such as those in North Africa and the Middle East, admire Turkey's success as a fellow Muslim and democratic country which has created a dynamic and fast growing market economy that is the envy of the world, especially in this period when the global economy is struggling to avoid recession or worse. Of course, each

⁵ United Nations Development Programme. "*Assessment of Development Results: Somalia – Evaluation of UNDP Contribution*", United Nations, New York, July 2010. More notably, read the forward of the report. (United Nations Development Programme) <http://web.undp.org/execbrd/pdf/UNDP-ADR-Somalia.pdf>

"*Final Report: Evaluation of the UNDP Strategic Partnership for Somalia*", Adam Smith International, June 11, 2009. See the report findings on page number iii. (United Nations Development Programme) <http://www.adamsmithinternational.com/files/Evaluation%20of%20Strategic%20Partnership%20%20final%2011.6.09.pdf>

country is unique and one has to take into account their unique culture, traditions and stages of development; however, the fundamental principles that make the Turkish model successful offer lessons which can be applied to other countries.

REASONS THE US AND THE WEST SHOULD SUPPORT TURKEY'S LEAD ROLE

The US and Western countries should welcome Turkey, for here is a NATO member country capable of taking a responsible role in finding a lasting solution to the vexing and challenging problem of Somalia that the world has been wrestling with for the last two decades. Questions likely to be raised by this suggestion might be: Purely from the West's perspective, what makes Turkey a better fit? What advantages in serving the strategic long-term interest of the West does Turkey offer that other allies or surrogates in the Horn of Africa such as Ethiopia do not offer?

To answer these questions, I will look at the negative role the United States has played in Somalia's affairs in the last decade in its support of the Ethiopian government as their main surrogate in the "global war on terrorism." Then, I will briefly discuss other significant issues that are important for the West, such as support for universal human values and freedoms, democratic rule and good governance.

For the last two decades, since the collapse of the Somali central government, all US administrations and most NATO Western countries have continued to make the strategic decision to use Ethiopia as their surrogate in the Horn of Africa region in the war against terrorism, especially after the bombings of the US embassies in Nairobi and Dar-Al-Salam and the September 11th attacks as well as the recent emergence of piracy in the Indian Ocean that threatened global shipping lanes vital to trade and commerce. In pursuit of these strategic interests, the US and Western governments have given billions of dollars in aid to the Ethiopian government, the bulk of which has been used for military hardware and training to prop up the dictatorial regime of Prime Minister Meles Zenawi of Ethiopia.

The atrocities and human rights violations committed by the government of Ethiopia are a

matter of public record⁶ and are well documented by many human rights organizations in the world⁷. Ethiopia has also been a major source of destabilization in Somalia in the last two decades, aggravating the conflict in the country by arming various militias and warlords with complete disregard for the arms embargo the UNSC imposed on Somalia in 1992⁸.

The highest strategic priority of the Ethiopian regime since the collapse of the central government in Somalia has been to ensure at any cost that no strong central government emerges in Somalia, for two reasons.

First, the dictatorship in Ethiopia – controlled exclusively by the Tigre minority which Meles Zenawi belongs to – is anxious its security could be threatened if the half a dozen liberation organizations, formed primarily along ethnic lines, find a safe haven in Somalia. Those liberation organizations, currently suppressed by Mr. Zenawi, include the larger ethnic groups (i.e. the Oromo), and the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF). Mr. Zenawi's *actions* not his rhetoric clearly indicates he considers the re-emergence of a stronger and stable Somalia a threat to his regime because of the potential leverage it might have if it decides to support these liberation organizations in the future. However, there is no basis whatsoever for his paranoia. The solution and responsibility of Ethiopia's problems is in the hands of Ethiopians not Somalis. A Somalia that emerges from its decades of civil strife will have no stomach to embark on a renewed conflict with Ethiopia for which it has neither the resources nor the required support. Using the Somali bogey is a convenient diversion and a scapegoat that suits Meles' internal Ethiopian politics.

Second, even though power has historically been held in Ethiopia by the minority Christian Amharas, the demographics in Ethiopia have changed significantly in the last half-century.

⁶ See Human Rights Watch World Report 2012, pp. 121-125, <http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/wr2012.pdf>. (Human Rights Watch)

⁷ See Amnesty International reports on Ethiopia for the years 2005 -2011. (Amnesty International)

⁸ UN Security Council. "*Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1916*", 2011. See footnote number 149 at the bottom of page 51, pointing to the extensive reporting of the monitoring group of Ethiopia's numerous violations of the arms embargo on Somalia. (UN Security Council)

The majority and a growing segment of the population are Muslims. Mr. Zenawi is very worried about the potential of an alliance between radical Islamic groups like Al-Shabab originating from Somalia in the future and the large number of mostly young, passive Muslims in Ethiopia, and the adverse implications this alliance might have for his régime. Again, taking such suppositions as a certainty and deciding to meddle in Somalia's internal affairs to pre-empt the likely occurrence of such scenario does not make strategic sense besides being in complete violation of international law and conventions. Destabilizing Somalia is no solution for the ethnic and religious problems in Ethiopia which Mr. Zenawi should have addressed and dealt with, and in the end his demise will not come from Somalia but from within his discontented citizens. After all, future leaders and governments of Somalia have their own problems to deal with and a country to rebuild for decades to come.

Given the long-standing historical hostility between Ethiopia and Somalia, most Somalis are naturally always skeptical and suspicious of the motives of the Ethiopian government. All Somalis vividly remember the harmful role the United States government played in 2005 – through the CIA – when it decided to support all the warlords and their militias in Mogadishu on the pretext of fighting its war on terrorism. However, those warlords, much hated by Somalis, were defeated by the Union of Islamic Courts. The US, not satisfied with this outcome and against the warnings of many experts, regional governments and domestic opposition, gave the green light – along with a substantial military aid to Ethiopia – to invade Somalia at the end of 2006 so as to defeat the Union of Islamic Courts. The two-year occupation that followed had devastating consequences for the population of southern Somalia and gave birth to Al-Shabab, the radical Islamic insurgent organization affiliated with Al-Qaeda.

US support for Turkey to play the lead role in the stabilization and development of Somalia would go a long way towards lessening the suspicion and hostility many Somalis have towards the US and Western NATO countries in general, which is a result of those

countries' geopolitical strategy of using the brutal régime of Ethiopia as their surrogate. Most Somalis acknowledge the long-standing historical alliance of the US and the West with Ethiopia. Furthermore, they understand and welcome the Western countries wanting to assist Ethiopia in its economic and social development. After all, a *genuinely* democratic and economically strong Ethiopia is in the best interest of Somalia. Somalis want to trade and cooperate with their neighbors so as to catch up with the rest of the world in this highly competitive globalized era.

Nothing fuels Al-Shabab's recruitment or for that matter the resentment of most Somalis, more than Ethiopia's regular incursions into Somalia's territory. Somalis in general have a xenophobia regarding the lengthy presence of large foreign contingents in their country that are non-Muslim. However, despite these sentiments, most Somalis are usually friendly people, proud of their religion and heritage. Again, the bigger picture is that Somalis want to build a democratic country that peacefully co-exists and trades with its neighbors, and possibly form and/or join regional free-trade zones or common markets such as the East African Community (EAC), to catch up with other fast growing emerging economies in the world. Of course it is without saying the underlying assumption is that our neighbors share a similar outlook.

There is another reason the US and the West should give their support within the international community and encourage Turkey's lead role in returning stability and laying the foundations for democratic governance in Somalia. According to recent reports in the news media, the Pentagon has decided to significantly expand its military base in Djibouti at *Camp Lemonier*. This decision diminishes further the necessity of relying on Ethiopia as a geostrategic surrogate in fighting the war on terrorism, and gives the West another compelling reason to heed the call of the good and decent people of Ethiopia yearning for freedom and democracy.

Finally, it is high time for the US and the West to push for real reforms in Ethiopia and demand the release from jail all political prisoners and humanitarian activists, as the United States recently did in the case of Burma. Doing so is the right thing to do, but it would also serve better the long-term strategic interests of the US and the West in general, to say nothing of the impact this would have on the hopes and aspirations of the Ethiopian people. Supporting the principles of freedom and human rights in Ethiopia and pressing Mr. Zenawi's regime to undertake genuine reforms would provide the West with an opportunity to reclaim the moral high ground and redeem the basic values they claim to cherish. The West should take notice, learn from history, and not get caught off-guard again as it has happened during the recent Arab Spring revolutions in North Africa.

WHY THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY AND THE UNITED NATIONS SHOULD SUPPORT TURKEY'S LEAD ROLE

There is no dispute that many agencies of the United Nations, such as those responsible for the resettlement of refugees and humanitarian aid, and the World Food Program (WFP), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) and UNICEF have helped millions of Somalis over the last two decades since the collapse of central authority in Somalia. These programs have saved hundreds of thousands of lives. The UN deserves to be given credit for the work they have done, despite many well-documented cases of corruption and mismanagement of resources in their programs.

However, the same cannot be said about the United Nations Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS) and the office of the UNDP in Somalia. Since July 2011, the international community in conjunction with the AU and TFG has been very successful in pushing back Al-Shabab from most of Mogadishu and several regions in the south. The success of AMISOM and the TFG forces has been the brightest ray of hope in Somalia for a long time. However, the overall failure of the UNDP in Somalia, UNPOS on the political front is beyond question.

With regard to the failure of UNDP operations in Somalia, look no further than their own assessment reports⁹. The reasons for failure range from mismanagement of funds and corruption, to poor planning and the refusal of UN staff to venture out of Nairobi (the staff enjoy a comfortable lifestyle unimaginable in the countries most of them come from. Somalis have long since lost faith in the UN and the donor countries that make up the International Contact Group (ICG).

As Somalis rightly or wrongly perceive it, the powerfully entrenched interest groups in Nairobi have made an unholy alliance in order to design and prescribe solutions or initiatives that are either unrealistic, with deadlines that are impossible to meet, and with no input and participation from Somalis. The one thing that all of these interest groups hate - including the TFIs - is to hire and deal with well-educated Somali technocrats from the diaspora. This is the reason the UN and representatives of donor countries beholden to the international NGOs in Nairobi fight so fiercely to keep on extending the transitional terms for the barely literate, myopic and corrupt leaders of the TFIs..

The fiascos of the UNDP and WFP in Somalia are so glaring and striking to anyone that an op-ed columnist from the *Kenyan Daily* who visited Mogadishu in mid-December 2011 to observe the UN programs in operation was so outraged by the performance of the UN she described them as “...crimes against humanity”¹⁰.

⁹ United Nations Development Programme. “*Assessment of Development Results: Somalia – Evaluation of UNDP Contribution*”, United Nations, New York, July 2010. More notably, read the forward of the report. (United Nations Development Programme) <http://web.undp.org/execbrd/pdf/UNDP-ADR-Somalia.pdf>

“*Final Report: Evaluation of the UNDP Strategic Partnership for Somalia*”, Adam Smith International, June 11, 2009. See the report findings on page number iii. (United Nations Development Programme) <http://www.adamsmithinternational.com/files/Evaluation%20of%20Strategic%20Partnership%20%20final%2011.6.09.pdf>

¹⁰ Warah, Rasna, “*UN Staff's Performance in Somalia Constitute a Crime Against Humanity*”, Daily Nation, December 18, 2011. <http://www.africareview.com/Opinion/Where+is+the+UN+in+Somalia/-/979188/1292678/-/view/printVersion/-/2up8pw/-/index.html> (Warah)

As shown above, the catastrophe of UNPOS started with 'The *Djibouti Agreement* which doubled the number of the members of the Transitional Federal Parliament (TFP), then there was the *Kampala Accord* which put the fate and destiny of the people of Somalia in the hands of regional powers like IGAD (dominated by Ethiopia) whose interests mostly do not align with those of Somalis, and most recently there was the *Roadmap* hastily produced by Mr. Mahiga and his staff in Nairobi under the *Mogadishu Agreement*; that *Roadmap* had complex benchmarks – requiring significant time, and more resources and greater participation than was available - with impossible deadlines. Furthermore, as mentioned above, the *Roadmap's* reduction of Somalia's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) from 200 to 12 nautical miles, and the drafting and adoption of a new constitution, all while Somalia was in the midst of its worst drought in 60 years, was simply humiliating. Yet, despite these setbacks and frustrations, Somalis still want to look ahead, use the more constructive elements of the *Roadmap*, and take full charge in managing their affairs.

Given only this incomplete listing of the failings of the UN and the international community, the only sensible and workable option left for them is to support a new and creative approach in helping the suffering people of Somalia by supporting an initiative for Turkey to take the lead role in stabilizing and rebuilding Somalia.

As explained earlier, Turkey has established goodwill with the Somali people because of their previous deeds, and their current actions. In other words, the government and the people of Turkey had earned the confidence and trust of the Somali people. Last but not least, the Turks are highly focused on achieving results, unlike the UN and many of the Foreign NGOs who seem more interested in perpetuating and preserving their own interests.

CONCLUSIONS

The Right Type of Government for Somalia after August 2012

The current attempt by the international community to force a permanent government by August 2012 upon the long suffering people of Somali will have disastrous consequences for

peace and stability in Somalia and the region, and for solutions of the piracy problem, let alone eradicating terrorism. Since the prerequisite and unavoidable hard work necessary for forming a permanent government in Somalia has not been done, I will make the case for why a new two-year transitional government is the best and most credible option in serving the country's long-term interests, in contrast to the alternative the international community is pushing.

As an alternative, this paper strongly believes that what Somalia instead needs is a new two-year Transitional government for the following reasons:

Firstly, a two-year time frame is the right duration to successfully accomplish the unfulfilled goals necessary to ensure the country is properly prepared and has the capacity to successfully undertake democratic elections and form a new permanent government when the transitional period ends. This transitional period will allow the following critical and indispensable tasks to be completed before the transition ends:

- Train and equip the military and police forces so they are able to take full control of the country, making it possible for AMISOM forces to go home at the end of the transitional period.
- Appoint a prominent national commission of distinguished Somalis representing broad segments and stakeholders of Somalia to recommend what criteria should be used in forming a regional government. This commission should be provided with the resources it needs to undertake this vital task since without national consensus on this thorny issue, forming a peaceful and democratic government in Somalia would be elusive. Recommendations of the commission should be preliminarily approved by the constituent assembly in place during the two-year transition. Final approval should be made through a national referendum during the ballot elections in two years' time when the permanent parliament and leaders will be elected.
- Plan and lay down the infrastructure necessary to competently undertake a national census for the regions recommended by the national commission I stated above, thus clearing the way for a one-citizen one-vote election.

- Give an adequate amount of time for the National Election Commission to be formed, so it can train its personnel and secure the resources necessary to successfully plan and prepare for the elections.
- Offer a reasonable amount of time so that the various relevant civil society organizations can inform, train and educate the public about the intended democratic elections.
- Prepare and draft a national constitution in a process that is thorough, transparent, and inclusive – this has not yet been done. Completion of this task will make it possible to put the draft constitution to a national referendum after the newly elected democratic parliament approves the draft constitution.
- Create a database that includes all the credentials and expertise of all Somali in the diaspora: North America, Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Malaysia, Australia and New Zealand and inside the country. Information submitted by individuals should be rigorously and thoroughly verified by a team with the skills to do so. Information obtained under this initiative will serve two purposes. First, it will be of great value for the new permanent government after the transitional period ends and matching skills and responsibilities to tasks and opportunities begins. Second, this information will give a good idea of the types of skills and talent the country has when making plans and projections around the possibilities for attracting foreign direct investment (FDI) and the skills global enterprises can tap into in Somalia with regard to joint ventures or other opportunities.

Secondly, a two-year transition period would be acceptable to those who oppose three or four years transition period as being too long, as well as those who argue that a one year transition period is too short to complete the groundwork necessary to make adequate preparations for a permanent government and successful democratic elections that are fair, transparent, and representative.

Thirdly, a two-year transition period is a reasonable time-frame for the educated, skilled and professional individuals in the Somali diaspora to return home and make significant contributions to the formation of a new permanent government. Experienced and highly educated Somalis returning from the diaspora and in the country would be the antidote to

the corruption and lack of human capacity that has crippled all the transitional governments formed in Somalia thus far.

Why Rushing to Form Permanent Government in Somalia would be Catastrophic?

- The corrupt and inept leaders of the current TFIs and the members of the TFP have positioned themselves well - using all available public resources and the influence of their positions - to return as part of the permanent government for five more years as leaders! The scheming for this outcome can plainly and convincingly be seen by all those who simply read the *Addis Ababa Communiqué, Garowe I & II Principles*. If a permanent government is formed by August 2012, at best there is a high chance this will mean five more years of the same chaotic waste of Somalia's potential, but more worryingly the perpetuating of the instability and warfare that bedeviled Somalia in the last two decades.
- But, faced with this prospect, greater disintegration and disenfranchisement in the country would be highly likely; many disappointed leaders, as well as the public and regional administrations, may well revolt against five more years of a permanent government that is highly corrupt and inept led by people whose sole ambition is to hold on to power and enrich themselves. In turn, this would lead to an even more fragile and unstable environment that would encourage neighboring countries like Ethiopia and Kenya and other hostile outside forces, who are inclined on making Somalia a failed and ungovernable state; all of which would make it easier to convince the international community that Somalia should be put under trusteeship, or worse, outside forces to govern the country.
- AMISOM and TFG forces deserves due credit for weakening Al-Shabab and routing them from Mogadishu and other areas; however, winding down its operations as Somali forces get stronger will create tensions due to the divergence of interests. Ugandan and Burundian forces are paid almost ten times what they get paid at home, so it would be a challenge to bring AMISOM's service and cooperation to an end - assuming the most favorable scenario where significantly large numbers of Somali forces are well-trained and capable of taking over. This optimistic scenario is less likely if the current ills of the TFG roll over under the new permanent government being pushed for by the international community. In the absence of the most favorable scenario, it is likely that AMISOM would metastasize into a destructive, sinister force, entrenched in Somalia and difficult to dislodge.

- As is most likely under a new 2012 permanent government, most of the corrupt and self-serving TFI leadership are likely to simply remain in place. Assuming this to be the case, all the infighting, incompetence and corruption that crippled the TFIs is likely to continue for another five years. If this happens, regional opponents of a strong and stable government in Somalia such as Ethiopia and Kenya as well as secession obsessed Somaliland, will finally have the opportunity to convince the big powers in the international community and other countries, including members of the AU and donor countries that it is either unworkable or unrealistic for the international community to continue supporting the preservation one Somali state as has been the case in the past. This argument will be easier to make and is likely to find receptive ears.
- To halt the frenzy to immediately exploit the country's huge wealth potential from oil discoveries by the current corrupt leaders the international community has anointed; who want to commit Somalia into long-term oil contracts for decades to come before the people of Somalia have an opportunity to enact a legislation – using the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiatives (EITI) as the guiding standards – that would ensure the country's natural resources will benefit *all* Somalis including future generations. Without the enactment of a well-crafted legislation broadly endorsed by most Somalis, in a process that is transparent, it is almost certain that proceeds from these natural resources would *not* be fully accounted for and lost through theft, fraud, corruption and at worst, used for building mercenary armies that will keep in power these corrupt leaders and perpetuate Somalia's instability.
- For all those who have been asking themselves loudly why the international community is adamantly pushing for a permanent government in Somalia come August 20, 2012, the answer in large is because *only* a permanent Somali government can enter into binding agreements with the big oil companies. Finally, as an article and interview TFG Prime Minister Abdiweli Ali Mohamed gave the Guardian Observer on February 25, 2012¹¹, the TFG and the Puntland administration have been conducting secret negotiations with British oil companies in the last few months about the exploitation of oil at the *Dharoor Block* and the *Nugaal Block* in the Northeastern region of Somalia.

¹¹ Abdinasir, Tariq and Mark Townsend, “*Britain leads dash to explore for oil in war-torn Somalia*”, The Guardian Observer, February 25, 2012. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/feb/25/britain-oil-dash-somalia> (Abdinasir)

- The international community as represented by SRSG Augustine Mahiga, as well as the corrupt and myopic leaders of the TFIs and the regional administrative states that exclusively produced the two *Garowe Principles* (most of whom publicly declared that they are candidates for leadership positions in August 2012), are circumventing the entire selection process by giving themselves authority on how and who would be chosen members of the constituent assembly that will elect leaders of the permanent government and members of parliament in *few* weeks' time, this is beyond comprehension. The only thing this haste and disregard for the will of the Somali people can produce is a unification of *all* the marginalized parties and stakeholders of this unfair and opaque process throughout the regions. This disenfranchised group is likely to form a formidable coalition with the already existing sinister and entrenched elements that have benefited from lack of government in Somalia for the past two decades as well as remnants of the heavily armed and demoralized elements of Al-Shabab and usher Somalia into additional decades of death and destruction to the delight of all the enemies or opponents of a stronger and stable Somalia.

Selecting Members of the TFP and TFI Leaders

The overriding principle here is *not* to repeat the fatal errors of the current transitional process that have rendered it inept, corrupt and hopeless.

To begin with, the constituent assembly or parliament should not exceed 175 members. The current bloated size of the TFP of 550 has stymied this critical institution into a perpetual state of chaos and confusion. To avoid repeating a different mistake, it is vital to ensure that members of the constituent assembly have a level of literacy beyond just the ability to read and write the Somali language. A large number of the current TFP members have demonstrated that they are incapable of operating at the level of work a parliamentarian should, because they are illiterate.

The president and speaker of the parliament should be elected by a constituent assembly of 175 members, and should *not* be individuals who are members of the current TFP. To gain the confidence and trust of the Somali people, candidates for leadership positions in the

transitional government should present written plans of their visions for the country and verbally articulate on public platforms why they are qualified to lead the country.

Following as a guide the current Transitional Federal Charter (TFC), the president should appoint the prime minister in accordance with the 4.5 power sharing formula. However, the future prime minister's credentials and competency should be the leading criteria for this selection. Any prime minister appointed in the future must first be available for questioning by members of the constituent assembly about his or her vision and priorities before the transitional constituent assembly, whose members should approve or reject his or her nomination.

Finally, and most importantly, drawing on lessons learned from the current transitional period, the size of the cabinet must be small and not greater than twelve at most. Furthermore, the prime minister must be given full control over the selection of his or her cabinet, provided he or she follows key conditions that were agreed upon in advance, requiring them to, at a minimum, demonstrate the suitable competency, education and experience of each cabinet member relevant to the office they will be directing.

THE PIRACY PROBLEM

The problem of Somali piracy in the Indian Ocean is an issue of growing concern for the international community. Moreover, the increasing size of the ransoms and the level of violence have brought a growing chorus of loud voices calling for a solution. British Prime Minister David Cameron stated that it was a concern about the adverse impact this problem is having on global trade and commerce that was one of the major reasons for him convening the London conference about Somalia on February 23, 2012.

It has always been clear to those most knowledgeable about the piracy problem that its solution lies primarily in forming a stable and credible national government in Somalia that has the resources and law enforcement apparatus to get the job done. However, effective

solutions for the problem must include finding alternative economic opportunities for the Somalis who live on the coastlines where piracy is prevalent. In other words, a policy of carrot and stick is most likely to succeed. The resources required to accomplish these goals would be a fraction of the estimated US\$ 6.9 billion¹² that Somali piracy cost global trade in 2011.

However, effectively ending the plague of piracy off the Horn of Africa means jumping two hurdles: (i) the forming of a credible transitional government that can effectively discharge its mandate; and (ii) the defeat of Al-Shabab. I have already gone into the type of transitional government that Somalia should have by August 2012, so I would like to briefly comment on the importance of defeating Al-Shabab.

Notwithstanding the hardships and the agony Somali people encountered in the last two decades; their resilience is remarkable and inspiring. Al-Shabab has brought nothing but devastation and destruction to the suffering people of Somalia in the last few years. However, there is a glimmer of hope that for the first time the demise and defeat of Al-Shabab might be near. This success has been made possible by the sacrifices and efforts of the TFG forces and AMISOM. The support of the international community has also been indispensable in achieving this success. It is highly hoped that the total defeat of Al-Shabab could occur late this spring or during this summer. This would be good news if it occurs after a prolonged period of fits and starts.

As I have strongly argued, it is extremely important to get the transition right before the overwhelming pressure from the international community to form a permanent government prematurely and perilously reduces Somalia's prospects. As I advocated, a new two-year transitional government that accomplishes all the stated objectives will lead to the formation of a permanent government that is stable, and well positioned to end for good the problem

¹² Bockmann, Michelle Wiese, *"Piracy Cost Jumps to \$6.9 billion with Attacks off Somalia Reaching Record"*, Bloomberg News, February 08, 2012. <http://origin-www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-02-08/piracy-costing-6-9-billion-as-attacks-off-somalia-s-coast-climb-to-record.html> (Bockmann)

of the plague of piracy. The positive spillover from the defeat of piracy will restore Somalia's prestige and image in the world, promote international trade and commerce, and possibly be a boon for tourism.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Bright Prospects for Somalia's Economy

To consolidate the peace in Somalia after the defeat of Al-Shabab and to strengthen stability, it is important to find jobs for both the unemployed youths who are part of Al-Shabab, and those who are not. They should be given priority regarding the employment opportunities that will be created in rebuilding the country's major infrastructure and the rehabilitation of government buildings, schools and other large structures such as the Mogadishu football stadium. Security forces such as the police, military, and correctional facilities could also absorb those youth that demonstrate the aptitude and temperament suitable for those institutions. The government should also encourage these youth to attend vocational schools to learn skills that will be in great demand during the reconstruction phase.

The old notion, prevalent in the minds of many Somalis, that employment opportunities are predominately available in the government or public sector, needs to be changed. Opportunities in the private sector will dwarf by far those that will be created in the public sector. Somalis are highly talented entrepreneurs and have successful enterprises in Kenya, East and Central Africa, North America, Europe and the Middle East¹³. In Somalia, there are many successful enterprises in telecommunications, money transfer, and the import of all types of tools and consumer goods, as well as construction materials. The return of capital and entrepreneurs from abroad will contribute greatly to economic growth when stability takes hold in the country.

¹³ Abdulsamed, Farah, "*Somali Investment in Kenya*", Chatham House Briefing Paper, March 2011. This report explains in detail just how extensive and influential Somali businesses are in Kenya, and East and Central Africa. http://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/public/Research/Africa/bp0311_abdulsamed.pdf (Abdulsamed)

Equally important will be the dramatic positive impact on the economy from the tens of thousands of Somali professionals in all fields of endeavor who will also be gradually returning from overseas, bringing with them the energy and drive, capital and skills to provide all kinds of services to Somalis; they will also have significant purchasing power from the wealth they have accumulated abroad over the years. Returning capital will come from a variety of sources such as businesses, savings, investments, pensions, and other streams of income from social programs many in the diaspora are entitled to in the Western countries they currently reside in.

There is an important role for the government to play in promoting economic growth. I will focus on four important areas it is well suited to, and where it can make the greatest contribution.

First, the government could undertake large infrastructure projects that will turbo-charge economic growth by building roads, ports, airports, power stations and agricultural infrastructure projects that will facilitate investments from business enterprises.

Second, the government could boost earnings from the Somali livestock industry (Somalia is the world's biggest livestock exporter) which is Somalia's largest export and hard currency earner, by making funds and credit available on favorable terms from a development bank exclusively targeting this important sector of the economy. In addition, the government could provide free veterinary services and dig water wells in Somalia, and support expansion in the existing livestock markets in the Middle East. The government can also assist by opening up new markets for the Somali livestock industry abroad.

A livestock trade association could be set up, which would be able to create a digital marketplace with up-to-date prices and other market information on sheep, goats, camels, and cattle in the different regions of the country and overseas. Access to useful and timely market information would empower Somali livestock raisers and traders to maximize their earnings. Ever since the collapse of the central government in Somalia, exporters of livestock

have been the victims of various kinds of manipulation by dubious Somali livestock traders as well as by shady importers in the Middle East who always give the short end of the stick to decent and hardworking Somali livestock raisers. A supportive and forward leaning government looking after Somalia's interests can make all the difference.

Third, the government could champion the interests of Somali businesses in East and Central Africa by opening more markets for their products and services. This would take the form of joining organizations such as the East African Community (EAC) common market and entering into new bilateral trade agreements with other countries in the region and the Middle East. Again, similar to the adverse effects on Somali livestock raisers stemming from the lack of government in Somalia, Somali businesses in East and Central Africa are severely disadvantaged in protecting and expanding their businesses. The more successful these businesses are, the more capital is available for existing businesses and industries in Somalia and for the creation of new businesses, which would possibly also lead to attracting increased foreign direct investment (FDI) into the country – a key factor in the success of many newly emerging economies around the world.

Fourth, the government must also make significant improvements to the social wellbeing of the Somali people by investing in education, healthcare, and clean water. The best resource any country has is its people. Providing conditional cash payments to poor families to ensure children can go to school and get nutritional meals and regular health checkups has been empirically proven in many developing countries as *the* most effective way to fight poverty and realize the full potential of all citizens. Knowledge is a cornerstone of development, and its importance is increasing in an age of accelerating technological change and globalization; it is a public good that underpins economies, politics and societies, permeating all aspects of human activity. So, the government must give high priority to elementary education and get started on setting the country on the path of becoming a knowledge society.

Finally, the issue of the highly promising prospect of significant oil discoveries in Somalia, particularly in the northeast regions as well as hopeful signs of large oil and gas prospects offshore. Realization of these resources could help the country alleviate abject poverty and make significant investments in education, healthcare, and other major infrastructure projects. On the other hand, many countries with extractive industry suffer from what economists call the “Dutch Disease”. This occurs when a country becomes *dependent* on exports from natural resources. The effect is usually higher consumption of cheap imported goods and services; soaring the value of the country’s currency which in turn devastates domestic manufacturing.

A recent study by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) showed that there was “... a significant negative relationship between the money countries extract from natural resources and the knowledge and skills of their high school population”.¹⁴ So, only if a country uses its natural resources wisely, can it be a blessing and not a curse. In the end, it is investment in human capital development that counts. This is best summarized by the author of this study, “...Knowledge and skills have become the global currency of the 21st century economies, but there is no central bank that prints this currency. Everyone has to decide on their own how much they will print.”

Dr. Abdirahman Mohamed Abdi Hashi

Email:amabdi77@gmail.com

Dr. Abdirahman is the author of the book Islamic Banking: Steady in Shaky Times. He is also an economist and a financial expert with nearly thirty years of experience working in Wall Street and the World Bank. Dr. Abdirahman was a candidate for the president of Somalia in 2012. He currently works as a financial and economic consultant.

¹⁴ Schleicher, Andreas, “*Knowledge and Skills are Infinite – Oil is Not*”, OECD, March 09, 2012. (Schleicher) <http://oecdeducationtoday.blogspot.com/2012/03/knowledge-and-skills-are-infinite-oil.html>

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CURRICULUM VITAE

Dr. Abdirahman Mohamed Abdi has a PhD in economics with specialization in monetary and international economics from George Mason University and two master's degrees in applied economics and finance from John Hopkins University. In the 1980s in New York, he worked for PriceCoopersWaterhouse and Citibank at their headquarters. He also worked for the investment banking firm, Salomon Brothers in New York, where as a senior financial analyst he provided economic reports to traders in New York, London, and Tokyo. From 1989 to 2004, he worked for the World Bank, where he was a treasury operations official in the assets & liability management unit, responsible for managing the Bank's \$115 billion balance sheet portfolio. Dr. Abdi is also a Certified Public Accountant (CPA). He currently works as a financial and economic consultant in the Washington, D.C. area.

Dr. Abdi is the author of an upcoming book titled *Islamic Banking: Steady in Shaky Times?* which will be published next year. The book explains Islamic finance and compares the stability of conventional banks with those of Islamic banks. It also explores what lessons Islamic finance might offer to the current global financial system plagued by recurring financial crises as shown clearly by the empirical evidence of the last four centuries.