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Anglo Somaliland Resources Ltd

For Desk

Rt. Hon. Grant Shapps,
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*PRD for reply by
Minister*

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*the
Chair
24.8*

Dear Grant

Somaliland

I am writing further to my letter of the 7th August because it seems to me that the emails I have received from the UN Somalia/Eritrea Monitoring Group (SEMG) who, as I understand it, are monitoring compliance with Security Council Resolution 2182, as to the United Nations' approach to Somaliland.

It is a matter of record that Somaliland has had a de facto Government for well over a quarter of a century – to all intents and purposes, Somaliland is a Nation State. It has well defined boundaries. It exists, clearly, within defined boundaries, the boundaries of the previous British-Somali Protectorate. It has a functioning Government, a functioning Parliament, regular democratic elections and indeed, elections which have provided for change of Government and Government moving between political parties, something which is actually comparatively rare in Africa.

The arguments as to why Somaliland should be recognised as a de jure state, have been frequently rehearsed on the floor of the House of Commons and in debates in Westminster Hall and in debates by various Select Committees of the House of Commons.

The approach of the UK Government has been, as I understand it, consistently to recognise Somaliland as a de facto administration, but insisting that any de jure recognition has in the first instance to be a matter of Somaliland's neighbours, and in particular the Africa Union.

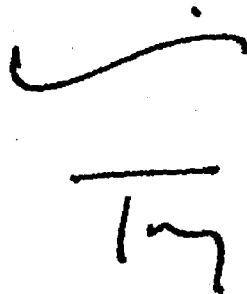
However the approach of the SEMG which is of course primarily focused on Somalia, but doubtless considers Somaliland to be part of de jure Somalia, that any licences issued by the Government in Hargeisa as being "illegal".

So if I understand it correctly, the thinking of the UN Monitoring Group is that if the Government in Hargeisa were to issue licences for fishing in what goes their international and territorial waters is that those licences are "illegal" and that any fishing carried out in pursuit of those licences is thus itself also "illegal".

I think the fact that the UN Monitoring Group have made apparently no attempt to talk to the Government of Somaliland about whatever concerns the Monitoring Group may have on Fisheries protection and Fisheries management around the coast of Somaliland also would suggest that the UN Monitoring Group simply don't recognise the Government of Somaliland.

I fully appreciate the desire of the UN and of the international community to seek to ensure the greatest stability in Somalia, but I think there would be many in Somaliland and indeed many in the Somaliland diaspora in the UK, who would be seriously concerned that in seeking to stabilise Somalia, the UN and the international community were to seek to deliberately destabilise Somaliland by effectively declaring and treating as illegal under international law any actions of the Somaliland Government.

I think it would be helpful if the Foreign Office were able to clarify the position of the UK Government on this and I am sure it would be a matter of interest in Hargeisa amongst the UK Somaliland diaspora, and indeed, amongst a number of members of the House of Commons who I know take a close interest in matters relating to Somaliland and Somalia.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, sweeping initial 'T' followed by a horizontal line and a smaller, stylized 'B'.

Rt. Hon. Sir Tony Baldry