



## Meeting with Lord Howard, Chairman of SOMA Oil and Gas Ltd

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To PS/Mr Simmonds  
PS/Foreign Secretary  
From [REDACTED] Somalia Unit  
Date 10 June 2013  
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### Summary

Acting Director for Africa Robin Gwynn met Lord Michael Howard in his role as Chairman of newly formed company SOMA Oil and Gas Ltd to brief him on the security and political situation in Somalia before a planned visit. The briefing included the volatility of Jubaland and Kenyan influence as well as the importance of transparency in the extractive sector in Somalia

### Detail

1. SOMA Oil and Gas Ltd are in the final stages of concluding a deal with the Federal Government of Somalia to take forward a mapping study of Somalia's oil assets and asked for help with security arrangements for a visit to Mogadishu to sign the agreement. Ministers agreed that, although we should decline, we could offer a private briefing on security to Lord Howard. Robin Gwynn held this briefing on 7 June.
2. Lord Howard began by informing us that he was planning to sign the agreement on 14 June when President Hassan Sheikh is in London and visit Somalia at a slightly later date. He will inform Minister Simmonds before travelling.
3. Lord Howard was briefed on FCO Travel Advice and reminded that security was the company's own responsibility. He agreed with that. He was updated on the current political climate including tensions over resource-sharing between the centre and the regions. Robin stressed the importance of the role of the new UN mission, UNSOM, in helping overcome these tensions. Lord Howard was interested in finding out more about the volatility of Jubaland in particular and Kenya's influence and intentions.
4. Robin ended the briefing by explaining that President Hassan Sheikh was attending the extractives session at the 3Ts event next week and we expect him to commit to transparency in the extractive sector and possibly announce Somalia's interest in eventually joining the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative. Lord Howard

