

## High Level Meeting on Somalia (co-hosted Ethiopia, Italy, Somalia and UK) | Joint Communiqué

### 71<sup>st</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly

21 September 2016

On 21<sup>st</sup> September 2016 at a High Level Meeting on Somalia hosted by the Federal Government of Somalia, Ethiopia, Italy and the United Kingdom in the margins of the United Nations General Assembly, the close partners of Somalia namely the African Union, Burundi, Canada, China, Denmark, Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, the European Union, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Japan, Kenya, the Netherlands, Norway, Russia, Somalia, Sweden, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, Uganda, the United Nations, the United States of America, the United Kingdom and the World Bank, issued the following statement:

We recognise that a peaceful and prosperous Somalia is in the interests of the Somali people, the region and the broader international community. We welcome the significant progress made in Somalia since the 2012 electoral process, in particular in the state formation process. We recognise that maintaining this positive momentum will require continued, coordinated efforts by the Federal Government of Somalia, the regional administrations and the international community over the coming years. The international community recognises that progress must be Somali-led and looks forward to working in close partnership with the Federal Government of Somalia and its nascent federal member states.

**Electoral process:** The international community highlights the importance of the upcoming electoral process, as a crucial stepping stone towards one person one vote elections in 2020. We reiterate the need to keep to the timeline and for a peaceful, credible and transparent process, in a climate of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. We welcome the introduction of a signed code of conduct for each candidate, as set out in the National Leadership Forum (NLF) Communiqué of 14 September 2016 and urge candidates to commit to it. We highlight the need to resolve disputes and disagreements through the Independent Electoral Dispute Resolution Mechanism. We urge all parties to cooperate to achieve this. We welcome the steps taken to ensure this is a more inclusive and transparent process than in 2012, including the National Leadership Forum's commitment to ensure at least 30% female MPs in both Houses of Parliament, and support the NLF's proposals to reach this. We continue to support sustained progress towards finalising federal member state formation and in the constitutional review process in order to establish an effective federal political system. We urge the Federal Government of Somalia and regional administrations to

build on the momentum of this year's electoral process and to quickly identify a clear roadmap setting out the institutional capacity building, constitutional and legislative steps required for elections in 2020, including a timeline and responsibilities and a clear division of duties.

**Security:** We welcome the recent NLF's agreement to strengthen the country's security and emphasise the importance of achieving an inclusive political agreement on the future of Somali security arrangements as a priority for the first NLF after the electoral process. We also underscore the urgency of building up a professional and effective security sector in Somalia, to enable the gradual handing over of security responsibilities from AMISOM to the Somali security forces. The absence of a political agreement among Somalis would undermine international support making it neither effective nor sustainable. In the meantime, AMISOM remains essential to Somalia's security and we express our appreciation for the sacrifices that have already been made by AMISOM troop contributors. AMISOM's recently revised Concept of Operations rightly focuses on providing electoral security and resuming offensive operations against Al-Shabaab in close coordination with Somali Security Forces in order to tackle the ongoing threat that Al Shabaab presents to peace and stability in Somalia.

We welcome the Federal Government of Somalia's commitment to building consensus around an effective security architecture in a federated Somalia, and note progress such as the endorsement of the National Security Policy and the New Policing Model. While the primary responsibility for the protection of the Somali people and building up the national security forces rests with Somalia, the international community is committed to working closely with the Federal Government of Somalia to develop capable, accountable, and affordable security forces which are acceptable to the population, provide security to the people of Somalia in accordance with applicable standards of international humanitarian law and human rights law, respect human rights in particular those of the most vulnerable groups notably children and women, and fully reflect Somalia's federal structures. This requires sustained prioritisation of Security Sector Reform and coordinated mentoring and training Somalia's security forces, including military and police, and building a robust architecture, through the agreed National Security Policy, along with the payment of regular salaries to Somali security personnel. It also requires a comprehensive approach to security which recognises that security is also derived from the extension of state authority, rule of law and justice, and countering violent extremism. We commit to improved and strengthened international donor coordination, under the leadership of the UN, and continuing financial and technical assistance of international partners to the Somalia security forces,.

**National development plan:** We welcome the work undertaken to develop Somalia's first National Development Plan in compliance with an Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy. As a Somali-led, Somali-owned contract between the government and its

people, it is a testament to Somali resolve and commitment. As the National Development Plan is finalised and implemented, we underline the need for prioritisation, engagement with the private sector, youth employment and the efficient allocation of resources to ensure successful delivery of results for the Somali people including finding durable solutions for internally displaced persons, refugees and returnees. In this context, we recognise the importance of sustained reform of Somalia's public finances to enable access to predictable development finance through International Financial Institutions to achieve Somalia's poverty reduction goals, and affirm that we will support Somalia to work towards this objective, provided that progress on political and financial management tracks is sustained.

**International framework:** A renewed partnership arrangement between the international community and Somalia is needed to guide international engagement also in support of Somalia's progress towards the UN Sustainable Development Goals. This renewed partnership should build on the progress made under the current arrangements to support the implementation of Somalia's National Development Plan, ensuring close cooperation with the Federal Government of Somalia and regional administrations as they take a greater role in realising the aspirations of the Somali people. We undertake to work towards renewing our partnership, preserving essential elements of the previous arrangements and setting out how we will work together in a transparent, mutually accountable and coordinated manner in support of Somalia's progress on security, political and development issues.

We recognise that 2016 is a pivotal year for Somalia, and that following the electoral process political leaders will need to work with purpose to form a stable government to meet the challenges ahead. The Somali people rightfully expect this new administration to continue building a cohesive federal state, and improve the lives of all of its citizens.