SOMALIA
A Nation Driven to Despair

A Case of Leadership Failure

Mohamed Osman Omar
SOMALIA :
A Nation Driven to Despair

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Dedicated To
The Somali People
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First and foremost I would like to express my profound gratitude to my mother, Sitey Sharif, my wife Mana Moallim, my children, my brothers and my sister for their moral support, although we are scattered, due to the difficult circumstances, in many places. Without their understanding and blessing I would not have been able to work on this book. My beloved father Osman Omar known by many as Iman Omar passed away in 1990. He was a great man. Allah Bless his soul.

My sincere thanks are due to the Indian Ministry of External Affairs for its valuable support to the Somali nationals who live in this great country and particularly to the Somali Embassy in India. To the many African and Arab brothers who help the Somali Embassy in Delhi I tender my heartfelt appreciation.

The office which was always ready to provide me with United Nations documents relating to Somalia is UNIC in New Delhi, and I am very grateful to it. My gratitude to Hari Sharan Chhabra for his academic advice. I extend my thanks to Hussein M. Nur Haraco who allowed me to read his collection of personal press cuttings and documents and for reading the proof of my manuscript.

Many African colleagues, Ambassadors and High Commissioners in New Delhi with whom I exchanged views on African issues and developments in different African countries deserve my gratitude.

I owe special thanks to my colleagues in the Embassy for their cooperation. I thank my My driver, I. Edward, who has always helped me to solve my various problems, particularly my transport problem.

Finally, to all my friends, wherever they may be, who keep in touch with me during this hardship period of our life, I say ‘thank you for your friendship and God bless you all’.

M.O.O.
“Things fall apart: the centre cannot hold
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world”.

The tragic situation in Somalia in the past half decade is reflected in the above lines. The state in Somalia has collapsed as a result of intense civil war and power struggle without restraint. It is an irony of fate that this country which became independent over three and a half decades ago with an unenviable advantage over other African countries, having an ethnically homogeneous population, has now become a mere geographical expression. For the past half decade Somalia has had no internationally recognised polity, no national administration exercising real authority, no formal legal system, no civil administration and no public health institutions. All its infrastructure has been destroyed during the civil war. Normal meaningful economic activities have been brought to a standstill, a tragic situation graphically described in Ambassador Mohamed Osman Omar’s earlier book, *The Road To Zero: Somalia’s Self-Destruction* (1992) and in his present book aptly entitled: *Somalia: A Nation Driven To Despair*. In the present book the author has presented a panoramic view of developments in Somalia from the fall of Siad Barre in January 1991 to the
withdrawal of the UN from Somalia in March 1995.

As the author rightly points out, the Somali nation, artificially divided by colonialism into five parts (British Somaliland, Italian Somaliland, French Somaliland (now Djibouti), the Ogaden region in Ethiopia and the Northern Frontier District of Kenya), has suffered for over 30 years in one form or another. The corrupt regimes that came to power during the years after independence only created division, malpractices and nepotism which facilitated the military coup led by Mohamed Siad Barre in 1969. The military regime aggravated the problems and deepened the divisions among the people.

The people became disgusted with the regime of Siad Barre and thought that any change would be better. Everyone had suffered under Siad Barre’s 21 year old tyrannical rule. Opposition movements promising justice, equality and democracy took over the country and Siad Barre was overthrown in January 1991. But the leaders who came to power in Mogadishu without prior consultation with the different groups who had fought against Siad Barre unilaterally appointed a President, thus paving the way for widespread violence and bloodshed, degenerating into total anarchy. The country has been at war with itself ever since the overthrow of Siad Barre in January 1991. In one year alone (1992) war and drought have taken 350,000 innocent human lives in Somalia. According to reports, as many as 2,000 people, mostly children and women died daily in Somalia in addition to many more thousands who were made hapless refugees in neighbouring countries. The tragedy in Somalia posed one of the greatest humanitarian and political challenges to the international community. Somalia, once known as the
problem child of Africa, became the problem child of the international community. No wonder, the otherwise proud people of Somalia widely welcomed the US 'mercy mission' code named “Operation Restore Hope” and successive United Nations Operations.

Beyond humanitarianism, what the country needs is unity, democracy and development. By tradition and history, the Somalis are a democratic people and semi-direct democracy has marked their normal way of political, social and economic life in the past. Even though the Somalis had suffered grievously under 75 years of colonialism and 35 years of neo-colonialism, they have shown robust resilience repairing and rebuilding their collapsed polity and economy. Following the US intervention in December 1992, many Somalis felt that through “Operation Restore Hope” by facilitating the empowerment of a civil society and pursuing creative diplomatic efforts, they could have enabled the US to play mid-wife in the process of state reconstruction in Somalia.

The United Nations had an excellent opportunity in Somalia. It could have built on the solid base created by ORH, initiated soon after the UN took over. It is unfortunate that the UN could not deliver the goods through UNOSOM-I and UNOSOM-II. At any rate Somalia, a part of which (Italian Somaliland) was under the UN Trusteeship System during the 1950s, would still need UN humanitarian and development assistance, including support for local NGOs.

The democratic option for Somalia cannot be forgotten. Democracy can find indigenous roots. Historically, Somalis have lived in societies with rules but without rulers as depicted in I.M. Lewis’s study on “Pastoral Democracy” (1969). The democratic
state renewal option would have several advantages for Somalia: it is compatible with the traditional consociational structure and mechanisms; it offers a real antithesis to the detested Siad military dictatorship and it situates Somali struggles within the ongoing global democratic movement, also making the country more amenable to international assistance necessary for rapid reconstruction and development. Consociational democracy recognises and acknowledges ethnic, clan and religious cleavages in constituting membership of governments and national commissions.

Ambassador Mohamed Osman Omar while succinctly describing the causes and characteristics of the crisis in Somalia rightly points out that the pursuit of narrow self-interests without restraint has brought total anarchy in the country. A handful of the leaders want to rule over the rest. The relentless and unprincipled struggle for power by any means has set the entire nation aflame. The author has lucidly provided a description of developments in Somalia from the vantage point of a participant-observer.

The author deserves lavish praise for his enthusiasm, scholarship and emotional involvement which have enabled him to provide the reader with an excellent account of the tragic developments in Somalia in recent years. This well documented and carefully made survey deserves and should receive widest readership and appreciation.

Professor K. Mathews,
Head of the Department of African Studies,
University of Delhi.
Ever since the early days of our independence, the Somali people have hardly enjoyed the fruits of freedom, peace and development, and scarcely realised the dreams of the freedom fighters against colonialism. From 1960 to 1969 our rulers failed to lay the foundation of the stable democratic system which we tried to adopt. Corruption, nepotism and mismanagement soon became the hallmark of our administration.

On 21 October 1969, the Army led by Mohamed Siad Barre overthrew the “elected” government, in a bloodless coup. Siad Barre remained in power for 21 years and his autocratic rule ultimately plunged the country into chaos due to his policy of divide and rule.

For the Somali nation these were yet two more decades lost in the life of the country, although in the early years of the Bloodless Revolution the regime brought about internal discipline and raised the image of the country abroad. But, as the years passed, General Siad Barre’s popularity started waning and opposition groups in different parts of the country became more active to remove him from power. Like all power-hungry leaders, Mohamed Siad Barre refused to step down under pressure. He even rejected the
idea, suggested by some friendly countries, to leave the country in order to save it from civil war. Instead he chose to hold the “throne” by force of the gun. But his intransigence did not pay.

As his forces lost ground against the opposition groups, on 26 January 1991, the once strong and dreaded man was forced to relinquish the Presidency and, a little later, he had to flee the country and died in exile in Nigeria on 1 January 1995.

In this book I have also dealt with the failure of the African leadership in general and the inertness of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and the League of Arab States, the beginning and the end of the international intervention in Somalia’s crisis as well as the failure of the Somali politicians to solve the problem that has thrown the nation into an abyss of despair.

In my book The Road to Zero—Somalia’s self-destruction, I tried to present to the world the events that caused the collapse of my country: the euphoria of the independence; the first national government and its demise; and the rise and fall of the regime of Mohamed Siad Barre.

Writing to my Publisher in July 1993, Prof. Charles Geshekter, of California State University, Chico, Department of History, said among other things:

“I read Mohamed Osman Omar’s The Road to Zero with great interest. It is full of interesting tidbits and social details much beloved by a historian. His flavouring the text with jokes and humorous remarks was extremely helpful.

“Mohamed’s book provides anecdotes that bolster my overall historical treatment of the last Somali century”.

I am sure, whatever I said in this book is known to
everyone, Somalis and others, but my idea is to let it be written, although I know, being an oral society, we will always be able to narrate our history from the heart. Yet, it is better to have it written than orally recounted, because as it is said: “words fly and scripts remain”.

Sometimes, for some people, the truth hurts. It is bitter, but we have to tell our story; to preserve and overcome the saddest part of our history. I have tried to record events as they happened and have included as many documents as possible.

I have personally sensed the feelings of a large number of Somalis inside the country and abroad. The thousands who are forced to flee the country because of the civil war are crying for peace and stability. All long for the day when they can go back home again.

This book is intended to be a window through which the reader and specially the Somali can see the disaster and the destruction we inflicted on our beloved society. If we can draw a lesson from the mistakes committed, I will be grateful to the Almighty.

Mohamed Osman Omar
New Delhi, India, July, 1996
MOHAMED OSMAN OMAR, was born in Mogadishu, Somalia, in 1937. He has studied in Somalia as well as abroad. He began his career during the UN Trusteeship as a Civil Servant at the General Post Office, reaching the post of Chief Controller of the main Cash. Then worked at the Constituent Assembly during the preparation for Somalia’s independence. After independence in 1960, worked as a journalist in the Ministry of Information. In 1967 joined the Foreign Service and served as a Diplomat in London, Beijing, Teheran, Dar-Es-Salam, Khartoum, Belgrade and New Delhi. The last three posts as his country’s Ambassador.

For six years he was Chief of Protocol in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He speaks several languages, including Italian and Mandarin Chinese. He is the author of numerous journal articles and two books—The Road to Zero: Somalia’s Self-destruction and The Scramble in the Horn of Africa. He has also written a book on Diplomacy and Protocol in Somali language.
PROLOGUE
After the Fall of Siad

Since its independence in 1960 the gentle and easily governable people of Somalia have hardly enjoyed a comfortable existence, due to inefficient and corrupt leaders. The post-independence period saw corruption, malpractices, nepotism and killings, creating an opportunity for the military takeover in 1969. Before, earlier wounds could be healed, the People of Somalia found themselves in a situation worse than the previous one. Even the collapse of the dictatorial regime of Mohamed Siad Barre did not put an end to the suffering of the people. They continued to be oppressed and indiscriminately killed by those who claimed to be their leaders. The people of Somalia are an obedient nation. They have tremendous capacity to endure hardship: they do not get easily provoked. During the post-independence period there was hardly any protest, demonstration or strike against the oppressive policies of the government. The first ever strike was resorted to by nurses in government-run hospitals, when they were not paid any salaries for months. Instead of conceding their genuine demand, or soothing their temper by promising them that their salaries would be paid, the then Prime Minister
declared that “Even if the people die ten after ten, the government does not care”. That was how the people were treated by their rulers.

Then the military intervened “to save the people” in October 1969. For a while, the military regime did what seemed to be right for the people and for the country. But then, with each passing year, the regime became more and more oppressive as was the case with earlier governments until it was toppled by opposition movements who claimed to be true representatives of the people.

Since January 1991, after the fall of the Siad regime, the Somali Nation has been subjected to unprecedented anarchy and civil strife. During the three decades of our independence, the Somali people have seen and experienced only suffering, oppression and hunger.
In order to defuse the deepening crisis in Somalia, President Hassan Gulaid Aptidon of Djibouti offered his good offices to mediate and bring the different groups and parties to the negotiating table. He invited to Djibouti leaders of the movements that included the SSDF (the Somali Salvation Democratic Front), the SPM (the Somali Patriotic Movement), USC (the United Somali Congress) and SDM (the Somali Democratic Movement). The SNM (the Somali National Movement) which had declared the independence of Somaliland in May 1991 did not attend.

The Conference was attended also by Aden Abdulle Osman, first President of the Republic, Abdirizak Haji Hussein and Mohamed Ibrahim Egal, both former Prime Ministers of the Governments before the 1969 army take-over.

Aden Abdulle Osman was elected Chairman of the Conference while the two former Prime Ministers became his Assistants.

President Hassan Gulaid Aptidon opened the Conference on 5 June 1991. In his speech he appealed to the participants to work with wisdom towards the
general interest and the future of Somalia. After a week-long debate, Djibouti One adopted, on 11 June 1991, the following declaration:

"1. The Conference declared that Mohamed Siad Barre, who was overthrown by the people and all Somali groups, on 26 January 1991, has committed a crime against the people and the Somali Nation and that his presence constitutes a permanent danger towards peace, security and the unity of the Somali nation. Therefore, the delegates agreed on the following points:

   a) To appeal to Mohamed Siad Barre to leave the country within a short period;
   b) Otherwise, they will use a common force against him;
   c) To bring Mohamed Siad Barre and his allies before a competent judicial authority.

2. The Conference issued an appeal for a general peace throughout the Somali National Territory and the creation of a climate of hospitality and mutual understanding.

3. It was decided that the title of the forthcoming meeting would be “National Reconciliation Conference of the Somali People” to be held in Djibouti starting on 13 June 1991.

   It was also decided that the participants of the second meeting, besides the groups which attended the first conference, will be the SNM and USF.

4. The Conference reiterated that the Somali Nation is indivisible and launched an appeal to the leaders of the SNM and other brothers in the north of Somalia to participate in the National Reconciliation Conference. It decided to send a
delegation composed of the members of the Peace Mission and representatives of the various groups attending the Conference to the North.”

Two months later the President of Djibouti again invited the Somali groups to meet in Djibouti. Djibouti Two started on 15 July and ended on 21 July 1991. Again, the Somali National Movement did not attend, insisting that they were an independent republic and had nothing to do with the internal affairs of the other side.

Djibouti Two was more elaborate and many foreign guests were also invited to the event. The President of Kenya, Daniel Arap Moi and the President of Uganda, Yoweri Museveni were the special guests of the Conference. Also present were representatives from Germany, the United States, France, Italy, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Libya, Yemen, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, the Sudan, Oman, USSR, China, the Arab League, OAU, OIC, EEC and IGADD.

Undoubtedly, the President of Djibouti, the President of Uganda and the President of Kenya and all the delegates from different countries who attended this Conference wished to see an end to the civil strife in Somalia. Donor governments were promising help in the reconstruction of our country which we, ourselves, had demolished with our own hands, provided that the warring factions reach a peaceful solution of the problem and restored stability.

At the end of the Conference, the representatives of the Somali Movements which attended the Conference adopted a resolution which was also counter-signed by the members of the Committee of “Wisemen of Somalia”, Aden Abdulle Osman, Former President of the Republic, Shaikh Mukhtar Mohamed Hussein, Former President of the National Assembly,
Mohamed H. Ibrahim Egal, Former Prime Minister, Abdirizak Haji Hussein, Former Prime Minister and on behalf of the Government of Djibouti, Mumin Bahdon Farah, Minister of Foreign affairs.

Djibouti Two Resolution stated:
1. That Mohamed Siad Barre should be militarily pursued by all the Movements under the direction of the Provisional Government and be brought before a legal jurisdiction if caught alive;

2. **Ceasefire**
   a) Establishment of a ceasefire among the movements involved in the fratricidal war, with effect from 26 July 1991.
   b) Each community should fully respect the ceasefire and ensure national security.
   c) The control of respect of the ceasefire and the restoration of peace throughout the country shall be the responsibility of a Somalian committee composed of Wisemen, Representatives of the Movements and of the Provisional Government.
   d) The Provisional Government shall have the power to take appropriate steps to safeguard the peace and security of the country.

3. **National Unity**
The Conference unanimously reaffirmed that the unity of the people and the national integrity of Somalia were sacred. The Conference reminded the Government of its duty to guarantee and strengthen the unity of the State and the people of Somalia.

4. **Formation of the Government**
   a) The Conference adopted the 1960
Constitution as a provisional constitution for a period not exceeding two years from the date of signature. The Government shall be formed in accordance with the principles to be decided jointly by the Movements.

b) The Conference adopted the principle of establishing a 123 member Constituent Assembly based on the 1969 regional boundaries. The Assembly shall have one Speaker and two Vice-Speakers.

c) The Conference agreed on the need for regional decentralization and the drafting of a Constitution.

d) Somalia’s membership of the Arab League and the officialization of the Somali and Arabic languages shall be enshrined in the Constitution.

e) The Conference appointed Mr. Ali Mahdi Mohamed, President of the Republic of Somalia for two years from the date of his swearing-in ceremony.

f) Appointment of two Vice-Presidents shall be made as follows:

1st Vice-President: One member of SDM
2nd Vice-President: One member of SSDF or SPM

g) That the Prime Minister shall be a native of the North of the country.

h) That the Speaker of the Constituent Assembly shall be a member of the SSDF or SPM.

i) That the two Vice-Speakers shall be one member of SDA and one member of USF.
j) The Government shall be charged with drafting a Constitution and organizing democratic and free elections during which the President of the Republic and the Members of Parliament shall be elected. The Provisional Government shall also be charged with drawing up a policy on respect of individual freedom and human rights as well as a policy on decentralization based on regional autonomy.

5. The Conference agreed on the appointment of a Committee to assess the loss of human lives and damage caused by the fratricidal war and to submit a faithful report thereon for Government action.

In conclusion, the Representatives of SSDF, USC, SPM, SDM, SDA and USF solemnly promised to abide by the resolutions of the Conference.

The Conference was officially closed on 21 July 1991 by President El Haj Hassan Gulaid Aptidon, President of Djibouti.

The Conference’s outcome was endorsed by the international organizations as well as by governments. King Fahad of Saudi Arabia immediately invited all the delegates of the Conference to Makka al Mukarama, Holy Shrine of Islam, to perform Umra and to pray for the success of the Agreement. For a good Muslim, once you make a promise while in Mecca you are duty-bound to try to fulfil it. The King wished to solemnize the Agreement by bringing the signatories to the Holy Place. He spoke to all the members about their responsibilities before Allah and before their people. King Fahad promised that his Kingdom was ready to offer all possible assistance for the reconstruction of the country if the situation improves and life returns to normal in Somalia.
However, the efforts of our well-wishers went in vain. From the Holy Place of Mecca, the delegates who were expected to bring peace to a war-torn country, dispersed to different parts of the world. A few of them went back home. General Aidid, the Chairman of the United Somali Congress (USC) refused to accept the Agreement of the Djibouti Conference.

General Aidid did not attend the swearing-in ceremony of the Interim President, Ali Mahdi Mohamed, on 18 August 1991, but a message from him was read at the ceremony by his representative. Later it was reported that Aidid’s absence from the ceremony was due to health reasons.

However, he later made his position very clear. Aidid said:

“the Manifesto Group announced the self-appointed Government with Ali Mahdi Mohamed as the self-styled Acting President, on investigation by Siad Barre before running out (I have documents to prove this), refusing my advice not to do so in a meeting which lasted for five hours on 29 January 1991.” He added: “I refused to extend any recognition to the illegal, illegitimate and self-appointed Government of the ‘Manifesto Group’ headed by Ali Mahdi, since it was nothing but the continuation of Siad Barre’s regime indirectly.”

The end result was chaos, civil strife and widespread violence.

The signators of Djibouti Two resolutions:
On 17, November, 1991, exactly 120 days after the Djibouti II Agreement, the power struggle between General Mohamed Farah Aidid, the Chairman of USC and Ali Mahdi Mohamed, the Interim President, also of USC, exploded in Mogadishu.

Unlike earlier when the clans fought each other with arrows, knives and later with rifles, this time the leaders contending for power exchanged artillery and rocket barrages, causing the death of innocent citizens and the destruction of national and private properties.

Thousands of citizens were forced to flee their home to save their lives. Those who had their roots in the interior of the country returned to their clan territories. While the residents of the capital, Mogadishu, which became the battleground had only two alternatives: either to stay at home, face death, rape and looting or risk life by going to sea. In Mogadishu even the mosque, the house of God was not safe. Marauders and thugs invaded the houses of the families of Shaikh Suufi and killed one of his grandsons who was sick, partially paralysed, and raped teenaged girls and then killed them.
...the ethnically distinct Banadir coastal town dwellers, were devastated by looting, rape and massacre during periods of military occupation by various factions.1

Alan St. Clair writing in the Nairobi Daily Nation of 8 November, 1991 wrote:

"Somalia has had little to celebrate in the eight months since the end of ex-President Siad Barre’s 21-year rule. Poverty and anarchy reign in the South while in the North a breakaway republic has yet to be recognised internationally."

Describing the prevailing situation he said:

"Brutal anarchy reigns in a city that was once warm and welcoming. Armed gangs roam the streets day and night, looting and raping. Basic public utilities are non-existent, the city’s infrastructure has been destroyed and schools closed."

Similarly, a correspondent of the Italian newspaper Corriere della Sera on 30 January 1992 portrayed the situation in Mogadishu in the following words: "Mogadisicco, una citta’ fantasma, Terrore, disperazione e morte" (Mogadishu, a ghost city terror, despair and death).

Besides looting the valuables of the common people, the thugs roaming the streets of Mogadishu did not spare the fixtures and furniture in Government buildings and offices. The Hotels Juba, Shebelle, and Al Uruba were left with pillars alone.

The new Post Office building was stripped of all the communication instruments, the furniture, doors and windows. The new building of the commercial bank, the museum, the former Government building (Ex-Governo), and the old and the new Parliament buildings emptied by looters were either occupied by refugees from the interior or used as observation posts by international peace-keeping forces. Due to heavy shelling across the city’s south and north zones, controlled by rival militant groups, the capital’s central zone was destroyed. There are places in Mogadishu which are hardly recognisable today. The rival leaders remain alive behind protected shelters while their artillery barrages caused so much destruction of human life and property.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) described the fighting as “A human disaster of the worst magnitude”. The Nairobi Daily Nation in December 1991 reported:

“General Aideed and Mr Ali Mahdi seek to oust each other from their respective positions in a clan-based power struggle for control of Mogadishu.”

True, these two fighting for supremacy have inflicted death and destruction on the whole nation. No mercy was shown to the innocent common people, for human beings who had the right to live, no fear of God, no Islamic brotherhood. Before his downfall, the late Siad Barre prepared the ground for the destruction of the Somali nation. He used to say:

“If I go there will only be land and not people.”

Human beings by nature are wicked and quarrelsome. They have always fought with each other, sometimes on trivial issues. But through the
ages man has evolved and established institutions to moderate his behaviour and punish the guilty. Clan customs, religion, education and philosophical thought and traditions, all have been developed to discipline him and create a peaceful environment in order to develop his faculties. However, we the Somalis apparently have learnt nothing from our religion, history and/or from the experiences of other peoples. In fact, we seem to have further degenerated as we have lost the basic human instinct for survival. As a result, we have aimlessly killed our own people and destroyed our own image as well as our own nationhood, inside and outside the country.

Julian Ozanne, of the Financial Times, in one of his reports in August 1992 rightly points out that

"there have always been clan disputes which were traditionally contained by the absence of modern weapons. In earlier days, the conflicts were for livestock or water or for grazing lands. But now the conflict is for power, it is a power struggle. When a clan leader fails to gain power through national consensus he involves his own clan, which blindly follows him."

Julian Ozanne added,

"It is difficult to explain why the two sub-clans which are the most closely related in Somalia have followed the warlords who lead them."

Maj. Gen. (late) Mohamed Siad Barre staged "the Bloodless Revolution" after the President, Dr Abdirashid Ali Shermarke was assassinated on 15 October 1969. Six days after the burial of the President i.e. on 21 October 1969, Mohamed Siad Barre, then Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces dissolved the democratic institutions, and established the
The Destructive War

Supreme Revolutionary Council (SRC) and installed himself as the President. He decreed that the country shall adopt "Scientific Socialism".

In 1974 in neighbouring Ethiopia, Mengistu Haile Mariam, a Colonel in the Ethiopian Armed Forces, toppled the oldest king in Africa, Emperor Haile Selassie, who also carried the title of King of Kings and the Lion of Judae. Like Siad Barre, Mengistu also adopted "Scientific Socialism". Both faced stiff opposition. There were at least half a dozen opposition movements in each country, fighting to depose the dictators who had usurped power. Both Siad and Mengistu assisted the enemy of the otherside.

Siad was forced out of power in disgrace by the power of the gun. Mengistu took the advice of some foreign powers and shortly before his opponents entered the capital, Addis Ababa, he gracefully flew out of the country.

Mengistu first went to Nairobi, Kenya, and from there he went to Zimbabwe. He had been persuaded to leave the country by the Western Powers and some of them even offered him asylum. But he preferred to settle down in Harare, Zimbabwe, an African country, and President Robert Mugabe welcomed him.

Even after he was stripped of power, Siad Barre insisted on staying in the country instead of seeking asylum abroad. He took shelter in his native village for about 15 months and continued to claim that he was still "the constitutional Head of State". When his civilian supporters realized that the "big brother" had no chance to regain power, they deserted him and he fled to Kenya on 28 April 1992. He was expelled from Kenya on 17 May 1992 and went to Nigeria. But his military wing tried to fight desperately, expecting that the intra-party struggle
within the United Somali Congress would facilitate his comeback. His expectations were belied and along with his remaining Comrades, he was forced to cross over to Kenya. The Kenyan Government let him in “on humanitarian grounds”. Unlike Mengistu who had at least a couple of places to choose, Barre had none.

The weekly magazine West Africa said:

“If there is any lesson to be learnt about Somalia, it is essentially a negative primer of how to destroy a nation; and with its author Siad Barre reportedly enjoying a comfortable asylum in Nigeria, Africa’s quirky sense of justice is well served. At another time and place in history, there would have been trials for crimes committed against humanity; as the scope of Somalian tragedy is fully understood, there might well be.”

The United Somali Congress (USC) which succeeded in removing Siad Barre from the Palace on 26 January 1991 was founded in Rome, Italy, during a conference held at the Hotel Helios, from 7 to 12 January 1989. It elected its temporary Executive Committee with the late Ali Mohamed Ossoble as Chairman. Four other persons were appointed Vice Presidents:

1) Mohamed Farah Giumale, Political Affairs;
2) Elmi Sharmarke, Military and Defence Affairs;
3) Hashi Nur Awdini, Financial Affairs; and

At the conclusion of its first conference, the United Somali Congress (USC) issued the first press release in which it made the following solemn declaration:

"The objectives of the United Somali Congress (USC) are the restoration of democracy and democratic institutions in Somalia, the National reconstruction, the internal cooperation of all social groups, and the unification of all liberation movements which are fighting and opposing the brutal and oppressive dictatorship of Siad Barre in Somalia.

"The Conference has denounced the grave state of terror, shock and decay resulting from the most atrocious, inhuman policies and actions carried out since the military coup d’etat, staged and inspired by the dictator Mohamed Siad Barre.

"The Conference has also denounced the deceptive Scientific Socialism which the regime of Siad Barre has imposed on the Somali people as a guiding religion; the killing of many religious leaders, students, nomads, politicians and the arbitrary arrests and torture inflicted on innocent Somali citizens."

APPEAL

"The United Somali Congress appeals to the world community and its leaders who believe in justice, human rights and human dignity to afford all possible help to the Somali People at this critical phase of their struggle aimed at removing the present dictatorship in Somalia
by all available means.

"The United Somali Congress also appeals to the press and all information media, to writers, journalists and intellectuals to stand with the Somali people in their legitimate aspiration for the restoration, as early as possible, of democratic institutions and government of their own choice in Somalia.

"The United Somali Congress appeals to all Somali opposition movements to put aside their differences and join hands for the formation of a common political platform, thus making a determined effort for the overthrow of the dictatorial regime in Somalia.

"In particular, the United Somali Congress condemns the barbarous atrocities committed by the regime against the people of the Northern Regions of Somalia and supports the legitimate struggle carried out by the Somali National Movement and other opposition forces in that area.

"Finally, the Somali National Army is called upon to stop the killing of their compatriots and to side with the liberation movements for the final overthrow of the intolerable and oppressive dictatorship of Siad Barre and his clique."

In short, restoration of democracy based on the cooperation of all social groups, unification of different liberation movements and denunciation of terror and militancy were the basic policy commitments of the United Somali Congress. However, when the United
The Destructive War

Somali Congress found itself in power it could not hold together even its own various groups and their leaders, let alone its commitment to unite all the "liberation" movements. The leadership, of the United Somali Congress failed to rise above self-interest and parochial loyalties. If the leaders of various groups and factions were really sincere in the cause of the Somali nation, after removing the Siad Barre’s regime, they should have tried to evolve a national consensus and worked for stability to create an environment for holding elections to the National Assembly.

When they were fighting against Siad Barre’s regime, they had only one enemy, but when they defeated the enemy they turned their enmity against each other.

For all that happened in Somalia we usually blamed Siad Barre, who had sown the seed of hatred in our society. It was believed that he used to say: "I am sitting on a volcano, and the day I go it will explode and no one will be able to stop it." He meant that no one else would enjoy peace in the country after his removal. And, in fact, that is what happened after he was removed from power.

The irony of the situation is that the seeds of hatred sown by Siad Barre are being harvested by those who were advocating an end to tyranny, oppression, dictatorship and tribalism. For instance, he sowed the seeds of tribalism; we now see that our people are being divided into tribes and his former opponents are virtually following his policy of tribal divisions and forming political organisations purely on tribal basis. The country itself is now heading towards fragmentation into tribal regions or districts. Siad Barre’s policy of divide and rule is now being implemented by the so-called "liberators and
saviours”, who were once making tall promises to bring unity and democracy if and when they come to power. The interim President Ali Mahdi Mohamed could hardly function because he did not get support from the other factions, as he was nominated President without consulting them. He formed a cabinet of over 80 ministers and deputy ministers. His “Prime Minister” Arteh proudly described the interim government as “the mirror of the Somali nation”, meaning that every tribe, clan or group was represented in it, instead of being ashamed of not establishing a government based on quality and experience.

Some people in the country, especially in the capital and in the coastal area, lost their mental balance when they saw their teenage girls being raped in front of them and their young children shot dead before their eyes. Such inhuman acts were perpetrated by the followers of the same leaders who had once been preaching the virtues of peace, stability and brotherhood.

In the beginning, the SNM (Somali National Movement) which seized power in the North advised their followers to refrain from looting, raping or torturing civilians. But in the South, the USC lacked political orientation and self-discipline. It had no control over its own supporters, who looted and killed innocent people. Neither did they spare public properties like hospitals, schools, factories and hotels, which were looted and left only as shells. The machinery of the factories was sold abroad as scrap metal. They did not think that these properties belonged to the State and not to Siad Barre and had to be protected and saved for the Nation.
THE WORLD IS HORROR-STRIKED

Just before completing his term of office, on 27 December 1991, the then Secretary General of the United Nations, Javier Perez de Cuellar expressed shock and concern over the deteriorating situation in Somalia. He said:

"in Mogadishu, factional fighting has engulfed the city in a nightmare of violence and brutality to civilians. Up to 20,000 people, the majority of whom are women and children, have been killed or injured since the heavy fighting resumed on 17 November. Many thousands are fleeing the city and large numbers of displaced people are without access to food, medical supplies, shelter or water".1

One year later, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, the UNHCR described the Somali situation as "Hell on earth",

"Worst situation ever seen",
"Most burning issue",

"A crisis of frightening proportion",
"The worst catastrophe in living memory" ....

The UNHCR report entitled "The influx goes on" said:

"Drought and fighting have forced about 1 million Somalis—about 20 per cent of the population - to flee to neighbouring countries in search of food, water and security. The UNHCR assists close to 700,000 of the Somalis in exile, mainly in Kenya, Djibouti, Yemen and Ethiopia. Somali refugees are streaming across the Kenya border in very poor physical condition - skin and bones - at a rate of 700 to 1,000 a day".1

And the influx continued. Thousands of Somalis took refuge in Europe and North America - USA and Canada. The whole world expressed shock and sympathy at our plight when the international media, specially George Alagiah’s report on the BBC Television, showed thousands of dead bodies as well as dying children, women and elderly in Mogadishu, Baidoa and other places. The world community was appealing to those involved in the civil war to stop fighting to enable international relief operations to reach the needy people.

The world wondered why this had happened to the Somali, the most homogenous race in the Continent of Africa, who speak only one language, unlike other parts of Africa where people speak different languages, who believe in one religion, Islam, unlike many parts of Africa where people believe in different religions. The answer is simple power

struggle. Power knows no father, no mother, no brother and no sister. It knows no friend or neighbour. Those who fight for power always claim to be doing so for the people. At the same time they do not care how much misery and death they cause to their same people.

At the United Nations Headquarters, the Somali situation became a pressing case for the former Secretary General, Javier Perez de Cuellar. On 27 December 1991, although he was leaving office in three days, De Cuellar informed the President of the Security Council that "he intended to take an initiative in an attempt to restore peace in Somalia". For the incoming Secretary General, Dr. Boutros Ghali, it would be a difficult beginning.

The first Resolution adopted by the Security Council after the deepening of the crisis was Res. 733 (1992) of 23 January 1992, urging "all parties to the conflict to cease hostilities, and decided that all States should immediately implement a general and complete embargo on all deliveries of weapons and military equipment to Somalia".

It was and still is an important Resolution and if it is sincerely implemented by all States much of our trouble would have been contained. However, as we all know, arms sale is a very profitable business, specially during times of conflict. And the sales are greater if there is an embargo. For some it is a question of profit and for others it means promoting and perpetuating instability in a country or region considered hostile. After the Resolution was adopted by the Security Council an article in the New York Times on 23 February said that the United States has begun a diplomatic effort to block shipment of Serbian arms apparently heading for Somalia.
The newspaper said that a Greek-flagged vessel called "Bana I" previously named the Maria was off the coast of Africa apparently heading for the Kenyan port of Mombasa. From there, the weapons would be taken across the Kenyan border to Somalia for delivery to unknown parties.

That was one case which came to the knowledge of the Americans and was made public. Who knows how many other shipments just pass across the seas without being detected?

Somalia has the longest coast in the African continent and it is easy to unload anything at many points on the coast. Unless the world community helps us to stop such clandestine deliveries of weapons there is no way to achieve peace in our war-torn country.

The United Nations must have noticed the breach of the Resolution 733 by certain States and that is why the appeal to stop selling and delivering arms to the Somali factions was reiterated in several other Resolutions. In fact, Resolution 814 (1993) of 26 March 1993: Paragraph 11 states:

"Call upon all States, in particular neighbouring States, to cooperate in the implementation of the arms embargo established by Resolution 733 (1992)".

There is a great deal of similarity between drug dealers and suppliers of arms. Both can be described as merchants of death; both operate for quick profit from items meant for destruction. Whether it is peace time or war time, weapons are always meant for killing or destruction.

In certain States weapons are accumulated by governments to suppress internal opponents. If it is
true that the world community cares about human beings, it should advocate a general prohibition of arms sales even during time of peace. For us, the small arms are the ones, that destroy our existence and not the nuclear bomb.


On 17 March, the Security Council adopted Resolution 746 (1992) supporting the Secretary General’s decision to send a technical team to Somalia to prepare a plan for a cease-fire monitoring mechanism. The Council also requested that the team develop a high-priority plan to ensure the delivery of humanitarian assistance. The team visited Somalia from 23 March to 1 April 1992. After discussions with the team,

"Interim President Ali Mahdi and General Aidid, signed on 28 and 29 March 1992, respectively, Letters of Agreement on the mechanism for monitoring the cease-fire and on arrangements for equitable and effective distribution of humanitarian assistance".

The Security Council also decided to send 50 observers to monitor the cease-fire and on 23 June the Secretary General informed the Security Council that both the principal factions in Mogadishu had agreed to the immediate deployment of unarmed

1. Reference Paper 30 April 1993, UN.
observers to be drawn from Austria, Bangladesh, Czechoslovakia, Egypt, Fiji, Finland, Indonesia, Jordan, Morocco and Zimbabwe.

The disorder continued. Killing and looting increased. The famine kept claiming lives in various areas of the country. The people, victims of the civil war, had no means to call for help. The broadcasts emanating from private radio stations, owned by the warring factions, only broadcast the success they scored against each other. Had there not been international non-governmental organisations, international mass media, BBC, CNN and others, the world would have remained completely ignorant of what was happening in the towns of Baidoa, Bardera, Hoddur, Marka, Brava, Shalambot, Afgoy, Kisimayo and the remote villages where people were dying of hunger and disease. In Mogadishu, the capital, during the bombardment of each other’s positions, the warring factions only cared for their followers while the rest of the population had been left without food and medical treatment.

At the beginning of its active role in Somalia, the United Nations, after securing agreement from the two factions fighting for power in Mogadishu decided to deploy 500 “security personnel” contributed by Pakistan and the first group arrived in Mogadishu on 14 September 1992. The Chief Military Observer, appointed by the UN, Brigadier-General Imtiaz Shaheen, was also from Pakistan. The “security personnel’s” job was limited to guarding the airport in Mogadishu. The political office of the UN (UNOSOM) was run by the Algerian Diplomat, Mohamed Sahnoun whose duty was to create a peaceful environment for humanitarian assistance to reach the needy people and bring Somalia back to
normalcy.

For the international community, drought and famine were the most pressing problems that needed to be tackled with urgency. Six organisations of the UN were working in Somalia. They were the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), World Food Programme (WFP) and the World Health Organisation (WHO). More than 30 NGOs have been working in Somalia. The ICRC has also continued to help Somalia. There are also local Somali NGOs collaborating with the international organisations.

The main aim of the United Nations was, according to former Secretary General, Javier Perez de Cuellar (27 December 1991) "to take an initiative in an attempt to restore peace in Somalia”. The new Secretary General, Boutros-Ghali, on 22 July 1992, reported to the Security Council “on the complex political and security situation in Somalia, as well as the desperate situation the country faced in terms of needs for humanitarian assistance, recovery programmes and institution building”.

Between 10 and 12 September 1992, a delegation led by United Nations Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs, Jan Eliasson, visited Somalia. After his visit, a 100-day action programme was developed. The 100-day programme (US$ 88 million) was reviewed at the First Coordination Meeting on Humanitarian Assistance for Somalia, which took place in Geneva on 12 and 13 October 1992, under the Chairmanship of Mohamed Sahnoun, Secretary-General’s Special Representative for Somalia.
Reuter News Agency reporting from the Conference said:

"One of the major questions facing the Conference is how to ensure security for aid supplies in the face of looting. The UN has been forced to employ so-called Somali "technicals" or hired guns to protect aid shipments".

The News Agency added:

"UN Officials had considered setting up a national police force to back the 3,500 UN troops being sent to Somalia, but Sahnoun said such a force could create problems in the absence of a recognized government.

"It had been decided instead to establish small security units of Somalis to assist UN forces at the airport, seaport, and distribution centres, starting in the capital, Mogadishu", he said.

"These security conditions are imperative today because the temptations for loot and greed are spreading with the prospect of more supplies reaching Somalia", Sahnoun added.

Somalia had, before the collapse of the system of Government, one of the best police force in the African continent, well trained and highly organized. Some of its high ranking officers were in Mogadishu at the time, ready to take up their duty if they were re-organized.

But the man, Sahnoun, who was entrusted with implementing "the recovery programmes and institution-building" preferred to establish what he called "small security units" of, as Reuter reported, so-called Somali "Technicals" instead of recovering
and re-organizing the existing members of the former police force who would have been more than happy to serve their country.

The country had all its institutions before the senseless destruction. So Sahnoun’s duty was to restore what we had and not to invent what we did not have.

We had no government during the fifties, as well. At that time the country was placed under trusteeship of the UN which created and developed various institutions prior to the formation of a national government after independence. Of course, they could not apply the same system of trusteeship as the Charter of the UN does not contain such a provision. In fact, according to Article 78 of the UN Charter:

"The trusteeship system shall not apply to territories which have become Members of the United Nations”.

But Sahnoun’s appointment and his job description were almost similar to those of a trusteeship territory administrator, in all but name. There was no need to cite “the absence of recognized government” as an excuse, if his intention was not to re-establish the infrastructure. We needed someone who could help us restore the administrative machinery, someone who could help rebuild national institutions, someone who could help reopen the educational institutions in the entire country. If we had a recognized government would we have required the services of Ambassador Sahnoun?

When I read his book: SOMALIA - The Missed Opportunities, published by the United States Institute of Peace, Washington DC, I noticed a different version from what the Reuter News Agency had
quoted him as saying.

The Reuter sentence read as follows:

"UN officials had considered setting up a national police force to back up 3,500 U.N. troops being sent to Somalia, but Sahnoun said such a force could create problems in the Absence of a Recognised Government.

Sahnoun’s version in the book:

"The option of a national police force was explored but on reflection it was decided that such a police force, in the Absence of National Reconciliation, would present serious problems. Nor can we continue to rely on the services of the present so-called “technicals.”

This statement was part of an assessment report of the situation he delivered at a donors’ conference in Geneva on 12 October, 1992. Did he change the phrases when he was passing over for publication? Has he been mis-quoted by the Reuter?

He added:

"Owing to the complexity and sensitivity of the political and military situation in Somalia, it would not be possible for United Nations security personnel to function effectively without the cooperation and support of some local Somali security arrangements."

The Somali disaster made many people famous in the world. In only six months in Somalia, Sahnoun became the most consulted expert on Somali affairs. He even surpassed those personalities/scholars who are well known in the subject like John Drysdale, Prof. I. M. Lewis, Prof. Ahmed Ismail Samatar, Rich-

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ard Greenfield and others, who understand Somalia and its people thoroughly well.

Whenever a Somali issue arises or even a minor news item is broadcast Sahnoun is there to comment, especially when United Nations is to be criticised.

On 27 December 1995, Sahnoun was participating in a BBC World Television Programme “The World Debate” with Sir David Hannay, former British Permanent Representative to the United Nations and others in London and Dr. Boutros-Boutros Ghali in New York.

It seemed to me that the programme was organised only to criticise the activities of the United Nations and particularly the Secretary General’s performance. Though the questions asked by the BBC’s Donald McCormick were clearly provocative and personal, Dr. Boutros replied to each one of them with direct and clear sentences and finished with his usual smile.

Sahnoun was there to criticise what the Secretary General was going to say and it was apparent that he was invited to join the panel for that purpose. Because he is considered the most outspoken critic of the Secretary General of the United Nations, and has become an asset for the anti-Boutros lobby in the world. He can say against Boutros what they cannot say in public with the lobby providing him the platform.

This kind of thing reminds me of the cold-war days when personalities were used for certain objectives. There is a cold-war between the anti-Boutros lobby and Boutros. The fact is that Dr. Boutros Ghali sincerely wants to help the third world solve its political, economic and social problems and he speaks frankly. But he also knows that he only has freedom of speech and not the freedom to do what he wants,
and in the latter case he admits that "he is only a servant of the member States".

One question and its reply:

BBC: Mohamed Sahnoun, with all your experience of the Somalia crisis, could that conflict have been prevented if more prompt humanitarian and political actions had been taken in advance?

Sahnoun: I definitely believe so, I think if we had intervened, if the International Community, the U.N., the International Agencies and Non-Governmental Organisations had intervened one year earlier when the Government left Mogadishu...the Siad Barre Government left Mogadishu in early 91, I think we would have certainly checked largely, not entirely, but checked largely, the humanitarian tragedy, and made it easier for a political solution to be done.¹

As he is an Algerian diplomat, expert on conflicts in Africa, the BBC should have asked him to speak about his own country. I feel Sahnoun should have thought of a preventive solution or advanced action for the crisis of Algeria as his "expertise" is needed there.

At the end of October 1992 Sahnoun "resigned" and returned to Paris, France, where he lives.

After his short sojourn in Somalia, Sahnoun claimed to have become an expert on Somalia.

In an article published in the News Perspectives Quarterly on "The Rahanweyn People", the former UN Envoy emphatically pronounced:

“Tribal divisions will remain so strong, however, that I doubt that one united Somalia is any longer possible. A more likely solution, following the world trend, will be a federation that will enable each community to control its own territory.”

This is a provocative conclusion and is similar to statements we used to hear from the administrators during the colonial period. Sahnoun spent six months in Somalia and came in contact with those fighting each other for power, using the name of tribes for their personal advantage.

In its early stage, the crisis in Somalia did not derive from tribal conflicts. It was simply a power conflict which involved few people who wanted absolutely nothing else but the throne.

I suppose when Sahnoun spoke of the “world trend” he was referring to what has happened in the former Soviet Union and former Yugoslavia. The Soviet Union was a country of fifteen republics and Yugoslavia a federation of six republics and two autonomous provinces. In both the countries each of the republics or the provinces spoke different languages and practiced different religions. In those countries the people caused the dismemberment. In Somalia the few who are calling for “regional autonomy” are those who are trying to establish for themselves a power base. They want to create fiefdoms where they can exercise power and influence on a permanent basis.

The former Algerian Ambassador, Sahnoun, claims success in his final days:

"In fact, my last official function as UN envoy was to organise, for the first time, a meeting in the Seychelles on October 25 of intellectuals from the different Somali factions. On the first day, they didn’t speak to each other. On the second day, they drafted a report together on how they saw the future of Somalia".1

What an achievement!

But as the Somali saying goes: "Shan beri Shaikh laguna noqdo". (It is impossible to become a saint in five days).

With all due respect, the Ambassador, may know everything else but not the Somalis.

It is proverbial in Somalia that once two groups of Somalis bitterly fought over a camel or a cow one day but the next day they sat together and amicably settled their dispute. But "His Excellency", Sahnoun, thought he had accomplished a great diplomatic achievement by persuading the intellectuals, belonging to different Somali "factions to draft a report together". Did he see them during the lunch break or during the break-fast, whether or not they were talking to each other? Did they have different dining rooms?

They may not have been talking to each other during the meeting, but Somalis, no matter how big their differences are, they always speak to each other. Not only do they speak to each other but they embrace each other and usually ask about the well-being of their families and relatives whenever they meet. They tell each other jokes about what one did to the other.

1 Hindustan Times, New Delhi, 2 December 1992.
At one stage during our crisis, an African Head of State tried to mediate between two groups whose differences were very deep. He invited them to his country. Knowing that the two groups had been killing each other, the host President suggested to his officials to keep the groups in two separate rooms until the meeting started, fearing that they may clash with each other if they were in the same room alone.

The officials of the host country did what the President ordered: keeping each group in a different room. But before the meeting started the members of the two groups met each other and soon all of them were in one room. They hugged each other and started talking about their personal problems, joking about what each group’s fighters did to the other. While they were laughing and talking, almost all of them at once, the officials of the host government entered the room and were surprised. They asked: “Where are the groups to be reconciled”? The hosts were surprised that the two antagonist factions, for whom much time and energy had been spent to bring them together for reconciliation, appeared as if they were members of one group.

In March 1993, during the Addis Ababa reconciliation conference, the situation was more or less the same. The conference’s purpose was to “reconcile” the warring factions. But no one reconciled them. They were seen coming to the conference hall talking of various subjects without a word of reconciliation.

Reconciliation in Somali custom means that rival groups led by their respective elders meet under a big tree, today in a hall, sometimes sitting on mats on the floor or on chairs. Most of the delegates would be
wearing national costume, Macaawis or Hoosgunti (Lunghi), a long sleeved white shirt or two pieces of cloth, one used as a lunghi or sarong and the other as shoulder cover, a Koofi Brava (Brava hat), Cimmama (Turban) and a walking stick, for the occasion. Some of the elders would have beads (tusbax) in their right hands and keep moving them with the thumb and forefinger one-by-one, in a silent prayer, while listening to the debate.

Every group presents its case, witnesses presented, if necessary. In the end, if the matter is cleared and if someone is found guilty, his group (clan) will pay the “Diyah” (blood compensation, in case of a killing or pay the cost in case of damage). At the final stage of the reconciliation everybody shakes hand or embraces the members of the other side while saying "aannu is cafino" (Let us forgive each other). Then a suitable sura of the Holy Qur’an or 'sura al Fatiha', will be recited at the conclusion.

In some cases the guilty party offers a bride to the Chief of the other side to solidify the reconciliation through marriage which will establish a family connection (xidid). In case of a wide conflict the sides give each other a number of brides. We believe that this leads to a closer brotherhood.

Nothing of this kind happened in Addis Ababa and yet all the leaders who were present at the Conference, no matter which organisation they belonged to, behaved as if they were brothers and sisters. They all stayed together in the same hotels and ate at common restaurants. They walked together and sat for coffee in the lobbies of the Hotel Ghion, Ethiopia and Shabelle and exchanged jokes, sometimes regarding the conflict in the country, recounting all kind of stories.
One day an Ethiopian official working as a Liaison Officer stood amazed at the centre of the lobby of Ghion Hotel, where over one hundred Somalis of different factions were either standing or sitting. "This is a joke," he said, adding: "if one sees this crowd sitting and drinking together, no one can think that these are the people fighting in Somalia".

Only very few, a handful of people are responsible for what is happening in Somalia. To be acquainted with the Somali situation, one does not have to be a diplomat.

My "brother" Ambassador Mohamed Sahnoun, was privileged by the UN Secretary General to guide the Somali people to a prosperous life and to help them remain united. As a Muslim he should have reminded us of the Almighty's word "And hold fast, all together, by the Rope which Allah, stretches out for you, and be not divided among yourselves." (Sura Al-Imran, S.3 A 103).

Instead, he came out with the prediction, as a fortune teller, saying "I doubt that one united Somalia is any longer possible." That was wishing evil upon the Somali nation.

We all know what has happened to our people, to our children, women, elders, to our statehood as well as to our properties. We know that hundreds of thousands of people have lost their lives due to famine or civil war. As we have failed to do our duty to govern our own nation, we hoped that the world community would come to our rescue. The Secretary-General entrusted Sahnoun to advice us to reconcile, to minimise our differences and, burying the past, start afresh the task of nation-building. I do not know what advice he gave to the people he met while he was in Somalia, but in his article (carried by
Hindustan Times, New Delhi, 2 December 1992), Sahnoun clearly sounded as if he was interested in further stoking the fire in Somalia.

In the opening paragraph of the article he says: “The Rahanweyn people of southwest Somalia are facing the same threat of genocide by massacre and starvation that confronts the Muslims in Sarajevo.” And he concludes his article with this provocative sentence: “The survival of the Rahanweyn people is at stake.” A friend of Somalia would have said that “the Somali nation’s survival is at stake.” But singling out one part of the Somali nation as the only victim of the conflict is tantamount to open instigation of the people of the area. It is true that the people of the Bay Region (formerly Upper Juba Region) have borne the brunt of the famine and the drought and the death toll was higher there than in other areas. But it was, as Sahnoun himself said in his article, due to “hunger and hunger-related diseases”.

The picture Sanhoun portrayed of Somalia was completely distorted. It is like him, with such negative ideas and policy, who have widened the cracks and misunderstandings among the factions instead of helping them to reconcile their differences.

Even now when he is no longer in our country, Sahnoun continues his whispering campaign against the Somali nation. The Rahanweyn people are part and parcel of the Somali Nation and its pain is felt by the rest of the population.

It is not the first time that the area has been hit by famine or drought. But in the past at least there were some sort of governments, good or bad, which used to rush help to the affected people.

This time famine and drought gripped the country at a time when we had no government. There is no
organised administrative network which can take care of national problems. As a nation we are in total disarray. Consequently, hundreds of thousands of people fled the country for fear of death from hunger or war. No national authority which could appeal on behalf of the nation. Our thanks go to the International NGOs’ aid workers, and other humanitarian organisations which have played the role of mobilising the world to come to the rescue of the Somali nation. The international media, particularly BBC world television, the American Television CNN and others, transmitted messages that really moved the world. The images that were seen by millions of families in Europe and America, made an impact on the international community.

In November 1992, the Secretary General of the United Nations, Boutros-Boutros Ghali, emphasized the important role played by the media. He was quoted as saying:

“When the media were paying attention only to Yugoslavia, Member States ignored Somalia. But when the media began focusing on people getting killed in Somalia, Member States were willing to give the UN planes for transport, more humanitarian assistance for Somalia and the forces to protect it.”

Television played a crucial role in securing worldwide sympathy towards the Somali nation, devastated by the famine and civil war. The President of Ireland, Mary Robinson said before visiting Somalia in October 1992:

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"I saw the images on television before I came and I found them disturbing. I found that I was moved and even moved to tears once or twice when I saw the coverage in the Irish papers and media."

On 4 December 1992, when he decided to send troops to Somalia to assist in Operation Restore Hope, the then President of the United States, George Bush told the American people in a televised address: "Every American has seen the shocking images from Somalia."

Both electronic and print media rendered invaluable service to the Somali people by highlighting their problems. When some friends remarked, "Your country is always in the news", I commented:

"I hope the media will not turn its back on us. As long as the media highlights our situation the world cannot ignore us. Whether in peace or in war, the role of the media is important."

Reminding the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and the League of Arab States of their duties towards Somalia, an Egyptian writer, Fahmi Huweydi, expressed his sorrow for the indifference of these organisations towards the crisis in Somalia. In an article published in an Arab newspaper in July 1992, Huweydi said among other things:

"It is sorrowful that the [The Arab League] Five-Nation Special Committee on Somalia did not have a single meeting since its establishment five months ago, due to differences between its members and as far as the relief fund is concerned, even a single fil
The World is Horror-Struck

(cent) has not been deposited.”

Huweydi added:

“The maximum that has been done is that Arab Ministers of Health contributed one hundred thousand US Dollars to the Arab League to be paid to the Medical Team (Ten Doctors) that were despatched by the Egyptian Medical Union to Somalia.”

Huweydi said:

“As far as the Organisation of the Islamic Conference is concerned, the Organisation contributed one hundred and fifty thousand US Dollars for the relief of the Somali refugees in Yemen.”

It would not be an exaggeration to say that some of the Muslim States, both Arabs and non-Arabs, are among the wealthiest countries in the world and it is their religious obligation to alleviate the sufferings of the poor nations in the Islamic world. On the contrary, a large amount of the wealth of the Islamic States is wasted on things that in the long run will be useless.

The Egyptian writer concluded his article by saying:

“I do not know how to raise the interest of the Muslims and the Arabs to save what is remaining of Somalia, and do not know how to draw their attention to the continued suppression, killings and deaths which are going on in front of our Secretary-General [of the Arab League].”

The Arab League has passed resolution after
resolution calling upon its members to help Somalia morally and materially. Yet practically no concrete steps have been taken by the organisation especially in reconciling the warring groups. For us to have peace is more important than to have wealth.

On the political side, however, the Arab League constantly expressed its support for the unity of the Somali territory and its people. The League’s counterparts in Europe, the European Economic Community (now European Union) have been more active than our Arab “brothers”. On 4 September 1992 it sent a delegation consisting of Foreign Ministers of Great Britain, Denmark and Portugal to assess the situation on the spot. A week later another delegation comprising the Development Ministers of these countries visited Somalia. The Arab League during the same week passed Resolution No.5222 in its ordinary session on 13 September 1992 “asking the various factions in Somalia to continue to abide by the cease-fire agreement...”

The Arabs were passing resolutions while the Europeans and Americans were already delivering humanitarian aid. The EC has, according to the EC Journal (The Courier, n.136 - November-December 1992) in 1992 allocated for Somalia 206,000 tons of food aid. The United States of America alone sent to Somalia 200,000 tons of food and helped to transport the first batch (500 Pakistani soldiers) of the 3,500 UN soldiers authorized by the United Nations to protect the relief operation.

The food aid destined for Somalia is not limited only for the people in the country. The International community provides food and shelter also to Somalis who are in the refugees camps beyond the de facto borders. It also provides financial assistance to the
neighbouring countries which shelter Somali refugees.

The President of the Republic of Ireland, Mary Robinson, her husband and the Irish Foreign Minister, David Andrews visited Somalia on a humanitarian mission to see the condition of the people with their own eyes. During her visit, (October 3 and 4, 1992) the President of Ireland, toured the most affected area, Baidoa. She met some of the famine stricken people and consoled the children being looked after by Irish humanitarian organisations which were operating various relief camps in the country. "I went to an elderly man, another woman, when I shook the hand of a woman or a child, for that instant their faces lit up and their eyes smiled", wrote the President of Ireland, in her book, A Voice for Somalia, published after her return to her country. Mrs Robinson arrived in Somalia with passionate affection. For a dying person nothing means more than having some one who shows affection and care. She is the President of a country and with all her commitments, she spared her invaluable time to visit Somalia. For us, the Somalis, it was a great gesture which encouraged the world community to come forward to the rescue of the Somalis.

She writes in her book:

"The suffering I encountered in Somalia offended all my inner sense of justice, a sense I had acquired partly through the practice of law but mainly through a simple human sense of what is right and fair as against what is profoundly unjust. I saw children die. I saw their mothers and fathers powerless to help them. I observed the life-and-death significance of items such as food and medicine—and often
crude versions of each—whose abundance we take for granted."

The visit of the President of the Republic of Ireland honoured the people of Somalia as a whole. By her visit she infused a new confidence and hope among the weak, hungry and enfeebled. We are beholden to her. Mrs Robinson put our case before the International Community most effectively. At a Press Conference in Nairobi on 5 October 1992, she stated:

"I find that the people of Somalia are extraordinarily dignified in the situation in which they find themselves. I have three written requests to be their voice, written by the people that I met, the elders, the women, and also intellectuals, doctors, nurses - those who in their own right in the past held positions of significance in their society - and I have a sense of what the Somali people want me to tell the world.

"And by the world I don’t mean some distant source. I mean each of us. Yes, the United Nations and other international agencies. Yes, governments and collective governments such as the EC, and all of us."

In her Book, A Voice for Somalia, Mrs Robinson expressed her feelings in the following words: "I felt shamed by what I saw, shamed, shamed, on behalf of the European World and the American World and the developed world generally. What are we doing that we have not got greater conscience for it?

"I wanted to say this to you, not in a structured and prepared way because I have been asked to do something very difficult. I have
been asked to be a voice for a very likeable people.

"They call themselves the Irish of Africa and I certainly found them a very likeable, dignified and very resourceful people. They want to help themselves."

When I received a copy of the book from the Ambassador of Ireland in New Delhi, Margaret Hennessy I read it immediately. I was deeply touched by the gesture that a European President coming all the way from Ireland to see famine stricken and dying people, mixing with them and then talking for them. I was deeply touched by the sentiments she expressed in the book:

"When we left Nairobi and took the long flight to Paris, I lay back in the plane, closed my eyes and wept quietly for a long time. I felt it was right to weep because I was grieving for the pain of a whole people who had so little quality of life, and for many, many children who had such a short life."

From Somalia, the President of Ireland went to the United Nations to report to the Secretary General on her visit and immediately after her return home, Mary Robinson, sent a letter to the Heads of State of the United Nations’ Security Council, the European Community and the Council of Europe as well as to the Heads of States of the countries she visited, in which she said:

"The scale of death and misery in the area is almost beyond belief and the degradation and humiliation that has been visited on the Somali people diminishes all of us as human beings."
Many thousands are dying each week and millions are at grave risk. The international community has to assume responsibility for the immediate adoption of the measures required to cope with this catastrophe.

"During my visit I witnessed the heroic work of the aid agencies and the remarkable impact of their feeding programmes. Yet that is not enough and the deaths continue daily. The amount of food and relief supplies reaching Somalia is seriously inadequate and security for humanitarian assistance is desperately needed.

"The horrific scenes of starvation are not confined to Somalia. In Mozambique and other parts of Southern Africa, drought and civil war have resulted in serious food shortages and there is now a very real risk of famine in the coming months. The international community must take urgent measures to ensure that adequate resources are provided to save these people. It is vitally important, I believe, now that we have emerged from two generations of Cold War, that the World should develop the capacity to respond to such dreadful situations with effective international action.

"Because my own visit was to Somalia and because of the appalling nature of what I found there, you will understand that that country in particular is the focus of my attention. I believe strongly that the international community has the resources to save the people of Somalia and that those resources must be applied in sufficient quantity and without de-
lay so that many more deaths will be prevented and the tragedy which is striking a whole people will be averted.

Many International celebrities visited Somalia during the year of 1992. In September, Actress (late) Audry Hepburn of the United States, a goodwill Ambassador for UNICEF (United Nations Children’s Fund) paid a visit to Somalia. In November, the Italian Actress Sophia Loren, a goodwill Ambassador for UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) visited the country. Both toured various parts of the country where the people had been seriously affected by the famine.

Another very important, exceptional personality who visited Somalia was the former Heavy Weight Boxing Champion, Ridick Bowe. He gave a healing punch to the Somali people, making a generous donation of a million US Dollars. His individual donation was equal to the contribution of OPEC, the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries which donated a million US Dollars to the Somalia relief fund.  

The former Heavy Weight Boxing Champion also toured different affected areas and comforted the famine stricken people. The Somali nation is beholden to him for his compassionate attitude and assistance in its time of need.

In Mogadishu we say:
"Grazie ayaa la yiraah,
ninkii kuu gar-gaaro, gaal iyoone islaam"
(Grazie [is Italian, thank you])

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It must be said thank you
To the person who helps you
Non-Muslim and Muslim"

We also say:
"Jiso waa la gudaa,
Haddii aad gudi karin,
waal la sheegaa."
(A good gesture is reciprocated,
If it cannot be reciprocated (due to lack of
possibility) it should be publicly acknowledged.

And, under the prevailing conditions I have no
other option but to record our gratitude for the gener-
osity of the world community towards my country.
The following is the list of the contributions made to
the Somalia Relief Fund in response to the UN De-
partment of Humanitarian Affairs’ appeal for the
Special Emergency Programme for the Horn of Af-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the Country</th>
<th>Contribution made until January 1993 in US$</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>5,563,903</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>2,327,048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>12,125,152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>6,799,125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>10,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>3,840,654</td>
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<tr>
<td>E E C</td>
<td>58,621,238</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>736,695</td>
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<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>6,298,767</td>
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<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>13,643,997</td>
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<tr>
<td>Iceland</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
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</table>
Italy 16,614,297
Japan 13,400,000
Libya 1,864,597
Luxembourg 1,015,153
Morocco 662,651
Netherlands 30,333,672
Nigeria 622,369
Norway 3,563,631
OPEC 1,000,000
Qatar 252,544
Republic of Korea 80,000
Saudi Arabia 1,278,658
Spain 680,000
Sudan 6,930,693
Sweden 4,364,788
Switzerland 134,196
Turkey 150,000
United Kingdom 29,894,040
USA 82,860,406

Sub-total 307,105,105
Grand-total* 335,268,591

* including international agencies, etc.

This is how the world community rushed to rescue and alleviate the sufferings of our people. These contributions consisted of both cash and kind. Many prominent persons and leaders from all over the world visited our country to express their solidarity and appealed for help on our behalf. The world community responded positively and flooded Somalia with food and medicine. According to reports in international media some of our own people have been creating difficulties to the distribution of food to the needy population. There have been reports of
attacks on international agencies, convoys engaged in the humanitarian relief operation. The condition of the people has worsened due to civil war between the factions fighting for supremacy.


"Like the rest of the international donor community, the EC has been giving urgent attention to the increasingly serious situation in Somalia, where a combination of drought, famine, war and anarchy has created a human disaster on a scale unprecedented even in that long-suffering part of the world.

"Rampant incidents of starvation and disease have gripped people even in the camps for refugees and displaced persons. At the beginning of September 2000 people a day were said to be dying of starvation in the capital, Mogadishu, alone. Mohamed Sahnoun, Special Envoy of the UN to Somalia said that one third of the population of 4.5 million were likely to starve to death before the end of the year."

On 3 December 1992, the United Nations’ Security Council passed, by unanimous vote, Resolution 794 (1992), which in its paragraph 10 says “Acting under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, AUTHORIZES the Secretary-General and Member States cooperating to implement the offer referred to in paragraph 8 above to use all necessary means to establish as soon as possible a secure environment for humanitarian relief operations in Somalia.”
Paragraph 8 of the above quoted Resolution reads:

"Welcomes the offer by a Member State described in the Secretary-General’s letter of 29 November 1992 to the Council (S/24868) concerning the establishment of an operation to create such a secure environment."

On 9 December 1992 a Unified Task Force headed by the US command, was deployed in Mogadishu “to establish in Somalia a secure environment for urgent humanitarian assistance”. Within weeks, the United States forces were joined by military units from Australia, Belgium, Botswana, Canada, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, India, Italy, Kuwait, Morocco, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, Tunisia, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom and Zimbabwe.1

Talking to the American people, former U.S. President, George Bush said:

"Every American has seen the shocking image from Somalia. The scope of suffering there is hard to imagine. Already, over a quarter million people, as many people as live in Buffalo, New York, have died in the Somali famine. In the months ahead five times that number, one and a half million people could starve to death."

Bush also said:

"There is no government in Somalia. Law and order have broken down—anarchy prevails."

"These, and other American forces will assist in Operation Restore Hope”, the former U.S.

President Bush added:

"The People of Somalia, especially the children of Somalia, need our help. We are able to ease their suffering. We must help them live. We must give them hope. America must act."

Addressing the Somali people, George Bush said:

"To the people of Somalia I promise this: We do not plan to dictate political outcomes. We respect your sovereignty and independence. Based on my conversations with other coalition leaders, I can state with confidence: We come to your country for one reason only, to enable the starving to be fed."

However, the journal Arab Oil and Gas quoting The Los Angeles Times said on 16 February 1993:

"US intervention in Somalia could have been prompted in part by former President Bush's determination to protect the interests of US firms. These allegations have been dismissed as ridiculous in US Oil circles."

Similarly, a special report OIL and GAS Journal dated 2 April 1993 said:

"Geologists have been speculating about the possibility of oil in Somalia since the last century, but it took the US military Operation Restore Hope to bring this possibility to popular attention. The widespread notion that US troops were sent to Somalia to protect the interests of US Oil companies, and their supposed huge oil finds, has been treated with amused derision in oil industry circles."

"Several US oil firms—Conoco Inc., Amoco
Corporation, Chevron Corporation and Philips Petroleum Company—hold extensive concessions in Somalia and hope to be able to resume exploration activities following US military intervention in that country. The concessions were awarded by the Somali Government in the final years of the Siad Barre regime, but could not be developed because of the civil war that followed the fall of the former President, says the Los Angles Times, which has obtained a number of documents on the awarding of these concessions in the late 1980s. The US daily adds that these companies are the best placed to develop Somalia’s oil reserves and the Conoco, a subsidiary of the Du Pont Chemical Group, had progressed furthest with its exploration activities in the centre and north of the country.¹

The Journal added:

"According to other sources, Conoco had drilled two wells in Block 28 and is thought to have discovered commercial reserves. The company, which has kept an office in the capital, Mogadishu, had also begun work on three other blocks in the north of the country. Philips, Amoco and Chevron are reported to have declared force majeur to suspend their activities because of the civil war, but have held on to their rights for the areas awarded to them."

"Non-US firms such as Agip, a subsidiary of Italy’s ENI, and more particularly Interna-

¹ Arab Oil and Gas, 16 February 1993, page 35.
tional Petroleum Corporation, which has wide interests in the region, are also license holders in Somalia. In 1986 IPC acquired a 66.67% stake in onshore Blocks 35 and 36 (total area: 23,000 sq.km.) along the Gulf of Aden in the north of the country, east of the city of Berbera. The remaining 33.33% interest was held by Gulfstream Resources Canada Ltd.", the journal said.

We say: Behind rumours there are always some truth.

Is it not a shame, with all the wealth we have in our soil, that our people die of hunger and disease? Are we not ashamed of being incapable of creating a suitable environment for the exploitation and development of these resources so that our people can enjoy a better life?

In addition to what is reported above, we also have other very important resources, namely agriculture, livestock and marine resources which unfortunately, like everything else in the country, have been mismanaged and misused.

Dr. Boutros Boutros Ghali, UN Secretary General, worked hard to convince the world community to the extent of embarrassing world leaders, when he said that they were concentrating on the Bosnian conflict which Dr. Boutros described as a "rich man's war" to turn their attention to Somalia, where thousands of people were dying of hunger and civil war.

The UN Secretary General’s dream was to involve the world community, especially the United States of America, Europe and possibly Saudi Arabia, to help in rebuilding the war-torn Somalia on the pattern of

the famous Marshall Plan which helped Europe recover from the devastation of World War II, although our recovery would need less than half of what was spent on the reconstruction of Western Europe.

On 5 June 1947, the then U.S. Secretary of State, George Marshall, speaking before the Graduation Class of Harvard University said:

"The United States should do whatever it is able to do to assist in the return of normal economic health in the world, without which there can be no political stability and no assured peace."

"Our policy is directed not against any country or doctrine, but against poverty, desperation and chaos." The Marshall Plan was implemented between 1948 and 1952 and the United States gave 13,000 million dollars in aid. "It was a comprehensive plan of U.S. assistance to Europe, conceived by Marshall and developed by U.S. and European leaders."  

The plan for Somalia’s recovery was conceived by the Secretary General of the United Nations, Dr. Boutros Boutros Ghali, as a model that the world community could be proud of having participated in its development, in the post Cold War period.

In his report (S/25354 dated 3 March 1993) to the Security Council, the Secretary General pointed out:

"The cost of restoring Somalia as a nation and society will be enormous. It will take many years even to reach pre-war levels. As prospects for peace and stability improve, the international community will undoubtedly be

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1. Article by Paul Malamud, USIA Staff writer dated 31.5.1994
called upon to assist the people of Somalia in supporting long-term national reconstruction and development. In the interim, much can be done immediately through the joint efforts of the international community and the Somali people. The main objective of the 1993 programme is thus to set the stage for such initiatives by enhancing the absorptive capacity of Somalia's human and institutional resources."

Our crisis coincided with other major crises in the world where the international community's attention was needed. The crisis in former Yugoslavia and the former Soviet Union also required the world's attention. Afghanistan and Liberia which were facing more or less similar situations as Somalia also needed the world's attention.

After the transfer of military command from UNITAF (United Task Force) to UNOSOM (United Nations Operation in Somalia) on 4 May 1993, the contingents of countries participating in the operation reached Somalia on 31 July 1993.

UNOSOM contingents were from Australia, Bangladesh, Belgium, Botswana, Canada, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, India, Italy, Kuwait, Malaysia, Morocco, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Republic of Korea, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, Tunisia, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, the United States and Zimbabwe as well as from Ireland, Nepal, Uganda and Zambia.¹

According to his statement made on 21 July 1993 to the Economic and Social Council, Jan Eliasson, the Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs said, "approximately US $1.5 billion will be spent on

military operations in Somalia over a period of 12 months". "In other words", he added, "due to the security needs, the international community is spending ten dollars on military protection for every dollar of humanitarian assistance in Somalia."

Eliasson also told the Economic and Social Council:

"There is a further need for substantial support to rehabilitate schools at all levels and for the production of text books and other materials. As requested by General Assembly Resolution 47/160, a scholarship programme for Somali University students to complete their studies abroad is being established."

On the same subject, the League of Arab States too had said that it has "established scholarships for Somali students in Research and Arab Studies Institutes".

Just before the adoption of Security Resolution 814 on 26 March 1993, US Ambassador to the United Nations, Madeleine Albright, said in the Council:

"By adopting this draft Resolution, we will embark on an unprecedented enterprise aimed at nothing less than the restoration of an entire country as a proud, functioning and viable member of the community of nations. This is an historic undertaking. We are excited to join it and we will vigorously support it. At the same time, we are soberly conscious of the fact that this draft Resolution engages the world community to provide the most comprehensive assistance ever given to any country, but do so with few lessons and no models to guide our path."

ATTEMPTS TO END
THE CRISIS

The Somali nation has suffered for over thirty years in one form or another. During thirty years of our independence we seem to have sowed the seeds of hatred among ourselves. The corrupt regimes that came to power during the years after independence only created division, malpractice and nepotism that facilitated the military coup led by Mohamed Siad Barre, in 1969. For more than two decades the military regime, instead of bringing the people together and creating an atmosphere of brotherhood and love, only deepened the divisions among the people. As in 1969, the people felt disgusted with the regime of Siad Barre, and thought that any change would be for better. The Siad Barre regime was toppled. But what after his fall?

The following poem was composed by Ahmed Ismail Diriye (Qaasim) during the early sixties complaining about the lack of national feeling of the first regime that replaced the UN Trusteeship in the South and the British Colonial Administration in the North. It is valid for all the regimes that have come to power in the country. It was recited by Nuh Ahmed Osman.
Qasim said:

"Dembi ku hadli maaye ma arag Dawladaan rabay;
Isma doorin gaalkaan diray iyo daarta kii galay;
Dusha midabka Somaali baad dugulka moodaa;
Misna laguma diirsadee galbiqii waa dirkii Carol"

Following is my own translation of the above lines:

1. I would not be guilty if I say, I have not seen the Government that I hoped for;
2. There is no difference between the foreigner (the colonialist) that I removed and the one who occupied his place.
3. In appearance he looks like a Somali;
4. But, he brought no betterment as his heart (i.e., behaviour or action) is similar to that of Carol. (Carol was Chief Secretary of the Administration in the former British Protectorate)

At this time, in July 1996, there is no widely accepted Government in the country and those who removed the regime of General Mohamed Siad Barre are busy fighting against each other and failed to prove they are better than the regime they had replaced.

Soon after the American troops arrived in Somalia, the United States Special Envoy, Ambassador Robert Oakley organised a meeting at the American Embassy premises to reconcile the two main leaders of the two factions of the United Somali Congress (USC), Ali Mahdi Mohamed and General Mohamed Farah Aidid on 11 December 1992.

After long and bitter fighting between the two
rival men, a cease-fire document was signed remarkably soon after embracing each other and shaking hands in the presence of their respective delegations and in front of television cameras that went out to the whole world.

A joint communique read to the Press said that the two leaders agreed upon the following points:

1. An immediate cease-fire;
2. Withdrawal of militiamen from Mogadishu;
3. A ban on hostile propaganda by their groups;
4. The urgent need for a "Unity Committee" to reconvene;
5. An appeal to all Somalis to end hostilities; and
6. The dismantling of the "green line" dividing Mogadishu.

The agreement reached during such a short meeting was commented on in two different ways. One was that the two were tired of fighting, therefore, they were ready to be reconciled, and they only wished to have someone to take the initiative to bring them together. The other comment was, why had they fought and destroyed so much if it needed only one meeting to solve their differences?

The former comment was positive while the latter was negative. But for us, whatever the case, any opportunity to solve the differences among the Somalis was a welcome step and a matter of encouragement. However, the Egyptian Ambassador in Mogadishu Fathi Hassan criticised the two leaders for having accepted the American Envoy’s mediation.

As quoted by Newsweek, the Egyptian diplomat said: "Only the United States has the leverage."
The Ambassador commented:

"When Oakley asked Ali Mahdi and Aidid to come to the Embassy, they came to the Embassy. He said: Shake hands, so they shook hands. Kiss each other, and they kissed each other. If he had said, "Do a handstand", they would have done that too."

That statement was nasty and unwarranted. But if he (the Egyptian Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary) meant that what Ali Mahdi and Aidid had done, i.e. accepting to be reconciled by America, was, according to him, shameful, cheap and humiliating, then what did he think when his President, the late Anwar Sadat was called by the American President Jimmy Carter to Washington D.C. and told to meet and shake hands with the enemy of all Arab and Muslim nations, Menachem Begin and then told to sign the Camp David Agreement in 1979?

What Ali Mahdi and Aidid did was, in fact, exactly similar to Egyptian policy towards the USA and Israel, which is practiced by Egypt until today. So, why did he choose to use such harsh words against the Somali leaders? As an Egyptian senior diplomat, the Ambassador knew better than anyone else, the value of American involvement in such a process. Or, perhaps, the Egyptian representative had himself wanted to play the role of the US, which was denied to him. Even if he missed that chance, as a diplomat, the Ambassador should have swallowed his feelings or anger and wished them and the Somali nation "Best of Luck". Even a superficial gesture would have done.

His statement produced a negative outcome and some people burned the national flag of Egypt in the streets of Mogadishu. Such an incident would not have happened if the Egyptian diplomat had been more diplomatic. For that incident, the Egyptian authorities should only blame the person they sent to Somalia to protect their country’s interest, for his most undiplomatic utterance and not make the Somalis “pay the price for it” as a revenge.

The Agreement itself did not work and the highly publicized joint communique signed by the leaders was just black ink on white paper. The reason for the failure was simple. Whether or not they discussed things privately during the negotiations, the final agreement did not take into consideration the heart of the matters, the power struggle. It was clear that as long as Ali Mahdi claimed to be Interim President, the hostilities and the status quo would continue.

According to Prof. Ahmed Ismail Samatar,

"The first indication that trouble was on the horizon came when Ali Mahdi Mohamed was challenged by other leaders of the USC - particularly the Chairman, General Mohamed Farah Aideed. Foremost of Aideed’s arguments were (1) that Ali Mahdi Mohamed had violated the procedure of collective decision-making, and (2) that Aideed himself was more deserving of the Presidency because he was the one commanding the fighters who shed plenty of blood to defeat Siad Barre’s regime."  

General Aidid himself said,

"I succeeded in uniting SNM, USC and SPM, and the treaty of their unity was signed on 2 October 1990, and consequently common political and military actions were implemented. On 26 January 1991, we were successful in removing Siad Barre and his dictatorial regime by capturing Mogadishu."¹

As long as this crucial matter remains in the minds of those who are fighting for power, and who fear not to get support at the conference table, the conflict will continue to exist. As we do not have the word "compromise" in our dictionary, it is important for the sake of the national interest, to find a broad-based formula that can harmonize the feelings and the interests of all sections of the society. If there is no hero who can sacrifice his interest for the sake of the nation, there must at least be someone who accepts power-sharing system. If everyone sticks to his own gun the Nation will continue to suffer.

Although his efforts in Mogadishu had failed to bear fruit, U.S. Ambassador Robert Oakley was honoured by the Pentagon with the Defence Medal, "the highest honour reserved for a civilian non-defense department employee", for his services as the President’s special envoy to Somalia, during "Operation Restore Hope".

The Secretary-General of the United Nations, Dr. Boutros Ghali, tried to make the operation a UN one so that the credit went to the world organisation. But when he realized that the United States was insisting

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¹ Mahamed Farah Avidid and his Vision of Somalia, Ed. by Satya Pal Ruhela, New Deli, 1994, p. 169
that if its forces were to be involved it should only be under a U.S. Commander, Dr. Ghali had no other option but to accept America marginalizing the world body, thus compromising the prestige of the UN and his own. But he also knew that America was the only country that could provide the necessary means to deal with the desperate situation. Apparently, the Secretary-General felt that if this formula could serve the main purpose, i.e., to help the Somalis, it would be practicable for them to do it, although his critics would say: "He compromised the UN prestige."

While mentioning the "offer by the United States to organise and lead the operation", at the Security Council the Secretary-General, said he "would advise the Council and those members taking part in the Operation that they find a way to recognise the Security Council’s legitimate interest in the manner in which it was carried out."

It was the then Acting Secretary of State, Lawrence Eagleberger who indicated in a letter to the Secretary-General of the UN,

"that should the Security Council decide to authorize Member States to ensure the delivery of relief supplies, the United States would be ready to take the lead in organizing and commanding such an operation, in which a number of other Member States also participate."

This was not the first time and it will not be the last that the UN will, with its resolutions, give leverage to the big powers, which will act in the name of international community.

Similar to the “United Command” organised for Somalia in 1992, a unified command was created as early as in 1950 for the Korean situation. Also at that time, it was the United States that spearheaded the operation. In the Resolution of 7 July 1950, the United States was openly mentioned by name, and the participating countries were requested that their military forces and other assistance be made available to “a unified command under the United States”.

In Resolution 794 (1992) of 3 December 1992, regarding the creation and operation of the unified command for Somalia, the United States which offered to command, was only referred to as “a Member State”, although its name was mentioned in an earlier letter dated 29 November which the Secretary-General submitted to the Security Council.

The two sides, the UN and the US, were quarrelling for the credit for assisting the Somali people to overcome the difficult situation. And we, the Somalis, failed to understand how best to make use of what the world community tried to do for us in terms of rehabilitation of the nation and reconstruction of the country. Almost one quarter of the UN Member States joined the forces that came to Somalia on the humanitarian mission. For the first time in their history, the German Government sent military personnel beyond the boundaries of the NATO countries.

Whether it was to fulfil its international responsibilities or for any other reason, the German Government sent its military personnel to Somalia against their own constitutional provisions, to serve in the UN operation. On 12 July 1994, the Federal Constitutional Court issued a decision that:
"... the Federal Republic of Germany may commit units of the German Armed Forces in operations of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and the Western European Union (WEU) to implement decisions of the Security Council of the United Nations (UN)".1

On 5 March 1993, the Secretary General nominated Admiral Jonathan Howe of the United States as his new Special Representative for Somalia. Before the Admiral two other UN Special Representatives were replaced: Ismat Kittani (Iraq) and Mohamed Sahnoun (Algeria). The latter had "resigned". The Secretary General also appointed Lieutenant General Cevik Bir of Turkey as Force Commander of UNOSOM II.

Following Resolution 794 (1992) of 3 December 1992, UNITAF had deployed about 37,000 troops in Somalia (South). The Secretary General indicated, "the presence and operations of UNITAF had a positive impact on the security situation in Somalia and on effective delivery of humanitarian assistance." He said:

"There was still no effective functioning of the Government in the country, no organized civil police force and no disciplined national armed force. The security threat to the personnel of the United Nations and its agencies, UNITAF, ICRC, and NGOs was still high in some areas of Mogadishu and other places in Somalia. Moreover, there was no deployment of UNITAF or UNOSOM troops to the north-east and

north-west, or along the Kenyan-Somali border, where security continued to be a matter of grave concern.”

Dr. Boutros Ghali’s relations with the Americans turned sour when the two sides disputed over the disarmament of the warring factions in the country. On 14 December 1992, Boutros Ghali was quoted as saying that he had sent a letter to the US President, George Bush, nearly two weeks earlier, saying that the American role should include disarmament of the warring factions. This was disputed by Lt. General Robert B. Johnson, Commander of the U.S. forces in Somalia who told reporters on 14 December 1992 that his mission was clearly delineated: “Get food safely to the hungry”.¹

That would have been a difficult job for anyone, any way. To disarm the Somalis is like collecting water in a sieve. Heavy guns, small guns and all other kinds of arms including grenades are spread all over the country and most of their holders claim that they need them for self-defence. Besides, there are also hundreds of freelance gunmen who possess guns and are under no one’s control. Unless a complete and full disarmament is effected and particularly voluntarily, it is hard to see restoration of peaceful co-existence among the various groups whose fear of each other is very deep. The hatred among those who fight each other for power is as abundant as the guns they possess. When the US/UN started buying the guns or exchanging them for food only a few arms were delivered and when the warring factions were asked to hand over their guns to the UN or keep them

¹ Associated Press, Mogadishu, 14 December 1992
in secure warehouses, there was no response. The bulk of the heavy guns was hidden outside the capital. Unless a voluntary, fear-free situation is created among the Somalis themselves, it is hard for any outsider to succeed in achieving a positive result. It is necessary and important that the warring factions understand that killing would not solve the problem. The only way to solve the problem is by talking to each other, either under the trees or at conference tables.

The budgetary, the administrative control and the military command of UNITAF was transferred to UNOSOM under Administrator Howe, the Special Representative of the Secretary General and Turkish General Cevik Bir, in early May 1993.

Despite Resolutions 814 of 26 March 1993 which expanded the size and mandate of UNOSOM, the Americans were still playing an important role in the Operation and were almost dictating what steps were needed to meet the situation.
I arrived at Addis Ababa airport by an Ethiopian Airlines flight from Bombay, India on Saturday, 13 March 1993, to observe the proceedings of the first session of the Conference of National Reconciliation in Somalia which was scheduled to be held on 15 March 1993. Like me, there were many other observers, both from Somalia and from other parts of the world, who came to see some progress at this important conference. We all hoped that the Conference would at least put an end to the senseless killing and destruction in Somalia and would pave the way for resolving the internecine conflict through dialogue and negotiation. The host country Ethiopia, had made excellent preparations for holding the conference. The venue of the conference was Africa Hall around which the organisers had made foolproof security arrangements.

The various groups and factions participating in this conference had already met in January 1993 at an informal preparatory meeting on National Reconciliation sponsored by the United Nations. Convened by the UN Secretary General Dr. Boutros Ghali, the Informal Preparatory Meeting was held in Addis Ababa from 4 to 15 January 1993. It was
attended by the following 14 groups:

1. Somali Africans Muki Organization (SAMO)
   Mr. Mohamed Ramadan Arbow, Chairman
2. Somali Democratic Alliance (SDA)
   Mr. Mohamed Farah Abdullahi, Chairman
3. Somali Democratic Movement (SDM)
   Mr. Abdi Muse Mayo, Chairman
4. Somali Democratic Movement (SDM-SNA)
   Col. Mohamed Nur Aliyou, Chairman
5. Somali National Democratic Union (SNDU)
   Mr. Ali Ismael Abdi, Chairman
6. Somali National Front (SNF)
   General Omar Hagi Mohamed Hersi, Chairman
7. Somali National Union (SNU)
   Dr. Mohamed Ragis Mohamed, Chairman
8. Somali Patriotic Movement (SPM)
   General Aden Abdillahi Noor, Chairman
9. Somali Patriotic Movement (SPM-SNA)
   Col. Ahmed Omar Jess, Chairman
10. Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF)
    General Mohamed Abshir Muuse, Chairman
11. Southern Somali National Movement (SSNM/SNA)
    Col. Abdi Warsame Isaaq, Chairman
12. United Somali Congress (USC-SNA)
    General Mohamed Farah Aidid, Chairman
13. United Somali Congress (USC)
    Mr. Mohamed Qanyare Afrah, Chairman
14. United Somali Front (USF)
   Mr Abdurahman Dualeh Ali, Chairman

15. United Somali Party (USP)
   Mr Mohamed Abdi Hashi, Chairman

After prolonged deliberation, the informal meeting of January 1993 agreed on the following points:

1. The convening of a National Reconciliation Conference in Addis Ababa on 15 March 1993;

2. The declaration of an immediate and binding cease-fire in all parts of the country under the control of the concerned warring factions, subject to para (a) of page 2;

3. The immediate cessation of all hostile propaganda against each other and the creation of an atmosphere conducive to reconciliation and peace;

4. The United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM), in consultation with the relevant regional and sub-regional organisations will be responsible for the logistical preparations of the National Reconciliation Conference;

5. The establishment of further mechanisms for the continuation of free dialogue amongst all political factions and leaders in Somalia in preparation for the National Reconciliation Conference;

6. To continue and enhance our full and unrestrained cooperation with all international organisations working inside and outside Somalia to distribute humanitarian relief to our people;

7. To commit ourselves, without reservation, to facilitating the free movement of Somali people throughout the entire country as a measure of confidence-building before the National
The participants of the Informal Meeting also agreed to surrender their weapons to a cease-fire monitoring group. The main points of this agreement were as follows:

1. **Disarmament**
   1.1 All heavy weaponry under the control of political movements shall be handed over to a cease-fire monitoring group for safe-keeping until such time as a legitimate Somali Government can take them over. The process shall commence immediately and be completed in March 1993.

   1.2 The militia of all political movements shall encamp in appropriate areas outside major towns where the encampment will not pose difficulties for peace. The encamped militia shall be disarmed following a process which will commence as soon as possible. This action shall be carried out simultaneously throughout Somalia. The international community will be requested to provide the encamped militia with upkeep.

   1.3 The future status of the encamped militia shall be decided at the time of the final political settlement in Somalia. Meanwhile, the international community will be requested to assist in training them for civilian skills in preparation for possible demobilization.

   1.4 All other armed elements, including bandits, shall be disarmed immediately and assisted through rehabilitation and integration into civil society.

2. **Cease-Fire Monitoring Group**

   2.1 A cease-fire monitoring group comprising UNITAF/UN troops shall be established
immediately. There shall also be a committee composed of representatives of the warring factions to inter-locate with the monitoring group and observe the implementation of the agreement by UNITAF/UN troops.

3. All sides agree in principle that properties unlawfully taken during the fighting shall be returned to the lawful owners. This shall be implemented as and when the situation allows.

4. The POWs shall be freed and handed over to the ICRC and/or UNITAF. This process shall commence immediately and be completed by 1 March 1993.

After the conclusion of the above agreement the participants also agreed on January 8, 1993 to take the following steps:

a) The establishment of the modalities for implementing the cease-fire amongst all warring parties and the creation of a mechanism for disarmament;

b) The agenda of the National Reconciliation Conference;

c) The criteria for participation at the National Reconciliation Conference.

The Informal Preparatory Meeting was a very important gathering of the political and warring factions and paved the way for the National Reconciliation Conference. But without the personal efforts of Dr Boutros Ghali, it would have been extremely difficult to bring the different factions to the negotiating table.

Even before his appointment as Secretary General of the United nations, Dr Ghali, as Deputy Minister
for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Egypt, had been taking serious interest in promoting national reconciliation in Somalia. Shortly before he was elected Secretary General of the United Nations, Boutros Ghali had paid a visit to India. I met him briefly at a reception given in his honour by the Egyptian Ambassador in New Delhi, Adel El Gazzar. We talked about Somalia. I thanked him for his endeavours in helping us to resolve our problems. He told me, during our conversation, that he had met a large number of Somalis who had discussed with him the difficulties that the Somali people were facing. He impressed upon them the need to abandon the path of violence and work for national reconciliation through peaceful means.

However, there was also some negative gossip and criticism about him because of his past relations with the former regime of Mohamed Siad Barre. But, undaunted by the criticism, propaganda and obstinacy of some of the factions involved in the conflicts, Boutros Ghali has succeeded in bringing the warring factions to the negotiating table. Even during Siad Barre’s time, Boutros Ghali was one of the mediators who wanted to settle the differences between Siad’s regime and his opponents through dialogue. But some movements considered Egypt as too friendly to Siad Barre, and interpreted its mediation as support to the regime.

Like many parts of the third world, countries afflicted with this type of conflict i.e., opposition against the regime and vice versa, often external power(s), regional or international organisations extend their good offices to help reconcile the differences. And even if some governments support the opposition they can hardly say or demonstrate
openly unless there is a conflict between the two governments, as we had with Ethiopia until the fall of the regime of Mengistu H. Mariam. So Egypt, like many other countries maintained its relations with the incumbent regime.

In this case, Italy and Egypt were trying to help resolve the differences between Siad Barre’s regime and his opponents.

The Italian writer Angelo Del Boca in his book, *Una sconfitta dell’intelligenza* writes: “Vladimiro Odinzov was told in confidence by one of the signatories of the ‘Mainfesto’ that ‘the idea that Italy along with Egypt could play the role of mediators is wrong and it will not succeed.’”

The late Siad Barre himself was not very enthusiastic about the meeting with his opponents. Therefore, he decided to arrest the delegates who were supposed to go to Cairo for an encounter between his representatives and the opposition due to be held there in December 1990.

Towards the end of his rule, Mohamed Siad Barre had lost the support of all his allies. Even his closest “friends” who took advantage from his power, had abandoned him. Only a few of his relatives and loyal lieutenants remained with him in the palace, “Madaxtooyada”. Despite pressure from all quarters, he was unwilling to quit. Some people quoted him as saying:” I took power with gun. Only with gun can it be taken from me.” He was very rigid and in the end became intransigent and uncompromising, more than ever before.

One third of his 21 year-rule could be described as successful, although some people might argue about that, as he enhanced the country’s image abroad. Somalia, since its independence, was a strong
supporter of the liberation movements in Africa, in all aspects, and in some cases more than those countries which talked loudly. Siad Barre continued that policy. Internally, one of his most important achievements was the decision to adopt a script for the Somali language. On 21 October 1972, as President of the Supreme Revolutionary Council, the late Mohamed Siad announced to the nation that the Revolutionary Government had chosen the Latin alphabet, with some modifications, as the official script for writing the Somali language.

The worse of his many mistakes was that he had become too proud. As we say in Somali “Wuu Ismahdiyey”. He felt that he was the only one who could run the country, besides being misled by his own close advisors.

The people would have forgiven him for whatever mistakes he has made, if he had retired immediately after Somalia lost the war with Ethiopia over the Ogaden in 1978. He did not resign and in 1978 a group of Army officers attempted to topple his regime and his crisis deepened. There was another occasion for him to quit. That was in 1986 when in a car accident on 23 May 1986 Siad was seriously injured and rushed to Saudi Arabia for medical treatment, due to lack of medical facilities in his own country after 17 years of his rule. As the accident damaged his mental and physical condition, he could easily have relinquished power for health reason. And the people would have sympathized with him.

At this moment, the country was already in deep turmoil, politically, economically and socially. But the people could still mend the cracks to save the country from collapsing. However, Siad as a very difficult person insisted that he would not leave the
throne for any one else. There was yet another occasion in 1990 when a group of politicians, elders, businessmen and intellectuals sent him a Manifesto in which they asked him to resign. He rejected the call and refused the appeals from different corners, inside the country and from different parts of the world.

As the base of the opposition in the North, the SNM (Somali National Movement) was in Hargeisa, the capital of former British Somaliland, the late Mohamed Siad ordered air bombardment of the whole city in 1988, killing an unknown number of people and indiscriminately destroying public and private properties.

Siad Barre was not an exception. Most dictators, especially in the Third World, have behaved in similar fashion. Once they grab power, only God or the gun can take it away from them.

Like other dictators he used every conceivable means, fair or foul, to remain in power. He had no mercy for his opponents, did not tolerate any dissent and humiliated common men by denying them basic human rights.

For instance, take Malawi's former President Kamuzu Hastings Banda, more than 90 years old has ruled his country for over 30 years. He has been respected as an elder statesman of an important country in Africa. But the lust for power made him impervious and he did not want to relinquish politics. At last, in 1994 the strong pressure from inside the country and outside forced him to accept elections which finally stripped the power from his hand. Likewise, President Mobutu of Zaire has been in power for over 25 years. He too has been respected as an elder statesman of an important country in Africa.
By refusing to give up power to a democratically elected body, he is creating serious problems for his country that could be avoided. Instead of saying, “I have had enough and now it is time for youngsters to take the steering” he is clinging to the chair and refusing to heed the advice of his good friends like the Americans, the Belgians and the French to relinquish power. He accuses them of interference in the internal affairs of his country. It is said that Mobutu has castles in France, Belgium, Portugal and who knows where else. It is said that he is one of the richest persons in the world. What else does he want? Why does he want to see his own country devastated by tribal and other conflicts? Like an elderly father of the Nation why does he not rest and pray for the prosperity of his country?

Like Siad Barre, Mobutu is a greedy person and he is treading the same path as Siad Barre. His fate will not be different. After he was overthrown, Siad Barre fled to Kenya in April 1992 to seek asylum. However, some Kenyan politicians protested against his presence in their country. No country was willing to give him asylum. When he was in power foreign governments accorded him due honour and respect. But when he was removed from power and disgracefully thrown out of his own country, no one wanted him. Once he had served in the Italian Police as ‘Carabiniere’ and had maintained warm relations with Italy. But after he was deposed, Italy too refused him even an entry visa. Similarly, the President of United Arab Emirates Shaikh Zayed Bin Sultan al Nahyan expressed his inability to give him shelter. Egypt, where some opposition groups claimed to have been supporters of Siad, also refused him an entry permit. I wonder whether he dared to approach the
United States. Ultimately, he found refuge in Nigeria, thanks to the generous offer of the then President Ibrahim Babangida who said, “Let him come to Nigeria until he gets somewhere else to go”. Siad Barre arrived in Nigeria on 17 May 1992.

After being president for 21 years (October 1969 - January 1991) of the Republic of Somalia, Siad could not get an entry visa to the country of his choice. The moral of the story is, respect is due to the people and not to the individual and a leader is respected only as long as he enjoys his people’s confidence. After two and half years in exile, Siad died in Nigeria on 1 January 1995. When they were in power, they had friends, but when they were toppled no one wanted to host them. Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, Shah of Iran who, carried the title of Shahenshah (the King of Kings) wandered from country to country. His best friends closed their doors upon him. He could not live even in the country where he had properties. In the end the former Shah of Iran did not even find a suitable place where he could die peacefully. Of all his old “allies”, Anwar Sadat, the then President of Egypt invited him to Cairo, where he died.

Similar or even worst fate befell the former President of the Philippines, Ferdinand Marcos. After he was overthrown he fled to the United States of America where he passed the final days of his life. For two years or so his dead body was not allowed to be brought back to his country for appropriate burial. Ultimately when his dead body was allowed to be flown back it reached Manila in the cargo compartment of an airline.

Democracy is an open game in politics. No one can say that it is all crystal clear. No, it has its own tricks which its participants play. But if one wins today and
becomes dictator he or she can be replaced in the next elections. In elections, ballots decide the winner and the loser and not bullets. It is not the best, but is better than the other systems.

In a democratic system, one can be elected and re-elected. But in the event of taking power by the barrel of the gun, the usurper of power never enjoys peace and tranquility as he is always afraid of being toppled by the same means. As it is said: “You can do everything with the bayonet, except sit on it.” It is also said “What you achieve by violence, you will need greater violence to maintain”. The former Somali dictator, Mohamed Siad Barre used to say,

“Waxaan ku qabsanay qori, qori baan ku ilaalinaynaa”. (“We took it [the power] by gun, we hold it by gun.”)

To avoid the creation of permanent ruling classes, it would be wise if some sort of limit could be applied on the tenures of the office of the President and the members of the Assemblies, in countries where elections take place. Of course, no one can dictate a political system in countries where autocratic rulers hold power. In the case of democratic countries, two five-year terms would be sufficient to allow a President and members of national assemblies to be elected to office.

What we have seen in Africa is a President changing the constitution of the country so that he can be re-elected as for many terms as he wishes. In some countries, mainly the so-called democratic countries there are members of assemblies, in one way or another, elected and re-elected since the 1940s until 1995.

Even if one party has the political ability to win
assembly seats in elections, their candidates’ tenures of office must be limited so that new blood can be injected into the party’s ranks and to avoid a group of people manipulating the power of the country to become life peers.

If anyone has held office for two terms and wishes to be re-elected, either as President or as member of parliament, he/she should do so only after a gap of two five-year terms, i.e. after ten years.

In our case, after fighting for about ten years, the opposition movements have succeeded in the war against the regime of Mohamed Siad Barre, who had sown the seeds of clanism and nepotism and set the people to fight each other.

Those who succeeded him in January 1991 also failed to deliver peace, stability and unity. At the outset the United Somali Congress which had removed Siad Barre, from the palace alienated the leaders of other movements by appointing Ali Mahdi Mohamed, as interim president of the Republic. Ali Mahdi Mohamed, a prominent businessman and former parliamentarian did not win the support and trust of all factions of the Somali political groups: the Somali National Movement (SNM), which had deposed the representative of the old regime in the Northern part of the country, felt enraged by the United Somali Congress’ unilateral action.

Both, as a matter of principle as well as on pragmatic grounds it would have been appropriate for the United Somali Congress to consult with the leaders of other movements. The right course would have been to constitute an ad hoc council pending the formation of a Transitional National Council, consisting of representatives of all the major and minor parties, groups, factions and movements. Only
such a Transitional National Council would have been competent to constitute an interim governing council, and to appoint committees for drafting a national constitution and an election commission. It is difficult to say whether the hasty action of the United Somali Congress was a deliberate pre-emptive move to usurp power or an ill-advised move which resulted in national disaster.

Feeling ignored, the reaction of the Somali National Movement was strong: it refused to recognise the government of Ali Mahdi and, in May 1991, it declared the independence of Somaliland.
THE ADDIS ABABA CONFERENCE

The National Reconciliation Conference held in Addis Ababa from 15 to 27 March 1993 was considered by many Somalis as the best encounter among the factions representing a cross-section of the Somali people. The masses in Somalia prayed for lasting solution to the crisis that has reduced the country to a rubble. It was the month of Ramadan, the Muslim Holy month, a month of piety, prayers, and peace. Besides representatives from various factions, religious persons, intellectuals, elders, women organisations and numerous Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and hundreds of others came to Addis Ababa to witness the outcome of the Conference. The organisers were expecting 250 participants but around 700 people came. All the main hotels and guest houses were humming with Somalis. As Ethiopia also hosts thousands of Somali refugees, Addis Ababa looked like a Somali city for the duration.

On 15 March 1993, the Conference on National Reconciliation in Somalia was inaugurated in the Africa Hall of the Economic Commission for Africa. It
was packed to capacity. Representatives from some Diplomatic Missions also attended the Conference as observers. Some of them were from donor countries which contributed to the funds for the rehabilitation of our country. The Conference was chaired by Ambassador Lansane Kouyate of Guinea, Deputy to the Special Representative of the Secretary General of the United Nations. The Ethiopian President was represented by Dr. Abdul Mejid Hussein, Minister for External Economic Cooperation. Also attending the opening ceremony were the Secretary General of the Organisation for African Unity, Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim, representatives from the Arab League, Organisation of the Islamic Conference and from the Non-Aligned Movement. It was reassuring to see so many important personalities sitting with us in the hall, all looking forward to a positive outcome for the Somali people, the victims of a civil war that had ravaged their country.

At the outset, the Chairman of the Conference, Ambassador Lansane Kouyate, inaugurated the Plenary Session with verses from the Holy Qur'an read by Shaikh Mohamed. The Shaikh read the following verses from Sura Al-Imran, S.3 A.103: In the name of Allah, Most Gracious Most Merciful:

103. And hold fast, all together, by the Rope Which Allah (stretches out for you), and be not divided Among yourselves; And remember with gratitude Allah’s favour on you; For ye were enemies And He joined your hearts In love, so that by His Grace
Ye became brethren;
And ye were on the brink
Of the Pit of Fire,
And He saved you from it.
Thus doth Allah make
His Signs clear to you:
That ye may be guided.

Then the Chairman asked the gathering to stand up and observe a minute of silence in memory of those Somalis who had lost their lives in the famine and the civil war. Recitation of the Sura from the Holy Qur'an and observance of a minute's silence were meant to soften the hearts of those whose agreement and reconciliation were necessary for the restoration of peace and stability in our country. Most of the main protagonists participating in the conference were those who were, directly or indirectly, involved in the political, economic, social and moral destruction of the nation. Neither in the Northern provinces nor in the Southern provinces of the country had emerged alternative leaders who could provide peace and stability to the nation.

Speaking on behalf of the President of Ethiopia, the Minister for External Economic Cooperation of the Transitional Government of Ethiopia, Dr. Abdul Mejid Hussein, who was very much involved in bringing the various Somali factional leaders to the Conference table, said:

"I would not be surprised if this conference were to be viewed, not by a few people, with a lot of skepticism. We cannot deny the fact that not enough has been done by our Somali brothers since the Informal Preparatory Meeting in January and pursuant to the
agreements entered into at that meeting. In this context, I wish to refer to what President Meles had said to my Somali brothers and sisters when he addressed the Preparatory Meeting on the 4th of January 1993. He said then that there is no lack of declarations, communiques and agreements among you, which are invariably breached before the ink they are written with dries up. What Somalia needs is a process of reconciliation in which all parties to an agreement fully honour it. The events that have transpired since January give us no reason to change our assessment in this regard and we view the lack of serious commitment to scrupulously abide by the agreements concluded on January 8th 1993 as a source of major disappointment. That is why our Somali brothers and sisters should not be surprised if this Conference were to be greeted with skepticism. The time is not yet late for all concerned to show the required level of commitment to help lay the foundation for a genuine process of national reconciliation in Somalia. It is also now the time for those who fail to comply with agreements entered into to be brought to account and to pay the necessary price for their breach of agreements that they have willingly accepted.

Dr. Abdul Mejid Hussein, himself of Somali origin, outlined a framework on how to deal with the Somali problem and with those who claim to be leaders.

“It is our firm conviction that there are few important guidelines which should be followed by all those who are engaged in the process of
helping the Somali people to bring about national reconciliation in their country,” he announced.

“The first guideline emphasised the need to take a firm and determined stand against those who fail to honour agreements concluded. Not only would this help to isolate those who represent obstacles to the process of national reconciliation but it would also enhance the credibility of those involved in Somalia as peacemakers. There should, therefore, be a real penalty for breaches of agreements in Somalia and the international community and all those concerned should be prepared to take necessary measures in this regard. The second guideline related to the need to base the efforts being made to bring about national reconciliation in Somalia on the wishes of the people of Somalia. In this, all attempts at the restoration of peace in Somalia that fail to accurately reflect the reality on the ground are bound to be a futile exercise”.

The Minister added:

“The process of national reconciliation in Somalia cannot be based on what ideally we feel should exist in the country. The problem in Somalia can be solved only on the basis of reconciliation and accommodation among those who at present command identifiable social bases.”

D. Abdul Mejid said further:

“The Transitional Government of Ethiopia
understands the frustrations of those engaged in this difficult task of bringing about national reconciliation in Somalia. But we are convinced that patience would have its rewards in this endeavour if it is combined with the necessary resolve to take punitive measures against and to isolate those Somali factions that are found in breach of understandings and agreements reached. Frustrations could easily lead those who are involved in Somalia to look for short-cuts which could easily be viewed by the people of Somalia as imposition of solutions from outside on their country.”

The Minister suggested that,

“It is, therefore, vital that the people of Somalia themselves take the lead in the search for the appropriate political solution to their problems and that the role of the international community be limited to creating the proper climate for the working out of such a solution.”

“This is,” the Minister added, “the third guideline which I feel should be followed in our attempt to help our Somali brothers and sisters to overcome the difficult problems their country is facing”.

Thus, the Minister offered guidelines to both the international community and to the Somali groups. Our problem has become a source of anxiety and concern to the international community, particularly to the neighbouring countries. Our case became like what the Somalis say:

“Nin aan tashan, wa loo taliyaa”.
(If a man does not decide for himself, others decide for him.)
On an earlier occasion, the President of Ethiopia, Meles Zenawi addressing the Second Coordination Meeting on Humanitarian Assistance for Somalia, held in Addis Ababa on 3-5 December 1992 had observed that:

“the problem in Somalia is first and foremost a regional problem. Whatever happens in Somalia, is bound, in one way or another, to affect the countries in the Horn of Africa”.

According to a press release issued by UNHCR in Geneva on 27 July 1992, “the civil war in Somalia has sent nearly 800,000 Somalis fleeing to neighbouring Kenya, Ethiopia, Djibouti and Yemen,” and thousands more are sheltered in Europe, Canada and America. At home, millions are displaced and threatened with starvation.

As Somalis everywhere were tired of the continuous instability and lack of security, their expectations of a positive outcome of the Conference on National Reconciliation were very high. However, there were others who were pessimistic about any kind of fruitful results because they felt that the people sitting in the conference hall were the same who had brought the nation and the country to their present state of affairs.

Addressing the plenary meeting, Dr. Mohamed Rajis Mohamed, the Chairman of the Somali National Union (SNU) observed that,

“the main tragedy that affected Somalia was due to the violation of human rights and injustice. The factions whose members were not armed have been subjected to the most inhuman treatments, their women were brutally raped, their properties looted and finally forced to flee the country by various
risky means to the neighbouring countries.”

A representative of the Somali Intellectual Forum told the Conference:

“In order to reverse the present dismal situation in our country, all concerned Somali Parties should renounce their sectarian interest in favour of a genuine national reconciliation which would bring about an end to the present crisis and restoration of full statehood of Somalia.”

He further added,

“It should be understood by all that clan-based struggle is meaningless, and it is in direct contradiction with the basic tenets of a modern State, governed by law and justice to all its citizens”.

The delegations from the various factions, religious groups, elders/wisemen, women organisations, Somali NGOs, and others represented all the different sections of the Somali society. In fact, all the so-called political organisations are mainly based on clan affiliation and they invariably represent the interest of their clans although each organisation has the letter “S” for “Somali” in its nomenclature.

This thing even the foreigners know it. Following is what Mohamed Sahnoun, former envoy of the UN Secretary General wrote in his book:

“Political movements were created fairly recently along the lines of clan structures.

1. United Somali Congress (USC). The USC was created by the Hawiye clan in central Somalia around Mogadishu. It is, however,
currently split into two factions, one led by Mohammed Farah Aideed and the other led by Ali Mahdi.

2. Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF). The SSDF was created by the Majertain subclan of the Darod, who live in northeast Somalia.

3. Somali National Front (SNF). This is the movement of the Marehan subclan of the Darod, who live in southern Somalia on the Kenyan border. The former president of Somalia, Siad Barre, belongs to this subclan.

4. Somali national Movement (SNM). The SNM was created by the Issaq clan of northwestern Somalia. Since May 1991, the SNM has proclaimed the independence of Somaliland in this region.

5. Somali Patriotic Front (SPF). The SPF was founded by the Ogadeni, a subclan of the Darod who live partly in southern and partly in central Somalia. It is currently split into two factions.

6. Somali Democratic Movement (SDM). The SDM is the movement of the Rahanwein clan, most of whom are sedentary farmers who live in southern and western Somalia. This clan is also split into two factions.

7. Somali Democratic Association (SDA). The SDA is the party of the Dir clan living in northwestern Somalia.¹

The civil war in Somalia could have been averted

if only the religious groups were united on the basis of religious faith and in the name of the Almighty, instead of being divided on the basis of their clan loyalties. The Holy Qur'an prescribes the best guidelines for unity: “And hold fast, all together by the Rope Which Allah (stretches out for you) and be not divided Among yourselves”. (Sura Al-Imran, S.3 a.103).

Instead of following the teachings of the Holy Qur’an, the Somali religious leaders started behaving like petty politicians involving themselves in a power struggle, blindly supporting their respective clan/faction positions.

Ali Mahdi Mohamed who was unilaterally appointed Interim President, after the collapse of the regime of Mohamed Siad Barre thought that the Djibouti accord should have been the “basis for restoration of peace and stability in our country” but, he admitted: “it did not work for reasons known to all of us”.

In fact, it was the Djibouti accord that confirmed his position as Interim President.

Speaking at the Addis Ababa Conference on National Reconciliation, Ali Mahdi Mohamed stated:

“In frequent consultation with many Somali leaders, elders, intellectuals and women organisations and Somalis living outside the country and also with some highly respected political figures within the Somali society, I have been requested to pass to you this message: “You the participants of this august Conference must lead the way to the rebirth of our country, a country which has fallen into anarchy and a vacuum of authority has been created.”
To fill the vacuum of authority Ali Mahdi Mohamed made a fervent appeal for the formation of a

“Provisional Government to carry out the political, social and economic reconstruction programme must be agreed upon as our last noble goal within a time frame which can allow us to be represented in the next General Assembly as a Nation”.

He expressed the hope that:

“I am sure if we achieve such a goal our Somali country fellows will be proud of our conference here and forgive us, may be, for some of our past mistakes”.

Ali Mahdi Mohamed threw the ball in the centre of the ground and it was up to the conference participants to score the goal. There was no organisation that did not have in mind the need to bring the country back to normal, to establish a new administration. The presence of such a wide range of Somali Society would have been most suitable occasion for a general reconciliation among the warring leaders, had they been sincere towards the national interest and not personal interest.

It was clear that the country needed an authority that could run the affairs of the people temporarily, until the situation improved and national elections were held.

Each one of the leaders delivered a long speech but none of them presented any concrete and sincere proposals on how to put an end to the mindless bloodshed and destruction in the country. Even Ali Mahdi’s proposal to set up “a provisional government”, though a positive one, lacked precision. The most
important question was, who should form such a
government. If the warring factions under pressure
were entrusted with the task of formation of a
provisional government, its fate would be no different
from that of Ali Mahdi’s interim government.

When the factions were so sharply divided on
tribal/clan affiliations as those of Ali Mahdi’s faction
and General Mohamed Farah Aidid’s faction, and
both belonging to the USC, they could not run a
provisional administration which demands a great
degree of neutrality, efficiency, and speed to complete
the task of laying down a basic political and
constitutional framework on which a permanent
political structure could be built. By necessity a
provisional government should comprise men of
integrity, constitutional experts and able
administrators who should discharge their duties
without fear or favour and complete their assigned
task within a given time-frame.

As the representative of the Somali Intellectual
Forum said:

“It should be understood by all that clan-based
struggle is meaningless, and it is in direct
contradiction with the basic tenets of a modern
State, governed by law and justice among all
its citizens.”

For nearly two weeks, harangues in the plenary
meetings continued in which leaders of various
factions and their advisors took part. The factions
were divided into two groups, one composed of 12
factions, associated with Ali Mahdi and the other of 4

1. Statement by Somali Intellectual Forum at the Addis Ababa
The Addis Ababa Conference

factions led by General Mohamed Farah Aidid. But the key to peace remained in the hands of the two strongmen Ali Mahdi and Aidid, who were engaged in a disastrous power struggle. The Addis Ababa Conference could have been the ideal occasion for the reconciliation of their differences and peacefully solving the question of power-sharing, if there was the will.

The Conference was scheduled to last only five days—15-20 March 1993,—coinciding with the Holy Month of Ramadan, a month in which Muslims should do good deeds, but it went on beyond that date. As there was no agreement in sight, the Somali people, due to their miseries and destitution, were becoming restless. The Somali women attending the Conference decided to stage a hunger strike as a token of protest. They declared that until an agreement was reached they would eat no food. It was a good nationalistic gesture and they kept their undertaking for at least one day. The Holy Month of Ramadan ended on 24, March 1993, and we were still without a solution to our problem. On the day of Eid el Fitr (the conclusion of the Fasting Month) I went to the Addis Ababa National football stadium where thousands of Muslims congregated for the Eid Prayers. The stadium was packed and thousands of devout Muslims were also assembled outside the walls of the ground.

The Muslims in Addis Ababa were converging towards the stadium since early in the morning. For them the gathering in the ground of the stadium was a very significant event as it was for the first time for over forty years that they were allowed to use the ground for prayers, thanks to the new Government of Meles Zenawi. The former regimes of Emperor Haile Selassie and of Mengistu restricted the Muslims to
small mosques which made it difficult for wider congregation.

The people were in a festive mood, dressed in their latest made-for-the-occasion clothes. The Ethiopian Muslim ministers, diplomats from foreign Muslim countries accredited to Ethiopia, dignitaries, religious personalities and thousands of young and old common people were all sitting in row after row, without distinction.

For a while, old memories surged up. When I was a little boy we used to go from door to door to our neighbours’ houses collecting what we used to call ‘haq’al-Eid’ (Eid gifts). No doors were shut upon us. One could enter any house whether one knew the owner or not. The whole country was like open-house party. But sadly, on that same day, in Mogadishu, one could not even come out of one’s own house, let alone visit the neighbourhood or go from Hamar Weyn to Shingani, which involved risk to one’s life. Wearing a new dress in Mogadishu had become equivalent to inviting a robber. The famous shops in Hamar Weyn and Afar Irdood where women used to buy their colourful clothes, no longer existed. No more were there happy looking parents strolling hand in hand with little kids or shopping for new clothes and Eid gifts. Well, we prayed for the return of the good old days when it was possible for us to celebrate the Eid Feast with customary joy and happiness.

On 25 March 1993, some time in the afternoon, I happened to meet Ambassador Lansane Kouyate, Deputy to Admiral Jonathan Howe, Special Representative of the UN Secretary General in Somalia. He told me:

“It is important that your people (meaning the factions’ leaders) reach an agreement by today,
otherwise the UN Security Council will pass a resolution that you people may not be happy about”.

With me was my colleague in Paris, Ambassador Said H. Mohamud who is one of us who wish to see a solution to our crisis. It was a warning which clearly meant that if we could not establish an authority in our country, the world body would do it for us. Although we were on our way out of the hotel, we decided to go back to the Villas and pass the message to those leaders who were available. At the same time, the representatives of the Committee for the Horn of Africa were also moving from Villa to Villa to impress upon the faction leaders the need for an expeditious agreement before the Security Council passed the Resolution.

The news about the impending Security Council’s resolution spread like wildfire and within a short time most of the Somalis knew about it. We did not know the content of the draft resolution, but we were already speculating that it might place Somalia under UN trusteeship.

Former Italian Somaliland was under UN trusteeship from 1950 until July 1960 when it obtained its independence and joined with former British Somaliland resulting in the formation of the Somali Republic. But now the situation was different; we are an independent sovereign country and a member of the United Nations. The Charter of the United Nations clearly states that:

“ARTICLE 78

The trusteeship system shall not apply to territories which have become member of the United Nations, relationship among which
shall be based on respect for the principle of sovereign equality.”

Somalia is an independent and sovereign country but there is no recognised authority responsible for its administration. Ali Mahdi Mohamed who was, for a short period recognised as Interim President by virtue of the Djibouti Agreement of July 1991, himself declared in his speech at the Addis Ababa National Reconciliation Conference on 15 March 1993, that “Djibouti accords did not work” and went on to say:

“To rebuild Somalia, a Provisional Government to carry out the political, social and economic reconstruction programme must be agreed upon as our last noble goal ...”

In that case, the people sitting in the Conference Hall were no more than representatives of different factions. If they had the slightest concern for the amelioration of the pitiable conditions of the Somali people, let alone their well-being, they would have, as a matter of priority, adopted a flexible and conciliatory approach for the establishment of a Provisional or Interim Administration to defend the sovereignty and integrity of the nation.

Most of the speakers spoke about the formation of an interim government, but no one insisted upon it. The Conference established committees on Cease-fire, Peaceful Settlement of Disputes, Charter etc., but not for the formation of a new interim President or Government.

The stipulated period of the Conference—15-20 March 1993—ended without conclusive accord. The UN started putting pressure on the groups by saying that it would not pay their hotel bills beyond the
stipulated date, but at the same time letting the Conference continue. And those attending the conference continued to stay in the hotels, eating free meals. Besides, the sponsors also, unexpectedly, decided to give the delegates some sort of pocket money.

One morning, I saw a long queue in front of a room adjacent to the venue of the Committee on Peaceful Settlement of Disputes which I was also attending. I stopped and looked at the people standing in the queue, which was growing longer and longer. I could not imagine why so many former high ranking officials, both civilian and military, were staring at the door impatiently. I hesitantly asked one of the friends whom I knew, why they had lined up there. I was told that the UN Officials were paying money to all the participants in the Conference. They were giving 600 Birrs (Ethiopian Dollars) to each person. (on that day the exchange rate of US $1 was equal to 5 Ethiopian Birr in the Bank and outside in the market 7 Birr per 1 US$). I thought for a while whether or not I should join the queue. I felt a little awkward and was hesitant to stand there like a beggar. It was really ugly and humiliating the way the people were treated.

But then I said to myself, why not? After all this money has either been donated to us or would be debited to my country’s national account. It is after all my own money. If I did not accept it, they would not be grateful any way. I decided to join the queue which was moving forward towards the entrance of the room at a very slow pace. While we were standing, one of the faction leaders escorted by some one just passed us and entered the room without queueing. That was wrong. We noticed it, but did not question
it. That is what’s happening in Somalia. We see people doing wrong and no one dares to question it. At last my turn came and I entered the room where two men—one with a list and the other with cash in a briefcase, were sitting. The man with the list looked at the badge on my chest. “Observer?” he said “No, you are not entitled”, he told me. “Thank you”, I said and slipped out of the room through an exit door. There were many others like me who were sent away when they approached the “cashier”. However, a few days later “the authorities—UNOSOM” decided to pay pocket money also to the participants who had ‘Observer’ badges. Was this little and miserable “allowance” also paid to those who claimed to be “leaders”? Though a consequence of our own actions, it was extremely humiliating. The fratricidal conflict has brought the entire nation to its knees; it brought it to a situation where it survived only on charity doled out by the international community.

Only four days before the commencement of the Conference on National Reconciliation in Somalia, the United Nations published an emergency programme for Somalia in respect of humanitarian assistance. In this programme, the UN estimated that US$ 166,478,600 would be required for the maintenance of the country for a duration of ten months i.e. from 1 March to 31 December 1993. We, the Somalis, the people of the country, on whose behalf such funds were collected cannot even query how the money are spent, because we have no one who has the authority to do so. And even the civil service had disintegrated due to the civil war.

Most of the participants who were in Addis Ababa knew about the imminent Resolution of the Security
The Addis Ababa Conference

Council. However, they did not show any concern about the possibility of the taking over of Somalia by the UN in one form or another. No one from any group or faction thought of creating a national authority to administer the country for the sake of the nation. We are parentless children.

The country has been destroyed and the people are suffering, while the armed factions enjoy the best of life in the zones they control: their food is guaranteed, while the rest of the population has to traverse the dangerous streets to reach the food distribution centres for their daily rations.

In reality, the majority of the population in the country would welcome anything that can help them change the situation, they are fed up with the so-called leaders who have, so far, given priority only to their own personal interests over the interests of the people. They have reduced the nation into clans, the country into clans’ territories and partitioned the capital of Mogadishu into two zones, North and South, and controlled by the two factions of USC, the North, Ali Mahdi’s and the South Aidid’s. The factions’ leaders who attended the meeting were all advocating the formation of a Provisional government. But in practice, they refrained from presenting any concrete framework on how this proposal should be implemented. The reason, according to some observers, was that some leaders were afraid to insist on nominating an authority for fear of not getting elected or nominated. So they chose to maintain the status quo. One of the leaders loudly and repeatedly said: “We all want to be Presidents”. So the case is “If I do not get it, let no one else get it”.

On 26 March 1993, the UNOSOM officials distributed copies of Resolution 814 (1993) of the
Security Council to the delegates.

The Security Council, 'acting under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter', requested the Secretary General:

"to provide humanitarian assistance to the people of Somalia in rehabilitating their political institutions and economy and promoting political settlement and national reconciliation. Such assistance should include economic relief and rehabilitation of Somalia, the repatriation of refugees and displaced persons within Somalia, re-establishment of national and regional institutions and civil administration in the entire country, the re-establishment of Somali police, mine-clearance and public information activities in support of the United Nations activities in Somalia."


Our case is a peculiar one. The international community has seen a government fighting opposition groups or insurgents or even two parallel governments established one in the country and one in exile, fighting for control, but it must be a rare case to see an independent, sovereign country which is a member of the United Nations, the Arab League, Organisation of African Unity, Islamic Organisation and other
organisations, without a recognised government for such a long time. Even when a government loses power by vote of confidence or for other reasons there is always “a caretaker” authority. The same applies if a Head of State loses power by death or for other reasons. Resolution 814 (1992) made it clear that the United Nations was in Somalia for “re-establishment of national and regional institutions and civil administration in the entire country”.

It is a shame, that some one else tells you “stop killing your own people or destroying your own properties (country); put your house in order”. All the resolutions issued on Somalia’s crisis by the Security Council “emphasize the need for the Somali people including movements and factions, to show the political will to achieve security, reconciliation and peace”.

All of us were carrying copies of this Resolution in our brief cases or under our arms together with the other documents under discussion at the Addis Ababa conference. They were all papers, just papers, because some of us did not even try to read them. Similarly, we listened to the speeches in the conference hall with one ear and let them out through the other.

In the morning of 27 March 1993, while all the faction leaders were either in their comfortable rooms or at the breakfast table, some officials from the Presidency of Ethiopia came around and delivered a message that “the faction leaders” were required at 10.00 a.m., at the President’s office for an urgent meeting. It was like an order from a master to his subordinates.

We saw our leaders going, hoping that they would come back soon with good news. We started counting the time. We were all nervous, drinking coffee after
coffee at the counter of the hotel where the barman used an Italian made ‘espresso’ machine. And those who smoked kept puffing at their cigarettes.

We stayed in Addis Ababa for about two weeks but that day was the longest day for us and tension was higher than usual. Lunch time came and passed, and there was no news from the Palace. Due to the long wait we were also getting bored. To overcome the feeling of weariness we were cracking jokes. Someone quipped: “They have been taken to Alam-baga jail”. Some others joked: “Let us stage a coup against them”, and so on.

No news until sunset. Suddenly, while we were watching the television in the lobby of the hotel at 22:00 hours a lady newsreader appeared on the screen with a flash announcement saying: “The Somali leaders have signed an agreement”. We uttered a sigh of relief. This 12 hour long meeting seemed to be more fruitful than the past twelve days of going to the conference hall and returning to the hotels.

A seven-page agreement was signed by 15 Somali political leaders. However, the agreement did not include the nomination of an authority that should run the country as a national administration, which for the country was a matter of priority. It provided for the establishment of a Transitional National Council (TNC), which according to a separate agreement reached between these leaders on 30 March 1993, was to be nominated within 45 days from 1 April 1993. The word “government” was only mentioned in a paragraph dealing with “Central Administration Departments (CADs) on page five of the main Agreement of 27 March 1993. With this agreement, the Somali Political Leaders, portraying themselves as “factions” recognised UNOSOM as the
The supreme authority of the country, at least until “the re-establishment and operation of a formal government”, after the creation of the Transitional National Council. This is clearly indicated in the separate and supplementary agreement signed by the Political Leaders at the consultations held in Addis Ababa on 30 March 1993, regarding the formation of the TNC. According to the agreement, the political leaders agreed:

“1. For the formation of the TNC each faction will nominate a representative;

2. Given the 18 regions three representatives will be chosen by each region and names will be submitted to UNOSOM by the factions.”

The Somali National Movement, the main opposition organisation in the Northern part of the country, formerly known as British Somaliland, boycotted this National Reconciliation Conference as it did the two conferences held in Djibouti soon after the collapse of the Siad Barre regime. It refused to attend the earlier conferences because it considered the way in which Interim President Ali Mahdi Mohamed was elected unacceptable.

The Movement insisted on its decision of 15 May 1991 to break away from the Republic, declaring itself the independent Republic of Somaliland.

The former British Protectorate obtained its independence from Britain on 26 June 1960, four days before the former Italian Somalia was declared independent on 1 July 1960 after ten years of United Nations Trusteeship. The two parts joined together on 1 July 1960 and formed the Republic of Somalia under one flag.
Edmund Kwena, Foreign Editor of Kenya Times, in a report from Hargeisa published on 27 November 1991, stated that the SNM justified its stand because its leaders claim that they had “merged with the South on the basis of certain commitments and promises which never materialised. Therefore, SNM decided to pull out saying their country existed before the formation of the Republic of Somalia.

At the Addis Ababa conference in March 1993, there were three Organisations—Somali Democratic Alliance, United Somali Front, and United Somali Party, which claimed to represent former British Somaliland. Their representatives signed the Addis Ababa Agreement of 27 March 1993.

However, the groups that signed the Addis Ababa Agreement agreed to despatch a delegation from the factions which attended the National Reconciliation Conference to the Somali National Movement (SNM). They nominated General Mohamed Farah Aidid to lead the delegation. But this decision never materialised.

Although the SNM itself was not officially present at the Conference, the following statement was left on the desk of the Press Releases in the corridor of Africa Hall:

“The Government of Somaliland and its people as well as the SNM delegation would like to express their sincere thanks to the international community for its conscientious and unrelenting efforts to bring about a lasting solution to the crisis in Somalia.

“We particularly thank the Transitional Government of Ethiopia and people of Ethiopia for their generous efforts to sustain the process
of national reconciliation at a time when others have all but given up.

“The policy objectives of the Transitional Government of Ethiopia towards the present crisis and beyond is mirrored by the way it has been receiving the homeless, the destitute and the wounded. That treatment has become woven into the very fabric of our consciousness. It will be part of our political culture henceforward. So will the historic quest of the Ethiopian Government for peace among Somalis. The purpose of the SNM delegation to the present reconciliation conference is two-fold:

(i) It is an established policy of the SNM to attend all forums and conferences where issues relating to the crisis in Somalia are under discussion;
(ii) It is also an established policy of the Movement to search for a genuine and permanent peace among the splintered political groupings.

“The concept of Somali unity i.e. the creation of ‘Greater Somalia’ consisting of what used to be French Somaliland, British Somaliland, Italian Somalia, the Northern Frontier District of Kenya and the Ogaden of Ethiopia, has been a strong political instrument in the struggle towards the attainment of national independence.

The objective of creating Greater Somalia defied not only the established norms of international relations manifested in the UN, Arab League, OAU
etc., but at the same time brought about enormous human suffering in the Horn in the form of persistent conflicts, outbreak of regional wars and the dislocation of settled populations.

“Besides, the same ideology has been manipulated in a manner undermining the basic human and social rights of not only the Somali people, but at the same time jeopardised the collective security of neighbouring countries. The people of Somaliland have outlawed that concept. The union between ex-British Somaliland and ex-Italian Somaliland was a consequence of the political success of that concept. SNM and the people of Somaliland totally reject it. There is nothing sacred about Somali unity. In fact, sanctity is not an attribute of politics.

“The position of the SNM and its Interim Government towards the Resolutions of the Security Council on the Somali crisis have been articulated previously. We endorsed them. However, we strongly believe that conditions that determined the deployment of UN Forces in Somalia are not prevalent in Somaliland. There is ample evidence in Somaliland that peace and stability pervade the land except for random breaches which had been made inevitable by the total absence of employment opportunities. The SNM administration could easily deal with the situation provided that the international community was forthcoming in extending adequate support.

“The people of Somaliland and the SNM
delegation in this conference share the agony of the people in the south. We are genuinely committed to every effort to bring about a genuine and a lasting solution to the problems facing our brothers.

We, therefore, propose the following:

1. Reinforcement of ceasefire arrangements;
2. Devising practical modalities to unify split factions;
3. Formulation of strict guidelines for the establishment of political parties;
4. Establishment of a provisional central authority.

“Finally, we solicit the understanding of the international community as we in Somaliland address the following:

1. Somaliland considers itself to be in a position to take advantage of rehabilitation and development opportunities offered by the international community bilaterally and multilaterally;
2. Such support should concentrate on institution-building: administration, banks, port authorities, police and the social services at the initial stage;
3. It should underline the importance of rehabilitating the productive sectors of the economy such as livestock and agriculture;
4. It should also lay special emphasis on the formulation of comprehensive and precisely targeted programmes of income generation activities;
5. Given the fact that the institutions of Somaliland are not even at their design
stage, flooding the country with returnees to multiply the problems of the displaced is a blueprint for condemning both groups to starvation;

6. The rehabilitation of the social sectors should give particular emphasis to vulnerable groups: the disabled, orphans, widows etc...."
At the ‘Observers’ corner of the Conference Hall there were about a dozen politicians including Jama Abdullahi Ghalib, the former Speaker of the first National Assembly of Independent Somalia, and some former Ministers in the regimes of Siad Barre and before Siad. They were led by Mohamed Ibrahim Egal who was the Prime Minister of the last civilian government just before Siad Barre’s military coup.

Egal said that he and his delegation were representing the people of the Northern part of the country and had come to Addis Ababa not to attend the conference, but just to wish “our southern brothers best of luck”.

The former Prime Minister clearly sounded like he was the person who had worked for the unity of the Somali people who were so harshly and mercilessly divided by the colonial powers and “now I am here to demolish the same unity of which I was one of the architects”.

Mohamed Ibrahim Egal seemed to have nurtured anti-Somali unity feelings very deeply. He was the man, as Prime Minister in the Government of Abdirashid Ali Shermarke, in 1967, who signed the famous Arusha Agreement according to which “his
government” agreed to consider the Northern Frontier District (NFD) as part of Kenyan territory.

His action was not only against the wishes of the Somali people in the area and elsewhere, but even against the position of the colonial power, Britain, which proposed the unity of the Somali territories, under what was known as “The Bevin Plan”. The proposal was announced in the British House of Commons on 4 June 1946, by the then Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin, the architect of the Plan, who said:

“Now may I turn to Eritrea and Somaliland? I think that M. Molotov has been more than unjust in stating that we were trying to expand the British Empire at the expense of Italy and Ethiopia, and to consolidate what he calls the monopolistic position of Great Britain in the Mediterranean and Red Seas. In the latter part of the last century the Horn of Africa was divided between Great Britain, France and Italy. At about the time we occupied our part, the Ethiopians occupied an inland area which is the grazing ground for nearly half the nomads of British Somaliland for six months of the year.

“Similarly, the nomads of Italian Somaliland must cross the existing frontiers in search of grass. In all innocence, therefore, we proposed that British Somaliland, Italian Somaliland, and the adjacent part of Ethiopia, if Ethiopia agreed, should be lumped together as a trust territory, so that the nomads should lead their frugal existence with the least possible hindrance and there might be a real chance of
decent economic life, as understood in that territory.

“But what attracted M. Molotov’s criticism was, I am sure, that I suggested that Great Britain should be made the administrating authority. Was this unreasonable? In the first place, we were surrendering a Protectorate comparable in size to the area we hoped that Ethiopia would contribute. Secondly, it was a British force, mainly East African and South African, which freed this area; and it was a British, Indian and South African forces which bore the main brunt of restoring the independence of Ethiopia and of putting the Emperor back on his throne after several years’ sanctuary in this country. We do not seek gratitude on that account, but I think it right to express surprise that our proposals should have met with such unjustified criticism. After all, when we were defeating Italy in East Africa, Britain was open to invasion, and we were fighting alone. I hope the deputies at the Paris Conference will now consider a greater Somaliland more objectively.”

“All I want to do in this case is to give those poor nomads a chance to live. I do not want anything else. We are paying nearly £1,000,000 a year out of our Budget to help to support them. We do not ask to save anything. But to have these constant bothers on the frontiers when one can organise the thing decently—

1. Statement of British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs at the House of Commons, London, 4 June 1946 (Foreign Affairs) Minutes, pp. 1840-41
well, after all, it is to nobody's interest to stop
the poor people and cattle there getting a
decent living. That is all there is to it. It is like
the Englishman's desire to go into Scotland—
to get a decent living. We must consider it
objectively. If the Conference do not like our
proposal, we will not be dogmatic about it: we
are prepared to see Italian Somaliland put
under the United Nations trusteeship."

As for the Northern Frontier District (NFD), which
was under British rule together with Kenya, an
independent commission “to investigate public
opinion” was appointed by the then Secretary of
State for the Colonies, The Right Honourable Duncan
Sandys, MP, on 5 October 1962. It was composed of
two members: A Nigerian Judge, G.C.M. Onyiuke,
Esq., Q.C. and a Canadian Major-General, M.P.
Bogert, C.B.E., D.S.O., C.D.

The fact-finding commission which toured the
territory had extensive talks with the population of
the region from 22 October to 26 November 1962 and
presented to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, a
34-page report entitled “Kenya-Report of the Northern
Frontier District”. The Secretary of State for the
Colonies presented it to the British Parliament, by
Command of Her Majesty in December 1962.

According to the Report, the Commission also met
a delegation of the Kenya African National Union
(KANU) headed by the late Jomo Kenyatta. The
principal speakers were Kenyatta and T.J. Mboya.
Kenyatta strongly supported the retention of the
NFD as part of Kenya and said that he favoured it

1. Statement of British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs at the
House of Commons, London, 4 June 1946 (Foreign Affairs)
Minutes, pp. 1840-41.
becoming a region under the Kenya regional system. He stated that as there were many supporters of KANU in the NFD and he had a right to speak on their behalf.

The report said: “Mr Mboya contended that Somali opinion was divided as to the best future government”. “We did not in fact find any evidence of this in the NFD”, the Commission’s Report said.

**Summary**

“75. In an effort to establish public opinion as to the future government of the Northern Frontier District, it has been considered area by area. As has already been stated, we found that opinion is often unanimous over a wide area, particularly where this is the grazing area of a single tribe. It was apparent that opinions were influenced by religion, ethnic affiliation and way of life. Consolidating the findings already set out by districts, we can define three kinds of area: areas supporting the Somali Opinion, areas supporting the Kenya Opinion and areas of mixed opinion.

76. The areas in which we found the people supporting the Somali Opinion are the biggest in total population and size and are in fact one. They extend from the Somali frontier to the Somali-Galla Line and beyond, to include the grazing lands of the Adjuran. We found that the people there almost unanimously favour the secession from Kenya of the NFD, when Kenya attains independence, with the object of ultimately joining the Somali Republic, but they want the NFD to have a period under British authority in which to build up its machinery of government so that it can join the Somali
Republic as a self-governing unit.

77. This is the Somali Opinion as expressed to us verbally and is based on the premise that there can be no question of secession before Kenya gets independence. The Somali Opinion as expressed in the written memorandum submitted by almost all supporters of the Somali view is somewhat different. This memorandum requests that union of the NFD with the Somali Republic should take place contemporaneously with the granting of Kenya’s independence, that the establishment of a legislative assembly for the NFD should take place before and not after Kenya’s independence, and that the secession of the NFD from Kenya should take place immediately. The written memorandum was obviously prepared by some central authority and we consider that it is less personal than the opinions expressed verbally.

78. The areas supporting the Kenya Opinion we found to be the grazing lands of the Gabbra in Marsabit District, of the non-Moslem Boran in Moyale District, and the Riverine Tribes on the banks of the Tana in Garissa District. Here the people wish to remain part of Kenya and to participate in its constitutional development.

79. Although the Gabbra and Boran have close affiliations with Ethiopian tribes, no suggestion was made in verbal statements that Ethiopia has any concern with the problems under consideration and in fact, such a suggestion only appeared very briefly in one of the written memoranda.

80. The areas of mixed opinion we found to be Moyale
Township and the grazing area of the Sakyue to the east as far as the Boran-Adjuran Line, Marsabit Township, Isiolo District, Garissa Township, and the grazing area of the Orma south and west of the Tana River.

81. We noted that the division of opinion almost exactly corresponds to the division between Moslem and Non-Moslem.

82. It is apparent that in this division of opinion mention has been made of neither the Gelubba nor the Rendille. The Gelubba are not mentioned because we do not consider that these people have a coherent opinion as to the future government of the NFD. The opinions we received from the leaders of the Rendile we are not prepared to accept as an accurate reflection of the opinion of the people.

83. We understand that 90 per cent of the Rendille are pagan, and that, although their language bears some resemblance to Somali, their dress and customs are different and have in fact, more in common with those of the Samburu and the Masai. In view of these differences it seemed strange that they should want to join the Somali Republic but when taxed with this, the Rendille Chief insisted that their customs are like those of the Somali and not those of the Samburu and Masai, he did not mention religion, perhaps the most significant point. We understand that traditionally the Rendille have lived in harmony with the Gabbra, although recently they have quarrelled seriously over grazing rights. But, whether or not this quarrel has caused a serious break, we cannot believe that Rendille people,
who have no direct contact with the Somali, genuinely want to join the Somali Republic. The difference in religion between the Rendille and the Somali reinforced this belief. We do not wish to imply that the Rendille necessarily support the opposite view, but simply that we do not accept their opinion as given.

84. Apart from the case of the Rendille, we believe that we have obtained a true picture of public opinion as to the future government of the Northern Frontier District.

Dated this 7th day of December, 1962.

G.C.M. Onyiuke (Sgd), Member
M.P. Bogert (Sgd), Member

P.A.G. Field (Sgd), Secretary.

The famous Anthropologist Prof. I.M. Lewis in his Book *The Modern History of Somaliland* (1965) wrote:

“The Commissioners found that the Somali who they estimated made up 62 per cent of the NFD’s population ‘almost unanimously’ favoured secession from Kenya with the object of ‘ultimately’ joining the Somali Republic”.

Prof. Lewis added:

“At last, in March 1963, it fell to Mr Duncan Sandys, the new British Colonial Secretary, to announce his Government’s decision. To the satisfaction of the Nairobi and Addis Ababa governments, but to the chagrin of the Somalis, this was that the NFD was to be brought into Kenya’s regional constitution. A new, predominantly Somali Northern-Eastern Region was to be created in which Somalis would enjoy the same degree of local autonomy
as had already been accorded elsewhere in Kenya's other six Regions”.

The British decision was contrary not only to the wishes of the Somali population in the territory but also against the result of the referendum conducted by the “independent Commission” which Britain itself had appointed.

The decision angered the Somali people and as soon as the British announcement was heard over BBC radio, spontaneous demonstrations were staged in the streets of the Somali capital. The Somali people demanded that the Government sever diplomatic relations with Britain and Dr. Abdirashid Ali Shermarke, Prime Minister, had no alternative but to table a motion in Parliament to that effect. Diplomatic ties between the Somali Republic and Britain were broken off on 12 March 1963. The relations were resumed in 1967.

So here he was, Mohamed Haji Ibrahim Egal, at the Addis Ababa National Reconciliation Conference in March 1993, where all Somalis hoped to see or hear some sort of reconciliation at the gathering by patching up the cracks caused by the clan-based civil war in the country. However, instead of playing the positive role of an elder statesman and displaying political maturity by expressing concern over the disaster that has destroyed the people’s hope, Egal said that he and his friends had come to Addis Ababa to tell the Conference that former British Somaliland “is an independent republic”. This is the same personality who played the statesman’s role at the “Somalia National Reconciliation Conference held in Djibouti in July 1991, together with former First President of the Republic, Aden Abdulle Osman and former Prime Minister, Abdirizak Haji Hussein, as
well as with the Foreign Minister of Djibouti, Mumin Bahdoon Farah. Egal also countersigned, together with these personalities and the Movement Leaders who attended the Conference, the Declaration in which it was clearly stated

“that the unity of the people and the national integrity of Somalia were sacred”.

The former Prime Minister and those who shared his idea claim that the South had exploited the wealth of the North and that the latter did not get its due share in the Government. This may have been so, but that is debatable. They claim that the North received very little of the development funds and everything had been done in the South and the North was neglected. This should also be discussed. They claim that the territory and the people of their region suffered during the regime of Siad Barre. True, but this is valid also for the rest of the country and the people. The whole country had suffered.

All these are sad and difficult facts to bear, but do they constitute valid reason to break the country? Were these crimes committed by the people?

The “Qoraal” newspaper published in London, in its issue n.21 of 1 June 1993, reproduced the text of a keynote speech delivered by Mohamed Ibrahim Egal, as Prime Minister, at a mass rally at the Headquarters of the Somali Youth League (SYL) in Mogadishu on 13 October 1968, in which Egal stated:

“The First Somali Government was that headed by Abdullahi Issa. We Northerners responded to its call for unification by joining it immediately in 1960 after achieving our own separate independence. And you were all witnesses to the fact that it was the Somali people themselves that had been anxiously
waiting for this unity. The two Prime Ministers had no choice but to acquiesce and to forge their offices. The leaders at the time cannot claim any reward for the historical event, because had they even tried they could not have stopped the irresistible movement. But their memory should be inscribed for the wise abstention on their part from even so much as attempting to do so”.

He claimed to have been advising the Prime Minister, Dr. Abdirashid Ali Shermarke in the sixties, even when he had resigned from the cabinet of Abdirashid. According to “Qoraal”, Egal in his speech at the SYL in 1968, said:

“You remember I resigned from my post as Minister for Education in Abdirashid’s Cabinet. But would you believe that even then he entrusted me with the task of finding a solution for the problem of the Somali territories under alien rule, particularly the NFD?”

Then, of course, when he became Prime Minister under Dr. Abdirashid’s presidency, Egal signed the famous Arusha Agreement over the NFD in 1967.

The following is the text of the Memorandum of Understanding signed by Governments of Kenya and Somalia at Arusha, Tanzania:

**The Arusha Memorandum** (Mimeographed Text, November 1967)

“Meeting in the Arusha Town Hall, the Kenya President and the Somali Premier expressed their desire to consolidate the Kinshasa Declaration on Kenya-Somalia relations and
recognised the need to restore normal and peaceful relations between Kenya and Somalia.

“They have towards this end reached agreement on the following points:

The following Memorandum of Agreement was signed by the President of Kenya and the Somali Prime Minister on 28 October 1967 in Arusha, Tanzania:

1. Both Governments will exert all efforts and do their utmost to create good neighbourly relations between Kenya and Somalia in accordance with the OAU Charter.

2. The two Governments agree that the interests of the people of Kenya and Somalia were not served by the continuance of tension between the two countries.

3. They, therefore, reaffirm their adherence to the Declaration of the OAU conference at Kinshasa, a copy of which is attached to this Memorandum of Understanding.

4. In order to facilitate a speedy solution to the dispute and to ensure the maintenance of continued good relations, both Governments have agreed to:
   a. the maintenance of peace and security on both sides of the border by preventing the destruction of human life and property.
   b. refrain from conducting hostile propaganda through mass media such as radio and press against each other; and encourage propaganda which promotes development and continuance of friendly relations between the two countries;
c. the gradual suspension of any emergency regulations imposed on either side of the border.

d. the re-opening of diplomatic relations between the two countries;

e. the consideration of measures encouraging the development of economic and trade relations.

The appointment of a Working Committee consisting of Somalia, Kenya and Zambia, which will meet periodically to review the implementation by Somalia and Kenya of the points agreed in this document and also to examine ways and means of bringing about a satisfactory solution to major and minor differences between Kenya and Somalia.¹

**Kinshasa Declaration on Kenya-Somali Relations**

The Assembly of Heads of State and Government meeting in its Fourth Ordinary Session in Kinshasa, Congo, from 11 to 14 September, 1967.

*Desirous of consolidating the fraternal links that unite us.*

*Recalling* resolution CM/Res.17 (II) of 29 February 1964.

*Recalling* further the attempts that have been made by the Governments of Kenya and Somalia at Arusha in December 1965, through the Good Offices of His Excellency President Julius K. Nyerere of the Republic of Tanzania, *Mindful of* the new and welcome initiative taken

by His Excellency President Kenneth D. Kaunda of the Republic of Zambia in Kinshasa during the Fourth Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government; Notes with Pleasure the joint Declaration mutually and amicably reached between the Governments of Kenya and Somalia, as represented by Vice-President Daniel Arap Moi and Prime Minister Mohamed Ibrahim Egal, respectively, through the Good Offices of the President of Zambia, which reads as follows:

1. Both Governments have expressed their desire to respect each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity in the spirit of paragraph 3 of Article III of the OAU Charter;

2. The two Governments have further undertaken to resolve any outstanding differences between them in the spirit of paragraph 4 of Article III of the OAU Charter;

3. The two Governments have pledged to ensure maintenance of peace and security on both sides of the border by preventing destruction of human life and property;

4. Furthermore, the two Governments have agreed to refrain from conducting hostile propaganda through mass media such as radio and the press against each other;

5. The two Governments have accepted the kind invitation of President Kaunda to meet in Lusaka, during the later part of October 1967, in order to improve, intensify and consolidate all forms of co-operation;
Resolves to express its sincere gratitude and congratulations to President Kenneth D. Kaunda of Zambia as well as the Governments of Kenya and Somalia for their positive efforts to overcome differences in a fraternal manner. Requests the Governments of Kenya and Somalia, as parties to the Declaration, and the Government of the Republic of Zambia, as host convenor, to submit a progress report on the proposed meeting in Lusaka to the Secretary-General of the OAU.¹

The following is an earlier OAU resolution adopted by the Cairo Summit in 1964 which Somalia has always rejected. Somalia believes that the Resolution endorses the colonialists’ actions of arbitrary and unjust demarkation of Africa’s boundaries:

The text of the Resolution on Border Disputes

“The Assembly of Heads of State and Government meeting in its First Ordinary Session in Cairo, UAR, from 17 to 21 July 1964:

CONSIDERING that border problems constitute a grave and permanent factor of dissension,

CONSCIOUS of the existence of extra-African manoeuvres aimed at dividing African States,

CONSIDERING FURTHER that the borders of African States on the day of their independence, constitute a tangible reality.

RECALLING the establishment in the course of the Second Ordinary Session of the Council of the Committee of Eleven charged with studying further measures for strengthening African Unity,

1. OAU Records.
RECOGNIZING the imperious necessity of settling, by peaceful means and within a strictly African framework, all disputes between African States,

RECALLING FURTHER that all member States have pledged, under Article VI of the Charter of African Unity, to respect scrupulously all principles laid down in paragraph 3 of Article III of the Charter of the Organization of African Unity,

1. SOLEMNLY reaffirms the strict respect by all Member States of the Organization for the principles laid down in paragraph 3 Article III of the Charter of the Organization of African Unity;

2. SOLEMNLY declares that all Member States pledge themselves to respect the borders existing on their achievement of national independence.”

This Resolution was, of course, approved and warmly welcomed by those countries which had been given the territories of others by the colonial powers upon their departure.

Egal told his audience in 1968 in Mogadishu:

“I assert to you that our policy will not fall short of reclaiming our lost lands and their people. And, mind you, not I, nor you, nor any other Somali can deflect the course towards our avowed ultimate goal—the re-unification of all Somalis—an ideal which is symbolized by the five-pointed star on our national flag”.

And in 1994, the same “leader” was quoted by the Kenyan newspaper, “The Standard” (6 January 1994) as saying:
“the dream of a greater Somalia by former leaders was no more and should be forgotten by peace-loving Somalis, adding that the former leaders had claimed parts of Kenya, Ethiopia and Djibouti as parts of greater Somalia”. These claims were symbolised in the blue and white five-star Somalia flag”.

But as a matter of fact, and as I mentioned earlier in this same chapter the idea of “greater Somalia” came from the colonial power, namely Britain, in 1946. And I am sure, sooner or later it is going to happen as it happened in Germany and in Yemen, as well as in Vietnam.

Whatever may be the policy of the present Somali politicians at this difficult moment, the future of the Somali territories and people’s unity remains in the hands and minds of the people who will see their dream come true. The policy of dividing the country for selfish reasons is bound to fail in the long run.

The difficulties we are facing at the moment have been caused by some politicians who worked for their personal or clan interests rather than the interests of the people and the country. Today, we have some people who think that, if they were alone as a separate region or district, they would enjoy power all by themselves instead of sharing it with others in a united country. Our biggest handicap is that we have no one with the characteristics of a charismatic leader enjoying the goodwill and respect of the entire Somali nation.

According to the Italian historian, Enrico Cerulli:

“the well known Somali Mahdi called by the British “the Mad Mullah”, began his movement as an agent of the Salihya tarika. Then, his
increasing popularity tempted him to a more ambitious sphere and, accordingly, after placing his propaganda on a severely religious basis, he tried to become the leader of all the Somalis by making the ties of the common faith prevail over tribal bonds. This is really the only way to lead such a movement in Somaliland where Islam may be regarded as a tie of brotherhood among tribes otherwise deeply divided by their secular history of wars and revenge”.

Sayyid Mohamed Abdulle Hassan was in the category of leaders like Omar Al Mukhtar of Libya or Al Mahdi of the Sudan who have shown great leadership in their struggle against colonial powers in their respective countries. The Sayyid fought against three colonial powers, British, Italian and Abyssinian—from 1899 until he died on 23 November 1920. They could not defeat him until in January/May 1920, after violent bombardments of the Mullah’s defences by British airmen, a British force advanced to Taleh, the Mullah’s last camp: rapidly pursued by the Camel Corps and Somali auxiliaries, he fled to Ogaden and then into the Karanla tribe’s territory, where he died on 23 November 1920.”¹

In the French Somali Coast (Djibouti) the late Mohamud Harbi, who was the leader of the Union Republicaine Party, which advocated the Union of the territory with the rest of the Somali territories, was defeated by Hassan Gulaíd the present President who was pro-France.

In this connection, Prof. I.M. Lewis’ views deserve

our attention. He wrote:

“The 1958 referendum in fact, was interpreted as offering a choice between working for independence and union with Somalia, and remaining with France. Mohamud Harbi campaigned on a Somali nationalist platform, while Hassan Guled, [the present President of the Republic.—The Author] with the powerful support of the French electorate, canvassed for a vote in favour of continuing the connection with France. When, with Mohamud Harbi still in office, it was announced that this latter aim had prevailed, an extremely confused situation developed. This was resolved by the intervention of the French authorities who dissolved the assembly and arranged for new elections to be held on 23 November 1958. In the confusion, Mohamud Harbi’s party largely disintegrated, while Hassan Guled’s group changed its composition. Five electoral groupings eventually emerged: two of them frankly Afar organisations, and two others Somali-Afar alliances led by the two principal contenders, Hassan Guled and Mohamud Harbi. Under a new system of allocating seats on a proportional basis, Hassan Guled commanding the majority of Afar support, defeated Union Democratique Somalie party. Mohamud Harbi subsequently fled to Cairo and later to Mogadishu where, in 1959, he participated in the formation of the National Pan-Somali Movement. His short but eventful political career ended in October of the following year when he was killed in an air crash while on his way back to Mogadishu.
Mohamud Harbi was a great nationalist and had a clear policy towards Somali unity. During the fifties we witnessed the death of three eminent personalities. Ustad Osman was stabbed to death in Hamar Weyn while walking home in 1956. The assassination of the Egyptian member of the UN Advisory Council, Kamal Uddin Salah, and the plane crash that took the life of Mohamud Harbi and others who were with him on the trip. May be one day we will know the reasons for the deaths of these eminent personalities.

During the early years of our independence the only person who won the respect of the majority of the people in the Republic or outside, i.e. in the rest of the Somali territories, was Aden Abdulle Osman, the first President of the Republic. Aden Abdulle Osman was not a hero or even a known freedom fighter. He became a respected person simply because he accepted the democratic process when he was defeated as President of the Republic by Dr. Abdirashid Ali Shermarke in 1967. After being the first President of the National Assembly and first President of the Republic of independent Somalia, Aden Abdulle Osman behaved just as an ordinary citizen. One could often see him walking in the streets of Mogadishu without security escort.

I was working as a steno-typist at the Constituent Assembly, when Aden Abdulle was President of the Assembly. I can, therefore, claim that I knew him at close range. Five years after he lost Presidential power and three years after the death of the man who replaced him as President and the subsequent

bloodless revolution which was led by Maj. General Mohamed Siad Barre, Aden Abdule Osman came personally to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Protocol Department in 1972 where I was the Director. He came for a Diplomatic Passport as he wanted to travel abroad. I requested him to have a seat. At the same time, the former Prime Minister, Abdirizak Haji Hussein also came to my office to obtain his Passport, I offered him a seat also.

Both of them were my chiefs: Aden Abdule was President of the Republic and Abdirizak was, for some time, Prime Minister. While they were exchanging pleasantries I called the office messenger Ali Gab and asked the leaders what they would like to drink, coffee or tea. Both of them asked for coffee. “Bring three cups of coffee” I told the messenger; adding “for me with less sugar, please”.

Aden Abdule immediately said in Italian “Perche non c'è zucchero nel paese?” (Why, is there no sugar in the country?) And Abdirizak followed him, also in Italian:

“Lo sai che un pacco di spaghetti costa shs. so. 5.00?” (Do you know that a packet of spaghetti costs five shillings?)

Obviously, their questions were directed to the Revolutionary Government. They meant that after the coup everything (food) had become difficult to obtain and prices had also soared. As the revolutionary fervour was still alive, the Government wanted to keep abundant quantity of food in the shops. It had opened fair price distribution centres where common men could easily buy their daily necessities.

“Mr President, sugar is available but the Government tries to make it available for the whole country
and the entire population”, I said with a smile.

And to the former Prime Minister, I said:

“Mr Prime Minister, a packet of spaghetti always cost Shs. So 5/- even during your time. But then you had no opportunity to go to the market, and therefore, you did not know prices of consumer goods in the market.

We all cracked jokes and laughed. Aden Abdulle Osman is still liked by most Somalis, especially because of the fact that the people now know the difference between him and the others who came to power after him. But for his advanced age, Aden Abdulle Osman could have become a good rallying point for the country’s unity.

The Somali people, everywhere, need someone to unite them and not those who divide them. The selfish and the separatists have no popular base in the country and they are doomed to be disgraced.

I believe that most Somalis are of the view that differences among the leaders of various regions over power-sharing or unfair distribution of the country’s resources should be resolved by peaceful means, discussion, mediation and negotiations.

First, the wounds were inflicted on Somalia by the colonial powers, which divided it into five parts. Our former leaders and freedom fighters showed a great deal of sagacity when they agreed in 1960 to unify at least two of its regions into a united country. But now, if our own leaders follow the policy of divide and rule we would be playing in the hands of our enemies.

I personally do not foresee any advantage to the people of former British Somaliland if they are
separated from their brothers and sisters of former Italian Somaliland.

Those who want to justify their divisive action cite the example of former French Somaliland, now Djibouti or the Republic of Djibouti, and say: “Look Djibouti, it is a Republic, why there can’t be a Republic of Somaliland?” We must not forget that this was a condition imposed on us by the colonial powers—France in this case. The idea was to weaken the Somalis even if they were reluctantly given independence. Of course, this policy was to please the regime of the former Emperor of Ethiopia who called himself “the King of Kings, the Lion of Judae”, as he and the Menelik earlier collaborated with the European colonial powers in order to grab Somali territories.

During the scramble for Africa by the European powers, Emperor Menelik told them:

“I have no intention of being an indifferent onlooker—if the distant powers have the idea of dividing up Africa, for Ethiopia has been for more than fourteen centuries an island of Christianity in the middle of the sea of pagans” (The Emperor Menelik’s address to the European Powers, 10 April 1891)1.

In his book, The Scramble for Africa, Thomas Pakenham wrote:

“Menelik then turned to the other Powers to confirm his diplomatic triumph. The French had contributed the arms essential to his victory, the British had given moral support to

his enemies. Menelik drove an equally shrewd bargain with each. From the French he took a large part of French Somaliland in exchange for secretly promising his unconditional support for their scheme to take over the upper Nile. From the British he obtained a large part of British Somaliland and the right of duty-free imports through Zeila in exchange for help against the Mahdists. At the same time he promised the Mahdists in the Sudan a mutual commercial Pact.”

As an African country, Ethiopia should have helped the rest of Africa to fight against the colonialists when the European powers were dividing the continent. Instead it collaborated with them so that it could have its own share of the cake. According to Dr. Negussay Ayele:

“The French were the first to open negotiations in Addis Ababa. After a series of talks with Ras Mekonnen, Governor of Harar Province (and father of Emperor Haile Selassie), and Emperor Menelik, the French representative, M. Legard, signed two agreements relating to the French colony on the Horn in March 1897. One of these agreements stipulated that “Djibouti shall be the official outlet for Ethiopia’s trade. The other agreement defined the territorial limits of the French enclave of Djibouti as being within a maximum perimeter of approximately 100 kilometers from the coast.”

1. Negussay Ayele, Rhetoric in the making of Boundaries on the Horn of Africa in 1897.
For Ethiopia and Kenya, which have Somali territories under their rule, the unity of Djibouti with the republic of Somalia after its attainment of independence in June 1977, would have been a political blow as it would encourage the Somalis under them to raise their voices for joining the rest.

The Emperor of Ethiopia, Haile Selassie not only supported the colonialist powers but even encouraged them to continue their colonial occupation. In fact, Emperor Haile Selassie, the King of Kings, the Lion of Judae, was quoted by BBC radio on 28 August 1966, as saying:

“If Somalia renounces its claim over French Somaliland, Ethiopia will thank God. I wish that France will remain in French Somali Coast for ever”.1

God did not accept the wish of the Emperor and the country won its independence on 27 June 1977. However, the enemies of the Somali people succeeded in keeping the Somalis divided by making Djibouti a separate Republic. This was also valid for former British Somaliland. The reason to give the Territory a separate Independence Day was to create a “Republic”, that eventually could claim its own sovereignty. There were only four days between the independence days of former British Somaliland and former Italian Somaliland. The idea was: “let them be united as two sovereign states, instead of re-uniting the divided nation”.

Here you are. Thirty three years later the formula has worked. The SNM (Somali National Movement), the main opposition movement which toppled the

Regional Administration of the Siad Barre regime in the Northern part of the country, declared independence of the Northern region calling it “the Republic of Somaliland” on 18 May 1991.

A “National Charter” approved by the Council of Elders in their Congress on 3 May 1993 held in Borama town begins with the long struggle waged by the SNM for the independence of the Republic of Somaliland.

Article 1 paragraph 2 of the National Charter states:

“2-Dalkii hore logu yiqiin Somaliland ee Xorriyaddisii ka qaata Boqortooyada Ingiriiska iyo Waaqooyiga Ireland 26kii Juun 1960 ayaa dib loogu soo celiyey Madaxbanaanidii laga bilaabo 18/05/91”.1 (The country known as Somaliland which obtained its independence from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on 26 June 1960 has restored its independence as from 18/05/91).

The National Charter “Axdi Qarameed” was reproduced by the Qoraal newspaper published in London in its issue n.21 of 1 June 1993. Abdurahman Ahmed Ali, “Tuur” who was the Chairman of the SNM became “President of Somaliland” from 1991. When he was defeated in the Presidential contest in the Elders Congress in Borama in May 1993, by Mohamed Ibrahim Egal, he said:

“... I wish history to remember that during the armed struggle in which many people lost their lives, there were four brothers who led

the SNM, and when I took over I had the luck of liberating the country from the blood-sucker Mohamed Siad Barre”.¹

His party treated him as “President of the Republic of Somaliland” for two years. However, no other country, or international body recognized him or extended official recognition to the so-called Republic of Somaliland.

According to some sources, he was defeated due to the fact that he could not get recognition for the breakaway republic. Some of the leaders in the North still think of the strategic importance that the region enjoyed in the early seventies because of the Port of Berbera. That was so because during the Cold War period the Superpowers were competing for the facilities of the port.

The Soviet Union built the Port of Berbera for their own use during the early sixties. The Americans started building the Port of Kisimayo in the South of the country. During the Cold War Mohamed Siad Barre kept the Soviets in the country, but in 1977 when he wanted to liberate the Ogaden from Ethiopian rule, the Soviets went to the Abyssinian side. Then Siad invited Americans help to defeat the “red terror” of Mengistu Haile Mariam and his Communist allies. During those days one could expect anything. When a Superpower felt that a certain part of the world was of strategic importance, it would do anything to gain it to the detriment of the other Superpower.

The Borama Congress of the Elders in the Northern part of the country elected Mohamed Ibrahim Egal, as “President of the Republic of Somaliland”. Some of the 150 members of the Elders’

Council in Borama, believed that Egal could persuade the world especially the West, to recognise the “Republic of Somaliland” as they thought he had been a good friend of the West when he was Prime Minister.

When he was, “elected” as “President” of “Somaliland”, he boasted:

“We can help our brothers in Somalia (the South) who are facing difficulties. But first we must establish ourselves and stand on our feet. As soon as the world recognises us as a government, the first step we take will be to help to solve the problem in Somalia”.

But those who thought he could do something about recognition, forget that he was “a good guy” because the West needed the country’s strategic locations for their “national interest” in the Superpowers’ rivalry, but not him personally. During the Cold War years, the Superpowers collaborated with countries of the Third World, not because they considered certain countries or personalities as “special friends”. The Superpowers’ “special friends” were their national interests in a given location on the globe.

For two years after he was “elected” “President” of “Somaliland”, Mohamed Ibrahim Egal failed to attract any country to extend recognition to him or to the breakaway republic. After his term ended, he unilaterally decided to continue in office without elections.

When he was invited by the President of Kenya, Daniel Arap Moi, to meet with General Mohamed Farah Aidid in January 1994, Egal thought it a good opportunity for him to persuade the Kenyan leader to
recognise “the Republic of Somaliland” but it was reported by The Standard of Nairobi, (Thursday 6 January 1994) that Egal “has been in Nairobi since last week for talks with General Aidid on the future of war-torn Somalia”. There was no mention that Nairobi was contemplating according recognition to the breakaway Northern region of Somalia.

This made it clear that his visit to Nairobi had no official character. He was in Kenya to meet with “another Somali leader”, Gen. Mohamed Farah Aidid, who himself was in Nairobi on a visit. And President Daniel Arap Moi of Kenya, who arranged the meeting, was playing only a mediator’s role.

Desperate to win the sympathy of the Kenyan President for his cause, Egal thought the Kenyan leaders were grateful for his signing of the Kinshasa Declaration and Arusha Agreement in 1967 which amounted to the renunciation of the Somali territory, the Northern Frontier District, NFD, and that they would support him.

During his short stay in Kenya, for personal triumph, the same man, the “architect of the Somali unity” inflicted another injury on the hearts of the Somalis, when he was quoted by the Standard Newspaper of Nairobi (6 January 1994) as saying: “I will fight Shifta”. The newspaper in its city edition said:

“The leader of breakaway Somaliland, Mr Mohamed Ibrahim Egal, yesterday pledged to help President Daniel Arap Moi to end the Shifta menace in the North-Eastern Province.

“Addressing the Somali community in Nairobi, Mr Egal said he would also support Somali warlord Mohamed Farah Aidid to form a
peaceful government in the Southern part of the country”.

The paper added:

“Mr Egal told his supporters that the dream of a greater Somalia by former leaders was no more and should be forgotten by peace-loving Somalis, adding that the former leaders had claimed parts of Kenya, Ethiopia and Djibouti as parts of greater Somalia. These claims were symbolised in the blue and white five-star Somalia flag”.

Would any Somali leader, no matter from which part of the country he hails, describe the Somalis in the NFD as “Shiftas”? To say that the unity of the Somali territories “should be forgotten” for the sake of individual selfish interest is a betrayal of the cause of national unity and the sacrifices made by the people. The failure of the policy of creating a breakaway republic is demonstrated by the fact that even such countries as Ethiopia and Kenya which have direct interest in the dismemberment of the Somali people, did not extend their recognition to “Somaliland”. For Ethiopia, the more the unity of Somalia is strengthened, the more they fear the Ogaden would join sooner or later: for Kenya, if Somalia returned to peace and solidified its unity, the fear is that the people in the NFD may one day want to join the Republic as they have already expressed such a wish in the referendum of 1962. This is also valid for Djibouti: the People in former French Somali Coast would like to be associated with their brothers in the Republic, because they were denied the right to join when the rest of the territories
united in 1960 and formed the Republic, due to strategic interest of colonial powers. As the strategic interests of the Big Powers have now changed and the regime in Ethiopia that collaborated with the colonial powers has perished, there are no more external obstacles to frustrate what Egal called “the dream of greater Somalia”. Because the Somali nation is one, divided only by outside forces, it is going to become one. Somalis are not like the people of the former Soviet Union with different languages, different cultures and customs which have been kept together by force under the facade of ideological bonds.

Britain, the former colonial power, besides giving away the Somali territories of Ogaden, Haud and the Reserved Area to Ethiopia in 1948 and in 1954, respectively and the Northern Frontier District (NFD) to Kenya in 1963, also gave the Island of Socotra in the Indian Ocean to South Yemen in 1967, seven years after Somalia’s independence.

A look at the map is enough to realise where the Island belongs. And according to official British documents available at the National Archives of India (NAI) in New Delhi, the Island’s description is as follows:

“The island of Socotra lies about 150 miles off Cape Guardafui on the African Coast and five hundred miles from Aden” [Yemen—Author].

....."an historical sketch published by ‘Phil Robinson’ in the year 1878, where it is mentioned, “the island of Socotra upon which the British flag has recently been hoisted lies
148 miles east of Cape Guardafui”.¹

And Cape Guardafui is actually in the main land of Somalia.

Sooner or later some one has to raise the question of recovering the Island and its dependencies, hopefully by understanding and peaceful means.

The Somali people are not like the peoples in what is called Ethiopia, which has variety of nations. Eritrea was not a part of Ethiopia and the Ogaden is not part of Ethiopia. Ethiopia or formerly Abyssinia was a multi-nation empire like the former Soviet Union or former Yugoslavia where the people spoke different languages and had different religions and cultures. Like the former Soviet Union or Yugoslavia the different nations in Ethiopia were kept together by imperial and dictatorial methods and not on the basis of their own free will. And like those countries, they are bound to go in different directions with each nation going back to its roots. We have already seen Eritrea getting its independence and we hope to see the people in the Ogaden joining their brethren in Somalia. Despite the continued existence of boundaries created during the colonial period, Somalis have always crossed into other Somali territories, because they do not recognize such artificial boundaries. Many well-known leaders of Djibouti had business, farms, etc. in Mogadishu and Shalambot or Jannaale. The same is true of a large number of people of the NFD and Ogaden who live and have parts of their families in the independent Somali Republic.

In his book, Assistant Professor of History at

¹. Note drawn up by Lieutenant Colonel Kitchener on the subject of lines of British communication in the Indian Ocean, India Office, London, 12 March 1886.
Rutgers University, S. Samatar wrote:

“It need be observed that by 1898, the year of the inception of the Somali resistance struggle, the main spheres of the three European powers and Ethiopia were tentatively formulated, though their boundaries were ill-defined, especially those between Britain and Ethiopia on the one hand and Italy and Ethiopia on the other. The Somali peninsula, one of Africa’s few homogeneous regions, was divided into mini-lands—into a British Somaliland, a French Somaliland, an Italian Somaliland, an Ethiopian Somaliland, and what came to be known as the Northern Frontier District (NFD) of Kenya. The unrealistic and opportunistic character of the partition of the Somalis was to prompt, decades later, Lord Rennell of Rodd to observe ruefully:

‘If we had been interested enough .... (and if the world had been sensible enough), all the Somalis .... might have remained under our administration .... But the world was not sensible enough, and we were not interested enough, and so the only part of Africa which is radically homogeneous has ... been split into such ... parts as made Caesar’s Gaul the problem and cockpit of Europe for the last two thousand years. And Somaliland will probably become a cockpit of East Africa’.”

For more than 12 days from 15 to 26 March the leaders of the Somali factions were in Addis Ababa for a National Reconciliation Conference which was due to last only five days. Ultimately on 27 March, after a marathon session at the Ethiopian Palace in Addis Ababa, an agreement was signed by all 15 leaders claiming to represent the various factions of Somali society. They signed the agreement under the supervision of the President of the Provisional Government of Ethiopia, Meles Zenawi.

There was a mixed reaction to the agreement. On the one hand, there were people who expressed the view that the agreement would not work. They believed that such a deep-rooted conflict could not be solved so easily and in so short a period. However, there were others who thought the leaders themselves had become tired of the war and that they were longing for restoration of peace. The Conference provided them a good opportunity for putting an end to the conflict. Of course, during the 12 days every faction involved in the conflict had bargained for the protection of its interests. The latter assessment was enforced by the fact that three days after signing the Agreement, the leaders had another meeting during
THE AFTERMATH

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Mogadishu—The UN Secretary General's Special Representative, Adm. (Rtd.) Jonathan Hawe greeting the author in one of the Peaceful Settlement of Disputes Committee meetings in 1993.

The streets of the capital reduced to ruins. The Arba Rukun Mosque is seen here.

The author shaking hand with Leonard T. Kapungu, Director for UN Political Division.

The historic Abdulaziz Mosque after 1991 civil war.
The face of the People’s Assembly before the Civil War of 1991.

The luxurious Hall of the People’s Assembly—Golaha Ummadda—stripped of all the seats including the Chairman’s chair and all the other facilities were looted.

The Central Garden in Mogadishu. Former Government building is seen in the background.  
*Photo by the author in 1993.*

Hotel Shebelle after the 1991 civil war.  
*Photo by the author in 1993.*
Citizens of Mogadishu showing brave faces even after their lives and the city have been mercilessly devastated by the civil war.

*Photo by the author.*

Hotel Al-Uruba after the 1991 civil war.

*Photo by the author.*

Addis Ababa—The author with the delegates to the Reconciliation Conference in 1993 queuing for pocket money.

New Delhi—The author with the Indian Tennis Guru Vijay Amritraj (center) and David Wilson, General Manager of Hotel Hyatt Regency (left) during one of the Vijay's Tennis Clinic at Hyatt Courts.

*Photo: Hyatt Regency, 1994.*
which another document was adopted. It laid down the procedure according to which a Transitional National Council was to be formed.

I had my reservations on these agreements. First of all, the agreements did not take into account the ground reality in Somalia. The most important item which should have been dealt with was the creation of an administration for the country. This, in fact, was not on the Agenda at all. Neither the Somali faction leaders nor UNOSOM gave adequate attention to the establishment of a national authority. Whether it were the Somali factional leaders who did not show any interest in the establishment of a national authority or that UNOSOM did not take interest in its formation on a priority basis, are questions that could never be satisfactorily answered, or whether they did not think it plausible to start the process of normalisation in Somalia with the establishment of a broad-based authority. In any case, the agreements concluded at Addis Ababa conference failed to end the blood-letting.

Consequently, the UN Security Council Resolution 814 (1993) of March 26, assured UNOSOM of the key role of the administering authority. It was clear, at least to me, that what had been achieved would be impossible to put into practice. The Addis Ababa Agreement's main article was “The Transitional National Council (TNC)” which would consist of three persons from each of the 18 regions, including one woman from each region, apart from one representative from each of the 15 factions which signed the Accord. We all know that there is no single region that has a settled population and no one asked how on earth any one could organise the selection let alone election of candidates to the council in a place
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where the inhabitants have fled their homes and those remaining are not registered. This is a nation in disarray. The main Agreement of 27 March did not even mention any date for the nomination. Among other things it only stated that the transitional period, will last for two years effective from the date of signature of the Agreement.

The lifespan of the Council was running out even before the preparations started. This Agreement could have been effective if the Council had been established while the groups were in Addis Ababa. The normal way in any abnormal situation like ours is first to establish a kind of administration in the form of a Council, a President or a Government which could act as an interim administration to run the affairs of the country for a period to be agreed upon by all factions. But for Somalia, the United Nations introduced a system so that it could run the affairs of the country. This happened because the Somalis themselves were unable to come up with a solution or a formula. Or perhaps the “the Somali leaders” for fear of losing the power they enjoyed among their supporters, in case they did not win the leadership seat, thought fit to see that no one got anything. But such a short-sighted approach cost the country dearly. In a country with such a magnitude of destruction with tens of thousands of people displaced, it was impossible to establish a Council consisting of members from regions that themselves needed to be re-established.

With mixed feelings of hope and despair I arrived in Mogadishu on 20 April 1993, the city I love more than any other city in the world. Last time when I was in Mogadishu in July 1990, the regime of Mohamed Siad Barre was in the final stage of its collapse. The
people were expecting his dictatorial rule would be replaced by a national democratic government. But instead it was followed by a national disaster, and unprecedented power struggle among those who had promised to lay the foundation of a democratic government wedded to the welfare of the people.

I arrived in Mogadishu by an aircraft taken on lease from Ukraine (a Republic of former Soviet Union) by the United Nations to carry its junior staff working in Somalia with UNOSOM, journalists as well as the Somalis who were going to Mogadishu to attend the reconciliation conferences and to Addis Ababa, Djibouti or Nairobi. Such aircrafts, made in the former Soviet Union, were originally meant for the transport of cargo or military equipment. The seats were of canvas which are stuck back on the wall when they carry heavy cargo. The plane was packed with consumer goods meant for the use of UNOSOM. Everything, the people, the boxes of mineral water marked “Kilimanjaro” and our luggage were all in the same place. I put my suitcase in front of my seat and my attache case on my lap and as the flight was of 2 hours duration I slept. There was no space for moving around or even to stretch one’s legs. For three hours (including an hour of waiting) we were treated like cargo on board. I could see the crew drinking something but to us even water was not offered.

From the airport I was taken to Hotel Lafweyne by a bus which was escorted by an armed car with Pakistani soldiers. All crossroads were guarded by blue beret soldiers.

I, a citizen of Mogadishu, was now unable to drive freely in the city for fear of being attacked by unknown gunmen. Even during the last few months of Siad
Barre’s rule, I had observed that in the streets of Mogadishu people were wounded by gunmen. Recruited by Siad, teenaged soldiers roamed the city. I know we have to die one day. But what happened here was that no one would even ask who’s the victim or who’s the killer. The courts had been abolished and the soldiers of the regime were given the license to kill anyone they pleased.

Along the route, on both sides of the road, one could see large-scale destruction of properties: roads, and the electric poles had been affected by the civil war. The houses were without roofs, doors or windows. I could not trust my own eyes.

A short distance from the centre of this devastated city is situated an impressive building, Palace Hotel Lafweyne, where UNOSOM guests mainly Somalis who had come to Mogadishu for the Reconciliation Conference, were accommodated. It was heavily guarded round the clock. First, there were the Italians who were later replaced by the Emirates’ soldiers. Due to complete destruction of its two power stations, the city does not have normal supply of electricity. The hotel relies on its own huge generators.

I immediately went in to attend a meeting of the Committee for Peaceful Settlement of Disputes. But there was some thing else more important on my mind: I wanted to know whether some thing has been done about the Transitional National Council. I asked those delegates who had arrived in Mogadishu before me. However, no one was able to answer my query though all indications were that nothing had yet materialised as no faction had given any thought to its formation. If there were members of the inner circles of the political organisations, such a development would have been leaked to the public.
Of the 45 days provided in the Agreement for nomination of members of the TNC twenty days passed without any action. In Addis Ababa, the factions agreed that as of 1 April 1993 and within 45 days, which would be over on 15 May 1993, the nomination must be completed. It was also agreed that the Charter Drafting Committee should start its work on 10 April 1993 in Mogadishu and complete the drafting within 45 days. The Charter Drafting Committee which consisted of two members from each political faction (one with political experience and another with legal expertise) started its work on time and did, in a relatively short time, a very commendable job. In fact, the Charter could have been ready within the established time frame. So it was also with the Committee on Peaceful Settlement of Disputes. It worked hard to draft necessary guidelines for the settlements of disputes relating to the properties which were illegally occupied by other persons, and properties looted during the civil war, as well as all State properties that had been grabbed by private persons. The Committee also dealt with the problem of restoration of agricultural and industrial machinery stolen during the crisis to their lawful owners.

After the conclusion of the first session of our meeting, the Committee decided to meet again on 23 May 1993.

I left Mogadishu by a UN flight to Nairobi on 27 April 1993 with confused impressions. After an absence of two years from Mogadishu, the destruction I saw during my sojourn was of massive proportions. But I still consoled myself with the hope that the days of misery and destitution of our beloved people and country would soon be over and we would rebuild
our country once again. With this optimism I left Mogadishu.

In Nairobi public opinion on the Somali crisis was divided: one group was totally pessimistic whereas another group was optimistic. The pessimists did not agree with my assessment that the situation in Somalia was improving, but there was a need to maintain the security and the efforts of peace-making. In support of my argument, I tried to tell jokingly those with negative views that “If I, a Reer Hamar, a Mogadishu man, who used to be described by some as a coward (fuley), could go to Mogadishu, it meant that the situation had improved.

There is an interesting anecdote portraying the attitude of the people of Mogadishu towards life.

While a couple were sleeping in their room, the wife heard some noise from outside. She got up and peeped through a window. She saw someone taking away their cow. She called her husband:

“Mohamed, Mohamed, wake up quickly”.

“What happened, who is there?” asked the husband, half asleep and shocked.

“Someone is stealing our cow”, she said in a frightened voice.

“Why are you worried, if he steals our cow, will he not bring it to the market place tomorrow morning? I will buy it back again”, replied the husband.

In short, Mohamed preferred to buy his own cow instead of facing a thief who might be armed. The moral of story is: life is more precious than material wealth. But the civil war has shown us that people who used to tease the Reer Hamars with such
provocative stories, themselves ran away to save their lives leaving behind all what they had.

The Reer Hamars say:

"Nafta waa macdahay". That means ‘life is sweet’.

They believe they can get back material wealth, but cannot get back life.

A month later, that is on 24 May 1993, I visited Mogadishu again. I was told that no progress had been made in the nomination of members of the Transitional National Council (TNC), although the deadline for its formation was already over. Not a single faction had nominated its members to the TNC. It was clear that the Addis Ababa Agreement like all other agreements that the factions had signed earlier, was not being implemented at all. However, we in the Committees, Charter Committee and Peaceful Settlement of Disputes, continued to do our job.

Of course, no one expected that the Transitional National Council could be established with members selected from the regions, where regional or even district authorities did not exist. Another absurd proposition was that the Northern Region, which has declared itself independent, would send its delegates to the TNC, although the Addis Ababa Agreement included it as part of the 18 existing regions.

As there was no national government, UNOSOM II was authorised by the UN Security Council Resolution 814 (1993) of 26 March 1993:

“to assist the People of Somalia to promote and advance political reconciliation, through broad participation by all sectors of Somali society, and the re-establishment of national and
regional institutions and civil administration in the entire country” (para c of the Secretary General’s report of 3 March 1993).”

Thus, UNOSOM II was assigned the task of coordinating and bringing various factions and parties together so as to restore normalcy in Somalia. As a result the entire responsibility of administering the country has fallen upon UNOSOM II, making it the de-facto authority to rule over the country. If such a situation is allowed to continue there is a possibility of UNOSOM II or some influential functionaries in it acquiring a vested interest and transforming Somalia into some sort of a UN administered territory.

Legally speaking, as Somalia is a member of the United Nations, the trusteeship system could not be applied to it. According to Article 77 of the UN Charter, the trusteeship system shall apply to such territories as may be placed thereunder by means of trusteeship agreements:

a) territories now held under mandate;
b) territories which may be detached from enemy States as a result of the Second World War; and
c) territories voluntarily placed under the system by States responsible for their administration.

In Somalia, the problem is confined to restoration of political order in a sovereign independent republic. Many people supported the intervention of the international community. We needed help, particularly for the security and well-being of our common people. We needed assistance for the rehabilitation of our nationhood, for the relief of human suffering. Although our people were
undergoing a tremendous burden of hardship, we could not compromise our national pride. The attitude and behaviour of some of the UNOSOM officials was absolutely intolerable. They showed a complete lack of understanding of our sensitivity. Their arrogant attitude was a constant source of irritation, mental torture and humiliation. They functioned in a manner as if they had come there not to help resolve the crisis but to rule over the Somali people. We were once under the United Nations, from 1950 to 1960, and that was enough. This time we ourselves were ready to accept the UN’s help to restore the political order which collapsed following the downfall of the regime of Siad Barre. But our good-will was frustrated by the arrogance of certain elements in the team of UNOSOM that was in Mogadishu to deal with the Somalis.

Some of us who questioned the efficacy of the role of the United Nations were arrogantly told by Leonard T. Kapungu, Director for UN Political Advisor that he enjoyed supreme writ over the country. In a meeting on 4 March 1994, he said that “UNOSOM II will administer you until there will be another authority that can take over the power”. He added: “I am the only one who can decide here”. He was the type of person who would flaunt his authority. However, Admiral Howe and his Deputy Ambassador Lansane Kouyate did not show such arrogance. Their behaviour was tempered with humility and an acute understanding of human nature. However, they too did not consider the Somalis as counterparts but as subjects.

The members of both Committees—the Charter Drafting Committee and Peaceful Settlement of Disputes Committee—were working very hard to
accomplish their task on time. We were working, in practice, for the United Nations or UNOSOM II, although some of the members were representatives of different parties or factions, as also of Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs). Therefore, we expected the UN to understand that we too, should get remuneration for the service that we were rendering. More so when we had no other source of income and the UN had earmarked a sum of US$ 166,478,600 in its budget for the period of 1 March 1993 to 31 December 1993 for the Emergency Programme of the United Nations in Somalia.

UNOSOM’s budget was the highest of all other UN organisations operating in Somalia. Of the US$29,527,600 budget, UNOSOM allocation US$20,000,000 was for employment and of that US$500,000 was for civil administration.

We realised that UNOSOM II officials were pretending to be deaf to what we were whispering, as we were trying to convey that we too should be paid for our services. But as a proverb says: “There’s none so deaf as those who do not want to hear”. However, we did not let it pass just like that. We acted in accordance with a legendary Somali proverb which says: “If a person is stupid hit the stick near by him, if he does not understand, hit it on him”. So we did.

The Charter Committee made a written request to UNOSOM and the Peaceful Settlement of Disputes presented its request orally to the Political Adviser, Kapungu, during a meeting of the Committee.

Since March 1992 Leonard T. Kapungu, had been working as a Political Adviser in Somalia under the Special Representative. Although he was an African, his behaviour was worse than a colonial master. Apparently, he did not know the history of the Somali
people or the struggle for the liberation of the country. He did not know how much we Somalis hated the colonial system.

When the Chairman of the Committee told him politely that the members of the Committee needed some remuneration his reaction was extremely childish. He said “I know the Special Representative of the Secretary General has no budget for such payment. But I know, since I have been working for the UN for twentytwo years, how to find and from where to find such a fund”. He repeated this ridiculous statement at least three times. There were funds for all aliens working as advisers, typists and cooks etc., but not for the Somalis for whose rehabilitation UNOSOM had been created. After all, we Somalis were working, and perhaps more sincerely and devotedly for the same cause.

In fact, Terrence Lyons and Ahmed I. Samatar mention in their book that:

“Kouyate and his staff developed a list of possible ways in which UNOSOM could help in implementing the agreement, such as providing consultants to assist the Charter Drafting Committee, offering support service (logistics, financial) for committee meetings and engaging observers to assist in selection processes for district and regional councils.”

On the 4th of June 1993 Kapungu came to our meeting to inform us that he had “succeeded” in getting US$100 each. He told us that if he had not

been there we would not have got even that sum. He expected that we would express our gratitude to him. Besides this allowance, there was also the question of travel fares which Kapungu refused to pay or refund to those who had paid their own fare coming to Mogadishu from distant countries.

To receive that small amount one had to mark his attendance on a sheet of paper everyday.

I was hoping that by 1 July 1993, the country would have its Transitional National Council and a National Government, thus ending the mental torture caused by the humiliation we were being subjected to. As the days passed by, our hopes were turning into despair and despondency as there were no indications of progress towards establishment of a national interim government.

In May 1993, UNOSOM II started sending its officials to various districts to establish District Councils, an exercise seen by some members as controversial.

The 92 districts in 18 regions that were functioning as on 31 December 1990 were to be covered by UNOSOM II. According to the report of the Secretary General by the end of July, a total of 21 district councils had been formed. It took UNOSOM two and a half months to establish 21 district councils and there were 71 more district councils to be formed. Each district council would select three of its members to serve on the regional council and each regional council would in turn select three citizens of the region to serve on the Transitional National Council.¹

¹ S/26317 dated 17 August 1993.
The Addis Ababa Agreement of 27 March 1993 stipulated that the duration of the Transitional National Council would be two years effective from the date of signature and the additional agreement reached between the political leaders at the consultations held in Addis Ababa on 30 March 1993.

The deadline passed without any steps taken towards the nomination of members of the TNC. It was thus clear that if UNOSOM continued to form district councils at that pace, it would need about a year or more until the TNC was established.

Therefore, I thought of suggesting to UNOSOM that we should find an expeditious way to establish the TNC. Before putting this proposal to UNOSOM I discussed it with a few members of the Committee who endorsed my idea. Then I approached the UN Political Adviser, Kapungu and told him of our concern over the delay in the formation of the TNC and the need to expedite its establishment. The month of May was coming to an end and we were uncertain about the formation of a national council and interim government by 1 July 1993. First July is a sacred date for Somalis as it is on this date that the South got independence and united with the North. It would have been a wonderful coincidence if our efforts were to fructify by 1 July 1993.

Kapungu frequently came to our meetings held in the Hotel Lafweyne. But it was rather difficult to get his attention, let alone listen to a person like me who was not a “Leader”.

But as I wanted to put this matter through, one day I followed him from the lounge of the Hotel up to his car. He was listening to me but did not slow the pace of his walk. He usually moved fast. I tried to keep pace while talking to him.
“I have a suggestion to make on the establishment of the TNC”, I said to him. Without waiting for his “go ahead”, I started telling him what I thought.

“You see, it is May and no faction has yet forwarded the nomination of the members to the TNC. So I suggest that the present Committees i.e. the Transitional Charter Drafting Committee, the Peaceful Settlement of Disputes Committee, the Cease-fire Committee and the Rehabilitation Committee members form the Transitional National Council, as they represent the various factions and non-political organisations, the religious, the women, the youth, intellectuals and the NGOs.”

Kapungu, without thinking for a moment, replied: “Who’s going to convince the leaders?” He asked me.

“They’ll also be included”, I answered.

That was all. Nothing happened. He was not impressed at all because he was not worried about the country’s need for an indigenous authority. He knew the moment we had a national government his duty would end. For me it was imperative to have a government if we wanted to organise the rest of the country.

Formation of a national authority meant putting an end to the services of the UN Political Adviser and his other colleagues in UNOSOM II. For Kapungu, the longer the chaos continued in the country the better for him.

We had been assigned the task of formulating rules and procedures for the settlement of property disputes, one of the most delicate problems caused by the civil war. We were supposed to produce documents to be used during the transitional period. To begin with, we had our first meeting in Addis Ababa. In the framework of the National Reconciliation Conference
held from 15 to 27 March 1993, we were given to understand that we were doing useful service for the country and the UN would encourage us to carry on our work seriously. But even before we ended our debates on this delicate problem, the UNOSOM staff started warning the delegates that the UN would not be responsible for our Hotel bills if the Committee did not end its job quickly. At least three times, the delegates were told that they must leave for their places of residence. I was wondering if this was the job required to be tackled for the National Reconciliation, why the UN wanted us to stop and go? Besides, it was UNOSOM that organised the meeting.

It seemed that UNOSOM was not really interested in completing the work assigned to various committees but merely wanted to show the world that the Committees were meeting. I still did not give up. I went to attend the next session (second) held in Mogadishu from 17 April 1993. There too, before we could prepare any paper, UNOSOM told the delegates that the meeting was over. In short, we were being used as show-piece. There were thirty members at the beginning of the second session, but, Kapungu told us during one of our meetings that “The world community is complaining about the composition of the Committee, because it comprises only delegates from factions. We suggest [his suggestions were always decisions] that thirty more members from non-political organisations must be added to make the Committee members 60. When a member at the other end of the long conference table raised his voice, perhaps to present a counter proposal Kapungu immediately showed his authority and said: “It is me who decides here”.

Then I intervened and sarcastically said: “No
problem. It will be useful to have more Somalis joining the Committee as they will bring in some new ideas”. Because I knew, whoever join the meeting would be coming from the same groups already represented. They would only increase the hotel bills. Only a naive person would think they would produce new policy.

In fact, UNOSOM had already decided to add thirty additional members. Moreover, all we were doing was unnecessary as UNOSOM had its own secret agenda for the Somali crisis. Some members, who were fed up with the way UNOSOM was acting, were commenting privately that the organisation had a hidden agenda.

The same thing happened during our meeting held in Mogadishu from 25 May 1993.

We worked day and night for five days but as the problems we were dealing with were extremely intricate, we could not prepare a final document within the stipulated time. However, the Chief Political Adviser told us that the time-limit would not be extended. A day before Special Representative Admiral Jonathan Howe had come to our meeting and praised our work. He used the occasion to criticise the Somali leaders. Without naming anyone, Admiral Howe said: “You are doing excellent work for the peaceful settlement of disputes”. He added:

“There are people who want to solve the problem with a gun. But we are against this”.

As we were keen to complete our work properly, the Committee rejected the idea of closing the session before finalising our recommendations and rules in the form of a document. What was the use of meetings if documents are not produced?
Then UNOSOM changed its position and came back with a proposal that a small number of delegates would be allowed to stay for a few days more to finalise the document.

On several occasions UNOSOM treated us as if we were beggars, though unlike many of its officials, we had more compulsive grounds. Our national interest demanded that we be there. If UNOSOM or Kapungu had already made some plan for Somalia why were they wasting the UN money at our cost?

I had the draft of the document we had prepared typed, ready for the approval by the members of our Committee who had been permitted to stay for the purpose.

As UNOSOM II claimed to be the administering power, delegates in the Committee for Peaceful Settlement of Disputes requested it to guard the territorial waters and air-space of the country. The Committee also asked UNOSOM II to protect the national assets and State properties. As far as housing for the UNOSOM II staff was concerned, the Committee suggested that the Government buildings should be repaired and used for the offices or even for accommodation. Everybody knew that hundreds of office buildings were vacant, as were residential houses. Some members also pointed out to UNOSOM officials that the Organisation had taken on rent houses whose owners were not in the country and it was dealing with ghost owners.

I could not understand why UNOSOM II was spending on rent for office and living accommodation or repairing private houses when there were so many government buildings lying vacant.

The sub-head of the first six-month cost estimate for the United Nations Operation in Somalia
(UNOSOM II) states:

**4. Premises, rental and maintenance:**

US$122,445.

"Provides for the purchase of prefabricated housing units, infrastructure repairs through Somalia covering the repair of bridges, airport and harbour facilities, the rental of office and living accommodation, regular maintenance, repairs, renovation and alterations of premises under contractual arrangements as well as utility costs."¹

There are many other things that could encourage the Somalis to participate in the reconstruction and rehabilitation of their country. There are thousands of educated Somalis, some even more educated than the expatriates, who should have been employed by the UN instead of bringing newly recruited international staff and UN volunteers. We have highly qualified civil servants who could help in reviving the administrative system.

Somalia had the best police force in Africa, trained by the Americans and Italians and equipped by the Germans. It also had its high ranking officers permeated with a spirit of nationalism discharging their duties without fear or favour. Some of them were active even during the two years when the force itself had fallen apart. So were many non-commissioned officers who were helping their brothers without being paid. They kept themselves away from the clan conflict. Nobody questioned their loyalty to the nation or their neutrality.

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The Somali Police force was not to be “established” but to be “re-organised”. And for that the UN only needed to consult the Somali officers who were active until the collapse of the Somali political system and also some surviving retired police officers.

But the Secretary General and his advisers, as they did in the case of the Civil Servants, completely ignored the existence of these valuable and knowledgeable officers. Instead, he told the Security Council:

“.... I had sent an expert team which, under the guidance of my Special Representative would prepare a plan for the establishment of a neutral police force in Somalia”.1

He further added:

“The team was requested to study the feasibility of establishing such a national police force, make recommendations and develop a strategy for implementation”2.

Even the auxiliary force that the UN “constituted” was composed of former police officers. They were there ready to work for their country.

It is understandable that experts are sent to countries of the Third World to help people to learn how to operate new machines, to handle newly acquired technology or to establish and train bureaucracy in a newly independent country. We too had received such international assistance before, soon after independence. That was more than thirty years ago. But a foreign expert, no matter how long

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2. Ibid., para 47.
he might have stayed in a country or know about it, cannot be a match for a native expert. He can be a good adviser, a consultant, but he can never be a substitute for a native expert or administrator. Why did the UN not employ Somali experts, who knew the environment better than foreign experts? After all no foreigner can do anything without consulting a local person. And in cases like this, only a local expert can do something about it. Besides, we know that nowhere in the Third World, have foreign experts done such a job of establishing a neutral civil or military authority. In fact, wherever such experts have been deputed they have further complicated the problem. Hence, conducting any “feasibility study” on the subject amounted to wasting scarce resources. It seemed to me that the whole exercise was unnecessary.
Eleven months after the Addis Ababa Agreement, the group led by Ali Mahdi Mohamed met in Cairo, Egypt, from 1 to 7 March 1994. The other group, led by General Mohamed Farah Aidid did not attend the meeting.

After seven days, the group came out with a new nine-page document in which the group, calling itself G12, concurred:

"1. To establish a Transitional National Salvation Council TNSC composed of 17 members as follows:

a) The 15 Chairmen of the Somali Political Organizations, Signatories of the Addis Ababa Agreement. Hon. General Mohamed Farah Aidid, Chairman of USC/SNA will be among them.

b) Chairman of SNM, who participated in the National Reconciliation Conference in March 1993, as an observer.

c) Hon. Ali Mahdi Mohamed whose membership was decided in accordance with the Addis Ababa Agreement."

The Cairo Document which has the title “Results of the Consultations amongst the Somali G12 Political organizations” also suggests the formation of a
Government and the preparation of a national constitution and general elections. In the end it calls upon the “the chairman of SNM and SNA to participate in the Joint Implementation” of the programme.

Although it is a common knowledge that Ali Mahdi Mohamed was the leader of the group, his name does not appear in the list of the signatories. The twelve who signed the Cairo Declaration were:

1. Mohamed Ramadan Arbow  SAMO
2. Mohamed Farah Abdullahi  SDA
3. Abdi Muse Mayow  SDM
4. Ali Ismail Abdi  SNDU
5. Omar H. Mohamed  SNF
6. Mohamed Ragis Mohamed  SNU
7. Aden Abdullahi Nur  SPM
8. Mohamed Abshir Muse  SSDF
9. Abdi Warsame Isaak  SSNM
10. Mohamed Qanyare Afrah  USC
11. Abdirahman Dualeh Ali  USF
12. Mohamed Abdi Hashi  USP

As expected, the Chairman of the SNA, General Mohamed Farah Aidid, did not pay any attention to the G12 Cairo Accord, but accepted United Nations sponsored “informal consultations” in Nairobi attended by all the signatories of the Addis Ababa Agreement of March 1993.

This meeting took place from 11 to 23 March 1994, a year after the signature of the Addis Ababa Agreement, which had not even taken off from ground. After two weeks of deliberations, the two main leaders, General Mohamed Farah Aidid and Ali Mahdi Mohamed signed another agreement on 24 March 1994, on behalf of their respective groups: General Aidid for the SNA and Ali Mahdi Mohamed for the
group that called itself the G12. This Agreement, like
the previous one, emphasised the need to restore the
sovereignty of the Somali State and the appointment
of a leadership.

However, this Agreement too did not produce
anything positive. It was just like any other resolution
that was signed by the groups. They keep signing and
they chose to avoid implementing them. In the
meantime, the people continued to suffer. The leaders
did not care that by not implementing their own
agreements and not maintaining their own words, it
affected their credibility. In all their agreements, the
leaders admitted that “there is the need to restore
the sovereignty” but then did nothing about it.

All the provisions of the Nairobi Declaration are
gone with the wind and no other agreement so far is
in sight.

DECLARATION BY THE LEADERS OF THE
SOMALI POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS

General Principles
1. Following the informal consultations in Nairobi,
from 11 to 23 March 1994, the political leaders of
Somalia have reached an understanding based on
the following principles:

(a) Inviolability of the territorial integrity and
sovereignty of the Somali Republic;
(b) Repudiation of any form of violence as a
means of resolving conflicts and implementa-
tion of cease-fire and voluntary disarma-
ment throughout Somalia;
(c) Respect for and preservation of fundamen-
tal human rights and democratic principles;
(d) Creation of an atmosphere conducive to
brotherly coexistence among all Somalis, using traditional channels, cultural and political means;
(e) Rehabilitation and reconstruction of the country to recover from the devastation of the civil war.

2. In specific terms, the leaders have agreed to implement the following:
(a) To restore peace throughout Somalia, giving priority wherever conflicts exist;
(b) To hold a meeting of the signatory factions of the Addis Ababa peace agreement and the Somali National Movement (SNM) on 15 April 1994 in Mogadishu to set up rules and procedures of voting and criteria of participation in the National Reconciliation Conference. The meeting will also discuss the ways and the modalities to establish the National Legislative Assembly, which will be formed after the formation of the National Government;
(c) In order to restore the sovereignty of the Somali State, a National Reconciliation Conference should be convened on 15 May 1994 to elect a President and Vice-Presidents (the number to be determined) and to appoint a Prime Minister;
(d) To complete and review the formation of local authorities, where needed, and establish them, where necessary, as a basis for regional autonomy and respect of community rights;
(e) To urge SNM to attend the above and all national reconciliation conferences, meet-
ings and consultations;
(f) To establish an independent judiciary.

**APPEAL TO THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY**

The Somali leaders wish to express their gratitude to the international community, particularly the United Nations, aid donor countries and countries of the region, for their valuable assistance and to request the continuation of these efforts until Somalia stands on its own feet.

Signed this 24th day of March 1994 on behalf of the Group of 12 and the Somali National Alliance:

(Signed)  (Signed)
Ali Mahdi Mohamed  Mohamed Farah
Group of 12  Hassan Aidid
SNA
It is interesting to see through the various political scenes in different countries in Africa. The dictatorship of Siad Barre collapsed in Somalia in January 1991 and Mengistu’s regime met with similar fate in Ethiopia in May 1991. However, the resistance movements which replaced Siad Barre failed to hold the country together. Instead of providing a healing touch to the strife torn nation, the new leaders, who should have played the role of saviours, were unable to control even their followers who indulged in wanton rampage, thus deepening the tribal/clan divide. Since the very beginning, after its independence in 1960, there has been a spiralling growth of clanism, nepotism, and corruption in Somalia. Educated and thinking people found the political environment in the country suffocating and unbearable. Some people, frustrated by the situation, nostalgically recalled “the good old days” of the colonial period when there was relative peace and “clean” administration. As the natives had no power, the evils of nepotism and corruption did not strike the society. After the collapse of the oppressive clanish rule of Siad Barre, the
people expected some relief. Alas! This was not to be. The roots of clanism have gone very deep and spread. We, as a nation, have completely failed and proved incapable of governing ourselves in a civilized manner.

Unlike in Somalia, the people of Ethiopia and their leaders, who had also ousted their ruling elite as well as those who replaced them, behaved in a much more restrained and civilized way. The Ethiopians were raptly watching the bloody Somali drama. They may have learnt a lesson from Somalia’s national tragedy and all the Ethiopian parties engaged in the power struggle took every precaution to avoid the Somali path—the path to national disaster—even though the political and other differences between the Ethiopian groups are much more acute than those of the Somalis.

Four months later, in May 1991, the Ethiopian resistance leaders belonging to different groups captured power in Addis Ababa. They did nothing to destroy or even disturb normal life. And the defeated regime too showed no resistance. The masses witnessed only a change of guard. No destruction, no mass killings, no rapes or looting. Everything went smoothly. All public utility institutions functioned without a break.

Having realised their objective of overthrowing the existing regimes, the leaders of the movements in Somalia and Ethiopia behaved differently. The Somalis turned their guns against each other and against their own people while the Ethiopians put their guns aside and started nation-building activities. This may be due to the fact that the movements in Ethiopia have been struggling for a long time. Even before they overthrew the Mengistu regime, they were controlling a large part of the territory. They
have been training their soldiers or militias with nationalist fervour. Their leaders, although mainly young, were politically mature, and their cadres disciplined. In the liberated areas, the movements established schools, hospitals and centres for social and political orientations, well before they overthrew the central government.

In Somalia the SNM (Somali National Movement), the SSDF (Somali Salvation Democratic Front), the SPM (Somali Patriotic Movement), USC (United Somali Congress), SDM (Somali Democratic Movement) etc. claiming to be liberators of the Somalis from the tyranny of Siad Barre, showed only the experience that they gained from Siad Barre—lust for power, self-aggrandizement, absence of discipline and nationalist spirit, and social cleavages based on clan loyalties.

We seem to be a self-righteous, arrogant and self-centred people. We are an uncompromising and inflexible people never willing to learn from our own or from others’ follies. The Somali is also a selfish character. If he wants something he will try to get it at any cost. He does not care about anything else, however harmful it may be, while achieving his objective. Pursuit of narrow self-interest without restraint has therefore brought total anarchy in Somalia. A handful of people want to rule over the country by force. And this relentless pursuit of power by any means has set the entire nation aflame.

Likewise, in Liberia, the power struggle between the regime of Sergeant Samuel Doe and his opponents degenerated into civil strife. After overthrowing “President” Samuel Doe, the opponents have been fighting with one another for power for over half a decade now. In the struggle, it is reported, at least
150,000 people have already lost their lives. Though several agreements have been concluded yet political stability is nowhere in sight. As a result, the stalemate continues and in the meantime, millions of people are suffering due to the civil war, hunger and disease caused by the war. But finally after five years of chaos, the groups formed, with the help of ECOWAS and other organisations, a Presidential Council. But then again in April 1996 fighting erupted between the factions and the situation deteriorated.

Thus, in several other African countries the common people are undergoing immeasurable sufferings while their leaders are either engaged in violent power-struggle or in siphoning off the meagre resources of their countries. These self-proclaimed leaders have no time and patience to look at the miseries and deplorable condition of the common men. Even if some friendly countries offer some help and assistance, these leaders cry hoarse of the menace of external interference in their internal affairs.

Africa is being destroyed by its own people, particularly by its leaders. Somalia which got its independence in 1960 has no internationally recognised government, no civil administration, no public health institutions. All its infrastructure has been destroyed during the civil war. Meaningful normal economic activities are at a standstill. In other words, we are at zero point. We have created a violent generation for whom killing has become a normal activity.

Most of the rulers and members of the ruling elite in various countries of Africa, were trained or educated in the West, in Britain, Italy, France or in Portugal, that is, the countries which are cradle of democracy. But when they assumed power in their homelands
they denied their countrymen the same civil liberties they enjoyed themselves in those countries—participating in democratic rallies, delivering speeches without fear and hindrance, publishing pamphlets etc.

Though most of the African countries gained their independence after 1960, more than thirty years later, by and large, they have failed to develop their economies and to meet the aspirations and basic requirements of their people. Even today when all other continents are improving their peoples’ condition, the African masses are faced with the problems of hunger, disease and ignorance. African leaders are themselves responsible for the poor performance of the continent’s economy. The ruling elite of Africa, with the collaboration of former colonial masters, have exploited the resources of their own countries in exchange for personal benefits for themselves.

According to the German News Agency (d.p.a.—Deutsche Presse—Agentur) report from Nairobi, Kenya dated 5 March, 1995:

"The Africans are worse off than they were 30 years ago when the continent’s states became independent. Then Africa was at least able to feed itself but now famine has become a permanent factor."

The report said, since 1990 Africans have been becoming poorer by 1.5 per cent annually, according to the United Nations. Over 250 million people, half of the continent’s inhabitants, live below the poverty line.

The d.p.a. reported:

"Despite a good harvest last year, millions of
people depend on food aid. Entire countries like Somalia and Liberia torn by civil war have ceased to function as normal nations. Other countries on the brink of abyss include Zaire, Rwanda, Burundi and Sierra Leone.”1

Right from the beginning of the decolonisation of Africa, the former colonial powers established neo-colonial structures in which the ruling elite of the newly independent countries was coopted as willing instruments of exploitation of the African peoples. Constitutional experts and legal luminaries of western countries assisted the newly independent countries of Africa in drafting their constitutions which are virtual copies of the constitutions of western European countries.

All such constitutions contain the noble principles of liberal democracy, fundamental rights, civil liberties political pluralism, and rule of law. The holding of periodical elections on the basis of universal adult suffrage form an integral part of these constitutions. But these constitutional provisions have never been sincerely implemented in any of the African countries. The ruling party/parties which grew out of the liberation movements invariably circumvented their constitutions and political processes in their favour. For instance, there were more than 80 political parties and groups in Somalia before the military coup. But the Somali Youth League, with the help of Italian experts always managed to win the elections to the national Parliament. Similarly, in most other African countries the national liberation movements were converted

1. d.p.a., Nairobi, 5 March 1995, Reproduced by Times of India, 6-3-95.
into ruling parties which proclaimed that they were the sole and legitimate political parties. Leaders of such parties nominated their candidates for elections, had the ballot papers printed and invariably their nominees got elected.

Certain famous leaders in Africa, after squandering the economic resources and the political systems of their countries thought morally fit to quit after sensing that their popularity was diminishing. But they still want to take the credit for the political changes that are taking place in their countries, changes that they refused to bring about when they were holding power. However, it is still better late than never. At least they saved their countries from internal conflict that could cause the collapse of the State.

At the beginning of the sixties, the defence forces of most African countries were not so large as they have grown over the years. During the early years after independence, the Armed Forces, which were trained to defend their nations from external enemies, kept a distance from politics. But gradually they realised that the so-called external enemies were either former colonial powers or multinational companies which were exploiting the natural resources with the connivance of some native powerful groups and leaders.

The neo-colonialists or their multinationals took away precious natural resources from the continent by extending nominal financial support to the ruling elite (families). And the ruling despots amassed wealth in foreign banks. In return the neo-colonialists extended moral, material, diplomatic and military support to these despots. The neo-colonialists were least concerned about the deteriorating economic or
political conditions in the continent. But soon the armed forces realised that the civilian leaders were acting against the national interests, creating division among the people, discriminating among the citizens, amassing wealth and encouraging corruption and malpractices.

The Armed Forces were inspired by nationalist spirit and high morality. Corruption and sectarianism had not yet touched them. To bring a semblance of order and to put their countries back on the road to nation-building, the forces in many African countries captured political power in what was called ‘revolution’. However, the civilian leaders who had lost power called it “coup d’etat”. Unfortunately the Armed Forces themselves were later corrupted by power.

Lord Acton, who lived in the second half of the 19th Century, wrote: “Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely”.

In Africa, the first military coup d'etat took place in Egypt on 23 July 1952 when a group of officers called “Free Society of Officers” captured power and forced King Farouk to abdicate. The leader of the Egyptian coup was General Mohamed Naguib. General Naguib was toppled by Col. Gamal Abdel Nasser on 14 April 1954. He died on 28 September 1970. Then another military officer, Col. Mohamed Anwar Sadat took over on 28 September 1970. Sadat was assassinated on 6 October 1981 and after his death, yet another army officer, Lt. General Mohamed Hosni Mubarak grabbed power on 7 October 1981. Since then Mubarak has been elected and re-elected for a third six-year term as President of Egypt in the “elections” of 1993. He was “supported” by the whole parliament of 454 members with only 15 MPs opposing
his candidacy.

Anwar Sadat was Vice President and became President following the untimely death of President Gamal Abdel Nassir. Hosni Mubarak himself was Vice President and took over the Presidency after the assassination of President Anwar Sadat in 1981. But for one reason or another, Mubarak refuses to have a Vice President.

Mubarak narrowly escaped an assassination attempt in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 26 June 1995. It was as soon as he arrived in the Ethiopian capital for the summit of the Organisation of African Unity. He was unhurt but did not stay for the OAU Meeting. He immediately returned back to Cairo.

In a wide ranging interview with the American Television, the CNN, in mid April 1996, Mubarak was asked by Hilary Bowker, among many other questions, the following:

**CNN:** “You survived, last year, an attempted assassination; there are some who worry, what would have happened had that attempt been successful? They look at you and see you and Egypt, almost as one, because there’s no potential successor seen. Why is it you don’t have the Vice President? Why is it that there doesn’t seem to be anyone that you are bringing along to be a potential replacement; should the need arise for one reason or another?

**Mubarak:** “I think those who say that doesn’t know our Constitution. Our Constitution says if the President dies or assassinated or anything, the Speaker will take over for sixty days. If there is no Parliament; the Parliament is dissolved, the Head of the Supreme Court
will take over. Then the process will work. One third of the members of the Parliament could propose a name and have the signature of one third of the members proposed to the Parliament. That means there could be proposed three names to the Parliament and any of them who will have two-third majority in the voting in the Parliament could be sent to the plebiscite, to the public to say their opinion. So there is a procedure to.... But the Constitution does not oblige me to appoint a Vice President. It says the President could appoint Vice Presidents. Not only one. And when I was appointed Vice President I was appointed not only to be a successor to Sadat. [it sounds like that—Author] But I was appointed just to help him in work. That’s all.”

CNN: “You feel no need to, sort of, share the burden?”

Mubarak: “Nnnnneee, I think we have the Prime Minister doing.....

The Vice President has no work, according to the Constitution, unless the President needs some one. The work is being done by the Prime Minister and his government. I don’t want to create problems now by naming somebody to be a Vice President. He may not be elected and when I thought of that sometime in the early eighties....I received written letters from some of the legislators saying ‘don’t appoint a Vice President that means this will be your successor. We don’t agree to that’.
I said all rights. Leave to the Constitution”. 1

Mubarak sticks on for various reasons, including love or lust for power or fear of losing it. Some analysts say his dilemma is:

(a) He is afraid to appoint a civilian Vice-President, because the Army objects to this. They believe in case of death of the President, the civilian will step in and that will be the end of the military control.

(b) He is afraid to appoint a Military Officer Vice-President, because he [Mubarak] thinks that a Military Vice-President might topple him or even kill him.

For the last half a century, the Egyptian people have been governed only by military officers who with iron fist have suppressed political opposition, and what we see today in the streets of Cairo and other cities of Egypt is a direct result of political and military dictatorship and oppression.

Military officers stage coups because they feel that civilian political leaders are corrupt or do not uphold national prestige or that they neglect the interests of their citizens. But what happens when military officers grab power? As long as military officers do not taste the flavour of power they play the role of protectors of the nation. But when they themselves wield political power they feel that they are the natural leaders to exercise it because it is they who defend the honour of country. An army officer comes to believe that he has every right to lead the country because unlike a civilian leader he is duty bound to even sacrifice his life for the defence of his country. That may be correct, but the problem is,

1. Literal transcription from the CNN Programme.
once a military officer grabs power, he becomes obsessed with it, becomes ‘power-holic’, corrupt, intransigent and hardly improves the general situation of people and the country. In most cases, he even destroys what existed before he came to power. For many years the Army officer/leader operates with his military uniform and then later to keep himself in power, puts aside the uniform and begins wearing a civilian suit, a black suit, white shirt and tie. The title will change from “Chairman of the Revolutionary Council” to “President of the Republic” or “Head of State”. The uniforms are changed, the titles are changed and in the meantime the people’s condition continues to change from bad to worse.

Nigeria is the continent’s largest populated country, with about 120 million people. It has a high level of literacy but has enjoyed only 9 years and 5 months of civilian rule in over three decades of independence. The rest of the period the country has spent in coups and counter coups. The country gained independence on 1 October 1960. The first coup took place on 15 January 1966 when Maj. Chukwuma Nzegwu overthrew the first civilian President, Nnamdi Azikiwe. A few months later, in July 1966, another group of military officers staged a counter-coup. General Yakubu Gowon took power and ruled the country until 1975 when he was overthrown by General Mortalla Mohamed. On 13 February 1976 General Mohamed was assassinated, but the military regime survived. The Supreme Military Council which remained in power nominated General Obosanjo, who was Chief of Staff, as the Head State.

Unlike his other colleagues in Nigeria or in other countries of Africa or other Third World countries, with the exception of Gen. Abdurahman Swar-ad-
Dahab, who after the military toppled the regime of Gen. Jafar Mimeri in Sudan in 1985, handed over the power to an elected government within one year, General Obasanjo organised political elections and on 1 October 1979, Shekhu Aliu Osman Shagari, won the elections and became President of the Republic. He became the first Executive President of the country. In August 1983, President Shekhu Shagari was re-elected, but a few months later, in December 1983, he was toppled by a military coup led by Maj. General Mohamed Bukhari. But he too was pushed out by General Ibrahim Babangida on 27 August 1985.

After 8 years in power, Babangida decided to hold political elections. He dictated that there should be only two parties and prohibited any third group or party from contesting in the elections. The largest and the richest nation Africa, has to abide by the rules of one military dictator. Though on 12 June 1993, elections were held, the General ordered the Elections Committee to withhold the results. Then he cancelled the whole outcome. A candidate of the party which believed that it had won the elections, took the case to the High Court. However, the High Court ruled that “the decision of the Military cannot be overturned”. Babangida passed the power to another officer, Gen. Sani Abacha. Thanks to the patience and tolerance of the people of this great country, there were no large scale upheavals except for a few small demonstrations. So what is going to happen to this rich country of the continent?

It is a pity to see that a country like Nigeria is seething under the yoke of military dictators. With all the resources it has, Nigeria has accumulated huge debts. With all its educated and talented people
it cannot meet its own expenses. The country produces 1.6 million barrels of oil a day and recently when, as it was said, the refineries stopped working, the people had to queue for petrol. The country has three refineries, at Port Harcourt, Warri and at Kaduna. But due to political chaos for sometime all of them were not functioning properly.

Like most African military dictators, General Sani Abacha, pursued policies which were meant to suppress the morale of the great nation of Nigeria. He refused to recognise the democratic right of the people who with great enthusiasm went to the polls to elect their representatives. How much energy and money are spent to conduct elections? Do military leaders care about the expenditure on such elections? Not at all. What they care is about power. They talk in the name of the people but they suppress and humiliate them. Nigeria and Egypt should have been beacons of democracy in Africa.

The Regime refused even to announce the results of the 12 June 1993 elections which itself had decreed to be held. What is worse is the Nigerian High Court’s judgement concurring with the diktats of the military dictator. The Military’s decision was strongly criticised by various countries including the United States and Great Britain which imposed selected sanctions to show their anger against the annulment of the elections.

Take Algeria, a country of nearly 25 million people. The people of Algeria waged a bitter and long struggle for their independence from France. Ultimately on 3 July 1962, Algeria won its freedom. The first President of Algeria was Ahmed Ben Bella, but only three years later on 19 June 1965, his government was overthrown by a military coup led by Col. Houari Boumedienne.
After his death in February 1979, Col. Chadli Bendjedid became President of Algeria and was twice re-elected in 1984 and in 1989.

Algeria has rich deposits of mineral resources such as oil, gas, zinc, lead, mercury, iron, silver, antimony, copper and kaolin. Like most other African countries, Algeria too was governed by one party for thirty long years after its independence. In 1989 the ruling party, the Front de Liberation Nationale (FLN) under strong external pressure reluctantly agreed to introduce a multi-party system. The leaders of the FLN had mistakenly believed that they would win the elections even after introducing a multi-party system. They underestimated the silence and unexpressed anger of the masses who successfully fought one of the most violent struggles for the liberation of their motherland. When the Government decided to hold elections 46 political parties registered themselves. The chance to demonstrate their power had come for the people. In the first municipal elections, the main opposition, the Front Islamique Salut (FIS), won most of the municipal seats. That was the first shock to the ruling FLN government. Again in the general elections for national assembly held on 26 December 1991, the FIS won the majority of seats in the first round. According to the Algerian Constitution, there must be a second round, which was due to be held in January 1992. The leaders of the FLN realised that to go to the polls in the second round, would be a suicidal step. Therefore, to stop the Islamic Front taking power, the FLN Government had to find a pretext to cancel the second round to prevent the FIS from coming to power. President Bendjedid resigned and created a constitutional crisis and a situation for suspension of the final elections. Since the cancellation
of the 1992 elections, thousands, nationals and foreigners, have lost their lives.

Like the rest of the African countries, after three decades of one party domination characterised by political and economic mismanagement, Algeria was confronted with a crisis of political legitimacy. Faced with the spectre of defeat in the elections the ruling party suspended the constitutional process and introduced martial law. Millions of Algerian youths are jobless and hundreds of thousands have no roofs over their heads. Today Algeria’s foreign debts amount to 25 billion US dollars, so each of the 25 million people owes to the foreign financial institutions US $1,000.

Religion cannot be blamed for what is happening in Algeria, because there is no religious contest, as the majority of the population are Sunni Muslims. There are only about 150,000 non-Muslims in the country. It was popular anger against suppression. It was a vote against dictatorship. And what is happening now in Algeria is the price that those who have created the situation are paying.

Liamine Zeroual who was elected President on 16 November 1995 admitted in his message to the nation that:

“A few days ago, the Algerian nation elected the President of the Republic for the first time with pluralism of choice and transparent freedom—a pluralism and a freedom through which Algeria restored to their rights the genuine virtues of democracy and the cardinal preponderance of the people’s sovereignty.”

Angola, country of diamonds and oil, got independence on 11 November 1975. Since then it has been involved in civil war. The sole legal party, MPLA (Movimento Popular de Libertacao de Angola) supported by the former Soviet Union and Cuba fought for about two decades against the opposition movement UNITA (Union Nacional para a Independencia Total de Angola) which was supported by the United States of America and South Africa. After a prolonged political crisis general elections were held in November 1992 under UN and international supervision and the MPLA secured a majority. However, the UNITA leader, Jonas Savimbi refused to accept the outcome of the elections and the civil war between Government forces and the opposition movement continued.

Although the elections in Angola were described by foreign observers as free and fair, Savimbi, who thought he should have won, rejected the results of the elections. All the powers, including USA which supported him in the war accepted the electoral verdict. If he was sincere and faithful to the people of his country he should have accepted their choice and participated in the process of reconstruction of country, which has been devastated by the genocidal war. This would have enabled him to contest the next elections and perhaps defeat his rivals. But alas! African leaders have not shown such magnanimity and statesmanship. If they are not in power or lose power as a result of a popular verdict against them they turn their wrath against the people. Whether they wage war on their own people on their own free will or they are mere instruments in the hands of some invisible enemy of the people of Africa, one can never be certain.
Benin, formerly Dahomey, gained independence on 5 August 1960 and until 1991 it had gone through the agony of six military coups. The government of Maurice Yameogo was overthrown by military coup on 3 January 1966. The second coup took place on 25 November 1980, the third on 7 November 1982, and within a year the fourth coup on 4 August 1983. After a gap of four years another coup took place on 15 October 1987 and the sixth one occurred on 18 September 1989. So many coups in a country which needs to provide its people with tools to combat illiteracy, disease and hunger! While people need to settle down in peace and create happiness, political leaders, officers of the armed forces from sergeant to general, are always busy in intrigue to grab power, no matter at what cost.

In Africa where most of the people suffer from malnutrition, lack of hygiene, high infant mortality rates, the so-called leaders make themselves rich at the expense of their own poor citizens. The leaders are involved in promoting their narrow self-interest and to some extent, the interests of their relatives and tribes before they are toppled. Some of them transfer international assistance given to the country to their private accounts in foreign countries.

Lance Morrow writing in *Time International* n. 36 of 7 September 1992, said among other things,

“Mali, Liberia and Congo have announced legal moves to recover assets they say were stolen under previous one-party regimes.”

The Central African Republic gained independence on 13 August 1960. The first government led by David Dacko was overthrown by Colonel Bokassa with the help of the Armed Forces after just 4 years
and 4 months of independence. Bokassa ruled the country in a highly dictatorial manner and in 1976, he drafted a constitution making the country an Empire and naming himself “The Emperor”.

Bokassa, whose country is one of the Least Developed Countries (LDC) came under fire from all corners of the world when he built for himself an Imperial Throne which the country’s economy could hardly afford. According to the Statesman Year Book 1990-91, the Central African Republic’s population was 2.9 million (1988) and for them there were 104 hospitals and health centres with 3,774 beds; 112 doctors, 6 dentists, 16 pharmacists, 168 midwives and 710 nursing personnel. Emperor Bokassa became the shame of Africa, and his “European friends” while laughing at him behind his back, were in the meantime constructing a golden throne for him.

In September 1979, the brute Emperor was overthrown and his empire was abolished. On 15 March 1981 David Dacko was re-elected President. But 6 months later on 1 September 1981, Dacko was once again overthrown by General Andre Kolimba. In April 1996 the Soldiers took to the streets to demand payment of wage arrears. The Government paid them. They mutinied again on May 18,... and what started as military mutiny has built on the residual discontent of professionals who have not been paid, said one diplomat.¹

“How can a country of 620,000 sq. km. (239,380 sq. miles) with all the wealth in the world and only 2.5 million people have no money? said Apollinaire Bira Demba, 31.....”².

The President, Ange-Felix Patasse responded to

2. Ibid.
street protests by banning demonstrations.

About 1,000 French troops, some already based in the former French African colony under defence accords, have fanned out in Bangui with tanks to help quell the mutiny which has killed at least seven people.¹

Chad, which attained independence on 11 August 1960, never had peace in its 33 year history. Coup after coup. Various tribal groups have been involved in fratricidal conflict. Besides their internal conflicts, the Chadians also suffer “the external assistance” syndrome. Each group has a supporter from outside which supplies arms. In the meantime, it is the people who are suffering.

The Comoros, officially known as the Republique Federale Islamique des Comoros, has a population of less than half a million. The Federation is composed of three islands situated between mainland Africa and Madagascar. Almost the entire population is Sunni Muslim. The islands were declared independent on 6 July 1975, but only less than a month later, the first government of Ahmed Abdullah was toppled in a coup led by Ali Soilih. After three years, in May 1978, Ahmed Abdullah regained power with the help of foreign mercenaries led by Bob Dinar. In November 1989, Ahmed Abdullah was assassinated. Bob Dinar who became part of the system, as the local leaders became indebted to him, attempted one more coup in September 1995. But the French, for one reason or another, intervened militarily and foiled the coup and arrested him.

However, with the blessing of France the Prime Minister took over the reign in what looks like a mini

¹. Reuter, May 21.
coup. But soon the OAU mediated between the leaders and restored the situation.

Like Mayotte, the Comoros could have stayed under French occupation, as its leaders were unable to handle an independent territory. Instead of making use of their freedom and taking advantage of their international relations with other countries, the leaders became busy with themselves. There are leaders in Africa who covertly use foreign forces to maintain their rule or to grab power. Likewise, there are leaders who use foreign forces to maintain themselves in power under the garb of “defence or security” agreements. But the leaders in the Comoros, not only used foreign forces overtly, but used well-known foreign mercenaries. Had its leaders been sincere nationalists, the tiny country could have been transformed as a model of peace, prosperity and development with the assistance it received from the world community, or from with their own resources.

The Comoros, like most African countries, have a kind of constitution, but they do not follow it. The so-called leaders, prefer to grab the power by means other than constitutional.

The Republique Populaire du Congo (Congo) with Brazzaville as its capital, has a population of about 3 million. Congo got its freedom on 15 August 1960. On 15 August 1963, the military deposed its First President, Fulbert Youlou, in a coup d’état led by Alphonse Massemba-Debat, who became Head of State on 19 December 1963. He too was toppled in a coup in August 1968. Major Marien Ngouabi led the coup and appointed his friend in the Army, Major Alfred Raoul as the President. A few months later, on 1 January 1969, Ngouabi himself took over the reins of power.

That is how things are in Africa. No time for
Leadership Failure in Africa

development, no peace. People suffer from fear of who is coming next. The coups are staged not for the nation but for certain individual interests. Major Marien Ngouabi was killed on 18 March 1977 and was succeeded by Col. Joachim Yhombi-Opango, who was also removed from power on 5 March 1979 by Col. Denis Sassou-Nguesso.

Finally, the people of Congo woke up and demanded the introduction of a multi-party system. After thirty years of independence the Congolese people forcefully won the approval of President Sassou-Nguesso to hold a referendum and by an overwhelming majority voted for a multi-party system. As a result a transitional government was formed.

Late in 1992, Pascal Lissouba was elected President of the Republic. But the former military leader Denis Sassou-Nguesso, who thought he would win the elections, has been busy in mobilising opposition groups to make it difficult for the new President to run the new government.

Constructive opposition is essential for the smooth functioning of a democratic system but it should wait until the agreed moment for elections to come. And the only way to ensure a smooth democratic process is to let the people decide in free and fair elections.

The problem of politicised army officers is that they have no patience. For them the only method of governing is the rule of the gun. Except for the first governments formed following the attainment of independence, the continent has only seen military regimes. Of course, the civilians are not immune from corruption, tribalism, nepotism and mismanagement, but they must be given their chance to prove their ability to combat these evils. If they are
found incapable of doing so, then let the people decide.

The country with no history of military coups, but with absolute dictatorship of the late President Houphouet Boigny is the *Cote D'Ivoire* (Ivory Coast). Politicians of the Ivory Coast were elected before independence to represent the country in the French National Assembly as well as in the Council of the French Republic (Senate) in 1947-48 and in 1955.

The eldest statesman, the late Felix-Houphouet-Boigny, President of the Republic, was an Ivorian who represented the country in the French Parliament. When the country was given autonomous power within the French community, Felix-Houphouet Boigny was nominated Prime Minister. And when Ivory Coast gained complete independence on 7 August 1960, Houphouet Boigny became its first President.

Despite all their training and experience in the functioning of democracy he and his colleagues had in the French Parliament and in the French Schools, and despite the civil rights they enjoyed under the French imperial patronage, Houphouet Boigny and company established in their own country a political system which had no resemblance with what the people of the country enjoyed under the French yoke. In 1985 President Houphouet Boigny was elected for a sixth 5-year term. He was supposed to be the man to teach Africa the democratic way of life. By this stage he should have been sitting somewhere, even in a huge palace, as an advisor to the young generation, as the father of the nation.

He could stick on to power but not to life. Houphouet-Boigny died in 1993.

Djibouti is the name of the country formerly known as *Cote Francaise des Somalie*. It is also the name of
its capital. Somalia was divided into five territories. Djibouti was one of them. It was ruled by France until it attained independence on 27 June 1977. It stayed separate from the Republic of Somalia, consisting of two other parts, former Italian Somalia and former British Somaliland which obtained independence in 1960. The other two territories are the Ogaden, under Ethiopia and the Northern Frontier District (NFD) under Kenya.

The French Government decided to eliminate the name “Somali” by changing the territory’s name into the “Territory of Afars and Issas”. It was clearly a colonial move to create trouble for the inhabitants. And it did work; what is happening in the country—political turmoil—is the result of French mischief, to create shareholder to confuse the ownership of the territory.

Djibouti did not join with the rest of the territories which formed the Republic of Somalia. It was named “Jamhouriyya Djibouti” and Hassan Gulaid Aptidon was elected first President of the Republic for a six-year term. According to the law approved by the Constituent Assembly on 10 February 1981, the President is directly elected for a six-year term, renewable for a second term. But Hassan Gulaid Aptidon made it possible that he could be elected not only “once more” but for as many terms as he wished. He was elected for the first term in 1977, for the second, third and fourth terms in 1981, 1987 and 1993. Like other African leaders, he formulated or twisted the laws according to his own liking. He made the country a one-party State in October 1981. After strong pressure from within and outside, he agreed to change that policy and allowed other parties also to contest the elections. In the elections of 1993,
some parties boycotted, while some participated in them. He won 60% of the votes in the first round. At the end of the next term, Hassan Gulaid will have been ruling the country for 22 years, one year more than Mohamed Siad Barre, who ran the other parts of Somaliland for 21 years.

Equatorial Guinea, a former Spanish colony, won its independence on 12 October 1968. It has a population of just about 350,000. This is the country to which even Somalia sent, in the early seventies, technical assistance, a military officer and a nurse.

The first President of the country, Francisco Macias Nguema, instead of going through with the preparation of a constitution or creating political institutions, declared himself President for life in 1973. But his tiny Army of just 1100 personnel overthrew him in 1979. In 1987 the rulers established a single party system. In that tiny country the leaders are only busy grabbing power and the people are at their mercy.

Ethiopia, formerly Abyssinia, is said to be the oldest Kingdom in Africa with the shortest period of colonial experience. In 1936 the country was conquered by Italy, which was later defeated by the British forces in 1941.

Known as the “Conquering Lion of the tribe of Judah, Haile Selassie I elect of God, Emperor of Ethiopia”, the leader assumed power in 1930. During his reign the Emperor was the rudest ruler in the region. While his people were suffering from hunger and disease he was feeding his pet dogs with meat. He utilised the most dangerous prison known as “Alambaga” to which he sent whoever he considered a threat to his power and no one is known to have come out of it alive. “Alambaga” means end of the world.
Leadership Failure in Africa

Ethiopia, especially under Haile Selassie, was the blue eyed boy of the European powers which helped him suppress the forces that were struggling for their freedom. The western powers had a soft spot for him, especially because he claimed that his country was “an island of Christianity in a sea of pagans”.

Haile Selassie ruled Ethiopia for 44 years, and one can see on the faces of his people, fear and sadness in the streets of Addis Ababa. Very few had the means of eating three times a day. When I visited Addis Ababa in 1973, I observed that the fear of the security men was much worse than what we had in Mogadishu under the dictatorial regime of Siad Barre. Tapping of telephones was a common practice. Like the other old African leaders, such as Habib Bourguiba of Tunisia, Houphouet Boigny of the Ivory Coast and Hastings Banda of Malawi, Haile Selassie tried to stick to power by all means and did not show any inclination of sharing power through democratic political reforms. No one dared to question the absolute power of the Emperor and some even worshipped him. Apart from Ethiopia, he was also worshipped in Jamaica. His followers are known as the Rastafarians. The famous reggae singer, Bob Marley, never performed before bowing at the portrait of Emperor Haile Selassie. Many of his followers believed in his supernatural powers, including immortality. During his long reign, the Emperor did nothing to improve the lot of his people as his country was one of the most underdeveloped and the foreign aid given to his country was largely devoted to military build-up, thus neglecting economic and social development.

Discontent among the educated and politically aware sections of the people was growing. In 1964 an
attempted coup against the Emperor did not succeed. It was said that the diplomatic missions of some eastern European countries in Addis Ababa played an important role to cultivate leftist youths. The armed forces personnel sent to the United States in the sixties for training returned disgruntled due to the racial discrimination that existed in America. They established contact with the leftist youth groups working against the penetration of the western capitalist system.

On 12 September 1974, exactly ten years after the first attempted coup, the Army overthrew the “Conquering Lion of the Tribe of Judah, Haile Selassie I, Elect of God, Emperor of Ethiopia”. He was first kept at the Military Camp IV Division. But as the military rulers feared that his supporters might try to rescue him, Haile Selassie was shifted to the Menelik Palace, which the military thought was more secure than the military camp.

On 23 November 1974, sixty military and civilian leaders were executed. General Aman Andom, Chairman of the Provisional Military Administrative Council, was among them. Again on 3 February 1977, Brig. General Teferi Bente, Chairman of the Provisional Military Administrative Council was also killed while chairing a meeting of the Council. With him, six other officers were also killed. Lt. Col. Mengistu Haile Mariam, who was one of the Vice-Chairmen, appointed himself as Chairman of the Provisional Military Administrative Council.

On that fateful day, Mengistu had called for an emergency meeting of the Council in the midst of rumours that the Chairman was going to arrest him. Mengistu went to the meeting prepared to eliminate General Andom and others with the help of his trusted
officers. He had decided to act first to forestall the alleged plot against him.

As soon as he took over power, Mengistu Haile Mariam erected statue of “Comrade Lenin” in front of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa building in Addis Ababa and huge portraits of the founders of Marxism–Leninism—Marx, Engels and Lenin—were mounted on the walls of the main square of the city. The capital of the former empire of Ethiopia was converted into a small town in the former Soviet Union. He also declared Ethiopia as socialist, Marxist country.

Mengistu appeared to follow in the footsteps of Maj. General Mohamed Siad Barre, who after overthrowing the civilian government in 1969, had established a socialist state in Somalia. Mengistu was as intransigent as Emperor Haile Selassie in respect of the right to self-determination to the peoples of Eritrea, Ogaden, Oromo, Tigray and others. In 1977 Ethiopia under Mengistu went to war with Somalia over the Ogaden. In 1991 as pressure increased on him from the opposition groups, Mengistu was forced to flee the country by air to Kenya and then to Zimbabwe where President Robert Mugabe granted him political asylum.

The Horn of Africa was for a long time the most turbulent area in Africa. Unending territorial disputes between Somalia and Ethiopia over the Ogaden and between Somalia and Kenya over the Northern Frontier District brought havoc in the region, specially in the sixties and seventies. The arrogant refusal of the Ethiopian rulers, first Haile Sellassie and then Mengistu, to allow the Eritreans, the Ogadenis and the Oromos, to exercise their right to self-determination was the main reason for the instability
in the region. Somalia supported the movements fighting against the Ethiopian and Kenyan regimes and they in turn supported the Somali movements fighting against the regimes in Somalia.

Both in Somalia and Ethiopia, the struggle to remove the military regimes continued. Finally on 26 January 1991, the so-called father of the bloodless revolution Mohamed Siad Barre, was overthrown in a bloody fight staged by the opposition, and three months later on 28 May 1991, Lt. Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam was thrown out of power by the Ethiopian opposition groups.

Haile Selassie stayed in power for 40 years, except for 5 years of interruption during the Italian occupation between 1936 and 1941. He was an absolute dictator. And in the end became arrogant, rough and reckless.

According to the Constitution which existed during his reign, under the “Powers and Prerogatives of the Emperor”;

“The Emperor determines the organisation, powers and duties of all Ministries, Executive departments and the administrations of the Government and appoints, promotes, transfers, suspends and dismisses the officials of the same”. (Article 27).

Regarding foreign policy the Constitution stated,

“The Emperor exercises the supreme direction of the foreign relations of the empire....He, alone, has the right to settle disputes with foreign powers....He, alone has the right to ratify, on behalf of Ethiopia, treaties and other international agreements”....and so on (Article 30).
Haile Selassie, like many other African leaders, used his power in the most dictatorial and repressive manner against his own people. If a long stay in power would create sympathy, Haile Selassie would have enjoyed that privilege. On the contrary, the longer a leader stays in power, the more enemies he creates for himself. Even those on whom he bestows special privileges will abandon him the moment they find him in trouble. Besides, the longer a leader stays in power the more he loses the initiative. He normally creates a circle that only agrees with what he likes as long as they can take advantage of his power.

The behaviour between the two neighbouring countries was similar in very similar situations. Both the movements claimed to be fighting against dictators and for the welfare of the peoples. The Somali Movements have destroyed the whole nation’s existence after they won the struggle, while the Ethiopian Movements have maintained the national assets and structures intact. The citizens continued their normal life. The situation was just like a normal change of government. The difference was an indication of the Ethiopian opposition movements’ political maturity and sense of nationalism which were lacking among the Somali movements. The Ethiopian opposition movements had established a shadow government during the struggle and they were already running hospitals, schools and political orientation camps in their respective areas liberated from the regime. They inculcated values and principles among their followers and supporters that the struggle was against the regime and not against any faction of the society. Besides, the leadership maturity played an important role in the peaceful take over of power.
As many groups such as the Oromos, the Tigreans and the occupied Somalis were involved in the struggle, there was a real possibility of a conflict among the different forces. However, they put their internal differences aside and in unison they defeated their common enemy. After a long and bitter struggle the Eritreans finally regained power in their homeland. Eritrea was given to Ethiopia by the United Nations following a resolution which the General Assembly passed in 1950, making the territory an autonomous province of Ethiopia. About a decade later, in November 1962 Ethiopia swallowed Eritrea and made it an integral part of the Empire.

In Somalia, in former British Somaliland, the Somali National Movement displayed similar political maturity. They took over power from Siad’s troops, without causing the chaos that was seen in former Italian Somalia. They told their followers, “It was Siad who was bad and he is gone”.

Although in the North, there was no indiscriminate destruction of public and private properties, they had their own power struggle within the various groups.

One of the most tragic incidents that occurred in the North after the fall of Siad Barre was in Berbera and Burao, in 1993. This claimed the lives of 500 people. However, it was gratifying to note that the various groups involved in the conflict accepted the mediatory role of the elders. They adhered to the time-tested native way of settling differences at a time when the elders’ role is being completely ignored by unscrupulous elements who have emerged as trouble-makers during the destructive civil war. But then they, too, could not hold the relative peace the elders established, and the power struggle goes on.
The internal conflicts and killings go on between those who claim to be the “Government” and those who oppose it.

After the fall of Emperor Haile Selassie and Mengistu in Ethiopia, the political picture in the Horn of Africa completely changed. Eritrea emerged, after four decades of struggle as an independent, sovereign country becoming the 182nd Member State of the United Nations on 28 May 1993. The Ogaden has also been granted some sort of regional autonomy, i.e., the people elected their local council and their representatives to the Ethiopian National Assembly. That could be the beginning for a future self-governing territory with the right to determine their own destiny. As the Eritrean people were allowed to exercise their right to self-determination, through a popular referendum, the possibility of a similar right being given to the people of the Ogaden cannot be ruled out. In the end, we might even see the Ogaden joining with Somalia.

The extraordinary changes in the set-up of the former Ethiopian Empire have definitely upset the Amharas, who have dominated the situation since the reign of Emperor Theodore, (1855-68) up to the end of the Haile Selassie era in 1974. The Amharas openly objected to the secession of Eritrea for they feared it would encourage the other territories like the Ogaden and the Oromo to follow suit. Fighting against the oppressive regimes of Haile Selassie and Mengistu, the leaders of various Ethiopian movements joined hands with the Eritreans and the Ogadenis, with the clear understanding of their objectives. The TPLF (Tigre People's Liberation Front) and EPDM (Ethiopian Peoples’ Democratic Movement) jointly formed the EPDRF (Ethiopian Peoples’ Democratic
Revolutionary Front).

The OLF (the Oromo Liberation Front) which was included in the Government in its first formation, walked out in protest against the small number of berths given to it in the Cabinet. The Oromos claim that they constitute around 40 per cent of the entire population of Ethiopia. Despite the political friction resulting from the power sharing, the Oromos have not resorted to open militancy or violence for their cause, thus avoiding the kind of disaster that has been witnessed in Somalia. If Ethiopia's new leaders guide the country to a democratic way, their efforts to build a healthy society will be successful. After all, the movements were fighting against dictatorship and oppressive policies. They were committed to promote better life, free speech, free association and free choice of leadership.

In the case of Ogaden, the new Ethiopian regime has allowed the people to establish self-governing bodies. And the encouraging sign is that the Government has adopted a new name for the country: Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.

According to Dr. Negussay Ayele,

“From the battle of Adowa in 1896 until the Italian conquest in 1936, Ethiopia remained the only traditional African state in the whole continent to escape European colonialisation, to receive international recognition, and to be treated, however reluctantly, by the powers as an equal”.

“Ethiopia herself, like Egypt under Ismail

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Pasha did not hesitate to join in the scramble for Somali possessions and here she took full advantage of her special position as an African state whose treaties European powers—when it suited them—recognised as something like their own coinage...." More recently, Ethiopia’s long-established position as a Christian state has commanded respect and attention, usually to the disadvantage of Somalis where Somali and Ethiopian interests have clashed".2

That seems to have gone now. During the early days, the colonialists worked on the basis of divide and rule. The colonialists not only set countries to fight each other, but also created divisions among the clans of the same country. But the most unfortunate thing is that the so-called leaders in Africa did not understand the games the external powers played or, if they did, found it convenient to maintain the status quo, i.e. to use the same tactics against their own people.

Abyssinia, which was the only independent State in Africa in the 18th century, which as Dr. Negussay Ayele proudly said in his book,

"Towards the end of the 19th century the Ethiopians had the upper hand in the territorial tug-of-war on the Horn partially because, unlike the Somalis, they were led by politically conscious leaders such as Menyelek and also because they were better armed than the Somalis".2

2. Ibid.
As an African State, and the only one during the scramble for Africa, would it not have been pragmatic for the “politically conscious leaders” to advocate for the rights of the African countries which were being dismembered, instead of participating with the European colonialists in the scramble for Africa?

In a circular to the Heads of European States in 1891, Menyelek, the Emperor of Ethiopia stated:

“While tracing today the actual boundaries of my Empire, I shall endeavour, if God gives me life and strength, to re-establish the ancient frontiers of Ethiopia upto Khartoum, and as far as Lake Nyanza with all the Gallas. Ethiopia has been for fourteen centuries a Christian island in a Sea of Pagans. If powers at a distance come forward to partition Africa between them, I do not intend to be an indifferent spectator”.1

Despite its dubious role of collaboration with the colonialists against the African countries Ethiopia managed to receive the approval of the rest of the African countries to have the Headquarters of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in its capital, Addis Ababa. That too did not change the colonial mentality of its leaders; this time Emperor Haile Selassie and his intimate friends insisted that Ogaden was an Ethiopian territory and Eritrea was an integral part of the Empire. The Emperor encouraged the Kenyan leaders to deny the right to self-determination for the Somalis in the Northern Frontier District, NFD. And the two countries signed defence pact

against Somalia. Haile Selassie went farther than that. In a BBC broadcast on 28 August 1966, he is reported to have said:

“If Somalis gave up claiming French Somaliland, Ethiopia will thank God; I would like France to stay in the French Somali Coast for ever.”

During his visits to France in 1970 and 1972, Emperor Haile Selassie asserted his Government’s desire for the maintenance of the status quo and, in the event of French departure, expressed the hope that France will hand over this Somali territory to Ethiopia. It is amazing that Ethiopia, one of the only two free countries (Liberia being the other) in Africa took part in the scramble for Africa. It had all the power and influence over the contemporary rulers for being accepted as advocate for the rest of Africa, which was suffering under the yoke of colonialists.

Surely, the European colonialists were not stupid. They drew the lines of the Continent’s boundaries by awarding the territories or pieces of lands of one country to another in that after their departure from the continent, conflicts among the Africans may start. In the case of the Horn of Africa, the Haud and Reserved Area was given to Ethiopia in accordance with an Agreement signed between Britain and Ethiopia on 29 November 1954.

The dawn of democracy in Ethiopia has changed the situation in the Horn to some extent. Eritrea’s struggle for freedom has successfully culminated in its independence, but the Ogaden is still suffering under Ethiopian domination. Attempts are being made to suppress the identity of Ogaden by referring to it as Zone 5.
Article Two of the Provisional Government’s Charter states: “The right of nations, nationalities and people to self-determination is affirmed. To this end, each nation, nationality and people is guaranteed the right to:

“Para “C” Exercise its right to self-determination of independence, when the concerned, nation/nationality and people is convinced that the above rights are denied, abridged or abrogated”.

The moral of the collapse of the Soviet Union is that in a multinational state/empire, nationalities or nations with different religious, cultural, social and economic, and ethnic background cannot be kept involuntarily together under one flag, however, powerful the dominant nation/state may be. The Soviet Union fell apart after decades of repressive regime as soon as democratic reforms were introduced. Similarly, Czechoslovakia has split into two—the sovereign republics of Czech and Slovak as they were before 1918. Likewise, the Federal Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia, comprising six republics and two provinces, each with full autonomy guaranteed by the Constitution, has been dismembered. This multinational state could not continue to exist as a united country as soon as the iron curtain was lifted. Apart from Serbia and Montenegro, all the rest chose to be free and separate entities. The denial of right to self-determination is the root cause of the present day political turmoil in different parts of the world.

The Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia could not stay together, because the peoples that formed their unions were of different ethnic origins. Besides, the disparity of economic development of the
differently nationalised and regionalised, coupled with unfair distribution of wealth and concentration of power in one or two areas, also contributed to the dismemberment of these countries. The United States of America and other western countries which adopted federal systems are holding together successfully because of their long democratic system of government. The freedom for association and expression, freedom for social emancipation, freedom for business and protection of human rights should not be mere slogans but should become an integral part of political culture. In the Soviet Union all these freedoms were denied to the people. The Soviet man in practice enjoyed no rights and had no opportunity to actualise his creative potentialities.

The socio-political condition in the Ethiopian Empire was worse. Like the Russian empire it was doomed to collapse. The new regime recognised that it would be futile to hold the disgruntled ethnic groups in bondage any longer. It let Eritrea decide its future. However, the new regime is still undecided about the demand for national self-determination of the Ogadenis. The sooner it recognises their right and concedes their demand, the better the chance for consolidating an era of peace and friendship in the region.

In fact, the Somalis like the Germans, the Yemenis and the Vietnamese were victims of the great powers and later cold war politics. The Germans, the Vietnamese and the Yemenis have got their long cherished dream of reunification fulfilled. The Somalis in the Western Somalia (Ogaden) under Ethiopia and those in the NFD under Kenya are still being denied their right to self-determination. The day will come when all the Somali territories, Djibouti, NFD,
Western Somalia, the Republic and its islands will join together and form one Somalia: the Greater Somalia.

What we have seen in the Horn during the last few decades is the result of the neo-colonialist policy of creating instability and chaos in the region with the objective of weakening the nationalist forces and preventing the development process from taking root. The colonialists set Somalia against Kenya and Somalia against Ethiopia. Scarce resources were spent by these countries on arms and ammunitions. With the end of the Superpower rivalry, their interest in the region has also diminished. It is high time for the leaders in the Horn to realise that, whoever controls the territories of others, it is wise to restore them to their legitimate inhabitants. For the new leaders in Addis Ababa, it is important to understand the aspirations of the various communities. The world has already noticed some sort of misunderstanding between the ruling group and other organisations, who have been part of the struggling forces. The leadership of the EPDRF was telling its supporters and followers that Ethiopia should not become another Somalia, devastated by civil war after the collapse of the regime of dictator Siad Barre. It will depend on how the ruling group lets democracy succeed.

But if what we hear is true, i.e. the Governing Group, taking all the privileges and the positions like what we used to have in Somalia during the past regime, we can sadly say that Ethiopia too is heading to disaster.

Physically the colonialists have gone, but their mentality still remains in some people in Africa. I have sometimes heard African leaders talking exactly like the former colonialists when discussions on
territorial disputes arise. “If we touch one territory all Africa will fall apart.” This is the way the countries which were given other people’s territories argue.

So, for the victimised territories only the colour of the colonial powers has changed: otherwise it is placed under another colonial power, this time a black brother. But a colonialist is colonialist, whether black or white. In fact, colonialism has no colour. For the support of their gains, those countries which subjugate other territories, always evoke Article III paragraph 3 of the OAU (Organisation of African Unity) Charter which calls for “... respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each State...”

*The Economist Intelligence Unit* (EIU Country Report, n.2, 1992) states:

“Having wholeheartedly endorsed the seizure of power by the EPRDF the conference establishing the transitional settlement in July 1991, in recent months the US government has begun to voice doubts over the direction of policy. Addressing the Senate Sub-Committee on African Affairs on 19 March 1992, Herman Cohen, the US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, echoed the enthusiastic line he has doggedly followed since May 1991. He heralded the regional elections as the first free election in Ethiopia’s history and commended the progress made on the economic front by the transitional authorities.

“A fortnight after Cohen’s speech to the US Senate the upsurge of violence in Harrarghe prompted a reassessment in US perception. In a written statement issued in Washington on 30 March the State Department stressed its
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concern and emphasised the linkage between the holding of free elections and continued US
diplomatic and material support for the transitional authorities. On 11 April 1993 a
senior State Department Official warned of impending civil war, stressing that only total
disengagement, disarmament and a return to barracks by both EPRDF and OLF forces could
avert widespread violence. This view was earlier echoed by the EC which warned on 27
March 1992 that aid to the region would be suspended unless fighting ceased”.

Again, EIU in its Country Report no.3, 1992 reported:

“....Speaking in Washington on 24 June, the US Assistant Secretary of State for African
Affairs, Herman Cohen, was forced to abandon the hitherto rosy picture of the new democratic
Ethiopia he had enthusiastically presented for the previous 12 months. ‘It is difficult to qualify
the elections as totally free and fair’, stated Cohen, admitting that “there is a danger of
return to civil war.”

As for the national elections, the Transitional Constitution’s Article 12 paragraph three
states: The said national elections shall be held no later than two years after the
establishment of the Transitional Government. Provided however, that the period can be
extended by the Council of Representatives for no more than six months.”

African leaders must show the courage to correct the injustice done to those countries whose territories
were unlawfully partitioned or given to other countries which have no *locus standi* over them.

Due to the civil war in Somalia coupled with non-existence of any strong political organisation, with a defined nationalistic perspective, Somalis can do nothing for the national self-determination of their brethren in Ogaden. The Ogaden still remains in bondage under Ethiopian yoke.

The consecutive Somali governments since independence have continuously extended moral, material and diplomatic support to the liberation movements fighting against the regimes in Ethiopia. At the same time, Somalia supported the EPLF (Eritrean People’s Liberation Front), ELF (Eritrean Liberation Front), TPLF (Tigrean People’s Liberation Front) and OLF (Oromo Liberation Front). The leaders of these organisations and their representatives enjoyed full brotherly respect of all Somalis.

In May 1991, when the TPLF (The Tigray People’s Liberation Front) was a major group in the EPRDF (Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front), it was expected that the new Ethiopian regime would, at least, recognise the right to self-determination for the people of Ogaden if not straight-forwardly grant them complete independence. It would have been upto the people of the territory to decide whether they wanted to remain with Ethiopia or to opt out for freedom. Besides, the Somalis were expecting from new friends in Ethiopia, an official apology for the wrongs done to the Somali people by the previous regimes in Ethiopia, as well as compensation for the human and material destruction caused to the Somali people in the territory that Ethiopia illegally occupies.
It was gratifying to note that our African brothers too were not silent about our situation. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Zambia, Hon. V.J. Mwaanga, called for an African solution. In a letter he sent to the Secretary General of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), Salim Ahmed Salim, the Minister said:

“We believe that it is important for an African initiative to be taken to address the broader political questions. Lack of any civil authority in Mogadishu makes the country virtually ungovernable. Food aid will not be able to continue indefinitely and that is why we believe that there should be an African initiative to address the political questions, with a view to establishing an interim trusteeship administration either under the OAU or the United Nations to create a semblance of administrative authority which can then be used as a basis for bringing the political factions to a negotiating table. I know that when we discussed this matter in New York we shared the same perceptions and the same concerns”.

The African Initiative!
One year later, OAU established the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution and appointed, as its Chairman, the President of Ethiopia, Meles Zenawi.

In April 1992, the Heads of State of the countries neighbouring Somalia met in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and formed the Horn of African Standing Committee on Somalia and nominated Ethiopia as Chairman of the Committee.

Speaking on 7 December 1993 at the First Ordinary Session of the Central Organ of the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, the President of Ethiopia and Chairman of the Mechanism, Meles Zenawi complained about the lack of coordination among the African countries and called on the United Nations to let the OAU take part in the decision making process in respect of the Somali situation. He said:

“First of all, Africa must speak with one voice. We must make it abundantly clear to all concerned that Africa does not want to see its efforts at helping Somalia dissipate as a result of discordant voices, approaches and initiatives. When our colleagues gave me the mandate to follow developments in Somalia on their behalf, I believe, they expect every African country to desist from explicitly or implicitly undermining my mandate. Secondly I believe, we must make it clear to the UN that Africa cannot and must not be marginalised on matters such as the problem in Somalia, that affect the vital interests of its Member states. The UN must be asked to work out a clearly defined partnership with the OAU on the issue
of facilitating political reconciliation in Somalia and the implementation of all and every agreement on Somalia. Thirdly, we must call for a review of the mandate of UNOSOM in Somalia. The UNOSOM’s mandate in Somalia should be limited to facilitating political reconciliation among Somalis and helping Somalis implement their agreements. It cannot and must not attempt to impose a solution on Somalis by force of arms. The armed contingents of the UN in Somalia must be structured and deployed with a view to supporting such a limited mandate. All attempts on the part of the UN to play the godfather of Somalia have failed so far and are bound to fail in the future at the cost of thousands of Somali lives and that of the peacekeeping troops.”

The Ethiopian President concluded his speech by saying:

“We must also encourage the International Community to launch a massive and effective programme of relief and rehabilitation in Somalia, along the lines of the consensus reached in the recent Humanitarian Conference in Addis Ababa”.

The President emphasized the need for dialogue among the Somali factions.

If the OAU believes in defending the interests of its members, as the Chairman of the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, put it, then the Organisation should have taken the lead in the process of helping Somalia, by sending African peace-keeping forces with their equipment
and food. In the case of Somalia, Africa’s share in the peace-keeping force was little over five thousand men from only eight countries out of over fifty independent countries.

According to the UN Secretary General’s report (S/26317) of 17 August 1993, 31 July 1993, African countries with the UNOSOM contingent were: Botswana (Infantry company 204 men), Egypt (Infantry battalion 540 men), Morocco (Infantry battalion and support unit 1341 men), Nigeria (Recce battalion 561 men), Tunisia (Infantry company 143 men), Uganda (Infantry company 300 men), Zambia (Infantry battalion 500 men) and Zimbabwe (Infantry battalion 928 men).

As far as “Somalia relief contributions” were concerned, only four African countries were listed as contributors. According to “African Recovery Briefing Paper” No. 7 dated 15 January 1993, the list included; Libya, U.S. $ 1,864,597; Morocco, U.S. $ 662,651; Nigeria, U.S. $ 622,369 and the Sudan U.S. $ 6,930,639.

None of the African countries appeared in the list of the financial contributors to UNITAF until 8 January 1993. In their summit meeting held in Cairo, on 7 December 1993, the Heads of State belonging to the Central Organ of the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution discussed the “conflict situation in Africa” and specifically dealt with the situation in Somalia, Burundi, Angola and Liberia. But since then the Rwandan crisis has also broken out.

There appears to be complete lack of seriousness towards crisis management and solution by the OAU. The creation of an OAU Fund is not enough to address the burning problems in various countries of the
continent.

The Communique issued after the Summit in Cairo, said:

“They (the Heads of State) welcomed the decision taken at Ministerial level to designate the Special Fund established to support the operation of the Mechanism as the “OAU Peace Fund”, which was launched on 18 November 1993. They took note with approval, the decision of the Central Organ at Ministerial level to recommend that 5 per cent of the OAU Regular Budget be earmarked for, and transferred, into that Fund. The sum so appropriated should not fall below US$ 1 million. They also welcomed the recommendation that the sum of U.S. $ 1 million be appropriated to the Peace Fund in the current 1993/94 financial year.”

What kind of peace can be kept with U.S. $ 1 million a year in five African countries gripped by conflicts? Somalia alone was consuming more than U.S. $ 1 million a day, according to estimates. The OAU Mechanism is also in charge of “Conflict Prevention”.

It sounds easy but it is definitely hard to implement, because in Africa “the conflict” arises from the power struggle mainly between an incumbent authority and opposition.

Generally, each of the two conflicting parties claims to have the upper hand over the other. For instance, during the last few months prior to his fall, General Mohammed Siad Barre was asked by some friendly governments to relinquish power so that bloodshed and major conflict could be averted. He
rejected the advice, believing that the opposition or others had no power to topple his regime and to take away his powers. Even when he lost control over the country, he considered the advice for stepping down “an interference” in the internal affairs of “his country”. On the other hand, if someone advises the opposition to stop fighting and negotiate, it too accuses the “peace brokers” of supporting the one who is in power. So what the OAU Mechanism can really do is only wait and see the outcome of conflicts.

In the guest column of “New Africa” magazine No. 307 of April 1993, a writer by the name of Guy Arnold said in an article entitled, “Africa must police itself”:

“The failure of the OAU to do anything in the case of Somalia can be put down to two principal causes: the first is simple weakness, the inability to raise either money or troops to make an effective intervention possible; the second problem is one that is also shared by the UN, the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of a member nation of the OAU”.

The “principle of non-interference in the internal affairs” should not be accepted by the OAU if there is a regime that suppresses its own people. The Organisation must be on the side of the people and not on the side of the man who has no respect for his own people, particularly when there is the likelihood of a possible collapse of the State. Like the United Nations, the OAU should condemn violations of human rights in its Member States as this is mainly the recipe for the conflicts and, if necessary, the Organisation must intervene with force to stop bloodshed and the collapse of the State. The OAU
must play its role in Africa, if it does not wish to be marginalized. Otherwise, the international community, the UN or a big power or a former colonial power will be bound to intervene to save lives, either for humanitarian reasons or for political gains.

The usual appeal to the Governments and the forces opposing them in various countries in Africa to “work together towards the establishment of peace, security and national reconciliation” does not result in the necessary fruitful results.

If, for lack of resources, the OAU cannot intervene militarily in conflict-affected countries, it should play a direct role in the reconciliation processes using African countries where the governments can afford hosting at their own expense.

The new OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, should also address the problems that prevails in certain countries in Africa, (apart from the ones that are already in deep turmoil), before they join the disaster list. The Secretary General of the OAU, Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim, in his message on the Thirtieth Anniversary of the foundation of the Organisation, said this about the democratization in the continent:

“The second wind of change since the independence of our countries is now blowing. I am referring to the democratization process. Elections have been held in many countries, and others are yet to go through the process. One party system are giving way to multi-party system. Africa is going through a process of transition which needs to be closely monitored in view of the fragility of our States and the precarious nature of the socio-economic conditions of our people. While we encourage
this process of change to ensure a greater participation of the people in the governance and development of their countries, we believe that it is very important, indeed necessary, that this process takes place in conditions of peace, security, stability and national harmony. We must promote a culture of tolerance and mutual respect in our societies”.¹

In his message Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim further said that:

“In recent years, conflicts in Africa have assumed such dimension and intensity as has never been before. It is therefore, obvious that a great deal of attention and efforts has to be paid to conflicts. The plethora of conflicts has revealed certain institutional inadequacies within the OAU which made it unable to respond swiftly to conflict situations in the continent.”²

Dr. Salim Ahmed warned:

“The adoption of the mechanism will not all of a sudden bring all the conflicts to an end or prevent conflicts from breaking out. With the mechanism in place, we can always be sure that at least there will be an OAU response at any point in time. Above all, our efforts will be aimed at bringing about peace, stability and security in Africa”³.

The anniversary of the OAU Day is celebrated on 25 May and thirty three years have passed since its foundation.

². Ibid.
³. Ibid.
The Secretary General proudly said in his message:

“The impressive achievements of the OAU in the field of decolonization are recognized even by those who usually have no kind words for our continental organization. These achievements are therefore, a major source of pride and satisfaction to all sons and daughters of Africa”.¹

The Secretary General of the OAU spoke of “impressive achievements” in the field of decolonization. He said “these are a major source of pride and satisfaction”. Are we really satisfied? We must ask each other. What’s the pride that the Secretary General is referring to? An Indian newspaper “The Hindu” in an article published on 28 May 1993, just three days after the Secretary General delivered his message, said:

“Although there have been improvements since independence across the board of social indicators, Africa has merely crawled while much of the rest of the world has raced ahead.”

A study conducted by “Freedom House”, a New York Human Rights group in 1993, revealed that:

“Since the democracy movement began with end of the Cold War, most African nations have had little or no success at multi-party democracy.”²

The Secretary General of the OAU, Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim appealed in his thirtieth anniversary message:

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² The Times of India, 15 Feb., 1994.
“Let us all re-dedicate ourselves to the objectives of the OAU and pledge to strive relentlessly for the attainment of those lofty objectives and, in particular, to leave no stone unturned in fostering the birth and growth of the African Economic Community, the harbinger of prosperity for Africa. Let us also strive towards the building of a strong and revitalized OAU as an instrument for peace and development in our continent. This requires the support of our Member States. It also requires the support of the African people.”

In reality, OAU exists mainly for the regimes of the Member States; they are the ones who get the Organization’s support. It has hardly or never openly condemned any Member State which has trampled on its own citizens. And there are many.

How can the Secretary General ask for the “support of the Africa people” if they are left to the mercies of their autocratic dictators. The Secretary General’s advice that: “...we must promote a culture of tolerance and mutual respect in our societies” could become meaningful if the OAU evolves certain mechanism to control the unbridled powers of dictators and their henchmen who let loose a reign of terror against their own people.

We have seen the democratic process succeed in Zambia, where Kenneth Kaunda (KK) after over two decades in power, was defeated in multi-party elections. We witnessed the elections in Malawi where the people voted out the self-proclaimed Life

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President, Hastings Kamuzu Banda, in May 1994 after three decades of autocratic rule. After a General Peace Agreement signed by the Government and the opposition, the people of Mozambique elected members for a new National Assembly in October 1994, thus ending over a decade of bloody civil war in which thousands of people lost their lives besides causing destruction of national infrastructure and properties of innocent citizens. We have also observed with great satisfaction the peace agreement signed in Zambia between the Government and the opposition (UNITA) of Angola. We hope Angola too will succeed in solving the differences for the sake of the welfare of its people who have not seen or enjoyed peace since the country won its independence.

While in Lusaka, Zambia, for the ceremony of signing of the peace pact between the Angolan Government and the opposition, UNITA (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola), the OAU Secretary General, Salim Ahmed Salim, made an unusually strong statement against African leaders. Without naming any one, the Secretary General of the Organization of African Unity said:

“Human rights abuses by politicians have prevented Africa’s 28 million refugees and displaced people from returning home. Africa should do something to address the root-cause—the political problems—to contain this endemic scourge. Gross violations of human rights by African politicians have undermined efforts to redress the refugee problem.”

Dr. Salim Ahmed added:

“Some African leaders preferred to force people to vote with their feet than by ballot.”
He said that an African peace council could be set up under the OAU to monitor and prevent conflicts.\footnote{I.P.S. (Global Information Network, New York), News item from Lusaka, Zambia, 12 Nov. 1994.}

This is just wishful thinking. The Secretary General knows that the OAU can only monitor but not prevent conflicts in the continent. We know that to prevent a conflict the Organization has to interfere directly in what the leaders of Africa call “the internal affairs of the country”. And that cannot be done even verbally, let alone physically with military force.

The easiest thing the OAU should do is, at least, to persuade the leaders to respect the wishes of their own people if they themselves decide to hold elections in their countries. But if the OAU cannot convince a leader who refuses to accept the outcome of a democratic process, i.e. elections, referendum etc., it should find a way of isolating him by barring him and his Government from attending OAU meetings.

Africa did refuse to accept for a long time, the former apartheid regime of South Africa for denying the rights of the majority until the change came. Africa, under the umbrella of the OAU also rejected the illegal regime of Ian Smith when he declared UDI (Unilateral Declaration of Independence) in what was called Rhodesia until Zimbabwe was born.

In Algeria, the Government of the ruling party decided to hold elections in 1991. But when it sensed that the opposition parties were gaining the upper hand, it decided to cancel the final round of the elections, thus causing the disastrous situation that we witness today.

The Nigerian military regime followed the footsteps of the Algerian regime by cancelling the
results of the democratically contested political elections in 1993.

The wish of the majority must be respected to avoid negative consequence.

In 1993, the Secretary General of the United Nations, Dr. Boutros Ghali, said:

“As an African, I must be frank with you. Africa has an image problem. In Somalia, in Angola, in Rwanda, in Liberia, in Western Sahara, in the Sudan and elsewhere, there is conflict. Unless we Africans show greater political determination to achieve solutions, the international community will cease to offer its support.”

I visited Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia, in 1973 when Emperor Haile Selassie was in full command. Then eleven years later in 1984, during the reign of Mengistu Haile Mariam who had toppled the Emperor in a bloody military coup in 1974, I again visited Addis Ababa.

Mengistu held power for about 17 years during which he faced stiff resistance from various opposition groups. Ultimately, the opposition movements forced him out and on 28 May 1991 they triumphantly marched into the city of Addis Ababa without breaking even an electric bulb, let alone destroying power generating stations as has been the case in Mogadishu. In Ethiopia, factories functioned as usual while in our country factories were not only demolished and burnt, the debris that remained was looted and sold.

In Government offices the movements in Ethiopia replaced the leadership as though they had taken over power after a general election. In some offices one could still see Mengistu’s portrait on the walls. Life continued without disturbance.
The fact that we Somalis went to Ethiopia to hold reconciliation conferences is a clear indication that in our country we could not hold such conferences, mainly because of lack of security and infrastructural facilities which had been destroyed. In Addis Ababa almost all the hotels, including the Addis Ababa Hilton, Ghion, Shabeli, Harambe and Ethiopia have been functioning as smoothly as they were before. Somali leaders belonging to different factions fighting for power stayed at the Ghion Hotel and enjoyed its facilities. Although Ethiopia too has passed through, more or less, similar developments as in our country, the new Ethiopian leaders showed political maturity and administrative skills which have been found wanting among ours.

During my visit to Addis Ababa, I did not see even a single private house with a bullet mark; even the houses owned by the members of the old ruling elites of the Amhara tribe have escaped the fury of the revolutionaries. The maximum the new rulers did against the former Government officials was their removal from office positions and putting them in prison. Of course, the Amharas had their good days. A taxi driver, an Amhara, told me that he was an engineer, a professional, and now he was experiencing great difficulty to survive with a large family. “I have converted my car into a taxi and I work all day to earn some money to maintain the family”, he said to me. He expressed sorrow over the tumultuous and tragic developments in Somalia and expressed the hope that we would overcome our problems. However, he painted a very gloomy picture of his country saying:

“If you Somalis reconcile and peace comes back
to your country, it will be our turn to have trouble”.

I told him:

“My dear brother, you should not entertain such pessimistic ideas about the future of your country. Instead, you should be grateful to the Almighty that at least you are alive and in your own home, driving your own car, your children going to their schools and your people still enjoying the basic facilities such as hospitals, schools and transport system.”

In the streets of Addis Ababa the militias of the EPDRF patrolled with their guns without bothering the citizens. With their guns on their shoulders, still dressed in their war fatigues, the militias proudly walk among those who might not even be their supporters, like the Amharas, or among those who feel the militias are their liberators. Some of the young former fighters against the regime of Mengistu Haile Mariam, have been provided with police uniforms to help the people to maintain law and order.

For me it was a very impressive and emotional scene to see a smooth and relatively peaceful transition in Ethiopia whereas we in Somalia are confronted with a disastrous transition period. One afternoon at the Ghion hotel about a hundred well-dressed “delegates” were sitting at the lounge sipping *caffe espresso* and filling the whole room with their cigarette smoke. They were sitting in groups. At some tables there were people from the same group and at others were a mixture of different groups. They were exchanging jokes in a really fraternal atmosphere. It was an amazing sight to see that they
were the same people who had been killing each other at home but here, in a foreign country, they were enjoying a peaceful environment. None of them seemed to think of the peace and stability which this neighbouring country, Ethiopia, had achieved after it had undergone similar political development as their own country.

In the corridor leading to the reception I met one of the leaders. I took him to the lounge where our fellow “delegates” were sitting in a very relaxed atmosphere. I called his attention to the huge crowd of brothers and sisters from various groups loudly conversing and laughing as though they had come there on a pleasure trip. “Look here, what do you see”? I asked the leader. “I see people” he said “What else?” he asked me. I said, “You see people enjoying themselves, talking, laughing, sipping soft drinks without fear in a peaceful atmosphere made possible by others. You leaders are the ones who should create something like this in our own country”. He laughed and turned his back and went back to his villa. I do not know if he understood that what we needed at home was peace.

The Palace of former Emperor Haile Selassie which Mengistu occupied after his coup in 1974 is now the official residence of the new President of the Provisional Government of Ethiopia. It is just as it was when Haile Selassie lived in it, every item in its original place. Since 1974 two violent changes have shaken the Ethiopian capital. Neither the followers of Mengistu nor those of Zenawi have touched the national assets.

This should have been a lesson for us. National assets are the property of a nation and not of the regime that comes to power or of an individual.
Each head of delegation was provided with a Mercedes-Benz chauffeur-driven taxi, run by the Department of Tourism of Ethiopia. They also belonged to the previous regimes and the newcomers let them just continue to operate as they were doing before they toppled the old regime. In fact, Addis Ababa appeared to me as safe as Mogadishu was once upon a time.

In May 1993, two months after the signing of the Addis Ababa Agreement by various Somali factions, I went to Nairobi, on my way home.

As I had not been to the country since July 1990, I was very anxious to know what had happened during the period of the civil war that followed the collapse of the regime of Mohamed Siad Barre. For three years, the news I received from the international media and from the people who managed to escape, was only about continued loss of human lives and destruction of national and private properties.

The Russian-made plane which was carrying us took off from Nairobi Airport en route to Mogadishu. After two hours flight along the coastal side over the Indian Ocean, the plane began approaching Mogadishu Airport. As I looked through the window for an aerial view of Mogadishu, I was shocked to find that at the sites of the refinery and fertilizer industry, there was nothing left except iron pillars. Then I looked at the power station which was situated across the same road on the way to Jasira Beach. I looked at the fishing boat factory. There was nothing left. I could not believe what I saw from the aircraft—rampant destruction of the economic infrastructure of the country. As the aircraft approached the runway I tried to take a few pictures of the remnants of the refinery and fertilizer factory so that I could show
them to my friends.

Around mid-day we landed at what we used to call “Mogadishu International Airport”. When the plane came to a standstill, a mini bus came to take the passengers. Before boarding the bus I looked around and saw a familiar view, like what I used to see during the last phase of Siad Barre’s rule: gun-wielding soldiers, guarding the planes from probable attacks by the opposition groups. But this time, the faces of the soldiers were different from those of our own former Army. They were foreigners belonging to the United Nations multinational forces which has been deployed in Somalia to keep apart the forces of the Somali groups who had been fighting with each other since the removal of Siad Barre from the power in 1991. The bus, like the aircraft which brought us to Mogadishu, was locally hired by the United Nations. It took us to a hangar which was converted into an Arrival and Departure Terminal. It was shocking to see that even the small terminal with its primitive infrastructure and poor services had been destroyed. I did not see the two famous personalities of the airport, Qulaan and Arwaah. There were new faces. The airport was under the control of foreigners who were running here and there with walkie-talkies. They were UNOSOM staff. There were also a few Somalis who helped us to carry our luggage from the plane to the hangar.

I was completely lost. I felt like a stranger coming to an unknown place. I was once the Chief of Protocol of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, well known at the Airport and in charge of all protocol Mercedes-Benz cars supplied to the foreign dignitaries who used to come to the country as our guests. I heard the voice of a girl, a foreign girl, calling for the newly arriving
staff of UNOSOM. There were three junior girls who had come by the same plane in which I had travelled. They were from the Caribbean. They were told to board a bus which came to take the members of the UN staff to the UNOSOM Headquarters. As I did not know where to go and how to go, I begged the UN staff girl for a lift. I told her humbly that I had come to Mogadishu to attend meetings of the committee for Peaceful Settlement of Disputes. The girl said the bus was full but if I could squeeze in, she would take me up to the UNOSOM office. So I boarded it putting my luggage on my lap. Five minutes later, it reached the UNOSOM HQ. It was the place from where my country was being governed under “the Administratorship” of Admiral Jonathan Howe, Representative of the UN Secretary General. It was lunch time and no one was in the office. A Somali guard directed me to a room where all the senior staff members were having lunch.

When I stood at the door of the room, I recognized one person who too nodded and invited me in to have lunch. I was hungry and wanted something to eat. During our flight in that cargo plane, no food or drinks were served to the passengers. These U.N. officials were discussing their plan of work while eating roasted chicken and rice cooked with goat meat. After the meal, slices of papaya were served. The soft drinks and the water were imported from abroad. An official told me that at 3 p.m a bus would take me to a hotel where other delegates were staying. I expressed my gratitude.

It was so humiliating that an Ambassador who represented his country abroad and a relatively high ranking official should feel alien in his own country. It was a bitter pill but I had no other choice but to
swallow it. I cursed those who had brought chaos and havoc in the country. At 3 O’clock I boarded the bus, which was escorted by heavily armed guards and took me to Hotel Lafweyne.

When I arrived I was advised not to go out of the hotel without UN escort. It was incredible that in my own country I was being advised to take permission and a UN escort to go out. “If I wish to go to Hamar Weyn to see my mother, Shaikh Aba and other relatives, do I have to ask for the UN escort?” It was ugly, but they were right, because the U.N. officials were concerned about our security and safety. The hotel was heavily guarded. Some Italian soldiers with armoured cars were guarding the gate and others with machine guns were positioned on the top of the building. All the cross-roads throughout the city of Mogadishu were similarly guarded.

The next day, one of my relatives came with a car with armed men borrowed from the group which controlled the part of the city through which we were to travel. The city is divided into two parts, one part (North) controlled by Ali Mahdi Mohamed and the other part (South) by General Mohamed Farah Aidid. In fact, the so-called green line which divides the city passes through the heart of the capital and it runs along the ancient border which divided the city into Hamar Weyne and Shingani during the Xth Century A.D. when the town of Makdishu was composed only of these two quarters.

Mohamed Abukar Haji, former President of Somalfruit who was also in Mogadishu for the meeting of the Provisional Charter Drafting Committee and myself decided to go to Hamar Weyn, without informing the UNOSOM staff. The Fiat 132 that drove us to the old city had two private security-men
carrying automatic machine guns. One sat in the car with us, next to the driver and the other on top of the back of the car. The guns could have been obtained illegally but the security-men told us that they had permission issued by UNOSOM to carry them.

After a lapse of three years I saw my mother Sitey Sharif Abdalla and other relatives—close and distant—as well as many of the inhabitants of the Hamar Weyn quarter. My mother, who is in her early eighties, is a very strong woman both physically and mentally. She takes care of the children of my brothers who are outside the country. She was happy to see me and I too was delighted to see her so fit and strong after all the difficulties that she and others had to endure during the heavy fighting. She rushed to make tea for us and said that she had some meat ready for lunch. We had the tea but told her that the car we were using belonged to a person who would be going on some kind of duty and he was in a hurry. And we still had to go around the neighbouring houses to greet the others or express our condolences to those who had lost their relatives since I left the country last. Many people came to meet us. All of them related their woes and the grim situation in which they were caught. When I asked my mother how she felt, her brief answer was:

“Thanks to Allah! What we saw cannot be expressed in words. We only pray to Allah that it may not be repeated again”.

She wanted to forget the gruesome days and long nights the people of the city passed through during the civil war. In her cryptic style, she expressed her abhorrence of the violence and hope for the return of good days. She said: “We must think not of the past,
but of the future”.

My mother is one of the millions on this earth who had no chance to get an education. Though illiterate she is a wise woman. She is one of the millions of Somalis who have suffered the hardship caused by the horror of genocidal civil war accompanied by hunger and disease. However, she did not show any sign of bitterness, she cursed nobody. She only prayed for a better future for those who had survived, particularly for the success of the young generation.

After we had the tea with some home-made cookies, she took us around to say hello to the neighbours. We went to nearby houses, in accordance with the order of precedence which she had suggested. In Hamar Weyn, many families live in one house, each family living only in one room for generations. The civil war and the national disaster have brought back in Hamar Weyn many families who had earlier moved out of the area. With their return to the quarter, the houses, became more congested.

Hamar Weyn still has centuries-old houses. The house where my ancestors lived is inter-connected with at least ten other houses having different entrances, which are like tunnels; the lanes and by-lanes of Hamar Weyn are similar to those found in other ancient and historic towns of the world. Only pedestrians, donkey-carts or two-wheelers, can use the narrow roads.

The people of Hamar Weyn have been living there for centuries, generation after generation. Occasionally, a few who are more enterprising and dynamic move to other areas, thus making room for their less fortunate relatives.

We ended our tour with a visit to the house of Shaikh Aba, our Shaikh, who is a highly respected
religious personality in the country. We spent some time with him to know how he managed to cope with the situation during the crisis. It would have been easy for him and his family to leave the country, which was in the grip of killings and looting. But Shaikh Aba felt he had a moral obligation to stay with the rest of the people. His stay in Mogadishu was a great encouragement for many people who chose to remain in the city.

Mohamed Abukar and I expressed our admiration for the Shaikh for what he had done. Before taking leave of him, we asked him to pray for stability and peaceful settlement of our crisis. We hurried back to our hotel.

The city of Mogadishu, the birthplace of my father, my mother and their parents and grandparents and further back of ancestors is today in a state it has never been in its history. The devastation of the city which was once described as “the pearl of the Indian Ocean”, is beyond imagination.

The city of Mogadishu unlike the city of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, has no authority, neither central nor local. There is total anarchy, the writ of armed gangsters and militias of clan leaders whose authority is accepted only by their followers prevails in different pockets of the city.

The civil war which began on 17 November 1991 between the two major factions of the United Somali Congress, led by General Mohamed Farah Aidid and his supporters and the other by Ali Mahdi Mohamed and his supporters, has devastated the lives and properties of thousands of innocent people. Nearly one million people including women and children were forced to flee their homes towards the nearest border points in order to take refuge in neighbouring
countries. Some people walked from Mogadishu to Afgoye, over 25 Km. and even beyond. Elders were carried on hand-carts and children on the backs of their mothers, forming long chains of human beings fleeing the spectre of death. Those who could not find land transport to cross the border to Kenya, took all kinds of boats that could float on the sea. Some people took rubber boats, dhows and ships from the shore of Mogadishu or from Merca, Brava or from as far away as Kisimayo and Basaso. They just went to the sea without knowing whether or not they would reach their destinations. They were desperate, in search of a peaceful refuge and the boat and ship operators loaded them as if they were inanimate objects or animals not giving any consideration to the capacity of their vessels. The only thing they cared for was the money they were collecting from these desperate displaced persons.

Three hundred men, women and children died near Mombasa port in Kenya, when their over-loaded ship with over 500 people capsized. About 3,700 people left Mogadishu on board the Gob Weyn ship on 10 June 1992 and headed towards Yemen. These people, compelled to abandon their own homes due to the civil war, spent 12 days at sea without food and water although they had paid $ 100 each to the ship owner. The ship Gob Weyn ran aground off the coast of Yemen, resulting in many casualties. According to the UNHCR’s (United Nation High Commission for Refugees) spokesperson, Sylvana Foa “the death toll was estimated between 147 and 149, the vast majority being children”. She said:

“About 100 people died on board the ship, while others perished trying to swim ashore”.
Six days later, on 16 June 1992 another six hundred persons boarded a dhow at the port of Bosaso. The passengers spent nine days in the dhow while the owner and captain were arguing with the Yemeni authorities over whether their dhow could come into the harbour. After appeals from various quarters the Yemeni government let the Somali refugees disembark.

I was shocked to find most of the houses in the centre of the capital destroyed. All the national hotels were literally made useless. I passed in front of the Juba Hotel, Shebeli Hotel and Al Uruba but what I could see was only skeletons. The Bank buildings, the Ministries, the Post Office building, the Mosques, the historic minaret of Abdulaziz mosque, the National Museum, the National Theatre, the National Assembly building, the Municipality building (former ufficio governo), former Parliament House, private hotels and private houses—everywhere I saw indiscriminate destruction. Even the power stations, already made useless by the regime of Siad Barre, were ransacked and destroyed.

In Mogadishu, during the civil war, when the two Machos were firing their heavy guns at each other's positions shells fell in areas which had nothing to do with the fighting. So the people of Mogadishu had to stay indoors for days and nights. Some of the people have not yet recovered from the nightmare. However, since the multinational contingents intervened, at least the risk of being killed by flying shells ceased and the people could move around their surroundings and the street vendors were slowly coming out of hiding. No one collected tax from the vendors. Anyone could import anything from abroad by containers. There are no financial authorities to levy taxes. So it
is very simple to clear the goods. If the receiving harbour is controlled by one’s own guerrilla group, one just arrives with papers that shows one’s name and unloads the container from the ship and sells the goods in the market place. Due to non-existence of a common government and the complete absence of the rule of law, Somalia went into the grip of anarchy. People recalled the old Somali proverb’ “A bad government is better than lack of government”. *(Dawlad xun, Dawlad la’aan ayay dhaantaa)*.

Today Mogadishu, once known as Pearl of the Indian Ocean, is in shambles, beyond recognition. Even its minarets, that used to be admired by sailors passing through the Indian Ocean, have not been spared. Once it was prosperous city. An Italian historian, Enrico Cerulli, in his book writes: “Vasco da Gama, when he was coming back from India in 1499 A.D., assailed unsuccessfully Makdishu with squadron; and even Da Cunha in 1507 A.D. did not succeed in occupying the town. In 1532 A.D. Makdishu was visited by Dom Estevan da Gama, son of Vasco, who came there to buy a ship. In December 5, 1700 A.D. a British squadron of men-of-war stopped threateningly before Makdishu but they did not land any force and after some days went away probably to India.”

Hamar (Xamar) is the name of the city and belongs to the Reer Hamar (The People of Hamar) and the first non-Reer Hamar came to the town only in the XVIII century and as the historian Enrico Cerulli wrote “....excited by the exaggerated traditions of the wealth of Makdishu assailed and conquered the town.” The chief of the assailants “who had the title of *imam*, established himself in the Shangani quarter”.

Today the same people, together with those who
Addis Ababa and Mogadishu: A Comparison

joined them later, have destroyed the city and its wealth.

I say:

Oh Mogadishu...
They mishandled you...
They massacred your masses mercilessly...
They mutilated your mosques and minarets mindlessly...
They maimed your museums and monuments...
They misused your marine and mineral resources...

And as Singer Ahmed Naji Sa’ad said:

Xamarey waa lagu xumeeyay, Yaa ku xaal marin ... ?
(Oh, Hamar, you have been abused, who will compensate you?).
On the eve of the fall of Mohamed Siad Barre’s regime, someone I know called long distance and told me in a threatening tone “you better seek asylum somewhere, as Siad Barre is going to fall”. I told him calmly, “I have seen him coming, while I was there, and will stay after him. I am for the country and not for individuals”.

My friend himself was a Government official before and during the Siad regime. He was elevated to the rank of a Cabinet Minister by Siad. Only when Siad removed him, like many others, he swelled the ranks of the regime’s opposition. “I am a civil servant”, I said to him, “and I do my duties as such to serve the people and promote the interests of our country.”

During my long career in the civil service, for over three decades, and as a senior citizen of the country, I have been witness to the rise and fall of many important leaders who climbed to the top and for one reason or another were either replaced, toppled or killed.

When a Head of State or an entire government is changed by election, revolution or coup, the bureaucracy, with minor changes, survives and runs the show. An Ambassador can be recalled to the
Ministry at home, if he is a career diplomat, to take up a post in the Headquarters. But a political appointee, whatever his political status, a Minister, business tycoon or other influential person, is usually removed after his/her patron has lost his position or power.

Siad Barre was removed from the Palace of the Presidency on 26 January 1991. I removed his portrait from the walls of the Embassy the next day and replaced it with some other pictures and on the wall of my own office I hang a painting of the Holy city of Mecca al Mukarama.

The Diplomatic Staff, six in all—two Counsellors and three First Secretaries and myself—met in the morning in my office to exchange views on the developments in Mogadishu. Though we had our own different political opinions and perceptions of what had happened in the country, our relations were cordial.

In fact, Somali visitors who came from Somalia or from other parts of the world were often surprised to see the atmosphere of friendship among the staff members, something that was very rare in other Somali Embassies abroad. Many of our Missions abroad were involved in groupism or conflicts between the Heads of the Mission and their staff or even conflicts among colleagues themselves which adversely affected smooth functioning.

We received no information from the Ministry, no instructions. All that we knew came through the international media.

The newcomers not only destroyed the regime but also the national machinery. The communications system was completely demolished. No one from outside could contact the country. And information
that came out of Somalia was relayed by foreign journalists and foreign non-governmental organisations via their own satellite dishes. The Government that installed itself faced difficulties in communicating with the Somali Missions abroad directly from the Capital of the country. And we at the Embassy who were obliged to inform the host Government or other Missions in the country where we reside of the political changes in our country, had no official information other than what the international media was reporting. Sometimes the BBC Somali Service gave news which were not broadcast over the “World News” and was exclusively for the Somali audience. From such specific news bulletins we came to know about the internal situation. The interviews of the BBC Somali Service, reporters and journalists conducted with the various factions’ leaders were useful sources of information.

Normally, the Embassies abroad communicated with the Ministry in Mogadishu via Dipmail, telex and telephone, but these too had become inoperative. A few days later when the bell of the telex machine rang I rushed to see what message was coming through. It was the first communication coming in after the fall of the old regime. Without a paragraph describing the situation in the country, it started with progressive numbers and names of the Ministers of the new Government. The message came from our Mission in Djibouti. It did not even explain why the message was coming from the Somali Embassy in Djibouti and not from the Ministry directly. Of course, we in the Embassy, already knew of the destruction of all the facilities including the communication system.

Again, after some days, we received from Djibouti
two more telexes: one asking all Ambassadors to come to Djibouti for “an important meeting” of Somali Heads of Missions abroad and the other instructing the Missions abroad to send their Diplomatic Pouches to the Somali Embassy in Djibouti. Both were signed by the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs.

From this, it was clear to us that the Headquarters did not exist any more and Djibouti was conveniently chosen to be the seat of the foreign policy-makers. All the communications which came to Djibouti were passed on to Mogadishu, to the “President’s office” by wireless radio or by the small aircraft that were operating between Mogadishu, Djibouti and Nairobi.

For a while, Djibouti became the seat of the new Government. The newly appointed Ministers found it convenient to operate from Djibouti. Djibouti had a branch of the Somali National Bank which apparently still had some State deposits. Moreover, Djibouti provided safe refuge to those who were escaping the chaos and the killings in the country. It was like a Government in exile!

As the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs was himself a former Ambassador before assuming the post, we expected that he would give some attention to the Diplomatic Missions abroad as some of us were without funds. However, no one cared about that. We would hear from the world media that Ministers of the new Government were visiting Italy, Saudi Arabia or other countries. They had enough money for that.

Any sensible government would have given its missions abroad some sort of importance and support in order that they could fulfil their duties properly. But in our society, even the Minister in charge of the welfare of the staff would only say: “Illoba Sufaaradaha, Janno ayay ku jiraan”. (Forget the
Embassies, they are in heaven).

However, in our Embassy at New Delhi, we decided to carry on our duties as usual and try to help the Somali nationals as much as possible. Besides a few telexes which were exchanged between our Mission and the Deputy Minister who was operating from Djibouti, there was no more communication with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the capital. Usually, the Embassy has to send reports to the Headquarters, daily, weekly or monthly. In the same way the Embassy receives instructions and communications from the Ministry. The Somali Embassy in New Delhi is also concurrently accredited to the Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and the Republic of Singapore with residence in New Delhi.

Months have passed without communication with the Headquarters. The diplomatic staff and myself were getting worried about the Embassy’s survival as funds were not forthcoming. It was already July 1991 and the last allocation we received from the Ministry was for the fourth quarter of the year 1990.

To drastically reduce the expenditure I moved from the Ambassador’s residence at E-38 Greater Kailash-I to a 3 roomed apartment at the Second Floor of the Chancery building at 167 Jor Bagh. I transformed my own office as the main bedroom and squeezed the kids into the other rooms. The idea was to save rent on the Residence at least until the financial situation normalized. To reduce expenses to the minimum, I reasonably convinced the Indian clerical staff to find other jobs for themselves as the Embassy had no more funds to pay their salaries. And the diplomatic staff members understandingly agreed to do the typing and other jobs “do it for yourself” (Iskaa wax u qabso). As there were no funds
coming to the Embassy from the Government, the members of the diplomatic staff consumed their own reserves that they had been saving for their future. We decided to tighten our belts.

For all of us life became harder, but we feel that we should keep our Flag flying and continue to help the Somali nationals in India and in the neighbouring countries. Our work continues to be as normal as possible but we mainly concentrate on Consular and Cultural activities. As there is no Foreign Ministry to report to, our Diplomatic activities’ reports remain confined to the Embassy’s files.

The first ever and last communications received from Mogadishu were sent to the Embassy directly by the Interim President, Ali Mahdi Mohamed and by the Interim Prime Minister, Omar Arteh Ghalib with a person, as the normal official channel of the State i.e. the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was non-operational. The former was dated 24 October 1991 and the latter 20 October 1991 and attached to it was a message to the Prime Minister of Bangladesh which I was asked to deliver personally. Both letters were about five Somali women who had been sentenced to long term imprisonment in Bangladesh. Four of them were undergoing ten year terms and the fifth a five-year term. They had been accused of possessing gold.

Bangladesh does not fall in my jurisdiction. I am not accredited to that country. However, I was more than happy to be able to embark on a mission to negotiate with the Bangladeshi authorities, for the release of the Somali nationals languishing in Dhaka Central Prison.

When the carrier came to the Embassy to deliver the letters he expected, as he told me later, to see the Ambassador sitting in a large luxurious air-
conditioned room, with sofa set etc. etc. Instead he came up to the uppermost floor, and found me in a little room. He handed over the envelopes containing the letters to me. While I was reading the letters, he looked around the small room where I had my desk and two chairs in front of me. He visualised our plight from the room’s size and its contents. He was also told that my residence was just a floor below and at the ground floor were the offices of the rest of the staff. To make him feel confident, I told my guest that what is important for me and my colleagues in the Embassy is the services that we can render to the Somali nationals. Although it is hard to run a mission without a normal budget still the Embassy keeps helping fellow Somalis in India and in Bangladesh, Malaysia, Thailand, Cambodia and in any other parts in the region on consular and educational matters.

We keep our mission functioning with the support of the host government and friendly Embassies in Delhi.

As the political situation in the country continued to deteriorate, I thought our Embassy’s duties were to take care of the Somalis stranded in the areas where we could reach, besides helping those in our jurisdiction.

Both the Interim President and the Prime Minister instructed me to proceed to Dhaka, Bangladesh and appeal to the Government for the release of the five Somali nationals from prison. But none of them thought of sending at least the ticket fare, let alone the Embassy budget. On my arrival at Dhaka on 20 December 1991 I was received by the Director General of the Ministry of External Affairs. With him I discussed the matter and passed on the message of the Prime Minister. The Ministry arranged for me to
visit the prisoners at the Central Prison of Dhaka.

Next morning, accompanied by two Somalis who were helping me while in Dhaka, I arrived at the Central Prison of Dhaka. An officer escorted me to the room where the five Somali ladies were waiting for me. They could not believe it, as they told me later, that “the Ambassador” would come to Bangladesh to help them. I told them that everything will be done to get the approval of the Bangladesh Government for their release and asked them to keep cool and be patient.

While having tea, we talked about the situation back in the country. As they were so far away, they received little news from home. But from time to time, the Somali students in Dhaka visited them and informed them of what was happening in the country.

But the news they received was of a general nature that people heard from radios. They were anxious to get news of their families which was not easy.

They looked in good health but the fact that they had to undergo long-term imprisonment was evident from their faces. They could hardly smile, even when I tried to humour them about the elegant way they were dressed even in the prison. They did not complain about the treatment meted out to them in custody. On the contrary, they told me that they even had servants to clean the rooms where they were locked in the evenings.

The Dhaka Central Jail is in the heart of the city. It is part of the old city and its walls cross through the narrow alleys of the most crowded area of the capital. It was hard to go there by car because of the traffic jam caused by rickshaws¹ not by cars. The

¹ Rickshaw or Ricksha: Three wheeler cycle pedalled by a man.
rickshaws in Dhaka, Bangladesh, are mostly pulled by men. While the motorized three wheelers are called “baby taxis”.

While I was talking to the ladies, the prison guards, especially the women guards, surrounded us and listened carefully as if they understood what I was saying in Somali language. From time to time they asked me what I said and what the women told me. I told them that I was trying to console them and explaining to them the steps I was taking to get them released from prison.

They were impatient and wanted me to get them released quickly. “We cannot stay in this prison”, one of them said.

“I will try to do my best and without reservation”, I told them.

I could imagine their agony. But the punishment was the result of their mistakes. Before leaving them I advised them to recite the Sura “Al Fatiha” and pray for their quick release. After my short stay I returned to Delhi.

Again I visited Bangladesh in the beginning of August 1992. The Government was very understanding and when I realized that the outcome of my mission would be positive my worry was where to take them in case the five women were released, as they would not be allowed to stay in Bangladesh. It was necessary to obtain transit visas for the countries through which they had to travel on their way home. If I did not get the visas, they would not be allowed to leave the jail. I felt that the Bangladeshi Government might pardon them but it would create a bad impression if I could not obtain visas for them from the Embassies in Dhaka. The only suitable transit point for them, I thought, would be Egypt.
I called the Egyptian Ambassador in Dhaka, M. Kamal El. Miligy, and went to see him in his office.

Like a true Egyptian, he gave me a warm welcome with big words of brotherhood. He offered me coffee with a lot of sugar (sukar siyaada). I requested him to help me to overcome the problem I was faced with. “Tu’ Mur” (give order), he promptly replied.

I told him that I had come there to appeal to the Government of Bangladesh for the release of five Somali women who were in Dhaka Jail. I told him that in case I succeeded in obtaining their release, I would like them to go home via Cairo. Without uttering even a word of sympathy he curtly replied:

“We cannot give them visa”.

“They need help”, I said.

“They are Somali women, they are Muslims, they are Arabs they are Africans”, I said all these things at one time, in one sentence.

“No, no, no”, he said.

“This kind of people will not be allowed to go to Egypt”, he added.

I got angry but kept cool. Jokingly I said to him: “If you do not give them visas I will bring them to your doorstep and let them stay there. Then he paused a while and said: “I will ask my Government for approval”. I requested him to tell his Government that there were five Somali sisters (as they always call us, sisters or brothers) stranded in Dhaka. They need help.

He invited me to his residence in the afternoon at 1800 hours. I accepted his offer with pleasure hoping that if we knew each other more intimately it might produce a positive move from his side towards the Somalis. After completing my one week visit during which I had fruitful discussions with officials of the
Government of Bangladesh, I returned to my base in New Delhi.

As I was not sure whether the Egyptians would issue the transit visas I immediately applied for Indian visas for the ladies. The Indian authorities promptly acceded to my request.

It was a good precautionary measure. In fact, when Bangladesh approved our appeal I went to Dhaka to oversee the formalities of their release. Once again, I met the Egyptian Ambassador at a dinner party organised by the Italian Ambassador in Dhaka. After the customary greetings he told me that “the Government of Egypt had rejected our request for transit visas for the Somali women”. I curtly replied: “I knew it”.

“How did you know” he asked me curiously.

“That’s your policy,” adding “Thanks to Allah I’ve got visas for them from a friendly government”. That was my short answer.

The Government of Bangladesh pardoned them on 7 January 1993 and on 8 January 1993, the five ladies along with the two Somali assistants and myself, flew to New Delhi by a Biman Bangladesh Airlines flight. When we landed at New Delhi, they all said at once:

“Ilaahow Dawlad La’aan ha na dhigin”
(Oh Allah do not let us without a government).

There are few Somali Embassies still operating in various parts of the world. They are the only pillars that the Somalis who are stranded abroad can lean on although the Embassies themselves have no proper government to lean on.

I know if we had a strong and stable government
back at home, the Egyptian Ambassador in Dhaka would never have refused the visas to the Somalis, because if his government refuses us visas, the Somali Government could reciprocate in kind. But what I highly appreciated is the kindness with which the Indian High Commissioner in Dhaka, at that time H.E. Mr. K. Raghunath, received me in his office and I will always remember the hospitality he accorded to me. He issued the transit visas to the ladies.

But at this moment, as gesture of brotherhood or, call it friendship, I really needed these Somalis to be helped. If the Indian Government had turned down our request, where would I have taken them? after I had invested so much effort for their release. The friend in need is friend indeed. This is indeed true. I had heard about the Egyptians refusing visas for Somalis, even to close relatives whose families live in Egypt. I did not believe this. But this time, I myself experienced it first hand.

Why did Egypt, an African, an Arab, a Muslim country refuse transit visas for the Somali women? Is the Egyptian State Security so fragile that it would have been threatened by the presence in or passage of five helpless Somali women through Cairo to Mogadishu? The Egyptian Ambassador did not care how much I would be embarrassed in Bangladesh if I could not get a simple transit visa for their departure after their release.

I wonder whether or not the Egyptian authorities still maintain or made more rigid the discriminatory treatment for the Somalis requiring visas to Egypt. On 2 April 1992, a Somali national who approached the Egyptian Embassy in Nairobi, Kenya, was given an official paper which says:
Embassy
of the Arab Republic of
Egypt

FOR SOMALIAN NATIONALISTS WISHING TO TRAVEL TO EGYPT SHOULD MEET THE FOLLOWING REGULATIONS:

1. A confirmed return Air Ticket to the same country or next destination after Cairo,
2. Kenya Re-Entry Pass valid for three months,
3. The passenger should have sufficient funds (in document form), to support him/herself in Egypt.

I have copied the content of the Embassy letter as it is printed. The word “nationalists” is also copied as it is, but I believe the Egyptian Embassy in Nairobi meant “Nationals”.

Back in New Delhi, the Embassy’s relations with the Indian Government are excellent.

The cultural relations between the two countries continue through the Embassy. The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) which deals with cultural and educational relations with foreign countries accepted the Embassy’s proposal that the Indian Government Scholarships to Somali students may not be stopped due to the collapse of the government in Somalia. Instead scholarships would
be made available through the Somali Embassy in New Delhi, so that Somalis could continue to benefit from it. Although educational institutions have fallen apart in Somalia yet the Somali Embassy in Delhi tries to help students take advantage of the assistance rendered to us by the Indian Government.

Besides the students, some of them on Indian Government Scholarships and some on self-sponsorship, there are also a few hundred Somali nationals who have come to India escaping the genocide caused by the civil war in the country.

The Somali nationals, by the mere fact that there is a Somali Embassy in India, feel confident in front of the local authorities. They are respected because they have an Embassy that looks after their interests. Somalis generally are able to solve minor problems by themselves and help each other when needed. However, in certain cases the Embassy’s intervention is absolutely necessary.

I continue to represent the Somali nation in my modest and humble way. I carry the Flag to all functions including the Indian Republic Day celebrations and all other functions celebrated in India. The President, the Prime Minister, the Foreign Minister and other Ministers invite me as the Ambassador of Somalia to all functions including annual Iftar parties during the month of Ramadan. My colleagues in the Diplomatic Corp invite me to their National Day Receptions.

I fully participate in the activities of the African and Arab Groups and attend their regular meetings each month or whenever they are held. Knowing our financial situation, both groups have exempted us from payment of contributions. Besides, both groups even extend financial help on an individual basis.
In one of our monthly meetings of the African Group, I made a very emotional appeal for financial support. I said, among other things, that what was happening in Somalia could happen in any other African country because Africa, as whole, is afflicted by political problems which are often aggravated by selfish and insensitive leaders serving their own narrow interests.

As Somalia also belongs to the League of Arab States, most of our friends think that the League gives financial assistance to Somali Embassies abroad. In our case some Arab Missions in Delhi help us individually and in the framework of the Council of the Arab Ambassadors.

More than five years have passed since the present crisis started in Somalia following the collapse of the dictatorial regime of Mohamed Siad Barre. The Council of the League of Arab States in the United Nations forwarded a resolution (No. 5279 ninety-ninth session-jim-4, 19 April 1993) which became UN Security Council document no. S/25769 of 13 May 1993.

The Council of the Arab League (in paragraph 7 of the Resolution) resolved:

“To urge its member states to make contributions towards defraying the costs of the Somali diplomatic and consular missions as well as the permanent missions of Somalia to international organisations”.

The most difficult question for me and my colleagues is the lack of a solution to our national problem at home. We have somehow managed for over five years in the hope that things would change for the better. But there is no solution in sight. When
Caught in the Fire

we hear from the World media that a meeting has taken place in Nairobi or Addis Ababa between the factions our hopes are revived for a while. But when some shocking news comes about renewed fighting in the country, particularly when innocent people are killed or hurt, our hopes are again shattered.

I feel sad when I attend a Reception organised by the Dean of the Diplomatic Corp to bid farewell to a colleague who has ended his or her tenure in India as Ambassador or High Commissioner. I stand amidst the Heads of Missions to say good-bye to an outgoing envoy and to welcome newcomers. I am physically there with them, but my mind is always thinking about the problems and difficulties which we, the Somali nation face. “Good or bad, at least my colleagues have institutions that transfer them from post to post,” I say to myself.

In the situation that I find myself, due to the political crisis that exists in my country, it is essential that I maintain mental control and physical fitness. I thought the best way to do that was to play some sports. I play tennis so that I could relax mentally and at the same time improve my physical condition. Whenever I am free, I play tennis. During the holidays and after office hours, before the diplomatic receptions, I play tennis with colleagues in other Embassies, with Ambassadors and other diplomats as well as with Indian friends. I am lucky, I have very good friends here, both among diplomatic and non-diplomatic circles and I highly appreciate their friendship. That also helps me a lot.

Some colleagues believe that I am a tennis fanatic. I am, in one way, because I play too much. But for me it is also a therapy. It is like a Yoga. It keeps me relaxed, it makes me forget, at least for a while, the
sufferings of the country, of the family, of the people that I am connected with. It makes me sleep well at night; otherwise it would take me hours thinking of the problems before my eyes close.

When I see some of my friends complaining about their lives or jobs or health I try to comfort them by comparing their problems with mine.

Our problems are not similar, but still there are some people who cannot cope with even minor problems.

The best sensible way to overcome one’s problems is to have patience and faith in Allah. He is the greatest reliever. Without His will man can do nothing. We, therefore, must cultivate trust and faith in Him.

It is also important that we develop a sense of humour and even in the most difficult moments we should keep it. When people ask me: “How can you keep smiling with all the problems that you have?” I give them a very simple answer. I keep smiling for three good reasons:

One: for my friends: when they see me smiling they feel happy.

Two: For those who wish me harm, if they see me smiling, they get shocked.

Three: For myself: for my health: it keeps me mentally strong.

During the last few years there have been a number of cases of mental breakdown in Somalia due to the civil war. It has become common to see people talking to themselves. One often hears people saying: “Hebel, Hebel, waaku dhufay, Waa Dhigay”. (So and so has became crazy). But our people still show great endurance and patience; they refrain from committing suicide. I believe this is due to religion. We believe
that what is happening is the will of Allah. Whatever happens to us we invariably say: “Al hamdu lillah” (Thanks to Allah).

Of course, for those who are good believers, there will be relief. It is a common belief that Allah will punish those who inflict pain upon fellow believers.

Like other Somalis who have been deeply affected by the crisis, I too talk to myself sometimes, and when I hear my own voice, I say “Aa uudu billaahi min al sheytaani rajiim” (Allah save me from the Satan).

Whenever my mind is not busy with reading, writing, watching TV, listening to radio or physically busy with walking, playing tennis or even cooking or eating, all the crises appear in front of me, like a hallucination I think of the country, I see my family in front of me, I think of my mother, I think of my wife Mana and the children: Jeylani, Ali, Abdullahi, Osman, Ibrahim, Amina and Halima, who are not with me. I think of my brothers, Sayid Mohamed, Sayid Ali and my sister Mana Fatima who are dispersed. I think of all the relatives and close compatriots who are spread out all over the world. I think of my colleagues in the Embassy, my fellow Somalis in India and of myself.

A large number of Somalis must be suffering from, at least, some sort of minor mental disorders. I am sure that even those who have inflicted such pain on the nation must suffer from some kind of uneasy state of mind. It is not easy for the innocent persons to understand for what they are paying such a price. If the innocents are paying such a high price what is the price to be paid by those who caused or are causing such hardship to the nation?

At the moment, for consolation we remind
ourselves of the verses of the Holy Qur’an-Sura Al-Inshi-ah or Al Sharh, Ayat 5 & 6.

5. “So, verily,
   With every difficulty,
   There is relief

6. “Verily, with every difficulty.  
   There is relief.

In all these past years there has been a deadlock. No improvement at all. Life seems to have come to a standstill. However, the Diplomatic Missions abroad, which are still allowed by the host governments to operate, should continue to look after the national interest and to look after their nationals who look to the Diplomatic Missions as the only remaining State organs. We should keep our Flag flying, as we are caught in the fire.
Dismayed by the lack of progress in the national reconciliation process in Somalia, the Secretary General of the United Nations, Dr. Boutros Ghali said:

“the international community’s concern about how long it will be expected to support efforts towards national reconciliation in Somalia is fully understandable. The repeated postponements of conferences, the emergence of new subgroups and the lack of a clear reconciliation process have created the impression that talks between Somali leaders at various levels could continue indefinitely. The impression is also created that, despite the prolonged suffering of the Somali people, certain leaders are still not prepared to subordinate their personal ambitions for power to the cause of peace and stability in Somalia.”

Commenting on UNOSOM in a letter to the President of the Security Council dated 1 September 1994, Ms. Fatun Mohamed Hassan, Charge d’Affairs of the Somali Permanent Mission to the U.N. said:
“the United Nations presence in Somalia, and particularly its military component, has always hung in a balance between those views approving and those opposed to it. It does not mean that all those who have favoured it have all nationally inspired motives nor that all those who disfavoured it have all had sinister or ulterior ones. Nevertheless, all indications show that the international community has been yielding to the pressure of those opposed to its presence, for good or for bad. The fading commitment of the international community represents a lost cause for the majority of the Somalis.”

Whatever the case may be, the Security Council of the United Nations has decided to send a special Security Council Mission to Somalia in accordance with its Resolution No.946 (1994)—of 30 September 1994,

“to convey directly to the Somali political parties the views of the Council on the situation in Somalia and the future of the United Nations presence there.”

The Mission of the Security Council was led by Collin Keating, Permanent Representative of New Zealand to the United Nations and included Wang Xuexian (China), Herve Ladsous (France), Isaac E. Ayewah (Nigeria), Kamran Niaz (Pakistan), Yuri V. Fedotov (Russian Federation) and Karl F. Inderfurth (United States of America).

The fact finding mission spent two days in Mogadishu—26 and 27 October 1994—during which it had meetings with Ali Mahdi Mohamed, representing the Somali Salvation Alliance (SSA)
and General Mohamed Farah Aidid, Chairman of the United Somali Congress (SNA). The mission conveyed a message from the Security Council in the form of a prepared statement to the two faction leaders and on their part, the two leaders presented their views in writing on behalf of their groups.

According to the report of the Security Council Mission, the following leaders were present at the meeting between the U.N. mission and Ali Mahdi, which took place in Mogadishu on 26 October 1994: (The names and the titles are as published in the document of the Security Council S/1994/1245—3 November 1994).

Mr. Ali Mahdi Mohamed Interim President
Mr. Abdulkadir Zobo Vice-President
Gen. Mohamed Abshir Muse Chairman, SSDF
Gen. Adan Abdullahi Nur Chairman, SPM
Adv. Abdi Muse Mayo Chairman, SDM
Mohamud Khalif Vice-Chairman, SNF
Omar Hashi Adan Vice-Chairman, USC/PM
Mohamed Ramadan Arbo Chairman, SAMO
Adv. Mohamed Ragis Chairman, SNU
Adv. Abdullahi Moallim Head of USC delegate
Mohamed Abdi Hashi Chairman, USP
Mr. Mukhtar Vice-Chairman, SSNM
Mr. Caana Nuug Vice-Chairman, SDA
Abdinasir Ahmed Adan Serjito Chairman, USC/SNA (Gyr. Habar Gedir)
Abdullahi Hirsi Drishe Chairman, SSC (Saleeman/Habar Gedir)

The meeting took place, according to the programme of the mission from 13:50 to 15:50 hours. The SSA presented a five-and-a-half page document which ended with the following paragraph:
“In case the peace process does fail, we strongly propose that a Cambodia type of United Nations administration be imposed on Somalia for a period not less than three years so that law and order can be retained. The militia must be disarmed and demining is vitally important. Also this administration will lead Somalia to civic elections.”

The Mission met with General Aidid on 27 October 1994 in the morning from 08:00 to 09:35 hours and was also attended by the following leaders: [The names and the titles are as published in the Security Council document S/1994/1245 dated 3 November 1994]:

Mohamed Farah Aidid Chairman, USC/SNA
Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed Chairman, SSDF
Ahmed Omar Jess Chairman, SPM/SNA
Mohamed Qanyare Afrah Chairman, USC
Mohamed Nur Aliyo Chairman, SDM/SNA
Abdiaziz Sheik Yusuf Chairman, SSNM/SNA
Sheikh Jama Haji Hussein Chairman, SAMO
Ismail Babu Hurreh Vice-Chairman, SNM
Abdurahman Dualeh Ali Chairman, USF
Ali Ismail Abdi Chairman, SNDU
Omar Mungani Aweys Chairman, SNU
Ahmed Gure Adan USP
Mohamed Farah Abdullahi Chairman, SDA

The memorandum presented by this group concentrated on various reconciliation conferences and mentioned another conference due to be held in Mogadishu on 27 October but then postponed to 1 November 1994. The memorandum’s last paragraph said:
“We would like to reiterate our commitment to finding a durable settlement to our current problem. We also believe in the democratic process and adhere to it in resolving national issues. It is the acceptance of the rights of the majority and the protection of the rights of the minority which underlines this process. We constitute 13 organisations of the constituent signatory members of the Addis Ababa and Nairobi agreements. Nevertheless, we are calling upon the remaining three members to join us so that together we could shoulder the responsibility of saving our nation from chaos, warfare and disintegration.”

But the Special Representative of the Secretary General when he was briefing the Security Council mission on current political developments in Somalia, appraised the mission of “his intensive efforts to discourage General Aidid from convening a national reconciliation conference without the participation of those factions allied with Ali Mahdi.

And on its part, the Security Council mission made it clear in its message to the Somali faction leaders that:

“A conference without the participation of all 15 Somali factions that signed the Nairobi declaration, plus the Somali National Movement (SNM), would be a recipe for continued strife and violence and the United Nations could not be a party to a divisive move of this kind.”

The U.N. mission sounded like a father caressing a child:
“The termination of the UNOSOM mandate will not mean that the United Nations will abandon Somalia. The United Nations will be ready to sustain a facilitating or mediating political role beyond March 1995 if that is what the Somali leaders want and if they are willing to cooperate with the United Nations to that end.

But it then concluded on a tough note:

“Lastly, the Security Council mission wishes to remind the faction leaders that the international community has made tremendous personnel and financial commitments to Somalia. These commitments cannot continue indefinitely, particularly in the absence of a meaningful improvement of the situation. The Council must reassess its involvement in Somalia in the broad context of its world-wide agenda. This is the thought that the mission wishes to impress upon the Somali leaders.”

The Mission, on its return to New York, submitted its final verdict:

“The Security Council mission concluded that 31 March 1995 was the appropriate date to be included in the Security Council’s resolution as the end of the mandate of UNOSOM II. None of the Somali factions requested a longer extension, nor did the humanitarian organisations or NGOs.”

The mission’s report was transmitted to the President of the Security Council with a letter dated 3 November 1994 and within one day, the Security Council adopted Resolution 954 (1944) on 4 November
1994. The resolution has 21 preamble paragraphs and 14 operative paragraphs. Of all these paragraphs, only paragraph 1 of the 14 operative paragraphs delivered the real message.

It says:

“The Security Council....... “1. Decides to extend the mandate of UNOSOM II for a final period until 31 March 1995.”

The withdrawal which began in November 1994, was completed on 2 March 1995. After two years of its presence in Somalia, the U.N. peace-keeping forces ended their mission without reaching any kind of solution to the crisis for which it was created.

Here we come to the conclusion of the so-called “Operation Restore Hope” which started on 9 December 1992 and UNOSOM which took over operations from UNITAF on 4 May 1993.

The U.N. mission to Somalia was described as the most expensive operation in the history of the United Nations, but not the most successful. Many people must have gained, in one way or another, from the over 3 billion U.S. dollars spent on us. “And according to reports, the operations claimed 136 lives of multinational forces” and incalculable number of Somali lives. As for the Somali people, only God can pull us out of this abyss of despair.

The masses neither gained politically nor financially, with the exception of the few who exploited the situation- Somalis and foreigners. The problem was not the presence or the absence of the United Nations, the OAU forces, the Arab League forces, Islamic forces or any other forces but their effectiveness to stop the fighting. Security Council Resolution 733 (1992), calling on all states to
immediately implement a general and complete embargo on all deliveries of weapons and military equipment to Somalia", not only did not work, but it may have made the sale higher and more profitable than when it was on an open market.

This fact was mentioned by the UNOSOM Force Commander, General Aboo Samah Bin Aboo Bakar, when he was briefing the Security Council Mission. The Report of the mission said:

"The Force Commander made a special reference to the fact that the flow of arms into Somalia was continuing unabated despite the Security Council's arms embargo."

But while preaching to the others the importance of imposing an embargo on deliveries of arms to Somalia, the United Nations itself was caught breaking Resolution 733 (1992) when, according to Sahnoun:

"... the UNOSOM team in Mogadishu learned that a Russian plane with UN markings and chartered by a UN agency had delivered currency and military equipment to the north of Mogadishu, apparently to the troops supporting interim president Ali Mahdi. This, of course, infuriated his arch-rival Aideed"1

Sahnoun, a former Special Representative of the UN Secretary General to Somalia, added:

"What is incredible is that although the UN's name and reputation were at stake, no serious investigation was undertaken and no legal

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action for redress was pursued."1

The reported cargo, delivered to one of the contesting parties annoyed not only the UN skeptics and the opposing camp, but it has also cast doubt in the minds of the section of the society that thought the Organisation could play a mediating role in solving the crisis, as to whether or not the UN was a neutral and non-partisan Organ.

Whether or not some one has done this for political gains or for economic benefit, this action has enormously compromised the image and the credibility of the organisation as a deterrent force.

Hari Sharan Chhabra, an Indian writer on African affairs, who sent a report from Mogadishu to the Hindustan Times (21 December 1994) said:

“Even as the U.N. troops are leaving, gunfire, shelling and flying rockets are common features, Somalia, being a big arms bazaar.”

It is for this reason that the observers thought that hostilities might be renewed in the country after the withdrawal of the U.N. Forces.

The Security Council Mission which visited Somalia on 26-27 October, said in its report to the Council:

“...everything that the Mission saw left its members with a profound sense of unease and a fear that, whether or not UNOSOM leaves, political reconciliation or the emergence of a Government that enjoys widespread acceptance is far from certain. The risk of a return to civil war is real.”

A senior European Union official, Sugurd Illing, coordinator of international aid to Somalia, told Reuters news agency:

“there seemed no prospect of a political accord between warring factions in the capital, Mogadishu, to set up a central government before United Nations forces pull out”.

In a report from Geneva, on 15 November 1994, Reuters also said “Many non-government aid agencies have expressed fears that the country could collapse again into chaos when UNOSOM leaves sparking a new humanitarian crisis and a repeat of the mass starvation that led the world body to act two years ago.

To my understanding, the UNOSOM was never there to prevent wars or clashes between the factions as it has never taken seriously the disarmament of the groups. In fact, there were several clashes in Mogadishu between the groups, the latest of which was the conflict of December 1994. According to a French news agency, 100 Somalis were killed and more than 300 wounded. Quoting the U.N. spokesman, the agency said that one Egyptian U.N. soldier was killed by a stray bullet during fighting in the Medina district and nine other U.N. soldiers were wounded, also by stray fire.

In former British Somaliland, which declared unilateral independence after the collapse of the regime of Mohamed Siad Barre, there was some sort of tranquility for a while although there were internal conflicts among the contestants for power. Then the hidden animosity between the incumbent “President” of the breakway “Republic of Somaliland”, Mohamed Ibrahim Egal and the former “President”,
Abdurahman Ahmed Ali ‘Tuur’ exploded when fighting broke out between their forces in mid November 1994, claiming many lives on both sides.

This conflict forced hundreds of innocent people to flee their homes toward the de facto border with Ethiopia. According to an Ethiopian Government press release:

“thousands of Somalis are crossing the Ethiopian border fleeing the renewed fighting between different Somali factions in north west Somalia.”

In the South of the country, fighting broke out in mid December 1994 between groups loyal, respectively, to Ali Mahdi Mohamed and Mohamed Qanyare Afrah, Chairman of the USC (United Somali Congress) of which Ali Mahdi was also a member. The fighting in Mogadishu started after Qanyare joined a conference on reconciliation organised by General Mohamed Farah Aidid, the arch rival of Ali Mahdi. For Ali Mahdi, this action of Qanyare was a betrayal of the interest of the rival group to the SNA.

Ali Mahdi and his allies denounced the conference and in their memorandum to the Security Council Mission, the group pointed out: “The UNOSOM officials are passively observing the SNA group’s manoeuvres and attempting to replace three political organisations who are signatories of the Addis Ababa and Nairobi agreements, namely SAMO, SNU and SSNM, and their legitimate leaders, with three prefabricated SNA affiliations with the complicity of the SNA ‘appointed Chairman’.”

On their part, the group led by General Mohamed Farah Aidid stated in their memorandum to the Mission:
“It is important to note here that the agreement specifies that it is the signatory factions as factions per se rather than as individual names that signed for the factions that carry the authority of representation.”

“In case of change of leadership through a democratic process or means (elections) in any particular faction, the newly elected leader of that faction will thereafter be the legitimate representative leader of the faction in the reconciliation conference, in accordance with the constitution of that faction.”

But this theory was rejected by the Security Council Mission.

It was also emphasized in Security Council Resolution 954 (1994) that

“only a genuinely inclusive approach to political reconciliation would provide for a lasting political settlement and re-emergence of a civil society in Somalia.”

Although it is not explicitly mentioned, for the Security Council Mission and the Security Council the word “inclusive” means the leaders who signed the Addis Ababa and Nairobi agreements. And for those who closely follow the situation “inclusive” means the two main protagonists: General Mohamed Farah Aidid and Ali Mahdi Mohamed. Some people believe that if these two leaders are genuinely reconciled, the door will be opened for positive achievement. The settlement of the crisis in the South would undoubtedly make way for dialogue with the leaders in the North.
A genuine reconciliation must also be organised in a genuine manner. The country is suffering now because of wrongs done by those who took power after the collapse of the previous regime, by appointing authorities without consulting the other movements. A government or any kind of authority created in Mogadishu without the participation of all the groups and, particularly, the genuine groups from the North, will be similar to that formed in January 1991, which angered the leaders of the North, especially when Ali Mahdi nominated Omar Arteh Ghalib, Prime Minister of his interim administration, as a representative of the Northern Region at a time when Arteh had no support or credibility. It angered some people even to associate his name with the region.

Something similar to the earlier stalemate was being repeated: something which would likely give more reason for the breakaway leaders in the North to distance the region from the other part of the country. If the southern groups include in their talks Abdurahman Ahmed Ali “Tuur” as a representative from the North it will be as wrong as it was when Ali Mahdi nominated Omar Arteh as Prime Minister.


“Mr. Abdurahman Ahmed Ali, who had been the Chairman of SNM before the Borama Conference which elected a new administration, was in touch with General Aidid and Ali Mahdi”, the U.N. Secretary General’s report said.
The report added:

“He declared that the Somali people in the north and south of the country must sit together and resolve the issue in a manner that satisfied the desires and the rights of the people of “Somaliland” to have a separate status, on the one hand, and on the other hand, maintained the unity and brotherhood of the Somali people.”

In his press release issued at Addis Ababa on 29 March 1994, Abdurahman “Tuur” admitted:

“The experience of the last three years demonstrates clearly that the path followed by the Somali people, [he must have been referring to himself and the other faction leaders—Author] whether they are in the North or in the South of the country, in resolving the conflicts ensuing from the struggle against and the ouster of the dictatorial regime of Siad Barre did not yield, so far, the desired results of attaining stability or providing to the Somali people a better alternative of governance and rule of law in comparison to the oppression and chaos which characterized the latter years of the former dictatorship.”

Abdurahman “Tuur” admits that those who removed Siad Barre from power, had failed to deliver the goods to the people. But the problem is that, he and his friends, who claim to be the leaders, still insist that they are the only people who can rule and have the right to rule the country, instead of letting others try to work out a solution.

The Secretary General’s Report said, in one
sentence, that “Mr. Abdurahman Ahmed Ali who had been ....” and in another it spoke as if he was the one who could decide what the SNM should or should not do, when it said:

“He announced that the Somali National Movement would attend all future Somali reconciliation conferences as it had in the past.”

However, according to the Secretary General’s Report, A. Ahmed Ali’s announcement was rejected by the leaders in “Somaliland”, including Mohamed Ibrahim Egal, its “President”.

The Report quotes him as saying that “the SNM would attend all future Somali reconciliation conferences as it had in the past”. But I myself cannot remember any reconciliation conference attended by the SNM in the past. The most important conference was the one held in Addis Ababa in March 1993 and the SNM was neither a participant nor a signatory to the final agreement. A team of elders, led by former Prime Minister, Mohamed Ibrahim Egal, sitting in the ‘Observers’ corner of the Africa Hall, stated that they were there “only to say good luck to conference”. And the SNM was only seen in a press release issued during the conference, distributed in the corridors, rejecting the concept of Somali unity. “The union between ex-British Somaliland and ex-Italian Somaliland was a consequence of the political success of that concept. SNM and the people of Somaliland totally reject it.” The SNM did not attend both the first and the second Djibouti conferences.

A year after the Addis Ababa conference, the two groups led, respectively, by Ali Mahdi and General Mohamed Farah Aidid, signed a declaration in Nairobi, Kenya on 24 March 1994, in which they
“urged SNM to attend all national reconciliation conferences, meetings and consultations.”

Abdurahman Ahmed Ali spoke of “unity and brotherhood of the Somali people” after he was defeated in the “Presidential contest in Borama, on 23 March 1993. And when he was ‘President of Somaliland’ Abdurahman Ahmed Ali told Reuter news agency (18 November 1991):

“Somaliland is here to stay. We are not going back on this. We have been separated by colonial powers for 70 years and our ways of doing things are completely different.”

However, this change of heart would have been more useful if it had taken place when he was still in power in “Somaliland” and an effective leader. Now, his participation in any political activity in the south might even provoke negative reactions from moderate leaders in the north. Or maybe his approach was a ploy to convince the southern factions to take decisions that might sound nice to them, with the intentions of jeopardizing any eventual contact with the breakaway region, thus creating reason to claim international recognition.

We have an example of this kind of thing. Omar Arteh Ghalib, after being Prime Minister of the interim Government of Ali Mahdi for two-and-a-half years, although for most of this time he was in exile in Saudi Arabia, went to the Northern region of Somalia. Without being ashamed of collaborating with the other side, he arrived at Borama town and put his name in the list of the candidates contesting the election for the post of the “President” of “Somaliland”.

Arteh also accepted the post of Prime Minister in
Siad Barre’s regime when even the children knew that Siad was on the verge of collapse.

During the campaign, according to reports coming out of the area, people were wondering about his “double face”—being the Prime Minister of Ali Mahdi’s “Interim Government” and wanting to be “the President of Somaliland”. His answer was, according to reports, “I was doing that for Somaliland”, i.e., it was Somaliland’s interest.

Apparently he meant that his acceptance of the post of Prime Minister was the reason for the creation of the “Republic of Somaliland.” But then, after he lost the election, he removed his new mask and kept calling himself the “Prime Minister” of Somalia and went back into exile in Saudi Arabia. Omar Arteh Ghalib is a lucky and astute politician. The Arab Kings love him because he recites poems for them and they easily believe what he says to them. Some Arabs even associate his name with Somalia’s membership of the League of Arab States.

On 1 September 1994, a Syrian newspaper, Al-Thawrah, reported that the League of Arab States rejected a request for recognition made by Mohamed Ibrahim Egal, “President of the Republic of Somaliland”. The paper said that the League believes that all international charters and conventions call for unity and not for separation and that:

“all resolutions of the Arab League Council on Somalia reaffirm the desire of the Arab States for the unity and territorial integrity of Somalia and for the need to achieve national reconciliation which may lead to the return of peace and stability to the four corners of Somalia with the support of all its citizens.”
Quoting Arab League sources, the newspaper added that

“the Secretary General conveyed to the ‘President’ of ‘Somaliland’ his amazement at the turn about in his stand as his group was amongst the first Somali warring factions to call for the first conference of national reconciliation which was held in Djibouti in 1991, and which called for the unity of Somalia.”

According to the newspaper,

“Mohamed Ibrahim Egal had expressed his willingness to discuss the issue of national reconciliation and to work for the realization of Somali unity on condition that an accord should be reached among the warring factions in the south, especially between the factions of Ali Mahdi Mohamed and General Farah Aidid.”

The Syrian newspaper concluded:

“Egal attributed non-realization of any real progress in efforts at reaching national reconciliation in Somalia until now to the conflict of a personal nature which was still there despite the efforts of the United Nations and the League of Arab States.”

The “administration” in the north since May 1993 has not yet announced the willingness to negotiate with the south. Besides, according to the U.N. Secretary General’s Report, “the leaders in Somaliland including Mohamed Ibrahim Egal, its “President”, rejected the announcement of Abdurahman Ahmed

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1. Arab News and Views, League of Arab States, New Delhi, issue no. 08/94 of 19 September 1994.
Ali, that the SNM would attend all future Somali reconciliation conferences." It is clear that Abdurahman has neither the approval of the "administration", nor the support of the Council of the Elders “The Guurti”.

I fail, therefore, to understand the reason behind the United Nations' encouragement/support to hold a National Reconciliation Conference in Mogadishu when a whole and important region, the partner in the Republic, would not attend it. Any conference held without genuine representatives of the North and without the transparent consensus of all parties concerned, is doomed to fail. The United Nations should refrain from encouraging, sponsoring or supporting any action that could only deepen the crisis and widen the crack brought about by the declaration of secession by the North.

His action and that of Arteh, might even be for personal ambition and not at all connected with the regional interest. After losing power in the North, Abdurahman might have thought fit to approach the South, posing as “pro-unity” and for “brotherhood” so that he could get a position, say that of a Prime Minister.

Omar Arteh’s action may also be interpreted in the same way, although his position was much more complicated. Arteh loved power and he did not care for the consequences. He accepted the Premiership from Siad Barre when everybody else wanted to see the regime fall apart. He accepted the Premiership of Ali Mahdi when he could imagine, as an experienced politician, that his appointment would have a negative impact in the North. Then, in the end, after his power of Premiership vanished, he thought fit to go to the North to seek the “Presidential” position.
If what is happening in the North and in the South are political games, then I pray: “God save this Nation”. In the meantime, millions of Somalis are suffering in the country and abroad, in the camps in Mombasa, Kenya where bugs and snakes are threatening their lives, in Aden, Yemen, where the heat-stroke, sand-bugs and baking rocks have led to serious skin and eye diseases.

Even those Somalis who found shelter in highly developed countries like Denmark, Sweden, Holland, Finland, the United Kingdom, Italy, the United States of America, Canada and Australia, with an extremely good life are not short of complaints. Whether leading a life of comfort or adversity all long to go back home. The biggest and most serious problem that we are facing is the fate of our children. The civil war is not only responsible for physical dislocation but is also a source of mental and cultural trauma. If the situation continues as it is now, in a few years we may witness a large number of young people losing their national, religious and cultural identities.

Somali parents in these “civilized” countries are reduced to powerless guardians. On the pretext of protection of the children’s rights, Somalis in many countries are facing difficulties with their own children. Adolescent children, particularly female, are encouraged to leave their homes even when the parents advice them not to stay out late at night or simply pressurize the child to study hard, as it used to be in the past. Non-governmental organisations or even government Agencies in these countries often accuse Somali parents of “ill-treating” the children saying that their behaviour towards children is in contravention with the convention on the Rights of the Child. There have been reports that some children
were separated from their parents after the child called the phone number, known to the Somalis, as 999, claiming that his or her parents mistreated him or her. In the past the children did not raise their voices, out of respect for elders or for fear, in front of their parents.

For many Somalis there is the fear that when peace is achieved at home and the day of going back comes, there will be a large number of families which will be forced to abandon their children. Then we will see many broken families with irreparable consequences. We need to save the society from breaking into pieces. We need to save the children and the future generation. If we really care about the nation, we should act, and the sooner, the better.

The predictions were that after the end of the United Nations operation in March 1995, the country would plunge again into chaos and the Security Council Mission which visited Mogadishu in October 1994 said in its Report that “the risk of a return to civil war is real.” First and foremost, only the Almighty knows what is going to happen in the future, but millions hope that the leaders whose actions the country and the people depend on, will challenge these gloomy predictions and instead bring peace and stability. But, if the failure of the conferences to produce healthy results and the continued skirmishes between the rival groups are considered as indications, then the situation may turn out to be what some Somalis sadly say: “Rajo malaha”, which means “there is no hope”. But, if the quarreling groups put the Nation’s interest and welfare before self-interest then there is hope.
On 4 June 1993, both the Committees for the drafting of the Provisional Charter and that of Peaceful Settlement of Disputes were holding meetings at the Lafweyn Hotel in Mogadishu. In the Committee for Peaceful Settlement of Disputes, was Leonard T. Kapungu, Director, U.N. Political Division. It was supposed to be the final session of our Committee. As the document was not ready, the Chairman of the Committee suggested that UNOSOM allowed the group to continue to meet until the final draft was ready. After a long discussion which covered, as usual, the issue of lack of funds for extra days, Kapungu accepted that a small group representing all factions be allowed to stay to approve the draft before it was finally printed. As I was preparing the document, I was among those who were to stay behind for a few more days. I was amazed by the fact that the UN showed no interest in the documents that we were called to prepare. UNOSOM asked us to wind up the meeting even without concluding the final document. It seemed lacking in seriousness. The whole thing looked like a show and what the Committees were doing remained just on paper and
what UNOSOM implemented had nothing to do with what we decided.

Kapungu behaved like a colonial officer and once he, while with us in the Committee room, told us angrily in a very arrogant manner,

“UNOSOM will administer you until you find some other authority that can take over.”

What he said was a fact, as he was talking in accordance with Security Council Resolution 814 (1993), but what annoyed us was the way he was saying it. As an African, Kapungu could have spoken with a little bit of politeness even if he wanted to say that he was our governor. Kapungu told us that he was not staying in town the next day as he planned to go to the interior for the establishment of district councils.

The next day, 5 June 1993, for me was just like any other day. I got up for morning prayers. At 6.00 a.m. I went down to the garden bar and waited until the coffee-machine was hot. In the meantime, I had a chat with the barman and other workers. My group, the committee members, stayed at the Guurguurte Hotel which was opened for us after two years of closure. Nothing happened to it during the earlier fighting in Mogadishu, during which the city’s main hotels were looted and then demolished by bombardment. UNOSOM was our employer and we worked for lodging and meals. Only after we protested they decided to give us $100 each irrespective of how long we worked. We were like bonded labourers. Even those one hundred dollars were given to us after a long struggle. It was, like what we Somalis say: “Hooda oo ku dhinta”, which means, “Take it and die with it.”
After the breakfast, the Committee members who had stayed in Mogadishu to finalize the Committee’s Report went to the Lafweyn Hotel for the meeting. I had the draft copy and as agreed the day before, the Secretarial staff was to come, as they did everyday, to type the Report on computer so that many copies would be available to UNOSOM and the members of the Committee.

While we were awaiting the Secretarial staff, someone who was standing at the steps of the Hotel noticed a helicopter gunships flying over the area of Radio Mogadishu, the National Radio, and smoke coming from the ground. “There is fighting going on there”, the person said. Radio Mogadishu is situated in the area controlled by the Somali National Alliance (SNA) group, led by General Mohamed Farah Aidid. For Mogadishu’s inhabitants, it had become normal routine, to see helicopters flying overhead, shots fired by machine guns, checkpoints and body searches. For us too. After a short stay in Mogadishu, we had become accustomed to such an unhappy situation.

Later in the day, the news came to our hotels that many people had lost their lives. Among the dead were 25 Pakistanis of UNOSOM and 54 wounded. The casualties on the Somali side were not known.

On 6 June 1993, the Security Council adopted Resolution 837 (1993) in which it

“Strongly condemns the unprovoked armed attacks against the personnel of UNOSOM II on 5 June 1993, which appear to have been part of a calculated and premeditated series of cease-fire violations to prevent by intimidation UNOSOM II from carrying out its mandate as provided for in Resolution 814 (1993)”.
On 7 June, 1993 the Committees were served with the following UNOSOM Notice:

"TO: The Chairman of the Sub-Committee of the Charter Drafting Committee.
The Chairman of the Sub-Committee on the Peaceful Settlement of Disputes Committee

FROM: Leonard T. Kapungu (Signed)
Director Political Affairs

DATE: 7 June 1993

SUBJECT: Request for adjournment of the Sub-Committees

1. In the present situation it has not been possible for UNOSOM to provide Secretariat services to the meetings of the sub-committees of the Charter Drafting Committee and the Peaceful Settlement of Disputes Committee.

2. In these circumstances, I would like to recommend to the two sub-committees that the meetings be adjourned and convened at a later date.

3. I deeply regret that I could not come to discuss this matter with you. However, should you feel that there is need to discuss the matter I will be delighted to meet with you at UNOSOM headquarters.

4. Should the sub-committees accept my recommendation, UNOSOM would try to arrange transportation for those travelling outside Mogadishu as soon as possible."

On his part, General Mohamed Farah Aidid, Chairman of the SNA in a speech delivered on 19 June 1993 in Mogadishu, said:

"The assault made by the UNOSOM forces on 5 June 1993, aimed to seize Radio Mogadishu were not accidental, but it was rather a deliberate and planned action."¹

In its Resolution no.837 (1993) of 6 June 1993 (S/

RES/837 (1993), the U.N. Security Council has also authorised the Secretary General,

“to take all necessary measures against all those responsible for the armed attacks referred to in paragraph 1, including against those responsible for publicly inciting such attacks, to establish the effective authority of UNOSOM II throughout Somalia, including to secure the investigation of their actions and their arrest and detention for prosecution, trial and punishment.” (clause 5)

While General Mohamed Farah Aidid said in his speech of 19 June 1993 that

“we previously requested the U.N. Security Council to send to Somalia a neutral committee that investigates the events that occurred on 5 June 1993 and the period thereafter. We hope that they will accept our proposal because it is inconceivable that the same officials who were directly responsible for the mentioned disaster could make the inquiry thoroughly and report to the Council truly.”1

General Aidid first proposed the formation of a Commission in a letter to former U.S. President Jimmy Carter.

The United Nations Department of Public Information in New York, released a statement issued by the U.N. Secretary General’s Special Representative, Jonathan T. Howe, on 4 October 1993, informing the world that:

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“United Nations troops yesterday launched an operation designed to apprehend a number of key aides to General Mohammed Farah Aidid, who are suspected of complicity in the 5 June attack on Pakistani peacekeepers, as well as subsequent attacks on United Nations personnel.”

During the “hide-and-seek operation” in Mogadishu on 3 October 1993, “two helicopters of the United States Rapid Action Force were shot down by armed gunmen”, according to a statement issued by the spokesman of the Secretary General. The statement also said that “five United States soldiers were killed.” The spokesman added:

“This latest incident brings the total number of the United Nations Operation in Somalia casualties to 66 dead and over 200 wounded.”

While the confrontation was going on, there were people who were trying to work out some sort of reconciliation between General Aidid and the United Nations. Among those involved in the opening of the dialogue between the two sides, was John Drysdale, who was, according to New York Times (17 October 1993), Jonathan Howe’s Special Advisor. According to the Washington Post, (Sunday, 17 October 1993), Drysdale prepared a confidential document for the U.N. in which he stated that Mohamed Farah Aidid “offered to cease hostilities and begin “mutual dialogue”. “But the peace overture was rejected by the senior U.N. Representative in Somalia, retired U.S. Admiral Jonathan T. Howe”, according to The Washington Post, quoting John Drysdale.

“On the same day he wrote the memo, Drysdale said, he visited Aidid, with whom he had a warm
relationship, having once been Aidid’s house guest. ‘I read out to him the terms of the Security Council meeting, and his reaction to it then was, ‘I do not trust an in-house UNOSOM investigation but I would be prepared to cooperate in an international tribunal to investigate the 5 June killings’. Drysdale called the United Nations failure to take up Aidid on his peace offer absolutely scandalous”, the paper added.

“Howe, with U.S. backing, pursued a different course, offering a $ 25,000 reward for Aidid’s arrest—a strategy he defended in an interview on 16 October 1993:

“This is a society that works for money”. “The people who shoot at the U.S. do it for money”, Howe said.1

In America, when the people saw the pictures of slain American troops being dragged on the streets of Mogadishu, they called on the Government to withdraw the soldiers from Somalia with immediate effect.

The confrontation widened. The Secretary General of the United Nations, Dr. Boutros Boutros Ghali increased his criticism of the U.S. whereas the latter tried to marginalize the U.N. particularly the role of the Secretary General. The President of the United States, Bill Clinton took certain steps which were clearly aimed at undermining the role of the United Nations. On 9 October 1993, Clinton asked Robert B. Oakley, the American Special Envoy to Somalia to initiate a fresh move to bring peace in Somalia with the collaboration of the leaders of Ethiopia and Eritrea, after General Mohamed Farah Aidid called

for a cease-fire. According to the *New York Times* (Sunday 10 October 1993), the U.S. Administration had decided that

“it would do whatever it could to protect the American troops, bring home any American held prisoner and promote stability in Somalia within six months.

The *New York Times* added:

“President Clinton has given Mr. Oakley the authority to bypass the United Nations and work directly with President Meles Zenawi of Ethiopia, President Isaias Afewerki of Eritrea and other African leaders to try to reach a political settlement in Somalia.”

Around this time, the President of Eritrea Afewerki, was in Washington on an official visit. The Eritrean leader whom the Clinton Administration had decided to involve in a political settlement in Somalia, himself said that “the United States was behaving like a Rambo” thus far and has misread the intricacies of Somali clan politics.”

At one time, the U.S. and U.N. were working together against General Aidid’s SNA. But most of the time, the U.S. acted independently without caring for the U.N. Some critics said that both the Americans and the U.N. behaved as if they were the main opponents of General Aidid. General Aidid on his part perceived the presence of international forces, the U.N. or the U.S. or others as support to his arch enemy, Ali Mahdi Mohamed, who continued to claim to be the Interim President of the country. However,

a more serious analysis reveals that all that the multinational agencies and forces were doing went in favour of General Aidid’s policy. When George Bush, then President of the United States, visited Mogadishu in December 1992, he did not pay a visit to Ali Mahdi Mohamed, as Interim President. That was a blow to Ali Mahdi’s prestige and an event which was to Aidid’s advantage. The United Nations, for a long time, has been emphasising the fact of “the absence of a Government”, in Somalia. This meant for the U.N. that there was no government in Somalia which was recognised by the international community. This, in fact, coincided with the attitude of the SNA, which rejected the government of Ali Mahdi from the beginning. But, as a matter of fact, what the U.N. was trying to do was to implement its resolutions which gave the U.N. power to administer the country as an alternative authority.

To undermine even further his authority as Chief of the United Nations, the U.S. administration told Dr. Boutros Ghali not to go to Somalia to visit the U.N. forces, citing security reasons. It was an unusual piece of advice. Instead of telling him not to go, the Americans should have helped him to make the visit successfully. It would have been a great political defeat if the Secretary General had not gone to Mogadishu. He had to show that he was in charge of the operation in Somalia.

Dr. Boutros Ghali defied the American warning and on 22 October 1993 flew to Baidoa from Nairobi, Kenya. Here the American attitudes coincided with the attitude of General Aidid. Both were hostile to the Secretary General. The hostile reception in some parts of Mogadishu’s streets was normal. The area where the anti-Boutros demonstrations took place,
south of Mogadishu was controlled by the SNA. This was the area where all the offices of UNOSOM were situated. If the Headquarters of UNOSOM were in the other part of Mogadishu, we would have seen a different reception from the supporters of the United Nations presence. The former government building “Ex-Governo” would have been an ideal edifice for the Headquarters of UNOSOM and would have saved a lot of money for the operation. Contrary to the SNA’s accusation that he was partial to Ali Mahdi, the Secretary General, did not even send a message of greetings to the “Interim President” who was on the other side, i.e. North of Mogadishu, where if he [the S.G.] would have gone, he would have been given a tumultuous welcome.

Irrespective of the U.S. attitude towards the U.N., the Secretary General cannot disregard the importance of the United States or the significant role it plays in peace-keeping or in providing funding to the organisation. The U.S. is the strongest member in the U.N. and largest contributor of financial assistance. However, when the United States acted as the sole arbiter, Boutros Ghali could not hold back his feelings and he complained that:

“...The United States could not invent its own rules for serving in the United Nations peace-keeping force.”

He was also quoted by the New York Times (16 October, 1993) as saying:

“You have already confused the military situation, and now you want to confuse the political situation too.”

The Secretary General said these words when the
U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Madeleine K. Albright, announced that the Clinton Administration had shifted its course. Ms. Albright bluntly told him that the United States

"would begin an aggressive peace initiative with an independent envoy who would report to Washington, not to the United Nations, and would withdraw its troops in six months."

However, Boutros Ghali knew that there was no point in antagonizing the most powerful member of the U.N. Therefore, he had no option but to swallow his pride. He quietly declared:

"Honestly, my meetings with all of them in the Administration are always very good." Let us be very practical. I need the United States."

The end of the Cold War and particularly the collapse of the Soviet Union has created a power imbalance besides inflaming civil disorder and violence in different parts of the world, particularly in the Balkan, Asia and Africa. This has greatly increased the burden of responsibility on the weak shoulders of the U.N. Thus Boutros Ghali, on assuming the office of the U.N. Secretary General, inherited not only the old intractable issues, but numerous new ones. He gave priority to the solution of the crisis in Somalia. He thought that until then the U.N. had not paid sufficient attention to the famine in Somalia but had concentrated on, what he called the "rich man's war" in the Balkans.

Since then, the Secretary General has faced harsh realities. His encounters with peace-makers and

trouble-shooters must have been very frustrating. His long experience in public life has enabled him to endure, otherwise, as he himself made it clear:

“To put it bluntly, I have no power, no independence. You are free to send the troops or not to send the troops. You are free to pay the money or not to pay the money. So unless I obtain your goodwill, I will not be able to do your work.”

It must have been a frustrating experience for him when he tried but failed to remove the Italian commander in Somalia when he had disobeyed the orders of the Turkish General in charge of the United Nations operation in the country.

Resolution 837 (1993) of 6 June 1993 failed to produce the results for which it was adopted. Although a few arrests were made, the main target, General Mohamed Farah Aidid, managed artfully to avoid getting into the trap. This only led to an increase in violence. The United States Administration, which was a prominent actor in the implementation of the Resolution, came under heavy pressure from the U.S. public and Congress. On 7 October 1993, President Clinton announced that the American forces would be withdrawn from Somalia within six months and put the deadline at 31 March 1994.

When the situation in Somalia deteriorated to such an extent that it appeared to be a power struggle between the U.N./U.S. coalition and General Mohamed Farah Aidid, Dr. Boutros Ghali had to say that he had “no personal animosity towards General Aidid.” He told visitors that he would not even object

if General Aidid emerged as King of Somalia, as long as it brought peace.\textsuperscript{1}

Earlier, a spokesman of the State Department said that

“talks had begun in the region, and the Administration made a point today of saying that General Aidid would not necessarily be barred from any efforts to fashion a political settlement that would end the fighting.”\textsuperscript{2}

Following the change in U.S. policy, and pressures from other quarters to avoid further bloodshed, the Security Council passed Resolution 885 (16 November 1993), authorising the establishment of a Commission of Inquiry to investigate the 5 June conflicts. This Resolution also requested the Secretary General to

“suspend arrest actions against those individuals who might be implicated but are not currently detained pursuant to Resolution 837 (1993).”

So the hunt for General Aidid came to an end and Aidid came out in the streets of Mogadishu triumphantly.

The Commission of Inquiry took five months to produce a report on its findings. The investigation was conducted by the Zambian Chief Justice, a retired U.N. peace-keeping commander from Ghana and Finland’s Chief of Staff. According to a \textit{New York Times} correspondent at the UN, Paul Lewis, who cited a confidential report:

“The report... covers the period from June 5, 1993 when 25 Pakistani soldiers were killed in

a fire fight with Somali gunmen, to October 3, when clashes with the faction of Gen. Mohammed Farah Aidid culminated in the deaths of 18 American soldiers”.

The N.Y. Times said the report:
“divides the blame among the Somali factions, the United Nations commanders on the ground, troop-contributing countries and the Security Council”.

According to the New York Times:
“the report accuses the United Nations of provoking General Aidid’s faction by ‘overstepping’ its mandate to assist in the rehabilitation of Somalia’s political institutions.”

It was also reported:
“The Commission recommended that the United Nations make payments to hundreds of Somalis that suffered injury regardless of who was to blame.”

The American Administration kept its word and withdrew its forces by 31 March, 1994. This was followed by the withdrawal of the contingents of Germany, Greece, Italy, Kuwait, Morocco, Norway, Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates.

The remaining troops in the country were from Afro-Asian countries. The largest contingent was from Pakistan with 6,875, followed by India with 4,920 soldiers. Next was Egypt with 1,665 men. The non third world countries, which remained with

UNOSOM II were Australia (Movement control unit of 55 persons in Mogadishu), Ireland (Transportation unit of 90 in Baidoa) and Romania, with 230 personnel running a hospital in Mogadishu.

The United States had called for the end of the Mission before the expected date of March 1995. It abstained from the voting of the Resolution extending the mandate of UNOSOM until the end of October 1994, saying that the world community should not just continue to spend money and sacrifice the lives of others in a country where its own leaders do not want to solve their own problems. Dr. Boutros Ghali, angry at the continued attack on UNOSOM's compound and forces, supported the end of the Mission by March 1995, whether or not an agreement by the factions was reached.

Some of the groups, especially the SNA, did what they could to make the stay of the multinational forces in the country as difficult as possible. They demanded that the United Nations forces quit. So they did. UNOSOM's Mission ended on 2 March 1995, almost one month ahead of its time. Now the ball was in our court; in the court of the Somalis. Let us demonstrate that we can put our house in order.

My friends ask me what is going to happen when the multinational forces leave the country? They have in mind that the situation is going to go back to square one, i.e. famine and civil war that claimed hundreds of thousands of lives. My answer is “if there will not be a compromise, we might keep suffering. Anyhow, this mission, meant to be the most ambitious project of the world community, which started with high hopes to help a country devastated by civil war and famine, ended in failure.
"On the day (2 March, 1995) the last United Nations peace-keeping troops left Somalia, Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali suggested that he believed that the hopes for a new international order that blossomed at the end of the cold war had evaporated".¹

Since the UN left our country on 2 March 1995, there is no sign of improvement. On the contrary, we have seen the gap between the quarrelling parties widening and in the meantime the people inside and outside the country are suffering.

This is the only country that has three “Presidents” with three governments.

Will there ever be a day that the people in unison will say no to this appalling condition?

May Allah help us.

Al Hadith:
Abu Sa‘id Khudri (R.A.A.) relates that he heard the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) saying:

“Anybody amongst you notices something evil, should correct it with his own hands, and if he is unable to do so, he should prohibit the same with his tongue: if he is unable even to do this, he should at least consider it as bad in his heart: this is the lowest degree of faith.” (Muslim).²

We, the Somalis, when we blame someone of the past we say: “Ayax Tag Eelna Reeb” (The Locust is gone, but left the disaster behind). So, for what is happening in Somalia even after such a long time we blame Siad Barre and we say this is his legacy.

As far as the continent of Africa’s situation is concerned, we blame the colonialists for all that is happening and we say “Ayax Tag Eelna Reeb”. And we say it is a colonial legacy. We never blame ourselves for not being capable of handling the administration and to properly managing the economy of the continent.

The worse of all is that those who were preaching peace, development, a good life, prosperity, democracy, etc. etc. are not able to prove to be better than the colonialists in the case of Africa. In fact, they not only increased the damage, but put the continent in a much deeper crisis. And as for Somalia, those who toppled Siad Barre did not only fail to deliver better goods, but they destroyed the little the country had.

Thirty five years have passed since the majority of the countries in Africa gained their independence and one can hardly pin-point any country in the continent that has given its people a comfortable and
decent standard of living and political freedom and apart from the few elite that have manipulated the economies and the political systems of the continent.

It is natural that man has to blame something, i.e. his opponents at home, outsiders or even the weather, when he fails to fulfil promise or achieve certain objectives.

The Somali Nation expected bread and butter from the leaders who toppled the regime and not disease and death. Since they grabbed power, the leaders are busy in intrigues to maintain their positions or to frustrate the attempts of their opponents, resulting in total anarchy and civil war.

During the Addis Ababa meeting in March 1993, General Aden Abduallahi Nur, repeatedly said that: “We all want to be presidents, each one of us wants to be president.”

Now our situation appears to fulfil the gloomy prediction. So far, three leaders claim to be presidents: Ali Mahdi Mohamed, Mohamed H.I. Egal and General Mohamed Farah Aidid.

It does not appear as if we are really concerned about the existence of our Nation. We have completely ceased to exist as a State within the world community’s organisations. We have lost our vote in the world, which means we are no more part of the international society.

Does this bother the leaders who are only concerned with their own status?

Somalia has to regain its rightful position in the world. And that can be achieved only when there is a viable government which can provide peace and stability at home.

All crises have been solved by dialogue in various parts of the world. Mozambique, Angola, South Africa,
provide us with good examples of peaceful settlement of disputes. We know in Somalia that agony is prolonged because of lack of compromise between the warring factions. A sincere dialogue, for the sake of the Nation, would produce a chance for positive results.

What is missing here is the spirit of compromise. If there is compromise there will definitely be understanding. If there is will, there is way. Our people have had enough. They wish to live in peace and harmony. They want to go back to their homes.

The stalemate must end, consensus must be reached for the sake of the people.

“All Government—indeed, every human benefit and enjoyment, every virtue and every prudent act—is founded on compromise and barter.”

“Aan wadahadallo waa aan heshiino.”
(Let’s talk means let’s reconcile)

“Rag waxaad ’walaal’ uga weydey waran ugama heshid.”
(What cannot be done [obtained] by persuasion cannot be done [obtained] by the spear).

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1. Edmund Burke, Irish Statesman.
AFRICA

Is your destiny tied
With only wars?
Must your children
grow under falling bombs?
Must they carry guns
at the age of ten?

Must they grow under the banner
of fear and hate? Must their
brains be painted with pictures
of horror and death?

Must they judge life
only with the barrel of the gun?
Africa, must the white man
enslave you and rule again?

Is this a vision of mine;
or what I see is a continent
With warring groups, trying
to cash the foreign aid?

*    *    *

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APPENDICES
By Mukta Magazine

He sings old Hindi hits like ‘Awaara hoon’ and ‘Dekh tere sansar ki haalat kya ho gayee bhagwan’ with a near-perfect accent and gives vivid descriptions of how biryani, parathas and naan are cooked. One could very well be talking to an Indian. But no, this is the Somalian Ambassador to India holding forth on these subjects with the expertise of a native.

Tall, wiry and exuding a vibrancy that belies his 58 years, Mohamed Osman Omar has been in India for the last six years and feels quite at home in a nation which has constant reminders of his country. The cultural similarities are many—the food, the spices, the climate, the ubiquitous lungi of the south, all have a sweet familiarity for him.

His love affair with India began many years ago, when he saw a number of Hindi films in Somalia, his first one being ‘Aan’. Hindi films are a rage in Somalia, says Omar. He nostalgically recalls the romantic songs of yesteryear, dismissing modern film music as ‘mere shouting.’ He recalls the time he acted in the stage version of ‘Awaara’ in Somalia. A linguist, he speaks six foreign languages with ease.

India with its advancement in different fields is a role model for African countries. “We in a Somalia feel we can run with developing countries like India. It is a target not beyond our imagination and reach” says Omar.
Somalia has witnessed a string of disasters—dictatorship, civil wars, an economy in shambles and a terrible famine that has left millions dead. “The world was good enough to come to our help during the famine and this saved many lives. The guns have finally fallen silent and this lull will hopefully be a good omen, a precursor of better times to come.” At the political level, stability is still a far cry. Even after the withdrawal of UN troops, which had been seen as an impediment to self-rule by Somalis, the feuding clans have not reached a final consensus and talks are still on for a national government of reconciliation between Gen Aidid and Ali Mahdi. “But we will overcome,” says Omar philosophically.

Local administration bodies have been set up in different areas and there is some semblance of sanity returning to the nation.

But how does the country function in the absence of a government? “It is truly a miracle, completely beyond peoples’ imagination. With no government at the helm, the country still functions, everything functions. Trade is thriving. Somalis have picked up the threads of their lives and are importing and exporting almost everything.” Mogadishu, the capital, stands as testimony to the Somali entrepreneurial spirit. In the midst of rubble and destruction, trade flourishes and life goes on.

Did he face any problems in India when Indian Peace-Keeping forces were killed in Somalia? He recalls the incident with regret. “It was unfortunate that a humanitarian mission ended so tragically. Fortunately the Indian Government and people were very understanding. “Indian soldiers, in fact, have left behind a very good impression in the area where they operated, like Baidoa, one of the towns worst-hit
by the famine, where they had helped set up a school and other facilities.

The absence of a formal government has created problems aplenty. Somalia is a member of the UN, but when it comes to casting a vote on crucial issues, it finds itself handicapped and unable to keep in step with the world.

The functioning of the embassies is also crippled because of this. The embassy in India is functioning almost independently, mainly helping Somali students and citizens. The Indian government and ‘other friendly countries’ have been doing their bit to help out, providing scholarships, etc. But the economic crunch is obvious. The Ambassador, in fact, doesn’t have a secretary and answers calls personally.

What are the problems Somalis are battling, besides the obvious ones of civil war and a shattered economy? “In their day-to-day lives, the problems of Somalis are probably the same as those faced by Indians. Unemployment is there, but Somalis are learning to become a self-sufficient, self-contained economy. New infrastructure is being painstakingly built by the people themselves. Earlier, the private sector was almost non-existent. Now the people are setting up small shops and business and trying to develop a different work culture.”

The country, ironically, has moved from a government that worked to a situation of complete chaos, Omar has traced this tragic downfall in a book aptly called “The Road to Zero,” covering five decades from the power politics of pre-independence days to the fall in 1991 of dictator Mohamed Siad Barre.

Omar began his career as a journalist in the Italian newspaper II Corriere della Somalia and later the state-owned news agency. Later he opted for
diplomatic service and has served in London, Beijing, Dar-es-Salam, Tehran, Khartoum and Belgrade, before being appointed Ambassador to India in 1989. “Life is hard, but peace is the greatest priority for the people of Somalia today. In the Third World countries, we are not keen to help human beings. In the developed countries, health and the well-being of people are issues. Even a solitary death is investigated, while in places like Somalia and Rwanda people have been dying by the thousands. It is time to save the human being. Peace must prevail. The rest will come naturally.”

His dream is to return home one day “sit at my doorstep, probably with a stick in my hand, and see the people go by happily walking in the streets without fear.”

That for him is the greatest challenge, the greatest test that his country faces today.
ADDIS ABABA AGREEMENT
OF
THE FIRST SESSION OF THE
CONFERENCE ON NATIONAL
RECONCILIATION IN SOMALIA
27 March 1993

After long and costly years of civil war that ravaged our country, plunged it into famine, and caused acute suffering and loss of life among our people, there is the light of hope at last: progress has been made towards the restoration of peace, security and reconciliation in Somalia.

We, the Somali political leaders, recognize how vital it is that this process continue. It has our full commitment.

By our attendance at this historic Conference, we have resolved to put an end to armed conflict and to reconcile our differences through peaceful means. We pledge to consolidate and carry forward advances in peace, security and dialogue made since the beginning of this year. National reconciliation is now the most fervent wish of the Somali people.

We commit ourselves to continuing the peace process under the auspices of the United Nations and in cooperation with the Regional Organizations and the Standing Committee of the Horn as well as with our neighbors in the Horn of Africa.
After an era of pain, destruction and bloodshed that turned Somalis against Somalis, we have confronted our responsibility. We now pledge to work toward the rebirth of Somalia, to restore its dignity as a country and rightful place in the community of nations. At the close of the Holy Month of Ramadan, we believe this is the most precious gift we can give to our people.

The serenity and shade of a tree, which according to our Somali tradition is a place of reverence and rapprochement, has been replaced by the conference hall. Yet the promises made here are no less sacred or binding.

Therefore, we, the undersigned Somali political leaders, meeting at Africa Hall in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia between 15 and 27 March 1993, hereby reaffirm our commitment to the agreements signed during the Informal Preparatory Meeting on National Reconciliation in January 1993.

In concord to end hostilities, and to build on the foundation of peace for reconstruction and rehabilitation in Somalia, we agree to proceed within the framework of the following provisions and decisions:

1. **Disarmament and Security**:
   1. **Affirm** that uprooting of banditry and crime is necessary for peace, stability, security, reconciliation, reconstruction and development in Somalia;
   2. **Further affirm** that disarmament must and shall be comprehensive, impartial and transparent;
   3. **Commit** ourselves to complete, and simulta-
neous disarmament throughout the entire country in accordance with the disarmament concept and timeframe set by the Cease-fire Agreement of January 1993; and request that UNITAF/UNOSOM assist these efforts so as to achieve a substantial completion of the disarmament within 90 days;

4. **Further reiterate** our commitment to the strict, effective and expeditious implementation of the Cease-fire/Disarmament Agreement signed on 8 and 15 January 1993;

5. **Reaffirm** our commitment to comply with the requirements of the Cease-fire Agreement signed in January of 1993, including the total and complete handover of weapons to UNITAF/UNOSOM;

6. **Urge** UNITAF/UNOSOM to apply strong and effective sanctions against those responsible for any violation of the Cease-fire Agreement of January 1993;

7. **Stress** the need for the air, sea and land borders of Somalia to be closely guarded by UNITAF/UNOSOM in order to prevent any flow of arms into the country and to prevent violation of the territorial waters of Somalia;

8. **Further stress** the need for maximum cooperation by neighboring countries to assure that their common borders with Somalia are not used for the movement of weapons in Somalia, in keeping with the United Nations arms embargo against Somalia;

9. **Agree** on the need to establish an impartial National and Regional Somali Police Force
in all regions of the country on an urgent basis through the reinstatement of the former Somali Police Force and recruitment and training of young Somalis from all regions, and request the assistance of the international community in this regard.

II Rehabilitation and Reconstruction:

1. **Affirm** the need to accelerate the supply and operation of relief, reconstruction and rehabilitation programs in Somalia;

2. **Welcome** the conclusion of the Third Coordination Meeting on Humanitarian Assistance to Somalia;

3. **Express** our appreciation to donor countries for their continued humanitarian assistance to Somalia and, in particular, for the generous pledge, made at the Third Coordination Meeting, to mobilize $142 million for relief and rehabilitation efforts in Somalia;

4. **Call upon** UNOSOM, aid agencies and donor countries to immediately assist in the rehabilitation of essential public and social services, and of necessary infrastructure, on a priority basis by the end of June 1993;

5. **Assure** the international community of the full desire of Somali leaders to re-establish, with the assistance of UNOSOM, a secure environment for relief, reconstruction and rehabilitation operations and the protection of relief and rehabilitation workers and supplies;

6. **Condemn** the acts of violence committed against relief workers and all forms of extor-
tion regarding humanitarian operations;

7. **Urge** the organizations within the UN system and NGOs to effectively utilize Somali human resources in the rehabilitation and reconstruction process in Somalia.

### III. Restoration of Property and Settlement of Disputes:

1. **Affirm** that all disputes must henceforth be settled by dialogue, negotiations and other peaceful and legal means;

2. **Further affirm** that all private or public properties that were illegally confiscated, robbed, stolen, seized, embezzled or taken by other fraudulent means must be returned to their rightful owners;

3. **Decide** to deal with this matter within the framework specified in the report of the committee on the peaceful settlement of disputes.

### IV. Transitional Mechanisms:

The Somali people believe that there is concurrence among the people of Somalia that Somalia must retain its rightful place in the community of nations and that they must express their political views and make the decisions that affect them. This is an essential component of the search for peace.

To achieve this, political and administrative structures in Somalia need to be rebuilt to provide the people as a whole with an opportunity to participate in shaping the future of the country.

In this context, the establishment of transitional mechanisms which prepare the country for a stable and democratic future is absolutely essential. During
the transitional period, which will last for a period of two years effective from the date of signature to this agreement, the emphasis will be upon the provision of essential services, complete disarmament, restoration of peace and domestic tranquility and on the attainment of the reconciliation of the Somali people. Emphasis will also be put on the rehabilitation and reconstruction of basic infrastructure and on the building of democratic institutions. All of this will prepare the country to enter a constitutional phase in which the institutions of democratic governance, rule of law, decentralization of power, protection of human rights and individual liberties, and the safeguarding of the integrity of the Somali Republic are all in place.

Therefore, we have agreed to a broad outline of a framework for a transitional system of governance to allow for the provision of essential services, the creation of a basis for long-term planning, and for the resumption of greater administrative responsibility by Somalis. In general terms, this system will be composed of four basic administrative components that will be mandated to function during the transitional period.

Taking into account the reality of the situation in Somalia today and the need for stability, we hereby agree to the establishment of the following four basic transitional organs of authority:

1. **The Transitional National Council (TNC)**

   The TNC will:
   
   a) be the repository of Somali sovereignty;
   
   b) be the prime political authority having legislative functions during the period in question.
c) interact, as appropriate, with the international community, including UNOSOM;
d) appoint various committees, including the Transitional Charter Drafting Committee, as required;
e) appoint Officers for its various functions;
f) appoint the heads of administrative departments;
g) oversee the performance of the departments created; and
h) establish an independent Judiciary.

The TNC shall be composed of:
a) Three representatives from each of the 18 regions currently recognized, including one woman from each region;
b) Five additional seats for Mogadishu;
c) One nominee from each of the political factions currently participating in the First session of the National Reconciliation Conference;

2. The Central Administrative Departments (CADs)

The TNC will appoint the heads of the Central Administrative Departments, whose prime functions will be to re-establish and operate the departments of civil administration, social affairs, economic affairs and humanitarian affairs, paving the way for the re-establishment and operation of a formal government. The CADs shall comprise skilled professionals having the ability to reinstate, gradually, the administrative functions of national public administration. The performance of these departments will be overseen by the TNC.
3. Regional Councils (RCs)

Regional Councils shall be established in all the existing 18 regions of Somalia. The present 18 regions shall be maintained during the transitional period. The Regional Councils shall be entrusted primarily with the task of implementing humanitarian, social and economic programs in coordination with the TNC and will also assist in the conducting of the internationally-supervised census. The Regional Councils will liaise with UNOSOM II, UN specialized agencies, NGOs and other relevant organizations directly and through the Central Administrative Departments and Transitional National Council. The Regional Councils shall also be responsible for law and order at the regional level. In this regard, the law enforcement institution will be a regional police force and a regional judiciary. The District Councils (see below) in each region shall send representatives who will constitute the Regional Councils.

4. District Councils

District Councils shall be established in the present districts in every region. District council members shall be appointed through election or through consensus-based selection in accordance with Somali traditions. The District Councils shall be responsible for managing the affairs of the district including public safety, health, education and reconstruction.

V. Conclusion:

The Conference agreed on the appointment, by the TNC, of a Transitional Charter Drafting Committee referred to in section IV 1 (d) above. In drafting the Transitional Charter, the Committee
shall be guided by the basic principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and by the Somali traditional ethics.

The Conference agreed that the TNC shall appoint a “Peace Delegation” composed of political movements and other social elements to travel to all parts of the country for the purpose of advancing the peace and reconciliation process as well as to explain the agreements reached in Addis Ababa.

We further agree that the TNC shall appoint a National Committee to bring about reconciliation and seek solutions to outstanding political problems with the SNM.

The Conference also calls upon the international community and in particular on the neighbouring states to facilitate the noble effort at reconciliation by providing moral and material support.

**In conclusion, we the undersigned, in agreeing to the above, resolve that never again will Somalia suffer the tragedy of the recent past. Emerging from the darkness of catastrophe and war, we Somalis herald the beginning of a new era of peace, of healing and rebuilding, in which cooperation and trust will overcome hatred and suspicion. It is a message we must pass on to our children and our grandchildren so that the proud Somali family, as we knew it, can once again become whole.**

We, the undersigned, hereby pledge to abandon the logic of force for the ethic of dialogue. We will pursue the process of national reconciliation with vigor and sincerity, in accordance with this declaration and with the cooperation of the people of Somalia as a whole.

**Recognizing the tragic and painful recent**
history of problems in our country, we pledge to achieve comprehensive national reconciliation through peaceful means. We also pledge to adopt, in all parts of Somalia, transitional measures that will contribute to harmony and healing of wounds among all the people of Somalia.

We invite the Secretary-General of the United Nations and his Special Representative in Somalia, in accordance with the mandate entrusted to them by the UN Security Council, to extend all necessary assistance to the people of Somalia for the implementation of this agreement.

SIGNATORIES

1. SAMO  Mohamed R. Arbow  Chairman
2. SDA  Mohamed F. Abdullahi  Chairman
3. SDM  Abdi Muse Mayow  Chairman
4. SDM (SNA)  Mohamed Nur Alio  Chairman
5. SNMU  Ali Ismail Abdi  Chairman
6. SNF  Gen. Omar Haji Mohamed  Chairman
7. SNU  Mohamed Rajis Mohamed  Chairman
8. SPM  Gen. Aden Abdullahi Nur  Chairman
9. SPM (SNA)  Ahmed Hashi Mahmud  V/Chairman
10. SSDF  Gen. Mohammedi Ahbol Musa  Chairman
11. SSNM  Abdi Warsame Isaq  Chairman
12. USC (SNA)  Gen. Mohammed Farah H. Aaid  Chairman
13. USC  Mohammed Qoryare Afrah  Chairman
14. USF  Abdurahman Dualeh Ali  Chairman
15. USP  Mohamed Abdi Hashi  Chairman
AGREEMENTS REACHED BETWEEN
THE POLITICAL LEADERS
AT THE CONSULTATIONS HELD IN
ADDIS ABABA, 30 MARCH 1993

The political leaders agreed on the following:

1. For the formation of the TNC each faction will nominate a representative;

2. Given the 18 regions three representatives will be chosen by each region and names will be submitted to UNOSOM by the factions.

3. In regions where there are more than one faction or differences between the factions in the allocation of the seats the concerned factions will try to settle their differences in Addis Ababa if not, they will iron out their differences in the regions;

4. Criteria for the selection of TNC members:
   (a) Somali citizen;
   (b) Not less than 30 years of age;
   (c) The person should be mentally fit;
   (d) The person should be literate;
   (e) The nomination of the TNC members should be completed within 45 days as of 1 April 1993;
   (f) UNOSOM will provide the logistical support and act as observer where there are dispute;
Charter drafting committee in view of the time factor a committee will be set up to draft the charter which will be approved and adopted by the TNC. The first session of this drafting committee will start on 10 April 1993 in Mogadisho. The composition of the Charter Committee will be:

(a) Two members nominated by each political faction—one with political experience and another with legal expertise;

(b) International and legal advisors should be provided by UNOSOM;

(c) UNOSOM should provide the financial resources for the work of the Committee. The Charter should be completed within 45 days starting 10 April 1993. The drafting committee will work in Mogadisho.
DISARMAMENT

It was agreed that the disarmament process will be fully implemented.

International participation through UNOSOM is necessary, this will include, reconstruction and rehabilitation, humanitarian assistance, development, logistical support, communications, security, demining and mobilization throughout Somalia.

It was also agreed that an official delegation comprising of one member from each faction led by General Mohammed Farah Aaidid will go to SNM and will report to the TNC. All expenses, logistics and security related to the work of this good-will mission will be paid by UNOSOM.

SIGNATORIES

1. SAMO  Mohamed R. Arbow
2. SDA   Mohamed F. Abdullahi
3. SDM   Abdi Muse Mayow
4. SDM (SNA)  Mohamed Nur Ali
5. SNDU  Ali Ismail Abdi
6. SNF   Gen. Omar Haji Mohamed
7. SNU   Mohamed Rajis Mohamed
8. SPM   Gen. Aden Abdullahi Nur
9. SPM (SNA)  Ahmed Hashi Mahamud
10. SSDF  Gen. Mohammed Abshir Mussa
11. SSNM  Abdi Warsame Isaq
12. USC (SNA)  Gen. Mohammed Farah H. Aidid
13. USC   Mohammed Qasayre Afrah
14. USF   Abdurahman Daaleh Ali
15. USP   Mohamed Abdi Hashi

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The Security Council,

Considering the request by Somalia for the Security Council to consider the situation in Somalia (S/23445),

Having heard the report of the Secretary General on the situation in Somalia and commending the initiative taken by him in the humanitarian field,

Gravely alarmed at the rapid deterioration of the situation in Somalia and the heavy loss of human life and widespread material damage resulting from the conflict in the country and aware of its consequences on the stability and peace in the region,

Concerned that the continuation of this situation constitutes, as stated in the report of the Secretary-General, a threat to international peace and security,

Recalling its primary responsibility under the Charter of the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security,

Recalling also the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter,
Expressing its appreciation to the international and regional organizations that have provided assistance to the populations affected by the conflict and deploring that personnel of these organizations have lost their lives in the exercise of their humanitarian tasks,

Taking note of the appeals addressed to the parties by the Chairman of the Organization of the Islamic Conference of 16 December 1991, the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity on 18 December 1991 (S/23469) and the League of Arab States on 5 January 1992 (S/23448),

1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Somalia and expresses its concern with the situation prevailing in that country;

2. Requests the Secretary-General immediately to undertake the necessary actions to increase humanitarian assistance by the United Nations and its specialized agencies to the affected population in all parts of Somalia in liaison with the other international humanitarian organizations and to this end to appoint a coordinator to oversee the effective delivery of this assistance;

3. Also requests the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in cooperation with the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity and the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, immediately to contact all parties involved in the conflict, to seek their commitment to the cessation of hostilities in order to permit the humanitarian assistance to be distributed, to
promote a cease-fire and compliance therewith, and to assist in the process of a political settlement of the conflict in Somalia:

4. **Strongly urges** all parties to the conflict immediately to cease hostilities and agree to a cease-fire and to promote the process of reconciliation and of political settlement in Somalia:

5. **Decides**, under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, that all States shall, for the purposes of establishing peace and stability in Somalia, immediately implement a general and complete embargo on all deliveries of weapons and military equipment to Somalia until the Council decides otherwise:

6. **Calls on** all States to refrain from any action which might contribute to increasing tension and to impeding or delaying a peaceful and negotiated outcome to the conflict in Somalia, which would permit all Somalis to decide upon and to construct their future in peace:

7. **Calls upon** all parties to cooperate with the Secretary-General to this end and to facilitate the delivery by the United Nations, its specialized agencies and other humanitarian organizations of humanitarian assistance to all those in need of it, under the supervision of the coordinator:

8. **Urges** all parties to take all the necessary measures to ensure the safety of personnel sent to provide humanitarian assistance, to assist them in their tasks and to ensure full respect for the rules and principles of international law regarding the protection of civilian populations:
9. **Calls upon** all States and international organizations to contribute to the efforts of humanitarian assistance to the population in Somalia;

10. **Requests** the Secretary-General to report to the Security Council as soon as possible on this matter;

11. **Decides** to remain seized of the matter until a peaceful solution is achieved.
RESOLUTION 751 (1992)
24 April 1992
Adopted, as orally revised, by unanimous vote.
Prepared in the course of the Council’s consultations.

The Security Council,

Considering the request by Somalia for the Security Council to consider the situation in Somalia (S/23445),


Having considered the report of the Secretary-General of 21 and 24 April 1992 on the situation in Somalia (S/23829 and Add. 1 and Add. 2),

Taking note of the signing of the cease-fire agreements in Mogadishu on 3 March 1992, including agreements for the implementation of measures aimed at stabilizing the cease-fire through a United Nations monitoring mission,

Taking note also of the signing of letters of agreement in Mogadishu, Hargeisa and Kismayo on the mechanism for monitoring the cease-fire and arrangements for the equitable and effective distribution of humanitarian assistance in and around Mogadishu,
Deeply disturbed by the magnitude of the human suffering caused by the conflict and concerned that the continuation of the situation in Somalia constitutes a threat to international peace and security,

Cognizant of the importance of cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in the context of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations,

Underlining the importance which it attaches to the international, regional and non-governmental organizations, including the International Committee of the Red Cross, continuing to provide humanitarian and other relief assistance to the people of Somalia under difficult circumstances,

Expressing its appreciation to the regional organizations, including the Organization of African Unity, the League of Arab States and the Organization of the Islamic Conference, for their cooperation with the United Nations in the effort to resolve the Somali problem,

1. Takes note with appreciation of the report of the Secretary-General of 21 and 24 April 1992 on the situation in Somalia (S/23829 and Add. 1 and Add. 2);

2. Decides to establish under its authority, and in support of the Secretary-General in accordance with paragraph 7 below, a United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM);

3. Requests the Secretary-General immediately to deploy a unit of 50 United Nations Observers to monitor the cease-fire in Mogadishu in accordance with paragraphs 24 to 26 of the Secretary-
General’s report (S/23829);

4. **Agrees**, in principle, also to establish under the overall direction of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General a United Nations security force to be deployed as soon as possible to perform the functions described in paragraphs 27 to 29 of the report of the Secretary-General (S/23829);

5. **Requests** the Secretary-General to continue his consultations with the parties in Mogadishu regarding the proposed United Nations security force and, in the light of those consultations, to submit his further recommendations to the Security Council for its decision as soon as possible;

6. **Welcomes** the intention expressed by the Secretary-General in paragraph 64 of his report (S/23829) to appoint a Special Representative for Somalia to provide overall direction of United Nations activities in Somalia and to assist him in his endeavours to reach a peaceful resolution of the conflict in Somalia;

7. **Also requests** the Secretary-General as part of his continuing mission in Somalia to facilitate an immediate and effective cessation of hostilities and the maintenance of a cease-fire throughout the country in order to promote the process of reconciliation and political settlement in Somalia and to provide urgent humanitarian assistance;

8. **Welcomes** the cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States, the Organization of African Unity and the Organization of the Islamic Conference in resolving the problem in Somalia;
9. **Calls upon** all parties, movements and factions in Somalia immediately to cease hostilities and to maintain a cease-fire throughout the country in order to promote the process of reconciliation and political settlement in Somalia:

10. **Requests** the Secretary-General to continue as a matter of priority his consultations with all Somali parties, movements and factions towards the convening of a conference on national reconciliation and unity in Somalia in close cooperation with the League of Arab States, the Organization of African Unity and the Organization of the Islamic Conference:

11. **Decides** to establish, in accordance with rule 28 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, a Committee of the Security Council consisting of all the members of the Council, to undertake the following tasks and to report on its work to the Council with its observations and recommendations:

   (a) to seek from all States information regarding the action taken by them concerning the effective implementation of the general and complete embargo on all deliveries of weapons and military equipment to Somalia imposed by paragraph 5 of resolution 733 (1992);

   (b) to consider any information brought to its attention by States concerning violations of the embargo, and in that context to make recommendations to the Council on ways of increasing the effectiveness of the embargo;

   (c) to recommend appropriate measures in response to violations of the embargo and to
provide information on a regular basis to the Secretary-General for general distribution to Member States;

12. **Notes with appreciation** the ongoing efforts of the United Nations, its specialized agencies and humanitarian organizations to ensure delivery of humanitarian assistance to Somalia, particularly to Mogadishu;

13. **Calls upon** the international community to support, with financial and other resources, the implementation of the 90-day Plan of Action for Emergency Humanitarian Assistance to Somalia;

14. **Urges** all parties concerned in Somalia to facilitate the efforts of the United Nations, its specialized agencies and humanitarian organizations to provide urgent humanitarian assistance to the affected population in Somalia and reiterates its call for the full respect for the security and safety of the personnel of the humanitarian organizations and the guarantee of their complete freedom of movement in and around Mogadishu and other parts of Somalia;

15. **Calls upon** all Somali parties, movements and factions to cooperate fully with the Secretary-General in the implementation of this resolution;

16. **Decides** to remain seized of the matter until a peaceful solution is achieved.
RESOLUTION 767 (1992)
27 July 1992
Adopted, as orally revised, by unanimous vote.
Prepared in the course of the Council’s consultations.

The Security Council,

Considering the request by Somalia for the Security Council to consider the situation in Somalia (S/23445),


Having considered the report of the Secretary-General of 22 July 1992 on the situation in Somalia (S/24343),

Considering the letter of 23 June 1992 from the Secretary-General to the President of the Security Council informing him that all the parties in Mogadishu had agreed to the deployment of the fifty military observers, and that the advance party of observers had arrived in Mogadishu on 5 July 1992 and that the rest of the observers had arrived in the mission area on 23 July 1992 (S/24179),

Deeply concerned about the availability of arms and ammunition in the hands of civilians and the proliferation of armed banditry throughout Somalia.
Alarmed by the sporadic outbreak of hostilities in several parts of Somalia leading to continued loss of life and destruction of property, and putting at risk the personnel of the United Nations, non-governmental organizations and other international humanitarian organizations, as well as disrupting their operations,

Deeply disturbed by the magnitude of the human suffering caused by the conflict and concerned that the situation in Somalia constitutes a threat to international peace and security,

Gravely alarmed by the deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Somalia and underlining the urgent need for quick delivery of humanitarian assistance in the whole country,

Recognizing that the provision of humanitarian assistance in Somalia is an important element in the effort of the Council to restore international peace and security in the area,

Responding to the urgent calls by the parties in Somalia for the international community to take measures in Somalia to ensure the delivery of humanitarian assistance,

Noting the Secretary-General’s proposals for a comprehensive decentralized zonal approach in the United Nations involvement in Somalia,

Cognizant that the success of such an approach requires the cooperation of all parties, movements and factions in Somalia,

1. Takes note with appreciation of the report of the Secretary-General of 22 July 1992 on the situation in Somalia (S/24343):
2. **Requests** the Secretary-General to make full use of all available means and arrangements, including the mounting of an urgent airlift operation, with a view to facilitating the efforts of the United Nations, its specialized agencies and humanitarian organizations in accelerating the provision of humanitarian assistance to the affected population in Somalia, threatened by mass starvation;

3. **Urges** all parties, movements and factions in Somalia to facilitate the efforts of the United Nations, its specialized agencies and humanitarian organizations to provide urgent humanitarian assistance to the affected population in Somalia and reiterates its call for the full respect of the security and safety of the personnel of the humanitarian organizations and the guarantee of their complete freedom of movement in and around Mogadishu and other parts of Somalia;

4. **Calls upon** all parties, movements and factions in Somalia to cooperate with the United Nations with a view to the urgent deployment of the United Nations security personnel called for in paragraphs 4 and 5 of its resolution 751 (1992), and otherwise assist in the general stabilization of the situation in Somalia, without which cooperation the Council does not exclude other measures to deliver humanitarian assistance to Somalia;

5. **Reiterates its appeal** to the international community to provide adequate financial and other resources for humanitarian efforts in Somalia;
6. **Encourages** the ongoing efforts of the United Nations, its specialized agencies and humanitarian organizations, including the International Committee of the Red Cross, to ensure delivery of humanitarian assistance to all regions of Somalia;

7. **Appeals** to all parties, movements and factions in Somalia to extend full cooperation to the United Nations military observers and to take measures to ensure their security;

8. **Requests** the Secretary-General, as part of his continuing efforts in Somalia, to promote an immediate and effective cessation of hostilities and the maintenance of a cease-fire throughout the country in order to facilitate the urgent delivery of humanitarian assistance and the process of reconciliation and political settlement in Somalia.

9. **Calls upon** all parties, movements and factions in Somalia immediately to cease hostilities and to maintain a cease-fire throughout the country;

10. **Stresses** the need for the observance and strict monitoring of the general and complete embargo of all deliveries of weapons and military equipment to Somalia, as decided in paragraph 5 of its resolution 733 (1992);

11. **Welcomes** the cooperation between the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity, the League of Arab States and the Organization of the Islamic Conference in resolving the situation in Somalia;

12. **Approves** the Secretary-General’s proposal to
establish four operational zones in Somalia as part of the consolidated United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM);

13. **Requests** the Secretary-General to ensure that his Special Representative for Somalia is provided with all the necessary support services to enable him to carry out his mandate effectively;

14. **Strongly supports** the decision of the Secretary-General to dispatch urgently a technical team to Somalia, under the overall direction of his Special Representative, in order to work within the framework and objective outlined in paragraph 64 of his report (S/24343) and to submit expeditiously report to the Security Council on this matter;

15. **Affirms** that all officials of the United Nations and all experts on mission for the United Nations in Somalia enjoy the privileges and immunities provided for in the Convention of the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations of 13 February 1946 and in any another relevant instruments and that all parties, movements and factions in Somalia are required to allow them full freedom of movement and all necessary facilities;

16. **Requests** the Secretary-General to continue urgently his consultations with all parties, movements and factions in Somalia towards the convening of a conference on national reconciliation and unity in Somalia in close cooperation with the Organization of African Unity, the League of Arab States and the Organization of the Islamic Conference;
17. **Calls upon** all parties, movement and factions in Somalia to cooperate fully with the Secretary-General in the implementation of the present resolution;

18. **Decides** to remain seized of the matter until a peaceful solution is achieved.
RESOLUTION 775 (1992)
28 August 1992
Adopted by unanimous vote.
Prepared in the course of the Council’s consultations.

The Security Council,

Considering the request by Somalia for the Security Council to consider the situation in Somalia (S/23445),


Having considered the report of the Secretary-General of 24 and 28 August 1992 on the situation in Somalia (S/24480),

Deeply concerned about the availability of arms and ammunition and the proliferation of armed banditry throughout Somalia,

Alarmed by the continued sporadic outbreak of hostilities in several parts of Somalia leading to continued loss life and destruction of property, and putting at risk the personnel of the United Nations, non-governmental organizations and other international humanitarian organizations, as well as disrupting their operations,

Deeply disturbed by the magnitude of the human
suffering caused by the conflict and concerned that the situation in Somalia constitutes a threat to international peace and security,

Gravely alarmed by the deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Somalia and underlining the urgent need for quick delivery of humanitarian assistance in the whole country,

Reaffirming that the provision of humanitarian assistance in Somalia is an important element in the effort of the Council to restore international peace and security in the area.

Welcoming the ongoing efforts by the United Nations organizations as well as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), non-governmental organizations and States to provide humanitarian assistance to the affected population in Somalia.

Welcoming in particular the initiatives to provide relief through airlift operations,

Convinced that no durable progress will be achieved in the absence of an overall political solution in Somalia,

Taking note in particular of paragraph 24 of the report of the Secretary-General,

1. Takes note with appreciation of the report of the Secretary-General of 24 and 28 August 1992 on the situation in Somalia (S/24480) on the findings of the technical team and the recommendations of the Secretary-General contained therein;

2. Invites the Secretary-General to establish four zone headquarters as proposed in paragraph 31 of the report (S/24480):
3. **Authorizes** the increase in strength of the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) and the subsequent deployment as recommended in paragraph 37 of the Secretary-General’s report;

4. **Welcomes** the decision of the Secretary-General to increase substantially the airlift operation to areas of priority attention;

5. **Calls upon** all parties, movements and factions in Somalia to cooperate with the United Nations with a view to the urgent deployment of the United Nations security personnel called for in paragraphs 4 and 5 of its resolution 751 (1992) and as recommended in paragraph 37 of the Secretary-General’s report;

6. **Welcomes also** the material and logistical support from a number of States and **urges** that the airlift operation be effectively coordinated by the United Nations as described in paragraphs 17 to 21 of the report of the Secretary-General;

7. **Urges** all parties, movements and factions in Somalia to facilitate the efforts of the United Nations, its specialized agencies and humanitarian organizations to provide urgent humanitarian assistance to the affected population in Somalia and reiterates its call or full respect for the security and safety of the personnel of these organizations and the guarantee of their complete freedom of movement in and around Mogadishu and other parts of Somalia;

8. **Reiterates its appeal** to the international community to provide adequate financial and other resources for humanitarian efforts in
9. **Encourages** ongoing efforts of the United Nations, its specialized agencies and humanitarian organizations, including the International Committee of the Red Cross, and non-governmental organizations to ensure delivery of humanitarian assistance to all regions of Somalia, and **underlines** the importance of coordination between these efforts;

10. **Requests** the Secretary-General to continue, in close cooperation with the Organization of African Unity, the League of Arab States and the Organization of the Islamic Conference, his efforts to seek a comprehensive political solution to the crisis in Somalia;

11. ** Calls upon** all parties, movements and factions in Somalia immediately to cease hostilities and to maintain a cease-fire throughout the country;

12. **Stresses** the need for the observance and strict monitoring of the general and complete embargo on all deliveries of weapons and military equipment to Somalia, as decided in paragraph 5 of its resolution 733 (1992);

13. **Calls upon** all parties, movements and factions in Somalia to cooperate fully with the Secretary-General in the implementation of the present resolution;

14. **Decides** to remain seized of the matter until a peaceful solution is achieved.
The Security Council,


Recognizing the unique character of the present situation in Somalia and mindful of its deteriorating, complex and extraordinary nature, requiring an immediate and exceptional response,

Determining the magnitude of the human tragedy caused by the conflict in Somalia, further exacerbated by the obstacles being created to the distribution of humanitarian assistance, constitutes a threat to international peace and security,

Gravely alarmed by the deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Somalia and underlining the urgent need for the quick delivery of humanitarian assistance in the whole country,

Noting the efforts of the League of Arab States, the Organization of African Unity, and in particular the proposal made by the current Chairman of the
Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity at the forty-seventh regular session of the General Assembly for the organization of an international conference on Somalia, and the Organization of the Islamic Conference and other regional agencies and arrangements to promote reconciliation and political settlement in Somalia and to address the humanitarian needs of the people of that country,

Commending the ongoing efforts of the United Nations, its specialized agencies and humanitarian organizations and of non-governmental organizations and of States to ensure delivery of humanitarian assistance in Somalia,

Responding to the urgent calls from Somalia for the international community to take measures to ensure the delivery of humanitarian assistance in Somalia,

Expressing grave alarm at continuing reports of widespread violations of international humanitarian law occurring in Somalia, including reports of violence and threats of violence against personnel participating lawfully in impartial humanitarian relief activities; deliberate attacks on non-combatants, relief consignments and vehicles, and medical and relief facilities; and the impeding of the delivery of food and medical supplies essential for the survival of the civilian population,

Dismayed by the continuation of conditions that impede the delivery of humanitarian supplies to destinations within Somalia, and in particular reports of looting of relief supplies destined for starving people, attacks on aircraft and ships bringing in humanitarian relief supplies, and attacks on the
Pakistani contingent in Mogadishu of the United Nations Operations in Somalia,

Taking note with appreciation of the letters of 24 November 1992 (S/24859) and of 29 November 1992 (S/24868) from the Secretary General to the President of the Security Council,

Sharing the Secretary-General’s assessment that the situation in the Somalia intolerable and that it has become necessary to review the basic premises and principles of the United Nations effort in Somalia, and that the Operation’s existing course would not in present circumstances be an adequate response to the tragedy in Somalia.

Determined to establish as soon as possible the necessary conditions for the delivery of humanitarian assistance wherever needed in Somalia, in conformity with resolutions 751 (1992) and 767 (1992),

Noting the offer by Member States aimed at establishing a secure environment for humanitarian relief operations in Somalia as soon as possible,

Determined also to restore peace, stability and law and order with a view to facilitating the process of a political settlement under the auspices of the United Nations, aimed at national reconciliation in Somalia, and encouraging the Secretary-General and his Special Representative for Somalia to continue and intensify their work at the national and regional levels to promote these objectives,

 Recognizing that the people of Somalia bear ultimate responsibility for national reconciliation and the reconstruction of their own country,

1. Reaffirms its demand that all parties,
movements and factions in Somalia immediately cease hostilities, maintain a ceasefire throughout the country, and cooperate with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia as well as with the military forces to be established pursuant to the authorization given in paragraph 10 below in order to promote the process of relief distribution, reconciliation and political settlement in Somalia:

2. **Demands** that all parties, movements and factions in Somalia take all measures necessary to facilitate the efforts of the United Nations, its specialized agencies and humanitarian organizations to provide urgent humanitarian assistance to the affected population in Somalia;

3. **Also demands** that all parties, movements and factions in Somalia take all measures necessary to ensure the safety of United Nations and all other personnel engaged in the delivery of humanitarian assistance, including the military forces to be established pursuant to the authorization given in paragraph 10 below:

4. **Further demands** that all parties, movements and factions in Somalia immediately cease and desist from all breach of international humanitarian law including from actions such as those described above;

5. **Strongly condemns** all violations of international humanitarian law occurring in Somalia, including in particular the deliberate impeding of the delivery of food and medical supplies essential for the survival of the civilian population, and **affirms** that those who commit
or order the commission of such acts will be held individually responsible in respect of such acts:

6. Decides that the operations and the further deployment of the 3,500 personnel of the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) authorized by paragraph 3 of resolution 775 (1992) should proceed at the discretion of the Secretary-General in the light of his assessment of conditions on the ground; and requests him to keep the Council informed and to make such recommendations as may be appropriate for the fulfillment of the mandate of the Operation where conditions permit:

7. Endorses the recommendation by the Secretary-General in his letter of 29 November 1992 (S/24868) to the President of the Security Council that action under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations should be taken in order to establish a secure environment for humanitarian relief operations in Somalia as soon as possible:

8. Welcomes the offer by a Member State described in the Secretary-General’s above-mentioned letter concerning the establishment of an operation to create such a secure environment:

9. Welcomes also offers by other Member States to participate in that operation:

10. Acting under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, authorizes the Secretary-General and Member States cooperating to implement the offer referred to in paragraph 8 above to use all necessary means to establish as soon as possible a secure environment for humanitarian relief operations in Somalia:
11. **Calls on** all Member States which are in a position to do so to provide military forces and to make additional contributions, in cash or in kind, in accordance with paragraph 10 above and **requests** the Secretary-General to establish a fund through which the contributions, where appropriate, could be channelled to the States or operations concerned;

12. **Also authorizes** the Secretary-General and the Member States concerned to make the necessary arrangements for the unified command and control of the forces involved, which will reflect the offer referred to in paragraph 8 above;

13. **Requests** the Secretary-General and the Member States acting under paragraph 10 above to establish appropriate mechanisms for coordination between the United Nations and their military forces;

14. **Decides** to appoint an ad hoc commission composed of members of the Security Council to report to the Council on the implementation of the present resolution;

15. **Invites** the Secretary-General to attach a small Operation liaison staff to the field headquarters of the unified command;

16. Acting under Chapters VII and VIII of the Charter, **calls upon** States, nationally or through regional agencies or arrangements, to use such measures as may be necessary to ensure strict implementation of paragraph 5 of resolution 733 (1992);

17. **Requests** all States, in particular those in the
region, to provide appropriate support for the actions undertaken by States, nationally or through regional agencies or arrangements, pursuant to the present and other relevant resolutions:

18. **Requests** the Secretary-General and, as appropriate, the States concerned to report to the Council on a regular basis, the first such report to be made no later than fifteen days after the adoption of the present resolution, on the implementation of the present resolution and the attainment of the objective of establishing a secure environment so as to enable the Council to make the necessary decision for a prompt transition to continued peace-keeping operations;

19. **Also requests** the Secretary-General to submit a plan to the Council initially within fifteen days after the adoption of the present resolution to ensure that the Operation will be able to fulfil its mandate upon the withdrawal of the unified command;

20. **Invites** the Secretary-General and his Special Representative to continue their efforts to achieve political settlement in Somalia;

21. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.
RESOLUTION 814 (1993)
26 March 1993
Adopted, as orally revised, by unanimous vote.
Prepared in the course of the Council’s consultations.

The Security Council,


Bearing in mind General Assembly resolution 47/167 of 18 December 1992,

Commending the efforts of Member States acting pursuant to resolution 794 (1992) to establish a secure environment for humanitarian relief operations in Somalia,

Acknowledging the need for a prompt, smooth and phased transition from the Unified Task Force (UNITAF) to the expanded United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II),

Regretting the continuing incidents of violence in Somalia and the threat they pose to the reconciliation process,

Deploring the acts of violence against persons
engaging in humanitarian efforts on behalf of the United Nations, States, and non-governmental organizations,

Noting with deep regret and concern the continuing reports of widespread violations of international humanitarian law and the general absence of the rule of law in Somalia,

Recognizing that the people of Somalia bear the ultimate responsibility for national reconciliation and reconstruction of their own country,

Acknowledging the fundamental importance of a comprehensive and effective programme for disarming Somali parties, including movements and factions,

Noting the need for continued humanitarian relief assistance and for the rehabilitation of Somalia's political institutions and economy,

Concerned that the crippling famine and drought in Somalia, compounded by the civil strife, have caused massive destruction to the means of production and the natural and human resources of that country,

Expressing its appreciation to the Organization of African Unity, the League of Arab States, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Non-Aligned Movement for their cooperation with, and support of, the efforts of the United Nations in Somalia,

Further expressing its appreciation to all Member States which have made contributions to the Fund established pursuant to paragraph 11 of resolution 794 (1992) and to all those who have provided humanitarian assistance to Somalia,
Commending the efforts, in difficult circumstances, of the initial United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) established pursuant to resolution 751 (1992),

Expressing its appreciation for the invaluable assistance the neighbouring countries have been providing to the international community in its efforts to restore peace and security in Somalia and to host large numbers of refugees displaced by the conflict and taking note of the difficulties caused to them due to the presence of refugees in their territories,

Convinced that the restoration of law and order throughout Somalia would contribute to humanitarian relief operations, reconciliation and political settlement, as well as to the rehabilitation of Somalia’s political institutions and economy,

Convinced also of the need for broad-based consultations and deliberations to achieve reconciliation, agreement on the setting up of transitional government institutions and consensus on basic principles and steps leading to the establishment of representative democratic institutions,

Recognizing that the re-establishment of local and regional administrative institutions is essential to the restoration of domestic tranquillity,

Encouraging the Secretary-General and his Special Representative to continue and intensify their work of the national, regional and local levels, including and encouraging broad participation by all sectors of Somali society, to promote the process of political settlement and national reconciliation and to assist the people of Somalia in rehabilitating their political
institutions and economy,

Expressing its readiness to assist the people of Somalia, as appropriate, on a local, regional or national level, to participate in free and fair elections, with a view towards achieving and implementing a political settlement,

Welcoming the progress made at the United Nations sponsored Informal Preparatory Meeting on Somali Political Reconciliation in Addis Ababa from 4 to 15 January 1993, in particular the conclusion at that meeting of three agreements by the Somali parties, including movements and factions, and welcoming also any progress made at the Conference on National Reconciliation which began in Addis Ababa on 15 March 1993,

Emphasizing the need for the Somalia people, including movements and factions, to show the political will to achieve security, reconciliation and peace,

Noting the reports of States concerned of 17 December 1992 (S/24976) and 19 January 1993 (S/25126) and of the Secretary-General of 19 December 1992 (S/24992) and 26 January 1993 (S/25168) on the implementation of resolution 794 (1992),

Having examined the report of the Secretary-General of 3 March 1993 (S/25354 and Add. 1 and 2),

Welcoming the intention of the Secretary-General to seek maximum economy and efficiency and to keep the size of the United Nations presence, both military and civilian, to the minimum necessary to fulfil its mandate,

Determining that the situation in Somalia continues
to threaten peace and security in the region,

A.
1. **Approves** the report of the Secretary-General of 3 March 1993;

2. **Expresses** its appreciation to the Secretary-General for convening the Conference on National Reconciliation for Somalia in accordance with the agreements reached during the Informal Preparatory Meeting on Somali Political Reconciliation in Addis Ababa in January 1993 and for the progress achieved towards political reconciliation in Somalia, and also for his efforts to ensure that, as appropriate, all Somalis, including movements, factions, community leaders, women, professionals, intellectuals, elders and other representative groups are suitably represented at such conferences;

3. **Welcomes** the convening of the Third United Nations Coordination Meeting for Humanitarian Assistance for Somalia in Addis Ababa from 11 to 13 March 1993 and the willingness expressed by Governments through this process to contribute to relief and rehabilitation efforts in Somalia, where and when possible;

4. **Requests** the Secretary-General, through his Special Representative, and with assistance, as appropriate, from all relevant United Nations entities, offices and specialized agencies, to provide humanitarian and other assistance to the people of Somalia in rehabilitating their political institutions and economy and promoting political settlement and national reconciliation, in accordance with the recommendations
contained in this report of 3 March 1993, including in particular:

(a) To assist in the provision of relief and in the economic rehabilitation of Somalia, based on an assessment of clear, prioritized needs, and taking into accounts, as appropriate, the 1993 Relief and Rehabilitation Programme for Somalia prepared by the United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs;

(b) to assist in the repatriation of refugees and displaced persons within Somalia;

(c) To assist the people of Somalia to promote and advance political reconciliation, through broad participation by all sectors of Somali society, and the re-establishment of national and regional institutions and civil administration in the entire country;

(d) To assist in the re-establishment of Somali police, as appropriate at the local, regional or national level, to assist in the restoration and maintenance of peace, stability and law and order, including in the investigation and facilitating the prosecution of serious violations of international humanitarian law;

(e) To assist the people of Somalia in the development of a coherent and integrated programme for the removal of mines throughout Somalia;

(f) To develop appropriate public information activities in support of the United Nations activities in Somalia;

(g) To create conditions under which Somali
civil society may have a role, at every level, in the process of political reconciliation and in the formulation and realization of rehabilitation and reconstruction programmes;

B.

**Acting** under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations,

5. **Decides** to expand the size of the UNOSOM force and its mandate in accordance with the recommendations contained in paragraphs 56-88 of the report of the Secretary-General of 3 March 1992, and the provision of this resolution;

6. **Authorizes** the mandate for the expanded UNOSOM (UNOSOM II) for an initial period through 31 October 1993, unless previously renewed by the Security Council;

7. **Emphasizes** the crucial importance of disarmament and the urgent need to build on the efforts of UNITAF in accordance with paragraphs 56-69 of the report of the Secretary-General of 3 March 1993;

8. **Demands** that all Somali parties, including movements and factions, comply fully with the commitments they have undertaken in the agreements they concluded at the Informal Preparatory Meeting on Somali Political Reconciliation in Addis Ababa, and in particular with their Agreement on Implementing the Cease-fire and on Modalities of Disarmament (S/25168, Annex III);

9. **Further demands** that all Somali parties, including movements and factions, take all
measures to ensure the safety of the personnel of the United Nations and its agencies as well as the staff of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations engaged in providing humanitarian and other assistance to the people of Somalia in rehabilitating their political institutions and economy and promoting political settlement and national reconciliation:

10. **Requests** the Secretary-General to support from within Somalia the implementation of the arms embargo established by resolution 733 (1992), utilizing as available and appropriate the UNOSOM II forces authorized by this resolution, and to report on this subject, with any recommendations regarding more effective measures if necessary, to the Security Council;

11. **Calls upon** all States, in particular neighbouring States, to cooperate in the implementation of the arms embargo established by resolution 733 (1992);

12. **Requests** the Secretary-General to provide security, as appropriate, to assist in the repatriation of refugees and the assisted resettlement of displaced persons, utilizing UNOSOM II forces, paying particular attention to those areas where major instability continues to threaten peace and security in the region;

13. **Reiterates its demand** that all Somali parties, including movements and factions, immediately cease and desist from all breaches of international humanitarian law and **reaffirms** that those
responsible for such acts be held individually accountable;

14. **Requests** the Secretary-General, through his Special Representative, to direct the Force Commander of UNOSOM II to assume responsibility for the consolidation, expansion and maintenance of a secure environment throughout Somalia, taken account of the particular circumstances in each locality, on an expedited basis in accordance with the recommendations contained in his report of 3 March 1993, and in this regard to organize a prompt, smooth and phased transition from UNITAF to UNOSOM II;

C.

15. **Requests** the Secretary-General to maintain the fund established pursuant to resolution 794 (1992) for the additional purpose of receiving contributions for maintenance of UNOSOM II forces following the departure of UNITAF forces and for the establishment of Somali police, and calls on Member States to make contributions to this fund, in addition to their assessed contributions;

16. **Expresses** appreciation to the United Nations agencies, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and the ICRC for their contribution and assistance and **requests** the Secretary-General to ask them to continue to extend financial, material and technical support to the Somali people in all regions of the country;

17. **Requests** the Secretary-General to seek, as appropriate, pledges and contribution from States
and others to assist in financing the rehabilitation
of the political institutions and economy of Somalia;

18. **Requests** the Secretary-General to keep the
Security Council fully informed on action taken
to implement the present resolution, in particular
to submit as soon as possible a report to the
Council containing recommendations for
establishment of Somali police forces and
thereafter to report no later than every ninety
days on the progress achieved in accomplishing
the objectives set out in the present resolution;

19. **Decides** to conduct a formal review of the
progress towards accomplishing the purpose of
the present resolution no later than 31 October
1993:

20. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.
RESOLUTION 837 (1993)
6 June 1993
Adopted by unanimous vote.
Prepared in the course of the Council’s consultations.

The Security Council,


Bearing in mind General Assembly resolution 47/167 of 18 December 1992,

Gravely alarmed at the premeditated armed attacks launched by forces apparently belonging to the United Somali Congress (USC/SNA) against the personnel of the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II) on 5 June 1993,

Strongly condemning such actions, which directly undermine international efforts aimed at the restoration of peace and normalcy in Somalia,

Expressing outrage at the loss of life as a result of these criminal attacks,

Reaffirming its commitment to assist the people of Somalia in re-establishing conditions of normal life,
Stressing that the international community is involved in Somalia in order to help the people of Somalia who have suffered untold miseries due to years of civil strife in that country,

Acknowledging the fundamental importance of completing the comprehensive and effective programme for disarming all Somali parties, including movements and factions,

Convinced that the restoration of law and order throughout Somalia would contribute to humanitarian relief operations, reconciliation and political settlement, as well as to the rehabilitation of Somalia’s political institutions and economy,

Condemning strongly the use of radio broadcasts, in particular by the USC/SNA, to incite attacks against United Nations personnel,

Recalling the statement made by its President on 31 March 1993 (S/25493) concerning the safety of United Nations forces and personnel deployed in conditions of strife and committed to consider promptly measures appropriate to the particular circumstances to ensure that persons responsible for attacks and other acts of violence against United Nations forces and personnel are held to account for their actions,

Taking note of the information provided to the Council by the Secretary-General on 6 June 1993,

Determining that the situation in Somalia continues to threaten peace and security in the region,

Acting under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations,

1. Strongly condemns the unprovoked armed attacks against the personnel of UNOSOM II on
5 June 1993, which appear to have been part of a calculated and premeditated series of ceasefire violations to prevent by intimidation UNOSOM II from carrying out its mandate as provided for in resolution 814 (1993):

2. **Expresses** its condolences to the Government and people of Pakistan and the families of the UNOSOM II personnel who have lost their lives;

3. **Re-emphasizes** the crucial importance of the early implementation of the disarmament of all Somali parties, including movements and factions, in accordance with paragraphs 56-69 of the report of the Secretary-General of 3 March 1993 (S/25354), and of neutralizing radio broadcasting systems that contribute to the violence and attacks directed against UNOSOM II;

4. **Demands once again** that all Somali parties, including movements and factions, comply fully with the commitments they have undertaken in the agreements they concluded at the informal Preparatory Meeting on Somali Political Reconciliation in Addis Ababa, and in particular with their Agreement on implementing the Cease-fire and on Modalities of Disarmament (S/25168, Annex III);

5. **Reaffirms** that the Secretary-General is authorized under resolution 814 (1993) to take all necessary measures against all those responsible for the armed attacks referred to in paragraph 1 above, including against those responsible for publicly inciting such attacks, to establish the effective authority of UNOSOM II
throughout Somalia, including to secure the investigation of their actions and their arrest and detention for prosecution, trial and punishment;

6. **Requests** the Secretary-General urgently to inquire into the incident, with particular emphasis on the role of those factional leaders involved;

7. **Encourage** the rapid and accelerated deployment of all UNOSOM II contingents to meet the full requirements of 28,000 men, all ranks, as well as equipment, as indicated in the Secretary-General’s report of 3 March 1993 (S/25354);

8. **Urges** Member States to contribute, on an emergency basis, military support and transportation, including armoured personnel carries, tanks and attack helicopters, to provide UNOSOM II the capability appropriately to confront and deter armed attacks directed against it in the accomplishment of its mandate;

9. **Further requests** the Secretary-General to submit a report to the Council on the implementation of the present resolution, if possible within seven days from the date of its adoption;

10. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.
RESOLUTION 865 (1993)
22 September 1993
Adopted, as orally revised, by unanimous vote.
Prepared in the course of the Council’s consultations.

The Security Council,


Having considered the report of the Secretary-General (S/26317) of 17 August 1993,

Stressing the importance of continuing the peace process initiated by the Addis Ababa agreement and in this connection welcoming the efforts of African countries, the Organization of African Unity, in particular its Horn of African Standing Committee, the League of Arab States and the Organization of the Islamic Conference, in cooperation with and in support of the United Nations, to promote national reconciliation in Somalia,

Stressing the commitment of the international community to help Somalia regain a normal, peaceful
life, while recognizing that the people of Somalia bear the ultimate responsibility for national reconciliation and reconstruction of their own country,

Expressing its appreciation for the improvements in the overall situation, which have been achieved by the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II), in particular, eradication of starvation, establishment of a large number of district councils, opening of schools and resumption by the Somali people in most areas of the country of their normal lives,

Recognizing the continuing need for broad based consultations and consensus on basic principles to achieve national reconciliation and the establishment of democratic institutions,

Calling upon all Somali parties, including movements and factions, to show the political will to achieve reconciliation, peace and security,

Recognizing that the highest priority for UNOSOM II is to assist the people of Somalia in the furtherance of the national reconciliation process and to promote and advance the re-establishment of regional and national institutions and civil administration in the entire country, as set out in resolution 814 (1993),

Noting with great concern, despite the improvements in the overall situation in Somalia, continuing reports of violence in Mogadishu and the absence of law enforcement and judicial authorities and institutions in the country as a whole, and recalling the request to the Secretary-General in resolution 814 (1993) to assist in the re-establishment of the Somali police and the restoration and maintenance of peace, stability, and law and order,
Convinced that the re-establishment of the Somali police, and judicial and penal systems, is critical for the restoration of security and stability in the country,

Gravely concerned at the continuation of armed attacks against the personnel of UNOSOM II, and recalling its resolution 814 (1993) which emphasized the fundamental importance of a comprehensive and effective programme for disarming Somali parties, including movements and factions,

A.

1. **Welcomes** the reports by the Secretary-General and his Special Representative on the progress achieved in accomplishing the objectives set out in resolution 814 (1993):

2. **Commends** the Secretary-General, his Special Representative, and all the personnel of UNOSOM II, for their achievements in greatly improving the conditions of the Somali people and beginning the process of nation-building apparent in the restoration in much of the country of stable and secure conditions in stark contrast with the prior suffering caused by inter-clan conflict:

3. **Condemns** all attacks on UNOSOM II personnel and **reaffirms** that those who have committed or have ordered the commission of such criminal acts will be held individually responsible for them;

4. **Affirms** the importance it attaches to the successful fulfilment on an urgent and accelerated basis of UNOSOM II’s objectives of facilitation of humanitarian assistance and the restoration of law and order, and of national reconciliation in a free, democratic and sovereign Somalia, so that
it can complete its mission by March 1995;

5. **Requests**, in that context, the Secretary-General to direct the urgent preparation of a detailed plan with concrete steps setting out UNOSOM II's future concerted strategy with regard to its humanitarian, political and security activities and to report thereon to the Council as soon as possible;

6. **Urges** the Secretary-General to re-double his efforts at the local, regional and national levels, including encouraging broad participation by all sectors of Somali society, to continue the process of national reconciliation and political settlement, and to assist the people of Somalia in rehabilitating their political institutions and economy;

7. **Calls on** all Member States to assist, in all ways possible, including the urgent full staffing of UNOSOM II civil positions, the Secretary-General, in conjunction with regional organizations, in his efforts to reconcile the parties and rebuild Somali political institutions;

8. **Invites** the Secretary-General to consult the countries of the region and regional organizations concerned on means of further reinvigorating the reconciliation process;

B.

9. **Approves** the recommendations of the Secretary-General contained in annex I to his report of 17 August 1993 (S/26317) relating to the re-establishment of the Somali police, judicial and penal systems in accordance with resolution 814
(1993) and requests the Secretary-General to take the necessary steps on an urgent and accelerated basis to implement them:

10. Welcomes the Secretary-General’s intention to convene at the earliest possible date a meeting of Member States interested in supporting UNOSOM II in the re-establishment of the police, judicial and penal systems, for the purpose of determining specific requirements and identifying specific sources of support;

11. Further requests the Secretary-General to undertake actively and as a matter of great urgency on international recruiting programme for staffing the UNOSOM II Justice Division with police, judicial and penal system specialists;

12. Welcomes the Secretary-General’s intention to maintain and utilize the fund established pursuant to resolution 794 (1992) and maintained in resolution 814 (1993) for the additional purpose of receiving contributions for the re-establishment of the Somali judicial and penal systems in addition to the establishment of the Somali police, other than for the cost of international staff;

13. Urges Member States, on an urgent basis, to contribute to that fund or otherwise to provide assistance for the re-establishment of the Somali police, judicial and penal systems, including personnel, financial support, equipment and training to help attain the objectives outlined in annex I to the Secretary-General’s report (S/26317);

14. Encourages the Secretary-General to take the necessary steps to ensure continuation of the
current police, judicial and penal programme from October to the end of December 1993 until additional funding from Member States is forthcoming, and to make recommendations as appropriate to the General Assembly:

15. **Requests** the Secretary-General to keep the Council fully informed on a regular basis on the implementation of this resolution:

16. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.
RESOLUTION 885 (1993)
16 November 1993
Adopted, as orally revised, by unanimous vote.
Sponsor: the United States of America.

The Security Council,


Also reaffirming resolution 868 (1993) on the need to ensure the safety and protection of United Nations personnel, Recognizing the critical need for broad based consultations among all parties and consensus on basic principles to achieve national reconciliation and the establishment of democratic institutions in Somalia,

Stressing that the people of Somalia bear the ultimate responsibility for achieving these objectives and in this context noting in particular resolution 837 (1993) which condemned the 5 June 1993 attack on UNOSOM II personnel and called for an investigation,

Noting further proposals made by Member States, in particular from the Organization of African Unity (OAU), including those in document S/26627, which recommended the establishment of an impartial
Having received and considered the reports of the Secretary-General (S/26022 and S/26351) on the implementation of resolution 837 (1993),

1. Authorizes the establishment of a Commission of Inquiry, in further implementation of resolution 814 (1993) and 837 (1993), to investigate armed attacks on UNOSOM II personnel which led to casualties among them;

2. Requests the Secretary-General, having conveyed his views to the Security Council, to appoint the Commission at the earliest possible time, and to report to the Council on the establishment of the Commission;

3. Directs the Commission to determine procedures for carrying out its investigation taking into account standard United Nations procedures;

4. Notes the members of the Commission will have the status of experts on mission within the meaning of the convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations, which shall apply to the Commission;

5. Urges the Secretary-General to provide the Commission with all assistance necessary to facilitate its work;

6. Calls on all parties in Somalia fully to cooperate with the Commission;

7. Requests the Commission to report its findings through the Secretary-General to the Security Council as soon as possible, taking into consideration the need for a thorough inquiry;
8. **Requests** that the Secretary-General, under his authority in resolutions 814 (1993) and 837 (1993), pending completion of the report of the Commission, suspend arrest action against those individuals who might be implicated but are not correctly detained pursuant to resolution 837 (1993), and make appropriate provision to deal with the situation of those already detained under the provisions of resolution 837 (1993):

9. **Decides** to remain seized of this matter.
RESOLUTION 897 (1994)

4 February 1994

Adopted, as orally revised, by unanimous vote.

Prepared in the course of the Council’s consultations.

The Security Council,

Recalling its resolution 733 (1992) of 23 January 1992 and all subsequent relevant resolutions,

Reaffirming the decision taken in resolution 886 (1993) of 18 November 1993 to continue UNOSOM II up to 31 May 1994,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General of 6 January 1994 (S/1994/12),

Stressing the importance the Council attaches to the Somali parties fulfilling in good faith all obligation and agreements to which they commit themselves, and affirming once again that the General Agreement signed in Addis Ababa on 8 January 1993 and the Addis Ababa Agreement of the First Session of the Conference on National Reconciliation in Somalia signed on 27 March 1993 (“the Addis Ababa agreement”) constitute the basis for the resolution of the problems in Somalia,

Bearing in mind respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Somalia in accordance with
the Charter of the United Nations and recognizing that the people of Somalia bear the ultimate responsibility for setting up viable national political institutions and for reconstructing their country,

Expressing serious concern at reports that Somali factions are re-arming and that a troop build-up is taking place in some regions of Somalia,

Condemning the continued incidents in Somalia of fighting and banditry and in particular condemning violence and armed attacks against persons engaged in humanitarian and peace-keeping efforts,

Emphasizing the crucial importance of disarmament by all parties in achieving lasting peace and stability in Somalia,

Paying tribute to the peacekeepers and humanitarian personnel of several countries killed or injured while serving in Somalia and, in this context, re-emphasizing the importance the Council attaches to the safety and security of United Nations and other personnel engaged in humanitarian relief and peace-keeping throughout Somalia,

Affirming the importance of establishing, by the Somali people, of representative district and regional councils and of a transitional national council, as well as the importance of a re-established police force and a judicial system for the restoration of public order throughout Somalia,

Welcoming the efforts made at the Fourth Humanitarian Conference at Addis Ababa and reaffirming the commitment of the international community to assist the Somali people to attain political reconciliation and reconstruction,
Welcoming also political contacts and consultations between representatives of various parties in Somalia with the view to finding solutions to outstanding matters and disputes among them and promoting the process of political reconciliation.

Commending and supporting the ongoing diplomatic efforts being made by international and regional organizations and Member States, in particular those in the region, to assist United Nations efforts to persuade Somali parties to reach a political settlement,

Reaffirming the objective that UNOSOM II complete its mission by March 1995,

Determining that the situation in Somalia continues to threaten peace and security and having regard to the exceptional circumstances, including in particular absence of a government in Somalia, and acting under Chapter VII of the Charter of United Nations,

1. Welcome the report of the Secretary-General (S/1994/12);

2. Approves the Secretary-General’s recommendation for the continuation of UNOSOM II, as set out in particular in paragraph 57 of his report, with a revised mandate for the following:

   (a) Encouraging and assisting the Somali parties in implementing the “Addis Ababa Agreements”, in particular in their cooperative efforts to achieve disarmament and to respect the cease-fire;

   (b) Protecting major ports and airports and essential infrastructure and safeguarding the lines of communications vital to the provision of humanitarian relief and recon-
struction assistance;
(c) Continuing its effort to provide humanitarian relief to all in need throughout the country;
(d) Assisting in the reorganization of the Somali police and judicial system;
(e) Helping with the repatriation and resettlement of refugees and displaced persons;
(f) Assisting also in the ongoing political process in Somalia, which should culminate in the installation of a democratically elected government;
(g) Providing protection for the personnel, installations and equipment of the United Nations and its agencies, as well as of non-governmental organizations providing humanitarian relief and reconstruction assistance;

3. **Authorize** the gradual reduction of UNOSOM II to a force level of up to 22,000, and necessary support elements, such force level to be reviewed at the next renewal of the mandate;

4. **Underlines**, in this context, the vital importance of placing at the disposal of UNOSOM II the necessary material means and military assets required to enable it to discharge its responsibilities in an effective manner as well as effectively to defend its personnel in case of armed attack:

5. **Approves also** giving priority to directing international reconstruction resources to those regions where security is being re-established and to local Somali institutions which are prepared to cooperate with the international
community in setting development priorities in accordance with the Declaration of the Fourth Humanitarian Conference in Addis Ababa as set forth in paragraphs 23 and 24 of the Secretary-General’s report:

6. **Underlines** the importance that the Council attaches to demining and **requests** the Secretary-General to make arrangements to ensure the start of demining operations as soon as possible wherever conditions permit;

7. **Calls upon** all parties in Somalia to cooperate fully with UNOSOM II and respect the cease-fire arrangements and other commitments entered into by them;

8. **Demands** that all Somali parties refrain from any acts of intimidation or violence against personnel engaged in humanitarian or peacekeeping work in Somalia;

9. **Reaffirms** the obligations of States to implement fully the embargo on all deliveries of weapons and military equipment to Somalia imposed by paragraph 5 of resolution 733 (1992);

10. **Commends** the Secretary-General, his Special Representative and the personnel of UNOSOM II for their efforts in improving the conditions of the Somali people and in encouraging the process of political reconciliation, rehabilitation and reconstruction;

11. **Expresses** its appreciation to those Member States which have contributed troops or provided logistical or other assistance to UNOSOM II or have offered to do so, and **encourages** those who
are in a position to do so to contribute, on an urgent basis, troops, civilian personnel, equipment, and financial and logistical support so as to enhance UNOSOM II's capability to carry out its mandate:

12. **Expresses also** its appreciation to those States which have contributed humanitarian assistance or have supported the Somali Justice Programmes and encourages further such contribution on an urgent basis;

13. **Requests** the Secretary-General to consider, in consultation with the Organization of African Unity and the League of Arab States, establishing contacts with the Somali parties with the view to arriving at an agreed timetable for implementing the “Addis Ababa Agreements” including the objective of completing the process by March 1995;

14. **Further requests** the Secretary-General to submit to it, as soon as the situation warrants, and in any case in good time before 31 May 1994, a report on the situation in Somalia and the implementation of this resolution;

15. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.
RESOLUTION 954 (1994)
4 November 1994
Adopted by unanimous vote.
Prepared in the course of the Council’s consultations.

The Security Council,

Recalling its resolution 733 (1992) of 23 January 1992 and all other relevant resolutions,

Noting with appreciation the work of the Security Council’s mission in transmitting directly to Somalia’s political parties the views of the Council on the situation in Somalia and on the future of the United Nations in that country,

Having considered the reports of the Secretary-General dated 17 September 1994 (S/1994/1068) and 14 October 1994 (S/1994/1166), and the oral report of the Security Council’s mission to Somalia given on 31 October 1994,

Paying tribute to the thousands of personnel of the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM), and to the Unified Task Force (UNITAF) as well as humanitarian relief personnel who have served in Somalia, and honouring, in particular, those who have sacrificed their lives in this service,

Noting that hundreds of thousands of human lives have been rescued from famine in Somalia through
the efforts of the United Nations and the international community,

**Commending** the efforts of the special representative of the Secretary General to bring Somali factions together in national reconciliation,

**Reaffirming** that the people of Somalia bear the ultimate responsibility for achieving national reconciliation and bringing peace to Somalia,

**Convinced** that only a genuinely inclusive approach to political reconciliation would provide for a lasting political settlement and re-emergence of a civil society in Somalia,

**Recalling** that the date already foreseen for termination of the current United Nations Operations in Somalia (UNOSOM II) is the end of March 1995,

**Recognizing** that the lack of progress in the Somali peace process and in national reconciliation, in particular the lack of sufficient cooperation from the Somali parties over security issues, has fundamentally undermined the United Nations objectives in Somalia and, in these circumstances, continuation of UNOSOM II beyond March 1995 cannot be justified,

**Recognizing further** that termination of the mandate of UNOSOM II by the end of March 1995 implies a secure and orderly phasing out of its military component in advance of that date,

**Noting** the assurances of cooperation and non-interference with such withdrawal received from all Somali parties during the Council's mission to Somalia,

**Re-emphasizing** the importance the Council attaches to the safety and security of United Nations
and other personnel engaged in humanitarian relief and peace-keeping in Somalia,

**Underlining** particularly, in this context, the overriding need for all possible measures and precautions to be taken to ensure that UNOSOM II does not suffer any casualties in the process of withdrawal,

**Emphasizing** its willingness to encourage the Secretary-General to sustain a facilitating or mediating political role for Somalia beyond March 1995 if that is what the Somalis want and if the Somali parties are willing to cooperate with the United Nations,

**Concerned** that the United Nations should continue to work with regional organizations, in particular the Organizations of African Unity (OAU), the League of Arab States, and the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), and with the Governments of neighbouring countries to promote reconciliation in Somalia and the re-emergence of a civil society there,

**Recognizing also** the impact that the situation in Somalia has had on neighbouring countries including, in particular, flows of refugees,

**Noting** also that the United Nations will do its best to sustain humanitarian activities in Somalia and to encourage non-governmental organizations to do likewise, but that their ability to do so will depend almost entirely on the degree of cooperation and security offered by Somali parties,

**Confident** of the willingness of the United Nations to remain ready to provide through its various agencies rehabilitation and reconstruction assistance,
including assistance to the police and judiciary to the extent that the situation in Somalia develops in such a way as to make that practicable,

**Noting further** the interest of humanitarian agencies and non-governmental organizations in cooperating with the United Nations after the withdrawal of UNOSOM II in transitional arrangements for mutual assistance,

**Determining** that the situation in Somalia continues to threaten peace and security, and having regard to the exceptional circumstances including, in particular, the absence of a government in Somalia, **acting** under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations,

1. **Decides** to extend the mandate of UNOSOM II for a final period until 31 March 1995;

2. **Affirms** that the primary purpose of UNOSOM II until its termination is to facilitate political reconciliation in Somalia;

3. **Welcomes** the intention of the Secretary-General, expressed in paragraph 23 of his report dated 14 October 1994, to continue throughout the period of the mandate of UNOSOM II, and even afterwards, the efforts of his special representative to help the Somali parties achieve national reconciliation;

4. **Urges** all Somali factions to negotiate as soon as possible an effective cease-fire and the formation of a transitional government of national unity;

5. **Decides** that every effort should be made to withdraw all UNOSOM II military forces and assets from Somalia in a secure and orderly manner as soon as possible, as described in the
Secretary-General’s report dated 14 October 1994, before the expiry date of the current mandate of UNOSOM II and without compromising on the paramount need of ensuring the safety of UNOSOM II personnel:

6. **Authorizes** UNOSOM II military forces to take those actions necessary to protect the UNOSOM II mission and the withdrawal of UNOSOM II personnel and assets, and, to the extent that the Force Commander deems it practicable and consistent, in the context of withdrawal, to protect personnel of relief organizations;

7. **Emphasizes** the responsibility of the Somali parties for the Security and safety of UNOSOM II and other personnel engaged in humanitarian activities and in this context strongly demands that all parties in Somalia refrain from any acts of intimidation or violence against such personnel;

8. **Requests** Member States to provide assistance in the withdrawal of all UNOSOM II military forces and assets, including vehicles, weapons, and other equipment;

9. **Requests** that the Secretary-General keep the Council informed about the progress of the withdrawal process;

10. **Invites** the Organization of African Unity, the League of Arab States and the Organization of the Islamic Conference to continue their efforts in cooperation with the United Nations in the search for lasting peace in Somalia;

11. **Calls upon** all Member States, in particular the neighbouring States, to continue to provide
support for all Somali efforts towards genuine peace and national reconciliation and to refrain from any action capable of exacerbating the conflict situation in Somalia:

12. Reiterates the need for the observance and strict monitoring of the general and complete embargo on all deliveries of weapons and military equipment to Somalia, as decided in paragraph 5 of resolution 733 (1992) and in this regard requests the Committee established by resolution 751 (1992) of 24 April 1992 to fulfil its mandate as described in paragraph 11 of that resolution, in particular to seek the cooperation of neighbouring States for the effective implementation of this embargo;

13. Further requests the Secretary-General to continue to monitor the situation in Somalia and to the extent possible to keep the Security Council informed in particular about developments affecting the humanitarian situation, the security situation for humanitarian personnel in Somalia, repatriation of refugees and impacts on neighbouring countries; and to report to the Security Council before 31 March 1995 on the situation in Somalia and to submit suggestions concerning the role that the United Nations could play in Somalia beyond that date;

14. Decides to remain actively seized of the matter.
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About the Book

Ambassador Mohamed Osman Omar while succinctly describing the causes and characteristics of the crisis in Somalia rightly points out that the pursuit of narrow self-interests without restraint has brought total anarchy in the country.

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