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Permanent Mission of the Somali
Republic to the United Nations

STATEMENT

By

The Honorable,

ALI AHMED JAMA JENGELI

Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

Of

The Somali Republic

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Mr. President,
Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen

Mr. President,

I take this opportunity to add my voice to the numerous speakers who extended their warmest congratulations on the assumption of your responsibilities as the President of the 63rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly. I am confident that this world body will benefit from your rich experience and wise guidance.

Mr. President,

We also appreciate the United Nations Secretary-General's commitment to put Africa's urgent needs at the top of his agenda during his term in office and particularly his untiring efforts to assist Somalis to find a lasting solution to their conflict.

In this connection I propose to confine my remarks first to what I consider to be the most important issues facing the development needs of Africa and the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. Secondly I will be raising some of the major concerns we have about the current situation in Somalia. In recent years a great deal has been said about Africa and its problems, regarding development needs and policy implementation. I would like to dwell, briefly, on three particular areas:

- (1) Aid
- (2) Debt Burden
- (3) Trade

Mr. President,

On the issue of aid to Africa we are mainly concerned with its quantity, relevance and quality. Of course we support any measures likely to increase the effectiveness, coordination and coherence of aid whether bilateral or multilateral. On the quantity of total Official Development Assistance (ODA), most observers would agree that total aid to Africa in the coming years is not likely to increase and may even decrease. Therefore it would be unrealistic to entertain exaggerated hopes for development through aid. Most donor countries have yet to reach the 0.7% GDP UN recommended target.

Mr. President,

With regard to the debt burden of many countries in Africa especially the so-called Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC), we believe that the international community should be doing far more than has been attempted or achieved in recent years. For one thing, the process of reduction of debt should be accelerated to give credence to our recognition of the existence of an urgent crisis. We believe

that, in respect of LDCs and Low-income countries, outstanding debts should totally be cancelled. We need to free resources for growth and the achievement of national development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

Mr. President,

With regard to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, we need to have a closer look at our development policies and institutions with a view to effecting urgent reforms. Corruption needs to be controlled and better governance given a real boost and not just lip service. Priority to agriculture should be reinstated. Africa can and should produce more food.

Mr. President,

We are convinced that Africa has an enormous potential. We believe that the greatest potential is in the sphere of trade and not so much as in aid or debt relief. In this connection, trade barriers against agricultural products of Africa should be removed from the markets of the European Union and North America, if the Developed countries are really serious about aiding Less Developed Countries. As we are all well aware, the Doha Round of negotiations is still in an impasse due to the divergence of interests between the Developed and Developing members of the World Trade Organization (WTO). At the heart of the impasse is the existence of huge subsidies given to the farmers in the European Union and North America. Unless these subsidies are totally eliminated or substantially reduced there is little hope for Africa and other Developing Countries to compete in the markets of the Developed Countries.

Mr. President,

I would now like to move from touching on major issues facing development in Africa to the specific problems and prospects of Somalia. We wish at the outset to reaffirm that the Transitional Federal Government of Somali Republic (TFG) is fully committed to the implementation of the road-map envisaged under the Somali Charter adopted in 2004 despite the daunting natural and man-made challenges.

On reconciliation, we wish to point out that a peace and reconciliation Agreement has been agreed upon and signed between the TFG and the Opposition Alliance on 19th August, 2008 in Djibouti. We are now in the process of implementation hopefully without undue delays. But we are also mindful, after 18 years of conflict that delays could occur on the tactics of those who have developed vested interest in anarchy and chaos. It is also important that the leadership both on the government side and on the opposition to show resolve and leadership in order for this process to succeed and succeed it must. We are also determined to ensure that the works of saboteurs and spoilers will not keep the whole Somali nation, and the peace in the region, hostage. We hope we can count on the unambiguous support of the Members of the UN body and the Security Council.

Mr. President,

The situation in Somalia has been before the UN Security Council for a long time. We urge the United Nations and the Security Council to play their part and not allow opportunities to be lost through a policy of wait and see. In the last resort history may not be that kind to the way the Security Council has been handling the Somali case relative to the ways it has responded to other crises in comparable situations. We need urgently the deployment of a full-fledged UN Peacekeeping Force to restore peace and stability and create a secure environment for institution building and socio-economic development.

Mr. President,

Let me draw to your attention the increasing acts of piracy and armed robbery against vessels in Somali waters and the adjacent waters which has resulted both loss of human life and property. My government has strongly condemned these criminal acts which are in violation of international law and the UN Convention on the law of the Sea of 10th December, 1982. These criminal acts of piracy are unacceptable and should be put to an end. Since Somalia has no capacity to interdict or patrol its long coastline to ensure the security of the sea lanes, we call on the international community to cooperate with the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) in the fight against sea piracy in conformity with the provisions of the UN Security Council Resolution 1816 paragraph 7. We stand ready to cooperate with all member States as well as with the United Nations in implementing resolution 1816.

We believe that the time has come when the world should take resolute action against piracy off the coast of Somalia and put to an end these criminal acts. It is unconscionable that piracy of this scale is left unchecked for so long at the dawn of the 21st century. We applaud the efforts of the Government of France and particularly President Sarkozy in the fight against piracy and armed robbery off the coast of Somalia.

Mr. President,

Finally I would like to touch on the dire humanitarian situation in Somalia which is the result of conflict, drought, acts of piracy and flooding in some regions. I appeal to the international community to provide more humanitarian to the Somali people. I wish to thank Governments of France, Denmark, Netherlands and Canada for escorting ships carrying humanitarian aid to Somalia. I also would like to express our profound thanks to all the countries that are currently providing humanitarian aid to our country.

May I end by emphasizing the importance of conflict prevention, conflict resolution and conflict management not only in Somalia but also throughout Africa and the Developing world? If there is no peace or security, it is hard to imagine that any meaningful socio-economic development could take

place. It is not realistic to expect countries in a state of conflict to achieve all or any of the agreed upon Millennium Development Goals. Therefore it is incumbent upon all Developing Countries, the United Nations and the UN Security Council to promote the conditions for effective development otherwise the development goals will appear as an exercise in wishful thinking.

Mr. President, I thank you.