

**STATEMENT OF THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION OF THE TRANSITIONAL
FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF SOMALIA HON. HUSSEIN ELABE
FAHIY, IN THE 34TH SESSION OF THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE
OF FOREIGN MINISTERS 15TH TO 17TH MAY, 2007, ISLAMABAD,
PAKISTAN.**

Mr. Chairman, OIC Secretary General, Excellencies, ladies and gentleman.

It is an honour and a pleasure for me to congratulate you for your appointment to lead this important session of the Islamic conference of the foreign ministers being held in this beautiful city, Islamabad.

I wish also to express my sincere gratitude to the government and people of Pakistan for the cordial reception and warm welcome extended to ~~our~~ my delegation since our arrival in Pakistan.

As you are all aware Somalia has passed through a difficult period during the past seventeen years, it has experienced one of the worst civil wars in its history. Hundreds of thousands of lives were lost and unimaginable destruction and devastation took place. In addition to this man made disaster, ~~the~~ the country experienced natural disasters caused by droughts followed by floods and others like tsunami.

The civil war seriously crippled the growth of the economy and badly affected the security, political environment and socio-economic conditions of the country. Tens of thousand have died of starvation and hundreds of thousands have either been displaced within the country or sought refuge in neighbouring countries, like Kenya, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Yemen and else where in the world.

The transitional federal government was established in late 2004 through a long and tedious reconciliation conference which lasted more than two and half years. This conference was sponsored by the international community and hosted by IGAD countries. The outcome of this conference was an all inclusive Government based on a 4.5 clan formula, which was acceptable to all the participants of more than four thousand nationals from all corners of the country.

Soon a comprehensive national security plan was launched after the Security Council lifted the arms embargo from the government. Accordingly, we requested the African union to send to Somalia a peace keeping force to help the transitional federal government to restore law and order and pacify the country in order to allow the humanitarian agencies to provide the needed

humanitarian aid to the people and to regain the confidence and support of the people. Thanks to the Ugandan government for fielding to Somalia the first contingent of African peace keepers. Similarly we are expecting from other African countries to follow and send troops to Somalia.

We are now in the process of holding a national reconciliation congress, composed of three thousand nationals from all the eighteen regions of the country, and people from Diaspora to thresh the outstanding issues and find lasting solutions to all the thorny problems facing the country. A five member committee of respected and distinguished nationals have been established to lead and guide the congress. This congress will encompass all sectors of the society; such as religious groups, political leaders, traditional elders, women, civil society, youth and the Somali Diaspora. All international organisation and donors will be requested to participate as observers. The OIC is welcome to take an active part in this reconciliation congress aimed to remove all suspicion and restore peace and stability in the country. Sincerely, we view that the OIC can contribute greatly to the success of this forthcoming national congress, and for that reason we appeal to the OIC to involve itself this important peace making effort being launched by a member of the organisation of the Islamic conference. We feel it is an obligation on the part of OIC to take an active and leading role in pacifying a member nation.

Finally the transitional national government and the people of Somalia are grateful to the support and assistance provided by the international community in the past without which conditions in the country would have been worse.

We request the OIC to be more involved in restoring peace and stability in Somalia. The congress is of paramount importance for it aims that:

- (I) The Somali people reconcile their difference, forgive and forget the past.
- (II) Renounce violence,
- (III) Agree to voluntary disarmament, and
- (IV) Accept the rule of law and democratic governance.

The Transitional Federal Government and the Somali people at large wholeheartedly support the initiative taken by King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia in his call for a negotiated settlement to the Middle East conflict.

Finally, I wish to re-iterate that the Transitional Federal Government is engaged in nation rebuilding and requests the OIC to extend the needed support and assistance in;

- (I) The restoration of peace and stability,
- (II) The building of the capacity of the dismantled basic institutions,
- (III) The rehabilitation and reconstruction of the damaged facilities like schools, hospitals, roads, bridges, ports, airports, and the like, and putting the country along the right path to development again.