



**THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF SOMALIA
PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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REMARKS BY

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**PRIME MINISTER OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF
SOMALIA**

AT

THE 72nd SESSION OF

THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF

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Bismillahi Rahmani Rahim

Mr. President

Mr. Secretary-General of the United Nations

Honourable Delegates,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honour to address the 72nd Session of the UN General Assembly.

I bring you warm greetings and good wishes from our President, H.E.

Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed Farmaajo, and the entire Government and

People of the Federal Republic of Somalia.

Allow me to first congratulate the President of the 72nd Session of the

UN General Assembly for assuming this role, and for ably steering this

august body toward a successful gathering. This year's session also

coincides on International Peace Day.

Yesterday, we observed the International Day of Peace. A day that called for togetherness and solidarity with those who have been forced to flee their homes and those who leave home to seek a better life. The theme of this year's General Assembly, speaks of peace and a decent life in a sustainable planet. The similarity in focus, goes beyond coincidence to acknowledge that the pursuit for peace, decent life, respect, safety and dignity is a global need yet elusive for hundreds of millions of people in the world today. From Syria to the Central African Republic, from the Rohingya people of Myanmar to the people of Libya, the number of protracted and new conflicts remains unacceptably high. The Somali people have for many years been the victims of war, famine and poverty, which has seen them displaced internally, while others made the perilous journey abroad. We therefore know too well, the necessity for others to open their doors to distraught and disillusioned people who just like us are looking for a safe and dignified living. I take this opportunity to thank all those who, even in challenging times, continue to uphold this spirit of oneness, of sharing and caring.

Mr. President,

Somalia is rising and we are determined to stay the course. Our aim is to contribute positively to the progress of our region, our continent and the world. Despite enormous challenges we are, among others, improving security, re-establishing law and order and conducting the necessary political and socio-economic reforms. The progress achieved so far, is because the Somali people have embraced a new dawn and our relentless partners continue to walk with us in our journey towards peace and prosperity. We will continue to formulate measures to strengthen Somalia's progress including in revenue generation, however, there are some serious challenges beyond the control of the Somali government. Debt relief would have the effect of unlocking concessional financing, attracting foreign investment and providing an opportunity that is critical to sustaining our reform efforts and consequently reinvigorate our economy. We are already working with International Financial

Institutions towards this objective and through this forum, seek your support.

Mr. President:

Terrorism remains one of our pressing challenges, with its repercussions felt globally. As such, our unity in addressing this scourge, collectively and sustainably, is critical. No effort should be spared in neutralizing the growth and influence of international terrorist organizations such as ISIS and Al-Qaeda who as we know, are key influencers of localized terrorism. Efforts to step up military interventions against such groups should be redoubled. In Somalia, we have made significant strides, which have weakened the capability of Al-Shabaab. In this regard, I would like to thank AMISOM for their sacrifice, unfailing support, dedication and solidarity in the fight against Al-Shabaab. To ensure the sustainability of such gains, we are focused on strengthening the military capacity of our national security forces. However, the arms embargo imposed against Somalia is a severe limitation towards this objective. The Federal

Government of Somalia will continue to work with the Security Council and relevant actors on our roadmap towards lifting the arms embargo.

Poverty and lack of education and livelihood opportunities remain contributing factors to the growth of violent extremism. Across the world, disillusioned youth are at heightened risk of exploitation by criminal networks, including terrorists. The urgent need to invest in education, skills building and livelihood opportunities for our youth is crucial. Addressing these key strategic elements to counter terrorism is an enormous task, which requires a holistic approach and resources to match. We continue to call upon friends of Somalia to help us in this important undertaking.

Mr. President,

We cannot talk about a sustainable planet without demonstrating commitment to make this world livable for ourselves and the future generation. Somalia is one of the countries ravaged by a vicious cycle of man-made and natural disasters created directly by environmental degradation. Rains are scarce, leading to crop failure and death of livestock, which subsequently leads to drought and famine. Currently the

humanitarian situation of millions of Somalis remains fragile as the bite of the current drought, which still threatens to develop into famine, continues. Our National Development Plan stipulates a clear and realistic roadmap to breaking this vicious cycle. However, Somalia, and many other countries who are on the receiving end of climate change are unable to find the resources required to tackle this ever-growing problem. In this regard, we urge all member states to continue improving Paris Climate Agreement which has the potential to mitigate the effects of climate change. Similarly, developing countries such as ourselves need investment in long term initiatives including infrastructure development, water conservation, innovative food and livestock production and creation of livelihood opportunities.

Mr. President,

We need to get better at streamlining global development and aid structures, especially for fragile states. We need to revisit the prevailing paradigms and take bold and innovative steps to improve this architecture. The New Deal Engagement in Fragile States, agreed in

Busan South Korea in 2011, was certainly a great step in that direction. Somalia fully embraced this agreement. Yet with all its strength, the New Deal for Fragile States needs improvement. That said, the mutual accountability principles embedded in the framework are exactly what fragile countries like us need. Often times, pledges are made, only to be neglected later. That should not happen as fragile countries rely on such support to rebuild their state. Conversely, development partners are often frustrated with the weak transparency and accountability institutions that exist in fragile countries. That is a legitimate concern, and we as fragile nations need to do better by tackling corruption and plugging leakages. Somalia has recently taken bold steps to address corruption. The Anti-Corruption Bill, critical for putting in place measures for good governance and accountability has been approved by the cabinet and tabled for enactment by parliament. The leadership of my country has also reiterated its zero tolerance to corruption.

Also relating to funding, we must find predictable funding for non-UN peacekeeping missions. This is particularly true for AMISOM in

Somalia. For over a decade, they have registered tremendous success yet they continue to operate in uncertainty of funding each year. We believe that investment in peacekeeping is a worthy investment in peace-building and state-building and we have seen the dividends of this investment in Somalia. I look forward to engaging our partners on this matter in the coming weeks and months.

Mr. President, Distinguished Delegates, Excellencies:

A fundamental element of peace-building and state-building is how any country treats its marginalised and the voiceless. Women are crucial in decision making and investment in society. In spite of our many challenges, Somalia has made significant steps in this regard. During the 2016 election, the number of women in our bi-cameral Parliament increased from 14 percent to 24 percent. Although we missed our 30 percent target, we did improve markedly from a few years ago.

Six months ago, when I was forming my Council of Ministers, I appointed six women to my Cabinet. They hold some of the most important portfolios in our nation, including trade and industry, health,

youth and sports, women and human rights and humanitarian affairs. In Somalia, women played an instrumental role during our worst times. In addition to being mothers and wives, they dominate the informal economy. Many living as refugees and migrants remain the lifeline of their families through remittances sent to Somalia.

Similarly, youth are vital to peace-building and state-building. The number of youth in our Parliament has increased exponentially. And I have also appointed a number of very young people to key cabinet positions. One of them, Abbas Siraji, was tragically killed in May this year. He was a beacon of hope for Somalia's young people. Having grown up in the world's largest refugee camp in Kenya, he worked hard, studied, and worked for various UN agencies. I appointed him to the Minister of Public Works and Reconstruction at age 31. Although he is no longer with us, his appointment spurred the potential of thousands of young people across the country. He showed them that, life in the refugee camps, as harsh as it was, didn't mean the end of hope.

Distinguished Delegates, Excellencies:

One of the core tenets of this United Nations is human rights.

We are working hard to ensure the respect for human rights of all people.

The establishment of institutions such as the national human rights commission that is mandated to protect and promote human rights will be a significant step towards in this direction. Vital legislations on human rights such as the soon to be approved Sexual Offences Bill, provide the tools to fight impunity of sexual perpetrators. Even though we are fond of our traditions, it should never be a reason to condone impunity and my government is determined to find ways to harmonise our traditional dispute resolution and our conventional justice system in a manner that respects the human rights of its people.

Mr. President,

The United Nations continues to be the world's most important common platform for nations to develop and strengthen bilateral and multilateral relations. It is a core UN principle for states to respect each other's political independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. It is a

principle that should be promoted and upheld at all times, especially when engaging with fragile state such Somalia.

Mr President,

In closing, I would like to take this opportunity to add my voice to the reform process of the United Nations. This organization has worked for peace and stability for decades and I strongly believe that the Secretary General's reform agenda will most certainly lead to a far responsive and dynamic institution. As a country that has greatly benefited from the UN system, we have also seen that it can improve its overall efficiency.

With that, I would like to conclude by once again reminding all of us, that we must redouble our efforts to focus on peace and decent life for a sustainable planet and that will take a collective recognition that, what happens in one corner of the world impacts another corner of the world.

Thank you, and may Allah bless you all.