

Text of the letter sent by fax to former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin by President of the Republic of Somaliland Mohamed Ibrahim Egal.

**Republic of Somaliland
The Presidency
Our Ref: SLR/PO/ISPMI/7/95
Your Ref:**

**3 July 1995
Hargeisa**

**His Excellency The Prime Minister
of Israel Mr. Yitshak Rabin
Hakirya, Fax No. 972 2 513 950
Jerusalem, Israel.**

Your Excellency

Establishing Strategic Partnership with the State of Israel.

In my capacity as the President of the Republic of Somaliland, an admirer of the state of Israel and the courage of its people, please accept my compliments and my people's profound felicitations to you, your Government, President and the people of Israel for their tenacity, strength and resourcefulness which had finally constrained its adversaries to make peace with the State of Israel. I have the honour of representing the people of Somaliland and its nascent state in this opportunity for seeking to establish amiable and strategic links with the State of Israel.

It is important to note that our two nations have had strong links since time immemorial. Indicative of such historical links, stretching well before the advent of Islam to this date is the influence of the Hebrew culture in Somaliland and how Jewish legends and their mystical powers are widely acknowledged and homage paid to them. In addition, the people of Somaliland are appreciative as they have an indelible memory of the fact that Israel was among the first three countries who recognized Somaliland after it declared its independence from Britain on 26th June 1960, alas, that independence lasted no more than four days as Somaliland entered into a voluntary union with the UN Trust Territory of Somalia on 1st July 1960, in the hope of creating Greater Somalia.

Exactly, thirty-five years later, the dreams of Greater Somalia are discredited and disavowed. It was under the union with Somalia that Somaliland found itself a pathetic captive within a ruthless, destructive and hostile state. Indeed, it was this union whose culmination was the tyrannous and repressive regime of the late Siyad Barre which brought about the enormous suffering, starvation and destruction in which the

world had witnessed and came to notice, too well, during the past five years or so. The people of Somaliland have renounced such a union in May 1991 and reclaimed their independent sovereign entity, and nothing will make them reverse the decision to extricate themselves from the captivity of Somalia.

The vice-president and the Foreign Minister of Somaliland have, recently, paid an official visit to Eritrea and while there met H.E. Ariel Kerem, the Ambassador of Israel in Eritrea, who furnished them with valuable advice and suggested that I, the President of Somaliland, should write to your Excellency, as the Prime Minister of Israel, in person, informing you about Somaliland's eagerness to establish an ex parte relationship based on strategic partnership with the State of Israel and sharing with you about my government's concerns and fears vis-à-vis the alarming menace emanating from the expansion of Islamic influence in our strategic region.

As I am sure you are aware, at the height of the cold war Somalia's strategic geographical location was acknowledged by both sides (East/West). Today, however, although the West had won the cold war and the threat of communism appears to be vanishing in many parts of the world, we, in the Horn of Africa, are being threatened by a more sinister and pernicious enemy in the form of encroaching Islamic influence. It would be true to say that the State of Israel and its people are, perhaps, more aware and alert of such threats than most other countries, and know how perilous and pestilential the spread of Islamic influence would mean for the entire region.

The political upheavals which have been taking place in the Horn of Africa and the lack of stability in the region could be aggravated further if the influence of Islamic Fundamentalism is not curtailed or contained very soon. Somaliland's concern is reinforced by the growing influence of the Saudis and the pro-Islamic Yemen, particularly ever since it had crushed and defeated the South Yemeni's courageous attempt to forsake or renounce its union with the north. Discovering that Eritrea is not interested [in] to act as an Arab satellite, both Sana' and Riyadh, as well as Khartoum (not to mention how pariah states like Iran and Libya are meddling into the internal affairs of my country), are now directing their efforts to force Somaliland to forfeit or withdraw its independence with the intention of installing a pro-Islamic Somali state (under a federal Somalia). This will most definitely render the control of both the north and southern coasts of the Red Sea to pro-Islamic regimes, with the exception of Eritrea and the miniature state of Djibouti which has no significance leaving the whole region to become a bed-rock for Islamic influence.

Your Excellency, my government firmly believes that owing to this region's strategic geopolitical importance as a result of its propinquity to the oil routes and the narrow Babul-Mendeb entrance, as well as its proximity to the Gulf, the Middle East and the access to the Indian Ocean, it will be highly deleterious if such a strategic region falls

almost entirely under the dominion of pro-Islamic regimes. Needless to say that this should be a portentous eventuality which will in turn adversely affect the national security of the State of Israel, and that of other countries in the Horn of Africa who are trying to recover from years, if not decades, of both man-made and natural disasters i.e. civil wars, military coups, draughts and famines, etc. In addition, since countries in the region are not politically stable the encroachment of Islamic influence will most certainly have a destabilizing effect. For instance, in Ethiopia with its various nationalities and particularly with its large Muslim population, the expansion of pro-Islamists in the region would act as a tinder-box with the potential to enflame the entire region.

Although the people of Somaliland are over 98% Muslims, they are, nevertheless, averse to adopt an antiquated Islamic Sharia Law as their way of living and governance. In contrast my government intends to make Somaliland a beacon of democracy and oasis for stability in this region of upheavals and turmoil. But this is unlikely to happen in the present climate, as we are ranged against by strong and powerful Islamic proxies whose primary aim is to put out such an illume of hope. A foretaste of what will happen if dark forces of Islamists will succeed in their pursuit of bringing in a passé or an out-moded system, could be seen in Mogadishu today, where a de facto administration from a coalition of Islamic proxies and minority tribal groups headed by not so long ago UN/International fugitive warlord General Aideed, where Islamic surrogates have been infringing people's human rights with impunity; people are being stoned to death for committing no crime other than fornication; and limbs are being chopped off for petty crimes such as mugging and burglary in a barbaric inhuman and uncivilized manner. My government has, in lieu of imposing Sharia Law on our people, just completed the draft of a new secular constitution which is very liberal and mundane, for I am conscious that Sharia Law does not reflect the needs of my people who are aspiring to become a modern society.

Pro-Islamists are hell bent on spreading their influence & version of Islam in the region, and are exploiting the plight of the people of Somaliland. Islamists are the kind of people inspired by a boundless hate who could even exculpate and excuse the crimes of the Holocaust. They have scant regard of the dire needs of the Somali people. All they are interested in is to have their way and are pouring arms and funds to set-up a pro-Islamic regime in our country and establish more Islamic proxies throughout the region. Their modus operandi is to take advantage of people's predicament and impose unsuitable Islamic regimes upon and unsuspecting people. Somaliland is doing all it can to be a bulwark against the spread of Islamic fundamentalism and sees this as an international issue, thus would appreciate it if your Excellency would use your good offices & enormous influence in the West, particularly in the US, to alert them about the portentous/ominous situation developing in this region, so that they would not remain hapless on-lookers while their national/international interests are being threatened. I am absolutely certain that those Arab countries noted above, as well as Iran, will whip-up Islamic/Arab passion against Somaliland establishing amiable & strategic partnership

with the State of Israel and thus could use this as a pretext to exacerbate our situation further both inside and outside Somaliland. However, those countries need to know that my government is not playing with empty emotions, as they often do, but playing pragmatism and real politick for the best interest of its people and country. The people of Somaliland have a daunting and onerous task to overcome their Islamist adversaries and contain the encroachment of Islamic influence, considering their strength, however, we are like David facing Goliath, but then there were overwhelming odds against Israel when it defeated Arabs in three major wars. In order to surmount such an onerous task my government needs the support and assistance of the State of Israel, not only to defend our nascent state from the menace of pro-Islamist dark forces, but also in terms of relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction of this devastated country. In this regard my government has a number of priority areas where your Excellency's assistance is pivotal to the people of Somaliland, among these are: First, military equipment and counterinsurgency experts. Second, conducting plebiscite on the issue of independence at the end of next year 1996 or early 1997. Third, relief and rehabilitation aid as well as development advisers, petroleum and mineral exploitation expertise. The people of Somaliland have full confidence in their government and are absolutely behind me in this historic decision of establishing strategic partnership with the state of Israel and I am determined to see it come into fruition.

**Shalom,
I have the honour to remain,
Your Obedient Servant**

**Mohamed Ibrahim Egal
President
Republic of Somaliland**