

The Unacceptable Nature of the Somali Transitional Charter
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A1 Introduction

Right after the adoption of the Somali [Transitional Charter](#) in Mbigathi (Kenya) on September 15, 20003, many of us who belong to the alienated groups in Somalia were disturbed. We saw that the transitional charter was planting the seeds of what we feared most – the legitimization of an unjust regime whereby certain clan groups would receive preferential treatment to representation while other groups would be marginalized and denied the right to have political representation. Given our long experience with colonial regimes and dictatorships, we know that such alienation would inevitably lead to more poverty in certain groups and the likelihood of more conflicts. Based on this understanding, we decided to communicate our views to the organizers, coordinators, participants, and the Western financiers at the Mbigathi Conference about the dangers inherent in an unfair charter.

Subsequently, we decided to go on record, out of which came out four historic letters (posted on www.benadir-watch.com) that we sent to the Mbigathi Conference to express our deep concerns regarding the inadequate nature of the Transitional Charter. As usual, we never received any reply to our concerns but we were vindicated because history did unfold differently than what they expected. The pro-colonial groups lost the political war, they rely more than ever on violence, and they continue to distribute millions of corruption money, paid by the former colonial powers, to buy loyalty for a few days.

The purpose of this paper is to confirm once again, three years after the adoption of the so-called Transitional Charter, in light of the calamity that has befallen the Somali population, that this document is not only inadequate as far as national reconciliation is concerned, but will ultimately lead to the disintegration of the Somali nation. This is what Ethiopia has been working on for the entire 20th century, this is what Kenya has been working on for the past half a century, both in their design to divide, absorb, and dominate what remains of the Somali nation.

The following points summarize the concerns we have about the transitional charter with respect to the clan quota system vs. universal suffrage, the violation of human rights, regulation of native land rights, native rights to resources, and the unitary state vs. federalism.

Clearly, Somalia today needs a rescue plan which will rectify the Transitional Charter by scraping off the damaging and divisive provisions and bringing it into conformity with the contemporary standards of justice and human rights. Lacking which, there will not be popular support for this model, there will be more bloodshed in the country, and the responsibility, in the final analysis, falls squarely on the shoulders of those clan chauvinists in Somalia who refuse to open up their minds to the inalienable rights of the Somali citizen and those who finance them, the West.

A2. Clan quota system vs. universal suffrage

Modern societies protect individual rights above all else on the understanding that all other rights are subordinated to individual rights and freedoms because only the individual is sacred and has dignity, not the group, not the clan. But to read the intent of the Charter, as far as the clan model is concerned, one has to refer to Article 21.4 which states that “any political party of a military character or tribal nature shall be prohibited”. This is polished language because it is contradicted by Article 30.2 of the same Charter which comes back to remind us that “Should any vacancy (that is parliamentary seat) arise after the coming into force of this Charter the relevant clan/sub-clan shall appoint a new member”. This is extremely dangerous because it is the legitimization of the distribution of parliamentary representation on a clan quota system, determined by warlords. Whoever is not included in this “takeoff”, and mind you that there are many, will be cut out, and will remain without any political representation for generations. This is tantamount to offering the warlords, on a silver plate, not only the legitimacy that they desperately need, but also the power to dominate the rest of the population, which they were never able to achieve in 17 years of destruction and havoc, because of the lack of support from the Somali population and from the international community.

On purely legal grounds, absent universal suffrage, neither those who promote the clan quota system, nor can their Western financiers establish the basis for assigning a 0 (zero) factor to some clans, 0.5 (zero point five) factor to other clans and 1.0 (one) factor to some other clans for the distribution of parliamentary seats. There is no basis for this discrimination, no census, and no history behind it, other than what some poorly informed and/or clan oriented Somali scholars write here and there behind the scenes, for over half a century of misleading reports about Somalia. And to put the gravity of the slow down of the current Transitional Charter in prospective, one has to ask since when did Somalia begin to have first class citizens, second class citizens and third class citizens? To our knowledge, the record is straight, the ink and paper of Mbigathi cannot and will not accomplish what these backward groups could not achieve in centuries of Somali history.

Further, the provisions of Article 14.2.C which states that “Every citizen shall have the right to vote upon attainment of 18 years of age” are misleading. The same is true about the provisions of Article 21.6 which states that, “All Citizens possessing the qualifications required by law have the right to vote and be elected to Public Office”. But

these articles are misleading because the voting right is recognized only within the clan group, as the right is not extended to all citizens, as stipulated in Article 30.2 of the same Charter which comes back to remind us that “Should any vacancy (that is parliamentary seat) arise after the coming into force of this Charter the relevant clan/sub-clan shall appoint a new member”. In fact, the butcher of Jowhar, Mohamed Dheere, notorious killer of teenagers, known for marching on their dead bodies, now the so-called mayor of Mogadishu, gave his position, as member of the so-called parliament, to his cousin Gedi.

Similarly, Yusuf, aware of his very imminent appointment with the accountants in heaven, has repeatedly argued that when a position in the so-called parliament is vacated, only the children of the deceased can occupy that position. Meaning that only his son can replace him when he goes to the tomb, as the case might be just around the corner. Though this imminent eventuality brings about relief and joy when the angels extend their solidarity to the oppressed population of Somalia, the building of a dynasty, a succession to power under these totally undemocratic means is illegal. This is a regrettable setback to political advancement, national unity, and regional stability.

Legitimizing the alienation of certain groups, illegally perceived as minorities, continues to be a widely shared policy, predominant in certain militia clan chauvinists who want to reserve preferential treatment for their clans. It started at the Arte Conference in 2001 and was presented for endorsement to the President of Djibouti who has very little knowledge about the composition of the various communities in Southern Somalia. The personalities who promoted this discrimination include a wide spectrum of so-called Somali scholars and politicians and who to this date continue to advocate this racism behind the scenes.

When questioned, the architects of this conspiracy explain that Somalia needs a “solution” and not necessarily “justice”. Or that an iron man, in other words a bloody dictator is necessary to shut off the population, business as usual, suppressing freedoms and glorifying fascism. To ask these charlatans a simple question, since when did discrimination and injustice lead to a stable durable solution, especially in this age? Surely, they do not have their figures in order because the alienated groups in Somalia do not constitute a small or a big minority, as they would like us to believe, but are rightful citizens of the nation and constitute at least 10 districts of the 15 districts that make up the 1.5 million citizens who live in Mogadishu, in addition to the hundreds of thousands that populate the Benadir Coast from Mogadishu, Merka, Brawa, Jilib, Kisimayo, and inland from Jowhar, Raqeyle, Afgoi, Awdegle, Genale, Marerey, Golweyn, to mention a few. The West must wake up to this reality on the ground and stop imposing its corrupt clients on the rest of the population.

There can be no substitute to universal national suffrage as the only means by which any future Somali government can claim legitimacy. There cannot be even a resemblance of government in Somalia unless the rights of every Somali citizen are recognized and restored upfront and on the table. Any plan which rejects universal suffrage and which approves of a power sharing mechanism based on franchise rights only within clan groups, living within their group area, is undoing the work of a century of urbanization, economic development, and national integration.

In this regard, a national election, like the one carried out in Liberia in July 1997, in the presence of prestigious non-profit organizations, such as the Carter Center, would help remove the unrelenting confusion and mystification that certain clan chauvinists continue to raise over the distribution of political representation in the country.

A3. Human Rights Violations

According to the United Nations Economic and Social Council, Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, “Governments must abandon their policies of intervening in the organization and development of indigenous populations and must grant them autonomy, together with the capacity for managing the relevant economic processes in the manner which they themselves deem appropriate to their interests and needs”. And that, “Self determination, in its many forms, must be recognized as the basic precondition for the enjoyment by indigenous populations of their fundamental rights and the determination of their own future”.

The same document reminds us, “It must also be recognized that the rights to self determination exists at various levels and includes economic, social, cultural and political, factors. In essence, it constitutes the exercise of free choices by indigenous populations, who must, to a large extent, create the specific content of this principle, in both its internal and external expressions, which do not necessarily include the right to secede from the State in which they live and to set themselves as sovereign entities. This right may in fact be expressed in various forms of autonomy within the State, including the individual and collective right to be different and to be considered different, as recognized in the statement on Race and Racial Prejudice by UNESCO in 1978”. We must definitely appreciate these important breakthroughs in the defense of the human rights of indigenous populations.

Back in 1950, when the UN Trusteeship Council handed over the administration of Somalia to Italy, considerable attention was given to the protection of the human rights of the Somali population in light of the possibility that the Italian Colonials in the country might revert back to the good old days. To prevent that, the UN Trusteeship Council negotiated the enforcement of a Declaration of Constitutional Principles as part of the Trusteeship Agreement, beyond the reach of any legislation that the Italian Authority imposed on the Territory. The UN Trusteeship Council assured the Somali population that former hard core fascists in the colony would not be allowed to participate in the administration of the Territory. Under the present circumstances, when it is obvious that the political, social, cultural, and human rights of the Somali population continue to be denied, it is more than reasonable to expect that a similar requirement, insisting on the introduction of a Bill of Rights, and the banning of war criminals altogether, would be in order.

The so-called Transitional Charter is, however, blind to these important principles. In fact, in an attempt to mislead the population, Article 14.1 of the charter wants us to believe that, “The Somali Republic shall recognize and enforce all international human rights conventions and treaties to which the Republic is a party.” We have nothing to do but to ask what are the covenants and international agreements on human rights that the previous Somali Governments ever adopted. Anybody who lived in Somali in the past 37 years, of which 20 years were painfully consumed under the oppression of a clan-based

military dictatorship and 17 years of lawlessness, knows the answer. Instead of tackling the challenges posed by the widespread human rights abuses in the country, the Charter persuades the Somali population to have faith in an empty slogan which bears no truth to reality.

Article 69.1 gives the impression that the Charter supports the protection of human rights, “The Transitional Federal Government of the Somali Republic shall uphold the rules of international law and all international treaties applicable to the Somali Republic and subject to the legislative Acts of Parliament, international laws accepted and adopted shall be enforced”. Why subject the upholding of the rules of international law and all international treaties, especially those on the protection of human rights, to the Acts of a Parliament, handpicked by warlords, and to which has been mandated the authority to alter and repeal any legislation? Especially, when taken into consideration the weight of Article 3.3, “The validity, legality or procedure of enactment or promulgation of this Charter shall not be subject to challenge by or before any court or other State organ”.

To our knowledge, there are no past conventions on human rights which past Somali Governments have ever adopted since independence in 1960. There is not even one single phrase in the Charter to indicate the need to use international human rights instruments as a legitimate guide in developing the common law in Somalia. There is no mention that where the current Charter and the [1960 Constitution](#) fail, and mind you, there are plenty, that international law becomes part of the domestic law. To sustain that the Charter recognizes all the human rights conventions that the previous Somali Governments signed since independence is a misrepresentation of the realities of the country.

The fact of the matter is that, throughout Somalia, today, human rights are violated daily beyond recognition, people are rounded up from their homes, in the markets, mosques, gunned down, while great numbers are shipped to unknown concentration camps in Ethiopia. People are hunted and captured as wild game at the borders of Kenya and Ethiopia with Somalia. People are renditioned, back and forth between Ethiopia and Kenya, much similar to the days when slaves were captured from the south and dragged across Ethiopia for sale. There are reports and videos coming out of Somalia which clearly show the atrocities committed by the Ethiopian military regime, Kenyan army, and their supporters in Southern Somalia. There is no walking away from these facts.

Yusuf, himself, is held responsible for killings as early as 1983 when he assassinated two of the most brilliant minds of Somalia: journalists [Ikar Haji Mohamed Hussein and Abdirahman Aideed](#). Up to the present time, he is wanted throughout Europe for these crimes. Further, in 2003, a British court found Yusuf responsible for the assassination of a naturalized British citizen Suldan Hure in 1998 (www.suldanhurre.org). In fact, every time he visits Britain for medical checkup, provide information, and get instructions from his masters, he travels with an Ethiopian diplomatic passport. In 1998, after being defeated on the ground by a popular uprising in the north east, the Ethiopians came to his rescue, and there he murdered thousands of innocent civilians. He and his Ethiopian masters are responsible for the current invasion, occupation, and genocide in Southern Somalia. Mental science would attribute such behavior to a psychopath, with a severely aggressive, perverted, criminal, anti-social mental disorder, fueled by hallucinations of

fascist grandeur, and supported by followers who are blinded by the lust for revenge and a longing for power at any cost.

Given this troubling record, characterized by unaccountable city states, headed by criminals and warlords, it is very clear that human rights can be protected in Somalia only if they are entrenched in the form of a Bill of Rights, beyond the reach of these sprawling backward clan-based city-states.

A4. Land

The African Charter on Human and Populations' Rights, adopted on June 27, 1981, to which the IGAD states are a party (ref. Article 6A of the IGAD Agreement), clearly stipulates in Article 14 that, "The right to property shall be guaranteed. It may only be encroached upon in the interest of public need or in the general interest of the community and in accordance with the provision of appropriate laws".

The United Nations Economic and Social Council, Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities states, "Indigenous populations have a natural and inalienable right to keep the territories they possess and to claim the land of which they have been deprived... The recognition and protection of land rights is the basis of all indigenous movements and claims today in the face of the continuous encroachment on their land... Millenary or immemorial possession should suffice to establish indigenous title to land, official recognition and subsequent registration in the absence of specifically applicable legislative or executive measures explicitly extinguishing aboriginal rights. As these rights are not "created" by legislation, neither should they be extinguishable by unilateral acts.... Recognition here means acknowledgement of a *de facto* situation that provides a basis for the existence of a right. Official recognition and subsequent registration should follow as a matter of course, once possession and economic occupation is established".

In other words, the Benadir and Dhowoy of Southern Somalia, inhabited by native indigenous populations whose recorded history goes as far back as the X Century and beyond, are not *terra nullius*; belonging to no one, a doctrine, which has been discredited by international law, and which was extensively used to justify the occupation of native land during the colonial era in Africa and elsewhere. Where then does the Mbagathi Charter stand when it states in Article 66.1 that, "Land being Somalia's primary resource and the basis of livelihood for the population shall be held used and managed in a manner which is equitable, efficient, productive and sustainable"? Further, Article 66.2 of the Charter stipulates that, "The Government shall define and keep constant the national land policy and framework of the land in the Somali Republic which shall ensure the registration, use, ownership, access, occupation, management rights, security, interests and title of the land". This does not only have the flavor, but is a continuation and the conclusion of the colonial decrees (1915 – 1960) and later of the military dictatorship (1969 – 90) that seized property and land belonging to the indigenous population of Southern Somalia in the interest of the colonial concessionaires. To our knowledge, however, and under international law, the fact of the matter is very simple: one cannot give, nor regulate, what one does not own

Again, Article 27.3 of the Charter, continues that, “The right to own private property shall be guaranteed by law, which shall define its contents and the limits of its exercise”. But this is misleading because it does not apply, nor does the Charter recognize native land rights in the Benadir and Dhowoy of Southern Somalia. This is a violation of the right to own property of segments of the population. Moreover, heavily armed pro-colonial forces continuously intimidate the indigenous population of Southern Somalia with the clear intention to seize their land as spoils of war as in the old colonial days. The thugs who terrorized the population in this region for over 16 years are replaced with another set of thugs who claim “it is our turn.” Their turn to build another bloody dynasty which will loot what remains of the country, use international foreign aid to buy the loyalty of morally corrupt clan elders, build villas in Nairobi and the Emirates, hold banquets and wedding ceremonies to the tune of millions of dollars, while the rest of the population is starving. Old alliances are replaced by an equally oppressive new alliance, with the only difference that the new alliance has Ethiopian and Ugandan mercenaries with tanks on their side, which makes the generals of these two countries in Mogadishu, the richest individuals in Southern Somalia today – looted private property and bags and bags of extortion money and women as spoils of war.

It is also very important to note that the transitional charter is silent on the principle of “voluntary abandonment” which is widely used by the armed thugs throughout the coastal cities of the Benadir to seize property and land belonging to the native population. As is known, this principle cannot be applied to persons who have been forced to flee their homes under wartime conditions or sell their homes under duress and extortion, something quite common in Southern Somalia. In fact, Article 71.4 avoids the issue, “In respect of private property currently held illegally, Government shall endeavor to restore it to the rightful owners”, meaning that the role of the Government is limited to an “attempt”, as far as restitution is concerned.

Given the highly advanced character of the Somali hostilities, decisions based on voluntary abandonment of land and all forms of property must be held null and void, as a precondition for a genuine reconciliation. Anything less than full and unconditional restitution of seized private and public property under war time conditions must be held illegal.

A5. Resources

The United Nations Economic and Social Council, Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities states, “In many legal systems, mineral and hydrocarbon deposits belong to the State, so that the granting of licenses for the exploration and mining of deposits is handled mainly by the government authorities. As the land belongs to the indigenous communities, they must be allowed to share in the profits resulting from such mining activities. They must also be compensated for damage caused. Still more important, they must be allowed to participate in the process of granting exploration and mining licenses and to examine all the potential consequences of the proposed exploration and mining activities. Particular care should be taken to ensure that the licenses or concessions granted by the State are not of such a kind, or awarded in such quantities, or so extensive that they negate the right of the indigenous populations to enjoy the use of their land”.

Article 27.2 of the Charter, however, states that. “The Government shall encourage, support and provide full guarantee to foreign investment in the country as specified by law”. Article 67.1 continues, “The natural resources of the country such as the minerals, water, flora and fauna shall be public property and a law shall be enacted which defines the manner of exploitation for the common good”. Clearly, there is complete silence over the role that the communities will play and what benefits they will derive from the riches that are being taken from their land. There is no distinction made between what constitutes developmental investment and what constitutes robbery of the national resources.

On this question, the referenced UN Documents stipulates that, “Since indigenous rights to land include the right to all natural resources contained therein and it is the communities concerned that will suffer all the consequences of mining and prospecting, current mining and prospecting should be suspended until negotiations are held with the indigenous populations concerned”. The document continues, “The protection and preservation of existing indigenous land bases from exploitation by multinational corporations without the explicit consent of the communities concerned should be guaranteed.... Existing laws and criteria for the adjudication of priorities, which currently favor non-indigenous population and transnational corporations, should be studied and revised so as to arrive at more just arrangements that would fully recognize indigenous land rights”.

None of these important provisions are incorporated in the so-called Transitional Charter in the sale of oil exploration rights as well as the rich fishery resources of the country. Reckless oil companies are running around in the country, paying bonuses and kick backs to an unaccountable clique, who represent the interests of a specific family, a clan, in exchange for favorable oil exploration rights. It may sound absurd, but to have a resource, under one’s feet, today in Somalia, be that oil or fertile land, is a liability, as long as the West continues to fund and arm these scavengers. This must come to an end before it is too late because should this continue, it is clear that in order to get these riches, entire communities will be targeted for elimination.

A6. Unitary State vs. Federalism

There are underlying concerns that persuade vast sections of the Somali population to dismiss the unitary state because of fear of abuse of power by the central authority. So much pain and suffering have been caused to innocent civilians in the countryside and in the cities by the military dictatorship that ordinary citizens seriously question the validity of a central authority which cannot deliver and protect its own citizens. This is the background against which must inevitably be seen the debate between a unitary state versus federalism and it is driven by the inspiration of the vast majority of defenseless citizens to escape the oppression of a despotic unitary state.

Despite this revolting reality, there are serious doubts about the economic feasibility of four or five separate city-states, under the present backward state of the economy. Further, the same tenets of set asides, clan privileges, power concentration, abuse of power, and mismanagement, that brought down the unitary state are inherent in the existing breakaway city-states, where power is concentrated in the hands of one or to two clan families. The matter is further complicated by the ambition of certain militia leaders

to preserve their personal and clan leadership at any cost, be it at the national level or at the city-state level, and is based on fear of losing power and of majority rule. Indeed, the dismissal of the unitary state is a prelude to the downward proliferation of clan feuds and hostilities in every corner of the country, as is already the case in the existing city-states. The problems facing the population of Somalia, as far as the abuse of power is concerned, hence, do not go away by throwing away the baby with the dirty water.

It is interesting to note that, despite the announcement of a Federal system, the Charter shies away from mentioning the names, number and boundaries of the states, districts, and municipalities, which will form the federal state. The headache, that could have been saved the Somali population, starts with the touchy borders of the regions, districts, and municipalities, many of which have naturally changed their clan composition, over a century of urbanization and national integration. These are natural processes that cannot be reversed with the ink and paper of Mbagathi and are based on the social and economic reality of the country, which finds support in the millions of Somalis whose concerns are not voiced in the talks. As the matter of regional demarcations are never raised in the Charter, it is silently passed out to the Parliament which has the authority to invoke the provisions of the 1960 Constitution, implying that, absent open debate and consensus, the matter might be resolved in the corridors of the parliament and that force might be used to balkanize certain regions, something quite typical of the good old boys.

There is nothing to prove that a democratic decentralized unitary state, of constitutional checks and balances, of separation of powers, of a multi-party state, and of a judicial bill of rights to guarantee public and private powers, with regional autonomy, based on equal rights and equal opportunity for all individuals, cannot serve the population of Somalia. The future Somali State must have the duty to promote a single national identity and loyalty, but at the same time, recognize, protect, and develop the positive aspects of cultural and linguistic pluralism.

A7. Ethiopian Invasion and Occupation of Southern Somalia

One has to look only at the treaties which Ethiopia had signed with the former European colonial powers in the last century to understand that the current policies of the Ethiopian government towards the Somali population is nothing more than a continuation of its past colonial policies. Ethiopia signed such illegal treaties with the former colonial powers, namely Italy, Britain, and France, behind the backs of the population of Somalia. It would be refreshing for the pro-colonial groups in Somalia to learn some history by reading these treaties, which are deposited with the UN and are available in every library. After reading these shameful documents, it becomes clear that even having the AU headquarters in Addis Abeba was a setup, an insult to the independence of the African population.

In invading and occupying Southern Somalia, Ethiopia is in violation of Article 53 of the UN Charter. Neither the Security Council nor the African Union, not even IGAD, authorized the invasion of Somalia. Indeed, all three organizations warned Ethiopia and Kenya to stay away from Somalia. Instead, Ethiopia invaded and occupied Southern Somalia, set up a military colonial regime, with an indefinite mission, violating UN and AU resolutions, and not accountable to anybody.

Instead of holding Ethiopia responsible for the violation of international law by invading and occupying a sovereign nation, engaging in genocide, committing atrocities, and holding thousands of Somalis in concentration camps to this day, the UN and the AU later on endorsed the invasion and occupation of Southern Somalia, as an accomplished (irreversible) fact. Further, certain members in IGAD, such as Kenya, Uganda, and Burundi, are busy trying to make money out of the occupation by sending their armies to Somalia, in exchange for a good fat check from the former colonial powers.

Yet, despite these difficulties facing the population of Somalia these days, the facts of the matter must be very clear. Somalia, with its well defined territory and population constitutes a reality, a nation, which extends from the South West (also known as the Northern Frontier District), currently under Kenyan colonial regime for over half a century, through Western Somalia (also known as the Ogaden), currently under Ethiopian colonial regime for over half a century, the South currently under Ethiopian occupation, to the North and East of the Horn of Africa. This national reality existed for centuries, it will not be affected by the ink and paper of Mbigathi nor by the Ethiopian aggression, no matter how much support they get from the paid pro-colonial groups in the country. The ethnic line will not change, and the right to self determination of the Somali population will always be on the table. No matter what they do, no matter how many Somalis they kill, nobody can change these parameters of the Somali nation. The record will always be there and straight. So must they learn.

A8 Remarks

Having laid out the inadequacies of the so-called transitional charter, if anything, the purpose of this divisive document was to setup Somalia for unending clan wars, as is already the case in many parts of the country. It was designed to bring about the demise of Somalia, disintegrate the nation into bankrupt and backward city states, headed by warlords, and set the stage for the balkanization of Somalia.

In the interest of peace and stability for the population of Somalia, as well as for the region, this document must be brought into conformity with the modern principles of human rights and international law. It is necessary to protect the rights of the Somali citizen and uphold the principle of equal rights and equal opportunity for all. It is necessary to abolish the clan quota system, and replace it with the principle of one man one vote, with a clear and unequivocal stand that set asides for backward clan chauvinists is unacceptable. It is necessary to enact a bill of rights, beyond the reach of the obscure forces in the country.

It is necessary to recognize the rights of indigenous populations to keep the resources in their area, rights which are centuries old, and which cannot be terminated with the fraudulent ink and paper of Mbigathi. In particular, the current seizure of land belonging to the indigenous people in the Benadir and Dhowoy must be held null and void.

The current so-called parliament must be dissolved. They cannot be considered as genuine representatives of the population of Somalia because they were not elected by the people but were hand picked by warlords and ignorant clan elders and notables. Further, it is public knowledge that with the exception of very few members, the so-called members of parliament are in the payroll of foreign governments, and function as

informers. Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Emirates, Malaysia, the West, all have their men in this anti-national group of paid chieftains, thus regionalizing the crisis, complicating the issues, and making it difficult to find a solution based on the wishes and welfare of the population of Somalia. Some of these chieftains, especially those serving high paying foreign governments, have grown fat and pretty in their pens in Baidoa, in the business of selling what remains of Somalia in the order of thousands of dollars, and are considered untouchables.

The time will come when the population of Somalia will hold these traitors accountable, but for now, it is sufficient to warn them, that under the laws of any sovereign nation, their actions, especially the resolution to side with Ethiopia in the invasion and occupation of Southern Somalia, constitute treason.

So much blood has been shed from innocent people. It is necessary to hold the Kenyan firm which prepared the so-called Transitional Charter and those who funded the document, responsible for instigating clan wars in Somalia, and ultimately responsible for the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Somalis.

Ethiopia must withdraw from Southern Somalia and both Ethiopia and Kenya must free the thousands of Somalis which they hold in their concentration camps. Ethiopia must be held responsible for reparations in the invasion and occupation of Southern Somalia. In plain and simple words, Kenya and Ethiopia must recognize the right to self-determination of the Somali population under their colonial regimes in the NFD and Ogaden.

It is necessary to re-examine the capacity of IGAD, especially Kenya and Ethiopia, to hold reconciliation talks. The wild concept which is based on a regional approach to African conflicts is essentially the result of Kofi Annan's fraudulent approach to give a prominent role to his friends at the AU in exchange for their support at the UN at a time when Kofi Annan, in person, was accused of corruption. The failure of this theory, which is essentially an extension of the concept of regional distribution of committees and positions at the UN, is its attempt to regionalize even human rights, essentially the work of bureaucrats who are determined to justify their own existence. It has reignited old hostilities between neighboring countries and polarized African nations, paralyzing even the AU itself.

Further, it is common knowledge that African bureaucrats, much worse than their counterparts in other continents, perceive reconciliation talks as bonanza, an industry, for financing the cronies of a president, bankrupt foreign ministries, broken tourist industries, unpaid staff, hustlers, or offering bureaucrats and cheap scholars the opportunity to extend their contracts. Almost each and every African country is oppressing its own people and they are not qualified to make peace in any other place.

Slavery was banned in Africa at the Berlin Conference over a century ago. Yemen must free the thousands of Somali slaves, forcibly captured and held in chains as domestic servants and as concubines in the Jezzani Valley. These are the vestiges of the notorious 19th century slave traders in East Africa, who currently find a favorable world environment to raise their heads once again. We request that the various Anti-Slavery

Societies commence proceedings to shed light on this crime against humanity. We request that the Abolitionists, wherever they are, to stand up once again and bring an end to this crime.

Any proposed resolution of the Somali crisis, any alternative, will be tested on these issues and on this political platform.

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