



NORTHERN SOMALIS for PEACE & UNITY (NSPU)

Press Release

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WHITHER 'SOMALILAND' AFTER THE FIASCO IN BANJUL?

For the last decade and half the secessionist leaders in the Northwest region of our country have been deploying efforts far and wide to get diplomatic recognition for an independent “Somaliland” of their own. They have been knocking all doors and turning every stone to achieve that purpose. Although there was no central government to frustrate their efforts the manifold distortions of the facts on the ground – both historical and current – on which they built their case laid bare the bankruptcy of their claim. We have recently explained the nature of those distortions in our pamphlet, [“The Illusory ‘Somaliland’: Setting the Record Straight”](#) (June, 2006).

But in the course of the last two years the secessionists have launched intensified campaigns because they were scared to death by the prospect of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) gaining legitimacy and increasing international recognition, a prospect which would spell out the end of secession. Such campaigns were launched in concert with individual journalists, academics, as well as the International Crisis Group (ICG) which dealt a death blow to its claim to being a “Think Tank” by so openly becoming an advocacy group for secession (vide their report: [“SOMALILAND: Time for African Union Leadership”](#), 23 May 2006, prepared in Hargeisa, the capital of the secessionist enclave). Even the AU Secretariat was prevailed upon to play a part in the conspiracy to dismember our country (see its unpublished report: “AU Fact-Finding Mission to Somaliland”, 30 April to 4 May 2005). Numerous articles were also published in newspapers and journals by the hirelings of the secessionists in order to carry forward the propaganda of the breakaway administration in Hargeisa.

The ‘President’ of the enclave, Mr. Dahir Rayale Kahin, using the two mendacious reports of the AU and ICG, himself went on a diplomatic offensive and tried to bring the campaign to a successful conclusion by undertaking visits to six countries (Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Rwanda and Ethiopia) just before the AU meetings in Banjul early this month. We know how he was met and what he was told in each country and we know that his mission failed. Upon return to Hargeisa Mr. Kahin was, according to the secessionist media, in an angry mood and, asked what he had achieved in his mission, he took refuge in brevity and resorted as usual to prevarications and equivocations but claiming success and refusing to give details. He had left behind in Addis Ababa two of his ‘ministers’ to make further diplomatic contacts there and then travel to Banjul to lobby for an invitation to be sent to him to attend the AU meetings.

Naturally, the ‘ministers’ were denied access to the meeting halls and had to make whatever contacts they could (at lower levels of course) on the fringes of the meetings – the corridors and snack areas. Mr. Kahin, though he told his people that he was going to Banjul, did not receive any invitation and had to stay behind. The fiasco in Banjul was blamed on Egypt, Sudan, Eritrea and the TFG as if the other 49 countries would have otherwise welcomed Mr. Kahin to the meetings.

Despite the fiasco, however, the ‘Minister of Information’ of the secessionist enclave made in his interview on the BBC (Somali Service) on 3 July two important points both of which were totally inaccurate. He said: (a) that there were a few countries which were friendly to and even lobbying for ‘Somaliland’; and (b) that the ‘question of Somaliland was discussed in the Executive Council’. However, he declined when pressed for details to name the countries. These two points fly in the face of logic. First, one would have expected countries that were convinced of a case for ‘Somaliland’ to recognize it first before they would lobby with others for its recognition. That the ‘minister’ does not ‘want’ to name those countries indicates that there were no such countries, and the fact still remains that there is not a single country that has recognized a state called ‘Somaliland’: there is not a single African country which condones, , much less supports, secession. On the second point of the ‘minister’ we know that Somalia as a whole (which includes ‘Somaliland’) was discussed in the context of supporting the TFG and restoring peace to Somalia. The case for secession did not figure anywhere in the agenda of the Executive Council or that of the Summit and, of course, it received no mention in the deliberations and the resolutions that came out. Yet we find articles by foreign interlopers who drum up support for the secession of our northwestern region (see, for example, James Butty. “Somaliland Statehood Discussed at the AU Summit, Washington, DC 5 July 2006). Such a headline could not be farther from the truth.

Conclusion

Our people in the Northwest of the country have been led through a dark alley by secessionist politicians who have been feeding them with hate for their fellow compatriots in the other regions. The history of secession in that part of Somalia has been for the last fifteen years nothing more than a cycle of climax and anticlimax, of expectations and frustrations, of hope and despair. The struggle for the minds and hearts of fellow Africans and of the rest of the world for that matter to support secession in our country has led to a cul de sac. It is therefore time for reflection, time for revision and reversal of sterile policies; it is time for sense to prevail and to realize that unity is more attractive than division because it is productive of peace and progress while division is costly and ruinous. It is senseless to dissipate meager resources which should be spared for development and for the fight against poverty.

We call upon our brothers and sisters in the Northwest of our country to forgo secession and to join hands with us in order to ensure that the federal structure which has been adopted will mean genuine devolution so that we will all be masters of our homes. We should channel our energies and resources towards building a peaceful, prosperous and united Somalia. Long may our unity live!

Please address your comments and feedback to:

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***NORTHERN SOMALIS FOR PEACE & UNITY (NSPU)** is a grass-roots Somali advocacy organization with Branches in Somalia, United Arab Emirates, Canada, USA, UK, and South Africa. We are dedicated to the promotion of peace and unity among the long suffering people of Somalia. We believe the ‘Somalia problem’ can only be dealt with within the framework of a holistic strategic approach aimed at the empowerment of a central government to rebuild national democratic governance institutions and restore law and order throughout the country. NSPU believes the balkanization of Somalia is a recipe for future conflicts and a bleak future for the Somali people, who are bonded by ethnicity, language, religion, and shared centuries-old culture and traditions.*

ONE PEOPLE



ONE COUNTRY