



OPCW

Conference of the States Parties

Eighteenth Session
2 – 6 December 2013

C-18/NAT.7
3 December 2013
ENGLISH only

SOMALIA

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR MR YUSUF MOHAMED ISMAIL BARI-BARI
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REPRESENTATIVE TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AT GENEVA AND OTHER
INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS IN SWITZERLAND AT THE EIGHTEENTH
SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES**

Mr Chairperson, Mr Director-General, Madam Deputy Director-General, Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

I wish you a very good afternoon.

It gives me a particular privilege and honour to represent my beloved country Somalia, for the first time in the history in front of this august body.

On behalf of my delegation, let me first congratulate you, Ambassador Sa'ad Abdul Majeed Al-Ali, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Iraq, on your election as the Chairperson of this Conference. We would also like to congratulate the newly elected Bureau Members and other officers. May I also take this opportunity to express my appreciation to Ambassador Peter Goosen of South Africa for all his efforts as the Chairperson of the Seventeenth Session of the Conference of the States Parties.

Somalia aligns itself with the statement made by H.E. Mr Seyed Abaas Araghchi, Deputy Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of NAM CWC States Parties and China, as well as, with the statement made by H.E. Ambassador Peter Goosen on behalf of the Africa Group.

My delegation is particularly humbled and honoured by the very warm welcome given by all the distinguished representatives for the accession of Somalia to the Convention.

On behalf of my Government and people, I am pleased to sincerely applaud the Director-General H.E. Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü and the outstanding team of the Technical Secretariat for the much deserved 2013 Nobel Peace Prize.

Allow me to quote one sentence of the speech that the Director-General delivered during the acceptance of the Nobel Peace Prize on 11 October 2013. I quote: "We are conscious of the enormous trust that the international community has bestowed on us". Indeed Somalia, which is the 189th State Party to the treaty, entrusts the Director-General and his team. Somalia is fully committed to interact with the OPCW in a proactive and tangible manner in order to boost the universality of the Convention and the capacity of our institutions.



At this juncture Somalia would like to welcome the decision of the Syrian Arab Republic to accede to the Convention. We would also like to kindly appeal to the few remaining non-Member States to the Convention to accede to it in order to strengthen its universality in full respect of our national sovereignties and interests.

Next year Somalia will join the international community in mourning the memory of more than 37 million of people who lost their lives in many countries in the aftermath of World War I, one hundred years ago. After more than 150 years of evolution of chemistry, 114 years from the first Hague Convention, 88 years after the Geneva Convention and 20 years after the Chemical Weapons Convention to name but a few, some regions of the world are still facing the awful consequences of the use of chemical weapons during the so-called asymmetric wars.

Somalia calls on the international community to remain vigilant against the "slippery slope" towards the reintroduction of chemical weapons in armed conflict.

Increasing globalisation, the expansion of knowledge and information technology, as well as the proliferation of non-State actors, pose serious and unpredictable risks that should make us rethink our approach.

The global dynamics are rapidly changing. We sincerely hope that the OPCW and the States Parties to the Convention will increasingly think outside the box and in an innovative manner in order to prevent new unconventional risks due to misuse of chemical and biological weapons.

Our sincere and deep thoughts and prayers go to the people of Syria and we sincerely hope that a lasting political solution to the conflict will prevail soon. After more than two decades we Somalis are still experiencing the painful effects of senseless civil strife. The same note goes to the people of the Philippines who like us in Somalia have recently been badly affected by a natural calamity accentuated by the abuse of mankind against nature.

Without going into the details of Somalia's record, we draw your kind attention to the many positive developments of our recent past and the main challenges that lie ahead. After the collapse of the late Mohamed Siyad Barre regime in 1991 only two resources were left in the hands of ordinary Somali citizen:

- (a) The clan identity; and
- (b) The religious identity.

Unfortunately, both have been misused during the different stages of the long struggle for political and economic gain by unscrupulous individuals.

Just like in all other countries of this world there are two factors that trump all others:

- (a) Access to resources; and
- (b) Political representation.

It is therefore difficult to foresee any other viable alternative to the implementation of a sustainable state-building process for peace, bearing in mind that the most important

challenge ahead of any Somali Government is the harmonisation between our traditional setting and modern statehood through a fair balance between the provision of civil and political rights and the socio-economic and cultural rights at national and sub-national levels.

Please allow me to say here, in front of you, that the overwhelming majority of the Somali people are ready to overcome this exploited division if truly engaged. My Government is fully committed to stabilising the country.

Somalia is not a black hole. There are large and relatively stable regions in the country. If totally stable, my beloved country can, thanks to its untapped resources—both human and natural and its geographical position—take care of the well being of its nationals and contribute to the economic growth of our subregion and beyond. An entire nation cannot continue to be held hostage to this prolonged political and socioeconomic crisis. The number of refugees, IDPs, so-called pirates, the deregulation and the dangerous attempts to modify our deep-rooted cultural values among others, are clear symptoms of a man-made crisis. The urgent need for the full restoration of Somali ownership of the country and the implementation of concerted political preventative measures are of a paramount importance in order to address the tremendous challenges created by the prolonged Somali political, humanitarian and socio-economic crisis.

As a consequence to the above mentioned constraints and inequities, the second but the most dangerous challenge is the exploitation by violent non-State actors of the socioeconomic grievances, especially of young people.

The spillover of the instability in certain areas of my beloved country has been manifested through awful terrorist acts in our sub-region. If any, the reoccurrence of such acts are in front of us as proof that it is high time that the policy of containment of the instability within the borders of Somalia should be replaced with the effective stabilisation of my beloved country.

I would like to take this opportunity to offer heartfelt condolences to the families and friends of over 60 people from different countries who lost their precious lives during the Westgate Mall terrorist attack in Nairobi, Kenya, on 21 September 2013. Our special condolence goes to the family and friends of Mr Yasin Hersi Dirie, the only Somali national who lost his life during the attack. He has fatally succumbed to those from whom he fled from his own country. Yasin's untimely demise left behind a young widow and a little baby girl. My beloved country salutes his memory.

At this juncture, I would like to pay tribute and express our deepest gratitude to our sisters and brothers, the peacekeepers of Uganda, Ethiopia, Burundi, Kenya, Djibouti, Sierra Leone and the police unit of Nigeria, within the framework of AMISOM, for their support and timely engagement. The same note of appreciation goes to all the friendly countries of Somalia and the international organisations for their tireless and valuable support.

In the 1970s and 1980s Somalia played a proactive role in the international arena. We are looking forward to playing an even greater and positive role within the international family as soon as possible.

I would like to take this opportunity to launch an appeal to the OPCW, the Open-Ended Working Group on Terrorism and to all the countries friendly to Somalia to call for timely

and tangible multilateral and bilateral technical cooperation—within the legal framework of Article VII and Article XI of the Convention and of the Africa Programme—in order to boost and harmonise the capacity of our concerned institutions at national and subnational levels which are mandated to prevent the misuse of any chemical and biological weapons by the non-State actors in and from Somalia. The creation of a “web of prevention” in our subregion is crucial.

I have the honour, on behalf of my Government, to officially invite the Director-General to my beloved country at his earliest convenience for a round of “camel milk diplomacy”. It goes without saying that the fresh camel milk is free from any chemical and/or biological additive. I would also like to echo the former colleagues and friends of the Director-General who are in Geneva in expressing the utmost congratulations for the achievements of the OPCW under his wise leadership. I wish you Mr Director-General every success for your well deserved second mandate.

To conclude, Mr Chairperson, I would like to assure you the fullest support of my delegation to a successful conduct of the Conference. Finally, may I kindly request that this statement be treated as an official document of the Eighteenth Session of the Conference of the State Parties. I thank you all for your kind and valuable attention.

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