

Uganda to Deploy Peace Keeping Troops

The Ugandan President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni said Uganda would send peace keeping troops to Somalia as soon as its parliament endorses the decision.

In a joint press conference he gave with Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, Museveni said Uganda sends its troops not to impose peace in Somalia but to reinforce the legitimate Transitional Federal Government.

Museveni said over the past 15 years the international community failed to assist the Somali people, and now should seize this opportunity to end the suffering of the Somali people.

Uganda was ready to send troops to Somalia for the past two years but failed due to the pressure from the international community, particularly the United Nations.



"Uganda believes that Ethiopia was forced to go to war with international terrorists to protect its security", Museveni added.

Prime Minister Meles Zenawi on his part welcomed the decision of the government of Uganda to deploy its peace keeping troops to Somalia.

President Yoweri Museveni

The Somali people should resolve their differences through an all inclusive internal dialogue, he said, adding that the international community should provide humanitarian and financial assistance for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the country

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Meles also underscored the commitment of Ethiopia to withdraw its troops from Somalia within weeks as soon as the situation improved.

The two leaders have agreed that the exemplary political and diplomatic relationships between Ethiopia and Uganda is not reflected to the desired level in trade and investment.

The leaders called on all Somalis to rise up to the challenge and use the new opportunity to reconcile their differences and work towards the reconstruction of their country.

Peace in Sudan Important for the Horn: Seyoum

The signing and implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) between the Sudanese parties contribute for the peace and stability of the Horn of Africa Region, beyond the Sudan, Foreign Minister Seyoum Mesfin said.

Seyoum, at the conclusion of the second anniversary of the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement celebrated in Southern



H.E. Seyoum Mesfin

Sudan, Juba, said it is not possible to see in isolation the peace and stability of the Horn of Africa.

The People and Government of Ethiopia heed the Sudanese Peace Agreement as they understand that the absence of peace and stability in any neighboring country could affect development endeavours.

Regarding the role Ethiopia played in the Sudanese peace process, Seyoum said, the idea of the peace process was first initiated in Ethiopia during the 1992 IGAD meeting, and Ethiopia contributed immensely for the success of the prolonged peace process.

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Seyoum pointed out that the implementation of the CPA needs patience as well as commitment while assuring that Ethiopia and IGAD would stand firmly alongside the people of Sudan.

Tekeda Calls for Concrete Support for the TFG

Sate Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Tekeda Alemu, called on the international community to provide concrete support to the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia /TFG/.

Tekeda told MoFA Newsletter that there could be lasting solution for the Somalia crisis when the TFG is given the necessary support.



Dr. Tekeda Alemu (Photo file)

He said Ethiopia for long time told the leadership of the Jihadists for restraint, adding that Ethiopia deployed its troops to Somalia to fight international terrorists.

Ethiopian nations, nationalities and peoples should stand firm to fight anti-peace terrorists and agents, he said.

Seyoum Says Inter Somali Dialogue Vital for Peace

Foreign Minister Seyoum Mesfin said an all-inclusive political inter-Somalia dialogue among various sections of society is necessary to bring an end to the Somali crisis.

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While briefing resident African diplomats in Addis Ababa, Seyoum said, military victory alone is not a solution for political grievances prevailing in Somalia.

He said the dialogue that should take internal shape contrary to the former has to be helped by African Union and the international community at large.

Ethiopia, by crushing the international terrorists besides defending its national security has saved Africa from a serious setback. He said "whatever we do in Somalia is what makes Africa good."

The Ugandan ambassador to Ethiopia on the occasion said Ethiopia exercised its inherent right to self-defense.

She drew a parallel between the defeat of the Jihadists and the liberation of Uganda by Tanzania from the authoritarian regime of Ide Amin.

Nigerian Ambassador also underlined the need for an all inclusive discussion for comprehensive peace.

Ethiopians in Diaspora Hail Victory over Jihadists

Ethiopians residing in Germany and Uganda hailed the counter attack launched and the victory gained by the Ethiopian defense force against the jihadists in Somalia.

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Expressing their delight over the military capability of the defense force engaged in war in self defense, some Ethiopians in Uganda stated that the counter attack has effectively reduced the threat of international terrorists operating in Somalia.

Members of the Ethiopian Nations and Nationalities Association in Munich, Germany, expressed in the same manner their joy over the action taken against the jihadists in Somalia. Stressing on the legality of the counter attack made by the Ethiopian government, they expressed readiness and commitment to contribute material and moral support if the need arises.

As terrorists in Somalia pose threat not only to Ethiopia and the sub-region but also to world peace, the international community should join hands in averting the looming danger.

In a related news, the Somali community residing in the State of Arizona, America expressed their joy over the victory scored on the UIC by the allied forces of Ethiopia and the Somalia Transitional government.

In a press release issued on 28 December 2006 the Somali community commended the Government of Ethiopia for its assistance and understanding of the suffering of the Somali people, and in particular for its swift action to help the Somali people in their unrelenting fervor for democracy and justice.

The joint action, they said, of the two governments emanates from the desire to promoting the values of freedom and democracy. They affirmed that the joint action of the two governments is a testimony for the universal character of the values.

The community also expressed strong yearning for a peaceful and democratic Somalia soon after the jihadists in UIC are gone. They also called upon the international community to play a vital role in building Somalia in its struggle to stand on its own feet.

Kenya Says Ethiopia's Action Decisive

Ethiopia's action taken against the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) is decisive, says Kenyan Foreign Minister Raphael Tuju.

In an interview with MoFA Newsletter in Juba, southern Sudan, Raphael said Ethiopia must be acknowledged for the support it



H.E. Raphael Tuju

gives to the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia so that the latter consolidates its power.

As the TFG is a born child of IGAD brought up from the Peace and Reconciliation Conference of Somalia held in Kenya, Raphael said, his country has equally felt the danger which the TFG faced.

In this respect, Raphael expressed that the action taken by the government of Ethiopia gets full support from Kenya since the objective of the two governments is one and the same.

The Minister added that Kenya will dispatch its officials to at least nine African States very soon, to get support for the stabilization force for Somalia so that Ethiopia could withdraw quickly as per its plan.

The minister assured that his government would do whatever it takes to bring permanent peace and stability in Somalia within the context of the laws of Kenya.

Djibouti Supports Ethiopia's Defensive Action

President of Djibouti, Omar Ismael Ghelle said Djibouti stands by the side of Ethiopia in its counter offensive measure to defend its national security from international terrorists.

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While holding talks with Dr. Tededa Alemu, State Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, in Djibouti, Ghelle said Ethiopia and Djibouti should work in tandem for the prevalence of peace in Somalia.

He called upon the support of the international community in ensuring peace in Somalia.

Dr. Tekeda on the occasion delivered a message sent by Prime Minister Meles Zenawi.

Three other senior government officials including Foreign Minister Seyoum Mesfin paid a working visit to the Sudan, Egypt and Kenya for consultative meetings with leaders and foreign ministers of these countries.

Ethiopia Benefits from China's Preferential Tariff

The number of Ethiopia's export items destined to China has significantly increased since the launching of the special tariff program.

Public Relations Section Head with the Ministry of Trade and Industry, Hailu Abebe, told MFA Newsletter that the type of goods exported to China free of tax increased from 187 to 442.

The special tariff program will help to scale up the trade relations between Ethiopia and China.

Ethiopia is one of the beneficiary countries of China's special tariff program in Africa.

In related news, importers shall avail quality certificate for all China-made products Hailu said. Pre-shipment investigation has been kicked off since January 2007 so as to control the entry into the country of substandard products.

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Millennium Secretariat Earmarks Over 117 Million Birr

The Ethiopian Millennium Festival National Secretariat earmarked over 117,935 million for the execution of its action plan.

The Secretariat's action plan indicates that 58 projects focused on construction of museum, village of nations and nationalities, schools and cultural events, among others, will be undertaken in the next two years.

The secretariat has identified the general public, international organizations and donors as possible collaborators.

The document shows that the high profile celebration of the millennium will be a strong catalyst in attracting high number of tourists and raising foreign currency.

Ethiopia's ideal geographical location, conducive climate, enormous wildlife, diverse flora and fauna are major assets to mobilize the international community to come and visit its attractions.

More than 15,000 Farmers Resettled

Some 15,546 household head farmers have benefited from the fourth round of the resettlement program aimed at ensuring food security.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development told MoFA Newsletter that the farmers have been provided with plots of land for the construction of houses and farming.

The Federal Food Security Coordination Office has allotted birr 57 million for the procurement of oxen and quality seed. In the past few years, some 550,000 family heads have been beneficiaries of the resettlement program conducted in three rounds. More than 132,000 among those farmers are now food self-sufficient.