

Seizing the Opportunity for the Restoration of Somalia

The current situation of Somalia is encouraging. Somalis have made it abundantly clear that they want peace. The TFG and the people of Somalia are trying to put their house in order.

People who fled the indiscriminate shelling by insurgents during the mop up operation by the TFG and Ethiopian forces are returning to their homes. Relief aid is reaching the affected people and conditions on the ground are improving allowing more access to relief operators.

Currently, schools are open and garbage which has littered Mogadishu and its environs has been collected by the general public and women in particular. There is a strong optimism in Mogadishu that Somalia gradually, but firmly will join the world community.

Another remarkable event that signifies the relative stability of Somalia is the reopening of the Ethiopian embassy in Mogadishu. With improving stability and peace in Somalia, surely more countries will join Ethiopia making their diplomatic presence contribute for the restoration and rehabilitation of the Horn of Africa country.

At the reopening of the embassy, Foreign Minister Seyoum said " Forgetting the gloomy past history is very important for us and for the coming generations. We are at the verge of a new era of Somali Ethiopian companionship, an era that needs sound thinking, deep understanding and intelligence."

Prime Minister of the Transitional Federal Government, Ali Mohammed Gedi, underlining the significance of the moment that brought to new high bilateral ties, has urged other countries to follow the footsteps of Ethiopia.

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The Premier acknowledged the strong desire of Ethiopia to see a peaceful Somalia and added "Ethiopia has paid sacrifices to save Somalia and enable the Somalis to have an effective government since the ouster of the former president, Siad Barre, in 1991."

Seyoum on the occasion has said "Many Somali Officials, civil society members and tribal elders asked that we should not leave Somalia while it is still vulnerable and we are determined to make sure that extremist groups don't come back and traumatize the population."

The Somalia people want and deserve stability and a functioning government as the situation is consistently improving. Somali Police Chief Abdi Hassan Awale said the prevailing improved security and calm in Somalia is encouraging. The way forward highly depends on the national reconciliation congress to convene in the capital in mid-July.

He said, Somalis of every orientation should discuss their future and that of their nation's and come up with viable solution to the underlying challenges that beleaguered the country.

Ethiopia by helping facilitate the restoration of peace is contributing its part for the success of the conference which is hoped to bring peace and stability in Somalia and the Horn of Africa. Support from the international community in both finance and logistics would facilitate deployment of AMISOM troops and the successful convening of the NRC. Somalis are eager and have displayed the will to restore Somalia. We are not to flee them.