



## The Transitional Federal Government of the Somali Republic Special Envoy to the Kingdom of Belgium, Benelux, EU-ACP

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### Joint statement by the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia (TFG) and The Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF)

A delegation of the TFG headed by Dr. Yusuf Mohamed Ismail “Bari-Bari”, TFG’s Special Envoy to the EU, and another of the ELF headed by Dr. Yohannes Zeremariam, Foreign Secretary of the Eritrean Liberation Front, met today in Geneva. They discussed a wide variety of issues ranging from peace and stability in the Region, transition to democracy, development, as well as the risk of terrorism and the Horn being transformed into a battleground for issues foreign to the peoples of the Region.

The latter danger is real and imminent seeing the latest developments in Somalia where the government of Eritrea is heavily intervening with military logistics, intelligence and training in support of the “Islamic Courts”. The intention of such intervention has nothing to do with the “Islamic Courts”, knowing the history of the Eritrean government’s handling of its own Muslim population, where hundreds have disappeared, Koran schools closed, any bearded Muslim called a *mujahid* or a terrorist giving the two words the same meaning, and where Muslims in general are treated as second class citizens.

The Eritrean government is playing the dangerous game of becoming a client government of forces intending to destabilize the Region. This is not the first time; it is in fact a defining characteristic of this government that from its onset chose that role. Only difference being that the puppeteers changed. In the past it had turned the country into storage of arms to be used in Sudan, today it turned it into storage to be used in Somalia.

The two parties agreed that the only lasting way to avoid that the Region become a playground for external interests, is to strengthen the Somali National Federal Institutions and accelerate the implementation of the *autochthonous democracy* in all the countries of the Region based on peaceful religious coexistence, respect of human rights, ethnical and personal identity, traditional and cultural peculiarities of each citizen. They agreed that coordination between the democratic forces in the different countries of the Horn become now an urgent obligation. They agreed that the future of peace, *autochthonous democracy* and development of the countries of the Horn lies in the implementation of a dynamic political and socio-economic integration based on free movement of people and goods, such as our ancestors knew in past centuries.

Asserting that the Somali people have the capacity to resolve their own problems, both parties welcome all initiatives, local and international, meant to prevent any further violence and bring to a far-sighted dialogue the local entities of the country with the Transitional Federal Government within the legal framework of the legitimate Federal Institutions.

Within this context, the parties agreed to bring to a higher level the cooperation between the TFG and the ELF.

Yusuf Mohamed Ismail “Bari-Bari”