



# **DJIBOUTI**

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**STATEMENT BY**

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AMBASSADOR, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF DJIBOUTI TO THE UNITED  
NATIONS**

**BEFORE THE SECURITY COUNCIL**

**ON THE SITUATION IN SOMALIA**

**MONDAY – 30 JULY 2018**

**CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY**

**Mr. President,**

At the outset, I wish to thank the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 concerning Somalia and Eritrea for his briefing covering the period from March 2018 to the end of July 2018.

I would like to particularly thank the Chair, H.E. Ambassador Kairat Umarov, for his visit in May to the region and to Djibouti. I believe this visit had provided an excellent opportunity for the Committee to have direct interactions with the authorities in the region and consult with them on how some of the issues that continue to plague the region, and negatively impact its efforts towards peace, development and prosperity could be best addressed. Djibouti too regrets that Eritrea did not invite their delegation and did not take the opportunity to provide its views on the situation in the Horn of Africa, including on the implementation of sanctions. As witnessed by its refusal to invite the Chair and cooperate with the Monitoring Group, Eritrea continues to display an intolerable pattern of behavior characterized by denial, obstruction and obfuscation.

As stated in its letter to the Secretary-General, circulated to the members of Security Council, Djibouti welcomes the latest positive developments regarding the protracted conflict between Eritrea and

Ethiopia and the readiness by the Council to support both countries in their implementation of the Joint Declaration. This is indeed a development we should all embrace and celebrate because the region for too long has experienced various intra and interstate conflicts with dire economic and social consequences. They have depressed and disrupted economic development and hampered efforts toward regional integration. Apart from the physical destruction of life and property, conflicts have diverted scarce resources from development to support war. It would be worth assessing the cumulative losses in gross domestic product (GDP) in the region because of conflicts. It stands to reason to suggest that any such study would prove that the benefits of investing in peace far outweigh the cost. Silencing the guns and realizing a conflict-free Africa is a challenging task but we should all work in earnest and full commitment towards that goal. The peoples of the Horn are incredibly brave and talented and given a chance, they can show phenomenal can-do spirit!

Djibouti concurs with the assessment by the African Union Heads of State as underlined in AU Assembly decision regarding the unresolved border dispute between Djibouti and Eritrea, adopted on July 2<sup>nd</sup>, in Nouakchott, Mauritania. It emphasizes that there is an urgent “*need for all countries in the Horn of Africa to engage towards maximizing possibilities for achieving lasting peace in the region. It requests the AU Commission to continue with its efforts in assisting Djibouti and Eritrea*”

*to reach a peaceful solution to the territorial dispute between them. In this context, the Assembly urges the two countries to extend the necessary cooperation to the Commission.”* Let me state unequivocally that Djibouti stands ready to work with the African Union Commission. In the same vein, Djibouti welcomes the letter dated 17 July 2018 by the Secretary-General regarding the ongoing border dispute between the Republic of Djibouti and the State of Eritrea, with a view to assisting the countries, in collaboration with the Security Council, in finding a way forward, either through a mutually agreed arbitration, or other means of peaceful dispute settlement to both parties.

Distinguished members of the Council, Djibouti has invested in peace, it submitted a legal memorandum and a comprehensive statement of pertinent facts and legal principles applicable to this matter, and other matters that form part of the dispute and promptly provided the list of prisoners of war in its custody. As the Secretary-General begins to undertake consultations, we need to approach the resolution of this conflict in good faith and an open mind while bearing in mind that the conflict has been going on for the last ten years and we have gone through six years of fruitless negotiations under the auspices of Qatar. The Council should urge Eritrea, in line with para 40 of Resolution 2384 (2017) to meaningfully engage in the mediation efforts led by the Secretary General, in collaboration with the Security Council. We cannot

afford to squander the opportunity we have to build and own a future of peace and development in the region. It's worth recalling that the Qatar led mediation effort broke down as soon as it began, because Eritrea refused to appoint its member to the body that was established to mediate and never really has shown any serious commitment to peace.

While noting the potential prospect for peace in the region, there is no escaping the fact that the international boundary remains disputed, Eritrea continues to occupy Djiboutian territory, prisoners of war remain unaccounted for, threat of force continue to emanate from the Eritrean side, and the risk of violent confrontation remains high. As documented in the last Monitoring Group report, *“there is ongoing activity on the Eritrean side of the border - at Ras Doumeirah, and the situation is vulnerable to manipulation by spoilers”*. Furthermore, as documented in successive Monitoring Group reports, Eritrea continues to recruit, train and equip Djibouti rebels at the Anda Ali Training Camp from where they conduct violent raids on villages in Djibouti and attacks on the Djiboutian security forces. The report of the Monitoring Group goes on to provide a detailed account based on testimonies by former fighters on how they participated in violent cross border abduction raids, including abduction of children. We call on Eritrea to stop stealing the lives of these children that often are psychologically traumatized and are a loss to their communities and nation.

Mr. President,

In doing so, it defiantly ignores Security Council resolutions.

If Council's resolutions are to be regarded as more than empty and meaningless gestures, the sanctions for non-compliance must remain in place as long as Eritrea refuses to comply with them. At the same time, Djibouti would support action by the Council to facilitate Eritrea's compliance by laying out a clear path and a reasonable timetable towards this end. In this regard Djibouti would like to kindly submit the following observations;

- 1) In respect of ending Eritrea's support for armed groups, the Council should resolve to send a Monitoring Mission to Eritrea within one month, with the condition that Eritrea commit to full cooperation with the mission, including full access to all information and records the mission deems necessary to review and all personnel it finds necessary to interview. The Mission would then report to the council within 30 days of its return from Eritrea.

- 2) In regard to prisoners of war, the Council could require that Eritrea account for them to the same Monitoring Mission and permit access to the Mission as well the ICRC.
  
- 3) Finally, in respect of the good offices of the Secretary-General in close collaboration with the Security Council, the Secretary-General could convene an urgent meeting of the Principal Parties to facilitate an agreement between them upon a mutually acceptable means of peaceful dispute settlement from among those identified in Article 33 of the Charter.

The Secretary-General could issue his recommended solution within 120 days and require that Eritrea and Djibouti either accept that solution or in the event one of them does not, accept submission of the dispute to the International Court of Justice for a final and binding resolution.

It is Djibouti's view that this path and this timetable would offer Eritrea a fair, reasonable and prompt means to solve outstanding issues. It accomplishes this in a manner that vindicates the actions of the Council and assures compliance with international law.

## On Somalia

Djibouti is heartened by the outcome of the Somalia Partnership Forum and the progress that Somalia is making in a number of critical areas. We welcome the endorsement of the Transition Plan by the African Union Peace and Security Council and the commitment to its implementation, as expressed in its communique of 27 July 2018. AMISOM continues to play a critical enabling role as Somalia strives to develop its capabilities in order to gradually assume responsibility for security. AMISOM deserves the continued support of the international community. In this regard, Djibouti welcomes the renewal of AMISOM mandate earlier this morning.

En conclusion, Monsieur le Président, le surgissement d'une Corne nouvelle est désormais possible. C'est un objectif à notre portée! Djibouti est entièrement disposée à apporter sa contribution en vue d'une paix totale, définitive et durable dans la région pour le bénéfice de nos peuples. L'enlèvement dans le passé n'est pas une option! Construisons un avenir meilleur pour nos enfants!

Thank you for your attention.