

PRESS RELEASE



DJIBOUTI

Statement by

His Excellency

Mr. Mahamoud Ali Youssouf

Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

Head of the Djibouti Delegation

During the

High Level Meeting on Somalia

Thursday September 21, 2017

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We would like to express our profound gratitude to His Excellency Mr. Hassan Khayre for the guidance he has provided in focusing our discussion on Somalia and congratulate the government of Somalia's strong resolve to rebuild the country's governance structure, economic infrastructure, and institutions. We are all aware that is a mammoth task, an uphill struggle but a challenge that can be overcome if pursued with vision, solid determination and of course coordinated and enhanced support by the international community.

We concur with the view articulated by the Prime Minister, that we need to engage across the interlinked areas of politics, security and development. Djibouti welcomes the proposed plan to invest in agro industry, in particular livestock, farming and fisheries. Djibouti applauds the elaboration of the National Development Plan developed by the authority. We welcome your plan to build up the tax base with the view to building functioning institutions that can deliver basic services to citizens, including security and managing the economy effectively and transparently. Mobilizing domestic revenue as a priority is key to expanding economic

opportunity and rebuilding Somalia. The government has to develop a system for resource allocation and generate jobs for Somalia's youth.

We are heartened by the far-reaching policy reforms currently underway and salute the adoption by the Council of Ministers of the Telecom Bill. This will definitely allow the government to raise taxes from Somalia's vibrant telecom sector.

Djibouti wishes to reiterate its commitment to supporting Somalia, in any way it can, despite its limited resources. It calls on the international community to support Somalia's development beyond humanitarian assistance. In this regard, we call on partners to alleviate Somalia's debt burden and applaud those countries which have agreed to cancel Somalia's debt. The benefits far outweigh the costs. Let us rebuild and rededicate ourselves to supporting Somalia. With focused and vigorous leadership supported by the international community, the reemergence of a stable, peaceful and prosperous Somalia will no longer be a pipe dream.

Thank you Mr. President