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**SOMALI REPUBLIC
Transitional Federal Government
Ministry of Livestock, Forestry & Range**

**SPEECH PRESENTED AT THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IN ISTANBUL, TURKEY
ON 21-23TH OF MAY 2010.**

**Present by: Hon. Abukar Abdi Osman, Minister of Livestock, Forestry and Range,
Transitional Federal Government of Somalia**

First and foremost I would like to thank the Government of the Republic of Turkey for allowing us to gather in this beautiful country, I am also indebted to thank The United Nation Special Representative for Somalia, Ambassador Ahmedou Ould Abdalla for his initiatives as well as high Government officials, Representatives of the International Organizations and distinguished participants who gathered here today ready to assist Somali people.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, Minister Jengeli stated this morning the situation of Somalia, including half of our population in need of humanitarian assistance, 1.4 million people displaced. Somalia is the battle ground against and victims in the fight against terrorism, extremism and piracy. We are a corridor for the illegal trafficking of people and illicit goods and our drivers of conflict are many.

As also mentioned this morning, the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia, with the United Nations and the World Bank, with Regional Administrations, with many Somali and International stakeholders undertook a comprehensive needs assessment a couple of years ago which was recently updated. Documents related to this process can be found at the resources room which is located in the ballroom. The needs are clearly far more than I can state today, so I will focus on the key priorities and note that a balance approach across the political, governance, security, security, social services and productive sectors is required.

Some key priorities that are reflective of the needs of the Somali people include:-

- Enhance human security through the further development of legitimate, professional security forces operating within the framework of the rule of law,
- Key reconciliation initiatives
- Economic development of key productive sectors, and rapid employment creation in Mogadishu and elsewhere for disaffected youth and as an alternate to piracy.
- Infrastructure (the expansion of the Mogadishu port, Berbera corridor, Garowe and Bossaso airports and Bossaso seaport.
- Effective, transparent and accountable public financial management.
- Improved social service delivery
- Micro-business loans and opportunities, particularly targeting women and youth
- Sustainable use and management of national resources
- Ensuring a smooth transition through the viable transitional tasks and through regional electoral processes.

Economic development in the prime sectors of livestock, fisheries, telecoms, infrastructures and alternative energy will be the focus at Sunday's round table sessions. These sectors would exponentially expand Somalia's economic base, provide livelihoods and deepen coping mechanisms of the Somali people: We see the aforementioned priorities as stated in our speech and the roundtable discussions on Sunday as mutually reinforcing and relevant and we encourage all partners to not look at the needs and opportunities and find ways to support Somalia's economic growth and stability.

Specifically, Livestock, and Agriculture sectors are the backbone of the Somali economy;

Excellencies, Ladies and gentlemen, poor countries depending on agriculture and livestock as their mainstay require extra support from the rest of the world to realize political stability and achieve economic growth, which is the only way to improve the standard of living and empower their people. As you were all aware Somalia has been at war for the last two decades; and war is just like cancer, it affects every part of life on any country.

The collapse of the Somali State in January 1991 and the subsequent destruction of public and private assets (including roads, factories, hospitals, laboratories, schools, businesses, and ministries, amongst affected badly were livestock, agriculture institutions and infrastructures. The displacement of people and livestock resulted in increased poverty and food insecurity. Currently, most of the Somali population lives below the poverty line.

In Somalia, livestock is the backbone of the economy and is one of the most important economic activities and the main stay of the people. The pastoral community use to produce 80% of GDP (gross domestic products) of Somalia, but this has completely collapsed due to past war and need to be revived. The contribution of livestock to the economy cannot be underestimated.

Despite many challenges, livestock production and trade is the only viable and on-going economic enterprise in the entire Somalia. Livestock in Somalia is the lifeline for individuals and source of national wealth been the major sources of; food, cash income, employment creation, revenue for the government and foreign exchange earner. This is why livestock resources and development programs are recognized and appreciated by the entire population of Somalia.

Livestock production and trade is historically linked to the social and cultural believes that livestock provides food, direct cash income, living bank, and transport which ensures sustainable farming and economic stability. Consequently, the Ministry monitors and implement livestock development programmes through established provincial and district association who carry out treatments, vaccinations, provide extension advice to livestock owners/users, and the Ministry staff writes periodic reports to all over the country. The Ministry also writes monthly reports to OIE headquarters in Paris through the Somali delegate reporting on the Livestock stock health status.

Dear delegates, In the past 18 years, we had export ban on our livestock to the Gulf Countries because of the rift valley diseases, but this ban was lifted 5th November 2009 by kingdom of Saudi Arabia and within four months Somali business people exported over two million heads of livestock to Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries which had generated employments and income of more than 120 million USD, while Countries such as; UAE, Oman, Qatar and Yemen announced lifting ban on the Somali Livestock last year. The business involved the pastoralists, women, youth, livestock traders, and transporters from the entire country.

Besides the Community business gains, the Regional administrations earned revenues from export of livestock through the ports. The youth and women had also benefited from sale of Livestock, as 50-60% of livestock sold in the rural areas, districts, and regions were handled by youth and women.

We are very grateful to the King Abdallah of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Gulf countries for there generousities actions in which their countries officially announced lifting import ban on the Somali livestock.

Dear delegates, I am glad to report despite security problems this Ministry has been in the forefront to ensure livestock marketing is strengthened.

The Ministry of Livestock, Somali veterinary Professionals, UN-FAO-Somalia and AU-IBAR carried out in two months emergency programs funded by EU, USAID and Spanish Government for; treatments and vaccination programs against livestock diseases in all Somali Regions; over 5.4 million heads of livestock were treated; these has given us an opportunity and hope by May 23rd 2010, two days from today, Somalia will be given recognition “free from Rinderpest” by OIE, World Animal Health Organization in its General Session which will take place in Paris-France. Thanks to the Director General of OIE; Dr Bernet Vallet for his dedication to accept Somalia to get recognition “freedom of Rinderpest”.

Excellencies Ladies and Gentlemen, the Ministry is mandated by the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia to facilitate, promote advocate, and regulate livestock resource management development programmes, We have positive measures to enhance economic developments and advance food security protection in the livestock sector. I am pleased to

report to you today that my Ministry, is one of the best productive key ministries delivering services in the entire Somalia and facilitating international livestock marketing.

The goal of the Transitional Federal government of Somalia is to eradicate poverty and accelerate economic growth. This is in line with the United Nations goal number one of reducing poverty by half globally by the year 2015. The government through my ministry, have developed livestock development policy papers and strategic plan in areas of priority mainly; reconstruction, rehabilitation and developments of livestock production and marketing facilities that can meet international standards and conventions. As earlier reported in several meetings, forums, reports and request letters, the government has no technical and financial capabilities to undertake these essential services. I have provided a technical report requesting you the distinguished delegates from donor countries to support us with financial resources to implement the areas of priorities (See my technical report for details). The Key areas of priorities are:

- Improvement of delivery of animal health service;
- Improvement of natural resource management to support livestock production;
- Enhancement of marketing of livestock and livestock by-products;
- Improvement of dairy production;
- Peri-urban animal production enhanced;
- Building quarantine stations, water points, resting pens, roads, fodder improvements, stock routes and lording ramps.
- Strengthening of institutional development and capacity building in both private and public sectors.

If supported, this will enhance food security by increasing livestock products that will keep the prices down allowing low income groups to access to livestock food, reduce level of dependence on relief food, create employments and establishment of security and social sectors. Yet, increased production of gross domestic products (GDP) will reduce import and earn foreign exchange.

Fisheries,

Somalia has the longest coastline in continental Africa (3333) km and therefore a very important Economic Exclusive Zone (EEZ) that has not been formally declared in accordance with the Law of Sea Convention.

The importances of the fishery sector within the overall Somali economy remain extremely limited and its potential is yet to be capitalized. Only 30.000 people (of an estimated 9 million Somali population) depend on fishing as their principal livelihood and an additional 60.000 use fishing as a supplementary livelihood. Fish consumption at the household level is one of the lowest in Africa.

The Somalia EEZ represents one of the richest fishing grounds off the African continent and is one of the world's last fishing areas where fishing activities are mostly unreported and unregulated. This has consequently led to massive illegal fishing, mainly for tuna. It has been estimated for Somaliland, Puntland and South Central combined, about 95 million dollars in export revenue each year lost due to illegal fishing. It should be noted that illegal fishing activities have recently reduced considerably due to piracy. Conservative estimates put the country's sustainable annual marine fisheries production in the range of 300.000 metric tons.

The main challenges affecting the Somali fisheries sector are:

- The absence of governance and regulatory fisheries management framework.
- The lack of capacity and poor level of infrastructures.
- The lack of internal and external marketing outlets.
- Illegal fishing.

Despite these challenges and potential, the fisheries sector has up to date received negligible attention from the International Community, while other productive sectors such as livestock and agriculture have received also minimum support.

Agriculture and Watersheds;

Somali economy is based on agro pastoralism and over 60% of total population. As a result of civil unrest and frequent natural disasters (droughts and floods) the economy faces a

serve decline. Performance of agricultural sector, the second largest productive sector after livestock have dismally reduced and food security at national level and household level is no more attained. The fertile and productive areas in Somalia was estimated at an area of 8 to 9 million hectares with two main rivers, Jubba and Shabelle which both are in southern regions of Somalia. The heart of the agriculture sector is also in the heart of the remaining conflict zone in the Southern Central area. As a result farmers in this area still suffer from destroyed flood control levees and dysfunctional irrigation systems, unreliable supplies of inputs such as fertilizer and seeds, uncertain markets and prices. This report concludes that the rehabilitation of destroyed flood-control levees and irrigation systems in the Shebelle and Jubba basins would be economic investment on the basis of previous profitability, strong growth in demand for domestically produced food in Somalia, and access to export markets for sesame, bananas and grapefruit.

Associated with the traditional field and tree crop production, there are considerable prospects in various Somali regions for a number of high-value specialized crops such as, dates, vegetables, fodder plants, frankincense and myrrh, gum arabic, honey and a range of medicinal plants that could all be developed into significant sources of income for farmers and pastoralists. This report concludes that because of the economic importance of these field and tree crops, their production and marketing should be supported by Governments through the establishments of public and private extension programs.

The European Commission in Somalia interventions in Somalia has been at best able to mitigate the decline of the agricultural sectors performances, not to stop. In the past years, the European Commission has been the main donor in Somalia, including in the Livestock and Agriculture sectors.

Honorable Ministers, distinguished guests and participants, I would like to thank all those supported Somalia in developing, Livestock, Agriculture and fisheries sectors, specially those at forefronts; International Organizations such as; EU, USAID, UN-FAO, AU-IBAR as well as Governments.

I would like to thank you once again the Government of the Republic of Turkey for giving us this opportunity to convene here in this beautiful and historical country.