



## **PRESS RELEASE FOR TFG MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**

### **THE SOMALI SOLUTION TO THE INTERNATIONAL PIRACY PROBLEM:**

#### **ANTI PIRACY TASK FORCE (APTF) COASTGUARD INITIATIVE**

The Minister of Defence of the Transitional Federal Government is pleased to announce significant progress in the fight against piracy.

The Transitional Federal Government of Somalia recognises the importance of securing Somalia's territorial integrity. Significant effort and resources have already been devoted by the African Union, Somalia's neighbours and the International Community to recover and secure Somalia's borders, including its shores. Much effort has also been given to building Somalia's National Security Forces, both Military and Police, and to build our capacity to defeat other obstructionist elements such as al-Shabaab and their foreign masters, al-Qa'ida, who threaten our people and our country.

However, we must also turn our attention to maritime security and the threats that emanate from the sea. Somalia's maritime borders are as important as her land boundaries, yet today we continue to face a continuing threat posed by the continued support for our enemy from abroad. This support takes the form of supplies of arms, ammunition and personnel.

We are also faced with a growing trade in human trafficking, drug smuggling and illegal imports and exports that in no way add to the growth of our economy (despite the disingenuous claims to the contrary of those who profit from this trade). At sea, we are very aware of the need to protect Somalia's natural resources as was highlighted in the UN Secretary General's recent report to the Security Council (S/2011/261). The need to prevent the plundering of our fishing stocks by illegal fishing, to stop the dumping of toxic waste in our waters and the ability to claim our rights to our Exclusive Economic Zone are some of our highest priorities.

In addition, we are committed to the speedy eradication of piracy in our waters. Somalia is committed to fight against piracy and in order to reflect how serious Somalia is about this the Prime Ministers of the TFG established the Somali Anti Piracy Task Force. This scourge is destabilising to our coastal communities, damaging to our economy and detrimental to our reputation in the international community. Piracy is a criminal act under international law that has spread well beyond the shores of Somalia and has been choking both regional trade and international shipping around the Horn of Africa and the Gulf of Aden. Successive UN Security Council resolutions, in particular UNSCR 1976 and 2015 of 2011, clearly place the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia at the forefront of this fight but also recognise that Somalia has limited resources with which to combat the problem.

Whilst there have been considerable resources directed towards the Land Component of the National Security Forces little has been done to address the deficiencies of our maritime forces. It is, therefore, with great pleasure that H.E. the Minister of Defence, Hussein Arab Essa, announced today that “with the help of several members of the international community and in partnership with Halliday Finch International we will deliver, under the auspices of the TFG Ministry of Defence and through the TFG Anti-Piracy Task Force, a National Coast Guard capability with immediate effect. In developing a national capability we recognise that we need the help and assistance of our regional partners and we will establish many of the training facilities and bases in their areas. Halliday Finch International will provide training and logistic support as well as other services”.

This new Somali National Coastguard will have land, sea and air components, will be an integral part of Somalia’s National Security Forces and will operate under the auspices of the Ministry of Defence. Our Coast Guard will work in close cooperation with the international naval operations already active in the area and we will be establishing a maritime operations centre in Mogadishu to coordinate intelligence and operations of our own forces and those of the international community. We are confident that by combining land, air and coastal patrolling we will significantly impact the pirate gangs’ ability to go to sea, thereby reducing and ultimately halting this scourge. We are confident that we can rely upon the international community to continue their operations against pirates whilst also taking into account our wider maritime security requirements, particularly in areas adjacent to land we do not yet control.

Whilst establishing better port security, a more secure coastline and controlling our seas we also recognise that we need the continued support of the international community to help develop our coastal communities and offer alternative livelihoods – this will be a major challenge but one that is essential to contribute towards the success of our mission.

I would also like to put on notice those elements that seek to exploit our maritime resources that Somalia intends to lay claim to its rightful territory including our EEZ and extended Continental Shelf claims.

More details of this exciting new initiative will be released in due course. We are working hard with our partners in the international community and Halliday Finch International in order to implement a fully transparent auditable program that will comply with international best practices.

The new National Coast Guard will form part of the Somali National Security Forces and will fall under the scrutiny of the Joint Security Committee, giving our international partners full transparency and the ability to monitor our progress and activities. We will continue our engagement with the UN-led Kampala Process, UNPOS, IMO and UNODC to better coordinate our counter piracy activities with those of other Somali regions and with the wider regional efforts of the IOC and IGAD.

Any further enquiries regarding this subject should be directed to [media@hallidayfinch.org](mailto:media@hallidayfinch.org).

Thank You,

HE The Minister of Defence - Hussein Arab Essa