



Puntland State of Somalia
Garowe

Somalia: Puntland Rejects ABC Media Criticism of Anti-Piracy Force

PRESS RELEASE

13 September 2012

Puntland Government rejects baseless allegations and misleading connotations aiming to criticize the anti-piracy training program in Puntland State of Somalia.

In a video and written report entitled, “Australian accused of funding private Somali army,” published on 6 September 2012 on the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) website, the ABC program was provided misleading information by objectionable sources, and the program resulted in misleading public opinion regarding the Puntland Maritime Police Force (PMPF), the Puntland Government’s locally recruited and professional force that deters and disrupts piracy criminal activities on land and at sea.

This misleading and defamatory report’s key source is Mr. Matt Bryden, the former Coordinator of the Somalia Eritrea Monitoring Group (SEMG). During Mr. Bryden’s time as Coordinator, SEMG reports to the U.N. Security Council have been drafted in an unprofessional manner and intentionally biased against the Puntland Government’s consistent anti-piracy activities, as Mr. Bryden is known to favor one region of troubled Somalia at the expense of other Somali regions.

Contrary to Mr. Bryden’s allegations that the PMPF is a “private army”, the PMPF is a legitimate government security force mandated with fighting piracy and illegal fishing activities along the Puntland coastline.

Additionally, the security forces depicted on the ABC video program consisted of various Puntland Government security forces, including paramilitary Darawishta forces, Puntland Police Force, and PMPF units, on a celebration parade in the capital Garowe marking Puntland State’s 13th-year anniversary.

Puntland Government expects from internationally known media organizations, such as Australia’s ABC, to behave with exceptional professionalism and to refrain from broadcasting biased media programs and citing objectionable sources for news content.

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