



Federal Republic of Somalia
MINISTRY OF JUSTICE

Minister's office

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Minister Speech to 13TH UNDOS Conference in Qatar

Greeting key attendants: UN Representatives, UNDOS Chief, Qatari Official, Experts, Advisors, NGO representatives and Ladies and Gentlemen;

It is a great pleasure and an enormous privilege to be given the opportunity to address you all during the 13th UN Congress on Crime prevention and Criminal Justice hosted so beautifully by our brotherly nation of Qatar. It is a special year to join the 60th UN Crime Congress and the government of the Federal Republic of Somalia is honoured to be here.

This conference has a special importance for Somalia which is slowly starting to recover from a disastrous and very painful near quarter century of civil war. We Somalis understand well the importance of preventing and fighting crime. Crime is indeed an impediment to any form of development and progress as it destroys the very people, systems and tools required to make change possible. Our experience in Somalia over the last quarter of a century serves to illustrate and reinforce the message that preventing crime is crucial to peace, stability and development. Without prevention, positive intervention and an equitable and accessible functioning criminal justice system, crime becomes a barrier to development, social cohesion and progress.

As a person who worked in all aspects of state security and crime prevention as a practitioner and adviser before assuming my current post, I understand that it must be brought to the centre of any peace keeping and peace building process as H.E Banki Moon stated in his key note address to this Congress. Public participation and trust in and support for the State Criminal Justice processes and mechanisms must also be moved from the periphery to the heart of the policy debate as it is with public support and their full confidence in our criminal justice systems that we can effectively confront crime at any level. This is why both are a top

priority for my Ministry and government as we march towards security, stability and inclusive politics.

Somalia is turning the corner. This is a fact that I am proud to share with you all today. People are returning to Somalia from abroad, drivers are obeying traffic wardens, the police stations are opening and the people are reporting crimes and because of improving security, local neighbourhoods are thriving with the entrepreneurial spirit of shop keepers and other traders. ~~However, it is crucial to remember that while Somalia is turning the corner, it's still battling~~ with many criminal demons.

Criminality is still plentiful in many Somali areas, police services not yet professional and our criminal justice system is still undergoing a national constitutional dialogue and review. It is therefore my strong view that Somalia is at a critical juncture of rebuilding and reform while at the same time fighting many national and transnational crimes. We as a nation face many of the same challenges other countries have to grapple with and some specific to our condition. **Among the most prevalent and persistent criminal challenges facing Somalia today are terrorism, piracy and human trafficking.**

The single most difficult criminal challenges facing Somalia today is terrorism. As you are aware we have secured most of the territory within our borders. We as a government understand, and are committed to winning the war against AlShabaab and returning full control of all Somali territories to the legitimate state and its people. The Somali National Army in conjunction with AMISOM troops has returned almost 80% of all territory into State hands. The President, myself and other key Minister's have visited these liberated regions and I can tell you, the people are relieved and have high expectations for the preservation of peace and arrival of genuine development to cement their joy. However, small pockets of Al Shabab terrorists remain and are now focusing their efforts on just murder as they understood a long time ago that the Somali public had seen their ideology for the bankrupt rhetoric it actually is.

AlShabaab's main tactic now has become to adopt opportunistic guerrilla style warfare against private property and the general public which has caused the death of many of our people. However, we are more determined than they are and we are employing all the tools at our disposal – military, intelligence, police, and even engaging the public to prevent these attacks and destroy their remaining capabilities. The UN agencies, AU, Arab League and many others partners in Somalia have been instrumental in supporting us to contain the AlShabaab violence and the criminal activities they fund their operations from. Unfortunately, as we all know and have witnessed, terrorism is also a transnational crime. You are all aware of tragedy of Garrisa University which took the lives of so many bright and hopeful young students a few weeks ago. Terrorism is a global crime. One, we Somalis knows very well from experiences and we call on

all nations and international bodies to cooperate and work in partnership to tackle it once and for all through all the resources available to us collectively.

Piracy off the coast of Somalia in the past impacted heavily on the global economy and the local communities who had to live with the reality of the ill gotten gains and the further crimes it fuelled. Today, due to our government's determination and international efforts and cooperation, piracy of the coast of Somalia has radically diminished. However, we cannot be complacent.

The Somali Federal Government, with the support of regional and international actors and partners, is beginning to build its navy. This will allow us to patrol our own sea and work with businesses, our neighbours and international partners in making our sea safer and our waters clear of piracy. More than fighting at sea, we need to fight this crime on land by providing hope, opportunity and alternative livelihoods to young men who are often misguided by the promises of quick wealth by their exploiters. Furthermore, it is fundamental that we continue to also target the financiers and key individuals who truly benefitted from the piracy to cut off the head of the poisonous snake permanently.

With regards to offering hope and alternatives to the most vulnerable to lure into criminality in the absence of hope and opportunity in the world, I strongly support the initiative of the Qatari Prime Minister and Minister of Interior who is also the elected President of the Congress, H.H. Sheikh Abdallah bin Nassir bin Khalifa al-Thani. His generous and timely initiative will make an enormous difference to the lives of a generation of displaced children and youth who will benefit from the funds support for their education and professional development.

It is by only creating an alternative economy in the regions that have been affected by piracy and appeared to have falsely flourished as a result that we can tackle the get rich quick scheme ideology that underpins the piracy operations. It is also fundamental to support the Justice Sector and Ministry of Justice to expand to the region and in conjunction with other concerned agencies maintain the rule of law.

A side from terrorism and piracy there are many local and national crimes which my Ministry, with the support of regional and international actors, is trying to fight. Among them is sensitive issue of rape. This is a common phenomenon after many years of conflict. It is tragedy that affects many young girls and women and it is therefore a top priority for SFG and Ministry of justice to prevent, educate, and prosecute perpetrators with the full force of the law. Other economic crimes such as property theft are common after civil war and it is our clogging up our courts. It requires much recourse to ascertain the right owners with the use of forensic

technology. This is a key issue that MOJ is working to find a lasting solution and we urge all nations and international bodies to assist us in any way they can.

The final crime is my country and the world at large is grappling with is human trafficking. This is both national tragedy and transnational in nature. Many young Somalis have been lured with hope of a better life in Europe and North America to their deaths at sea in the last few years. These young boys and girls experience exploitation and great hardships and some even lose their lives ~~trying to cross many border on land and sea~~. No doubt, in desperate times, the grass always seems greener on the other side. We have to urgently find international solutions for this transnational matter and bring to justice those who benefit from exploiting the hopes and dreams of those many people who risk losing their lives daily in search of a better life abroad.

Combating all crimes requires creating economic opportunity and hope at home. It also requires targeting human traffickers who take thousands of dollars to take young men and women to their death and confronting the violent ideology that indoctrinates young people to commit heinous acts of criminality without any regard for their own lives or the impact their actions will have on society. In a globalised world, there is no one nation that can resolve transnational crimes alone. We need to cooperate to find lasting solutions as a community of nations and learn best practices from one another.

In the past and to some extent today, criminal justice debates have centred on historical ideologies that underpinned it. These archaic arguments of whether we punish or rehabilitate offenders to make our society safer are no longer useful as the risks have increased on a global level. What matters today is that ideas, good practices and a commitment to partnership in tackling all crimes is promoted by us all present at this congress and that we collaborate to find effective methods to make our societies safer.

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is a great pleasure to have had the opportunity to speak with you today. I assure my Government's commitment in "preventing crime" and the full commitment of my ministry in using all the available tools at our disposal to strengthen our criminal justice system. I urge you all at this Congress to continue supporting our national development and to confront and eradicate criminality and insecurity for a better Somalia, region and world.

Thank you.