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**NINETY-FOURTH ORDINARY
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OF THE CENTRAL ORGAN OF THE
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**REPORT OF THE INTERIM CHAIRPERSON ON
THE RECONCILIATION PROCESS
IN SOMALIA**

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. At the 92nd Ordinary Session at Ambassadorial level of the Central Organ, held in Addis Ababa on 12 and 13 June 2003, I reported on the evolution of the Somalia peace process, within the context of the IGAD-led Somalia National Reconciliation Conference that has been going on, since 15 October 2002, in Kenya (first in Eldoret, and, from mid-February 2003 onwards, in Mbagathi, in the vicinity of Nairobi). In particular, I recalled the signing, on 27 October 2002, by the Somali leaders attending the Conference, of a Declaration on the Cessation of Hostilities and the Structures and Principles of the Somalia National Reconciliation Process. Among others, the Somali leaders requested IGAD, the AU and the wider international community to support and monitor the implementation of the Declaration.

2. I also informed the Central Organ that, in March of this year, the persistence of inter-factional fighting in some parts of Somalia, in violation of the Eldoret Declaration, prompted the Conference Steering IGAD Technical Committee to consider appropriate measures to deal with the situation obtaining on the ground.

3. It was against this backdrop that Amb. Bethuel Kiplagat, Kenya's Special Envoy for Somalia and Conference Chairman, wrote to me on 18 March 2003, requesting the AU to deploy a monitoring mechanism in Somalia to support the cessation of hostilities. As a follow-up to this request, and after intensive consultations between the AU and the IGAD Technical Committee, the two Organizations undertook a Joint Technical Fact-Finding Mission to Somalia, from 22 May to 2 June 2003. The Mission issued a report that, among others, conveyed a request from the Somali parties and large sections of the population to the AU to deploy a military force in Somalia to carry out disarmament of the military factions and other armed groups.

4. On the basis of the said report and subsequent discussions with the IGAD Technical Committee, I recommended to the Central Organ the establishment of a mechanism to monitor the cessation of hostilities in the form of an AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) that would comprise up to 75 military observers and civilian staff. As stressed in the Fact-Finding Mission report, the proposal to deploy Observers was predicated on a number of conditions, all aimed at ensuring the successful execution of their mandate. These included (i) the need to complement the existing Eldoret Declaration, which, in addition to the fact that it had not been signed by all the parties, was insufficient for the deployment of an Observer Mission; and (ii) the existence, by the time of the

deployment, of a new civilian authority that would take responsibility for the disarmament.

5. On its part, the Central Organ, having welcomed the progress made in the Somalia National Reconciliation Conference, expressed the readiness of the African Union to play the role expected of it in the establishment of a mechanism to monitor the cessation of hostilities in Somalia, including the deployment of an Observer Mission. Consequently, the Central Organ requested me to undertake the necessary consultations with IGAD and the Somali parties towards the establishment of such a mechanism, and to take all steps required for the mobilization of the financial and other resources needed.

6. The present report provides an update of the steps taken by the Commission in pursuance of the Central Organ decision on the deployment of an Observer Mission in Somalia. It also gives information on the evolution of the discussions at the Somalia National Reconciliation Conference. Finally, the report makes recommendations on the best possible way forward.

II. DEPLOYMENT OF AMISOM

a) Communication with the Frontline States and Request for Military Observers and Funding

7. In the aftermath of the Central Organ meeting, I addressed letters to the Foreign Ministers of the three Frontline States, namely Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya, to formally bring to their attention the decision to deploy an AU Observer Mission in Somalia and the steps taken to that end. I expressed confidence that the Frontline States will provide whatever support possible to AU's efforts. In response, the Ethiopian Foreign Minister, Seyoum Mesfin, in a letter dated 3 July 2003, assured me of his Government's determination to do whatever is expected of it in order to assist the AU in its initiative.

8. The Commission also sent Note Verbales to those seven African countries that had been proposed by the Somali leaders and factions to contribute military observers, namely Algeria, Botswana, Ghana, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania and Zimbabwe. Since then, Ghana has responded favorably to the request, whilst Zimbabwe has indicated that it was not in a position to contribute military observers due to other commitments. At the time of finalizing this report, responses from the other five countries were still being awaited.

9. In addition, I wrote to the UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, on 18 June 2003, to inform him of the Central Organ decision and seek UN support for this endeavour. I also sent a similar letter to the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States (LAS), Amre Moussa, seeking the support of his Organization, including financial assistance from the LAS Special Fund for Somalia.

10. In the same vein, I addressed a communication to the Foreign Minister of Italy, Franco Frattini, in which I requested his country's support for the funding of the envisaged Observer Mission.

11. On 9 July 2003, the Interim Commissioner for Peace, Security and Political Affairs wrote to the Italian Foreign Minister to provide further details on the AU's request for support. In response, Minister Frattini assured the Commission that Italy would make sure that the necessary support will be given. In this respect, he stressed the need to further study in detail the operative modalities of the execution of the Mission, its connection with the entry into force and implementation of a comprehensive peace agreement among the Somalis, and the actual cost of the deployment.

12. I should also like to inform the Central Organ that communications have been sent to some of the AU Partners, to seek their financial and logistical support. I am pleased to note that Germany has contributed Euro 200,000.00, whilst Sweden has pledged SEK 1,000,000.00. Efforts are still underway to secure the necessary funding for AMISOM, whose budget has been revised upwards, amounting now to US\$5,692,750, to take into account an increase in the number of Observers and projected deployment sites, the objective being to ensure a better coverage of the Mission area.

b) Dispatch of a Reconnaissance Mission to Somalia

(i) Preparation for the Reconnaissance Mission

13. On 28 June 2003, the Interim Commissioner for Peace, Security and Political Affairs addressed a letter to Amb. Bethuel Kiplagat regarding the decision of the Central Organ and the steps taken by the Commission for its speedy implementation, including the contacts initiated with the countries that are to provide military observers. Amb. Djinnit also informed him that, in preparation for the envisaged deployment, the AU would be dispatching a Reconnaissance Mission to Somalia to consult further with the Somali factions and leaders. Finally, and in line with the report submitted to the 92nd Ordinary Session of the Central Organ, Amb. Djinnit recalled the context within which the deployment would take place:

- the Mbagathi Conference should result in the formation of a transitional government and appropriate arrangements for the transitional period;
- there should be conducive and acceptable security conditions;
- the Mission should benefit from the full support of the Somali parties;

- the Mission's objective will be to create the requisite environment that would make it possible to deploy a larger peace-keeping force.

14. The Reconnaissance Mission departed from the AU HQ to Nairobi on 17 July 2003, comprising of Dr A. M. Kambudzi, Political Analyst, and Lt. Col. Abdelhamid Khalifi, Senior Military Expert. A Communication Technician was to join the Mission in Nairobi, but could not do so.

15. While in Nairobi, and in addition to working out its flight and road sector itinerary, the Mission consulted with various Somali leaders at the Mbagathi Conference, to duly inform them of the exercise. The Mission also prepared documents that it distributed to the Somali leaders relating to its activities and objectives once in Somalia. Some of these leaders formally signed the Pledge to extend full support, protection and assistance to the Observer Mission as soon as it is deployed and throughout its presence in Somalia. These are Abdullahi Yusuf, President of the Puntland State; Yusuf Hassan Ibrahim, on behalf of the Transitional National Government (TNG); Omer Finish, Chairman of the United Somali Congress/Somali Salvation Alliance (USC/SSA); Mohamed Afrah Qanayare, Chairman of the United Somali Congress (USC) and of the G8; Osman Atto, Chairman of the United Somali Congress/Somali National Alliance/Somali Reconstruction and Restoration Council (USC-SNA/SRRC); Sheikh Madde, on behalf of the Rahanweyne Resistance Army (RRA); and Yusuf Alire Mohamud, on behalf of the Juba Valley Alliance (JVA). Muse Sudi, Chairman of the Somali Salvation Alliance (SSA), refused to sign the Pledge submitted by the AU, while Hussein Aideed, Vice Chairman of the Somali Reconstruction and Restoration Council (SRRC), was away from Nairobi at that time.

16. Further, arrangements were made for the AU delegation to the Mbagathi Conference, led by my Special Envoy, M. A. Foum, to maintain contacts with the Somali leaders for them to alert their respective representatives in Somalia to receive the Mission according to the detailed schedule that had been communicated. Due to logistics constraints and the heavy assignments envisaged in Mogadishu, the capital, the Somali leaders were informed that the Mission would first visit Luuq and Garbaharre, in the south-west of Somalia, before proceeding to other places.

17. From Nairobi onwards, the Reconnaissance Mission was accompanied by three Somali members of the DDR Committee at the Somalia National Reconciliation Conference. Maj. Gen. J. A. Musomba, Coordinator of the Committee Monitoring Cessation of Hostilities under the IGAD Technical Committee, was unable to join the Mission due to other commitments at the Mbagathi Conference. Also accompanying the Mission was Abdallah Arimi, from the League of Arab States.

(ii) Visits and Discussions in Somalia

18. From 22 to 31 July 2003, the Reconnaissance Mission visited Luuq, Garowe, Bossasso, Galkacyo, Belet-Weyne, Baidoa, Mogadishu and Kismayo (Garbaharre could not eventually be visited as the airstrip there was not usable). On the ground, the Mission adopted an approach that it felt appropriate to convey the correct message and signals to the Somali leaders, factions and population. That approach consisted in highlighting the significance of the earlier IGAD-AU Fact-Finding Mission; clarifying the mandate and objectives of the Reconnaissance Mission; explaining that it was only AU military observers (not an International Force) that will be deployed in the country; and indicating what role was expected of the Somali political leaders, military commanders and the rest of the population in support of the Observer Mission.

19. Discussions with Somali leaders and factions focused on the identification of regional command centers and Mission sites for the Military Observers, security conditions, offices and accommodation, as well as the economic parameters under which the Military Observers would operate in Somalia. The Mission was able to identify buildings (both accommodation and offices) for the Military Observers in Luuq, Garowe, Bossaso, Galkacyo (north), Baidoa, Mogadishu (TNG, Qanayare and Mohamed Deere - Chairman of Middle Shebelle Regional Administration - groups controlled areas; as Hussein Aideed, Osman Atto and Musa Sude groups refused to meet with the Mission, none of the same could be done in those areas that they control), and Kismayo.

20. The other aspects of the Mission are covered below:

20.1 Luuq – This is a small town, with about 10,000 inhabitants, located by a section of the Juba River, in the Gedo region, and controlled by an alliance consisting of the SRRC, the Somali Alliance Movement (SAMO) and the Somali National Front (SNF). The Mission was enthusiastically received by the local political leaders and military commanders, as well as the inhabitants of the town, on 22 July 2003. The leaders pledged full cooperation and protection for the Military Observers and signed a written commitment to that effect. They noted that “the African Union will not do more for Somalia, as it has its own limitations”. Others, however, felt that the Military Observers would be “below the tasks expected in Somalia, such as disarmament”. The town and its surroundings looked calm and peaceful during the visit.

20.2 Garowe – This is the capital of the Puntland State of Somalia. The Mission was very well received by Ali Abdi Awaare, Minister for Local Government and Rural Development, on 22 July 2003, and by the Vice-President, Mohamed Abdi Hashi, as well as other Ministers. Abdullahi Yusuf, President of the Puntland State, received the Mission the following day, after his retreat from Mbagathi. Assurances were given by the Puntland Officials to facilitate the work of the Military Observers and to protect them. They

suggested that the Observers should be deployed in all the regions that make up Puntland.

20.3 Bossaso – From Garowe, the Mission was accompanied by two Ministers and security personnel by road to Bossaso, the port outlet of Puntland, on the Red Sea. Bossaso appeared calm, safe and peaceful when the Mission visited it on 23 July 2003. The port is functional and could be of use to the Observers. The Mission was well received by the police and military commanders, who all pledged to work closely with the Observers.

20.4 Galkacyo - This town lies in the west-central part of Somalia, at the inter-section between the Darod and Hawiye clans. The town is divided into two parts, the Darod section in the north and the Hawiye section to the south. Indeed, there are two systems of administration in Galkacyo. Further, the town serves as the gateway into and from Puntland to the southern regions of Somalia. The Mission reached the town via Garowe, from Bossaso, on 25 July 2003, and concluded its stay in Puntland with a few meetings and a visit to locate offices and housing for the Military Observers.

The main problem encountered in Galkacyo was how to cross to the other side of the town. Efforts were made to contact leaders from that side, but no response was given to the Mission's request for meetings, immediately upon arrival, on 25 July 2003. The Mission was informed by the Puntland officials that the Southern part leaders had said they could not guarantee its security. However, two delegates, purporting to represent Hussein Aideed and Osman Atto, respectively, turned up at the Hotel, the following day, at 7.30 a.m., and informed the Mission that the leaders, elders and people had assembled to receive it. But since the flight from Galkacyo to Belet-Weyne was scheduled to depart at 8.30 a.m., it was, instead, agreed to have a brief meeting with just these two delegates in the northern part of the town. Recalling that they had earlier on received the IGAD-AU Fact-Finding Mission, those delegates pledged to work with the military observers and said they also wanted them "on their side of the town" (But, on return to Nairobi, the Mission was informed by the respective Somali leaders, particularly Osman Atto, that those men were not representatives of his organization or that of Hussein Aideed).

20.5 Belet-Weyne – This town lies in the Hiran region of Somalia, along the Ethiopia-Somalia border. The Hiran Regional Administration controls the West Section of the town, while the East section is under the control of different authorities. The Mission landed at the airport in the morning of 26 July 2003, but was not received. It was ordered to depart immediately by the militia commander in charge of the airport. He spoke to the Mission whilst his militiamen were surrounding it and the plane. The commander said he had no instructions from the responsible political leaders to receive the Reconnaissance Mission and that nobody could protect its members in Belet-Weyne. So the Mission quickly took off to comply with the order. Notably, the fax that Amb. Fom had dispatched to the Mission, via the Pilots, to convey a message about

Belet-Weyne was received at departure time, whilst at Galkacyo. Therefore, it was too late to cancel the visit to Belet-Weyne.

20.6 Baidoa – This is the administrative centre of the Bay region, in south-central Somalia. The Mission was well received by Abshir Hussein Ali, Ag. Chairman of RRA. During the discussions, the local leaders pledged to assist and protect the Military Observers once deployed to Baidoa. They showed a building to the Mission that would provide both offices and accommodation for the Military Observers.

20.7 Mogadishu – The Mission stayed for four days in Mogadishu. The three organizations/factions of Hussein Aideed, Osman Atto and Muse Sudi instructed their groups not to receive the Mission.

The Mission had several fruitful meetings with the TNG political leaders and military and police commanders. Although they pledged to protect and assist the Military Observers, they also expressed doubts about the effectiveness of the exercise, indicating that they would rather prefer a military force with the capacity to conduct disarmament. The TNG Deputy Police Commander, Ismail Hadj Osman Ali, invited the delegation to visit the Criminal Investigation Department (C.I.D), where he offered to allocate seven offices for use by the AU Military Observer Mission.

The Mission also met with Mohammed Afrah Qanayare's representatives, led by Mohamed Xiireey Mohamed, the Vice- Chairman of USC, and other leaders and commanders at their HQ, in Danyale area of Mogadishu. They pledged to work closely with the Military Observers and to extend to them the necessary assistance and protection throughout their presence in Somalia. Further, the Mission met with the representatives of Mohammed Deere in north Mogadishu, who, similarly, expressed support for the AU Military Observers. Later, the Mission met Omer-Finish's representatives in the west part of Mogadishu. They pledged to cooperate closely with the Military Observers.

Finally, the Mission met with the following:

- the leadership of the Suleiman sub-clan that controls the Mogadishu seaport, who signed the Pledge/Commitment document submitted to them by the Mission. Nevertheless, they indicated that if they continue to be left out from the Mbagathi peace process, the Military Observers would be unwelcome;
- the leadership of the newly emerged faction United Somali Congress/Peace Society (USC/PS), who threatened the Mission physically;

- the leadership of the newly emerged faction USC/SC, who threatened not to cooperate with the Military Observers as long as they remain excluded from the Mbagathi Conference;
- the leadership of the Medical Association in Mogadishu, who said that the initiative to deploy Military Observers would appear to be not the right choice to assist Somalia that rather needs a military force with the capacity to undertake in the first place disarmament in the country. They also indicated that the delegates at the Mbagathi Conference do not represent all the Somali people. They suggested that if the Military Observers come, they would have to undergo a medical check-up in their health facilities, and that the population would have to be informed that the Observers suffer from no infectious diseases;
- the University Professors, who welcomed the initiative of deploying Military Observers, fully supported the idea and pledged to explain to the population and their students the objectives of the Observer Mission. However, they doubted the Military Observers would effectively carry out the tasks needed in Somalia; and
- General Galaal (ex-Somali National Army commander), who advised that it should be an international force to undertake a disarmament programme in Somalia and not Military Observers.

20.8 Kismayo – This is the third largest town in Somalia, located on the coast, in the south. It serves as both the administrative centre and the port outlet/inlet for the southern areas of the country. The Vice-Chairman of JVA, Yusuf Nur Mohamoud, accompanied by members of the Executive Committee and military commanders, warmly received the Mission. The Vice-Chairman recalled receiving the IGAD-AU Fact-finding Mission through which the leadership had conveyed their requests to the Technical Committee and AU. He also asked what steps had been taken to deal with the problem of ceasefire violations and what would be done to those who violated. The leaders undertook to cooperate fully with the Military Observers. They led the Mission to see a building that would be offered for offices and accommodation for the Observer Mission. It should also be pointed out that peace and security prevailed at the time of the visit.

(iii) Obstacles and incidents encountered by the Mission

21. Although the Mission proceeded in conditions of calm, support and cooperation at most of the places that it visited, it was not entirely immune to problems, incidents and malicious misinterpretations. Aside from the difficulties noted above (lack of cooperation and goodwill from the political factions controlling the southern section of Galkacyo, refusal to access Belet-Weyne), the Mission faced several other incidents, including:

- threats circulated through letters that were aimed at intimidating the Mission;
- shooting in front of the Sahafi International Hotel, in Mogadishu, that resulted in one Somali death;
- throwing of a home-made bomb that exploded against the front wall of the Hotel at a time when the members of the Mission and other hotel guests were sitting in the court yard, in the evening of 28 July 2003;
- an amputated woman's leg discovered nearby the Hotel premises, on 29 July 2003; and
- circulation of rumors that the Mission would not be allowed to depart for Nairobi.

22. A lot of these problems apparently originated from distortions in local and international media reports (particularly the BBC Somali Broadcast) on the remarks and activities of the Mission, specifically when it was at the northern part of Galkacyo. The Mission was reported to have said that the Headquarters of the AU Observers would be in Galkacyo, since this was "a very important and strategic town in Somalia", thus implying that the solution to the Somali problem was to re-locate the capital to Galkacyo. The media distortions were spread widely ahead of the other visits of the Mission, and obviously did not go well with the people in South Galkacyo in particular and those of South Somalia in general.

23. In fact, the remarks made by the Mission were that: "Galkacyo was a very important and strategic town in Somalia, and the African Union would deploy 4 to 6 Military Observers there. The Observers would be located in the northern part and would, from there, also cover the southern part of Galkacyo, since it was just one town". Upon its return to Nairobi, on 31 July 2003, the Mission learnt, from various sources, that the reasons of the incidents encountered was, to some extent, linked to the return to Puntland of Abdullahi Yusuf, who was supposed to be in Nairobi whilst the visit in Somalia was underway and who met the delegation. This was perceived by some of the Somali factions as evidence of preferential treatment for Puntland and its leader, particularly in the context of the tensions between the Hawiye and Darod clans that are sharply manifested in the belt from Galkacyo across the country, down to Hobyo, on the Central Indian Ocean coast of Somalia.

(iv) Conclusions of the Mission and subsequent meetings in Nairobi

24. Given the prevailing political and military conditions in Somalia, the Mission concluded that more work was needed before the deployment of the Military Observers. It was felt that the Observer Mission should be the initial component of a much larger and well-equipped force. In this respect, the Mission emphasized that the Somali political leaders and commanders consulted within Somalia overwhelmingly and strongly expressed the need for an international force to assist in the disarmament programme.

25. Following its return from Somalia, the Mission, together with Amb. Foom, met with Maj. Gen. J. A. Musomba, Coordinator of the Committee Monitoring Cessation of Hostilities, on 4 August 2003. After an exchange of views, it was felt that the AU should continue with its efforts to assist the Somalis. Also at the meeting held, on the same day, with the international observers at the Mbagathi Conference, the participants expressed appreciation that the Mission has done its best despite the difficult conditions that it encountered in Somalia. The observers further pledged to support the efforts of the African Union to help restore peace, security and stability in Somalia.

III. EVOLUTION OF THE MBAGATHI CONFERENCE

26. As indicated in my earlier report to the Central Organ, the Harmonization Committee set up by the IGAD Technical Committee to integrate the reports of the six Reconciliation Committees established on 29 November 2002, to deliberate on core issues of the Somali conflict, submitted a provisional integrated report in early May of this year. That report also comprised a Draft Charter to guide the transitional period in Somalia. This opened the way for the Plenary of Phase II of the Conference, which started immediately debating on the recommendations contained in the report.

27. At the beginning of June 2003, the Technical Committee submitted a revised Draft Charter that had been prepared by Experts, including Somali intellectuals with competence on constitutional matters, to the Plenary Session for discussion by the Somali parties. That Charter is conceived upon the principles of federalism. Discussions on this document have continued throughout, from June to August 2003. However, differences have continued to emerge among the Somali parties. In summary:

- some delegations, including the TNG, took the position that the Draft Charter should not be adopted as valid for the transitional period. Rather, it should be submitted to a referendum, at a later stage, during the envisaged four-year transition;
- the Puntland delegation expressed strong support for the adoption of the Charter, right from the end of the Mbagathi Conference and the beginning of the transitional period;

- other Somali factions expressed serious reservations on some aspects of the Draft Charter, especially that aspect concerning the definition of the Somali nation.

28. It should also be noted that the members of the IGAD Technical Committee had differences regarding some aspects of the Draft Charter and the method of reconciling the Somalis. This, in turn, has further complicated the intra-Somali differences over the issue.

29. As the debate on the Charter proceeded, differences among the Somali parties grew deeper, especially in the month of August, culminating in the withdrawal of some delegations from the Conference, notably the larger part of the TNG delegation that left Mbagathi for Somalia, together with the TNG President, Abdikassim Salad Hassan, as well as Muse Sudi, with members of his delegation. In withdrawing their participation from the Conference, some of the delegations cited the reluctance of the Technical Committee to allow for meaningful changes in the Draft Charter. Others highlighted what they called the lack of impartiality within the Technical Committee with respect to its treatment of the different Somali delegations. Still, some other delegations withdrew protesting against the alleged continued exclusion of important sections of the Somali population from the reconciliation process. With a view to meeting some of the objections and observations made by the Somali participants in the Plenary, the Chairman of the Technical Committee has appointed a Committee comprising of Somalis and a Kenyan legal expert to review and prepare a revised Draft Charter.

30. In view of these developments that are threatening to derail altogether the peace process, now at its most crucial phase, my Special Envoy and the international observers made concerted efforts in a bid to reconcile the Somalis over their differences and also to renew harmony within the Technical Committee. However, these efforts are still to bear fruits as differences on the Draft Charter have persisted at Mbagathi.

31. Meanwhile, a delegation led by a diplomat from Italy, which is currently chairing the EU, met the Interim Commissioner for Peace, Security and Political Affairs, for consultations on Somalia, on 20 August 2003. The delegation reiterated the support of the EU to the ongoing peace process, expressing the hope that it would lead to the conclusion of a comprehensive agreement and the establishment of an all-inclusive and broad-based democratic Government for Somalia.

IV. OBSERVATIONS

32. The Somali peace process is, once more, at a crossroads. Nearly ten months after it was set in motion, the National Reconciliation Conference is yet to fully achieve its stated objective of bringing about a lasting solution to the

more than a decade-long conflict facing Somalia. Amb. Kiplagat was expecting that all Phases of the Conference and the formation of a new Somali Government would be concluded by mid-June. Clearly, as things stand now, the Conference is largely behind schedule.

33. Of particular concern are the divisions within the Plenary on the revised Draft Charter for the transitional period and the withdrawal of some participants from the Conference, which is undermining the principle of inclusiveness upon which the entire process is premised. In addition, the differences within the IGAD Technical Committee on how to move the discussions forward have further compounded the situation.

34. At the same time, the situation within Somalia remains unstable. In more general terms, the conditions spelt out in my June report to the Central Organ, as being the basic requirements for the execution of the mandate of the Observer Mission, are yet to be met. In fact, the situation on the ground, as repeatedly stressed by the Somalis themselves during the Reconnaissance Mission, calls for the deployment of an international force that would carry out the difficult and complex task of disarming all armed groups and factions. The Observer Mission would then constitute a component of such an international force, though, and provided that the requisite conditions are met, it could be deployed in advance.

35. In light of the above, the Central Organ may, among others, wish:

- to appeal, once again, to the Somali factions and leaders to demonstrate the required political will to ensure the swift conclusion of the Mbagathi Conference. In this respect, the Central Organ could invite, at the appropriate time and venue, all Somali factions and leaders currently in Mbagathi, to remind them, in an unequivocal way, of the fact that the achievement of lasting reconciliation and peace in Somalia lies first and foremost on the Somalis themselves;
- while reiterating its appreciation to the Frontline States and the IGAD Technical Committee for their efforts, to encourage them to show greater cohesion and coordination in their handling of the Mbagathi Conference and the Somali peace process in general; and
- to endorse, in line with the decision on Somalia adopted by the Executive Council at its Maputo Session, the establishment of a multinational force to be deployed in Somalia, at the most appropriate time, to carry out the disarmament exercise and provide security for the implementation of any comprehensive peace agreement resulting from the Mbagathi Conference.

36. On my part, I intend to continue engaging the Somali factions to see how best to support the peace process, including the implementation of the Eldoret Declaration. In particular, I envisage to dispatch a delegation to Mbagathi to pursue contacts, with some of the Somali factions. Such consultations could open the way to the dispatching of another delegation to Somalia, to discuss further with the Somali leaders and military commanders, both in those areas where cooperation had not been forthcoming and the places that could not be reached during the Reconnaissance Mission.

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