



**The Federal Government of the Somali Republic  
Office of the Prime Minister**

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**16 April 2013**

**Somalia values strategic partnership with EU, Prime Minister says**

His Excellency Prime Minister Abdi Farah Shirdon today welcomed Francesca Mosca, the EU's Director of Cooperation for Sub-Saharan Africa, to Villa Somalia to discuss the security partnership and strengthen bilateral relations.

"Our relationship is much closer than partnership," the Prime Minister said. "We are friends and I thank you for coming to Villa Somalia."

During wide-ranging talks, the PM updated Ms Mosca on the government's rejection of the old "4.5 tribal system" for political representation and participation. Women's rights and political contribution were a priority for this government.

"We recognize the role of women in our society and give them a fair share in our government: two ministers out of 10 and the first time a Deputy Prime Minister is a woman. While we are in a bad situation we never forget our obligation to the Somali women." Human rights more broadly was a critical issue, which is why the government had launched the Independent Task Force on Human Rights to investigate sexual violence against women and the killing of journalists.

The Prime Minister briefed Ms Mosca on his successful recent Listening Tour across Somalia and his Regional Tour of East Africa. Security was at the heart of both initiatives and the government was acutely aware of the public's priorities – which partners, such as the EU could support. Piracy was dramatically down in 2013, the Prime Minister said, stating that this was reflective of political, security and economic improvements on the land. Terrorism was a formidable international challenge that Somalia was facing with limited resources.

Somalia was calling for more direct support to the government and line ministries rather than support to NGOs, which bypassed the government and did not enhance capacity. In that light, the Prime Minister welcomed Ms Mosca's commitment of €22m of direct support to focus on public finance management and public administration.

Ms Mosca said the EU was standing by Somalia at this critical time. "We want to be supportive and Brussels to be successful. We want to help on building the capacity of Somali security, as we already support AMISOM operations."

Somalia was looking forward to participating in the New Deal, the Prime Minister said. This was a new framework for assistance provided to fragile states affected by conflict.

ENDS

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