



*This paper is for Government departments and statutory organisations dealing with counter-terrorism. It is intended to help you to respond to any concerns generated in communities as a result of the coverage in the media of the CT issues. It is not intended to provide detailed briefing about Government policies, and explaining these issues to the media is the role of relevant departmental press office.*

### **Conference on Somalia, May 2013**

The UK and Somalia have agreed to jointly host an international conference on Somalia in the UK on 7 May 2013. The purpose of the conference is to provide international support for the new Government of Somalia's immediate priorities as it rebuilds its country.

#### **What are the objectives of the conference?**

The conference will help the Government of Somalia to deliver on the priorities it has identified. These include rebuilding its armed forces, police, coastguard, justice and public financial management systems.

#### **Why hold a new international conference on Somalia now?**

Somalia now has a new parliament, selected by the clans, and a new president elected by the parliament. As a result, Somalia has a more legitimate government that it has seen in many decades. In addition, the proscribed terrorist organisation Al Shabaab has been expelled from many of Somalia's major towns and cities. Confidence is increasing and the diaspora is returning. The changes in Somalia over the last year offer a unique opportunity to build stability and security in the country, and the new Government of Somalia has asked for assistance in delivering its objectives.

#### **What did the last conference in the UK achieve?**

The London Conference on Somalia in February 2012 played a role in helping Somalia to end the political transition. In particular, the international community sent a concerted message that the transitional government's mandate had to end in August 2012. International engagement in the lead-up to the conference led to a UN Security Council Resolution expanding the African Union force in Somalia (AMISOM) from 12,000 to 17,000. Since the conference, AMISOM has been instrumental in taking control of a number of towns and cities in Somalia from Al Shabaab.

The UK has been supporting the training of the Somalia National Security Forces through the European Union Training Mission (EUTM), including by providing both funding and personnel. We have provided support for a biometric identification system to register EUTM-trained troops, which is now being expanded with an extra injection of \$2.4m over the next three years. In addition, we have been working with the US to support the building of camp infrastructure for the Somali National Security Forces in Mogadishu, providing £1 million to this end. AMISOM, which we support, is also involved in the training of Somali forces.

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## Who will attend the conference?

The conference will include a wide range of neighbouring countries, regional and international partners, and multilateral institutions. The attendees will be agreed between the Governments of the UK and Somalia.

## What about the Somali diaspora in the UK?

The Somali diaspora continues to play a key role back in the development and reconstruction of their homeland. For many years, Somalis worldwide have sent more money home in remittances than Somalia receives from the international community in aid. As we prepare to co-host a major international conference with the Government of Somalia, the UK Government is keen to hear from those who remain committed to delivering progress in Somalia. We will actively seek out opportunities to engage with the diaspora around the conference.

## Will the conference really help the people of Somalia?

The conference will help the people of Somalia because it can help galvanise the international community behind the Government of Somalia's priorities of rebuilding its armed forces, police, coastguard, justice and public financial management systems. The international community can support the new, more representative, Government of Somalia as it begins to address the underlying causes of instability and insecurity and deliver more adequate services for its citizens and, in the longer term, regenerate Somalia's economy.

A more stable Somalia will reduce the risk of humanitarian disasters. Last year's drought turned into famine largely because of conflict and instability. While the famine lifted in February 2012, more than two million people still remain in need.

## Why does the UK care about Somalia?

What happens in Somalia has implications well beyond its borders. Helping Somalia to reverse the underlying state failure can help to improve the security of the country, reduce the levels of piracy and terrorism, enable refugees to return home, and improve the lives of millions of Somalis. And by supporting the Government of Somalia in tackling the root causes of state failure, the security interests of Somalia's friends and neighbours will also be served.

Britain has pledged to spend £63 million every year to tackle the root causes of poverty and conflict in Somalia. By 2015 UK aid will help build up key local government services; help 45,000 people to get a job; allow 3,000 more women and girls to access justice; and help 20,000 access the schools, latrines, roads and health clinics to give the people of Somalia the opportunity they need to pull themselves out of poverty.