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INTERNATIONAL  
SECURITY AFFAIRS

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

10 JUN 1981

SOMALIA

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Meeting between the President of Somalia and Senior Defense Officials (U)

TIME AND PLACE: Thursday, 28 May 1981, 2:45 pm - 3:23 pm, Room 3E912  
The Pentagon

PARTICIPANTS

US

Somali

Secretary Weinberger  
Deputy Secretary Carlucci  
Under Secretary for Policy Ikle  
Assistant Secretary of Defense West  
Deputy Under Secretary of Defense Stilwell  
Deputy Assistant Secretary, ISA/NEASA  
MG Richard V. Secord, USAF  
Lt Col Gregory H. Bradford, USAF  
ISA/Africa Region (notetaker)

President Siad Barre  
Ambassador Mohamoud Haji Nur,  
Ambassador to US  
General Ahmed Suleiman,  
Chief of National Security  
General Abdurahman Mohamed Ali,  
Military Attache to US  
Colonel Mohamed Sheikh Adan

Mr. Carlucci opened the meeting by welcoming President Siad and his delegation to the Pentagon and expressing US gratitude for the access to Somali facilities granted by Siad in August 1980. The Deputy Secretary indicated that the Reagan Administration had reviewed the threat confronting the US and had decided to take the steps necessary to counter that threat, especially the Soviet threat. In that light the US clearly required flexibility and mobility for its forces and was therefore grateful for access to Somali facilities.

President Siad stated that he and his delegation were very happy to be able to meet with Defense officials because Somalia wanted to cooperate with the US in every way possible against a "common enemy," i.e. the Soviet Union. President Siad said that he wanted "closer cooperation in all fields," and that he came to Washington with a mandate from the Somali people to prove that Somalia was sincere in its friendship with the US and to demonstrate interest in cooperating to meet the threat posed by common enemies. President Siad continued by relating the Somali experience with the Soviets. He characterized the Soviet relationship as a "new kind of colonialism." Siad felt that the old

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form of colonialism "did not take away the spirit of the people;" but that "this new form of colonialism" did. He said the Soviets talked of equality, justice, and progress, but really only wanted to put together a coalition of countries in order to improve their position and overtake the West.

(U) Secretary Weinberger (having joined the meeting at this point) then pointed out that this Administration felt the best prevention for Soviet aggression is through deterrence and the threat of retaliation. He stated that the US needed to show resolve and the will to respond.

(U) President Siad then continued with an overview of Somalia and its problems. He summarized the problem of the economy and refugees and characterized the Greater Somalia (Ogaden) issue as a "territorial problem of people," that is, that Somali people were scattered in other nations and that the issue was how to solve the "people problem," Siad felt that the US might help in this area, and in fact, might lead the way. Somalia will cooperate with any country that has a solution to propose regarding the territorial "people problem."

(U) Secretary Weinberger continued the "Soviet threat" tone of the meeting by stating that the US was leaving an era of non-response to Soviet expansionism and that the US must re-arm in order to help ourselves and our friends and allies.

(U) Mr. Carlucci added that the US is very disturbed over the Soviet and Cuban presence in Ethiopia and while we are not optimistic about a solution in the near term, we believe that there are Ethiopians struggling to get out from under the thumb of the Soviets. He stated further that the US continued to adhere to the principle of territorial integrity and that we applaud Somali efforts to solve the Ogaden problem peacefully.

(U) Siad continued to discuss the Ethiopia-Somalia problem by saying that Somalia had attempted many times to talk to the Ethiopians about an Ogaden solution but received no response. He stated that the Ethiopia problem is a "border" problem; that there is no such thing here as an "internationally recognized border." There was no agreement before independence and there is no defined or recognized border between the two countries involved. Siad said that the line on the map did not coincide with what the people on the ground believed to be the border. Secretary Weinberger suggested that perhaps a fresh approach to the problem focusing on this actual border issue might be the proper way to begin again. Siad agreed.

(U) Siad then turned to defense. Siad said that although Somalia was small, it could defend itself with US help. Further, that Somalia could be instrumental in helping to rid the region of Soviets and Soviet influence. He said Somalia doesn't want war, but must be prepared if war comes. He said that Somalia would work with the US and would be willing to have Somalis "at the front" if Somalia is given the army it would need to fight. Siad stated that Somalia would not seek war if the US provides weapons, and that such a widespread notion

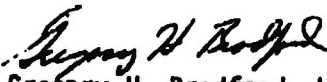
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is "denigrating to Somalia's intelligence;" Siad concluded his remarks by saying that there was too much made of the \$40M (in FMS credits); that the amount was not important, rather it was the commitment and friendship which it represented. Siad urged the US to "use anything you want." He said that US could station men and use facilities as long as Somalia was treated as an equal partner and trusted as such.

(U) The Secretary concluded the meeting by thanking President Siad for his comments and wishing him the best of health.



APPROVED:  
R. V. Secord  
Major General, USAF  
Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary



Prepared by: Gregory H. Bradford, Lt Col, USAF  
Assistant for East Africa, 6/5/81

cc: SecDef ←  
DepSecDef  
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