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UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON

August 26, 1981

SOMALIA

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Dear Frank:

We welcome your personal attention to the problem of how to demonstrate our support for Somalia's security. I concur in the actions, as outlined in your letter of July 17, to schedule regular port calls in Somalia by U.S. Navy surface combatants, and to include Somalia as one of the host nations for the fall RDF exercise in South West Asia (Bright Star 82). These actions should send a positive signal to President Siad.

However, we also need to do something tangible to help Somalia solve its air defense problem. While I favor your proposal to send an MTT to help improve Somali air defenses, I understand that the Air Force now believes the proposed MTT will not be able to make a significant contribution within the time and resources currently programmed for it. Having already raised Somali expectations by offering to send this team, I believe it is highly important that we reach an early decision on exactly what we expect the team to accomplish for the Somalis and at what total cost in U.S. resources.

We also believe that we need to do more to expedite the delivery of air defense items we have already agreed to provide to Somalia. In our view, Siad desires accelerated delivery of these items as a demonstration to his own people that Somalia's security is of interest to the U.S. He has long awaited such a signal, he needs it badly, and it is manifestly in our interest that he get it in the immediate future. We recognize your concerns regarding the taking of Vulcans from our existing inventories. Therefore anything you could do to speed up production and allow for earlier deliveries would be most helpful. In this regard, we should not hesitate to consider offshore procurement from Korea.

The Honorable
Frank C. Carlucci,
Deputy Secretary of Defense.

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Due to the difficulty of controlling REDEYE, we do not believe that its introduction into the Horn would be advisable at this time. Since there is a high probability that REDEYE would eventually be used in the Ogaden, the U.S. could be linked directly to Somalia's violation of its neighbor's borders. We also expect that Congressional reaction against such a transfer would be strong. The same conclusion applies to Egyptian supplied SAM-7s. Consequently, we would like you to defer consideration at this time of MANPADS for Somalia from either U.S. inventories or from Egypt.

Our staff will continue to work with yours on this matter.

Sincerely,



Walter J. Stoessel, Jr.

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