TICAD V

SPECIAL CONFERENCE ON SOMALIA

YOKOHAMA, JAPAN, 31 MAY 2013

REMARKS BY AMBASSADOR RAMTANE LAMAMRA,
COMMISSIONER FOR PEACE AND SECURITY OF THE AFRICAN UNION
Your Excellency Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, President of the Federal Republic of Somalia;
Your Excellency Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan;
Your Excellency Hailemariam Desalegn, Prime Minister of Ethiopia and AU Chair;
Excellencies Heads of State and Government;
Ministers;
Ambassadors;
Ladies and Gentlemen

I welcome you all, and, at the outset, I wish to thank the Government of Japan for hosting this special conference on Somalia, as well as neighbours, friends and partners of Somalia for supporting and attending this important gathering. Indeed, the conference is holding on the margins of TICAD V, but it is by no means a side show.

In fact, our gathering here today, which I prefer to dub “a caucus for action”, is one of the many in a series, past, present and future, the most recent being the 7 May London Conference on Somalia. In September, we will be in Brussels to further the same effort.

All these engagements are an affirmation by the international community that its eyes are continuously on the ball, that is Somalia, determined that until Somalia is able to stand on its own, at peace with itself and with its neighbours, it will not relent in its support.

And this conference is also a challenge from this action caucus to the Government and people of Somalia. Friends and partners are sending a strong message. This is what we are prepared to do for you. We know that you are ready to play your part, and you will make it easier for all of us to continue to mobilize support for peace, security and stability of your country.

We are in this together, not just for Somalia, but for the best interests of all of us. Yet, we are not unaware, and neither are the people of Somalia, of the magnitude and complexity of the task at hand. The challenges the country faces are formidable, but not insurmountable. The political will and the resilience to succeed are there. Failure cannot be an option.

The Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) has a clear comprehension of what needs to be done, to what end. President Mohamud’s Six-Pillar Policy Framework is our compass in this regard. Our support needs to be aligned to these home-grown key policies and priorities.

This conference correctly identified human resource development as one of the most urgent tasks, at federal and local levels, to be tackled by both the Federal Government and its partners, if the former is to implement its key policies and deliver services to its people. This focus on human resource development speaks to the entire six-pillar policy framework. It is
therefore appropriate that we focus on socio-economic aspects of Somalia’s nation building to emphasize awareness and need for a human security approach in the country’s development agenda. The concept paper for this conference rightly points to this direction for action.

We are expected to refine and add on the outcomes of the May 7 London conference by:

1. identifying and discussing modalities that will ensure Somali citizens get basic human needs, such as capacity building at both institutional and individual levels, basic public services like health, water and sanitation;

2. identifying and discussing modalities to build economic and social foundations of communities in local areas by ensuring the livelihood and empowerment of people by:
   a) focusing on youth through social integration, education, vocational training and employment creation,
   b) developing key potential economic sectors;

3. contributing to the identification of peace-building and state-building goals (PSGs) on economic foundations (Goal 4) and revenues and social services (Goal 5) of the “Compact”.

We will conclude with the Co-Chair’s summary, which will constitute the outcomes of this Special Conference on Somalia.

However, before I conclude, permit me to echo my own words to the May 7 London Conference on Somalia as I believe they will help give context to our deliberations today. Somali leadership right across the political, clan and religious spectrums has the primary responsibility for the consolidation of peace and security in their country. There is an urgent imperative for selfless leadership, bearing in mind that, no amount of external assistance, worse still, an externally driven process, will make it possible to consolidate the gains that have been made in Somalia.

The nexus between development and security in Somalia cannot be overstressed. AMISOM alone cannot stabilize Somalia. It is self-evident that without the support of Somali security forces and also that of the Ethiopian contingent, we would not be here near the territorial and security gains made to date. If these three forces are not adequately supported, the hard-won gains could be reversed. Furthermore, it must not be lost on us that while Al-Shabaab has been severely degraded, it is down but not out. The long and short of it is that Somalia needs, with the urgency of now, well-trained, well-equipped, disciplined, loyal, and sustainably resourced military and security services able to defend and protect the country’s territorial integrity and sovereignty. This is Somalia’s top priority. It should be our top priority too! All else will fall into place after it, with it.

Finally, we are all agreed on the necessity for coordination and clear division of labour amongst Somalia’s friends and international partners, if we are to deliver effective support to the Federal
Government and the people of Somalia. Coordination and harmonization of activities will enhance implementation and guarantee state penetration in terms of service delivery, governance and other critical public responsibilities and functions. This conference, in addition to its stated objectives and outcomes outlined above, should also rally around a modus operandi for coordination and harmonization. This is a pressing need if we are to assist the Somali Government deliver on its commitments and give effectiveness to our support.

Thank you.