Thirty-fifth session
FIRST COMMITTEE
Agenda item 50

REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE
STRENGTHENING OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

Letter dated 15 October 1980 from the Permanent Representative of
Ethiopia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

My Government is aware of the letter of 3 September 1980, addressed to you by
the Permanent Representative of Somalia and circulated as General Assembly
document A/35/436, protesting the circulation by the Government of Ethiopia of the
recommendations of the Organization of African Unity Good Offices Committee adopted
at the meeting it held in Lagos, Nigeria, from 18 to 21 August 1980.

The malicious charges and self-serving distortions contained in the
contradictory letter of the Permanent Representative of Somalia are in keeping with
his Government's fraudulent diplomacy. The letter denies not only the validity but
also the very existence of the recommendation unanimously adopted by the member
States of the Organization of African Unity Good Offices Committee.

It is not the least surprising that Somalia, a country which, ever since its
creation as a State in 1960, has systematically either denied the existence, or
rejected the validity, of all and every international treaty, resolution or decision
adopted by the Organization of African Unity or the United Nations whenever it found
them to be contrary to its expansionist policy, should now do the same. None the
less, as the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity,
H.E. Dr. Siaka Stevens, President of the Republic of Sierra Leone, has indicated in
his address to the General Assembly on 24 September 1980 (A/35/PV.8), a
recommendation has indeed been adopted by the Good Offices Committee of the
Organization of African Unity and no amount of denial or falsification on the part
of Somalia can nullify its existence or subvert its contents.

While it may be said that the Committee conducted its meetings in camera, it
does not follow that the recommendation itself was a secret document. As a matter
of fact, the delegation of Somalia did not only acquire a copy of the recommendation
before its adoption by the Committee, but also made extensive comments on it. The
Government of Somalia cannot, therefore, impose a double standard on the

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international community by claiming that it has a right, or that it is "regular and principled" for Somalia to make comments on a document - whose existence it has denied in the first instance - while insisting that it is "irregular and unprincipled" for countries that do recognize its existence to circulate it.

The records of the relationship between Somalia and the Good Offices Committee of the Organization of African Unity belie the claim that Somalia had co-operated with it. It may be recalled that the delegation of Somalia at the Libreville meeting of the Good Offices Committee in August 1977 walked out of that meeting after castigating the members with its usual diatribe. A year later, the President of Somalia made slanderous remarks about the then Chairman of the Good Offices Committee, the former President of Nigeria, simply because the Committee's recommendation to the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity, at its Khartoum meeting in July 1978, were consistent with the principles and decisions of the Organization of African Unity and rejected Somalia's contentions. Is it any wonder then that Somalia should continue its bankrupt policy of ignoring African consensus by characterizing the Good Offices Committee as "unfair" and "biased" at its meeting in Lagos last August. These are indisputable facts which may be verified from the records of the Organization of African Unity.

The Government of Ethiopia is aware of no rule which prohibits member States from circulating recommendations of resolutions of subsidiary organs, ad hoc or otherwise, of the Organization of African Unity. This is the sovereign right of member States which Somalia's unwarranted protests and slanders cannot abridge. The action taken by my Government is thus both legitimate and in perfect accord with diplomatic norms and practice.

It is, therefore, clear that Somalia's hollow protestations are designed principally to cover-up its policy of aggression and expansion as well as the rejection and condemnation of that policy by Africa.

The principles which the Good Offices Committee unanimously declared as sine qua non for the normalization of relations between Ethiopia and Somalia in its latest recommendation are: recognition of territorial integrity, non-interference in domestic affairs, peaceful settlement of disputes, prohibition of subversion and inviolability of borders inherited on decolonization.

These are principles which governed inter-State relations for centuries and the violations of which invariably brought about disastrous results. These are also principles which have over the years been developed and expanded to make them reflective of new realities thereby enhancing the prospects for the preservation of international peace and security. The reference here is to the principle upheld unanimously by Africa, namely, the inviolability of borders inherited on decolonization.

Taking each of these lofty principles individually, we find that they are diametrically opposed to Somalia's declared policy of gross interference in the domestic affairs of neighbouring countries by resorting to subversion, terrorism and premeditated and unprovoked aggression with the objective of territorial expansion at the expense of her neighbours. /...
The Organization of African Unity Good Offices Committee has, indeed, lived up to the responsibility entrusted to it and carried out its mandate successfully by unanimously agreeing on the principles on the basis of which Ethiopia and Somalia should proceed towards the normalization of their relations. Unfortunately, and as reported to the thirty-fifth session of the United Nations General Assembly by no less an authority than the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity, the efforts of the Good Offices Committee have not been successful because of Somalia's rejection of these very principles, principles which constitute the cornerstone of the Charters of both the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity.

Parallel with its rejection of the wise recommendations of the Organization of African Unity Good Offices Committee, the Government of Somalia is feverishly stepping up its acts of subversion and aggression. Worse still, it has acquired new and sophisticated weapons of destruction in return for the sale of vast areas of its territory for use as military base by a super-Power thereby sharply escalating tension in the area and threatening the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the States of the region.

Finally, I should like to reaffirm that full responsibility for the consequences of both the rejection of the recommendation of the Organization of African Unity Good Offices Committee and the current escalation of tension in the region lies solely on the leadership of the present Government of Somalia.

I should be grateful if you would kindly have this letter circulated as an official document under agenda item 50 of the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

(Signed) Mohamed Hamid IBRAHIM
Ambassador
Permanent Representative