



Statement for the Interactive Debate of the Independent Expert on Somalia

Wednesday 28th September 2011

Thank you Mr. President,

Femmes Africa Solidarité and its affiliate Save Somali Women and Children, welcome the Report of the Independent Expert on the Situation of Human Rights in Somalia and its recommendations.

In the past, Somalia created opportunities for women to be part of the Peace negotiations through the sixth-clan - the women's clan-, in accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325.

However, serious women's rights violations have been reported since the outbreak of the conflict opposing the Transitional Federal Government and the insurgent group of Al Shabaab. As noted on the Independent Expert's report, women find their access to fundamental areas such as health, education and justice increasingly denied.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees stated that 80 per cent of those displaced are women and children who try to reach refugee camps; and that women in camps are victims of recurrent sexual violence.

In addition to this, women and children have to bear the brunt of the drastic effects of famine. Recently, Save Somali Women and Children with the support of the Elders -including Her Excellency Mary Robinson-, made an appeal on the impact of this crisis on women and children.

Women should not only be considered recipients of aid, but Somali women claim their right to be fully involved in any distribution mechanism; and be provided opportunities to equally participate in any process for durable peace and reconstruction of the country.

To conclude,

Femmes Africa Solidarité expresses its solidarity to the Somali women who have been suffering grave violations of their rights;

We welcome the Universal Periodic Review recommendations to protect the rights of women and children and to end violence against women;

We support the appeal of the Independent Expert for stronger collaboration between the United Nations and the African Union;

We encourage the Independent Expert to strengthen his work with the Special Rapporteur on the Right to food, and together explore means to strengthen the role of women to battle famine;

We call on the government of Somalia to ratify the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women and to implement United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325;

Finally, we appeal to the International Community to mobilize resources to enable the United Nations and other humanitarian organizations to respond to the crisis.

We thank you Mr. President

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