

II. İSTANBUL SOMALİ KONFERANSI HAKKINDA ABD BASININDA YERALAN HABERLER

Turkey Tells UN, Aid Donors To Move To Somalia– Jonathon Burch (Reuters kaynaklı olarak Yahoo News, The Republic ve Chicago Tribune)

The United Nations should beef up its operation in Somalia, and other countries who want to help the war-torn state should actually move in and set up bases there, Turkish Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan said on Friday.

Erdogan's direct remarks at a international conference on Somalia in Istanbul, the second hosted in Turkey in two years, was the latest sign of his administration's growing interest and clout in Africa.

"Without living there you cannot devise the correct policies and you cannot help. I invite the international community to open representative offices," Erdogan told the conference attended by U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, the Somali interim president and delegations from more than 50 countries.

"We have really struggled to make Somalia's voice heard, to make those who do not see or feel what's going on in Somalia, see and feel," he said.

Most aid agencies funding projects in Somalis are actually based in neighbouring Kenya or further afield.

Many moved their headquarters out of the country years ago to avoid kidnappings, looting and fighting between al-Qaeda allied militants and Somali troops backed by African forces. Somalia has been mired in turmoil since the 1991 overthrow of dictator Mohamed Siad Barre. Erdogan made a high-profile and whirlwind visit to the Somali capital in August last year, bringing his family and a plane full of ministers and consultants. For all its brevity, the trip was still the first time a non-African leader had visited the country in almost 20 years. While the visit was aimed at drawing attention to the famine that swept across the Horn of Africa nation, it was also part of Ankara's wider strategy of positioning itself as a growing regional power and influential voice within the Muslim world.

Turkey has since opened an embassy in Mogadishu, built hospitals and schools and started direct flights between the two countries. It has also sent hundreds of Somali students to study in Turkey.

While Turkey has been largely applauded for its assistance in Somalia, critics say Ankara's headfirst policy and relative inexperience in the region leaves it vulnerable to manipulation by different political factions.

PRESENCE ON THE GROUND

The Turkish leader also called on the United Nations to review its mission in Somalia and strengthen its presence there.

Speaking after the conference, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, who has visited Somalia since Erdogan's trip, said his special representative had been based in Mogadishu

since December and urged others to follow.

"We agreed on the need to insure that international assistance is predictable, transparent and coordinated. This can best be done when member states have a presence on the ground," Ban told journalists.

He called for other countries to follow Turkey's example by opening embassies in Somalia. Delegates at the conference discussed ways to support Somalia during a transition period that will see the creation of a new constitution, parliament and president."

UN Secretary General Worried About Power Vacuum In Somalia– Dorian Jones Voice of America

The United Nations Secretary-General warned against the dangers of a power vacuum in Somalia with the mandate of the "Somalia transition government" due to end this August. The warning was made at the end of a two day international conference on Somalia in Istanbul, Turkey that included representatives from 54 countries.

The U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon warned delegates at the Istanbul conference on Somalia against the dangers of warlords exploiting a power vacuum in the east African country and said the international community must strengthen security and increase aid in order to head off the warlords.

The Somali transitional government mandate expires on August 20th. But Secretary-General Ban said the conference gave positive commitments to be ready for that date.

"I was assured by President Sheik Ahmed and all the delegations hoped and expected ((the transitional government)) should be ended by that day. By then Somalia must have broad-based and inclusive political governance," Ban said.

Ban said a new president of Somalia must be elected by August 20 and he said the new government should be based on an established constitution.

He said the new government must reflect international human rights standards and the new constitution should be put to a referendum open to all Somalis regardless of gender, clan or political affiliation.

The Secretary-General praised the commitment to 30% female representation in the planned constituent Assembly and new parliament of Somalia.

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu addressing the closing press conference said the Istanbul meeting had agreed on a new initiative with the emphasis on security for Somalia. He said the three pillars to rebuilding Somalia are political stability, economic redevelopment and especially security. He said that's why we have agreed at this conference, under the initiative of Turkey, to set up a "Rebuilding and Restructuring fund for the Somali security sector.

The call for urgent international aid for Somalia came as allegations of corruption hung over the conference.

According to a World Bank report, over \$100 million in aid to the Somalia transitional government between 2009 and 2010 could not be accounted for. But Somali President Sharif Sheik Ahmed welcomed the report and call for international assistance. He said the missing funds referred to never reached Somalia and he said maybe they are in the pockets of other people. He said Samalis would welcome the help of international organizations to help find where this money went, as the Somalia transitional government is now struggling to pay workers their wages.

The British foreign minister William Hague, who attended the conference, called for the setting up, as soon as possible, of the Joint Financial Management Board which was agreed upon at February's London conference on Somalia. The board is intended to help regulate Somalia's finances and development assistance.

The Istanbul meeting agreed on the establishment of a multi donor Trust Fund for assistance after the transition of power to a new government in August.

Istanbul Conference Seeks To Help Somalia - Christopher Torchia
(Associated Press kanyaklı olarak Washington Post, The Republic, The Seattle Times, Boston.com, Washington Examiner, Seattle Post Intelligencer, San Jose Mercury News, ABC News, Huffington Post ve MiamiHerald.com)

International forces cannot solve Somalia's security problems in the long term and the fragile country needs its own strong force to do the job, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said Friday.

Ban spoke at a conference in Istanbul that aims to support Somalia in a transition process calling for a new constitution and parliament, and the election of a president, by Aug. 20. The Horn of Africa nation dissolved into anarchy in 1991 and has endured conflict and deprivation ever since. African Union troops have helped Somalia's transitional government in its fight against al-Shabab, an Islamic militant group with links to al-Qaida.

While significant gains have been made in that fight, Ban said the international community must help Somalia build its own security apparatus, establish the rule of law and shed a pervasive culture of impunity.

"In the face of terrorism, piracy and drought, Somalia needs solidarity," Ban said. "Partners have to step up and do their part."

National reconstruction aside, international donors rushed last year to provide food aid to Somalia after a famine was declared, and the United Nations said donations of food and cash saved half a million lives in the second half of 2011. But reports of looting and diversion of humanitarian supplies pointed to endemic corruption in one of the world's poorest countries. Somali President Sharif Sheikh Ahmed told the conference that Somalia doesn't have a national army and needs military training.

"We need to have a realistic state structure," he said. "These things are not easy at all because we are facing major problems, and especially the terrorists continue with their activities, and the clashes from tensions have hindered our efforts during the transition period."

Al-Shabab is suspected in a bomb attack Monday in Nairobi, Kenya's capital, that killed one

person and wounded more than 30. Kenya is involved in the fight against the Somali militants and announced this week that it had captured a rebel-held town in southern Somalia. Al-Shabab and al-Qaida formally joined organizations earlier this year, though the ties between the groups were already strong. Al-Shabab counts hundreds of foreign fighters among its ranks, including militants with experience in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars.

Kenya's prime minister, Raila Odinga, said there were reports that militants were fleeing to mountain hideouts in Somalia's semiautonomous region of Puntland. He also said it was vital for Somalia's militia groups to be integrated into the country's fledgling forces so they can "assume control and protection of liberated areas," and that military action against pirates who prey on international shipping was also key to national security.

As an example, he cited actions this month by European Union naval forces, which used attack helicopters in their first onshore raid on a suspected pirate lair in Somalia. A pirate said that strike destroyed a supply center and set back operations.

The EU is the main donor to the Somali transitional government. It also trains Somali army troops, and is reinforcing the navies of five neighboring countries to enable them to counter piracy themselves. The long coastline of war-ravaged Somalia provides a perfect haven for pirate gangs that target shipping off the East African coast.

Ban also urged Somalia's leaders to "keep human rights at the center of the political process," stick to commitments to allot 30 percent of the 225 seats in the new parliament to women, and ensure freedom of expression and the safety of journalists. He cited the shooting death earlier in May of a Somali journalist, the sixth to be slain in the country this year."

UN Chief Urges International Support For Somalia Voice of America

United Nations chief Ban Ki-moon is urging the international community to strengthen security in Somalia as the country tries to move beyond its transitional government. Mr. Ban spoke Friday at a conference on Somalia held in Istanbul, focusing on helping the east African country establish a stable government and elect a new president by August 20. He says the new government should be based on the tenets of an established constitution. "It must reflect international human rights standards. It should be put to referendum open to all Somalis. And all Somalis regardless of gender, clan or political affiliation should be able to take part in elections."

Mr. Ban told the gathering of representatives from 54 countries that Somalia needs solidarity in the face of terrorism, piracy, and drought.

The U.N. chief said success in building Somalia's security sector and the rule of law demands more engagement from Somalis and the international community as a whole.

Mr. Ban went on to urge donors to, in his words, support "this critical effort." He said Somalia's private sector also has a role in rebuilding the country.

"Somalia's women and youth, if given the opportunity, can transform the nation. But partners have to step up and do their part."

Mr. Ban said it is important that Somalia build resiliency and break the cycle of emergencies. Somalia's transitional government is battling an insurgency from the Islamic extremist group al-Shabab.

The country has also been plagued with recurrent droughts, and its coast is home to pirate gangs that have hijacked dozens of ships in recent years.

Somalia has not had a stable central government for two decades, since the fall of President Mohamed Siad Barre in 1991.

UN Chief Urges Continued International Support For Somalia **RTTNews**

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon on Friday urged the international community to continue supporting Somalia as it enters a new political phase. He noted the end of the political transition period and adoption of a new provisional constitution, will be a "historic starting point" for the East African country.

Ban made the remarks while addressing a two-day conference on Somalia in the Turkish city of Istanbul. The conference is aimed at helping the east African country to establish a stable government and elect a new president before the current transitional governing arrangements end on 20 August. The meeting is being attended by representatives of the private sector, donors, Somali authorities, the UN and civil society.

"My message to this conference and the world is this: Commit to long-term assistance for Somalia," Ban said, adding that financial resources as well as engagement with the country are essential to help it tackle some of its major challenges, including terrorism, piracy and drought.

"The end of the transition marks the beginning of a new phase in the political process. A new phase of inclusive dialogue where all Somali voices should be heard. Somalia's women and youth, if given the opportunity, can transform the nation. But partners have to step up and do their part," he stressed.

The UN chief also emphasized that the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and its successor will have to earn the population's trust and quickly start delivering security and basic services to avoid a power vacuum that could be exploited by warlords in the country. Reiterating continued UN support for establishing Somalia's own security and justice institutions, Ban said: "Success in building the security sector and rule of law now and in the future demands far greater engagement from both the Somalis and the international community. I urge donors to contribute to this critical effort. In the face of terrorism, piracy and drought, Somalia needs solidarity."

Ban concluded his address by thanking all of the countries which pledged their support for Somalia's peace and reconciliation process, while stating that the international community has a responsibility to help Somalia achieve its goals.

Somalia has been without a functioning government since the fall of dictator Mohamed Siad Barre's government in 1991. Currently, a weak U.N.-backed interim government set up in 2004 is trying to enforce its authority in the country with the help of African Union (AU) peacekeepers.

Until recently, Islamist militant groups controlled large areas in southern Somalia where strict Islamic laws or Sharia were enforced. In recent months, Somali forces, backed by AU peacekeepers and Kenyan troops, have managed to seize control of most regions, except some pockets that are still under the control of rebels.

The latest development comes as the deadline set by the international community in September last year for completing the political transition process in the troubled Horn of Africa nation is due to expire in two months time. Last week, Somalia's political leaders took an important step in the implementation of the roadmap for completing the transition by agreeing to a timetable that will elect a new president by August 20.

The deal envisages a bicameral Parliament, recognition of the breakaway States of Puntland and Galmudug and representation of all clans. Under the deal, the president will be elected by a new parliament, which will be selected by Somalia's elders and sworn in by July 20. The Somali leaders have also agreed on a draft constitution.