

Somaliland Foreign Minister Essa Abdirahme Kayd and Special Envoy Edna Adan Ismail Conclude U.S. Visit

Visit advances a framework for Somaliland-U.S. cooperation as new concerns emerge regarding security environment in the Horn of Africa

WASHINGTON, DC., NOVEMBER 24, 2021 – A high-level government delegation from the Republic of Somaliland, led by Foreign Minister Essa Abdirahme Kayd and Special Envoy Edna Adan Ismail, yesterday concluded a six-day visit to Washington, DC, and New York City, where they met with a number of top government officials, advocacy organizations, experts and academics focused on the Horn of Africa. They also held community events with members of the Somaliland diaspora in the Washington, DC area.

Foreign Minister Kayd and Special Envoy Adan provided updates on recent developments in Somaliland and highlighted the growing need for closer ties with the United States given the many areas of mutual interest between the countries on economic, security and governance issues in the Horn of Africa. The delegation also outlined the challenges that Somaliland continues to face as an unrecognized nation, including acquiring COVID-19 vaccines from the international community, and provided specific recommendations to advance cooperation between Somaliland and the United States.

In Washington, DC, the delegation participated in a series of meetings with officials from the National Security Council, Department of State, Department of Defense and U.S. Agency for International Development. On Capitol Hill, they met with members and senior staff from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the House Foreign Affairs Committee and other relevant committees. They also met with the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office in the United States and briefed experts from the Atlantic Council, American Enterprise Institute, Jamestown Foundation, U.S. Institute of Peace, Wilson Center, American University, National Endowment for Democracy, International Republican Institute and Freedom House. In New York, the delegation participated in meetings with United Nations officials and experts on East Africa, peacebuilding and democratic governance.

“Our visit was an important and timely opportunity to consult with American partners on a range of regional issues that have drawn us closer together than ever before, including the fight against terrorism and instability in neighboring countries,” said Foreign Minister Kayd. “To this end, we felt a mutual interest with U.S. Government officials in exploring a framework for U.S.-Somaliland cooperation that we look forward to building together.”

“For thirty years, Somaliland has been a beacon of democracy, security and steady economic progress in an otherwise troubled region,” Special Envoy Adan added. “Our ability to sustain this role will benefit greatly from the support of the United States and other like-minded allies.”

The Republic of Somaliland first gained independence and international recognition in 1960, and soon thereafter joined with the former Italian Somalia to establish the state Somali Republic. Upon dissolving this failed union in 1991, Somaliland reclaimed its national sovereignty and has maintained a distinct and democratic government and economy and a secure and functioning nation in an otherwise volatile environment, with its most recent local and parliamentary elections occurring in May 2021.

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