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I, Christina Farah, hereby certify that the document "BBC interview with Mohamed Ali Samantar" is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, a true and accurate translation from Somali to English.

Christina Farah

Sworn to before me this
June 27, 2011

Signature, Notary Public

KRISTIN MILORO
 Notary Public - State of New York
 No. 01M16212799
 Qualified in New York County
 Commission Expires Oct 19, 2013

Stamp, Notary Public



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BBC Reporter: The Prime Minister of Somalia, General Mohamed Ali Samatar, has stated in a press conference held in London that all political prisoners in jail in Somalia will be released. General Samatar stated that prisoners are being released upon an order of President Mohamed Siad Barre. Included are all the people who were involved in last year's war in northern Somalia. He stated that a lot of people who were refractory to authority had been released and that the people who were involved in the war in northern Somalia had been pardoned last year. General Samatar stated that the operation of releasing prisoners would be undertaken in the month of ... when a delegation from the organization that advocates for human rights, Amnesty International, is scheduled to go to Somalia. The delegation from Somalia, led by General Mohamed Ali Samatar, has come to London on Monday; they have held talks with British Prime Minister, Mrs. Margaret Thatcher and the foreign affairs secretary, Sir Jeffery Howe. It has become possible for me to meet Mohamed Ali Samatar and ask him questions about the internal situation in Somalia as well as external affairs. First, I asked what he had discussed with the British Prime Minister, Mrs. Thatcher and the Foreign Affairs Secretary. His answer was:

Samatar: I have met both officials; first, I had an excellent discussion with the Foreign Secretary, and he welcomed us with respect. We talked about matters concerning the two countries as well as the world in general. I communicated to him the situation in Somalia, in particular the political, economic and social situation. I communicated to him the many problems that the country had passed through at different periods; Somalia had been beset by many problems for about the last ten years; the biggest burden was the continuous war between Ethiopia and us. Just when I found a solution for that war and we thought it was time to turn to the affairs of the country, the bandits attacked several regions of the country and this added to the problems. I told him what we had done about those problems. I told him about the decisions of the Somali Revolutionary Socialist Council concerning the affairs of the North and how to solve them. These decisions do not concern only the North but in general they concern life in the country, in its political, economic and social aspects. They told us to continue and to further clarify the matter; they told that we had satisfied their queries up to a level. They want that the steps that we are implementing to continue; they said we should keep them abreast of developments; that they [the British] want to see satisfactory results. We are ready for such cooperation. I believe that they were satisfied.

BBC Reporter: The British government and the Parliament have stated, for some time, that they are worried about developments in Somalia. The first concerns the situation of human rights, which many people believe is being trampled upon by the Somali government. They are also

worried about the wars in the North; news sources have stated the Somali government has used unnecessary force, including warplanes and tanks and that many people died there. What did the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary say about these two points?

Samatar: It is not true that the Somali government tramples upon human rights. This has been inflated; people with other interests have propagated that view to give a negative image about the Somali government;

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but the true facts can be verified; they can be seen; I can tell you right now that it is rare in the world that people who committed crimes in a country, the biggest crimes that one can commit, killing the population, destroying property, working towards dividing the state, be pardoned and not punished for any crimes; there is not a country in the world, except Somalia, where people who committed such crimes have been pardoned. Therefore, it is not true that Somalia tramples upon human rights.

BBC Reporter: It is true that the government of Somalia has pardoned many people and that they hold important positions. However, it is often said that there are even more people in prison and that people are thrown into jail without a trial all the time and that they stay in prison for many years.

Samatar: Briefly, I would like to say to tell you about the decision of the councils for whose implementation a committee has been created; one of the articles of the decisions says that a pardon should be offered by the president to those who are in prison for political crimes of every type, including those imprisoned for what happened in the North. The President has accepted the decision of the Central Council over which he was presiding and which says that a pardon should be offered to all those in prison and they will be released. Since those outside the country have been pardoned, those inside the country, whether in prison or not, have also a right to be pardoned. Therefore, those people have also been pardoned.

BBC Reporter: Mr. Prime Minister, there are many people who are saying that there is no need at all to imprison anyone for political reasons in Somalia. The reason is the Somali constitution clearly states that no one can be imprisoned for their thoughts or political opinions. Therefore, why are you imprisoning people for political reasons?

Samatar: Many times people confound the opposition in these countries and the opposition in the Third World. The opposition in Europe and in the United States show their opposition by competing in the political process; they do not do anything else; they do not take steps aimed at destroying the country, or aimed at destroying the economy of the country or its security; they do

not take those kinds of actions; of course, you cannot call a politician any man who takes steps whose aim is to create problems for the country or to kill or destroy state property shared by the people; that man is not an opposition. He is a bandit, a terrorist that the world is fighting; today we are offering a pardon to that terrorist.

BBC Reporter: What is the number of people to whom you are offering a pardon? Is it in the hundreds, thousands? How many?

Samatar: No, Mr. Abdullahi, it is not in the thousands; it may be in the hundreds. At this moment, I do have the number off the top of my head and I cannot tell you; there is a committee responsible for that matter. It is the committee's responsibility to screen these people. The committee responsible for the matter will screen them; when that process is over, they will pass a list to the president to sign the decree of pardon.

BBC Reporter: Briefly, Mr. Prime Minister, can you tell us what is the Somali government's program or plan for dealing with or healing the problem in the North?

Samatar: That plan has many sections; it is divided into matters concerning security, matters concerning social affairs and matters concerning the economy.

[10:00]

The biggest and most serious issues concern those people who have suffered a lot in the towns of Burao and Hargeisa. The decision of the government is to return those cities to a good life. When I say that, it does not mean that there are no people living there; people live there; but many homes have been destroyed. There has been much damage to resources that support life such as water and electricity, as well as schools. The government's plan is to restore these and spend much on them; that the government should repair the destroyed houses of the people. Of course, the expenses that would emanate from that enterprise are large and the Somali government alone cannot accomplish it. The Somali government will seek support from friendly countries. The government has already sent out an appeal to support the rehabilitation of these towns. However, we will not wait until a response comes from the world; the Somali government will proceed with that endeavor and we will declare that. After the houses are repaired, priority will be given to those present there right now. Those coming in will be given houses when further houses are repaired. Since a lot of money and resources will be involved, the government has created a special high committee to steer the project, in order to avoid funds going to other purposes.

BBC Reporter: That is about repairing the destroyed houses; there are many people who kept money in banks in Burao and Hargeisa; that money has been looted. Is the government thinking

of reimbursing those people when they bring in their papers and receipts, since the government is responsible for this matter?

Samatar: Those monies can be paid in two types; monies held, for example, as a check by someone. If the money is a check and it has not been cashed; it will be verified. Is the person bringing in the check also the owner of the check, or has he looted or stolen it? The person will be verified and other verification documents will be used, if necessary. When the bank is assured the person carrying the check is the rightful owner, funds will be released. In a similar manner, if someone has an account or an account sheet and that has been verified, they will be given their money.

BBC Reporter: There are news reports saying that the food situation in Somalia is dire and that there is no food in the country; what can you tell us about that, in particular concerning the city of Mogadishu? Can you tell us something?

Samatar: No, that is not true; there are economic problems and there are shortages. But there is no dire situation; people have food; in addition to a food importation program, what has been produced in the country is still available. As you are aware of, international monetary agencies have held an auction in which hard currency was auctioned; those who got the auctioned hard currency are required to bring to the country items such as food; food has been brought in through this manner and it is available.

BBC Reporter: That was the Prime Minister of Somalia, General Mohamed Ali Samatar. The government is currently mounting a big International Public Relations exercise to try and counter the wave of criticism of its human rights record. The activities of the Somali armed forces in the north of the country following last year's rebellion by the Somali National Movement have caused considerable concern. Allegations of reprisals against the civilian

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population of widespread killing, burnings, rapes, and looting had been made by international aid agencies, Amnesty International and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Even the British government has expressed disquiet talking about withholding aid while Somalia's Prime Minister Mohamed Ali Samatar is in London to put his government's denials. He's seen Foreign Secretary Sir Geoffrey Howe and Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. Elisabeth Aheami, asked him if anyone had believed him.

Samatar: First of all, I had a long discussion with the Foreign Secretary. I informed him what is going on in Somalia and informed him in new steps taken by Somali government in order to solve the problem of North. And I think he remained satisfied about what I told him.

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BBC Reporter: The British government has made specific allegations; they have expressed the disquiet about what they called the abuse of human rights in Somalia. Were you able to reassure the foreign secretary on those points?

Samatar: Oh, yes, in fact I told him that many occasions some newspaper exaggerated really what's happened in Somalia. And they published unfair news against us, and very often in the Amnesty International used to have as a source of information people from these dissident elements; therefore, those news are not correct.

BBC Reporter: But, what about the aid agencies that were operating from Somalia, they are not getting the information from anybody else. They were on the ground and they have made similar accusations.

Samatar: Which one you mean?

BBC Reporter: The Australian aid organization that has pulled out recently.

Samatar: Well, I had that news, but those groups, first of all, they were not in the area of operations. They were far from that area. And they published a news heard by people in that zone where they are. And the news is itself hearsay.

BBC Reporter: What about the United Nations Higher Commission for Refugees? They have been operating in Somalia for years and years with you. And they now have joined in and made specific allegations that refugees in the camps are being armed and being conscripted into the army.

Samatar: Well, we come to know these allegations and we reject this accusation, because it is not true.

[18:00]

BBC Reporter: Prime Minister, yesterday we had a call to our office applicably from people that you might call dissidents and they say that last year's total mayhem, chaos, at Hargeisa airport was a result of operations ordered by you personally.

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Samatar: I was there at that time, but I was not the commander of the unit. I was the higher ranking person in Hargeisa; therefore, it was necessary those commanders to consult with me and to have directions from myself. As you know, the top person in the area of conflict should

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give the last okay. Yes, I give this okay. How to use tactically, how to employ the units; it was my task to give them directions and the directives.

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BBC Reporter: Prime Minister, do you feel that your government is under siege literally? In Rwanda may be the SNM is winning the propaganda war and after all this had to bring a whole Prime Minister and a delegation to come around and they are trying to convince people that this is a propaganda position. Do you say that they are winning the propaganda war?

Samatar: Well, up to now they had a certain success in propaganda war in outside country.

BBC Reporter: Somalia's Prime Minister Mohamed Ali Samatar. Will your government consider coming to a political solution with the members of the SNM, rather than trying to seek out a military solution?

Samatar: Yes, of course. Probably you have informed that recently our Central Committee and the government took the decision to solve politically the problem of North rather than military one.

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Somalia's Prime Minister Mohamed Ali Samatar. What are they about? He answered them.

Samatar: A proposed article cannot replace a constitution; I think there are 14 articles. Replacing some of them is not a big issue; it is about the manner of saying it or changing some letters; it is about which articles would be good for which country, which tone. Some articles are fundamental; for example, some fundamental articles of the constitution; previously, the economy of the country was directed by the public sector. Now there has been an amendment to the constitution, and the amendment does not the public sector a priority. The public sector does not have dominance anymore; it now says the economy of the country consists of the public sector, the private section, a mixed sector and cooperatives.

BBC Reporter: There is the issue concerning the first vice-president; if the president is incapacitated, is sick, or dies, the first vice-president should exercise the president's function for a period. Is that going to be changed in the constitution or is it going to stay the same?

Samatar: That has not been changed in the constitution; it is still there.

BBC Reporter: If the president is incapacitated, does it mean you, as a prime minister, you would become president and also exercise the vice president's functions. Does it mean that?

Samatar: Right now, I am vice-president. The law upon which the nomination of a vice-president is based is still there. No one has repealed that law. It is effective; it is there. I am also the prime minister. I do not like many titles. First vice-president, first prime-minister; those have become too many; I do not use them. I do not function as a vice-president. I function as a prime minister. What should be diffused is my title as a prime minister, since I function as a prime minister. By law in Britain, the post of first vice-president and prime minister exist and are in writing; the law is there; they have not been erased.

BBC Reporter: In the Third World and in Africa, it is common knowledge that the one party system is not effective. Somalia has been under a one party system for twenty years. Let me say, Somalia has been under a one party system for 13 years; are you planning to return the country to a multi-party system, since the one party system is ineffective?

Samatar: Abdullahi; first, I do not share your view that the one party system is ineffective. There are many places in the world where one party has been in power for 50, 60 or 70 years and they are still not dysfunctional. There are many parts of the world, in Africa, or in the Third World where there are single parties. I do not believe that the multi-party system is advantageous, as Somalia has experienced the multi-party system. We even broke the world record by having the highest number of parties in 1968. A single party can govern the country if the party works in an honest way and it works for the interests of the country and the people. I believe a single party can lead; your view comes from what is usual in Western countries where are multiple-parties, where there are two parties, three parties or four parties;

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thus, they say there is no democracy where there are not multiple-parties. As a matter of fact, the meaning of the word democracy is in dispute; what is meant by democracy can be a question. At this time, we are not planning to allow multiple parties. The only party that exists in the country is the Somali Revolutionary Socialist Party; we should increase its effectiveness and capacity. As a party or as a government, we plan to govern the country with justice.

BBC Reporter: A delegation lead by the president is visiting Arab countries, while you are here. There is also another delegation, led by Hussein Kulmiye Afrah; there are also others by Ahmed Saleebaan, Ahmed Farah. Because of all that, it seems there is no government in the country right now. The Prime Minister and the President are absent, and have been for a time. There are rumors saying that, if the president goes to Afgoye, the government would be toppled and there will be a coup in the country. Therefore, are you not afraid that your government will be toppled? Why are all these officials wandering outside the country?

Samatar: That is a sign showing the great stability that we have reached. I maybe outside the country but there will be no change. The security and the affairs of the country continue well; thus the decision to send out all these delegations, after a decision by the Central Committee. In addition, the political committee held a separate meeting; this separate meeting of the political committee concluded that it was necessary to take a diplomatic move, to take an active and dynamic move; because we knew that we had neglected the outside world for a time. We had neglected for a time to present our views to the world. We decided, therefore, that the top leadership should go abroad, including the prime minister; also the leaders of the party have been sent to all the regions; that shows...

BBC Reporter: He held today a press conference to expound on the political situation, internally and externally. Reporter Mohamed Abdi Ali Du'ale [Maxamad Cabdi Cali Ducaale] was there for us and listened to what Mr. Samatar had to say. I asked Du'ale to summarize for us what Mr. Samatar had to say. Here it is: "Abdullahi, that press conference opened this morning at a hotel called Church Hill Hotel in London, which is where Mr. Samatar and his delegation are staying. There were many journalists from major media outfits from Britain, in particular those who report on African and Arab affairs. He spoke at length about the internal as well as the external political situation in Somalia and how they want to do something about human rights, in particular about those things that the Somali government is accused of, and the problems of the North. He spoke in Somali and interpreting for him was Ambassador Ahmed Jama Jangali. When he finished speaking, the journalists asked him many questions. One of the questions was whether his government is ready to talk to the SNM, a movement that opposes the government. Mr. Mohamed Ali Samatar said that that they will not talk to them and that they view them as bandits. He said, however, that they were ready to talk to the elders of the North; he was expressly asked if that meant the Isaaq clan. He said they would hold talks with their sultans and chiefs. Mr. Mohamed Ali Samatar was also asked about the refugees

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that had been conscripted and armed by the government. The Prime Minister said that some of the refugees had taken up arms so they could defend themselves, as their lives were in danger when they came under attack in northern Somalia. On refugee issues, he was also questioned about their dispute with the UNCHR, an international agency that deals with refugees; one of the disputes with UNHCR concerns the agency's plan to curtail the refugee assistance program by 1990. However, the Somali government is saying that is too soon and they want the program to be extended to 1993. Abdullahi, there were many questions and time was limited. As a matter of fact, I can say that most questions were similar to those that you asked him in our earlier program today, and whose second part would be released today. One of the interesting things that transpired concerns a request to the media by Mr. Mohamed Ali Samatar, when he asked the

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media to check the accuracy of the information they are releasing, whether it is information from the government or from the opposition; he said they are responsible for checking the accuracy of the information they are spreading. In front of the hotel, there were people who oppose the Somali government; among them were members of the organization known as SNM; they were shouting and holding written messages; in particular, they were condemning attacks on them and they said he was responsible for the attacks.