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Brussels, 3 May 2018/ ACP: The Prime Minister of Somalia, Mr Hassan Ali Khayre, met with Ambassadors of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Countries in Brussels earlier today. The main message from the Prime Minister was that Somalia was trying to establish a stable foundation on which to re-build a strong nation.

Security is one of the main pillars to support this foundation. However, he pointed out that fighting terrorism using only the military is not an effective way to do so. He feels that economic factors, bad governance and corruption are the seeds of terrorism in Somalia. He therefore proposes that building a stronger economy based on the rule of law and good governance will combat terrorism at its roots. Over a period of one year, they have made significant strides to move the nation forward. Help from African countries through the African Union has also helped in the stride against terrorism.

The PM pointed out that for the past 30 years, Somalia has had a very bad reputation with creditors as it has been unable to repay its debts. However, in conjunction with the president, they are taking steps to correct this image. The country ran up a debt of approximately 5 billion dollars under the old regime of the 1970s and 1980s. However, for the past year, they have taken steps to satisfy the international financial institutions that Somalis can be trusted. There is now a real chance that they will reach pre-arrears clearance by June or July 2018 with a longer term focus on debt relief.

These steps should help to set the stage for investment to occur in Somalia. The Prime Minister pointed out that they are not looking for handouts, as they do not consider themselves poor. On the contrary, with one of the longest coasts in Africa, gas and oil reserves, a strategic geographical location and a vibrant small business community, the potential for growth is enormous and thus the question is, *"who is willing to do business with us?"*

The Prime Minister further pointed out that to develop the trust that will encourage investment, they need to put in place policies that foster that trust. To do so, they will first re-draft the constitution so that it meets the needs of all the Somali people. Secondly, they will adopt a new system of political power sharing which will also feature revenue sharing with the federal member states. The aim is to come up with a new electoral model for 2020 that will put power back into the hands of the population, especially the younger section of the nation. This will also involve encouraging the growth of political parties.

In concluding, the Prime Minister emphasized that what he wants ACP member states and the rest of the world to see, is not the Somalia as it has been portrayed over the past 30 years, but what it could become.

Finally, in relation to the pending negotiations between the ACP and the European Union, he pointed out that the ACP should approach them from a position of strength. The partnership is built on mutual trust, interest and responsibility and the rules should apply equally to both sides. In closing, Prime Minister Ali Khayre pointed out that the guiding principle that should be guiding the negotiators, is that "*We are the ones who will shape the destiny and the future of our children*".

[Link to the video of the Prime Minister's speech in full](#) [1]

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