

AFRICAN UNION
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UNION AFRICAINE
UNIÃO AFRICANA

P.O. Box: 3243, Addis Ababa, ETHIOPIA Tel.: (251-1) 51 38 22 Fax: (251-1) 51 93 21
Email: oau-ews@telecom.net.et

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CHAIRPERSON OF THE AFRICAN UNION STATEMENT ON THE SWEARING-IN OF MEMBERS OF THE TRANSITIONAL FEDERAL PARLIAMENT OF SOMALIA

The swearing in of 194 Members of the Transitional Federal Parliament of Somalia by the IGAD Ministerial Facilitation Committee on 22 August 2004 at the UN Compound at the Gigiri Centre, Nairobi, Kenya, was yet another major step by the Somali leaders towards the restoration of peace, security and stability in Somalia. Like its predecessor, the Eldoret Declaration, which the leaders signed on 27 October 2002, providing for the cessation of hostilities through out the country and the establishment of a Parliament for Somalia, is a significant turning point in the 22 months old Somali National Reconciliation Process. The prospects of a durable solution to the conflict in Somalia have become brighter today.

I appeal to all the Somali leaders at the Reconciliation Conference at Mbagathi to stay united and to ensure that the selection of the remaining 81 Members of the Transitional Federal Parliament is successfully concluded.

I would like, also, to take this opportunity to thank all Somali leaders, as well as the people of Somalia for their support and close cooperation with the Second Reconnaissance Mission that the Commission of the African Union dispatched to Somalia, from 7 to 18 August 2004, to prepare for the envisaged deployment of an AU Military Observer Mission that will accompany the outcome of the Somali National Reconciliation Conference. The enthusiasm and cooperation of the Somali people enabled the Mission to carry out its mandate in a peaceful environment.

Addis Ababa, 27 August 2004