

Benita Ferrero Waldner,
Commissioner for External Relations

6 May 2008
Our ref :B774

Dear Mrs Ferrero Waldner,

Amnesty International report: Attacks on Civilians in Somalia

Amnesty International would like to draw to your attention its latest report on the human rights situation in Somalia, entitled '*Routinely Targeted: Attacks on Civilians in Somalia*'. The report documents grave and widespread human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law being perpetrated against the Somali civilian population during the ongoing conflict in southern and central Somalia.

Amnesty International is deeply concerned about the violations of human rights and international humanitarian law documented in this report, including torture, rape, attacks on civilian infrastructure and unlawful killings of civilians by all parties to the conflict in Somalia, most notably Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and Ethiopian forces. The report underlines the TFG's failure to hold anyone accountable for the human rights abuses committed by its own forces, which are frequently reported to act as if they were immune from investigation or prosecution, including for crimes under international law.

Amnesty International calls on the EU to use its influence as a donor to the TFG, and to provide leadership among donors, to press for the violations of human rights and international humanitarian law in Somalia to be addressed. In particular Amnesty International recommends the EU to:

- support mechanisms to investigate violations of international human rights and humanitarian law committed in Somalia in 2007 and 2008, and to map violations since 1991 which may be considered war crimes or crimes against humanity;
- take steps to ensure that any security sector assistance to the TFG and Ethiopia does not contribute to violations of human rights or international humanitarian law, and to closely monitor the human rights impact of any assistance.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter. As always, we stand ready to provide any further input which would be helpful to you.

Yours sincerely,



Natalia Alonso
Deputy Director
Amnesty International EU Office

Cc : Louis Michel, Commissioner for Development
Javier Solana, High Representative for the Common and Foreign Security Policy
Riina Kionka, Mr Solana's Personal Representative on Human Rights
Christian Berger, Head of Unit « Crisis response and Peace Building », RELEX