

ORAL QUESTION O-0019/02

pursuant to Rule 42 of the Rules of Procedure

by Cristiana Muscardini, Roberta Angelilli, Sergio Berlato, Roberto Bigliardo, Antonio Mussa, Sebastiano Musumeci, Mauro Nobilia, Adriana Poli Bortone and Franz Turchi, on behalf of the UEN Group
to the Council

Subject: Somalia

Following the unification of the former Italian and British colonies in 1960, Somalia experienced many years of military dictatorship and civil war.

In 1991, the Somali National Movement unilaterally proclaimed the foundation of an independent republic, Somaliland, in the north of the country and in 1998, Puntland, a regional state in the south of the country comprising five areas of the former Somalia, was formed. At present, these are the only autonomous regional entities in which legislative, executive and judicial powers are separated.

In August 2000 the Djibouti Conference should have disbanded the former Somali Democratic Republic to create a new form of peaceful government, but the conference was manipulated by former 'warlords' and took place without Somalia being democratically represented, and the commitment to reconciliation based on a 'bottom-up approach' that had UN support has not been honoured.

In the early 1990s, the Al-Ittihad armed Islamic group was formed in Somalia and several links between the warlords and Islamic terrorism aimed at transforming Somalia into a fundamental Islamic state were brought to light.

As part of their international fight against terrorism, the United States have repeatedly pointed to links between the Al-Qa'ida terrorist organisation and Al-Ittihad through commercial and financial enterprises and militia recruitment in Somalia.

Does the Council intend to convene a meeting between representatives of the regional communities with a view to initiating a broad-based political dialogue aimed at securing a general improvement in the political situation in Somalia?

Would it also be prepared to contribute to finding a solution to the present situation in Somalia by fostering, inter alia, the establishment of a central federal state based on regional entities, which are currently the sole bodies capable of giving free expression to the needs and aspirations of the civilian population of Somalia?

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