

Stern Warning to OAU: Consequences of Ignoring African Colonial Borders.

Somaliland is not breakaway or separatist or secessionist. Somaliland was separate British Protectorate Colony for nearly 80 years (1884-1960) and achieved independence on June 26, 1960 with immediate diplomatic recognition from more than 30 countries while Somalia was still Italian colony. If Nyanza province of Kenya or Lusaka province of Zambia or Puntland administration of Federal Somalia declare independent of their respective countries, that is secession or breakaway because these provinces share colonial borders that cannot be altered with their respective countries.

Because of chauvinistic jubilation in 1960s (The year of Africa), Somaliland hastily and unthoughtfully shared unrectified union with Somalia. In October 1969, General Siad Barre took over the country in military coup and established brutal dictatorship. Siad Barre's Regime of Somalia waged devastating war against Somaliland committing genocide against its people, leveling major cities of Somaliland on the ground and destroying the livelihood of rural areas. The Barre's criminal Regime slaughtered 50, 000 or more Somalilanders in the years between 1984-1990.

SNM led fierce armed resistance against the fascist regime of Siad Barre and defeated in January 1991. After the victory, Somaliland people withdrew from the disastrous union and reclaimed its independence of June 26, 1960. For unknown reasons, Somaliland Republic is still awaiting international diplomatic recognition.

Unions or federations between two or more countries are not eternal. A union or federation could be simply dissolved anytime if the sides disagree, each country restoring and retaining its original independence, recognition and colonial borders. Senegal and Gambia shared federation called Senegambia Federation in 1982 but dissolved it in 1989. Egypt and Syria shared union called United Arab Republic in 1958 and dissolved it in 1961. Each country regained its independence and recognition it had before the federation or union. Neither Africa nor Arab world objected the dissolution of those union and federation or even refused to re-recognize those countries. Why not re-recognizing Somaliland after dissolving the union with Somalia in 1991? South Sudan is recognized in 2011 without having colonial borders of its own. Why not recognizing Somaliland which has its own colonial borders like any other African country ?

Some African Union officials and African presidents claim that if Somaliland is recognized, it will shift or change the borders of current African independent states inherited from colonial

powers leading to instability and political unrest in Africa. If that claim were true, why did not the recognition of South Sudan and Eritrea change the borders of Africa and cause instability and political unrest in African continent? Unlike Somaliland, South Sudan did share history and colonial borders with Sudan but, at the same time, was recognized. Somaliland recognition is much more legitimate and legal than that of South Sudan because it would be based on its own colonial borders like the rest of Africa.

Some leaders of African countries believe in what they call “disputed land” in Somaliland. There is no disputed land in Somaliland as Sool Region and Eastern Sanaag are located within the colonial borders of former Somaliland British Protectorate that can not be altered. The sovereignty and recognition of every African country depend on European colonial borders and Somaliland is not an exception. No African country or African leader would accept that part of their country, which is within its colonial borders, is called “disputed land.” If some of African leaders do not stop calling part of Somaliland “disputed land” then it is fair game to call part of their country “disputed land” in future. The territory of every African country is defined by its colonial borders. If these colonial borders are not respected and protected, then every African country will have disputed land in its country and the whole continent would be plunged into chaos, anarchy and tribal wars.

Also, there is no African country that needed approval for its independence and recognition from another African country or even referendum. Likewise, Somaliland does not need approval for independence and recognition from Somalia or even referendum as Somaliland became independent nation before Somalia on June 26, 1960 while Somalia became independent on July 1, 1960. There should be no condition at all for Somaliland recognition.

If OAU does not recognize Somaliland Republic on its own colonial borders like any other African country, then OAU conference in 1964 for reaffirming African colonial borders will be obsolete and internal conflicts may dismantle Africa to create small tribal states. The declaration of Organization of African Unity (O.A.U) in 1964 in Cairo on African Borders was the formal acceptance of the existing colonial borders inherited from colonial powers on which independence and recognition of each African country were based including Somaliland. That declaration had nothing to do with unifications, federations, and unions between two or more African countries. That declaration reinforces the rightful claim of Somaliland to be recognized as independent nation based on its colonial borders. That declaration does not prevent Somaliland from withdrawing from the union with Somalia and restoring its independence and diplomatic recognition achieved on June 26, 1960.

If Uganda and Kenya share union today and after some time they disagree and dissolve that union, each would still be independent, recognized nation on its own colonial borders. Denying

Somaliland to be recognized on the basis of its original British Protectorate colonial borders is absolutely wrong and may put the whole African continent in crises. The diplomatic recognition and independence of all African countries depend on their colonial borders and Somaliland have equally the same status and not an exception.

This continuous denial of Somaliland recognition will encourage the rise of internal insurgents seeking independence, like South Sudan, in any African country or separatist forces rejecting colonial borders seeing it as wrong borders or demarcations drawn by divisive colonialism that should not exist any more in order to reunite tribes divided and separated by colonial powers. This is stern warning to OAU and to every African country which wants to keep its territorial integrity and national unity in future. OAU must recognize Somaliland Republic for its statehood of 1960 to preempt continental tribal disaster.

Peace and stability of African countries depend on respecting and protecting colonial borders of Africa. The colonial borders of Africa are not different from those of Asia, South America and Arab World. Independence and recognition of each African country are based on colonial borders. If OAU continue ignoring the legitimate colonial borders of Somaliland and deny it of recognition, then colonial borders of all African countries may be disregarded and African tribes in any country may ignore it and advocate for secession. OAU will be solely responsible for the consequences if crises of African colonial borders arise if not respected and recognized as they were drawn by colonial powers.

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FRIDAY 24TH JUNE 1960

BY THE QUEEN

A PROCLAMATION

TERMINATING HER MAJESTY'S PROTECTION
OVER THE SOMALILAND PROTECTORATE

ELIZABETH R.

Whereas the territories in Africa known as the Somaliland Protectorate are under Our protection:

And whereas by treaty, grant, usage, sufferance and other lawful means We have power and jurisdiction in the Somaliland Protectorate:

And whereas it is intended that the Somaliland Protectorate shall become an independent country on the twenty-sixth day of June 1960 (hereinafter referred to as "the appointed day"):

Now, therefore, We do hereby, by and with the advice of Our Privy Council, proclaim and declare that, as from the beginning of the appointed day, Our protection over the territories known as the Somaliland Protectorate shall cease, and all treaties and agreements in force immediately before the appointed day between Us or Our Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and any of the Tribes of the said territories, all Our obligations existing immediately before that day towards the said territories and all functions, powers, rights, authority or jurisdiction exercisable by Us immediately before that day in or in relation to the said territories by treaty, grant, usage, sufferance or otherwise, shall lapse.

Given at Our Court at Buckingham Palace this twenty third day of June in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and sixty, and in the ninth year of Our Reign.

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN

