

Republic of Somaliland
The President



جمهورية صوماليلاند
الرئيس

Date: 21/01/2017

Ref: RSL/P/UN/251/3-4496/012017

H.E. António Guterres
Secretary-General of the United Nations
New York - United States of America

Excellency,

I have the honour to write to you in your capacity as depositary of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and refer to Somalia's Proclamation of an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and the co-ordinates of its outer limits on 30 June 2014, which were deposited with your Excellency on the same day.

In a statement of formal protest lodged with the United Nations on 23 July 2014, the Republic of Somaliland declared that it *"emphatically rejects, opposes and will not recognise these Declarations by the Republic of Somalia to the extent that they purport to include or affect the Waters, continental shelf and other maritime entitlements of the Republic of Somaliland."* Copies of the statement were also sent to Somaliland's regional neighbours and other interested governments including the United States, the United Kingdom, and Turkey.

The statement went on: "The Republic of Somaliland reserves its right to declare and exercise jurisdiction in accordance with its maritime entitlements under international law as reflected in the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), including with respect to an Exclusive Economic Zone. The Republic of Somaliland made clear its position on this question to the Republic of Somalia in an official letter from the former Foreign Minister Mohamed Behi Yonis to the former Foreign Minister Abdirahman Duale Beyle, dated 17 June 2014."

Somaliland had hoped that matters such as this could be resolved through negotiation with Somalia in the framework of the Dialogue established in June 2012 following the London Conference on Somalia of that year. As part of the Dialogue process, the parties agreed in Ankara in April 2013 to "refrain from using any inflammatory language and any other act which may put the continuation of the Dialogue at risk". Yet on 30 June 2014 the Federal Government of Somalia proclaimed an Exclusive Economic Zone which included waters adjacent to the Somaliland coast, a unilateral act which runs counter to the spirit and purpose of the Dialogue.





Unfortunately, the Republic of Somalia has shown no inclination to pursue the talks in good faith and has refused to implement the measures agreed, for example on civil airspace control. For these reasons, Somaliland suspended the Dialogue in March 2015.

Somaliland remains as committed as ever to the fostering of peaceful relations and mutual respect with Somalia. We remain hopeful that, through dialogue with the competent Somali authorities, we will continue to amicably resolve all outstanding issues between the two states including finding a mutually acceptable outcome in respect of the international recognition of the status of Somaliland under international law in a manner that preserves the right of the people of Somaliland to self-determination.

However, in light of the set-backs in the Dialogue process caused by Somalia, Somaliland is obliged to take steps to fulfill its responsibilities to promote regional maritime security and ensure the establishment of the peaceful, stable and more prosperous Horn of Africa that we all desire.

The Republic of Somaliland is fully aware that the United Nations do not yet recognize it as a sovereign State, but pending a final political settlement between Somaliland and Somalia, and without prejudice to the respective positions of the parties in that regard, we have a duty to preserve the rights and interests of the people of Somaliland.

Accordingly, to ensure that those rights and interests are not jeopardized in advance of a mutually acceptable political settlement, it is my duty to bring to your Excellency's attention and, through you, to the attention of the Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, the following information.

The Republic of Somaliland formally lays claim to maritime zones as detailed below. These zones are measured from baselines based on the low-waterlines of its mainland coast and of its islands, including Dolokhtiya, Duren, Aibat, Saada Din and Rebchi Islands and certain islets and low tide elevations to the east of Ras Gumarlain the vicinity of Duren Island. The coordinates of the baselines are contained in the first attachment.

There are four zones:

1. A territorial sea that extends twelve nautical miles seaward from those baselines;
2. A contiguous zone that extends beyond the seaward limit of its territorial sea to a distance twenty-four nautical miles from its baselines;





3. A continental shelf that extends two hundred nautical miles seaward from its baselines, subject to delimitation with states having overlapping maritime claims, in accordance with international law; and
4. An exclusive economic zone that equally extends two hundred nautical miles seaward from its baselines, subject to delimitation with States having overlapping maritime claims, in accordance with international law.

An outer limit for each of its maritime zones constituted by a line every point of which is at a distance from the nearest point of any mainland or insular baseline equal to the breadth of the maritime zone in question. I attach a map which shows the position of the zones in general terms.

Somaliland is taking steps to include these provisions in its domestic law.

I wish to note that the limits of the EEZ as listed in the attachments are without prejudice to future negotiations and potential mutually agreed maritime delimitations with any and all neighbouring States.

In particular, I assure you, and we have also assured our brothers in Somalia, that Somaliland continues to be willing to cooperate and reach mutually agreed arrangements for the mutual benefit of Somalia and Somaliland and to continue to contribute to the international effort to combat the twin scourges of terrorism and piracy in our region.

Please accept, your Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Yours sincerely;

Ahmed Mohamed Silanyo
President, Republic of Somaliland



Maritime Zones of the Republic of Somaliland

This illustration shows the Territorial Sea, Contiguous Zone, Continental Shelf and Exclusive Economic Zone of the Republic of Somaliland extending to provisional median lines dividing the overlap of similar entitlements of neighbouring states

