MEETING ON THE CULTURE OF PEACE IN SOMALIA
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
8 – 10 June 1996

FINAL REPORT

1. The third meeting on the Culture of Peace in Somalia was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 8 to 10 June 1996 under the auspices of UNESCO with the participation of Somali intellectuals and was attended by representatives from the international community. (List of participants is attached.) This meeting was a follow-up to the Sana’a Symposium (Yemen, April 17–20, 1995) and the Paris Conference (October 25–27, 1995) which were sponsored by UNESCO and the European Commission, European Union.

2. The opening session was chaired by the representative of the Director–General of UNESCO, Mr. Ahmed Sayyad, Assistant Director–General for External Relations and it was addressed by Her Excellency Ms Genet Zewide, Minister of Education of the host country, Mr Sigurd Illing, EC Special Envoy to Somalia, His Excellency Ambassador Mahmoud Ould Weddady, Representative of the League of Arab States, Mr. Erling Dessau, UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia, and Mr Mohammed Abdi Mohammed, Chairman of the Somali Peace Line (SPL).

3. While the speakers endorsed all efforts for the promotion of a culture of peace in Somalia and reiterated their commitment and support to the peace process, they urged the participants to come up with a concrete programme of activities which would enable the international community to support its implementation through technical and/or financial assistance. In this respect, the EU informed about the recruitment of a consultant to provide technical advice to the Somali Peace Line Secretariat. The session was attended by Mr M. Sarr, Deputy Executive Director ECA.

4. Mr. Abdul Mohammed who chaired the plenary introduced a brainstorming session which recapitulated the process from Sana’a to Addis and provided the orientation and guidelines for the working groups. He emphasized that there is no alternative to the political dialogue to be undertaken by Somalis themselves and clarified that the culture of peace process is instrumental to the creation of a conducive environment.

5. During the brainstorming session the participants expressed their views on the peace process as well as the conduct of the meeting itself in view of reaching concrete recommendations. They reaffirmed that the responsibility of leading the peace process lies with Somalis and emphasized the supportive role of the international community.

6. The participants called for the empowerment of the civil society in support of the peace process. In particular, they underscored the role of women, youth, elders and religious leaders to promote peace in Somalia. They stressed the imperative need for creating an atmosphere conducive to the attainment of peace through dialogue, mediation, confidence–building and involvement of all categories of the Somali society.

7. The participants strongly stated that peace promotion would not be effective or even possible in Somalia without the continuation of rehabilitation and development assistance programmes by the international community in such areas as health, education, income generation, water, sanitation, agriculture, livestock, fisheries, etc., as well as support to local administrations.

8. The crucial roles played by education and communication in the promotion of a culture of peace in Somalia were stressed. Future efforts to promote peace through education and communication must be built on current efforts, giving due recognition to concrete
9. The participants were then divided into two working groups in order to develop concrete proposals to promote a culture of peace in Somalia through (1) peace education and (2) communication activities.

10. The participants decided to emerge with specific actions in the areas of peace education and communication to ensure progress in the implementation of the culture of peace in Somalia. Based on the conclusions of the working groups, the participants agreed on a Programme of Activities which would be implemented with the participation of all components of the Somali society along the following lines:

I – Peace Education:

11. The participants recognized the existence of two distinct sectors in education, namely, formal and non–formal, where a change towards a culture of peace could be introduced for the benefit of specific target groups. The target groups within the formal sector are children, teachers and parents. For the non–formal sector the target groups are militia, unemployed youth, women, elders/ traditional and religious leaders, artists etc.

**Formal Education**

12.a **Surveys**

- Surveys covering both formal and non–formal sectors should be conducted wherever possible, countrywide, to provide basic information on the formal sector with the view of introducing peace education.

12.b **Development of curriculum on peace education programmes**:

- Developing specific programmes of peace education incorporating religious and cultural values and utilizing songs, stories, cartoons, group games, extra–curricular activities etc.
- Continuing and enhancing the training of teachers in peace education.
- Encouraging the introduction of peace issues in the training of Community School Committees.

**Non Formal Education**

13. **Militia and unemployed youth**:

- Take stock of existing initiatives in the area of demobilization and develop appropriate proposals for funding and technical assistance. The initiatives will include secondary, vocational/technical education programmes using open education methods.

14. **Women**:

- Develop income generating activities to empower them economically
- Preparation of proposals for women to be trained in conflict management/resolution
- Organize peace workshops
- Use of media to address awareness of women in peace issues
- Organize activities promoting the exchange of experience among women groups.

15. **Elders, traditional and religious leaders**:

- Promote their awareness and enhance their knowledge of principles of good
governance, democratization and human rights through the organization of workshops and seminars.

16. Artists:
   - Train and use local artists to convey peace messages to communities through the organization of peace caravans, radio programmes, etc.

II. COMMUNICATION

17. The participants recognized the value of promoting the culture of peace through media, arts and sports to ensure the participation of the Somali communities in the peace process.

18. Identify potential partners and seek collaboration with existing media facilities for the dissemination of peace messages and civic education in support to local community peace initiatives. The media channels considered by the group are broadcasting, printed press and audio visual products;
   - Compile culture of peace programmes in consultation with the Somali Diaspora to be offered to local, regional and international media.
   - Launch a special issue of Hal-Abuur on peace and assist in the promotion to reach larger audiences.
   - Create a media unit under the auspices of the Secretariat for the production of programmes and printed materials including leaflets and posters.

19. Include creative activities such as music, literature, performing arts and sports as part of the overall communication strategy for peace.
   - Launch and support road shows by artists in coordination with the Somali art and literature network.
   - Identify artistic creators in music, literature and the performing arts, facilitate their interaction and encourage their contribution to the culture of peace.
   - Support an annual arts festival to be organised in different parts of the country on a rotation basis starting with the festival planned to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Somali modern music.
   - Support the relaunching of inter-regional sports competitions.
   - Contact the Somali Olympic team to the Atlanta Games urging them to announce the commitment to the peace process in Somalia.

20. Support communities to be pro-active in the peace process through the facilitation of local communication means to peace promoters, such as women, youth, elders, teachers, health workers, local NGOs and other constituted groups and to assist in their networking.

21. Support activities that will enhance the human resources of the Somali media with particular emphasis on the training and upgrading of skills of journalists and technical staff.
   - Promote the introduction of codes of ethics by and for Somali journalists and encourage and support independent journalist and media associations, in particular the Somali Independent Journalists Union (SIJU).

22. Welcome the involvement of the private sector media and encourage them to participate in the process of peace-making and public service.

23. Promote the networking of the Somali Diaspora with Somalia through all appropriate
channels such as creating an INTERNET web-site in order to enhance and co-ordinate its contribution to the peace process.

III. MODALITIES

24. The follow-up of the implementation of the Programme of Activities will be ensured by the Somali Peace Line in accordance with the Sana’a recommendations for the creation of a follow-up mechanism and the decision of the Paris Conference to elaborate the structure and its composition. The Somali Peace Line shall further specify its own structure and method of work.

25. The participants appeal to the international and regional organizations, Governmental and non-governmental organizations to support the efforts of the Somali Peace Line in the implementation of this Programme of Activities.