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**The Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral Resources had two days intensive meetings with US State Department and the Major International Oil Companies in Washington**  
**7-8 August 2013**

The Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral Resources is pleased to make the following statement at the conclusion of its mission during the US Africa Leaders Summit in Washington, DC.

The US Africa Leaders Summit was organized to encourage close economic relations between the United States and the African nations. Somalia, represented by His Excellency President Hassan Sheikh Mohamed, members of the cabinet, and other government officials, were honoured to participate at the highest levels on behalf of the Somali government.

During the African leaders summit in the United States, the Minister of Petroleum and Minerals (MoPM) and his Team in Washington DC held bilateral talks with several US government departments and representatives of International Oil Companies with interest in Somalia.

The Minister and his delegates initially met with high-level representatives of the US State Department, the US Commerce Department, and the Department of Interior. These bilateral talks were useful, sincere and frank reiterating the continuing friendship between the two countries. The talks highlighted both the challenges facing Somalia, and the opportunities to advance the interests of Somalia and its people in a transparent, collaborative and responsible way.

Also, the Minister and his delegation had a joint meeting with the US State Department, and international oil companies that have prior rights in Somalia; ExxonMobil, ConocoPhillips, Chevron, and BP. This meeting marked the first time in more than two and half decades the two parts, Somalia and IOC have met.

The two days of intensive meetings produced very tangible results that accommodate the interests of both Somalia and the Oil Companies opening a new page to talk and move forward. The US and Somali government agreed to work closely together so that oil and gas can be extracted in a manner that is both beneficial to Somalia and attractive to investors. The Minister reiterated his intention to create a very competitive investment environment with harmonized laws and regulations that attracts and protects foreign investment while also discharging its fiduciary duty to safeguard the interest of Somalia and its citizens.

During the talks between the Ministry and the international oil companies, the issues involving recognition of rights and "force majeure" were discussed and understood. The Ministry communicated its view that the issue of Force Majeure was a legal issue that will be addressed on a case-by-case. The Minister urged to the international oil companies to state their claims publically, and provide a timeline for the return and resumption of their contractual obligations based on any claimed pre-1991 contracts.

The Oil Companies acknowledged the primacy of the Federal Government of Somalia and recognized the Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral Resources as the representative and the contact on all issues of Somalia's hydrocarbon and Minerals. The Oil companies have also indicated their intent to reclaim their acreage rights and collaborate with the Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral resources.

At the end of meeting, the Minister discussed with the State Department, and the IOC the issues of small hunting oil companies, overlapping prior concessions, signing illegal contracts with non-representative actors which adding fire to local conflicts, environmental degradation, clan hostilities and undermining the sovereignty of the country.

These small companies are destabilizing the country and destroying the international community's effort to build the peace and the security of the country. A case in point is the Norwegian Company (DNO), which is planning to introduce armed militiamen in areas already in conflict and thereby stoking old feuds which resulted internal displacement and harming the innocent and the most vulnerable people.

The Ministry and the Somali government condemn the introduction of arms, armed militia and violence into Somali regions in pursuit of illegal oil deals. We are warning those companies that the Somali Government will lodge complaints with their respective countries and the United Nations Security Council. The Ministry and the FGS also reserve the right to take legal action against these companies on behalf of the Somali people.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact the Ministry at:

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