

August 31, 1977

**Record of negotiations between Somali and Soviet
officials in Moscow from 15-19 August 1977
(excerpts)**

Citation:

"Record of negotiations between Somali and Soviet officials in Moscow from 15-19 August 1977 (excerpts)", August 31, 1977, Wilson Center Digital Archive, TsKhSD, f. 5, op. 73, d. 1620, ll. 60-80; translated by Sally Kux.

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Summary:

Record of negotiations between Somali and Soviet officials in Moscow (excerpts) regarding Somali-Ethiopian tensions and reactions by Somalis of negative comments in Soviet press regarding Somalia

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

Record of Negotiations between Somali and Soviet Officials in Moscow,
15-19 August 1977 (excerpts)

From the journal of Secret. Copy No. 8
L.F. Ilichev 31 August 1977
No. 2325/GS

Record of Conversation
with the Minister of Mineral and Water Resources of Somalia,
Head of Delegation of Experts
Hussein Abdulkadir Kasim
(third level)

The head of the Somali delegation of experts returned to Moscow on 14 August 1977. Meetings took place at the residence of the Somali Delegation from 15-19 August 1977. On 20 August the delegation returned to Mogadishu.

15 August

[...] Moreover, in confidence it had been said to the head of the Somali delegation, that the Soviet leaders and L.I. Brezhnev in person had appealed once again with a message to President Siad, in which was expressed the point of view of the Soviet side with regard to the events, which were taking place in the region of the Horn of Africa. This had been done before the publication of the TASS statement.
[...]

17 August

[...] [I] underscored that the Soviet good services mission, as follows from the exchange of messages between L.I. Brezhnev and Siad Barre, is not charged with facilitating the discussion of any particular concrete question or questions which have arisen in relations between Somalia and Ethiopia, such as, for example, the territorial question, for the parties which are in conflict are more familiar with the substance of the matter. In the current situation it is difficult to imagine how it will be possible to resolve any sort of concrete question. After all, in order for that to happen it is necessary to create the appropriate conditions. Therefore the Soviet side sees its good services mission first and foremost in assisting in the creation of conditions, under which it would be possible to resolve all questions at the negotiating table.

18 August

A tete-a-tete conversation took place at the request of the head of the Somali delegation.

H.A. Kasim reported that:

1. He was charged by the Somali government to inform the Soviet government that new factors had arisen in the development of the situation in East Africa, which bear witness to the attempts to expand internationally and to escalate the conflict and also to the interference of non-African governments in the conflict. Several days before President Siad in his declaration had spoken of the interference of a friendly country, part of the socialist community, whose leaders and policy enjoy great authority in Somalia. According to information received by Mogadishu, Cuban military officials are involved in the conflict between the Western Somali Liberation Front and Ethiopia. As President Siad declared further, Somalia does not intend to remain neutral in the face

of this situation, when citizens of Somali nationality in the Ogaden are perishing at the hands of non-Africans.

2. He discussed the campaign of insinuations which was being carried out in the imperialist press and declared that Somalia will not become the victim of such a campaign, that, as before, Somalia will adhere to socialist principles and to the course of strengthening friendly relations with the Soviet Union, in spite of the ruses of imperialist propaganda.

At the same time he expressed alarm at the "avalanche of declarations and commentary appearing in the Soviet press," beginning on 14 August, noting, that such declarations are pouring oil on the fire of imperialist propaganda at the very moment when the Soviet Union is conducting a good services mission, whose aim is to assist in finding a solution to the situation which has been created in East Africa. Such reports hardly further the fulfillment of the good services mission and they could not have been printed without the consent of the Soviet government. In his words, the campaign in the Soviet press does not promote the creation of a situation which would be favorable to reaching a peaceful resolution of the questions which have arisen between Somalia and Ethiopia. If this campaign does not cease, said my interlocutor, the Somali people will begin to ask why statements in the Soviet press contain accusations addressed at Somalia and why the Somali government does not react to them.

He assured me further, that Somalia would not be deceived by any such ruses of imperialist propaganda, but warned that others might swallow the bait.

[I] asked about the degree of trustworthiness of the intelligence which served as the basis for the declaration that, "Cuban military officials were involved in the military conflict." Is it possible that you are swallowing the bait of imperialist propaganda? Moreover, would it not be preferable to clarify this sort of question directly with our Cuban comrades?

H.A. Kasim. We are not speaking idly. Contacts have already been established with the Cubans as regards this question.

[Source: TsKhSD, f. 5, op. 73, d. 1620, ll. 60-80; translated by Sally Kux.]