



Congressman Donald Payne

Tenth District - New Jersey

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Contact: Kerry McKenney/Nkechi Mbanu
(202) 225-3436

Payne Highly Concerned over Surge of Violence in Somalia

Washington, DC – Congressman Donald M. Payne, Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health, expressed dismay over the recent upsurge in violence against the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and the people of Somalia. “Somali President Sheikh Sharif Ahmed and the TFG have made great strides to bring Somalia back from the brink,” Payne said. “However, rogue elements have been trying to stymie their attempts to bring peace and stability to the country.”

For over two weeks, terrorist elements have intensified their attacks against the government and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) peacekeepers. In an attempt to destabilize the country and subvert the recent gains of the TFG, al-Shabab and Hizbul-Islam, terrorist groups operating in the Somalia, have escalated their attacks which have killed and displaced hundreds of innocent Somalis. Foreign fighters [expelled] from Iraq are being encouraged to go to Somalia to fight and undermine the progress the TFG has made. “I traveled to Mogadishu last month and witnessed first-hand how the TFG has done a great deal to bring stability, reach out to its opponents and end the suffering of the people. I also met with AMISOM officials and troops. Their work is greatly appreciated.” Payne asserted, “These acts of desperation by al-Shabab and other criminal elements are an attempt to undermine the progress the TFG has made. I am confident that with strong assistance and support, the new government can repel these foreign-backed terrorist elements.”

“The Obama Administration is becoming engaged in Somalia and I commend this move,” Payne said. “This sends a strong message to al-Shabab that their actions will no longer be tolerated.”

Payne went on to say, “A strong government is key to bringing peace to Somalia. The international community must use its resources to help eliminate the terrorist network running amok in the country. Willful negligence is no longer an option. I call on the Obama Administration and the international community to provide critical support to the TFG to build democratic institutions, to strengthen their defense forces and to establish security so that the people can start rebuilding their nation and begin to live in peace.”

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