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Agenda item 12.

QUESTION OF THE VIOLATION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL
FREEDOMS IN ANY PART OF THE WORLD, WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE
TO COLONIAL AND DEPENDENT COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES

Letter dated 6 March 1990 from the Permanent Representative
of Kenya to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed
to the Under-Secretary-General for Human Rights

Further to the right of reply made to the Commission on 26 February 1990, the Government of Kenya would like to refute other allegations made by the International Organization for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. The organization made reference to the deportation of hundreds of Kenyan citizens of Somali origin, deprivation of their passports and "witch hunting". The Government of Kenya states the following:

1. In November 1989, the Kenya Government began a screening process of all Kenyan citizens of Somali origin at the request of political, religious and civil leaders of Kenyan Somali ethnic origin. This request came amid widespread incidences of banditry, thuggery, illegal entry, murder of tourists in game parks and forged Kenyan identity documents. These acts were nearly all committed by aliens from neighbouring countries. Given this situation, there has been suspicion and outrage against Kenyan people of Somali ethnic origin. The neighbouring governments are fully briefed and aware of these incidences and these governments have themselves expressed concern at the adverse publicity such acts have generated against the governments and people of the region.

2. The Task Force to identify and reregister Kenyan Somalis was headed by a very senior Kenyan citizen of Somali ethnic origin and Provincial Commissioner, Rift Valley Province. The exercise of weeding out illegal aliens and criminal elements who use physical similarities to Somali people as cover, has further strengthened Kenya-Somali relations which the Kenya Government has worked hard over the years to strengthen and maintain.

3. Finally the exercise is not one of screening but one of registration to protect legitimate Kenyan citizens of Somali ethnic origin and has been carried out with no malicious intention.

The Kenya Mission would be grateful if this letter could be distributed as a document of the Commission on Human Rights at its forty-sixth session.

(Signed): Thomas A. Ogada
Ambassador,
Permanent Representative

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