

## The President speech on the night of the signing

Good evening to the head of the Company, the dignitaries, and especially to Dr Black and Terry. The contract we have signed tonight did not take a little time, but is the work of seven months. In this period we have received, maybe more than twenty companies interested in developing the natural resources of Puntland, but we decided to choose the company (Consort) that we are signing with tonight, for the simple reason that their agreement goes beyond developing minerals. We have looked at a lot of things, and we believe that they can make a huge difference.

There is a lot of speculation that we are rich in natural resources, and we want to find what is in our soil. Some people are asking, what are we getting in return or how much money are we going to make out of this deal, but as the head of the government, I am much more interested in creating opportunities of work for the people, for example, if a thousand people get employment directly or indirectly I think we have achieved something. A newspaper that came out today made suggestions that we have received some bribes, let me assure you that I am not interested in bribes, and that we don't need bribes, but we need a company to help us get on our feet.

Consort showed us that they are willing to help, Dr Black showed us that he can help. Terry, who is the gentleman sitting next to Dr Black came to Puntland to help our kids, but when he saw all the lies that were spread about our country, lies such instability, lack of security, widespread killing, and with his travels around the country he realized the tragedy these lies were causing, he promised us that he will help in anyway he can. He introduced us to Consort.

What are we hoping for? We are hoping for a lot of help especially rebuilding the basic infrastructure. Consort told us that they are not only looking for minerals, but also help the country with a little bit of development.

I am requesting from all of you to facilitate the work of this Company, make sure that we give them all the help they need from us. There were a lot of opportunities for this country, but we did not take advantage of it. We will make sure that it doesn't happen again. We (government) promise that as long as we are in power we will give everything to make this project successful.

As soon as I took over I introduced no visa for foreigners, and as a result a lot of people came, they want to help and they are still coming everyday, we have to take advantage of that.

To conclude, I want to tell the Federal government that we are an integral part of the Federal Republic of Somalia, and that Puntland spent a lot of money to the realization of a Federal Somalia, but I am very sorry that they are going around on radio comments that we cannot get into a contract with a foreign company.

Well, let me tell you that we have every legal right to get into contract. We have our own laws that allows us to do so, and we are the only people responsible for anything that concerns Puntland.

Praise to Allah that we have finally signed the contract.

If there are any questions I will take it later on.

Thank you.