

## [News story: Minister for Africa meets members of the Somali Diaspora](#)

Africa Minister Tobias Ellwood met 25 members of the Somali Diaspora, invited by the Anti-Tribalism Movement (ATM), on 19 April to talk about the UK's policy on Somalia which will be delivered through the London Somalia Conference.

ATM's guests were from different sectors including community leaders representing minorities, campaigners including for women's rights such as anti-FGM, the media, lawyers, students, and NGOs including the umbrella group for over 80 British Somali groups called the Council of Somali Organisations.

After briefing the community, the Minister consulted the group on their views, identifying shared priorities and opportunities to work together. Discussions were useful and wide ranging, including on the role of the Somali diaspora, the ongoing drought and environmental protection, Security Sector Reform, the African Union Mission to Somalia and accountability, migration and refugees.

The London Somalia Conference, due to take place on 11 May 2017, aims to accelerate progress on security and agree the new international partnership needed to keep Somalia on track towards increased peace and prosperity by 2020. It will also take stock of the response to the humanitarian crisis affecting Somalia.

With support from the international community, Somalia has made real progress since 2012. Al Shabaab has been driven from most cities. A federal structure is being built and an electoral process concluded on 8 February with a peaceful transition of power. But these gains are fragile and significant challenges remain, most urgently the threat of a third famine in 25 years.

The time is therefore right for the international community to come together with the Federal Government of Somalia to agree how to make the most of the present opportunities and to tackle the significant challenges the country continues to face. The new four year term of the Federal Government of Somalia and the need for a replacement to the expired 'New Deal' mean this a watershed moment for all interested parties to come together to agree a long-term plan for achieving Somalia's stability and prosperity.

### **Further information**