

MEETING OF THE CC CPSU POLITBURO

March 9, 1978 (excerpt)

Chaired by Com. BREZHNEV, L.I.

Attended by Coms. Grishin, V.V., Kirilenko, A.P., Kosygin, A.N., Kulakov, F.D.,
Mazurov, K.T., Pel'she, A.Ya., Demichev, P.N., Kuznetsov, V.V.,
Ponomarev, B.N., Solomentsev, M.S., Dolgikh, V.I., Zimianin, M.V.,
Riabov, Ia.P., Rusakov, K.V.

12. About Measures to Settle the Ethiopia-Somalia military conflict

BREZHNEV. All comrades, evidently, have read the latest telegrams from Ethiopia and Somalia in relation to Siad Barre's request vis-a-vis our mediation. Mengistu's initial reaction to the thoughts we expressed about that issue was basically positive. But he has promised to give a final response only after he will consult with his colleagues in the leadership. Thus far that response has not been received.

Siad Barre's reaction to the thoughts which we expressed to him regarding his request suggests that he, as in the past, is playing a dishonest game. He obviously would like to leave some part of the forces in the Ogaden disguised as "patriotic detachments" and does not accept as a starting point for negotiations the principle of mutual respect, sovereignty, territorial integrity, non-violation of borders, and non-interference in the internal affairs of one another. He declares that these principles should be the subject of the subsequent negotiations.

At the same time, Siad Barre's response in no way excludes the possibility of organizing a Somali-Ethiopian meeting, if Ethiopia will agree to it. Therefore, if Mengistu will give his consent to this meeting, then it seems expedient to continue our work aimed at organizing it. Simultaneously, it will of course be necessary to confirm to Siad Barre our principled approach regarding the withdrawal from Ethiopia of all Somali sub-detachments and about the principles of a settlement which are mentioned above.

I believe that it is necessary for us to continue working in this direction.

MFA USSR, the Committee of State Security, the Ministry of Defense and the International Department of the CC CPSU are assigned to continue working in the direction of a settlement of the military conflict between Ethiopia and Somalia and to submit possible proposals to the CC CPSU.