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AFRICA/SOMALIA - Conference in London: the Constituent Assembly for Somalia, renewed commitment to fight terrorism and piracy

Mogadishu (Agenzia Fides) - "The decisions on the future of Somalia remains in the hands of the Somali people. The Somali political leadership must be accountable to the people. " As a consequence the final communiqué of the London International Conference on Somalia lays the groundwork to launch what it hopes is a new step for the stabilization of the country. The Conference which was held in the British capital yesterday (see Fides 23/02/2012), was attended by 50 among States and international institutions. One of the key issues on the agenda was the term of office of the National Transitional Government, which expires in August, "which will not be extended."

For this reason the final communiqué intends to convene a constituent Assembly "that is representative of the opinions of people from all regions of the Country where women have a role in the political process." The definition of the details for the convocation of the Constituent Assembly will be the focus of the next international summit on Somalia to be held in Istanbul in June. Turkey and Qatar are among the new international protagonists which have for some time appeared on the Somali side: Turkey has a strong well-organized humanitarian organization, Qatar has the television network Al Jazeera.

The British interest in the stabilization of Somalia was underlined by Prime Minister Cameron, who recalled not only the presence in Britain of a strong Somali community, but also the concern of his government, shared by several other executives, for piracy and the presence of terrorist groups who support the Shabab, the fundamentalists who are fighting against the Somali transitional government.

The U.S. has threatened economic sanctions against the Shabab and their sponsors, but they have rejected the request made by the Somali Premier Ali Mohamed Adiweli of air raids against the Shabab. Just today, however, in a missile raid carried out presumably by a U.S. drone, some Shababs were killed, among whom some seem to be foreigners. (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 24/2/2012)

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