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1 August 2013

To whom it may concern,

I am writing in my capacity as an Expert appointed to the UN Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea, mandated by the UN Security Council to investigate violations of UN Security Council resolutions on Somalia and Eritrea.

During the course of our current mandate, the Group has travelled to Australia to meet in person with Ali Abdu, former minister of information for the State of Eritrea.

The Group is pleased to report that it has received full cooperation from Mr Abdu in respect of the Group's ongoing investigations. It is also our assessment that Mr Abdu has great potential to play a stabilizing role in Eritrea, with the country possibly headed towards an uncertain period in its history. Without moderate figureheads such as Mr Abdu, a transitional process in Eritrea may fall prey to polarizing and possibly violent forces.

As such, I would support any efforts to extend to Mr Abdu a recognized asylum status, to allow him to coordinate his activities peacefully and to travel as necessary. I would also hope that the relevant authorities might extend travel visas, on compassionate grounds, for his family members to come and visit him in Australia.

Please accept, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Mahtani'.

Dinesh Mahtani

UN Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea
Security Council Resolution 2060 (2012)

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