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THE PRIME MINISTER

8 March 2013

Dear Mr. Simon,

Thank you for your letter of 1 February regarding President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud's visit to the UK.

I personally raised the case of the woman who alleged she was raped and the journalist who investigated her case with President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud when I met him on 5 February. The President assured me that his Government takes a zero-tolerance approach to the perpetrators of sexual violence.

I was very concerned to hear about the conviction in this case and the UK will continue to raise our concerns. It is vital that the rights of both the individuals involved in this case are respected, including the right to a fair and transparent judicial process and the right of appeal: and it is essential that victims of rape or sexual violence are able to report such crimes without recrimination.

I also share your concern about the reports of killings of journalists in Somalia. Prime Minister Abdi Farah Shirdon's announcement of the establishment of a task force on 1 February to investigate the murder of journalists in Somalia and sexual violence against women is a welcome development. We will be monitoring the task force's progress closely.

These cases demonstrate the urgent need for judicial reform. We welcome the Somali Government's plans to strengthen their police and justice system so that the rule of law can be established throughout Somalia. We have pledged to support their efforts. Improving the justice system and working on preventing sexual violence will both be important objectives of the Somalia Conference in London in May.

*Yours sincerely,
David Cameron*

Mr Joel Simon