

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

May 21, 2014

President Uhuru Kenyatta
State House
State House Road
Nairobi, Kenya

Dear Mr. President:

We write to express our concern over the treatment of Somalis in Kenya during the government's recent security operations. While we strongly support Kenya's right to defend itself from terrorism and to enforce its laws, all countries are obligated to do so in a way that respects human rights and does not indiscriminately target members of one community. We urge you to ensure that the rights of Somalis in Kenya are upheld.

The state of Minnesota is home to the largest Somali community in the United States, and many of our constituents are deeply affected by the events in Kenya. According to Human Rights Watch, police have detained hundreds of Somalis in overcrowded and unsanitary facilities for extended periods without access to the courts or being charged with a crime. Harassment, forced relocations to refugee camps, and summary deportations continue. Observers have also reported that Kenyan security forces have extorted money and property from Somalis during operations.

These reported abuses would violate the rule of law for Kenyan citizens, as well as Kenya's international obligations to treat refugees and others humanely. We recognize Kenya as one of our country's key partners in Africa and appreciate the humanitarian assistance it provides to refugees from neighboring countries. It is in our mutual interests to ensure that Kenya pursues its security in a way that does not violate its own laws or alienate the Somali community in Kenya.

We thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Amy Klobuchar Al Franken Keith Ellison
United States Senator United States Senator Member of Congress