

Somalia peace talks open

by UPI

MOGADISHU, Somalia -- A top United Nations' envoy said peace talks between Somalia's government and a leading opposition group began on an encouraging note Tuesday. U.N. Special Representative Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah said in a written statement that both sides appeared focused on what was best for the Somali people when they sat down in Djibouti. "Many, especially the young people, told me that this is a new and important first step towards stability in their own country," said Ould-Abdallah. He again urged the two camps to do their best to resolve the growing humanitarian crisis in Somalia, where Islamic insurgents and Ethiopian-backed government troops have been battling. The Transitional Federal Government and the Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia were the two major parties at the talks. Statements were read from the African Union, European Union and League of Arab States.

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