Rwanda has expressed full support for statements by the African Union and the East African Community reaffirming Somalia’s sovereignty, following reports that Israel views the self-declared region of Somaliland as an independent state.

The Rwandan government on Sunday said it aligns with the AU and EAC in defending Somalia’s territorial integrity, stressing that peace and stability can only be achieved through respect for international law and the country’s recognized borders.

Israel announced late last week that it considers Somaliland a separate state, becoming the first country to take such a position since the region declared independence from Somalia in 1991. The move has drawn criticism from regional and international bodies.

In a statement issued Sunday, the East African Community said it stands in solidarity with Somalia and recognizes it as a sovereign state within the borders it held at the time of independence. Somalia joined the regional bloc on March 4, 2024, becoming its newest member.

African Union Commission Chairperson Mahmoud Ali Youssouf condemned efforts to recognize Somaliland as an independent state, reiterating the AU’s commitment to Somalia’s unity and territorial integrity. He said the continental body supports Somali leaders working to restore peace, strengthen state institutions and promote inclusive governance.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Israel and Somaliland had signed an agreement establishing diplomatic relations, which he described as part of the Abraham Accords a U.S.-led initiative aimed at normalizing relations between Israel and Arab countries.

Several countries and organizations have also rejected any recognition of Somaliland, including Egypt, the Arab League, Venezuela, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, Qatar, Yemen, Palestine, Iran, Sudan, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia.

U.S. President Donald J. Trump said the initiative was not intended to support Israel’s recognition of Somaliland as an independent state, adding that it remains a proposal under review.