

REPORT FROM THE

2nd Somali Peace Conference

Good Governance and Rule of Law

Oslo 22-23 May 2006
Red Cross Conference Centre, Norway

**Coordinated by the Somali Peace Initiative
Group (SPIG)**





Delegation from Somali Peace Conference visiting Nobel Peace center in Oslo.



Members of Somali Women's Union singing with Fatima Kassim.

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Editor and photographer: Ellen Stokland

Background to The Somali Peace Conference



By Ayaan Yasiin – Somali Women's Union

The first Somali Peace Conference was held in 2004. It was organized by the Norwegian-Somali Self-Help Organization (NORSOM) and the Somali Welfare Organization in Norway (SWO). In the early part of 2005, these organizations decided to organize another peace conference. Representatives from these organisations called together several other organizations and had a meeting to plan the peace conference. After many discussions and meetings, seven organizations agreed to work together to organize the Second Somali Peace Conference.

Thus began the weekly meetings that would last for 9 months. The organizers met every Friday at the premises of the Primary Medical Health Workshop (PMV) in Oslo. At one of the first meetings we agreed to the title of the conference and general guidelines. We also agreed on the following:

- To focus on mobilizing Somalis to take part in a dialogue to bring peace to our homeland. We need to overcome the obstacles and differences that exist among us

by not focusing on clan and geographic belonging.

- So that as many people as possible could willingly contribute to the process, we agreed that intimidation, even while expressing disagreement, would be harmful to the building of trust and confidence among the broadest numbers of Somalis.

- To get in touch with Somalis in Somalia, Norway and elsewhere in the diaspora to participate by giving lectures and workshops, or to contribute in other ways. We wanted to make sure the speakers came from different geographical regions and that there would be a balance in the representation of gender.

We had a lot of discussion on a number of topics on which we were able to make compromises and respect each other's views in order to focus on dialogue and the work for peace. For example, we decided not to display any flag at the conference.

We are grateful to everybody, both Norwegians and Somalis, who contributed to and supported

the conference and helped make it a success.

We hope that many more Somali organisations will join us in organizing new conferences in the years to come. In the process of

working for peace, we need to stand together and to pool all the resources that exist among us.

We hope that the conferences will grow bigger with the years to come.

A new beginning

- notes from the coordinator



By Bashe Musse
Conference Coordinator

Our hope is that we have initiated a process where Somalis living in the Diaspora – in Norway or elsewhere – can unite for Somalianness and be a force for peace and development in our beloved homeland.

It has been a privilege and an honor to coordinate the Somali Peace Conference in Oslo May 22-23, 2006. I would like to thank all the participants – both Somali and Norwegian organizations. Many of you had high hopes for the conference and I do not think that the conference disappointed. The conference marked one of the largest gatherings of Somali intellectuals and organizations in recent times and featured Somali speakers from around the world. One of the main goals was to mark a new beginning for Somali inclusiveness. Everyone who was interested in peace and development in Somalia was welcome to attend, independent of their gender, clan, geographical ties or ethnicity.

As organizers, we were particularly proud of our success in having equal representation between male and female speakers. It is our belief that one key to future development and peace lies in the involvement of women in network building. Somali women have always stood for the grass-roots family organization of our culture. They are instrumental for the rebuilding of Somalia – both inside the country and as activists in their current country of residence. We believe in the old proverb saying: *“Educate a man and you educate an individual. Educate a woman and you educate an entire nation.”*

The conference also marked a starting point as individuals and groups met to

discuss the need for cooperation and consolidation in the time ahead. If we are to be of any assistance in the rebuilding of peace and development in Somalia, we must work together both within the Somali community in Norway and with interaction between Somali and Norwegian individuals and organizations. If Somalis here in Norway can succeed in forming a strong alliance devoted to promoting health, education, conflict resolution and the protection of basic human needs – then perhaps we can become a real force in helping to solve the challenges in Somalia.

During the period following the conference, Somalia has faced severe aggravation of the conflict. But we have not lost hope. With the formation of a transitional federal government and the rise of Islamic courts, a new era has begun. Now, more than ever, we must speak to each other and work together to forward peace and development in the region. In one way, this is a matter for the United Nations and other multi-national cooperations. Yet, in another, it is a situation felt here in Norway as Somalis for the first time are forcefully returned to the uncertain situation in our homeland. It is our hope that Norway will play a leading role in international treaty-building and conflict resolution strategies. Last, but not least, it is our hope that the conference in Oslo has initiated a process where Somalis living in the Diaspora – in Norway or else-

where – can unite for Somalianness and be a force for peace and development in our beloved homeland.

In conclusion, I would like to thank all participants, sponsors and speakers, and

I look forward to a long and fruitful cooperation towards a new Somalia.

Caano iyo Nabad - Milk and peace!

Organizers of The Somali Peace Initiative

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The SPIG organizations are:

Somali Women's Union



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Started in June 1998, we have among our goals to help Somalis all ages to realize their potential as a part of a multicultural society and develop themselves as good members of that society. We organize volunteers and contact with isolated families and develop self-help strategies for single mothers and men. We support organizations of groups to get the long-term unemployed into jobs and strengthen youth's ability to master their own live situation. The Somali Women's Union organizes groups around the Koran, cooking, sewing, health, family planning, and many more.

Somnor Consulting and Communication (SomNor)



Nur Duale, Research Scientist, Norwegian Institute of Public Health

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Our aim is give both Norwegians and Somalis an opportunity to exchange information and discuss how to create a society built on trust and mutual respect. We believe this kind exchange strengthens our mutual sense of belonging and common interest. There are three main actors who can make this possible: Somalis, the Norwegian people, and government authorities. A main objective is to replace myth with credible information so that both Somalis and Norwegians have knowledge about each other's societies. We raise funds and work with the Norwegian government to create health centres, water wells, and schools in Somalia.

Somali Inter-riverine Cultural Association/ Hakaba Education Trust

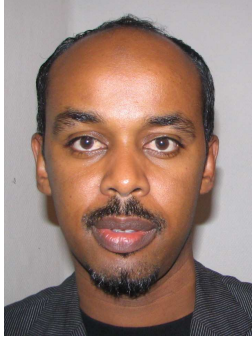


Mohamed Ali Mamow: somali.inter@buurhakaba.com; www.buurhakaba.com

SICA is an organization for adults and young people of Somali background in Norway. We are working in the area of identity, self-improvement and cultural integrity for individuals and groups. The Hakaba Education Trust was founded in 2001 in Oslo by group of Somali's from Southwestern regions of Somalia and others who have sympathy for the charity. As a humanitarian organization we focus on improving and developing basic education for children in the Southwestern regions of Somalia. Buurhakaba Media Center is a part of Hakaba Education Trust. Buurhakaba Media Center consist a website which is www.Buurhakaba.com and local FM Radio station in Baidoa City (Radio-Baidoa), the capital city of Southwestern regions of

Somalia.

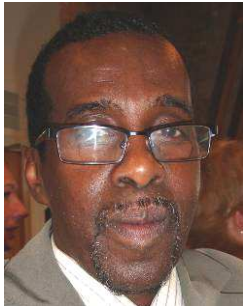
Somali Welfare Organization in Norway



Said Farah: safar30@hotmail.com; www.swo.no

Begun in 1985 in Oslo, SWO is one of the first and now the largest organization for Somalis in Norway. We are a voluntary interest group for Somalis in Norway that speaks on their behalf in the media. Our main goals are to create and participate in a multicultural Norwegian society through work, the schools, and education. We offer, among other activities, homework help for youth. SWO provides truthful information about Somalis in Norway, create meeting places for Somalis regardless of clan or geographic origin, and create social and cultural activities for children, youth, and women. We aid Norwegian officials in difficult cases and are a source of information for government agencies.

Norwegian-Somali Self Help Organization (NORSOM),



Mohammed Elmi: mohamed@norsom.no; www.norsom.org

NorSom is based in Norway, and now also in Somalia. It is independent of government, clans and private business. NorSom aims to act as a catalyst in mobilizing local resources to improve basic infrastructure in Somalia and the Somalia community in Norway. NorSom commits itself to join with others in action, promoting basic human rights, which are aimed at changing the living conditions of the poor people. Our vision of the future is not based on everyone achieving a Western-style, high-consumption society. Our aim is that every person has enough safe water and food to stay healthy and to follow education; that people have control over their own lives and destinies; and that all individuals have a chance to contribute. We promote the values of honoring human beings and allowing nature to flourish, as well as increasing the awareness of living in peace.

Somali/Norwegian Research and Development Center (SONORFUS),



Morsal Siyad Mohamed: meygagy@yahoo.com; www.sonorfus.com

Established in 2004 SONORFUS has a vision of transacting social problems of immigrant communities in Norway and east Africa in order to uplift all aspects of human norms.

The organisation has enough capacity of expertise towards dealing in its integral parts of prioritised work fields and incorporates its works with other Somali and non Somali institutions in and out side of Norway.

Somali Child Care



Jama Yusuf Ibrahim: Somalisk.barnehjelp@hotmail.com; www.sombarnehjelp.com

Somalia Child Care [Somalisk Barnehjelp (SBH)] is voluntary organization established in 1992 in Oslo, Norway. Our goal is to provide counseling and help Somali children and youth overcome difficulties with school homework. We also assist them in selecting appropriate areas and physical training in the field of sport and help build their ability function socially in both cultures.

Margrethe Siem from the Office of Diversity and Integration, City of Oslo (EMI) and Bashe Musse co-chaired the two-day conference.

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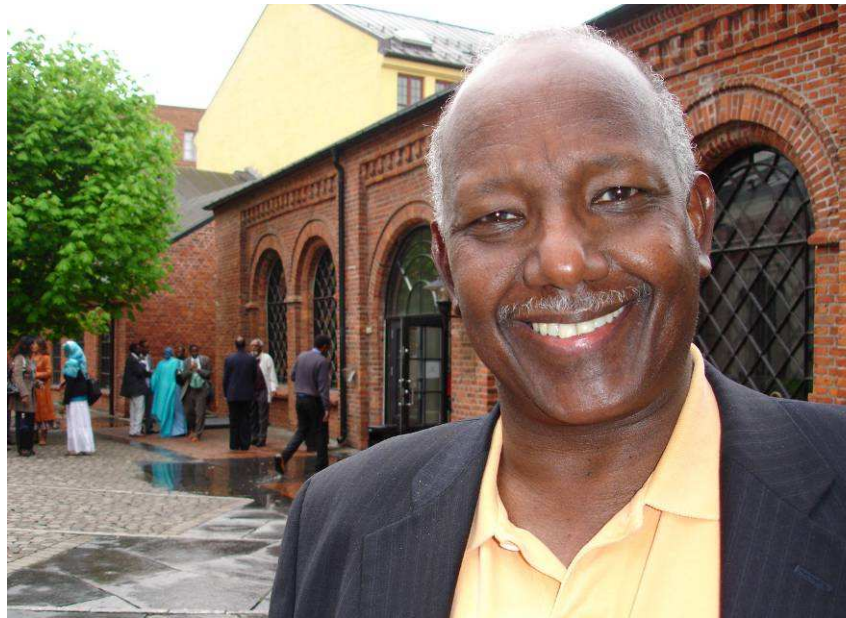
Professor Mukhtar Mohamed, USA; Nima Ali, Canada; Amina Abdi, Belgium; Zahra Nur, Nairobi; Mohamed Jawari, Trondheim; Jabril Abdulle, Mogadishu; Ibrahim Farah, Nairobi; Fatima Kassim and her band, London; and from Oslo, Geir Sørensen, Knut Espeland, Geir Sjøberg, Gro Hillestad Thune, Arild Aambø, Margrethe Siem, Greg McCartan, Ellen Kobro, Lars Mannsåker, Deqa Ahmed Barkhadle, Roda Abdi Hassan, Jan M. Haakonsen, Ellen Stokland

Making a difference

A conference for peace in Somalia

By Ellen Stokland

“The peace conference in Norway has already made a difference for Somalia. The fact that Somalis in the Diaspora are leaving their conflicts aside and gather in order to contribute to peace and reconciliation in their homeland is giving great hope for those struggling and suffering in Somalia.”



These words belong to Professor Mohamed Haji Mukhtar, Professor in History at the Savannah State University in the USA and main speaker at the Peace Conference in Oslo on May 22-23, 2006. He was impressed by the willingness of those involved to find a common platform for peace and reconciliation talks.

The central theme of the conference was how Somalis in Norway could coordinate and mobilize their efforts in order to contribute to peace building, conflict resolution, and general development in their homeland. The background of the conference was the idea that the international society and Norway in particular, can play an important role in reducing tensions in the Somali conflict. Organizers aimed to build a powerful network that could have a positive impact on the situation in Somalia.

“What struck me the most is that they are trying to clean their house first, solve their own conflicts in the Somali Diaspora. I got the impression that there was a division before, but now they

have realised that divided they are weak, that they have to be united to make a difference and to be strong. Divided you cannot unite anyone else. By being united here, they can solve their problems here and back home.”

Seven Somali non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Norway – The Somali Peace Initiative Group (SPIG) – have jointly organized and coordinated the conference. The organizations are of different nature, but they all have one common dream: peace and reconciliation in Somalia, and they wanted to bring unity among Somalis in Norway in order for them to play an important role in conflict resolution, peace building and development in their homeland.

The organizers strived to reach out to as many Somali groups and individuals as possible, and saw it as extremely important to have a large attendance at the conference. They were not disappointed. The vast majority of the participants were from Somalia, and particularly positive was the broad



Representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

participation of the younger generation. They are impatient, they want peace and they don't want to hear more about division and ethnic conflict. As youth representative Ilham stated: "We don't think in clans. We are smarter than that."

Norwegian historian Knut Kjeldstadli regretted that the Norwegian media was not present. Here they could have got a totally different image of Somalis, so often marginalized, victimized and criminalized by mainstream media. Maybe ignored by the Norwegian media, but Professor Mukhtar was convinced that the happenings in Oslo had reached Mogadishu and the other regions by word of the mouth by the end of the two days conference.

"Somalia is an oral society, we can communicate so quickly and we love to talk. I am sure that the news of the Oslo Conference is all over Somalia and the way it is reported is very positive. Back home it is all about clans and division, here everyone was welcome to say whatever they wanted regardless of clan affiliation, gender or background. What I saw here was very inclusive; these people have a sense of Somalianness. If they continue to push this line of unity, of making a difference, they can impact the future of Somalia."



Participants of the conference take a break.

The conference had Somali speakers from the Diaspora and coming directly from conflict ridden Mogadishu. Also a number of Norwegian speakers representing the government or NGOs engaged in Somalia were on the program. All of them were very enthusiastic about the peace initiative from the Somalis in Norway.

Nimao Ali from Canada shared her experiences working with education in the Sool, Sanag and Hawd regions. "We can all help however little knowledge and skills we have," she emphasized. Further she observed and felt the strong emotions coming to the surface at the conference, particularly when the London based artist Fatima Kassim sang patriotic songs calling for peace and reconciliation. Tears were falling and bodies moving as Kassim performed together with women from the Somali Women's Association in Norway.

In his intervention, Professor Mukhtar regretted the failure of 14 peace conferences for Somalia. But the Oslo Conference gave him a different feeling. "The other conferences have been national, either in or outside Somalia. But this conference is the first event I know of where Somalis in the Diaspora have gathered in order to do something, to be united, and not to be clannish."

Nobody complained during the conference, they were rather concerned

about being focussed. It was a Somali conference about peace, and everybody were searching for possible, small and achievable steps forward.

Another major step was, according to Professor Mukhtar, that after 15 years of war, people finally spoke openly about identifying the war criminals. Speaker Amina Abdi Mohamud from Belgium called for an end to impunity, that war criminals had to be brought to justice, that clanism was contra human rights and that the International Criminal Court was the right place for those committing mass human rights violations in Somalia.

"It seems that we are going above clan. Before, I could not identify a criminal because his clan would kill me. That was no hinderance in Oslo." Professor Mukhtar states.

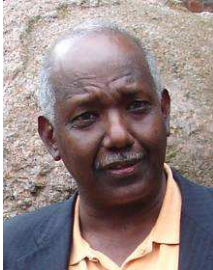
A common recommendation and acknowledgement during the conference was that only the Somalis could solve

the Somali problem. Professor Mukhtar is glad foreigners are helping out, facilitating the process. "But why did we need to have clan meetings overseas?" He asks. All the national conferences were held outside Somalia. "Why didn't we try to do it in Somalia? Why not try some traditional; Somali way? I don't mind learning from others, from Sierra Leone, Liberia. But whatever worked there will not work in Somalia. We should not use Arabic or Norwegian laws. We need to find our indigenous ways, use the Xeer – costumary Somali laws. And it has to be in Somalia, under a tree, in a tent."

Says Professor Mukhtar. He believes that the motivation created on the Somali Conference in Oslo has to be kept higher and that there should be another conference next year. "We must build up from where we are now, learn from the little inconveniencies we have. If we just learn from the mistakes we made we can build something new."

Background of the Conflict

History, Clans and Ethnic Conflicts



*By Mohamed H. Mukhtar
Professor of History
Savannah State University
Georgia, USA*

What went wrong with the Somali peace initiatives?

Over the last 15 years we Somalis have been going through all kinds of pain and stress. Since 1991 there were 14 major national and uncountable sub-national reconciliation conferences on Somalia, most of which took place outside of the country. Indeed, Djibouti hosted three of them: the first, the second in 1991, and later the thirteenth in May 2000. These conferences grow and go on and on. My worry is: What are the results of these conferences? Why is peace and reconciliation not found?

What strikes one the most are the similarities in the way these peace and reconciliation conferences were conducted. Each of them – whether international, national, local, or in the diaspora – attempted to lay the groundwork for a comprehensive peace and each supposedly represented the entire nation. Most were hosted by a friendly (neighboring) country, supported by the Somali public, the UN, the international organizations and the Nongovernmental Organizations (NGOs). Key participants included representatives of armed factions, collaborators of faction 'leaders,' and former civilian politicians and army officers who clearly helped put the country in the position where it is today. At the start of each meeting, there were great expectation and hopes that there would be 'no more missed opportunity' for peace. But they all were doomed to fail, leaving Somalia without government.

I want to share with you why. Why all the conferences failed, what they lacked, and why they will fail in the future too. I am not pessimistic, but realistic. The time has come to reconsider the basic ingredients of peace and reconciliation. Was this the first time we had civil war? No. The cradle of humanity lays there. Somalia is part of the historic region of the origin of man, hence there has always been conflict. However, I cannot think of a period in Somali history that reconciliation has lasted this long. According to the Somali tradition, *Oi nebeda ku dombooyty* (Every war gives way to peace); *Dagaal wiilba ku dhinta ee kuma dhasho* (War results in the death of a son, but not in the birth of one); *Nebeda naas la nuughy leh* (It's only peace that can give you milk). Somalia has all these beautiful sayings.

And to make peace, the following are required:

1. Trustworthy participants

For stateless societies recovering from periods of massive atrocity such as Somalia, reconciliation efforts can easily be doomed by disputes over who has the right to represent whom in the peace talks. It is necessary therefore to ask what would it take, and what do the current or imagined institutions need to do, to help Somalis come to terms with the past to help heal the victims, the bystanders, and even the perpetrators of violence? What could build a nation

capable of preventing future massacres and the rise of new regimes of torture?

The most effective way is to embrace the rule of law and to set up a tribunal. We need a due process. The trials of post-Rwandan massacre of 1994 and the South African Truth and Reconciliation are just some good examples. Imagine World War II without the Nuremberg Trials. We didn't do that, but that door is still open. Somali victims are entitled to full justice, namely the trial of the perpetrator and adequate punishment for those found guilty. This procedure has the added advantage of "short listing" the number of potential participants in the peace negotiations and gives the public a clear conscience as they choose future leaders.

2. Impartial or disinterested negotiators

According to a Somali saying, Habar lang fadaw mal ku weidiyaw (You should not ask the hands of a bride from one who is interested in her).

So far most conference participants have been those who viewed the meetings more as a vehicles for enhancing their own status or that of their clans than for advancing the cause of peace. They used the meetings to promote their own interests. Period. Participants in the future of Somali peace and reconciliation conferences should be composed of individuals with no vested interest in holding political office and should be invited by the preparatory committee of the peace talks.

3. Need for some alternative ideas

We cannot stick with old ideas. For decades the political rules in Somalia have been set by the rulers – first a dictator, then a series of warlords, fanatics. Dictators will not let you participate in democratic processes. Warlords are even worse, and there are so many of them. In both cases, to maintain their power, the rulers eliminated competition and restricted participation, since any enlargement would likely have disturbed the prevailing equilibrium. Future peace and

reconciliation conferences need new players willing to accept new entrants.

The political reforms required for the future Somalia should not be conditioned or imposed by external donors. The country needs cultural and economic adjustments before it is ready for sustainable ideologies.

4. Reinterpretation of sovereignty

In Somalia, sovereignty is lost, but we still think of it as if the sovereignty is still there. But since Somalia currently does not fit the meaning of a "sovereign state" in its modern political parlance, and has no official standing in the global world order, it may be necessary to reconsider the possibility of "tutelage," if that term is reinterpreted to mean "temporary custodial care" by the UN for a state that has given up or lost its sovereign nationhood. If the current Transitional Federal Government (TFG) fails to bring about governance for Somalia, the UN may be obliged to develop a mechanism for intervening in situations where a state's fundamental institutions have collapsed – not with the aim to institutionalize foreign control, but with the goal of creating stronger domestic institutions. The Somali people may even be ready to welcome such temporary recommitment to the UN.

Some Success Stories

And yet while Somali peace and reconciliation conferences have so far not managed to achieve their ultimate goals, they have not all been abject failure. Let me give you some positive stories.

Regional autonomy

The Addis Ababa Peace Conference of March 1993 promulgated an idea of fundamental importance, that is, the proposition of regional autonomy. The Somali people have been moving towards that form of governance for the past nine years and there is still a chance for its success. The sub-national factional conferences of 1994, such as the Cairo Accord, the Nairobi Declaration, and the Somali National Alliance (SNA) Mogadishu Conference brought about alliances of factions to

forge perhaps such regional authorities. The Cairo Accord was signed by leaders of 12 factions, dubbed as group 12 (G 12), where the Nairobi Declaration was initially signed by the SNA but later welcomed by the signatories of the G 12. The Mogadishu Conference was undertaken exclusively by the SNA, which declared an interim "national" government. Similar experiences took place earlier in "Somaliland," which proclaimed itself a republic in 1991, but which has yet to gain international recognition, and later "Puntland," which became an "autonomous" region in 1997.

The Digil and Mirifle people also established in March 1995, the Supreme Governing Council (SGC), a bicameral council as an autonomous legislative body for the Reewin people called the Reverine State, which was overthrown by Mohamed Farah Aideed seven months later. The Reewin land covers former Upper Juba, Lower Juba and Banadir regions. The Reewin Resistance Army (RRA) also established a regional administration over what it calls the "liberated" territories of Bokool and Bay in 1998 and 1999 respectively. This can also be considered an accomplishment in governance, though one not widely accepted because the concept of internal occupation was not an issue previously addressed in Somali politics.

It was after Aideed's occupation of Baidoa in 17 September 1995 that some Somalis started questioning the right of invading clans to govern. In fact, there were many regions that had been occupied by new clans in Somalia, among which the Lower Shabelle occupied by Harbar Gedir, Lower Juba by Majerteen, Middle Juba by Ogaden, and Gedo by Marehan. These regions were historically Digil and Mirifle. Here local people during the occupation found themselves negotiating not with comparable representatives with whom they share long common experience and social contracts, but with young, armed militiamen whose interest and actions placed them outside the pale of the Somali customary law.

The RRA, by liberating the Bokool and Bay from Habar Gedir militias, opened up a Pandora's Box, as they promised to continue the liberation movement until the last piece of the Digil and Mirifle land is freed. If regional authority based on local participation is the goal, then these RRA actions can be considered movements in the right direction, despite the general stagnation of Somali reconstruction efforts.

On clans, women's participation and languages

Another important accomplishment is the Sodere Accord of 1997, where for the first time Somali clans agreed about their relative size, power and territorial rights. The Sodere participants agreed that there are four major equal clans: the Reewin known also as Digil and Mirifle, the Issaq later called Dir, the Hawiye and the Darood. The conference also recognized another segment of the Somalia society which included minority groups not identified with one of the above clans. After Sodere, the question on the clan composition of any future Somali "conference" should not be a problem any more.

In Djibouti 2000, the gathering agreed that 10 percent of the seats of the transitional national parliament (TNP) be reserved for women which is a significant accomplishment too, because women were traditionally excluded from the Somali political scene.

Finally, the Mpegati Peace and Reconciliation Conference of Kenya in 2003, acknowledged with sizeable majority the consideration of two Somali languages Maay and Maxaatiri as the official languages of Somalia. This is a challenge to Somalia's long-held homogeneity and monolingualism, but on the other hand it was an interesting revision for better accuracy of Somalia's history and culture.

Now, the issue focuses on how to do better. Only by tackling the obstacles outlined here can Somalia expect to move forward on the slow road to reconciliation and renewal.

Some challenges

To conclude, I will emphasize some of the most important challenges we are facing. First, we need to redefine the term "occupation." Today in Somalia – as I highlighted earlier – there are clans occupying other clans. We have to speak up for the voiceless, otherwise peace will remain remote.

Second, we have to bring the war criminals to justice. It took Liberia many years to nail Charles Taylor. We can do it now. We urge the international community or friendly countries to ban Somali warlords from coming into their countries – stop issuing visas and shut down their bank accounts!

Further, the rule of self-determination must be applied. We should not be obsessed with what form of government Somalia should adopt. Be it unitary, federation of regional states, or should it be split into many independent states. Finally, we need to indigenize the ethos of the reconciliation process. Future conferences should take place in Somalia. I believe if some of the conferences had taken place in Somalia the outcome would have been greater and the chances for peace would have been higher. We must draft our own constitutions based on our needs and experiences under the tree "Geedka hoostiisa." We need to employ and empower our "Xeer" customary laws and our traditional Islam to make it work.

Status of the Conflict Today



By *Jabril Ibrahim Abdulle*
Researcher
Center for Development and Research
Mogadishu, Somalia

We have a conflict and we need help. Intellectuals in the diaspora are asking what went wrong. This conference in Norway is good timing.

We heard that Norway has helped a great number of countries. After former Prime Minister Bondevik visited Somalia earlier this year, we believe that Norway wants to help. I am here to present the hot-spots and status of the conflict today. But first some background information.

Background

Somali society is traditionally organized into clans that share culture, language and religion. In general terms, every clan is known for areas it inhabits and from which they generate their main source of livelihood. The total population of Somalia is subject to several guess-estimates exhibiting considerable variations. The average estimation of Somali population is between 6 to 7 millions.

The Somali clans are generally categorized into three main groups:

- Pastorals (nomad): who rear livestock for their livelihood. They often move from one place to another in search of good, pasture and water.
- Agricultural Communities: who are sedentary, and predominantly live along Shabelle and Juba rivers.
- Agro-pastoral communities (semi-nomad): who inhabit mostly in the southern part of the country.

The violent downfall of “*Siyaad Barre’s*” regime did not bring about the expected governance structures in south-central Somalia. The sudden and total collapse of centralized institutions of government precipitated the country to be fragmented into fiefdoms controlled by clan-based warring factions competing for control over the ruins of the fallen state.

Following the overthrow of the Barre regime, a few events have taken place which in principal created political vacuum, where new forces emerged and thus changing the country’s political landscape.

Some crucial events were:

- In mid-1996, the Somaliland administration was established. Armed clans had reconciled, and with help of traditional leadership, armed groups were demobilized and re-integrated. At this very critical time, there is border dispute between the regions of Somaliland and Puntland which could escalate to a wider inter-regional conflict.
- After the failure of Cairo conference, the Puntland administration was established in the northeast of Somalia in 1998. Although the region has made some level of remarkable economic development, there have been political tension and inter-clan

conflict. The region is relatively stable under the leadership of General Ade Muse.

- Bay & Bakool regions in southwest Somalia remain tense but stable after the transitional government made its temporary seat. There has been a serious inter-clan conflict between clans, mainly in the Iidaale areas and Tayeeglow districts.
- In lower Shabelle, lower and middle Juba and parts of the central regions of Somalia, there is low intensity conflict between the clans in the area and the armed political leaders of the region.
- Mogadishu and its environs is relatively stable after the take over of the Islamic Shari'a Courts. However, there are small sporadic inter-clan clashes. The city is, apart from the present inter-clan clashes, stable and economically vibrant.

Hot Spots of the Somali conflict

The current Somalia conflict falls under three regions or zones: Somaliland - The Breakaway Republic of Somaliland, South-Central Somalia with numerous regional *de facto* administrations and faction leaders, and Puntland with its regional administration. The conflict issues are on three levels: national – disputes on federalism, DDR, land and property disputes and Mogadishu issues; sub-national, such as the disputes over the Sool and Sanaag regions and north and south of Mudug; and finally local and sub-regional conflicts.

Somaliland and dispute over Sool and Sanaag

On May 18 1991, the former British Protectorate of Somaliland, now Somaliland, declared independence. But the regions of Puntland and Somaliland lie in a disputed area: the Sool and Sanaag. Most of the inhabitants in this area have kinship ties to the Harti/Darod clans in Puntland. Unlike Somaliland, which is slightly pluralistic in terms of clan structure, the Sool and Sanaag regions

are populated by a number of clans whose territory is defined by the British colonial history. Somaliland, which claims control over the Sool and Sanaag regions, inhabited by the Dhulbahante and Warsangeli clans of the Harti/Darod, is in a heightened situation of a possible military contest between Puntland and Somaliland.¹

Sool and Sanaag are an integral part of the former British Protectorate of Somaliland and is a prerequisite for the independence of Somaliland. The clansmen of Puntland, however, could not countenance the prospect of being forever isolated in the eastern corner of Somalia, cut-off from their close kinsmen in Sool and Sanaag. The administration of Puntland refuses to recognize the legality of the colonial boundary on which Somaliland bases its claim to Sool and Sanaag regions.

This area remains volatile and could erupt any given moment. Both leadership, Puntland Presidents, General Ade Muse and his counterpart have successfully defused numbers of clashes that could have precipitated into large regional conflict.

South-Central Somalia

Decades of migration and settlement between the Somali clans have dominated in southern Somalia. This has resulted in an ethnic/clan topography where some regions are predominantly dominated by single clans, while some others are single clan. The idea of establishing a separate regional administration in south-central Somalia has been difficult because of the mixed nature of the clan topography, where some host single clans while many other regions are multi-clan structured.

Unlike other regions, this area has failed to bring about one unified administration. For example, in Mogadishu, there have been a number of attempts made - since 1990 - for establishing a regional administration for Mogadishu city. But with no avail. All attempts were foiled by the armed faction leaders in the region

1 Jabril Abdulle, Abdulkadir Yahya Ali " Geography of Conflict" 2005

due to endless conflicts over power sharing equity.

Mogadishu is the epicenter of the Somali crisis as it is the country's economic, political and social capital. It is a metropolitan city with an estimated 1.5 million inhabitants, also accommodating ten major warlords with vast weaponry and militias. People from across clans move freely in the city, so does goods. The only restricted movement exists among the faction leaders and their militia. The city continues to experience skirmishes and there are a number of inter-clan conflicts. Local clans have yet to reconcile. The legacy of the failure of the UNISOM remains and the city has strong external influence.

Puntland

The state of Puntland was formed in July 1998 and was prompted by a number of factors, however, not only limited to the successive failures of reconciliation efforts between the Somalis sponsored by the external actors. The formation of the regional administration is also a by-product of the confusing pattern of peace-building and state-building efforts.

The sub-regional administration of Puntland has experienced successive civil wars. Although the region remains peaceful and somewhat stable compared to the South-Central Somalia, there are a number of areas where there is yet unresolved hot-spots with a potential escalation of conflict. These include Mudug, Sool and Sanaag regions, as well as internal political dispute. The major of unresolved issues within Mudug, is the power sharing within Mudug regions. The conflict between Hawiye and Darood which erupted in 1991 was partially resolved under the Mudug Accord. The accord has tested its limitations in serious clashes between the clans in the region.

Mudug Gal-gadud Crisis

The current conflict between Sa'ad and Suleiman, both Habargedir sub clans, started in mid-2004. The two conflicting parties (Sa'ad and

Suleiman) are nomadic communities living in the regional border area of Mudug and Galgaduud regions of South-Central Somalia. The armed conflict has been aggravated by and has a negative impact on the current humanitarian emergency due to drought in South-Central Somalia. Given the breakdown in dialogue, shortages of water and pasture can readily trigger conflict between nomadic communities. Equally critical, the conflict is inhibiting free movement of trade and people between south and north Somalia affecting the cost and availability of food and restricting livelihoods.

The area, in which the conflicting parties are fighting, is estimated to around 400 km, going from the Ethiopian border to the coast of the Indian Ocean. In this vast geographical area, there are more than nine frontlines where violent encounters between the militias of the two clans have taken place. During the current conflict, over 500 people lost their lives, and property is destroyed across the Mudug and Gal-gaduud regions.²

In the Somali context of the post-civil war period, social and political reconciliation is required in order to address the problems of fragmentation and to support a process of dialogue not guns. In line with this, the two conflicting parties started dialogue throughout the conflict. However, success was very limited mainly due to lack of or limited technical support from the other Somalis as well as from the international community

Other regions with substantial conflict are the Lower Juba and the dispute over the port town of Kismaayo, and the Lower Shabelle due to the main transit routes from the hinterland to the ports of Mogadishu and Kismaayo.

The Transitional Federal Government

In late November 2004, the Somali political landscape was uncertain but more promising than it had been for a long time. The Somali National Reconciliation Conference in Kenya

² Norwegian funded reconciliation initiative under the leadership of the Center for Research and Dialogue – Somalia (CRD), has successfully halted the fighting between forces and open-up dialogue.

produced a Charter that made provision for a transitional government and a federal state, as well as it proposes several mechanisms intended to assist the country's efforts to heal the bad legacies of the past unnecessary civil war.

On August 29, 2004, a 275 member transitional federal parliament was inaugurated in Nairobi, Kenya. The parliament was formed according to a 4.5 formula of clan distribution as stipulated in the transitional Charter of Somalia. On October 10, 2004 the Transitional Federal Parliament elected H.E. Col. Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed as the new President of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) of Somalia. He, as mandated by the transitional Charter, appointed H.E. Mr. Ali Mohamed Geedi, as Prime Minister on 4 November 2004.

The TFG claims jurisdiction and sovereignty over the entire Somalia territory, including Somaliland and Puntland.

As Government began the relocation process of the transitional Federal institution to Somalia, a new political crisis emerged within the TFG structure dashing the hope for full factional transitional authority. Even through the crisis has been successfully resolved; the TFI remains weak, divided and lacks capacity to deliver.

External influences

External actors seem to fuel Somalia conflicts. Most of weapons entering Somalia are proliferated from neighboring countries. Since 1993, after the declaration of cease fire between the then warring factions in Somalia, the UN imposed numerous Security Council Resolutions banning the importation into Somalia of all kinds of weapons, but none has been implemented. In response to the massive inflow of small arms into Somalia, on May 3, 2002, the UN Security Council appointed a Panel of Experts to *"investigate the violations of the arms embargo covering access to Somalia by land, air and sea, in particular by pursuing any sources that*

might reveal information related to violations"

The panel also is expected to provide recommendations on possible practical steps for further strengthening the enforcement of the arms embargo.³ This, like many more preceding resolutions, may not work although the current National Reconciliation Conference appears to support its effective implementation.

The Somali conflict will not abide without the restraint of the frontline status.

Current Trends

The civil war in Somalia has ended. Clashes are politically motivated and only serve the interests of a few. There are political struggle between armed factions and the business community against some of the faction leaders.

But there are positive signs. The TFG enjoys measured support and the external influence is sustained. There is an obtained domestic recognition from the Somali people that we have to find the solution to the conflict, and there are community based reconciliation processes going on. The civil society is vibrant, local conflicts are de-escalated, the TFG revives the basic governing institutions and the support from the international community continues. The diaspora factor has also increased and is promising for the future of Somalia.

³ United Nations Security Council Resolution 733 (1992)

The Role of Norway in Peace and Conflict Resolution



*By Raymond Johansen
State Secretary
Foreign Ministry
Norway*

Norway's efforts to promote peace, reconciliation and development reflect the value we place on human solidarity and our respect for the value of each human being. This foundation of what might be called core values is central to our efforts in different parts of the world.

As an impartial actor, Norway can help to put good intentions into practice. We can play a constructive, supporting role and enable progress that benefits the people.

At the same time, peace policy has become a part of security policy. By helping others, we can also help ourselves, as members of a globalised world. Norwegian peace policy is therefore more than involvement in a series of peace processes. Our involvement in such processes and our efforts in the UN and development assistance are gradually being fused with security policy — security policy for the 21st century — security policy for the age of globalisation.

Globalisation is making the world a better place. Many people are being lifted out of poverty, but far too many are being left behind. In the last fifteen years, the world has suffered one hundred conflicts, of which about thirty are still 'active' today. Nearly all of them are internal. Due to globalisation we are affected by these conflicts.

Many of today's greatest challenges – terrorism, international crime,

environmental degradation, the spread of infectious diseases and fear – originate in conflict areas far away. However, there is really no 'far away' anymore: Local conflicts are also a global problem, a global challenge. The situation in Somalia is no exception and deserves our most serious follow-up and support.

Norway and the UN

Norwegian foreign policy is pursued along three main tracks:

Firstly, we are seeking to strengthen the international legal order, and we will cooperate with others on finding joint solutions to the greatest challenges of our time.

Secondly, we know where we are and where we need to go. We will further develop our partnerships with our close friends and allies.

Thirdly, we will focus on areas in which Norway can contribute to peace, reconciliation and development. We will participate actively in the UN, and are willing to provide assistance and support for development. We will seek out opportunities where we can make a difference.

My main point is that Norwegian peace policy is guided by all of these

considerations. Much of what Norway does on its own is possible only because of our involvement in international cooperation, our partnerships, and our alliances. In several conflict areas Norway's role has been to prepare for, complement or support the efforts of the UN. Our efforts under the auspices of the UN give certain credibility. Our peace and reconciliation efforts are rooted in our commitment to the UN, NATO and European cooperation. Although we have had high-profile roles in some conflicts, we generally cooperate with others, whether in the UN or in other forums. Norwegian peace building is based on teamwork.

Of course, there are many conflicts in which the UN cannot play, or is not given a role to play. It is particularly in these situations that a country with Norway's resources, political will, and vision can make a difference. Many consider the thrust of Norwegian peace policy to be our participation in peace and reconciliation processes.

Our involvement in Sri Lanka, Sudan and the Middle East is well known. Many are also aware of the role we are playing in the Philippines and Haiti, and — after a hiatus of several years — we are again involved as facilitators in a process involving the ELM and the Government of Colombia.

Norway's policy towards Somalia

Let me now turn to Norway's policy concerning Somalia.

The Somali people have suffered for so long. For much too long!

The plight of the people must come to an end. To this end, the country needs an effective parliament and government for the people.

The drought this year and recent battles in Mogadishu have not made the situation any easier. If anything, the desperate needs of so many have been amplified. The international community must help.

From the Norwegian side we are committed. We provide humanitarian assistance. A total of more than NOK

100 million so far this year (in addition to GAP contributions and peace and reconciliation initiatives) - channelled through the United Nations and NGOs. And we will continue to provide our support to alleviate the difficult humanitarian situation. We will also continue to encourage other countries to follow suit.

But, as you are well aware, in Somalia even humanitarian help can be difficult to deliver. Because of the shaky security situation, because of the lack of political progress and compromises. That makes it very hard to reach out to the people in real need. Lasting and fundamental improvements to the situation are much needed. For this to happen, real political will of the Somali leaders are needed. The anarchy in Somalia cannot be allowed to continue forever.

Potential for a new Somalia

At the same time, lasting peace cannot be imposed from the outside. The peace effort must be owned and driven by the Somalis themselves. Above all, the Somali leaders must let national interests lead the way. The ongoing process – the Transitional Federal Charter and Institutions – carry the potential for a new Somalia.

- With a representative Government based on Somali traditions that can bring the country forward, away from unrest, anarchy and possible radicalization.

- With a Government that can also be a partner for international cooperation and bring the country back to the community of nations.

The Charter provides a good basis, and must be translated into real results locally – on the ground. The Government of Norway supports fully the implementation of the Charter and Institutions. We will continue our support. We will continue to support institutional capacity building and reconciliation efforts locally. The fact that the Parliament has begun its work inside Somalia is a necessary step. It is a good step. It is a beginning of the long road ahead.

Dialogue must now be the means of settling differences, not arms. In this

regard I am very concerned about the developments in Mogadishu. Compromizes must urgently be reached so that the country can function and move forward - with improved security, humanitarian access and gradual building up of the institutions. We must engage all willing groups in dialogue to move forward. Somalia has always been a moderate society. Emerging radical elements must be marginalized through real progress emanating from the process in Baidoa.

Promoting proactive international contributions

As a member of the international community, Norway also seeks to influence other countries and organizations to do more for Somalia, to be more engaged in a constructive way. The multilateral system, the United Nations, must be geared up to the challenges at hand in Somalia. Only a united and coordinated international approach can achieve that. We need common efforts to support the ongoing process for peace,

governance and development within Somalia.

We will continue to promote strong and proactive international contributions. We will follow up and do our part, through the multilateral system and with our partners. Mrs. Rina Kristmoen from the Embassy in Nairobi will talk to you tomorrow, and go into more detail about the cooperation we are engage in within the region.

You can make a difference

Last, but not least, I am very pleased to see so many Somalis in Norway gathered here today. The kind of inclusiveness you demonstrate here today is a great step forward. I know you have made great efforts to make this happen. I am also very sure it has been worth it - and will continue to be a rewarding journey for all of us. Uniting in dialogue here in Oslo today is an example to be followed by all Somalis.

Together you can send a strong message to Somalia in support of the efforts for peace and development in the country. You can make a difference!

Can We Reconcile the State and Society?



*Abdulrahman Moallin Abdullahi
the chairman trustee of
Mogadishu University*

Somalia remains a failed and collapsed state since 1990. Although some of its regions succeeded in establishing local administrations, the core questions of state and societal relations remain unsolved.

The political elite still has nostalgia for recreating the old system of governance characterised by the lack of respect for basic human rights, transparency, and good governance. On the other hand, people in Somalia are yearning for a comprehensive and lasting peace and looking forward for a system of governance that offers respect for their Islamic faith and does not discriminate clans and citizens in any way. Dialogue as a means for conflict prevention and resolution between the ruling elite and the ruled masses is not a well-developed culture. Therefore, as far as the genesis of the conflict remains unaddressed, there will be always possibilities for recycling crisis and conflicts in Somalia.

Somalis are Africans, Muslims, and Arabs. Around the world, there are Somali-Norwegians, Somali-Americans, and Somali-Canadians. In Somalia there are different indigenous groups; two of the clans are indigenous. But we are all Somalis.

Somalis are Muslim clans living originally on the Horn of Africa. They share both the Islamic faith and the clan culture. Traditionally they are ruled by a co-chairmanship of the clan chiefs and religious scholars in a

harmonious way. However, the Somalis lost their independent leadership by 1925 when colonial powers completely suppressed and/or contained local leaders. The new Somali elite that dominated the post-colonial nation-state worked to weaken traditional structures and to undermine social values and culture. This has resulted in an unresolved, permanent conflict between the traditional elite, consisting of clan elders and Islamic scholars, and the modern elite.

There were initially two Somali identities. Those who created the Somali state suppressed the clan identities. Then those identities revolted against the state. The warlords are representing the suppressed clans. However, radicalised indigenous attachments are the biggest problem in Somalia today. How should we deal with this?

I want to open a discourse on the relation between tradition and modernity in Somalia. There are three major components of the identity of every Somali; these are clan attachment, Islamic faith, and national identity. How is clanism, Islamism, and nationalism organised and prioritised in the way of thinking of every Somali?

1. The nation-state educates its citizens and demands that they must give their total loyalty to the nation.
2. The clan culture and its leaders demand that priority should be given to the clan interest and loyalty.
3. Islam demands and Islamists propagate that absolute loyalty belongs only to Allah.

Therefore, Somalis are divided on how to prioritise these three major components, and as a result we may see today nationalists, Islamists, and clanists vying for political power. I will

argue that until we reconcile these three ideologies the Somali crisis will remain.

Many Somali groups feel that they are not included in Somalianess. They are still revolting. To have comprehensive peace and reconciliation we have to recognise the clan identities and the Muslim identities. This is the time to look at this. And we have to look at clan attachments and Islam before we can have a nation state. Today, the nationalist state is dominating.

The Role of the Diaspora in Peace Building



*By Kristian Berg Harpviken
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There is an emerging acknowledgement of the role of the diaspora in peace building processes.

The PRIO does research on diasporas and peace building in a number of contexts and countries. Recently the PRIO has employed one of the leading researchers on the Somali diaspora, the Dutch scholar Cindy Horst. Personally I know nothing about Somalia and will talk about the role of the diaspora in peace building on a general basis.

The concept of peace building was launched by former UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali (1992-1996). Until then peace building was only seen as something happening after a war. Now the concept has a broader meaning. The question raised was to what extent the peace building concept grasps all those involved. It has expanded in space; it is something that goes on in regions.

The transnational network of people living in the diaspora is an emerging area in research. But it has been there all the time. If you want to be a part of the diaspora, you challenge the limits of nation states.

Three sectors for peace building

As we see the concept of peace building today, it goes on in three main sectors:

One: the security sectors. Rebuilding security is mostly about making

military means less relevant for the political scene. So what possible roles may the diaspora play in this sector? First of all they can be a resource because they may have left the country because they did not want to fight. That is, they do not have blood on their hands. That may have a positive effect. But coming from the diaspora can also have negative effects.

Two: the economic sectors. Peace building is also about reconstructing the economy of the country. In this sense the diaspora contributes positively by investments and by sending money home. But a negative side effect is that this may lead to unrealistic expectations on the ground.

Three: the political sector. People in the diaspora can lobby and offer neutral candidates. However, commonly the diaspora is politically polarised, and may be seen as 5th colonists.

The increasing importance of the diaspora
To conclude my introduction I will emphasise that there is a potential for positive and negative effects of the diaspora in peace building processes. The diaspora is part of the problem, but is also part of the solution. In research, there is an emerging trend of acknowledging the diaspora in peace

building. In my view, this must be encouraged. But we do need more knowledge of the role of the diaspora in peace building. We want more

recruits from the diaspora, like you here at this conference, who can become researchers.

Somalis in Norway as a Resource in Conflict Resolution



*By Mohammad Osman Jawari
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Teacher at Tiller Secondary School
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I did not come here to make you happy, but to confront you. We want to solve the problem. Take off your gloves!

In Norway it is a common event that seminars, symposiums and round tables and group discussions about Somalia are held at regional, communal and district levels and at school and work places too.

I must say, it's extraordinary that there is enough interest in Somalia's problems in Norway to support a two-day conference on how to be helpful, and it's splendid that Somali Norwegians who are committed to obtain a better future for Somalia have organized this venue. I am delighted that they've included me among the speakers, although I am not at the height or competence of the illustrious professors and speakers who have been tackling uninterrupted the problems of Somalia for the last 15 years. Nor I am more informed than the dear brothers and sisters from Somalia, whose mere presence and participation in this venue not only honors us, but simultaneously re-evokes deep-seated nostalgia as they share with us their up-to-date experiences which educates our minds and stimulates our thoughts.

At this junction, as an elder Norwegian Somali, I will be below my duties if I do not register here, on behalf of the all the Somalis of Norway, our gratitude to all of you who have taken the trouble of the long trip to visit us in Norway, our newly adopted home. As the ancient saying

goes: "O dear visitors! If you visit us at our homes, you will find us the guests in our homes, and you the lords of the houses". Welcome to Norway! And thank you very much for sharing with us your experiences.

We likewise wish to register our thanks to the Norwegian Foreign Office and the UDI in particular, and through them, to the Norwegian government and society for their interest, for keeping the concern of the Somali problems alive, and for making this event possible.

Last but not the least, our praise goes to the Somali young men who relentlessly worked and organized this conference and out of love, hope, and brotherhood to Somalia and Somalis, never felt tired nor were discouraged by any hindrances. It is a good sign that Somalia has yet well educated and sensitive young men to rely on, who are able to deliver the objectives if given the right opportunity.

Experiences from Norway

I have been given the not-so-easy task of presenting some thoughts on "How the Somalis in Norway could be as a resource in conflict resolution". I might take you through a rather lengthy introduction, but insightful for some, before proposing some possible fields in

which the Somalis in Norway or in the diaspora could be of help.

I live in Trondheim, the first city in Norway to receive Somalis and where they have been able to organize themselves in one organization. We want to solve the problem, and I did not come here to make you happy. I came here to confront you. On the issue of Islam, we stand together – Norwegians, imams, priests, Somalis – in a discussion on how and if Islam can survive in a secular society. It can. There are three forms of secularization. Islam can only live with one of them. Not the Cuban/Russian form, neither the liberal secularist form. But Islam can live with moderate secularism. Norway is constitutionally a Christian society. Still the government supports the construction of a mosque.

In this country we have just celebrated the 17th of May. They didn't celebrate it with their guns, they have barnetog, russetog and folketog – processions of the people. It is a day for children. They dress up. Why? They are remembering their constitution, not somebody else. This country has been like a ping-pong ball between Denmark and Sweden. Norway has suffered. We have to look into the history of the country we have adopted. Norway was trying to become itself. They traded their constitution and got the Danish king.

The first thing Somalis did was to throw out the constitution. We traded badly. In my opinion, you must be beneficial to the society you where you live, that being in Norway, Somalia or elsewhere. If you sit in the cafeteria and go to the social office and you tell me you are good and superior, I am sorry, you are NOT!

How to solve the Somali problems

In a nutshell the major problems of Somalia are lack of security, the absence of the rule of law, poverty, and the lack of education and health. These need immediate action. Yet there are other major problems, such as cultural social behavior, which need steady action for a long-term solution.

It seems to me that there is little room for the Somalis in the diaspora to contribute to the establishment of security and the rule of law, which are the major and most immediate problems. It requires means and resources beyond their capacity. But there are many ways they can help and effectively make a difference in the long-term future of the country, which we shall discuss latter.

It goes without saying that, in order to solve Somali conflict, it is necessary:

First: (a) to identify, determine and define the major problems in contest. And that is not enough. It is necessary that (b) all Somalis accept and recognize that the identified issues are "problems" that need to be collectively addressed with sincerity, free from tribal pride and political, religious, economical and/or militia opportunism.

Second: The intent, point of view, and position of each quarrelling party about the issue(s) in contest must be clearly determined.

Third: To find a patient and resourceful mediation/conciliation party, who all parties can trust and who is able to help and draw the quarrelling parties to a common ground of conciliation acceptable for all parties.

In the hands of the Somalis

The first thing that all Somalis, inside and out of the country, including the transitional parliament and government, must realize that the key to the resolution of the disputes of Somalia is in the hands and minds of the Somalis. They should stop looking out for or thinking that foreign countries or other than the Somalis will solve their disputes.

As we experienced, the foreign "helpers" all too often get it wrong and do more harm than good. Moreover, I think it's important and logical that a people in distress go through the agonizing process of coming up with solutions to their own problems, rather than merely accepting spoon-feeding from foreign "experts".

The essential cultural element(s) for a country seeking an immediate response and consideration of support from a concerned foreign country --as is the partisanship of world nations today -- is that it belong to all, or at least strongly in one, of the following categories: blood and language relation, religious relation, way of life, good neighborhood and strong economic interest (see also Samuel P. Huntington's "The clash of civilizations", 1997 Ed. p.42).

Somalia's relationship to other states

If we carefully examine these six elements vis-à-vis Somalia's relations with the sovereign states from which Somalia might expect resolution and support, it will be clear and beyond any doubt that the resolution of the Somali problems must come from no one else but the Somalis themselves. They must clean their own house and then seek only financial and technical help from the international community.

1. The only sovereign country with whom Somalia has blood, language, religious and neighborhood relations is Djibouti, which has done whatever it could. But the experiment failed, thus no blame on Djibouti.
2. Blood and religious ties with Arab nations: considering the actual situation of the world today with the so called "war on terrorism" and the domestic problems in their region, the Arab nations are in despair. They can and they are helping only financially and, for obvious reasons, only on carefully selected fields.
3. Religious relations with the Muslim nations is likewise handicapped and unable to help for the same reasons in (2) above. This is also due to the disturbing activities of religious opportunists in Somalia and for many other reasons. To my understanding, the Muslim nations will never be able to help effectively resolve the differences within a given Muslim community or between two Muslim countries, or to solve the unrest which is dominantly affecting

most of the Muslim countries. This is true until the Muslim states translate into practice the Qur'anic process of conciliation and the deterrent component in verse 49:9, and the humanization in the true sense of the word stated in verse 49:10.

4. If two parties among the believers fall into fighting, then affect reconciliation between them. If one of them transgresses beyond bounds against the other, then fight you all against the one that transgresses until it complies with Command of God (and desists from fighting); But if it complies, then make peace between them with justice, and be fair: For God loves those who are fair and just. The Believers are but a single Brotherhood: So make peace and reconciliation between your two contending brothers; and fear God that you may receive Mercy". (Q. 49:9-10).
5. Apart from rehearsing daily these verses, what have the Muslim states done to translate them into practice? Don't all the Muslim states together have the ability and necessary human and financial resources to sustain a nominal and quickly deployable armed force that applies these rules in the Muslim countries, if not by themselves, at least under the United Nations supervision? Why the children of NATO member States die doing the Heavenly duty imposed to the Muslims? The whole world is in despair for an organization over groups and nations from whom can be expected to act justly and try to compose quarrels and able to make and keep peace. The absences of these essentials were the failings of the League of Nations and are today the failings of the United Nations. Somalia is known as "the conceived baby of the UN", from the time of the Soviet Unions' rejection of the British Foreign Minister Ernest Bevin's plan of Great Somalia the Four-powers council to the UN Trusteeship to the failed tentative of the 90's to its actually almost indifference.

6. There is no sovereign state on earth which knows the human history and the dramatic failures and primitive killings and maims of tribalism and the hatred therein, that will ever support willingly the development or establishment of a way of life based on tribalism.
7. As for the goodly neighborhood assistance Somalia is receiving from its neighbors, there is a great dosage of altruism and of good intention indeed, but many Somalis, especially the elderly and the educated middle-aged Somalis, have some reservations. They are mindful of the reason why the Somali flag has a five-pointed star in its middle and what it represents. And because of that they take caution.
8. As for the economic aspect, it is easy for everyone to see that Somalia does not have the resources of Iraq nor are there super-powers interested in its geographically strategic position.

Thus we conclude that Somalis must reconcile themselves and stop looking for a solution in foreign arenas.

As we said earlier, if Somalia is to reconcile with itself and get out of its misery, statelessness, anarchy and put an end to the primitive and senseless killing of its own children, and further commit themselves to establish a state and long lasting peace and prosperity for the coming generation, then it must take a pause and constructively look first and foremost to its real history from the ancient to the modern times.

Then throw out the myths on which many of their beliefs are based, the myths that made them despise each other. Then courageously accept the outcome, correct the mistakes, and take only what is traditionally good and ours. And use that as a base for changing and to start a new beginning.

The origin of Somalia and the Somalis

History is important, as the ancient saying goes: "He, who doesn't know his history, knows not his identity".

So let us look into some examples of historical fact, and certain issues among the folk stories and myths. I believe that these are untrue myths, but there are many people who took them as serious and true indeed, and thence fight for it. Thus are these among the major problems of Somalia.

In ancient times the Somali area was called the Land of Punt. Some experts claim that: "The Land of Punt is the same mentioned in the Bible as Put or Phut, a people counted amongst the sons of Ham mentioned in Gen. 10:6; 1 Ch 1:8 and frequently mentioned in the Prophets as an ally of Egypt (Jer 46:9 Ezk 27:10, 30:5 38:5 and Nah 3:9. It has been suggested that it represents the people of the Punt (rather Powne in ancient Egyptian), i.e. the African coast of the red sea with Somalia etc. Warriors may perhaps been obtained thence for Egypt".

To date the residue of the name "Puntland" is today known to the North-Eastern regions of Somalia.

As for the origin and the meaning of "Somali", experts and ordinary Somalis alike do disagree and have different interpretations and/or theories. Among them the most prominent of which are myths and theories:

1. The myth holds that the word Somal' developed from the name of the patriarch or the eponymous ancestor of four major Somali tribes: The Darod, the Dir, the Hawiye and the Isaaq whose name, according to the myth, was Samaale i.e. "The righteous one or the one from whom goodness develops or good does work".

This myth must be the first candidate to be thoroughly scrutinized and preferably taken out of the context of the Somali folk stories. It is not inclusive, but limited just to a group of tribes and leaves out a huge section of the Somali

society. Thus divisive and troubling. If it should remain it should be interpreted in the concept of one of the following theories.

1. One theory relates the word Somali to the traditional Somali hospitality, and that it is derived from the imperative tense of the verb Soo + maal e.g. "go and milk" (the domestic animal for the guest), an instruction often given by the head of the household immediately on the arrival of a guest.
2. Personally, after some consideration and research, I prefer the concept that suggests that the word Samaali derives from neither of the two suggestions above. The word Samaale is rather the short form of Samaal + leh (e.g. the righteous one, or the one from whom effaces goodness, one possessing good characteristics), and it is merely obtained from the translation of the Arabic word in Qur'an Saalih (pl. Salihii) lit. The righteous person/or people) which occurs in the Qur'an more than 62 times. It is also the name of one of the Messengers of God mentioned in the Qur'an. In fact even today the name Samantar (the short form of Samaantare and/or Samaaltare, is common name in the Middle and North-Eastern regions of Somalia, and Samow, the affectionate form of the same (lit. the one who is good or does the good deeds), whose derivative root in the Somali language is the same as Samaale, and yet is a common name in the south-eastern regions of Somalia. The Samaale was probably not an individual, but a group of people who agreed and committed themselves to do and develop goodness. Furthermore, it is not only the word Samaale that can be traced back to a translated Qur'anic word. Many of the names of the Somali tribes are as well mere translation from the Qur'anic text.

Likewise the so-called distinction of the Somali people into sab or saab and Samaali has neither sound traditional nor sociological proof in the recorded

history. It is not older in any way than the British and Italian colonial era. This theory distinguishes the Somali people into Sub and Samaali, or Saab and Soomaal. The word itself appears in Somalia only when the British Military Administration's public registration offices began issuing personal identity cards to Somalis, therein it was required to record the person's clan and sub-clan, in addition to his/her name, mother, father and grandfather's name. It is a known phenomenon that Somalis traditionally do not use a fixed family name as in the west. The same practice was in use in the Italian colonial and fiduciary administration (AFIS) in the southern Somalia, (Nome, Cognome e Soprannome, Cabila e sotto-Cabila (Reer e sotto Reer). Such identity registration practice was discontinued only in the late 1950s when the nation was to be independent.

In light of the above, and knowing that Somalis are very quick adopters of foreign words, I believe in the theory of division of the Somalis into Sab/or Saab & Samaali or Somali developed from the English registration word "sub"-clan, and latter became a hyperbole and highfalutin of some western writers who delivered to the books of African history.

Furthermore, a great section of the Somali society is despised by the very tribes which they are brethren with, for the only reason that "Once upon a time some of them ate fish and they have been called 'name', or ate some of the meat of an animal which was not properly butchered etc." And the list goes on. But my question is: how many Somalis do you know who drink alcohol and/or eat pork (both forbidden food by scriptural law), and yet none of their brothers and sisters are giving him or her a name nor despise them? Then if we are not doing anything to a worse crime being committed in our presence, why should anyone despise another person for having done an unclean thing thousands and thousands years ago?

These are only some examples, which I leave to the debate of our young intellectuals who have crossed the line, out of the tribal precinct to Somali

fidelity, and our traditional elderly immune of tribal inebriation.

Preview of the tribal virtues and solidarity of the old and modern

In the old days and until late 1930s, as it was true in almost all other nomadic and/or semi sedentary communities, the Somali society too was entirely dependent on the principal of tribal solidarity. The tribe was the self sufficient cell of the embryonic political and social life. It was the only structure to which the individualistic Somali would submit, because it supported him. It offered him personal protection, it satisfied his vanity and desire for glory with its genealogical and martial traditions, not to speak of the many livestock raid opportunities it offers. Yet tribes were not immune of anarchy, as one author observes: The hierarchical pattern of authority is foreign to pastoral Somali society which in its customary processes of decision-making is democratic almost to the point of anarchy". (I. M .Lewis, 1965)

The various natures of rainfall compelled the Somali population in the north-west, north-east and central regions of Somalia to conduct a nomadic life. The wandering existence inevitably produced clashes and revelries between different tribes, the nomadic battles had occurred from immemorial time and were accepted unquestioningly by the tribes as part of life. Hostility normally took the form of raids on somebody else's flocks, until the accidents of grazing and rainfall caused the rivals once more to drift apart. Such warnings produced little hatred; the fight had its own virtues and its unwritten code of honor.

The virtues, among others, required from the tribe members were bravery and endurance in times of war; generosity, hospitality and protection of the weak in times of peace. Qualities which are far from the attitudes of today's Somali tribal or "civil" war. There was nothing that could not be settled by the tribal elders through mediation, from the blood-feud to livestock raids. In any way, these hostilities were nothing compared with the modern Somali tribal war.

Unlike their brethren in the north-west, north-east and middle regions, the Somalis in the riverine regions are sedentary cultivators and semi sedentary (farming and livestock breeding). They did not normally take part in tribal wars or raiding. Their laborious lives are mostly spent in extracting livelihood from the soil and animal husbandry. They are steady, hard-working people, who watch their income and their expenditure, and observe the laws of generosity and hospitality in a sensible rather than glamorous manner.

They also adhere to the tribal social structures and observe the traditions of the virtues, of the blood-feud, etc. in the same way as the nomads. Their tribal structure is not patriarchal but institutional, inclusive with a true and effective "neutralization system" known as "Bunjibis" (lit. the ceremony of coffee bean breaking), invented some 400 years before the Americans. Their hierarchy also slightly differs from their nomadic brethren. They have shown less individualistic but egalitarian, less anarchic but more sensible to the rules of law, and abiding to the principals of Islamic laws and the basics of the tribal "Heer" (e.g. the unwritten social organization laws). This is the people of the 'Somali Mesopotamia', although with a humble and peaceful attitude in general, if their settlements were attacked, they would defend it with more obstinacy than the nomads normally showed in their battles.

Scholastic statistics show that since Somalia had formal schools until early 1960s, most of the school population was traditionally from these regions. Fortunately or unfortunately, most of these Somali riverine people have not yet fled from the country probably because of their attachment with the land. Thus, their presence is just a nominal presence in the Norwegian Somali community and in all the five continents as well.

The period from the late 18th century to 1960 the country has experienced British and Italian colonialism

administration and UN Trusteeship. 1960-69 democracy was experimented and seemed successful but ended, as in many African countries, with military takeover of the civilian rule and with the introduction a Soviet/Cuban sponsored Scientific Socialism. This was followed by upraise of the people which subsequently drove the country into chaos and has left it without a formal government for more than 15 years now, in fact there has been a total absence of state (in the legal sense). Thus leaving nothing of value for the people to rally around.

The tribes today

Today each tribe is a law by itself and acts independently. The tribal solidarity and structure is also broken up into ever smaller sections, and differences of factions within the tribe sections are frequently occurring.

The old unwritten, but well abided, code of honor and the traditional chivalry are long gone, substituted by extremely deteriorated attitudes and way of life that is unacceptable in any human society. The foundation onto which a political unity and the infant state of modern Somali democracy was based upon and practiced during 1955-1969 – and which produced the first democratically elected African president and who also lost his presidency in a democratic way – has been severely damaged, corrupted and almost uprooted by the military takeover of the 1969-1990. Although the military rule has brought some positive achievements, the scientific socialism foreign to the Somali nationalism, religion and tradition, has severed the democratization process. Whatever was left of the pride of a people, whose de facto homogeneity as a nation was accomplished, and whose will, strength and determination to build and attain the establishment of a democratic “state” which used to be the envy of almost all the black African countries, vanished with the so-called people’s upraising in 1991. It soon developed into the present statelessness, governed by ruthless war mongers, power soothers, economic and religious opportunists, with no agenda of

normalization in sight, nor the possibility of knitting the country back together as a nation. Subsequently, life in Somalia today is crowned of the insanity of tribal anarchy, in a volatile situation of survival, insecurity and unrest.

As if all the above was not enough, we are witnessing what's happening right now in Somalia. Major efforts to put together a national government by Somalis have been under way for over a year after almost sixteen years of anarchy. Apparently oblivious of these efforts, the Americans, who supposedly abandoned all hope for the place a decade ago, are running around covertly trying to track down terrorists and shelling out money and weapons to Somalis for their help. Never mind that there aren't any real terrorists to be found. The warlords are able to spot them under every bush (or in every mosque) and point them out to the Americans, who are delighted to compensate them generously for their tips. The result is that Americans are bankrolling the warlords’ side in a campaign against “Islamic militias”, a campaign that, at a minimum, sets back the efforts to get a transitional government established and into operation – and at worst, it is about to plunge the country into a new round of civil war. All this to get support and keep going the American domestic policy on the expense of poor Somalia.

Governmental options for the future

Somalia has good people, but it is lacking good governance and good understanding of the meaning the word “sovereignty” and the implications and duties therein. It has good and fertile land; it is lacking water and good irrigation system. Somalis are quick learners but they are lacking scientific education. The people can live together, as they used to, but they lack trust to each other, the will or method of power-sharing, and every slight success or even attempt of nationhood revival is followed by opportunistic counter. Thus people are forced and discouraged by events, circumstance and loss of values.

Sheikh Sha’rawi, a well known scholar, and familiar with the political and

spiritual situations of the Muslim countries, was once asked by the Egyptian TV: "What is the reason behind the long and unending fighting around the world, like the one in Somalia?" In short his reply came in three sentences: "Two rights never quarrel," he said, "while it is known to all that if right and wrong quarrel, surely sooner or later wrong will loose and the quarrel ends. If you see an unending quarrel, it's a fight between two evils."

I believe that every human being, including the warlords, have a God-given nature, a natural faculty of knowing and accepting only the truth. All the Somali people in Somalia and in the diaspora agree, after the tortuous peace process, that even a bad government is better than no government. So, however weak the actual parliament and government, we must support it while it is in its infancy. We must likewise be careful what form of state or form of government we should put forward for the country. For now it seems that three options are on the table, namely, a Somali federal republic, the actual transitional setup which I understood as a Somali tribal federation, and thirdly a Somali republic. Let us dedicate a brief comment to each of the three.

Federal republic: Most of the federal systems of the world are found in countries that are geographically large and are composed of regions that differ from each other in various important ways: Religion, ethnicity, language and economic activity. Do we really differ in these items? How many states are we thinking of? Will these states be economically in a self sufficient situation to run all their affairs, and thus join the federation? When we say federalism are we really thinking to establish a federal "republic", or a federation of tribes?

The federation of Somali tribes: The actual setup onto which the parliament seats are distributed, as well as the cabinet ministers, over-emphasizes tribalism and can be translated to a federation of tribes. I hope that this is only in this mandate and transitional, and that before the end of this mandate the parliament will be able to work out a

reasonable system based on something other than tribal distribution. Because if we continue the present system sooner or later we will be confronted with question of constituency of each seat, and this will take us to the consideration of determining the geographical borders of each tribe, and as we all know – tribes have no borders. The true geographical boarder delimitation of any tribe is where it meets another more powerful tribe. As we can note today, for example, there are tribes who migrated as far as from the middle regions and beyond, and which are now residing in the Lower Shabelle Regions.

Somali republic: A political framework for Somalia that could work and creates space for peace, focuses on nationbuilding and produces responsible leadership, is one that gradually de-emphasizes tribalism for the sake of Somalism.

At the outset, I wish to make it known that I have nothing against tribes per se, on the understanding that it is used as a convenient label by which we may know, and not to despise each other. The now legally stupid concept of tribalism in Somalia is, as each tribe is saying to the other: "I know why I am on my side, because I know myself. That is why I am not on your side". In reality, what the individual knows of himself or herself is whatever vanity the tribe's poets and story tellers have praised their own tribe, and likewise nurtures hate for the other tribes on the bases of the myths, poems of the same tellers, for s/he trusts them instead of taking a pause to ponder and question himself or herself "what is wrong with me?". Truth is that all the tribes of Somalia don't know each other. Each tribe knows just itself and the neighboring tribe(s) at most.

As we said earlier above, the tribe is the self-sufficient cell of the embryonic political and social life, and a structure to which the Somali individual easily submits. To de-emphasize tribalism must be accommodated at village, district and regional levels, so that it can function as a shock absorber for the national. In order to get this apparatus functioning as such, the establishment

of strong local municipalities must be given priority. The regions must be reduced to a minimum so that tribes can learn to live together. Regions must be given a broad autonomy in the conduct of their affairs, and officials must be elected by their respective communities at all levels and be accountable to their community. Accordingly we can have a simple Somali republic with autonomous regions which will be gradually sanitized from tribalism through time, and likewise a national parliament de-emphasized from tribalism from the beginning as its seats will be distributed and elected by the regions on the basis of equal representation.

Emergency needs of Somalia and possible fields of assistance

Let's now jump to what we in the diaspora can do. There are innumerable emergency needs in Somalia today. People need medicine, water, food, shelters, education and schools, social justice, equal opportunity, and jobs. Each one of these needs is of high priority for the people living in Somalia. The question is, what the Somalis in Norway, and the Somalis scattered over the five continents as well, can do to alleviate some of these burdens from their brethren in distress?

The transitional government is in its infant stage and has no control over the whole territory, nor does it have the necessary resources to provide the most immediate and basic needs of social services. Therefore, we suggest that the Somalis in Norway should concentrate in three fields of activity: water supply, health, and education.

Since the security situation in the country is volatile, it should be the more fortunate Somalis abroad to draft, search for financial support and execute mini-projects targeted to communities in places more in need and ready to take over the projects at a later date.

At present there are mini-projects such as schools, drilling of wells and water reservoirs, and sanitation sponsored by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) created by and managed by Somalis in Norway and abroad. They operate in the

regions of their origin, and are jointly financed by grants from governments and other NGOs and monthly contributions collected from their tribesmen in the diaspora. Lately these activities have helped, but their efficiency, fruitfulness for the community, and accountability leaves much to be desired. Furthermore, the various projects, although with the same objective (education for example), have no system of cooperation and exchange of experience. As a result, each project implements what it can and teaches what it deems necessary, thus creating future difficulties and complications.

Accordingly, I would suggest that:

1. All the Somali-Norwegian NGOs should meet and form a forum of Somali NGOs' cooperation council, where they can exchange experience, help each other, and create a kind of uniformity of the final product they are delivering to their community.
2. It has been noted that most of the applications submitted for financial support of projects to the government or other NGOs in Norway are not receiving positive replies, although the projects are genuine. This is mostly due to insufficient data or that they are not defined to the Norwegian standard. Accordingly, the Somali Norwegian NGOs' council should apply for a shared fund, or to be provided with shared "grant-writer expert", who will draft the projects agreed by the NGOs' council. S/he will make sure that these projects are drafted to the required standard while the NGOs' will supply all the necessary data and information needed.
3. The immediate objective of this council is to unify the projects, create accountability and make sure the delivery of the product is as described in the project document.
4. The council should establish contact with concerned Somali department(s) and should operate tactfully with the local elders and

with the department and avoid rivalry.

5. One of the long term objectives of the council should be to expand the council to include first to the Scandinavian Somalis, and then to the rest of the Somalis in the diaspora scattered in the five continents.
6. All the projects financed by the Norwegian government or Norwegian NGOs shall be manned by Somali Norwegians and Norwegian experts. This is to insure accountability and reducing our local Norwegian unemployment. Other Somalis in the diaspora or experts of other nationalities can be employed if the need arises.

Suggestions for education projects

"Society, language and mind are indissoluble: Society creates mind, mind creates society, and language stands as mediator for both these processes" (Halliday 1978)

We have seen the absence, or weakness, of a central authority in Somalia. Children are growing, we already have a huge generation of illiterates, and the gun fight school which certifies the teenagers joining a partisan militia is the easiest accessed school available.

Education through mother tongue training plays an important role for the basic development of the cognition, identity and personality of the child. It is also true that a well-developed mother tongue has great influence in evolving the self esteem and the attitudes of the child to become lifelong learner. On the other hand, it is certain that Norway is among the most prominent nations that have early recognized and granted this vital children's right through its educational policy. The Mønsterplan for grunnskolen, otherwise known as m-87, is firm proof both to the above statement and the importance the educational system in Norway attaches to the teaching of the mother tongue at the schools. Indeed the m-87 was the greatest gift Norway has given to the

minorities living in Norway, of course after asylum.

The more we make schools and educational institutions, the more we ease the market from employable young men and women in the inappropriate fields, and indeed a patient way that surely will contribute to the resolution of the conflicts in the long run.

Accordingly in the educational area, we suggest that the Council of NGOs' should take as its foremost priority to develop:

1. An educational curriculum vitae or an educational master plan (pensum), for the 1st to the 10th grade school children must be in the foremost perspective, as a start, followed by the Secondary Schools and higher educations CVs. This should be presented to the education department of Somalia. It will be the greatest gift of the Somali Norwegians to the future men and women of Somalia.
2. Develop text books on the bases of the Master plan.
3. Print the text books.
4. Train voluntary Somali Norwegians as teachers who in turn will be developing emergency teacher training courses in Somalia in their respective regions of origin or, security permitting, in other areas of Somalia.
5. Enable and equip the Somali Norwegian elders to return to their regions of origin for several months to get reacquainted with the local problems and prepare the ground work for the project(s).
6. Help in the rehabilitation of the school buildings, and build schools where there is none.
7. Create adult education centers, with the objective of an illiteracy campaign, and mainly teaching civic education and social science. The centers must also be equipped to function as community centers

where they can discuss their community affairs.

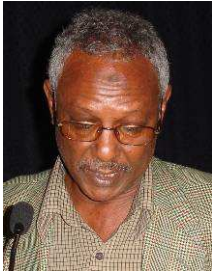
8. It would be ideal if a dollar a day per child could be paid to the family of the children. This would attract students, strengthen the power of purchase of the families, and thus create small businesses in the community markets.

Projects on water supply, health and sanitation shall be developed and

executed with the example of the educational master plan stated above.

In conclusion, I wish to make it known to whom it may concern that there are many descent and well-educated Somalis (educators, doctors, engineers, scientists, policy makers) in the diaspora, with all the necessary qualifications and experiences and able to undertake the realization of these suggestions, and in despair to be given only the opportunity to be used for these tasks.

Voices of Peace and Awareness



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Is peace an alien concept in the Somali culture?

As we all know, traditional Somali life is, for the majority, nomadic, in an arid terrain which is full of adverse conditions as a result of the scarcity of rain and grazing for their livestock. The harsh environment is an aspect of what makes the character of these people tough and resilient, but at the same time cognizant of the need for a code "Xeer". The "Xeer" shall limit and diffuse man-made crises for the benefit of the individual. It is a group insurance, as they are perpetually on the move as they chase after water and better grazing grounds for their animals and hence their survival.

Peace and peaceful co-existence is a cornerstone of the survival of the nomadic mode of life. Hence conflict resolution is neither a new phenomenon nor a scarce tool in the Somali traditional context, as conflicts deliberately or accidentally have occurred and confronted the people. Testimonials to such cases are masterfully expressed and we find them treasured in the annals of Somali poetry. Furthermore, the teachings of Islam that Somalis adhere to emphatically promotes the belief and practice of peaceful code of conduct that demands the observance of the individual both in his/her religious rituals as well as the daily activities. Somalis, as all Muslims, are obliged to greet each other with "May peace be upon you, as well as Allah's mercy and blessing". How noble peace and charity are to the Moslem person is evident in the Quran and the Prophet's teachings. Here are few examples demonstrating how Somalis treasure peace in their faith and traditions:

- "Spread peace and feed others, and pray at night while the people are asleep, then you will enter the paradise in peace" from prophet Muhammads "Hadith" which is an adored obligation which each one ought to follow.
- Ma nabadbaa? which means "Are you in peace?" Waa Nabade ma Nabadbaa? affirms that there is peace and in return enquire if there is peace. These are the two most common greetings two people exchange when they meet.
- Nabadgelyo and Nabaaddiino which mean respectively "go in peace" and "remain in peace" are the last words two people say before departing from each other.
- Nabadda wiilbaa ku dhasha, colaadana wiilbaa ku dhinta! which means "a boy is born at the time of peace, whereas a boy dies in the war". Suffice it to say that this Somali saying summarizes the contrast of the virtues and vices respectively inherent in peace and war.
- Rag gogashii waa godob la'an is a powerful Somali saying meaning "the comforting sleep mattress of men is when they are not sought for revenge".
- Rag wadday oo wadday, oo walaal wax uu ku dhaamo waayay by the great Somali warrior Wiilwaal which

means: "I subjected every sort of punishment to men and I didn't find any thing better suited than to call them, oo brother!"

- Gartu hadday qoraxooto guurtiday hadhgashaa, hadday oontana markhaatigay ka cabtaa, hadday daashana runtay ku nasataa. In the efforts to settle a dispute, when hit by the heat waves of rage, it seeks calm under the council of Elders. When it gets thirsty, it quenches from a witness's alibi, and when it gets tired, it relaxes and rests with the truth told.

With the above excerpts one then wonders why the contemporary feuds are defying what is inherent in the faith teachings as well as in the tradition of the people. My answer to this is based on a deep thinking and I am encouraged to note a living example that I believe affirms my conclusion. Traditionally, whenever Somalis resolved to settle conflicts, the parties are believed to come to the meeting Shir, valuing and wanting to see a peaceful conclusion with an honest pledge to live up to the final terms of the decisions. Thus, the traditional approach valued transparency whereby the motives and verbal pronouncements were consistent, and hidden agendas were not anticipated to have an effect on the agreements.

In the contemporary context, I find that where those present and jockeying for positions in the so called "peace conferences" are true representatives of the grassroots, stability and lasting peace is possible. The Somaliland experiment is a outstanding example where elders took hold of the situation. Without any outside interference they have resorted to the traditional Shir to bridge the polarizations caused by the oppressive regime and to chart a framework and foundation for peaceful co-existence. This is a outstanding Somali prototype conflict resolution model all Somalis need to feel proud of. The success of this effort is credited to several main factors:

1. The application of the traditional conflict resolution paradigm Shirweyne with Beel mandates.
2. The absence of hidden agendas assured by long and unconditional discussions to all parties.
3. The main players/participants during the process had no fear of conflict of interest as the format for crafting a resolution had no chance to secure them personal perks.
4. There was no pressure on those at the meeting from outside interest groups or individuals.
5. A crucially important factor is the honesty of those mandated to bring trust and build the needed mechanism that can bring reconciliation, as the words expressed publicly and the inner feelings of those responsible must be one and the same.

The challenges in the 14 failed attempts made in Somalia are painful. In my opinion, they show elements that are contrary to the points mentioned above that constitute reasons for success in Somaliland.

1. In principal those present in the meetings claim to represent Beelo, but are predominantly self-appointed politicians.
2. For the most part each has a hidden agenda, cheering for whatever one perceives to assure or promote their personal interests.
3. All these meetings have been in the media limelight and invariably funded by foreign capital and the outside community. Therefore, they are and cannot be free of outside interests, be that regional or otherwise.
4. At all such meetings the final word invariably is "let us party for the successes concluded". But we don't wait long before it hits irreconcilable bumps and hence another painful and a dooming crash.

The Prospects for Peace

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Somalia is currently undergoing a 15-year-long civil war which has resulted in the loss of thousands of lives, mass internal displacement, and a large refugee influx in addition to its impact on regional instability in the Horn of Africa sub-region.

Since the early 1990s, the country has been without a recognized central government. There is no law and order. Apart from "Somaliland," "Puntland," and the emerging Transitional Federal Institutions (TFIs), the country is divided up into fiefdoms controlled by faction leaders answerable to no authority. The newly-formed TFIs are also split into two factions based in Baidoa and in Mogadishu, the capital: with its majority in Baidoa, the interim capital. In the absence of a recognized central government, formal laws have been replaced. Instead there is a combination of Islamic Sharia law, Somali customary law and the pre-1991 penal code which is widely used. Although not very effective, in terms of its uniform application country- and clan-wide, it is one of the few remaining mechanisms for managing violent conflict in the country.

Historically, conflict has been part and parcel of Somali life. This may be due to the Somali people's pastoralist nature. This is also linked to the country's long history of migration, conquest and assimilation coupled with the colonial-imported and imposed 'nation-state' system which has had significant political and administrative repercussions. For example, there were contradictions between the new centralized state system and the Somali pastoral culture, which could never co-exist.

This paper aims to discuss the Somali conflict and prospects for peace. It is meant to help generate academic discussions and ease policy making for interesting countries like Norway. The paper argues that in the end it is the Somali people who are to find a lasting solution to their problem and that the international aid community needs to understand Somalia through the eyes of Somalis and that it should not go beyond playing the role of a facilitator.



Photo: Margrethe Siem

The Somali Conflict: An Overview

The Somali conflict is part of a larger conflict system, the Eastern and Horn of Africa conflict system which brings not only countries in the region, but other interested foreign countries into the conflict picture. Although Somalia's post-Barre era, 1990-2006, experienced inter-clan conflicts, dominance of warlords in Somali politics, localized intra-clan clashes, and clashes for territorial control prior to the Eldoret/Mbagathi peace process, there are three main types of conflicts in Somalia to date: the general civil war, political divisions within the Transitional Federal Institutions (TFIs), and counterterrorism vs. Jihadism. None

of these seem to be fading away anytime soon. In fact they all look to be just beginning. The causes of the Somali conflict are wide and varied: colonial legacy, Cold War politics, and regional and international interference and influence are but a few of the main causes. The initial epicenter of the conflict can be determined as the total collapse of the Somali state.



Photo: Margrethe Siem

In the general picture, the Horn of Africa sub-region has long been a focal point of strategic interest to outsiders especially during the Cold War period. As a result, international spheres of influence during this time between the United States and the former Soviet Union influenced the unstable character of the sub-region. This was based on long-term strategic interests in terms of its location, religious and ethnic diversity, and natural resources potential.

Geographically, Somalia is the best placed in terms of its location in the Eastern and Horn of Africa sub-region. In addition to its centrality between the Arab and the African worlds, the country borders three important waterways: the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden, and the Indian Ocean. These three important waterways and the link between the Arab and the African worlds give the sub-region particularly Somalia – even in its war-torn nature – an important role in the international naval trade route system between the Middle East, Russia, Asia, and Africa.

Somalia, which is one of the worst cases of state collapse and state failure in post-colonial Africa, is situated in the Horn of Africa and covers an area of 637,660 Km². It has the longest coastline in Africa, being bordered by the Gulf of Aden to the north and the Indian Ocean to the east. The country

is bordered by Kenya in the south, Ethiopia in the west and by Djibouti in the northwest. In the 21st century, particularly after 9/11, the sub-region has again become equally important for the “war on terrorism” by attracting a similar international attention like that of the Cold War with more of the focus on Somalia due to its anarchic nature and that of the IGAD region.

Somalia, especially during Barre’s time (from 1969 to 1990), was a victim of nationalism and Cold War rivalry. Due to this, the country overflowed with arms and Barre’s dictatorship was kept in power by the two former superpowers: the former USSR and the United States. Similarly since the 1970s, the Horn of Africa sub-region has been a hotbed of inter- and intra-state conflicts. A combination of a power vacuum, drought, and competition among rival factions and groups over the scarce resources led to the famine and to the eruption of civil war in Somalia from the late 1980s.

Since the break up of the civil war, the Somali conflict has become unique in that it makes Somalia the only country without a government for more than a decade and a half. Of all the past peace attempts tried so far (including the most recent IGAD-led initiative in Kenya), none of them has taken root. Changes in government have not helped to further national reconciliation nor peace building. It is a country where there is a struggle for survival: one which is only for the fittest and which gives no role to the poor and the marginalized. There is no protection of minority rights, nor the rights of women and children. There is also an ongoing strategic war economy – including the most recent piracy off the Somali coast – which brings not only Somalis, but also non-Somalis, into the conflict map.

The Causes of the Somali Conflict

As shown from Somali history – despite its contentious nature – there is no single cause that can be isolated as ‘the source’ of the Somali conflict. Several causes have jointly contributed to the creation and development of the war: for example, the legacy of European colonialism and the Somali kinship system and their

impacts on one another can be singled as the major cause.

Cold War politics also had its contribution especially in the late 1970s and early 1980s when Mogadishu sided with the West, the East, and then with the West again due to economic interest while the former USSR sided with Addis to defeat Barre in the 1977-78 Ogaden War. Militarization by Barre himself after the Ogaden War and, as a result, the marginalization and uneven development between the urban and the rural Somalia were also major contributing factors to the conflict.

One other major factor is also the cumulative impact of armed conflicts in Somalia: from 1900-1920, Italy and Britain fought against Sayyid Mohammed Abdulle Hassan, the Dervish; between the 1920s and 1930s, there was Italian fascist rule which the Somalis fought; during the Second World War, Italy and Britain themselves fought over Somalia; during the 1960s and 1970s Somalia has had border disputes, which led to conflicts with Kenya and Ethiopia; the Somali civil war erupted in the northwestern region in 1988 and it later on expanded to the rest of the country in early 1991.

Different scholars have advanced various arguments as to the causes and factors relating to conflict and instability in Somalia. Some argue that the Somali conflict is a result of the incompatibility of Somalia's pastoral democracy and the colonial-imposed central state system while others put the blame on regional interference by both Somalia's neighbors and other interested foreign countries due to their long-term strategic economic and security interests. Academic arguments aside, the need to discuss the Somali conflict and prospects for peace – within the Horn of Africa sub-regional context – is of paramount importance.

Present Conflicts in Today's Somalia

As was earlier mentioned, the Somali conflict is part of a larger conflict system, the Horn of Africa conflict system which includes all other states in the sub-region, particularly Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda. There are also other countries involved, which have interests in Somalia in one way or another. These include Britain, Egypt, Italy, Libya, Yemen, and the United States. They all play important roles – be it constructive or destructive – so as to ensure the different groups they support serve their interests.

Presently, there are three types of conflict in Somalia, each feeding the other: 1) the general civil war which resulted widespread lawlessness and anarchy throughout the country with no uniform (but only clan-based) system of governance; 2) deep political divisions within the TFIs which are yet to agree on where the government should be based; and 3) a new externally-funded conflict between Mogadishu-based warlords and political Islamists over counterterrorism vs. Jihad.

1. Civil war: As a result of the general civil war in the country, there is no recognized central authority to deal with on Somali matters of national interest. The country is divided up into three major units with over 22 warlords or so controlling a population of over 9 to 12 million people. There are also a number of other conflict-generating issues: refugees and returnees, the internally displaced persons (IDPs), violation of human rights, and corruption, nepotism, and political and administrative inefficiencies by various authorities in terms of resource-sharing in war-torn Somalia.

2. Political divisions: Presently, the issue of where the government should be based is threatening the TFIs. While a number of Mogadishu-based prominent warlords want Mogadishu to remain the seat of government, President Yusuf, who has no power in the capital, and the Somali Speaker Shariff Hassan Sheikh Aden, today's power house in lawless central and southern Somalia, both want to use Baidoa as interim capital. Other issues in dispute include the deployment of foreign troops (including Somalia's

neighbors) and the mode of governance in Somalia, in other words the use of force of arms vs. genuine grassroots reconciliation in order to take full control of Somalia.

3. Counterterrorism vs. Jihad:

Worst of all, a new externally-funded conflict between Mogadishu-based warlords and political Islamists over counterterrorism vs. Jihad started in Mogadishu in the past few weeks. Since 9/11, Somalia was branded to be a possible safe haven for terrorists despite the fact that there was no evidence showing the existence of – and/or links with – Al Qaeda members in Somalia. It is no secret, at least from the past few months, that there are radical elements all over the country and even in the sub-region. However, the regional threat they can pose seems to have been overestimated by the US, neighboring countries, and by individual Mogadishu-based warlords who all want to use the counterterrorism card for the advancement of their political and security interests in Somalia and in the Horn of Africa sub-region.

Regional and International Influences

The regional and international influences in the Somali conflict – or obstacles to peace – are a major cause and a contribution to the continuation of the conflict. On the other hand, Ethiopia and Egypt have been competing to have a greater role in the formation of Somali governments since the break up of the civil war. This was shown in their efforts to manage the Somali conflict. While Ethiopia sponsored the Sodere Conference in 1996, which focused on Somali unity and which agreed on a transitional and rotating presidency, Egypt, on the other hand, involved itself in another conference, the Cairo Conference which was held in December 1997. This conference, which focused on the formation of a federal structure, produced the Cairo Declaration which included both Hussein Aideed who claimed the Somali presidency and the former "Somaliland" leader, Mohammed Ibrahim Egal.

Ethiopia's interest is to promote a decentralized state system that will have less influential and power in the Horn of Africa region. Contrary to Ethiopian interest, Egypt's is a centralized state system that can be controlled and that is capable of increasing tensions on Somalia's border with Ethiopia. Doing so would occupy the Ethiopian government and divert its attention and resources from development of Nile waters. The Ethio-Eritrean war has also complicated the competition between Egypt and Ethiopia over Somalia as it also brings Eritrea into the picture. For example, in the 1990s, Ethiopia and Eritrea attempted to outflank each other by fighting through rival armed groups in Somalia and providing them with massive military support and training.

Italy and Britain are also interested in supporting various groups for their interests. For example, Italy is blindly supporting a faction of the TFIs, while Britain seems to be favoring the north and as a result developed quiet diplomacy. Energy-hungry China is also supporting one of the TFIs factions possibly for Somalia's oil potential and the possibility that they may be given oil concessions. They may also be interested in doing this so that they can get a guarantee that the "new Somalia" may not reclaim – and therefore not attack – the Ogaden region over which China already allegedly has oil deals with Ethiopia.

The United States and Ethiopia are also interested in security in Somalia and in the Greater Horn of Africa. Landlocked Ethiopia, using the counterterrorism card, has strategic economic interests within its security interests – which may be genuine but require a Somali counterpart – in Somalia. As a Somali analyst put it "who also knows that the US may also be after oil due to Somalia's and the Horn of Africa's oil potential." Ethiopia may also be after different deals with port towns in Somalia i.e. Berbera under "Somaliland," Bosaso under "Puntland," Kismayu under the Juba Valley Alliance (JVA) and so on if not after a sovereign port of its own annexed from Somali territory.

The Epicenter of the Conflict

Just like any other conflict, the epicenter of the Somali conflict has continued to shift as determined by the focus at any particular time. The current epicenter has shifted from the regular factional fighting in Somalia to more of proxy wars – both military and political – still within and among Somali factions and splinter groups within the TFIs but encouraged and funded by external actors.

In this case, Ethiopia, Italy, Yemen, China, the AU, IGAD, and the Arab League are all allegedly supporting one of the splinter groups within the TFIs while Egypt, and Eritrea are also allegedly supporting the other. Similarly, the ongoing war between the Mogadishu-based warlords and Islamists in the capital is allegedly supported by the US and by private Arab Jihadist elements in the Gulf respectively.

However, the initial epicenter of the Somali conflict can therefore be determined as the total collapse of the Somali state – and the lack of clear agenda by the so-called 'Somali' leaders – which in turn led to injustice, instability, and insecurity for all, inefficient utilization of both human and natural resources and political, economic, and social instability.

Prospects for Peace: Lessons Learned?

There were a number of peace and reconciliation efforts facilitated by members of the international community since the break up of the civil war: fourteen initiatives in total. By looking at – at least – four of the main peace attempts made so far, one can predict, if not see, the optimistic and/or pessimistic nature of Somalia observers and analysts on the prospects for peace in Somalia. The United Nations (UN), the European Commission (EC), the Arta and the Eldoret/Mbagathi peace initiatives are four significant peace and reconciliation efforts facilitated respectively by the UN, the EC, the Government of Djibouti, and the Republic of Kenya under the auspices of IGAD. Although all of the four peace

processes have failed to take root, some of them have had positive impacts.

1. The UN Initiative: With the assistance of the Ethiopian government, the UN facilitated two peace and reconciliation efforts in Addis Ababa in January and March 1993. Fifteen factions attended the two national reconciliation conferences and produced the Addis Ababa Accords. The Accords were never implemented, however, due in part to the focus on the warlords (who many Somalis considered criminals) and the political aspects of the Somali conflict.

In late 1992 following intense media coverage, the United States decided to join on-going international efforts in Somalia, and to lead what is termed "an international humanitarian intervention" in Somalia. They came under the name Unified Task Force (UNITAF), later code named United Nations Operations in Somalia (UNOSOM). Their mission was to stop the factional fighting and to end the famine.

Later, the United Nations was drawn into an armed conflict with the late General Aideed, a powerful warlord in Mogadishu at the time. The conflict became one between the UN-led international forces and General Aideed's United Somali Congress (USC) forces, and eventually led to the loss of twenty-four Pakistani and eighteen US troops, as well as thousands of Somalis, both Aideed's militiamen and civilians. Following these losses, the United States announced a phasal withdrawal, with most Western forces in the UN following suit. UNOSOM completely withdrew from Somalia in March 1995 with neither national peace nor a revived national government structure in place.

2. The EC Initiative: In addition to the UN initiatives for Somalia, the European Commission was pursuing its own approach for peace and reconciliation. The EC commissioned the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) in 1995 to conduct a comparative study to assess the implications of various types of political and administrative decentralization in Somalia, and to avail this information to both the general public

and leading Somali scholars and decision-makers.

The report, which was titled "A Study of Decentralized Political Structures for Somalia: A Menu of Options," focused on four models: (1) confederation, (2) federation, (3) a decentralized unitary state, and (4) a community-based type of power sharing known as 'consociation.' The EC sponsored two seminars each in Naivasha and Nakuru, Kenya in June and November 1996 to discuss the study's findings. Somali traditional and religious leaders, professionals, women and other representatives of the Somali civil society attended the seminars, and supported the concept of establishing "a decentralized state with constitutional guarantees for the full autonomy of its constituent units."

In addition to the seminars held in Kenya, three follow-up seminars were held in Somalia. Aside from establishing the "Puntland" regional government in northeastern Somalia, Somali sentiment and the nature and extent of the civil war remained unchanged. It is believed that the limited effectiveness of the EC initiative was due to the fact that it focused on constitutional debates, rather than on conflict management, as it did not include the grassroots people or the warring factions.

3. The Arta Initiative: President Gelle of Djibouti initiated a long-awaited peace process in September 1999 when he appealed to Somali leaders and the IGAD member states to join him in addressing Somalia's situation. The Djibouti president hosted a preliminary conference in Djibouti with over sixty scholars to discuss how best to approach the reconciliation process. He focused on members of the civil society: the traditional clan leaders, community elders and prominent political figures from past Somali governments, and also asked IGAD member states to provide him the necessary support and back up for the peace process.

The peace process began during May 2000 in Arta, Djibouti with delegations from all corners of Somalia. The discussions continued for over four months and concluded with the election of a 245-member Transitional National Assembly (TNA), an interim president, Abdiqassim Salad Hassan and a Transitional National Government (TNG) led by interim prime minister Ali Khalif Gallayr. The first interim government for Somalia for more than a decade moved to Mogadishu in September 2000 and was overwhelmingly received by Mogadishu residents. Throughout its three-year term, the government was haltingly trying to establish itself in Mogadishu, with no concrete plans to expand throughout the country.

A number of faction leaders resisted the TNG and formed a coalition of opposition groups with a rotating chairmanship called the Somali Reconciliation and Restoration Council (SRRC). The interim government continued to meet resistance from these externally-funded warlords because they believed that sidelining them and labeling them as criminals prevented them from participating in and contributing to the peace process. Like the EC initiative, delegates at the Arta initiative focused on institutional and constitutional solutions to the conflict, instead of reconciliation. While establishing an interim government and certain other state institutions is noteworthy, it was believed and hoped that the process would have gone further and dealt directly with issues of dialogue and national reconciliation.

4. The Eldoret/Mbagathi Initiative: Further talks aimed at resolving the Somali conflict were launched in October 2002 under the auspices of IGAD. In late January 2004 a major breakthrough was achieved when around 40 warlords and politicians signed an agreement at State House in the Kenyan capital, Nairobi, on a transitional charter to establish a new national assembly. After several postponements, a 275-seat transitional federal assembly was sworn in on 22nd August, 2004. The assembly's members were selected under the 4.5 Somali clan formula, with each of the country's four major clans taking 61 seats and a coalition of smaller clans taking the remaining 31 seats. On September 15 and

October 10, the same year the transitional federal assembly elected Shariff Hassan Sheikh Aden and Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed as the country's new assembly speaker and president respectively.

In early November Yusuf appointed Ali Mohamed Gedi as prime minister. Gedi and his first cabinet were rejected by parliament on 11th December but later on endorsed. Although there is some pro-Ethiopian SRRC dominance, the cabinet positions are split between the famous 4.5 Somali clan formula. The new TFIs will be charged with overseeing the writing of a new constitution and staging elections after five years. Under the terms of the January 2004 accord, "Puntland" is to be reunited with the rest of Somalia. Despite the fact that "Somaliland" was not party to the accord, the TFIs are also mandated to open dialogue with the "Somaliland" leadership once they complete the peace process throughout the rest of the country.

Unfortunately, the TFIs are yet to materialize even after a year and a half in office. There have been splits within the TFI's on the seat of government, the mode of governance and the deployment of foreign stabilization force including Somalia's neighbors. The leadership of Yemen and Djibouti and the UN Special Representative of the Secretary General tried their hands to bring the two groups together but failed. On January 5, Ali Abdalla Salah of Yemen finally succeeded to bring Yusuf and the Speaker together in Sana'a and facilitated the signing of the Sana'a Declaration. Although the parliament has been meeting in Baidoa since February 26, 2006 and the top leadership of the TFIs is all on board, the disputed issues are still on the table: the seat of government, mode of governance, and deployment of a stabilization force which includes troops from the neighboring countries.

Missed Opportunities?

In Mohammed Sahnoun's views, the UN missed three opportunities to save Somalia before the state collapse. The first opportunity, says Sahnoun,

presented itself during the 1988 civil war when Siyad Barre's regime bombed cities in the northwest. He argues that the UN should have mediated between Barre's regime and the secessionist SNM movement. The second opportunity, observes Sahnoun, was available in 1990 when Siyad Barre arrested members of the Manifesto Group (a coalition of 114 statesmen, intellectuals, and businessmen) who signed a letter calling for Siyad Barre's resignation and for democratic elections throughout the country. Sahnoun argues that the UN should have forced Barre's regime to release these political prisoners and to restore the pre-1969 democracy that existed in Somalia. The third opportunity, notes Sahnoun, was there to be exploited in 1991 shortly after Siyad Barre fled from the capital. Instead of evacuating from the country and refusing to engage in Somalia, Sahnoun maintains that the UN should have forced the victorious Hawiye-led USC rebel group to share power with its Darod partners and prevent civil war in the south.

Although the above missed opportunities are debatable, Abdul remains unconvinced that these "missed opportunities" ever existed. He argues that with or without a UN mediation effort, the SNM leadership was committed to secession and would never entertain any dialogue with Barre's regime. He also argues that in the Somali mind, the Somali political pie is either won or lost but never shared.

However, there were three other missed opportunities in Somalia. Firstly, the US-led UN Operations in Somalia (UNOSOM) was one other major missed opportunity. The international community under the auspices of the UN could force the so-called 'Somali' leaders to form a government of reconciliation and national unity and help with the task of peace building and state building throughout its two-year stay in the country. Secondly, the Arta peace process was one of them. If Ethiopia and other IGAD member states gave the relevant political and diplomatic recognition, the TNG would have worked since it was only the warlords who were absent from the process. Once the TNG was fully installed in Mogadishu, an

attempt could be made to bring "Somaliland" onboard and an acceptable form of a political federation could be worked out – one that would give the "Somalilanders" enough room to breathe and develop on their own without the approval of the leadership in Mogadishu for everything.

Finally, the workings of the current TFIs seem to be posing as another missed opportunity. In the history of the IGAD sub-region there has never been this level of inclusivity not only among the Somali side but also from the region and from the international community. There is one major factor the TFG leadership does not want to engage – reconciliation – and which it has the support of a regional actor to ignore the significance of key political figures in Somalia. The TFG has a much higher chance to succeed than the TNG had in 2000 when it moved to Mogadishu but it seems that it is losing it purely because it does not want to engage in dialogue but in force of arms with the help of IGAD particularly Ethiopia. Somalia political and military analysts strongly argue that if troops from IGAD's frontline states participate in a peace support mission in Somalia, there will be the first Islamic Jihadist movement in Somalia ever in the history of the Horn of Africa.

The Way Forward: Tying it up?

The paper has made a long journey from pre-colonial to present-day divided Somalia. This section provides a list of policy options and recommendations for the international aid community.

The study recommends the use of conflict-sensitive approaches to programming in Somalia encouraging the involvement of civil society organizations in the international aid

community's programming. There is also a need to devise programmes that address a long-term, all-inclusive, genuine, grassroots reconciliation process. In this case, established academic and research institutions like the Hargeisa-based Academy for Peace and Development (APD), the Borama-based Amoud University, the Garowe-based Puntland Development and Research Centre (PDRC), and the Mogadishu-based Centre for Research and Dialogue (CRD) and Mogadishu University can be fully utilized to marry academic thinking, advocacy and practical programming for the aid community's priorities.

Bringing peace to Somalia is no quick fix. If outsiders are to be involved, they should be engaged in a constructive spirit and good faith even when pursuing their interests. In this case, they can do a lot of useful work under certain conditions: there must be a long-term commitment and willingness to give priority to local Somali ideas and efforts and a thorough understanding and extensive knowledge of the local Somali situation. This should build up relations of trust with everyone – be they groups or individuals, rich or poor, and secular or religious – from all corners since it is the Somali people who are to carry on the peace processes.

Finally, Somalia needs an international secret shuttle diplomatic facilitator to help her get out of the mess, just like the Israel-Palestine and the Sri Lanka secret deals, and in this case, it needs an international caring friend – one that is committed and willing. It is fortunate that the Royal Norwegian government has decided to raise the Somalia profile in the international aid community. There is therefore need for the Royal Norwegian government to take the lead in this especially now that the right man is in the right ministry at the right time!

Perspectives on International Cooperation in the Region



*By Rina Kristmoen
First Secretary
Norwegian Embassy in Nairobi, Kenya*

The role of the international community in the peace process and in assisting Somalia.

Subax wanaagsan!
Good morning!

Dear friends and colleagues:

Let me start by saying that I am very grateful to be invited, and I am very happy to be here to address the Somalis in Norway and to talk about the international community's role. Its role during the peace process and its role in assisting Somalia. The international community can contribute to peace and reconciliation in Somalia, but it is Somalia herself who has to solve the problems. To us it is a continuous task to raise Somalia on the international agenda.

What is the international community? The international community consists of the IGAD, the UN agencies, the African Union, the Security Council, international non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and the diplomatic community, including the European Commission, Italy, Sweden, Yemen, the League of Arab States, Norway etc. The diplomatic corps in Nairobi is particularly active and travels to Somalia frequently. I will focus primarily on the role of the diplomatic community, but also to some extent on the UN's role to assist Somalia, including Somaliland.

The assistance can be divided in two phases: during the peace process and

after the TFG's relocation to Somalia. Assistance is given as political and financial support.

The IGAD Council of Ministers on Somalia met on the 6th September 2002 in Nairobi and considered a report by Somalia Frontline States Technical Committee (TC), which had prepared for the Somalia National Reconciliation Conference. The Ministers approved the report and decided the conference should start on the 15th October 2002. Upon this approval, Kenya announced that it planned to hold the conference at Eldoret on the 15th October.

Delegates would start arriving from Somalia on the 12th to 14th. The opening of the conference was on the 15th October 2002 and several IGAD Heads of States attended the opening ceremony to give the process support and demonstrate resolve of the region to assist the Somalis.

What was the role of the international community during this period? Perhaps more political than financial. Economically the programs and projects continued, and it gave support to the conference itself in Eldoret and later in Mbagathi. Politically IFC/IPF meetings were held during the peace conference, which was chaired by Special Envoy Bethuel Kiplagat. Participants were the IFC (IGAD countries ambassadors to Somalia and the African Union), the diplomatic community, and

the UNPOS. The other UN agencies did not participate at this stage but continued with their programs/projects throughout Somalia.

The IGAD held ministerial facilitation committee meetings on Somalia during the process. These meetings pushed the process forward and for some periods they were held very often: the 8th IGAD Ministerial Meeting on 16th July, 2004; The 7th IGAD Ministerial Meeting on 22nd June, 2004; The 6th IGAD Ministerial Meeting on 22nd May, 2004.

Breakthrough

In March-April 2004 there was a breakthrough in the process. Ethiopia and Djibouti agreed on differences, which led to a coherent approach from the IGAD. In July, August, and September a parliament was selected, 275 members from sub-sub clan on a 4,5 formula (61 from Dir (incl. Isaaq), Hawiye, Darood, Digil/Mirifle, plus 31 from the 5th Clan. A Speaker of Parliament was elected in September, and a Somali Transitional President was elected on 10th October 2004. Out of a competition of 25 candidates, Col. Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed was elected the transitional president of Somalia in a transparent and fair election conducted in a democratic and peaceful manner uncharacteristic of this 14-year old failed state in the Horn of Africa.

The Speaker was from Digil/Mirifle, the President from Darood, and the Prime Minister would be Hawiye. The President appointed the veterinary professor Ali Mohamed Gedi as a Prime Minister. He appointed his Cabinet which was endorsed by Parliament in January 2005.

During the peace process, the international community has had both a political and financial role. Politically it was to "make things work" – but with Somali ownership. The relocation to Somalia for TFIs in June 2005 led to the second phase, where economical assistance became more crucial.

The government relocated to two cities, which led to a difficult period. The Speaker and some ministers were in Mogadishu, while the President, members of parliament, and other ministers moved to Jowhar. In addition, their policies were not coherent, causing difficulties for international support. Many donors held back, even though all institutions needed both economic and political support at this stage.

The international community attempted to bridge differences between the Speaker and the President. They met in Aden in Yemen 4th-6th January 2006, which was an important step in the right direction.

The parliament, consisting of 256 people, was to meet for the first time in Baidoa 26th February 2006, an event that would attract major international presence and hence required a high level of security. And Baidoa was not very safe. Norway sponsored a peace conference on request from the Speaker. Due to the lack of all kinds of facilities – chairs, tables etc. – we suggested that the opening be postponed, but the Somalis did not want that. And they made it. Some 20-25 representatives from the international community in Nairobi were present, as were 211 members of parliament when it opened as planned on February 26th.

It was a very touching and moving day. They sang the national anthem, the Speaker and the President spoke, everybody was very excited. We did not know what to expect. Would they try to overthrow the President? Start throwing chairs at each other? But it all came out very peacefully.

Ongoing projects

The international community has a number of projects going on. One is the Somalia Emergency Budgetary Support Project (SEBSP) which for instance financed the parliamentary session in Baidoa. SEBSP also made a quick response to the Speaker and President regarding the Parliament opening, and has given flexibility towards different requests from the TFG\TFIs.

Another project is the Rule of Law and Security (ROLS), which also deals with the

Baidoa Security Plan. Security in Baidoa has been a challenge and an important issue. There is supposed to be a weapon embargo, but that is a joke. Weapons are coming in from everywhere. The Security Council must sooner or later realise that Somalia needs security, including military forces, and then they must have exception from the embargo. Another important project being supported by the international community is the National Security Plan (NSSP).

There are also a number of projects on Good Governance, among them the Civil Service Task Force which will become a commission as soon as the Parliament finds time to endorse it. There are also a number of projects on education. The UNICEF is quite big in Somalia, and there are also a number of Norwegian NGOs operating in the area.

At the moment there is a need for an emergency package for the government. The MPs don't have offices, computers, hardware, software, furniture – hardly anything. I don't think any ministry has more than three people. They receive no salary, they work voluntarily. The Speaker, President, and some important ministers have received necessary equipment.

Challenges

The international community definitely has a role to play and we face a number of challenges. First of all, we need to coordinate ourselves. We do have a common agenda, peace in Somalia, but we have different opinions on how that can be achieved. We have a number of different coordinating groups, such as the Somalia Donor Group which I am chairing at the moment. We have meetings every second week and discuss openly the developments and

the projects we work on. Huge parts of the international community in Nairobi come to these meetings, including representatives from China, Japan, etc.

A major challenge today is to increase the engagement: we need more donors. The fact that the institutions are together, and that the Speaker and the President have a common message today, is very important. There is a will to get things to work.

We also have to deal with expectations, and not expect too much. Dr. Jawari said yesterday: A bad government is better than no government. Kenyan Foreign Minister, Raphael Tuju put it this way: We tell them to swim cross the river, but the river is full of crocodiles! They need help to get started, but we demand that they get started before we'll be willing to help. They are really starting from scratch, and they need to prioritise immediate tasks and long-term tasks.

But YOU, the diaspora, also have a role to play as Somalis. First of all to support peace.

Be constructive and not destructive. You also have a responsibility when it comes to the attitude you all have towards the new institutions. It is easy to sit in a country thousand of miles from the heat of Mogadishu and come with statements and complaints.

I would like to commend you all for this peace initiative amongst yourselves. It gives me great hope for the future Somalia – and to hear that ALL the Somalis in Trondheim are gathered!

While I have the floor I would also like to commend Jabril and Dr. Abdullahi and the work they do inside Somalia. It must be an inspiration for all of you to see intellectuals working inside Somalia to make it a better place!

No peace without justice

How to deal with impunity



*By Amina Abdi Mohamud
Student of Law
University of London*

There is no peace without justice. Sustainable peace is only possible with justice. There have been 14 attempts. The issue of justice has never been mentioned. I wonder why.

As we are gathered here this morning in the city of peace, Oslo, over there in Mogadishu, the city of war, immense atrocities are taking place: random killings, women are being raped, and civilians are wounded, looted, and burned out of their homes. The latest news from Mogadishu, a city run by warlords, reports that more than 200 people were killed and some 1,000 wounded.

I am not talking about history; I am talking about what happens today. Two million people have fled the country, including myself.

Someone ought to take responsibility for the suffering caused to this wounded boy during the recent clashes 7-13 May 2006 Mogadishu. His name is Shabelle. I will let him be the symbol of my presentation here today.

Impunity

I have searched for a Somali word for "impunity". I found it in a song: "I will kill you, I will murder you, and I will get away with it with total impunity." Impunity is defined as failure to bring to justice those who have committed a serious violation of human rights. Impunity is the lack of accountability for the perpetrators of war crimes and crimes against humanity under international humanitarian law.

Impunity denies effective remedies for the victims.

Over the past years, thousands of civilians have been killed, women and girls have been raped, and children under the age of 15 have been forced to fight. These crimes against humanity have been committed with total impunity and the wrongdoers have never been held accountable.

If you want to change Somalia, stop impunity.

Individual criminal liability

During the Nuremberg Trials the world community felt that crimes were committed by individuals as commanders, and not by invisible entities such as the state. Therefore individuals are criminally liable for their acts or omissions.

History has seen a number of social movements demanding justice. Latin America has changed. During 30 years the brave Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo in Argentina have persistently demanded justice for their children who disappeared during the "Dirty War". We brave Somali women should do the same: stop killing our children! In June 2005 the Argentinean mothers succeeded. The country's Supreme Court ruled that the two amnesty laws enacted by the previous regimes were unconstitutional.

These amnesty laws were preventing the former military officers and government officials from being investigated and prosecuted for the alleged crimes committed during the military regime.

We need both social movements, including NGO's and human rights defenders, and the legal channel to combat impunity. There are no social groups in Somalia today that talk about the issue of impunity

Transitional processes

Today a number of mechanisms are in use to deal with impunity: amnesty laws, truth commissions, and criminal prosecution.

Amnesty laws are commonly applied during transition from military to civilian rule. They are meant to block investigation and prosecution of top officials. But the state also has to redress the grievances of the victims. The heart must also heal.

Truth commissions are used for investigative purposes and are particularly known from Latin America and South Africa. These are temporary bodies used for transition from political violence or civil war to peace and reconciliation. The aim is to bring together victims and officers responsible of state-sponsored terror like apartheid. In South Africa victims and perpetrators sat together telling everything and crying together. Today, however, apartheid is considered a crime against humanity.

National criminal prosecution is brought out in a number of different ways, such as through international ad-hoc war tribunals as the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) (161 indicted), the International Criminal Court for Rwanda (ICTR) (57 indicted) and the SC-SL (9 indicted).

We have also seen local court systems as the Rwandan Gacaca, where the perpetrator had to tell why he killed. One said that he dehumanized his victim calling him a cockroach. And,

finally, we have the establishment of the permanent International Criminal Court (the ICC) in the Hague.

Impunity in Somalia

Somalia has a long history of impunity; the country carries the legacy of colonialism which was based on the use of force to control the Somali population and their land. The colonialist departed from Somalia enjoying total impunity. Then, during 1960-1969 there was a continuation of the colonial policies manifested through oppressive systems or configuration of power. The oppressed of yesterday became the new oppressor.

The dictatorial regime of 1969-1991 escalated the violation of human rights through summary executions, torture, extra-judicial killing, etc. Violent armed conflict between 1991-2006 violated the Common Art. 3 of the Geneva Convention, Additional Protocol II of 1977, as well as the latest Jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court.

The clan against justice

To complicate matters even more, the clan system harbors criminals and victims in the same community. Individual vs. clan responsible are inseparable in the Somali culture. Somalis do not abide to the rule of law. The rule of law is to regulate individual and state matters and behaviors and not the clan. Somali poetry by Geeraar also promotes widespread impunity and dignifies killing. It also incites clan hatred and rivalry.

The clan system is incompatible with the rule of law.

No punishment may be inflicted on a person other than for a breach of the law. But people are killed or punished because of clan affiliation. Irrespective of rank and status all are equal under the law. (Maxim: No one is above the law). But the clan in power is above other citizens. Protection of fundamental human rights and individual freedom. (Under a bill of rights or the constitution). But one can lose his/her life because of his/her clan.

Accountability for war crimes
Somalia after 14 different peace and reconciliation conferences still lacks any

provision for a truth commission, prosecutions, or other forms of accountability for past abuses in the conflict. How can a nation reconcile without first exposing injustice?

When other methods than criminal prosecution are implemented during the transitional period following the period of armed conflict, they may simply wipe out crimes against humanity which international law sees as having "universal jurisdiction". Many conflict-resolution advocates prioritize first the other existing mechanism at the expense of justice. But the need to re-establish peace on the one hand or national reconciliation on the other, cannot substitute for justice.

There must therefore be accountability for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by all parties to the internal armed conflict in Somalia; otherwise it will not be possible to have long lasting peace, economic development and reconstruction.

The international community

The international community has a duty to investigate and prosecute the non-state actors involved in the Somali conflict who have violated both human right and international humanitarian law.

The international community cannot prescribe different standards for different countries (Liberia/Sierra Leone vis-à-vis Somalia), and for this purpose, I will present the different institutions and legal mechanisms that exist throughout the world in dealing with the fundamental issue of impunity.

I will examine the new legal doctrine in Individual Criminal Responsibility in international law and its particular emphasis for acts and omissions committed by non-state parties. I will also highlight the legal and practical arrangements in bringing to trial non-state actors (rebel groups and warlords) involved in non-international armed conflict to the International

Criminal Court (the ICC) under this doctrine.

There is likely to be broad agreement that the law of internal conflicts includes principles regarding the protection of the civilian population. Basically, the treaty-based law applicable to internal armed conflicts is contained in common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions and the additional Protocol II of 1977. The rules of international humanitarian law state that military operations must constantly be conducted in a way that will spare the life and dignity of those not, or no longer, taking part in the hostilities, including civilians, captured fighters and the wounded. None of these instruments, as well as clan truce or cease-fire agreements, holds in Somalia.

Moreover, the principle of Individual Criminal Responsibility enshrined in Article 25 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court is relatively new and it contains an updated codification of the elements of crime against humanity applicable in internal armed conflicts and non-state parties such as warlords and rebel groups.

Operations in a collapsed state
The absence of a national judicial system through which to prosecute those responsible for gross human rights violations within a collapsed state may also have contributed to the UN's passivity concerning abuses of Somalis by Somalis. So long as it had no clear legal framework to prosecute individuals within a "clan based society" operating in a failed state, there was even less prospect of holding Somali authorities accountable for atrocities against their own people.

In a clan-based society such Somalia, selecting the appropriate jurisdiction for high-profile defenders (who often claim to be war heroes rather than war criminals) is a complex job. Failure to bring them to justice will rob the traumatized population of the ability to heal. In particular, the victims and their families have a right to see justice being served; or that the amnestied or truth and reconciliation methods if prescribed may not still lead in certain circumstances to a requirement to pay damages to the victim.

There cannot be peace in Somalia as long as clan allegiance which harbors criminals is deeply rooted in the Somali culture. Therefore, each clan has the responsibility to surrender the particular warlord once prima facie evidence proves that he has committed certain crimes.

The International Criminal Court

There is now an alternative mechanism: the International Criminal Court to which the UN could readily turn in the "Somali case" to the court's prosecutor acting under chapter VII (Art.. 48 and 49) of the UN Charter.

As I argued above, it is of fundamental importance to address the core accountability issues of impunity. It is necessary for the UN to appoint an international commission of experts to investigate, to gather documentation, and to analyze the possible remedies and consequently to propose a judicial process that will bring to justice those responsible for the violence.

Even if Somalia will establish a functioning judiciary branch, it will not be in a position to prosecute past crimes due to the local clan pressure

or direct influence by those still in power.

However, international proceedings may rise above these problems, and be the best option for Somalia. The case of Charles Taylor, indicted of war crimes in 2003, was transferred to the ICC on April 2006. This is the reason why I believe that Mr. Taylor sets the precedent and a justifiable reason why Somali warlords should also be brought to the Hague.

Recommendations

In conclusion I will urge the following steps to be taken:

- The Somali Government must ratify the Rome Statute so that ICC can exercise its jurisdiction for crimes committed in Somalia from 1st of July 2002.
- The UN should appoint an international commission to investigate war criminals and the violations of humanitarian law in the recent battles in Mogadishu.
- The UN should request that the ICC Prosecutor starts the investigation. As per Chapter VII of the UN Charter and ART. 13 (b) of the Court's jurisdiction.
- Civil society should start a social change to end impunity.

Finally, but not least, the Somali clans must bring the war criminals to justice. That is the hardest challenge of all.

30 years of Red Cross/Red Crescent: Challenges and Successes



*By Bodil Ravn
Department for Emergency and International Affairs
Norwegian Red Cross
Oslo, Norway*

Red Cross' most important role in Somalia is to be a service to the community.

I have worked with the Red Cross for 21 years. Somalia has always been a topic. We have had a close contact with one of the Red Crescent groups in Somalia, Somaliland, and Puntland (Galcaio) over the last 16 years. In the beginning of the 1980s we focused mainly on landmines. During the 1990s, through the *TV-aksjonen* fundraising campaign rewarding the Norwegian Red Cross, we focused on Somalia, Mocambique, Afghanistan, and Sri Lanka. Somalia has to solve this herself has been the focus. Somalia may be divided into two or three countries, but there is one Red Crescent.

Today, Somalia has a Red Crescent that is 100 percent self sufficient. There are no Norwegian delegates. We wanted to build a national society, and that is what we have done. Everybody in Somalia knows what the emblem means – the cross and the crescent. The key word they think of is "protection".

We have orthopaedic workshops in three cities. The workshops have been assaulted, but our professionals came back. We invest in people. We have initiated an integrated health programme. It is important to provide what the ordinary health authorities should provide, but are unable to do. We go where the people are. There are a number of topics: malaria, HIV/AIDS, and vaccination programmes. We encourage women to

come to the health stations for vaccination of their children. We tell them why the vaccines are important. The first two programmes are directed towards the community, the third is an organisational development programme.

It has been difficult to get people from other countries to work in Somalia due to the security situation. Therefore we have focussed on educating our own people inside Somalia so that they can run the programmes themselves. Our Somali students are among the best.

The organisational development programme is a way of preparing ourselves through capacity building and knowing. That way we can be prepared if something happens. The three workshops situated in Mogadishu, Galcaio, and Hargeisa have their people circulating between the centres. We learn from each other, and there is intensive cooperation between the centres.

There is a problem when it comes to staffing. People leave us and go to other countries or to other organisations to work because they get better paid. However, as long as they stay in Somalia and work, that is OK with us. If you don't work with people, you cannot mobilise people for good. It is not enough to talk. We also need practical examples to show what is important. How can civil society make a difference? Through networking. People talk to each other. When you move from Mogadishu to Galcaio to work, you talk to people.

Education and development Experiences from the Sool, Sanaag and Hawd Development Agency



*By Nimao Ali
Elementary School Teacher
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada*

We all can do something: go to Somalia, spend our holiday there, work voluntarily. Just talking to people helps.

I am an elementary school teacher in Canada. Some time ago I went back to Somalia for my holidays. When I came back home I realised I had to do something and searched for an organization through which I could work. I found the Sool, Sanaag and Hawd Development Agency (SSHDA) run by Somalis in Canada and the USA. Today I want to share the experience of SSHDA and the role of Somali Diaspora in order to promote and encourage collaboration between Somali professionals and government organizations.

Education in a neglected region

The Sool, Sanag and Hawd Development Agency (SSHDA) states in its mission that:

Today's youth and children are the future of Somalia, as professionals and international community members it's our prime responsibility to ensure that they are properly educated.

Education is a key to human development, success, and prosperity. It is a fundamental element and instrumental in teaching people values. *We, individually and collectively value not how much power, wealth or influence we possess, but how much knowledge we offer to make other people's lives easier.*

The SSHDA works in the Sool, Sanag, and Hawd region in the north of Somalia, which shares borders with Ethiopia, Puntland, and Somaliland. 90 percent of the population is nomadic. This section of the Somali society is neglected, marginalized, and suffers from regional political instability. The citizens have major difficulties and there is very little aid from the international community. School and elementary training has been close to absent in the SSH region. There were no educational buildings or any infrastructure. Refugees and internally displaced people were living in the old school and university buildings. We could not throw them out from where they had lived for ten years, so we had to give them money in order to resettle somewhere else.

Funding by the Diaspora

A huge number of children have lost their parents and dependants in the war or due to their nomadic lifestyle. An orphanage was urgently needed. We launched a campaign last summer encouraging Somalis living in New York to sponsor the orphanage with 30 dollars. The first orphanage center is now established in Las Anod and an Orphan Children Sponsorship Program introduced, covering the living and educational expenses of each child.

This shows that each one of us, you and me, can do something.

The SSHDA started by introducing an elementary school, and the number of students increase every year. More than eight primary schools have now been built or rehabilitated to an estimated cost of US\$15,000. Secondary schools have also been established.

There was also a high number of teenagers hanging around. We had to prepare a project that could attract them and keep them off the streets. This was again done by the Diaspora, which raised funding for the first university in the region, in Nugal. The first public libraries in the SSH region have also been established, and the only High School in Las Anod has been rehabilitated and reopened. The salaries for teachers, Principals, and SSH's Regional Education Director have been secured for 4 years.

We have also introduced an alternative education program for youth and business owners, through the Nugal University, the library, and the Hirrosontti Youth Vocational Program. This is done in partnership with Finland and will be implemented in the region from 2006-2008.

When you collect money, particularly after 9/11, everything has to be transparent. We organize conferences where we show our achievements and ask if people can help.

Community Development

As elementary schools, secondary schools and a university were in place, next step was to educate the community. To make them aware their own responsibility for maintenance of the community: This is your school, this is your city.

For this purpose we have the Program for Education for Peace and Development focusing on community development, social rehabilitation, sustainability for education and environmental awareness, and the

Program for Community Awareness and Participation organizing annual conventions on cross-fertilization of ideas, awareness creation, achievements discussion and long and short term planning.

Somalis talk a lot, so why not talk about those things that really matters? We established a radio where they could talk about important things. This, and the establishment of websites, has had a tremendously positive impact on the communities. Free speech and open debate needs to continue and to be encouraged.

The Diaspora

The Somali Diaspora and Somali professionals overseas play a key role for the sustainability of the educational projects. They are persistent due to their love of the country; they can have a strong impact and serve as a bridge between Somalia and the international community. They are accountable and responsible, and have skills and experience that can be used to create the building blocks of peace in Somalia.

The UNDP launched a programme a few years ago facilitating Somali professionals going back and work in Somalia for a few months. It has stopped now, but should start again. Many parents need training in how to tackle the raising of children who have suffered severe abuses.

The SSHDA and other NGOs alike have to deal with an enormous range of challenges and difficulties when working in the area of education in Somalia. Firstly, it is hard to ensure a seat in the classroom for every 6-year-old Somali child. Secondly, there are no public schools. Thirdly, without international donation from friendly foreign governments these penniless students do not stand a chance. There should be established boarding schools, as people are nomads. The international aid in the SSH region is close to minimum. Only some 30 percent of the needs are met, there are many unfinished projects pending and funding hard to get.

The Diaspora is not willing to pay all the time; people have their own problems,

their own family concerns. So funding is unstable. But we have to pay our teachers, and are obliged to charge school fees. However low the fees, there are always families that cannot afford to pay for their children's education. But if we can get collaboration with large, international organizations, we may be able to establish a free public school.

I was thrilled as I learned that children in Norway have the right to learn their mother tongue. That protects the identity of the child. You have to bear that in mind when you open a school. The school is not just to keep children away from the streets. You must ask what the purpose of the school is. You have to teach children that violence is wrong, that they have to talk to people when they are angry, and not beat them. And when you teach children, you teach adults.

Women, Islam and a modern society

Women are the backbone of Somalia, both in and outside the country. We have to support women, They do a tremendous job. But they also require support and consideration for any lasting peace. They need parenting and birth control education, as well as to learn about health, nutrition, and women's rights.

The faith of the community is also an important issue. There is an Islamic revival. In some regions every fourth house is a Koranic school, something that proves the community's interest in education. According to a UNDP report:

"Koranic schools have the potential to play an enhanced role in expanding primary education, and thus help to move the country towards Education For All. Towards this end, there is need for a clear definition of the interface between the Korana and formal primary school."

We work with this and recommend that the core values be adopted to gain the trust of the community.

The Somali culture is rich in traditional institutions, in systems of land management, agricultural and grazing systems, conflict mediation, and legal adjudication. These traditional practices are part of the support system needed to make any new settlement effective and sustainable. They should be refurbished and provided with resources.

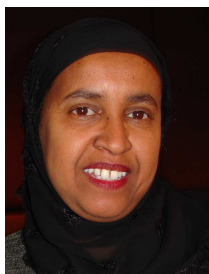
External technologies and management systems should be adapted in order to meet needs at local levels. Further, the spirit of innovation and creativity ought to be encouraged at regional and national levels.

A free and unregulated market economy has emerged and its growth should be encouraged. We should include a new curriculum that is combatable with the business education needed in each region. Education has to be relevant and must add what matters to the individual such as food, water, shelter, security, and environmental impacts.

Relevance

We try to give education that matters to the community, adults and children alike. There are a number of people working in the private sector; we try to provide relevant training.

Education Is the Key to Development and Rebuilding



*Zahra Said Nur
Programme Manager for Education and Democracy
Diakonia Sweden, Nairobi, Kenya*

Education liberates people and enables them to take control of their destiny. It empowers them so that they can stand up and claim space in the political arena and demand democracy. Education makes people into agents for change.

Before the civil war Somalia's population was estimated at 7.5 million, today the UNDP and World Bank estimate the population to be around 6.8 million. We are said to be one million people in the Somali Diaspora, but I believe the correct number to be two million Somalis outside Somalia.

The Somali economy is mostly based on livestock trade. An estimated 50-60 percent of the population is nomads. An estimated 20 percent of the population is settled in rural areas and 25 percent live in urban centres. Globally, Somalia ranks 161 out of 163 states on the Human Development Index with 67 percent of the urban and 79.9 percent of the rural/nomadic population living in extreme poverty.

The school situation

According to UNICEF, there are more than one and a half million children of primary school age (6-13 years) in Somalia, but less than 350,000 children are enrolled. However, always keep gender disparity in mind when you read statistics, as women and girls often come out worse. 27.9 percent of the boys in primary school age are going to school while only 15.5 percent of the girls. Less than 14 percent of

the teachers are women. Puntland has the lowest school enrolment with only 20 percent. The overall adult literacy rate in Somalia is very low, only 17.1 percent. When you look at poverty in a country you also have to look at the levels of illiteracy, infant mortality, and basic socio-economic factors. These are extremely depressing in Somalia. As a nation-state, Somalia collapsed in 1991. 4 million children live without basic services and access to education. 132 out of every 1,000 babies die at infancy. One out of every ten women dies during labour with birth complications and an estimated 98 percent of girls undergo female genital mutilation. Only one out of every five Somali children access primary school.

The education structure in Somalia is organised in primary, secondary and tertiary education. Primary formal education has eight grades divided into lower primary (1-4) and upper primary (5-8). Secondary education is organised in forms 1-4, then tertiary education is delivered through the university or vocational skills training at community colleges.

The Millennium Development Goals

The UN member states have set a number of goals to be fulfilled during 2000-2015,

the so-called Millennium Development Goals (MDG) including:

- Eradication of extreme poverty and hunger
- Achievement of universal primary education
- Promotion of gender equality and women empowerment
- Reduction of child mortality
- Improvement of maternal health
- Combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- Ensuring environmental sustainability
- Developing a global partnership for development.

How many of these goals do you think Somalia can achieve within ten years? We are very far from achieving these goals. If we achieve only five percent we should be very happy. However, some MDGs are more important than others. In order to attain all the other MDGs, we must have universal education for all. This is formulated as a promise by Mr. Kofi Annan, UN Secretary General: "Every boy and girl around the world has a right to expect that we will do all we can to ensure that they will enjoy their right to an education."

Further, Mr. Annan also has stated that: "There is no tool for development more effective than the education of girls." Hence, the MDG calling upon gender equity and empowerment of women is of fundamental importance as well for the achievement of all Millennium Development Goals.

Then we have to think particularly of education for girls, as that is the most effective tool for development. But nevertheless, all children should go to school.

The situation of women

The situation of women has left much to be desired in Somalia. We are supposed to have 12 percent representation in the federal government, but we only have eight. There is only one woman in the Puntland government, Ms. Asha Geele. The division is by clan, and many of the clans do not appoint women at all.

Women's access to the political arena is restricted.

We need to empower women if we want to improve our productivity. But we also have to bring the men onboard, as they are the ones in power. Through education, we can assure the basic needs of families and communities. The social-economic benefits of educating girls and women are numerous: improved economic productivity, well-being of families, lower infant/maternal mortality rate, improved nutrition, improved health status, prevention of the spread of HIV/AIDS and increasing opportunities for subsequent generations to access and participate in education and training.

In Diakonia we have extended the concept of education. If you want to promote democracy and human rights, the key is education in a broader sense. The benefits of education and training cannot be underestimated. Quality education establishes a firm and solid ground upon which families and nations can grow stronger and fuller. It equips individuals with skills which then makes them more productive and healthier, it guarantees prosperity, equity and equality. Education is further the best tool to script the blueprint for social development as it is only through education that individuals are able to meet their basic needs in the long term.

It is the single most highly rated item that can be applied to free humanity from dehumanising conditions evident in extreme poverty that millions of people are condemned to. Through education people are liberated and enabled to take control of their destiny. It empowers them so that they can stand up and claim space in the political arena and demand for democracy.

Education opens the eyes of individuals so that they are able to look, see, and perceive structures of oppression. Then they can ask questions and become agents for change. Human rights, democracy, and gender equality can only be promoted where there is education and awareness. Through education we want to produce new leaders who are open-

minded, tolerant, and who questions things. All change starts with education.

"Education raises awareness and awareness gives birth to concern. Concern in turn gives birth to action and action leads to change. Change gives hope, and hope gives people reason to believe in themselves. This in turn leads to development, a development that is rooted in people which is sustainable"

Diakonia's work in Africa

Diakonia Sweden is an international NGO working all over the world. Most projects are in East Africa where it started working in 1984 as a humanitarian agency with the aim of emergency relief and disaster management. Since then the NGO has increased its scope of interventions and works to cover other key priority areas, namely democratization of education, gender streamlining, human rights, and economic justice. It started its operations in the north-eastern regions of Somalia, now called the Puntland State of Somalia, in May 1994 as an emergency organization headed by the strong Swedish woman Elsie Ludenburg. She went to Somalia when the Somalis fled the country, and in short time she implemented a number of programs and activities.

Our strategy is to have an integrated approach to enhance local democracy and poverty alleviation through education and skills building. We focus on construction and rehabilitation of schools, capacity building, civil society organisations, tertiary institution development, literacy programme, vocational skills training, provision of instructional materials and equipment and peace and civic education. We work with local NGOs and let them localize their own problems and make projects. Diakonia is a facilitator, supporting and encouraging local initiatives.

The Puntland University is the result of this. It started as a small project, now it is a state university. Everything has been concentrated in Mogadishu--the universities, the state bodies, etc. etc. If you needed a passport you had to go to Mogadishu. There are a lot of problems in Somalia, but things are happening. People organize themselves, women organize. Courts are being reconstructed. On April 17 we commemorated the Somali Environment Day. Human rights, capacity building, and building of a judiciary do not come easy. It takes time.

What Diakonia is doing is a drop in the ocean, but it is something. Conflict and insecurity cannot be an excuse for not helping people.

Higher Education in Mogadishu During the Civil War



*By Dr. Abdullahi Farah Asseyr
Consultant Pediatrician at Arafat hospital in Mogadishu
and Adviser of President of Mogadishu University
Mogadishu, Somalia*

The Mogadishu University was established amidst the civil war and a city in conflict in 1997. Its mission is to restore hope and educate and nurture students with proper values, knowledge and skills necessary to develop Somali society.

Looking back into the history of the higher education in Somalia, we see that during the Italian trusteeship (1950-1960), two years institute for higher education consisting of law and economic departments was established. Then, the faculty of education of Lafole was opened in 1969, and the same year the Somali National University (SNU) was established.

The university gradually grew until it reached 15 faculties during 1971-1985. In these years, SNU graduated 7,431 students. The university was financially supported by the Italian Cooperation Development. However, during the civil war, the Somali National University was completely destroyed.

The road to the establishment of Mogadishu University (MU) was not furnished with roses. The initial vision and the heroic decision to work towards instituting a community not-for-profit university in the midst of armed militia trenches, war-torn community and divided city of Mogadishu, was even unbelievable. However, founders were conscious of the formidable task ahead and their slogan was "when there is a will, there

is a way". In fact, these founders had only strong will, dedication and faith. No human and material resources and no facilities were available.

A famous medical Somali Doctor Mariam Warsame Yusuf wrote after visiting the university in 2002: "This is a group will, a group of Somalis who have vision, ambition and dedication".

Historical chronicles

In June 1993, the idea of establishing a non-governmental university came about when a number of professors of the former Somali National University and other prominent Somali intellectuals from the Diaspora congregated in Mogadishu. The concept continued under discussion until 1995. On 9 August 1996, the group met and decided to open the university. On September 22, 1997, Mogadishu University was officially opened and the dream came true.

The vision of the MU is that it shall be the premier non-state university in Somalia, dedicated in providing affordable and accessible high quality education attuned to the decent values and the culture of good governance.

Its mission is to restore hope in the Somali society impaired with collapsed

state institutions. It shall educate and nurture students with proper values, knowledge and skills necessary to develop Somali society and it shall preserve the national cultural heritage and integrate indigenous knowledge and modern sciences.

The university is dedicated to good governance within the MU and beyond. It works for the protection of human dignity and rights. It works with professionalism and superior work ethics, encouraging openness and cooperation with others.

The Mogadishu University is governed by a board of trustees with 15 members, and an academic council consisting of a president, vice presidents and the deans of the faculties. Its financial resources come from student tuition fees (\$300- \$600 per year) and donations from individuals and institutions both Somali and non-Somali.

Seven faculties and international collaboration

By now, the university awards bachelor degrees in seven faculties, the Faculty of Shari'a and Law, the Faculty of Education, the Faculty of Arts and Humanities, the Faculty of Economics & Management, the Faculty of Computer Sciences and Information Technology, the Faculty of Nursing, and, finally, the Faculty of Political Science and Journalism. It has established three institutes and centers respectively working on Somali studies, continued education and public services and water and environment. Instructions are given in English and Arabic.

The university also collaborates internationally and holds memberships

in important transnational university associations such as the Federation of the Universities of the Islamic World (FUMI), the Association of the Arab Universities and the Association of the African Universities. Further it has initiated partnerships with African and Arabic universities, universities in the United States and Scandinavia, including the University of Tromsø in Norway.

Advocates for peace

During the civil war the Somali education system totally collapsed. The MU hired 15 buildings where it habited, and its first classes were held in a secondary school. It acquired an area where it would construct its university campus.

Next year the MU will celebrate its 10th anniversary with high achievement. In the last nine years nearly 4,000 students have enrolled and about 700 students have graduated from various faculties. These young graduates are the backbone of the Somali service providers' network run by the Somali civil society organizations and emerging state institutions. The Mogadishu University boasts that some of their graduates have completed their PhD degrees and have returned to lecture at the university.

This is a dream; even the students are participating in the construction of the new university. These buildings can stand there for 500 years; they are the future of Somalia. When completed, the Mogadishu University will have more than 20,000 students. All students moved into the new campus last year. Around 1,100 students were enrolled last year. If they had not had the university, they would have joined the militias. Instead they became friends across conflicts. Peace starts with education. The students are advocates for peace.

What do you think?



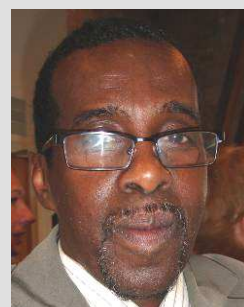
*Text and Photo:
Deqa Ahmed Barqadle
Roda Abdi Hassan*

The students Deqa and Roda asked some of the delegates to the conference what they thought were the most crucial issues related to achieving peace in Somalia, what they could do, and what they thought about the conference.



Kalgacal Hassan, Midwife, Stavanger

Honesty, justice, education and dialogue are the important issues in building our country. Somalis here in Norway must achieve something for themselves before they start doing anything in Somalia. In this way they will reach further both on a personal level and for Somalia. I made a lot of new friends and acquaintances at the conference.



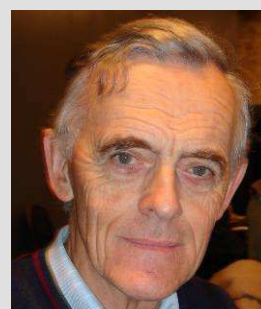
Mahamed Cilmi, Business Man, Oslo

The most important thing for me is dialogue. Somalis need to talk to each other. What Somalis here in Norway can do in the current situation is to encourage people in Somalia to work toward peace and support them. I liked the entire conference, as all issues discussed were of equal importance.



Fatima Kassim, Artist, London

To me the most important thing is to be able to understand each other. To be open and to respect the opinion of others are things we Somalis need to learn if we shall be able to talk to each other. It is also important that you achieve something for yourself in order to be capable of doing something better for your country.



Sturla Johnson, Doctor, Oslo

Honesty is important to achieve peace in Somalia. And Somalis in Norway must stand together and find a solution for this conflict. It surprises me that so many people have gathered here today. It shows that they really are taking the initiative and working together for peace.



Jabril Ibrahim Abdulle, Mogadishu
 Dialogue is important for creating peace in Somalia. I find it very encouraging that Somalis in Norway want to work for peace and it makes me proud. Somalis have to gather information about the current situation and build networks. Together we are strong.



Hodan Mohamed, Student, Oslo
 I want to move back to my home country if peace comes. We who live here in Norway can support our brothers and sisters in Somalia by teaching them about the ideas and knowledge we have learned in Norway. I enjoyed the conference because I learned so much.



Ruth Øydegard, Red Cross, Kolbotn
 Dialogue and respect for each other are important things Somalis need to learn in order to achieve peace in Somalia. I enjoyed the conference and met a wide range of interesting people.



Zakariya Mahamed, Artist, London
 I believe that to achieve peace in Somalia, first and foremost we must put down the weapons in ceasefire. I am impressed that Somalis in Norway have gathered in such large numbers to talk and discuss peace.



Farahnaz Rastegar, Consultant, Oslo
 Dialogue and openness are important, I think. Somalis in Norway could try to contribute to better the situation in Somalia. There is always something you can do. Even the smallest contribution could make a big difference.



Knut Kjeldstadli, History Professor
 The most crucial thing for Somalis is to find a solution to the problem. They have to stand together and demand peace. The rest of the world will also have a better image of Somalis if they stand together and struggle as a nation.

Evaluation of the Somali Peace Conference

*By Thomas Jackson
Researcher
International Peace Research Institute
Oslo, Norway*

The conference, which brought together a large number of Somalis from Norway and abroad, proved to be well organised and successful, with many stimulating presentations and good discussions.

As a participant at the Somali Peace Conference held in Oslo, I have been asked by the organisers to present a brief assessment of the two-day meeting, based on my impressions.

The focus of the conference's first day was to give a solid background to the conflict in Somalia and to explain why so many peace initiatives have failed. The speakers also discussed how the conflict had affected all aspects of Somali life, from politics to social networks and families. One speaker pointed out that past peace conferences had failed because of self interest, a lack of trust and widespread confusion about Somalia.

For those with little knowledge of Somalia, the first day was an excellent introduction to the challenges that face the country, as well as the potential for the global Somali diaspora to support peace initiatives. It was also interesting to hear about the several identities that Somalis hold, which occasionally serve as barriers to co-operation and unity.

The Norwegian government gave its support to the conference, stressing the benefits of communication on both sides to maximise external assistance. The conference was therefore particularly useful given the consensus on the need for teamwork and dialogue between various actors with a stake in peace building efforts. The first day was also valuable for the attention

given to crucial but all too often sidelined factors, such as the empowerment of women.

Day two concentrated on the role of the diaspora including discussion about the challenges facing the Somali community in Norway, including employment, housing and mental health.

Diasporas have positive roles to play for many reasons. Firstly, they may portray an element of neutrality because they have not participated in the conflict. On the other hand, they may have become politically hardened and therefore less likely to support compromise, or they could be viewed as 'fifth columnists' by the population at home.

Another speaker outlined how Norwegian Somalis could direct assistance to the home country, especially through raising educational standards and investing in the younger generation. To these ends, Somalis need to take advantage of the opportunities available in Norway for education and skills acquisition which can then be used to help rebuild Somalia.

There was clearly unanimous agreement with a teenage Somali who reminded the conference of the importance of youth in spreading messages of tolerance and equality.

The conference reflected an impressive vibrancy within the global Somali community. The conference attracted a wide range of speakers who all stressed

the need to maintain momentum and keep international attention on Somalia and to hold those in positions of power to account.

The discussions, whilst highlighting a broad spectrum of opinion on several questions, were always animated and enthusiastic. This clearly illustrated the diaspora's awareness of their potential contribution to peace in Somalia. Several people spoke of their desire to return home and asked the international community to help them to rebuild their lives.

Speakers from civil society organisations in other countries gave examples of the work they were doing, as well as offering advice to the Norwegian community of Somalis.

These conferences are important because they allow for cross

fertilisation of ideas, long and short term planning and the fostering of assistance projects. They also advocate sending Somali professionals on short term missions to Somalia. The participants argued that use of traditional Somali institutions and procedures such as systems of land management and conflict mediation could be an effective way of directing at dialogue and reconciliation.

Overall, the conference was impressive because of the enthusiasm and commitment on the side of Norwegian Somalis to assist in the home country and to push for Norway and the international community to help the diaspora to help Somalia. If this enthusiasm and commitment is maintained then it seems that the diaspora in Norway and elsewhere will have an important impact on future peace and stability in Somalia.

How we in Diasporas with interdisciplinary competencies can contribute to restore peace and rebuild Somalia



By Eng. Morsal Siyad Mohamed, Director of Sonorfus, Master student in Social Science and Environmental Sustainability, University of Oslo.

Excellencies, distinguished guests, ladies and Gentlemen,
I am very much pleased by the opportunity of presenting my contribution in this dialogue of peace and good governance for Somalia.

I will first say some words on Somalia in general and on the crisis produced by the civil war. Then I will briefly present a part of the report of my trip to Somalia regarding voluntary repatriation. Finally I will comment on the severe environmental problems emerging as a result of the lawlessness in Somalia today.

Somalia is located on the horn of Africa. It has a coastline stretching 3,025km from Djibouti in the north to Kenya in the south. Actually it has the longest coastline in any African country. Somalia shares common borders with Djibouti, Ethiopia, and Kenya. It is an arid to semi-arid country with seasonal and erratic rainfall.

Only 13% of the land is potentially arable. A further 45% is suitable for raising livestock. The significant mineral resources and aquatic wealth, considered of high potential, are not exploited systematically to benefit the population.

The livestock production has been the backbone of the Somali economy for centuries; it is the most important source of cash income for the predominantly rural population. Together with meat and milk it assures 55% of the calorie intake of the entire population.

Compared to other production systems, the impact of the civil war on livestock production was relatively limited. This is due to the predominance of the nomadic rearing system and the almost complete absence of fixed assets.

People and their livestock were therefore forced to make an unusual migration to other places.

Thereby the livestock population in those particular areas was artificially enlarged with the result of possible spread of endemic livestock diseases. These abnormal migrations also create stiff competition for pasture and water resources among pastoralist groups, and ignite conflicts between the pastoralists themselves. The recurrent resource-based conflicts among the various communities and livelihood groups have resulted in a deep-rooted animosity between the various population categories.

Similarly, it worsened the situation of chronic food insecurity. Action is therefore needed to reduce these conflicts and ensure a fair share of the abundant resources for the benefit of all clans in Somalia. This can be achieved among others, the creation of an environment where dialogue and exchange of ideas is possible.

As all of us are aware, Somalia had no central national government from 1991 – 2004 which is very long period of time for a nation to be ruled by an anarchy and chaos. Over a million Somalis have fled the country including my self and sought refuge from the nations in the world wide like Norway and most of us now live in Diasporas.

I have recently visited Somalia and some other parts of the east African countries like Kenya and Uganda. My purpose was to undertake a feasibility study aiming at describing possibilities of return. Further I wanted to talk with local leaders and mobilise them for the idea of return. This study was jointly implemented by the SONORFUS and the Norwegian consultancy firm the Pertinax Group represented by its director Ragnar Naess.

More specifically, the study made an assessment of the current situation in the Bu'ale area regarding security, health, water, education, economy, and infrastructures as prerequisites for return in the area so as the Somalis in Norway act. According to the assessment, security situation of the area is relatively good. People can actually return there at any time. But the area needs a huge effort of reconstruction. Only by such an effort is a realistic option for voluntary repatriation.

The majority of Somalis have by now been in Norway for some ten years and many have been rooted in Norwegian society. This applies particularly too many of the young people. At the same time, many Somalis want to return to their homeland for various reasons. They want to return from a country which appears alien in many ways, and

many are also aware of the economic potentials in a reconstructed Somalia. We all know that a land can not be built by it self but that people build a land. This means that those Somalis who want to move back home should be given a possibility to do this. We request the Norwegian and Somali governments to facilitate such a return process. I strongly emphasize that this process must be voluntary and in line with the general recommendations of the United Nations. This is so not only because voluntary repatriation of people is the only form of repatriation that can produce positive results in the long run. I also emphasize voluntary based repatriation because there are political forces in Norway that simply want to force repatriation on Somalis irrespective of what Somalis believe and feel.

There is today a broad experience in organising repatriation. Thus there is no lack of established patterns of investment and safeguards that can be applied as we want repatriation. In my previous work in Somalia and Kenya I myself had the privilege of organising repatriation in collaboration with international agencies.

For repatriation to take place there must be peace. But the successful examples of limited repatriation may in itself be conducive to peace. If we can solve the various challenges in repatriation on a scale limited to one area, we will prove the possibility of overcoming the Diaspora crisis.

Even limited return to certain areas must be assumed to have a positive effect on the overall peace efforts. Actual repatriation will point out the way to a possible positive future for many Somalis in Diaspora. It will demonstrate to the ones who remained in Somalia that returnees with new skills, international contacts and new experiences are willing to join them in their effort to rebuild the country. I have previously participated in many peace conferences of Somalia including Nairobi 1994 and 1996, Addis 1993 and 1996-98. Human security was always discussed during those peace dialogues,

but the natural heritages and our living arts of nature had never been considered as one of the vulnerable sectors for the current insecurity situation of Somalia. Therefore, earth scorching for charcoal must be stopping so as to fauna and floras are fully preserved.

Additionally, since the outbreak of the civil war, no significant investment in construction or maintenance has taken place. Former government owned offices and premises are destroyed or illegally occupied by squatters. The road network of the Juba valley regions has deteriorated massively and a considerable number of bridges, particularly those of strategic importance, have deliberately been destroyed.

Now, a new Somali government has been established in Oct. 2004 with help of the international community members and the government is now scrambling to stand on its own foot. However, the country needs huge efforts of reconstruction and rehabilitation to restore the normalcy of social life standards.

On the other hand, 80% of the Somali elates have fled the country during the

civil war and it will be difficult to face the magnitude problem of Somalia if the group does not reconsider to voluntary return home and re-build their country of origin.

So that, May I advantage from this opportunity by calling all of Somali elates and those who could not integrate with the hosting societies in Diasporas to voluntary return home and participate in the extensive rebuilding work of their country.

I am finally, thanking the UD, UDI, Red Cross and Primary Medical Health Workshop (PMV) for funding this historic 2nd annual Oslo Peace conference for Somalia. I also thank the organising group of the conference SPIG for the tireless Herculean efforts of making this conference to happen.

This has made tremendous efforts of to challenge the difficult situations experienced during the 8 Months of its preparatory process.

Finally, Let us stand together for building sustainable peace and prosperity in Somalia.

Thank you all and please convey the messages of this conference to the communities we are representing.

Appendix: Conference Programme

Monday 22 May

8:30 – 9:00	Registration, coffee and tea
9:00 – 9:15	Verses from the Koran Welcome and Opening of Conference <i>Ellen Kobro, Health and Welfare Agency, City of Oslo</i>
9:15 – 9:30	Artistic opening with <i>Fatima Kassim</i>
9:30 – 10:00	Background of the Conflict in Somalia: History, Clans and Ethnic Conflicts <i>Prof. Mohamed H. Mukhtar, Savannah State University, Georgia, USA</i>
10:00 – 10:30	The Status of the Conflict Today <i>Jabril Ibrahim Abdulle, Center for Development and Research, Mogadishu</i>
10:30 – 10:50	The Role of Norway in Peace and Conflict Resolution <i>Raymond Johansen, State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs</i>
10:50 – 11:10	Break
11:10 – 13:00	Discussion with introductory comments by <i>Jan M. Haakonsen, Research Council of Norway</i>
13:00 – 14:20	LUNCH / Prayer Time / Break
14:20 - 14:30	The Role of the Diaspora in Peace Building <i>Kristian Berg Harpviken, Deputy Director at International Peace and Research Institute, Oslo</i>
14:30 – 15:00	Somalis in Norway, a Resource in Conflict Resolution <i>Dr. Mohammad Jawari, Teacher at Tiller Upper Secondary School and Åsheim Junior/High School of Trondheim, Norway</i>
15:00 – 15:30	Voices of Peace and Awareness <i>Somalis in Norway</i>
15:30 – 16:30	Discussion

Tuesday 23 May 2006

- 8:30 – 9:00 Registration, coffee and tea
Verses from the Koran
- 9:00 – 9:10 *Fatima Kassim*
- 9:10 – 9:40 The Somali Conflict and Prospects for Peace
Jabril Ibrahim Abdulle, Center for Development and Research, Mogadishu
- 9:40 – 10:00 Perspectives on International Cooperation in the Region
Rina Kristmoen, Norwegian Embassy in Nairobi
- 10:00 – 10:30 Peace and Justice in Somalia: Dealing with Impunity
Amina Abdi Mohamud (M.A. Economics), Student of law, University of London
- 10:30 – 10:50 Break
- 10:50 – 11:10 Red Cross/Red Crescent in Somalia the Last 30 years: Challenges and Successes
Bodil Ravn, Department for Emergency and International Affairs, Norwegian Red Cross
- 11:10 – 11:40 Education and Development: Experiences from the Sool, Sanaag, and Hawd Development Agency
Naimao Ali, Junior/Intermediate teacher, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada
- 11:40 – 13:00 Discussion
- 13:00 – 14:20 LUNCH / Prayer Time / Break
- 14:20 – 14:50 Education: Key to Development and Rebuilding
Zahra Nur, Diakonia- Sweden, Nairobi, Kenya
- 14:50 – 15:10 Higher Education in Mogadishu During the Civil War: The Role of Mogadishu
Dr. Abdullahi Farah Asseyr, Adviser to the President of the Mogadishu University and Head of Health Affairs
- 15:10 - 16:30 Discussion and Summary