



In the Spirit of the Constitution

Article 9 of the Somaliland Constitution demands that the political system of the Republic “shall be based on peace, collective decision making, democracy and plurality of political parties.” For many, the embedded call for consultations, combined with Somali’s strong tradition of cooperative discourse, presents the overarching guideline for resolving contentious issues in Somaliland’s young democratic system.

Recent developments have inspired hope that the dawn of collectiveness and cooperation may be on Somaliland’s horizon. Saturday, 2 June 2007, marked a turning point in one of the key issues of political contention, as the House of Representatives eventually approved five of the seven nominees for of the Second National Electoral Commission (NEC). President Ra’yale’s pledge for more dialogue on the eve of the 16th Anniversary of Somaliland’s sovereignty provided further ground for optimism for increasingly cooperative government action.

However, the realities of this renewed optimism will be tested as the public awaits advancements in three key areas: the completion of the National Electoral Commission, the long-awaited approval of the 2007 National Budget, and implementation of the Voter Registration Act.

During the vote on the new National Electoral Commission on 2 June, the two candidates nominated by the House of Elders received 35 and 36 “yes”-votes of the required 42 votes for absolute majority. Whereas the fact that the two rejected candidates were the only non-Issaq persons in the list gave immediate rise to speculations of a clan-motivated rejection, it has since emerged that a lack of support from the candidates’ own regions contributed to their failure.



„United we stand, divided we fall“

Rather than entering into a constructive dialogue, the three relevant bodies of government have since dug into their positions. The House of Guurti re-submitted the two unapproved

nominees, the government forwarded these names to the House, and the House leadership refused to present them for a second vote. Mediation efforts were ultimately turned down. Meanwhile, it is feared that the elected five commissioners will not be sworn in before the remaining two seats have been filled.

Had governing laws been consulted and utilized in the spirit of the Constitution rather than through the lens of self-serving interpretations, the composition of the NEC could have been completed as early as January 2007, when the mandate of the old commission expired. Instead of allowing the national focus to shift to other vital national concerns, there now seems to be a danger that the continuing delays in the finalization of the new NEC may serve as a detriment to the democratization process. *(continued on p.2)*

A Note from the Executive Director of the Academy

Welcome to the second issue of *The Academy Today*. Judging from the feedback we’ve received on our inaugural issue, it seems that this newsletter may fill a part of the void in public discussion on pressing issues of Somaliland’s democratic development. We greatly appreciate your comments and would like to share some for which we are particularly grateful on page 10. The Academy looks forward to hearing more of your reactions and continuing to provide a space for constructive dialogue. Please send your feedback to: newsletter@apd-somaliland.org To subscribe to the mailing list for *The Academy Today*, invitations to our public events and other information please visit our website at <http://www.apd-somaliland.org>

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(Continued from p.1) A second extant point of contention between the House of Representatives and the Executive Office is the approval of the 2007 National Budget. The government is mandated to prepare the budget in consultation with all concerned actors, including the Financial Affairs Sub-committee of the House of Representatives. In accordance with Article 55 of the Constitution, the budget is then to be debated, amended and approved by the House of Representatives. As

in any other constitutional democracy, this aspect presents the core element of parliamentary oversight over the executive. Yet once again, what should have been a collective process in which the Executive Branch engages in joint discussions to ensure subsequent endorsement by the Parliament has instead been reduced to a series of closed door conversations and unilateral recommendations.

As a result of this lack of consultation and consensus building, President Ra'yale vetoed the budget approved by Parliament in April. While the House leadership insists on its right to decide on the budget and they have refused to return it to the parliamentary agenda, the President maintains that he has the right to treat it like any other bill coming out of the House of Representatives. Based on this view, he returned it to the House with a request for changes.

What makes the continuing wrangling between the two constitutional bodies over the budget increasingly bizarre is the fact that government operations have been running under the budget of the previous

year for the past six months. In the words of a political observer in Hargeisa, "this all seems to be little more than an academic exercise." Furthermore, though the long-awaited Registration Act was finally approved by the House of Representatives, the prospects for



Speaker and Deputy Speakers of Parliament

successful implementation are still unclear. First and foremost, the Act merely provides a legal framework for the voter registration exercise while leaving a number of serious challenges to NEC as the implementing body. These challenges are both technical – such as the equipment to be used, verification of voter eligibility, etc. – and political. The implementation of the Act will require mechanisms to ensure confidence of all parties and to resolve emerging differences over the exercise.

Secondly, and more detrimental to the consensus-building skills of all stakeholders, is the new dilemma that results from the continued de-



President Riyale talking to the Chairman of the House of Guurti, Salebaan Mohamoud

lays in the finalization of the Act. According to technical experts, even under ideal circumstances the registration exercise will require a minimum of ten months from the beginning of preparations to conclusion of the process. With only six months to the local elections and ten months to the presidential elections, the parties, the government and the legislative assemblies will soon need to agree on how to arrange these milestones on a feasible timeline. Incorporation of voter registration into the existing electoral law and the desire to further advance Somaliland's democratization needs to be balanced to ensure timely and fair elections.

In effect, the positive resolution of these three issues largely depends on a productive synchronization between the three main governing structures. Physically, the House of Representatives, the Presidency as the head of the executive branch and the House of Elders are separated by a road that is no more than twenty meters wide, theoretically allowing for constant consultation and the development of compromises. However, instead of direct discussions, an alternate practice of communication through the media has only served to illuminate differences and thereby aggravate already strained relationships. Rather than considering national objectives and public interests, all actors seem to interpret the constitution from a

narrow perspective of power interests, allowing a discussion of semantics to overshadow collective priorities. With press releases and media interviews as primary activities, pressing issues such as unemployment, health and environment too often take a backseat to rhetoric.

Broadly, a constitution establishes the rules and principles governing an organization or political entity. In the case of

countries, this document should aim to define fundamental political principles and establish the structure, procedures, powers and duties of a government. As the pre-eminent source of laws and regulations, it is neither the property of legislators nor of executives. It is by the people and for the people, requiring that its interpretation is not used to enhance the interests of these leaders.

Hargeisa Group Hospital: A Post-conflict Community-based Initiative in Somaliland

In the 16 years since Somaliland's devastating civil war and its declaration of independence from Somalia, the nation has made enormous strides to rebuild its structures and society. Today, the country has many of the attributes of a state, including a constitution, functional parliament and government ministries, judiciary system, an army, a civil police force, and multiple political parties. Both local and presidential elections have had the strong participation of women voters and the parliamentary elections of September 2005 were declared free and fair by an extensive team of independent international election monitors.

However, since its formation in 18 May 1991, the nation has felt the costs associated with lack of formal international recognition. Presently, Somaliland does not qualify for bilateral donor assistance or the support of international financial institutions for reconstruction and development. As a result, international trade is constrained and the country remains desperately poor. The mainstay of the economy has been remittances from Somalis living abroad. Paradoxically, as Somalilanders have had no option but to mobilize their own resources, the meagre international assistance has created strong, self-reliant social networks.

The Somaliland Constitution is not complete and can never be comprehensive (see *The Academy Today*, No.1), but while consistently being subject to reform and review its spirit can provide guidance facing the above-mentioned political challenges.

As one practical example, the Electoral Law in many ways fell short of directing procedure before the parliamentary elections in

2005. Only political dialogue, which led to the development of a Code of Conduct to complement the law, allowed for national objectives to take precedence over branch differences. Recent developments, such as the Act of Registration in particular, call for renewed cooperation of this type.

Background

The decade of civil war has affected all of Somaliland, uprooting whole communities. Entire industries, communication systems, social services and agricultural infrastructures were all destroyed. In Hargeisa alone 60,000 houses were demolished and most urban centres had nearly all government and public buildings ransacked.

The one remaining structure has been the Hargeisa Group Hospital (HGH). Built in 1953 by the British Somaliland Protectorate, HGH was designed to serve as the national referral hospital for the 30,000 inhabitants of Hargeisa. As it was used by government forces during the conflict period of 1988 -1991, its 400 remaining beds are now supposed to accommodate a population approaching 500,000.

Decentralisation of Health Care in Somaliland

Introduced in 1999, the Somaliland National Health Policy has been a guide for Health Sector Reform. The Policy aims to create a system based on self-sustaining community co-financing and co-management, leading to a shift away from centralized, free health-care delivery to decentralized, cost-shared programs. Through the formation of Regional Health Boards (RHB) and Community Health Committees (CHC), the policy further moves the key functions of planning, budgeting and management of health services to the regions/districts.

The Regional Health Board (RHB)

Membership: The community-based RHB of the Waqooyi Galbeed Region is chaired by a retired diplomat returning from the UK. The members include a retired WHO senior nurse, a businesswoman, a businessman from the

Emergency Unit of Hargeisa Group Hospital



Chambers of Commerce, a traditional Sultan, and a local elected councilor. The Board also includes two individuals from the 'Hargeisa Group'; imprisoned in 1981 by dictator, Siad Barre, for their involvement in a self-help scheme at Hargeisa group hospital. The hospital Director and the Regional Health Office Director also serve as active members.

Achievements: The diversity and strength of RHB members



***The Board
of Hargeisa
Group
Hospital***

raised the profile of the issues while fundraising efforts and community-based initiatives increased national and international support for the Hargeisa group hospital and health centres.

Through its partnership with Tropical Health & Education Trust (THET), a UK-based NGO, and the King's College Hospital in London, five years of funding were provided by Comic Relief. Part of the funding was used to assist in the purchase of affordable drugs for impoverished patients and transport vehicles for pregnant mothers in need of transfer from catchment areas to the Hargeisa hospital maternity ward.

The funds also allowed for the visit of specialists from King's College Hospital (KCH) twice a year to train doctors, nurses, and students, and sponsored the Director of the Hargeisa hospital and a senior qualified nurse from Edna Maternity Hospital for a special training session in KCH. The chairperson of the RHB further utilized the funding to participate in fundraising events and advocate for

support from the Somali Diaspora in UK.

The RHB has also received several large containers of drugs, materials and essential equipment such as X-ray machines, ultrasound machines, a laundry machine, an eye-analyzer, a complete still lamp set, and an anesthetic machine from the Diaspora in Europe and North America. Funds raised for the HGH in Europe, North America or in the

Gulf Countries were further earmarked specifically for equipment and associated items.

As part of its advocacy efforts, the RHB contacted local business owners and reached out to the community through media programmes like Hargeisa radio, TV and daily news papers. To ensure accountability and increase local trust, the RHB tried to avoid in-cash donations from local communities and businesses, Diaspora or the international community. Instead, the Board and hospital management advised supporters to select specific contractors to work with them in planning and designing appropriate interventions. Minimal cash was directly transferred to the RHB bank account.

A key priority was to renovate hospital wards and facilities to create a hygienic and more pleasant environment for the recovery process of admitted patients and the status of staff morale. 17 HGH buildings were reconstructed and 5 newly constructed. The maternity ward, in particular,

significantly increased the admission rate of normal and complicated pregnancies and improved cost-sharing efforts. The new construction of a theatre with four operation rooms was supported by the President of Somaliland and UNHCR. The Kuwait Red Crescent Society contributed half a million dollars to fully equip the space with surgical equipment and materials.

Challenges

While the strides made were tremendous, some challenges remain. Most pressingly, hospital staff is severely underpaid. The salary of medical doctors is \$50/month while other personnel receive far less. Though hospital management tries to enhance earnings through income attained by cost-sharing, it is simply not enough.

Perhaps associated to this fact, staff shortages have also presented a problem. To a certain extent, the gap in nursing personnel has been filled by the first set of graduates from the Hargeisa Health Institute in 2006. The return of Somalis that studied medicine abroad has helped address the lack of medical doctors.

The third key challenge has been sustainability. The Revolving Drug Fund which comes out of the selling of drugs and used for the sustainability of the medicine, intends to assure patients, particularly those that have previously avoided public health facilities, that affordable quality drugs will always be available in the hospital. While the RHB is confident that this system will function, there is a pressing need to review the impoverished patient fund before the cessation of Comic Relief Funding. As this fund exempts those individuals unable to afford services from participation in cost-sharing and entitles them to free health care, there is a need to develop a new strategy to address the fact that at least 30% of HGH patients are destitute.

Finally, in spite of all the successes of the RHB, the health care service

requires further improvements. Private, uncertified pharmaceutical and medical providers must be closed down and the lack of appropriate health care in rural areas surrounding Hargeisa must be addressed.

Conclusion

This community-based initiative at Hargeisa Group Hospital could serve as a case study for a country

like Somaliland, desperate to find ways to provide adequate social services with minimal government revenues.

Dependency on international aid and remittances has the potential to decrease individual initiatives on the part of Somalilanders while quests for international recognition may distract political

leaders from development efforts.

Citizens of Somaliland must be made aware of their civic duties and must refrain from voting on the basis of clan lines. Every person regardless of age and sex can afford to dedicate part of his/her time to help those displaced and impoverished persons who have been more affected by conflict.

Analysis: Burco's Economic Enterprises

The economic situation of Somaliland revolves around the livestock trade and the general wellbeing of the pastoral population. As Burco is at the centre of this trade, its economic viability grows in importance. The environmental degradation taking place in the countryside and affecting the lives of the pastoral sector has increased with the spread of general malaise and diminishing population

incomes. As a result, merchants and traders owning family-run businesses have begun experimenting with the idea of forming corporations by investing in shares of larger ventures such as factories. The success of these endeavors will depend on whether the Somali culture of ownership can also traverse into corporate run business ideas.

These business formations aim to substitute imports by producing goods of strong quality and affordability, allowing them to compete in the national and international market. They further hope to create employment for the multitude of urban youth

who otherwise have few opportunities in the country.

It is of particular interest that it has been Burco, despite a history of intermittent conflict, which has attracted such a wide range of investors. On one hand, Burco has the distinct advantage of access to water sources, location in the flatlands and status as a key corridor to all Somali inhabited territories,

reach, difficulties with revenue collection, and a population more accustomed to a pastoral – rather than agricultural – lifestyle. However, it is precisely this combination of characteristics, many of which can also be seen in other areas of Somaliland, that allows for Burco to serve as a strong case study for the potential of corporate development. Even with the multiplicity of tribes and potential instability such a composition can cause, the progress and development of this town may serve to show that strong coordination efforts can lead to both advancement and stability.

The complicated set of issues facing Burco's development sector does indicate that the development of concrete policies is of paramount importance. Close collaboration with the government is needed to ensure free trade procedures and prevent price fixing, hoarding or other illegal methods of competition. However, looking at the interdependent corporate sector that has been created through the rise of a detergent factory, abattoir and tannery illustrates both the needs of such endeavors and their benefits to the community.

I. The Detergent Factory

The APD team visited the Detergent Factory in Burco. The gleaming ten-story building is located 5 km to the east of the town center. It generates its own electricity and water. The 100 employees, including management and casual labor-



Burco Detergent Factory

increasing both its natural resources and market base. However, it has also encountered classic management problems such as an administration with limited

ers, are bussed to the site at the factory's expense. At its peak capacity, it employed approximately 200 persons, including a number of female personnel. At the moment, females are only employed on a temporary basis.

The factory is Chinese-made and though it has a production capacity of 120 tons/day, it presently only produces 20 tons/day. It is set up for 50, 20 and 10 gram packages and has a large warehouse with a capacity of 4000 m³. Unexpectedly for a poor region like Togdheer with access to manual labor, production is highly automated and machines are manned by Chinese and Somali technicians. There has not been a breakdown since its establishment and it has the layout of a modern factory.

The management complains of lack of government incentives to deter the import of similar products from Yemen and other Arab states. Those relatively low cost detergents, ostensibly produced with the intention of export, do not face import taxes, making it difficult for the Burco factory to attain profits in a market with low demand. The wars in the South and the instability of the region have been a deterrent to marketing attempts to increase the consumption of the detergent by the Somaliland population.

The plant is owned by 100 individual shareholders with a capital investment close to 4.5 million USD. However, the profit margin remains small as over 20 of the materials needed for detergent production must be imported. These materials are given tax exemption by the Ministry of Finance but this only offers minimal protection due to the generally low tax rate on all imported goods.

The detergent factory has had a large effect on the economic development of the district—extending employment opportunities to the community. Furthermore, after the relative success of

this operation, a similar factory by Indho-deero, will soon be inaugurated. Although smaller in size and made by the same Chinese company, it will operate in the same market and trigger price competition, hopefully increasing the factories' profitability through exports.

II. The Burco Abattoir

The creation of the Burco Abattoir by the owners of Dallo Airlines aims to standardize the meat trade in Somaliland. At a cost of 950,000 USD, the clean facility was built 3 km to the west of the town at Kabadheere.

From 2003 to 2006, the factory operated at full capacity. It handled 1800 carcasses per trip load, amounting to 12 to 13 flights per month. Most shipments were then sent to the United Arab Emirates. At the height of its operation it employed 120 persons. At present, it produces 1200 heads per week with 40 employees and an addi-

the factory. "It is now 5,000 shillings SLD." The kidneys, a popular alternative to liver, have also become inexpensive and affordable.

The factory owners have also made extended efforts to incorporate corporate development with Muslim tradition and community assistance through the free distribution of other animal parts to the impoverished population.

III. The Burco Tannery

The Burco Tannery is located close to City Plaza, on the old premises of the factory owned by the Hides and Skins Agency of the former Siad Barre Regime. With its own production facilities, generator and well, it employs 25 persons for the morning shift. It uses huge rotary drums producing between 1000 and 1200 skins per day. Sayid Ikramullah, a Pakistani Engineer who is responsible for the technical aspects of the factory, stated that there are 5 levels



Detergents stored at the factory

tional 12-person permanent staff consisting of drivers, security personnel and administration. Today, most shipments are sent to Oman. The factory has been able to fulfill the demands of the Somali market. Responding to the needs of liver for traditional breakfasts, the factory's operation has significantly decreased consumption costs. "A liver would cost 15,000 shillings SLD before the factory began operating," explained an employee of

of skin quality produced. Levels 1-3 are characterized as TR (superior) while 4-5 are piled up separately after manual sorting on separate skids as 100-dozen packages.

The determination of quality depends on blemishes of the skin/hide, such as surface scratches or cuts which reduce the utilizable area of the skin. The removal of skins from carcasses is traditionally done by hand, using

sharp objects or knives that often inadvertently slip and create such damages.

The sheep of Eastern plains produce the best quality skin. Animals from other areas have skins which have either been penetrated by ticks or scratched by thorny bushes – creating permanent marks that become more apparent during processing.

The raw materials used include salt, lime and chromium sulfate/chrome. It is the chrome that

creates the characteristics of the Raw to Wet Blue varieties. After overnight immersion in pits, rota-



Workers at the Burco Tannery.

tions through drums, pressing and eventual squeezing through the Summing machines, the final

product is dried and folded according to its grading.

While investors, mainly from Burco, have purchased shares totaling 500,000 USD, total monthly export amounts to one 40 ton container and overall profitability remains low. Furthermore, waste material is casually discarded into open pits adjacent to the factory compound. As the water wells of City Plaza are less than a kilometer away, the general public is dangerously exposed to hazardous chemical and waste materials. As a result of these issues, the Tannery remains a prime example of the potential of such initiatives but also the subsequent responsibility they place on corporate leaders to ensure that the local community is assisted and not harmed by further developments.

APD Review: The SOPRI Report

A delegation from the Somaliland Policy and Reconstruction Institute (SOPRI) visited the country in November. The initiative for assessment of the situation in Somaliland was taken at the SOPRI convention in Arlington, USA, September 2006.

The delegation visited all regions of Somaliland and met with a wide range of public and private sector officials; including the president, speakers of the houses, leaders of the political parties, and mayors of the regions.

In March 2007, the SOPRI mission produced a report recording their observations of challenges and recommendations for reform. The report is enlightening material for the people of Somaliland and their elected officials. Its conclusions also reflect the ability of the authors to provide non-partisan recommendations for the development of the country.

The report gives information that is surprising if not disheartening. Out of the 100 judges that work in the 93 courts in the country, only

10 have legal qualifications and another 10 have legal experience. Out of the 332 elected municipal council members in the country, only 2 are female.

The SOPRI delegation did recognise the achievements of Somaliland over the past 16 years, including: peace and stability created through reconciliation, establishment of democratic governance through nationwide elections, existence of a vibrant private sector, active civil society, and independent media. At the same time, SOPRI produced a list of observed shortcomings:

- “A governance system that is leading towards paralysis. The state machinery is not functioning well. Somaliland polity is like a house divided. The working relationship between branches of the government and political parties is weak and often strained.”

- “The constitution is the source of confusion, subject to arbitrary interpretation. It is incomplete. The problem is compounded by a weak judiciary system that lacks the capacity and independence to provide impartial rulings.”

- “Democratic system shows signs of fatigue as evidenced by the personalised nature of the current political discourse and infringement on the basic constitutional rights, such as freedom of the press. The appointment of the National Electoral Commission is highly politicised which poses a serious threat to its independence.”

- “The political system seems to have been captured by those currently in the system, including the leadership of political parties, who resist the entry of the new political parties. Women, the most productive segment of the Somaliland society, are politically marginalized.”

- “There is a lack of transparency in public finance management (...). Normal checks and balances are not yet in place and effective parliamentary oversight of the budget is lacking.”

The report said that although the executive branch of the government is to blame for failing to create a national development plan, the responsibilities for the country's malaise are shared by the legislative, judiciary and political parties, the general public, and even the Diaspora. The Diaspora, and specially the intellectuals, say the

report has failed to provide constructive non-partisan suggestions.

The report mentions a number of observations related to potentially problematic external factors. These include:

- “Threats to national security from regional instability.”
- “Lack of articulated strategy for seeking recognition and no open debate regarding potential strategy options.”
- “Somaliland’s political isolation. Petty domestic policies and personality-based agendas absorb attention that would otherwise be used to project Somaliland and its achievements to the world.”

The SOPRI mission made recommendations discussing better governance, improvements in social and economic development, management of public resources, strategies for recognition and methods of engaging the Diaspora. Specific recommendations state Somaliland’s government should:

- “Adhere to the letter and spirit of the constitution, observing basic rights. The state must respect the constitution and refrain from interpreting its articles to serve partisan political interests.”
- “Set up a national panel to review the constitution and recommend appropriate amendments that would make it fully operative. Constitutional lawyers from the Diaspora can assist the panel.”
- “Strengthen the judiciary branch by allocating more resources, in order to ensure it has sufficient qualified manpower and institutional capacity to serve as an independent branch. The courts should be completely independent from the executive or legislative branch.”
- “Legitimise, through consensus, the extension of the Guurti term. Both the Guurti leadership and the Executive Branch should accept the compromise solutions put forward by the joint parliamentarian committee in Ramadan last year.”
- “Depoliticise the [National Electoral] Commission by appointing independent Commissioners based on rigorous selection criteria that must include person integrity, knowledge and experience. Inclusion of members

from the Diaspora community could add value to the process.

- “Nominate, appoint and elect more women to positions of power in all three organs of the government, starting with allocation of parliamentary and municipal seats to women. Ensure a minimum number of female members in the cabinet.”
- “Open up the political process and allow other parties to compete for the elections. The current system, gives a monopolistic advantage to the three national parties, thus does not serve the legitimate aspirations of all Somalilanders who are willing to participate in a political capacity.”



“Equal Justice under the Law” at Hargeisa Bridge.

- “Conduct the national voter registration. This is a prerequisite for national elections and is vital.”
- “Allow for the direct elections of all Regional Governors and Mayors to ensure independence, accountability.”
- “Establish National Consultative Council, consisting of heads of all branches of government and political parties, to meet periodically to discuss national priorities. The objective should be to develop national consensus on key policy issues and improve collaboration and cohesion among state organs.”
- “Reduce the number of ministries and streamline their operations (...). The current size is too big to manage, too costly to maintain, and too diffused to be effective.”

In social, economic development and public resource management, the recommendations include:

- “Enhance the institutional integrity and capacity of public institutions by depoliticising appointments to public positions and merit-based.”
- “Reorient the current educational system towards basic literacy, technical and vocational skills. Institutions of higher learning should be encouraged to produce skills that can meet the country’s development needs.”
- “Increase transparency in management of public finances through the establishment of concrete procedures, an independent auditing process and a complete exposure of budget implementation and results.”

Conclusion:

While the SOPRI report is not a panacea to Somaliland’s ailments, it is one of the most profound critical appraisals of Somaliland polity by individuals without partisan motives. All organs of the state came under scrutiny, shortcomings were identified and recommendations were presented.

It is only when problems are identified that solutions can be sought. The public and private sector officials could enormously benefit if they follow the recommendations of the goodwill mission. In many parts of the world, think-tank institutions support governance and serve their respective leaders. If appreciated, SOPRI can fulfill that role. The report is a must read for those engaged in the development sector.

Short News: People and Programmes

New Peace Mapping Project

In January 2007, the Academy for Peace and Development, INTERPEACE and their partner organizations started a Peace Mapping Project as part of Phase II of the Dialogue for Peace Programme. The Peace Mapping Project aims to improve understanding of peace initiatives and rec-

onciliation processes that have taken place between 1991 and 1997 in Somaliland. Documenting and analyzing key reconciliation initiatives, observations will be synthesized on particular challenges and factors that have influenced the success of reconciliation processes. This opens the possibility to draw broader lessons from this study which

may be replicated elsewhere.

During the preparatory phase of this project, the Academy established a research team and drew up a preliminary inventory of peace initiatives in Somaliland. The research team, from April 24-27, participated in a planning workshop in Kigali, Rwanda. The participants of the workshop reviewed the

preliminary work undertaken and developed a work plan for the study.

As the peace mapping research is based on Participatory Action Research (PAR) - a methodology generally employed by INTERPEACE and its affiliates - a working group was formed to lead and direct the overall activities.

PAR Training

An APD team of 6 persons from Hargeisa and Burco participated in a Participatory Action Research (PAR) Methodology Training conducted by INTERPEACE in mid-June in Naivasha, Kenya. They were joined by 17 participants from CRD and PDRC. The main topics of the training were: Action Research, Participatory Research and the role of the researcher. There was a discussion of how to integrate Action Research and Participatory Research and how this is implemented in to the actual projects the participants are working on. At the end, the participants

were divided into teams by organization and discussed their organisation's strengths and weaknesses and how to address these.

Team News: Fellow wraps up Successful Stay with the Academy

Georg-Sebastian Holzer, a Political Science student from the University of Vienna in Austria, recently completed his 7 week long fellowship at the Academy for Peace and Development.

The purpose of his stay was mainly to conduct interviews for his Diploma Thesis about Somaliland's recent transformation process and the lessons one can derive from this

example for state building in general.

As his contribution to the Academy, Sebastian also worked on a concept note for APD's training pillar. To this end, he conducted interviews with people committed to and within the Academy. An internal discussion paper now constitutes a first consensus on this project and will serve as a basis for the future discussion and planning of this part of the APD.

Georg-Sebastian Holzer



New Documentary Film on Small Arms Registration:

"Diiwaan Gelinta Hubka Fudud" (2007), for the UNDP Rule of Law Programme. 18 min., Somali.

The purpose of the film is to raise awareness and to encourage society to legally register their privately owned weapons.

Hargeisa Readers Club

Founded in May 2006, the Hargeisa Readers Club (HRC) is a youth initiative encouraging young people to read and write. Its vision is to create a Somaliland where reading is a habit and writing is a medium through which knowledge is transmitted and preserved. Currently, HRC organizes reading forums on the last Friday of each month. In these forums, they present books - written by national and international authors - and debate key ideas in the works. Presentations are translated into Somali and often published in local newspapers and on Somali websites. On June 1 2007, HRC presented its 11th book, entitled: Islam and the World.

HRC presently consists of 9 members with different educational backgrounds. Over time, they hope to expand both the membership and cornerstone activities. One objective will stay constant: to contribute to the betterment of Somaliland. It will require hard work, but it is worth time and effort.



Gender Teams participating in the Training

Somaliland celebrates its 16th Anniversary of Independence

On 18th May, the people of Somaliland celebrated the 16th anniversary of the restoration of its sovereignty. Somalilanders within the country and the Diaspora celebrated with unrivaled festivities on this great national day. The Vice President of Somaliland, Mr. Ahmed Yusuf Yassin took part in the celebration with Diaspora communities in the UK. Somalilanders in Nairobi, Kenya, also held large celebrations in the Town Hall. Communities of Somaliland and others who took part in this commemoration chanted slogans such as: “Today we are all Somaliland.” Festivities continued elsewhere as well, includ-

ing North America, other parts of Western Europe, and the Gulf States.

All major cities and towns of Somaliland commemorated the occasion. The biggest and largest celebration was held in Hargeisa, Somaliland’s capital, with thousands of people coming together in the Independence Garden.

HE. President Dahir Ra’yale Kahin delivered a long and passionate speech. The president’s words covered many areas – focusing on the country’s current political and economic situation. He also discussed the progress of the government in the last few years, recommending further improvements in employment opportunities for young generations,

development of economic resources, and advancements in health, education and security sectors. The President empha-

sized that the only way to solve Somaliland’s problems and issues is through constant dialogue.

Comments received on *The Academy Today*.

“I read your newsletter with great interest. It is an excellent initiative. Please keep it up. However, the article on NEC somewhat ignored the legal and constitutional argument of the issue and was to some extent more judgmental than analytical. The journalistic style of writing used might have influenced the writers to utilize some strong descriptive words which undermined to greater extent the analytical balance of some of the articles. Apart from these few comments, the articles were incisively educative. Congratulations.”

Ali Ibrahim (Minister of Planning)

“Thank you for sending me the newsletter. Well done Academy, you are doing a great job!”

Said Adani (Speaker of the Presidency)

“I would like to congratulate you for producing the first edition of the APD Newsletter, which looks very impressive. ‘The Academy Today’ will help the image and profile of APD in-country and abroad. Well done.”

Adan Abokor (Member, Board of Directors)

Calendar of Upcoming Events

- Youth Working Group Workshop** July 16-18
- Peace Mapping Workshop in Nairobi** July 23-25
- NSA Workshop** August 20

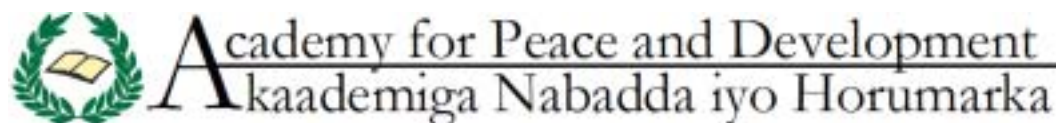
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