



THE NATIONAL CONSULTATION AND RECTIFICATION FORUM

Date: July 10, 2013

A POSITION PAPER

ABOUT THE FORUM

This forum is comprised of a group of Somalilanders from all walks of life and stations including SNM veterans, intellectuals, academics, politicians, businessmen, members from Somalilander Diaspora, ordinary Somalilanders as well as representatives from Women's and Youth Civil Societies. All the regions and minorities of the country are adequately represented. It is an open membership Forum and any Somalilander can join it in any meaningful and constructive capacity that he/she may choose.

This Forum is not a political entity. It neither claims nor aspires to any political authority or designation. Its current or potential members pledge not use this Forum as a platform for seeking collective or personal gain of any kind and dimension. All its activities will be carried out in a lawful, constructive and conciliatory manner. It will not be a party to any act and intent that could destabilize, degrade or otherwise harm the country and its citizens in any way. The good of the country is all that is in this Forum's heart, intentions, hopes and expectations.

THE STATE OF THE NATION

It is the viewpoint of the present members of the Forum that the nation is presently in a dire and critical junction in its twenty-two year history and that the current government bears the lion's share of the responsibility and blame for this situation.

Some the distinctive and potent characteristics that used to distinguish Somaliland from not only Somalia but also many other countries in Africa were peaceful coexistence amongst its citizens, nascent democracy, budding institutions, problems solving culture that was typified by broad consultations, compromises and consensus. Admittedly it was a slow, painful and sometimes erratic process, but this Forum believes that the country was making perceptively steady progress in all these public spheres.

However, the Forum is of the opinion that since the advent of Silanyo the Administration, the country has been dangerously regressing. Though admittedly democratically elected and therefore legitimate, president Silanyo and his government have been administering the country more or less like a dictatorship. Besides his performance and approval rates have been so low as to call his core competence into question.

Whatever rudimentary Checks and Balances mechanism that used to exist have been done away with. The legislative Branch has been turned into rubber stamp assemblies through foul tactics and seems to have abdicated its twin duties of supervising the government and legislating good laws. The judiciary has become kangaroo courts doing the government's bidding.

Almost all presidential power has somehow been relegated to a small inner circle of unelected individuals who have been grossly abusing that power and running the country as a kind of family business. Though the number

of the ministries has been unsustainably and wastefully ballooned to a ridiculous height of 46, nearly all of them and other government organs have been rendered more or less functionally irrelevant.

The freedom of the press has been suppressed or manipulated. This has become a country where it is a crime for a newspaper to translate an article from an international source thus justifying its editors to first be physically attacked by policemen and then be banned from publishing as well as its editors dragged to a court and given a prison term. This has become the country where the national radio, TV and other public media apparatus have been controlled and operated as an exclusive propaganda mouthpiece of the government. This has become a country where the private media have been subjected to financial inducements and, where that failed, to intimidation.

Institution Building has been abandoned and existing institutions have been gravely weakened. There has been precious little government accountability to speak of.

Systematic official corruption, nepotism and mismanagement of public funds and resources have reached unprecedented and morally unsustainable levels.

Meritocracy in assuming government positions is an alien concept. It has not been if one is qualified, experienced or deemed competent, but rather if one is purposely connected.

Equitably balanced political inclusiveness and representation in government have become more uneven and the peripheral regions feel more and more left out in the cold. The last local assemblies' election held was grossly mismanaged and indefensibly fraudulent.

On the social and security front, the ugly head of tribalism has raised its head anew. Harmonious coexistence amongst the clans has become more tenuous and many tensions exist in several parts of the country. Crime in the urban areas is on the rise.

The economy is in doldrums. Incomes are shrinking and inflation is rampant. Unemployment is sky high and the country's youth are the most severely affected sector of the society. It is a sign of their desperation and hopelessness that they have been taking to illegal emigration in droves thus creating a vicious boom for merciless human traffickers and unbearable loss for the country.

On foreign relations, the Forum has serious doubts about the wisdom and the implementation of the government's policies towards Somalia in particular and the international community in general. The Forum believes that the government has dismally failed to explain the people's wishes, sentiments and aspirations convincingly to its foreign counterparts.

It is on realization that the above trends cannot logically continue unabated and that their consequences can fatally undermine the nation's stability, social cohesion or even its very existence as well as the Silanyo government's apparent unawareness or stubborn denial or intentional propagation of these unsavory developments that prompted its members to form this Forum. It is the Forum's opinion that all the forgoing ills could be overcome and rectified by employing Somaliland's long tried and proven instruments of engaging in broad consultations, exchange of ideas, compromises and consensus amongst all stakeholders of the country's affairs including the present government.

THE FORUM'S VISION

- The establishment in the country of good governance, creditable and independent national institutions, reliable accountability as well as effective checks and balances in government
- Upgrading and streamlining the current constitution which contains many ambiguities, omissions, contradictions and other inadequacies

- The curtailment of the newly gone runaway tribalism, nepotism, and corruption
- The realignment of our economic priorities and core management of the public funds and resources
- The reevaluation of the country's political structure with an eye towards political devolution and more equitable inclusiveness especially for the citizens of peripheral regions
- The reexamination of the country's overall foreign strategies and policies with especial focus on the wisdom, conduct and potential consequences of the on-going talks with Somalia

THE FORUM'S OBJECTIVE

To convene ASAP a broad and inclusive national convention that would bring together a cross-section of all concerned stockholders (representatives of the government, the political parties, the two houses of the legislature, traditional elders, religious leaders, intellectuals, academics, civil societies, women's and youth organizations, Diaspora etc) and...

WHEREIN...

- The current State of the Nation is analytically dissected and debated
- Problems, challenges and threats presently facing the nation are identified and addressed
- Most suitable and sustainable solutions are contemplated, presented and agreed upon to be binding on all concerned
- An independent and authoritative commission is set up with the mission of monitoring and ensuring that all the resolutions adapted at the end of the convention are fully complied with and implemented by reasonable timelines by all concerned

Hassan Gure Jama,

The Chairman