

Civil Society & their role in Africa's struggle to deepen democracy:

Experiences of Somaliland in the Horn by Cde. Iqbal Jhazbhay

African Participatory Democracy Conference, SACP, 19-20 August 2010



Introduction:

- a. Location of Somaliland
- b. Status in International law

Civil society formations: Shared history, network of power relations

- a. Hargeisa Self-Help Group, 1980 / Somali Community League, 1950?
- b. Liberation movement: Somali National Movement, 1981-1991
- c. Elders (guurti)/ religious leaders
- d. Vibrant print, radio and TV media
- e. Women's groups / family networks
- f. Voluntary societies, notably Somalis abroad
- g. Business: livestock farmers etc

Democratic elections:

- a. District elections, 2002
- b. Presidential election, 2003
- c. Parliamentary elections, 2005
- d. 2nd Presidential election, 2010

SNM Chairmen	
Chairman	Period of Office
Ahmed Mohamed Gulaid Jan 1982	Oct 1981 –
Sheikh Yusuf Ali Sheikh Madar	Jan 1982 – Nov 1983
Colonel Abdilqadir Kosar Abdi	Nov 1983 – Aug 1984
Ahmed Mohamed Silanyo April 1990	Aug 1984 –
Abdirahman Ahmed Ali Tuur 1990 – May 1991	April

Resolutions of Burco Grand Conference of the Northern Peoples (Somaliland), May 1991

- Reconciliation of the warring parties to the conflict.
- Declaration of the creation of the Republic of Somaliland.
- The establishment of an SNM government for two years and the accommodation of the non-Isaaq communities in the government.
- Initiation of a separate reconciliation process for Sanaag Region.

Resolutions of the Special Conference between the Warsenegeli and Eastern Habar Ja'lo clans at Shimbirale, 8-18 November 1992

- With effect from 18 August any property stolen or looted should be returned immediately.
- Anybody who suffers injury cannot take revenge on the clan of the criminal, but will seek payment from the individual responsible or from his immediate sub-clan.
- Those who suffer casualties should not take revenge themselves but inform the standing committee on peace. If they take revenge, they will be treated as bandits.
- The standing committee on peace will use the services of the peace forces when needed.
- Anyone killed or injured while involved in acts of banditry will be treated as a dead donkey, and will be denied any rights.
- Any sub-clan engaging in acts of banditry which cause death or material loss should pay for whatever damages they caused. In addition, they will pay a bond of one hundred female camels. This bond will be made over to the joint administration of the two sides, for common use.

Suggested Readings:

Ethiopian Government Statement on Somaliland Presidential Elections, 2010:

http://www.mfa.gov.et/Press_Section/PressStatementSomaliland.pdf

ANC journal, *Umrabulo*, World Cup Soccer edition. Article by Prof. Ali Mazrui on Somaliland and Prof. Hussein Adam's review of the book, *Somaliland: An African Struggle for Nationhood & International Recognition*:

<http://www.anc.org.za/show.php?doc=ancdocs/pubs/umrabulo/umrabulo33/art22.html>

Speech by South African Minister Collins Chabane in the Presidency on Somaliland, March 2010:

<http://www.thepresidency.gov.za/show.asp?include=minister/sp/2010/sp0311858.htm&ID=2084&type=sp>

Somaliland elections: peaceful expression of popular will, UK & EU observers, 2010:

<http://www.progressio.org.uk/blog/news/somaliland-elections-peaceful-expression-popular-will>

Report on the South African Mission on the Somaliland 2003 Presidential Elections:

http://www.somalilandlaw.com/SA_Mission_report_on_Pres_Elections_2003.pdf

Media statement on the South African Observer Mission to 2005 Somaliland Parliamentary elections:

http://www.somalilandlaw.com/South_African_Observer_Mission_to_Somaliland_Parliamentary_elections.htm

Somaliland's Political Organisations in 2002 & current status

ASAD (Alliance for Salvation and Democracy) was headed by Suleiman Mohamed Aden 'Gaal', with former Vice President Abdulrahman Aw Ali (Gadabursi) as deputy Chairperson. Several of its prominent members were associated with the radical elements of the SNM, and the organization competed with Kulmiye for the votes of Suleiman Gaal's Habar Ja'lo clan. (now non-existent)

Hormood (Champions for Peace and Prosperity) was founded by civil activists and initially attracted support among civic organizations, including former members of the Hargeysa Group. The late appointment of the politician Omar Arte Qalib, Siyad Barre's last Prime Minister, as its chairperson was intended to raise its profile and attract funding. Instead Hormood became closely associated with one particular Isaaq sub-clan (Sa'ad Muse/Habar Awal), which lost its support outside Hargeysa. It also lost support when it reneged on a pledge to appoint a woman as a deputy chairperson and to ensure that 50 per cent of its candidates were women. (now non-existent)

Kulmiye (the Unity Party) was founded by Ahmed Mohamed Mohamoud 'Silanyo' in 2002 after Egal's death. Silanyo had served in Barre's government before becoming the longest-serving chairman of the SNM in 1984, and he served in President Egal's administration in Somaliland. During the district election Mohamed 'Fagadhe' (Dhulbahante) served as his Deputy, but he gave way to Abdulrahman Aw Ali in the presidential elections. Kulmiye initially drew much of its support from Sanaag and Togdheer regions in eastern Somaliland, the home of Silanyo's Habar Ja'lo clan, but it was also able to attract support from diverse constituencies by creating a quota system

in its executive and central committee. It received strong support from women in the district and presidential elections and from some Islamic leaders, even though Kulmiye's leadership is mostly secular. In the presidential election Kulmiye demonstrated a capacity for professional campaigning and an ability to raise resources, particularly from the diasporas.

SAHAN (Somaliland Alliance for Islamic Democracy) was led by Dr Mohamed Abdi Gaboose, a member of the SNM and a former Interior Minister in Egal's government. Its main source of support was Gaboose's Habar Yunis clan. The party also advertised its Islamic leanings by using a Qur'an in its logo. (now non-existent)

UCID (Justice and Welfare Party) was founded by its Chairperson Faisal Ali Farah 'Waraabe', who returned from Finland to found the party. UCID campaigned on a set of centre-left welfarist policies. In the district council elections UCID drew most of its support from the 'Idagalle population in Woqooyi Galbeed region. After winning third place in the district elections it has developed a broader support base for the presidential and parliamentary elections.

UDUB (United Democratic People's Party) was founded in July 2001 by the late President Mohamed Ibrahim Egal. Following his death the Vice-President, Dahir Riyale Kahin, became the party's Chairman and presidential candidate. UDUB draws support from across Somaliland and has received the majority vote in each election. Its electoral successes have been based on its ruling-party status, the public desire for stability and continuity, and the resources at its disposal.

The Opposition Parties' Reform Agenda for Parliament

- Revoking emergency laws.
- A constitution aimed at curbing the powers of the executive and reviewing the size of Parliament, the restrictions on political parties and the need for a Prime Minister.
- Impeachment of the President, openly discussed during the elections, though opposition party leaders relented when the voting was over.
- A reduction in the size of the cabinet from fifty to a maximum of eighteen ministers, with greater parliamentary oversight of appointments and the removal of unpopular ministers.
- Increased fiscal accountability and transparency in government, through greater oversight of the national budget and reviews of foreign investment contracts, fishing concessions and Berbera port management, and the establishment of a commission to tackle corruption.
- Measures to open up and stimulate the economy, including plans for the leasing of Berbera port facility.
- A review of the media law.

- An open debate on Somaliland's relationship with Somalia, and the status of the contested eastern regions.
- A review of the security sector budget, with the aim of cutting it and investing more in social services.
- Voter registration and a census – seen as essential, not only for holding election but as part of a state-building process of defining and counting the citizens of the country.
- A review of electoral law, to consolidate and iron out contradictions in the existing legislation.
- Strengthening of local government laws for the decentralization of government.
- A review of the role of the Elders (*Guurti*), and its appointment.
- Renewal of the mandate of the NEC (National Electoral Commission).

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