



Somalia Non-State Actors (SONSA)

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PRESS RELEASE

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Members of civil society organizations under the SONSA umbrella convened today to discuss the current situation in Somalia and explore how civil society can contribute to addressing the country's pressing challenges.

Political Conflict

Civil society expresses deep concern over the ongoing political conflict between the federal government leadership and some federal member state leaders, which continues to hinder the state-building process and national security. SONSA believes that the resolution of this conflict must come through constructive dialogue conducted within the framework of the law and the Provisional Constitution.

Civil society views the continued delay of regional elections as harmful to democracy and good governance. Therefore, it calls for the timely conduct of elections in all regional states. Dialogue remains the most effective path toward achieving political solutions that can address challenges impeding federal elections and the constitutional review process.

SONSA urges the federal government to resume political dialogue platforms between the government and opposition groups, such as the Somali Salvation Forum.

To support a lasting political solution, civil society will establish a committee comprising elders, religious scholars, intellectuals, women, and youth to facilitate dialogue between the federal government, Federal Member states and senior political stakeholders with different views. In addition, SONSA plans to convene a National Dialogue Forum to generate actionable recommendations aimed at resolving recurrent political conflicts.

Participants also agreed on the importance of creating a coordination office to strengthen cooperation between the federal government and federal member states, enhance accountability, and develop policy recommendations on unresolved issues.

Government Land Issues

Civil society expresses concern over the government's management of public lands previously inhabited by displaced persons. This issue has affected over 100,000 citizens that was illegally evicted and is regarded as a serious human rights violation.

SONSA calls for the formation of a joint committee comprising representatives from the Federal Government, the Banadir Regional Administration, and civil society. The committee should investigate the impact of government actions on land-related issues, hear victims' grievances, and propose practical and sustainable solutions to address these challenges.

Banadir Regional Elections

Civil society welcomes the planned local council elections in the Banadir region, recognizing their importance for enabling residents to elect representatives who can provide essential services. SONSA and its partners will support the process by conducting voter education campaigns and monitoring the elections to ensure transparency and inclusivity.

To guarantee credible and fair elections, civil society proposes the following measures:-

- Safeguard the independence of the electoral commission.
- Ensure the election budget is managed solely and independently by the electoral commission.
- Implement extensive voter education on the electoral system, voting procedures, and committee formation.
- Facilitate equal campaign opportunities and media access for political parties.
- Deploy trained security personnel to protect polling stations, candidates, and voters under the electoral commission's supervision.
- Uphold the rights of candidates and voters throughout the campaign and voting period.
- Increase the number of polling stations to reduce congestion and waiting times.

Finally, civil society urges all stakeholders to avoid actions that may hinder the Banadir local council elections or undermine public confidence in the process.

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