



SOMALI FEDERAL REPUBLIC
MINISTRY OF YOUTH AND SPORTS



THE NATIONAL YOUTH CONFERENCE Summary Report 2018



SUBMITTED BY:
SOMALI NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL



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Introduction

The Somali National Youth Conference took place on 26th and 27th December 2018 at SAHAL Terminal in Mogadishu where over 200 youth delegates from all walks of life, including representation from regions, youth-led organizations, young entrepreneurs and the general public attended. The Conference was also attended by representatives from civil society organizations, Somali senior government officials including the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Youth and Sports, Advisors of Minister of Youth, senior officials of the National Youth Council of Somalia, the media, (Youth from Federal Member States, Benadir Regional Youth leaders, Youth Committees from Somaliland, Youth Groups with Special Needs (Disabled), Minority Youth Communities and other nongovernment networks in Benadir region) as well as private sector also participated in the conference.

The aim of the conference was to bring together young people from a wide range of backgrounds to discuss their aspirations, challenges and recommendations on topics such as youth political participation, youth and peace and overcoming current challenges of youth. The Conference further aimed at ensuring that the ‘Voice of the Somali Youth’ is heard and addressed the challenges youth face when it comes to taking part in politics and come with policies that will facilitate active participation of youth in politics. The entire thematic agenda of the national youth conference was to promote youth in political participation.

The conference also aimed at identifying emerging issues faced by young people, agreeing on priority areas for intervention and strengthening Somali youth networks and organizations by creating a safe platform for them to meet and collaborate. It also sought to foster intergenerational dialogue and cooperation while facilitating the avenues for young women and men to meet with decision-makers.

Overview of the Conference Programme

The Conference followed a three-pronged approach to ensure its objectives were met. These were: the official opening, four panel discussions, break-away group discussions and presentation followed by closing remarks by the Minister of Youth and Sports Honorable Khadija Mohamed Dirie.



Highlights from the official opening

During the official opening session, the Somali Deputy Prime Minister his excellence Mahdi Guled and Minister of Youth and Sports her excellence Khadija Mohamed Dirie has officially opened the conference. In his statement, his excellence Mahdi, Deputy Prime Minister highlighted that in order to involve youth in the political process, it is necessary to overcome the current challenges that the young generation is facing today. He noted that youth inclusion in the current political process is very crucial since youth are active agents of change and play a key role in restoring peace in their societies. He also informed the conference participants that the federal government welcomes any efforts which give the Somali youth the opportunity to be part in politics as well as decision making process.



Figure: 1. Somali Deputy Prime Minister, his excellence Mahdi Mohamed Guled giving speech at National Youth Conference



Figure: 2. Honourable Khadija, Minister of Youth and Sports addressing her opening speech at National Youth Conference

In the same vein, Honourable Khadija reckoned that youth engagement in the political structure will be one step towards sustainable peace and development in the country. In her speech, Honourable Khadija underlined the need for a holistic approach towards youth development of which inclusion in the political process should be part of the efforts. She also highlighted that the young generation should strive to reach their targets and to jointly overcome the barriers which might get in the way towards their involvement in the political structure. During her speech, Honourable Khadija informed the conference participants that the Federal Government is ready and welcomes the inclusion of the young generation in the political process. The current government has seen major representation of youth in parliaments as

well as in the cabinet. This highlights that the Federal Government of Somalia is giving the opportunity and opening the doors for the Somali youth to be part of the political process in the country. She concluded.

Highlights from the Key Note Speeches & Guests

Honourable Abdifitah Qasim Mohamed one of the members of the House of the People informed the conference about the need for youth inclusion in the current political structure. In his speech, he noted that youth have the greatest understanding of the realities of their own lives and the issues that affect them. They have much insight to offer policy-makers. “Accessing youth to be part of decision making process can lead to more effective solutions to problems facing young people as they present an invaluable perspective into issues that affect them, as well as provide sustainability by preparing young people for future careers in civil service”. He concluded



Figure: 3. Chairman of National Youth Council giving speech at National Youth Conference in Mogadishu

The chairperson of the Somali National Youth Council, Mr. Abdihafid has explained to the participants about the objective of the National Youth Conference which he said was to bring together young people from a wide range of backgrounds to discuss their aspirations, challenges and recommendations on topics such as youth political participation, youth and peace and overcoming current challenges that Somali youth are facing today.

Panel Discussion I – Promotion of Youth in Political Participation



The first roundtable panel discussion composed of the Minister of Youth and Sports Honourable Khadija Mohamed Dirie; Member of Parliament Honourable Abdifitah Qasim Mohamed;

Vice chairman of Somali National Youth Council Jama Awil and representative from youth led organizations Mohamed Lafole as well as representatives from the civil society organizations shared their expertise with the panelists.

The discussions were centred on existing provisions and available opportunities for promotion of youth in the political participation. Members of from the panellists has noted the high unemployment rate, particularly among the youth in Somalia and suggested that it should be considered to address the demanding needs of youth before inclusion of the political process. Honorable Khadija; Minister of Youth and Sports specifically highlighted the importance of inclusive economic growth and explained that the poor performance of the economy has affected the young generation and forced them to immigrate to other countries in the world. She also noted that much more need to be done to overcome this situation before we think inclusion of youth in the political structure. The panel successfully concluded that opportunities for engaging youth in the political participation are a leading way to reach an inclusive politics in which citizens can participate in the public decision-making process.

Question & Answer Session

At the end of the panel discussion, conference participants were given the opportunities to ask questions regarding the discussed agenda. Although some of the participants were given opportunities to view their opinion during the panel discussion, there have been limited questions from the conference participants at the end of the session. Only three questions regarding on how youth can be engaged in the political participation were asked to the panelists given the challenges the young people are facing.

Panel Discussion II – Current Youth Challenges



The second roundtable panel discussion composed of Member of Parliament; member of Somali National Youth Conference and representative from youth led organizations, representative of youth with special needs as well as representatives from the civil society organizations shared their expertise with the panelists.

The second panel discussion highlighted the challenges youth face including high levels of unemployment; perilous migration journeys in search of better opportunities, lack of access to basic urban services such as health and education as well as a lack of inclusion in governance processes shaping their lives at the local and federal level, the panel provided the space for youth to raise their voices and interact with political leaders and international representatives on mechanisms for delineating policies that directly impact them.

Reacting to some observations from the floor, the Advisor of Minister of Youth and Sport on youth matters expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to learn from the past about the challenges young people are facing on their road towards economic development, political inclusion and peace and security in the country. He further expressed the need for the Federal Government to put more efforts in the campaign for inclusive political participation.

Question & Answer Session

At the end of the panel discussion, conference participants were given the opportunities to ask questions regarding the discussed agenda. Although some of the participants were given opportunities to view their opinion during the panel discussion there has been limited questions from the conference participants at the end of the session.

DAY TWO: 27TH DECEMBER 2018

Highlights from the Key Note Speeches & Guests

During the second day of the conference, Honorable MP Mustaf Dhuxulow, former Minister of information has challenged the youths to take the lead in countering violent extremism, which he noted had been exploited by terrorist groups to cause instability in the country. In his speech, he suggested that the federal government should take effective measures in preventing the youth from joining violent extremist groups through awareness campaigns in the media, sensitization by religious leaders and by keeping them engaged through sports.



Figure: 4. Honourable MP Mustaf Dhuxulow addressing youth and Violent extremists at National Youth Conference



Figure: 5. Asli, First Somali Female Pilot giving speech at National Youth Conference

The first female pilot of Somalia, Asli has reminded the conference participants about the golden age of Somalia. She noted that it was the Somali Youth League (SYL) who has fought for the independence of Somalia were youth and encouraged the young generation to unite and stand for the reconstruction and development of the country.

Panel Discussion III – Youth & Peace



The third roundtable panel discussion composed of the Minister of Youth and Sports; Member of Parliament Honorable Mustaf Dhuxulow; Abdiwali member of Somali National Youth Council and representative from youth led organizations as well as representatives from the civil society organizations Irshaad , And representative from Somali Scholars Umbrella Sheikh Mohamud Sheikh Ahmed shared their expertise with the panelists.

The third panel discussion focused on the role of youth in preventing conflicts, building peace and advancing political development is ignored or underemphasized. The expert on youth matters has explained the Security Council resolution 2250(2015) on Youth, Peace and Security which is a timely international policy framework towards understanding the important role of youth in peace and security. He added that the resolution is the first international instrument to recognize youth not just as perpetrators and victims of conflict, violence and extremism but also as fundamental drivers and critical partners in global efforts to prevent conflict and promote lasting peace. He concluded that this resolution is indeed ground - breaking by enhancing the positive contributions young women and men in peace and security.

Question & Answer Session

At the end of the panel discussion, conference participants were given the opportunities to ask questions regarding the discussed agenda. Although some of the participants were given opportunities to view their opinion during the panel discussion there has been limited questions from the conference participants at the end of the session.

Panel Discussion IV – The Youth & Somali Constitution



The fourth and last panel discussion composed of the Director General of Ministry of Constitution Mr. Mohamed Abukar Zubeyr; Chairman of Somali National Youth Council Abdihafid and representative from youth led organizations as well as representatives from the civil society organizations shared their expertise with the panelists.

The Director General of Ministry of Constitution Mr. Mohamed Abukar Zubeyr has explained the conference participants about the rights that the Somali constitution provides to its citizens including the youth. He noted that the Somali youth should take part in the constitutional review process and that it is necessary for inclusive constitutional review for all Somalis since the constitution belongs to all of the Somali people. It is the constitution which gives you the rights and privilege of being a Somali citizen as well as protects your rights from being violated or abused. He highlighted that the constitution does not merely focus on the technical aspect but also speaks about rights of the Somali citizens. Therefore it is the responsibility of the youth to make their inputs to constitution during the review process and learn the contents of their constitution and also to make awareness and empower the community to know their basic rights. He concluded

During the discussion, chairman of the Somali National Youth Council has spoken about the role of the youth in taking part in the constitutional review process. He highlighted that there should be a need for mutual collaboration between the Ministry of Constitution and National Youth Council which represent the voice of the Somali youth.

Question & Answer Session

At the end of the panel discussion, conference participants were given the opportunities to ask questions regarding the discussed agenda. Although some of the participants were given opportunities to view their opinion during the panel discussion there has been limited questions from the conference participants at the end of the session. A young participant has asked the panelists how the government can engage the young people in the participation of political structure and what constitutes the rights of the Somali youth.



Figure: 6. A young participant asking question during the panel discussion at National Youth Conference in Mogadishu

Overview of Breakaway Sessions

Four parallel sessions were held after each panel discussion to discuss, collect the ideas/opinions and identify issues affecting young people in the areas of promotion of youth in political participation; Challenges of Somali youth; how youth can prevent the conflict and participate in Peace building and how Somali youth can participate in the constitutional review process as well as making recommendations. Each group had a facilitator and was required to come up with some key recommendations, which were then reported upon during the plenary.

Conclusion and Communiqué

The Conference concluded that issues affecting the participation of young people in the political process are interrelated and in addressing such, a holistic approach needs to be identified. Honorable Khadija, Minister of Youth and Sports has officially closed the National Youth Conference. In her closing remarks, Honorable Khadija thanked the Ministers, MPs, Religious Leaders, Youth representatives, Scholars, Key members from the civil society organizations and guests of the conference for their brilliant ideas, contributions and suggestions which has been crucial for this event to happen. She also thanked the UN agencies particularly the UNFPA for their contribution and support and the National Youth Council who have organized this wonderful conference. She finally urged the young generation to work and give a supportive hand to their government so that through collective efforts, the youth can have the opportunity to participate in the political process. The two day National Youth Conference has been concluded with the release of the following communiqué:

1. Youth and Leadership

- ✓ Implementation of National Youth Policy and the role Constitution Review.
- ✓ To participate and be involved the youth in leadership and guiding the country with putting advice the selection candidates.
- ✓ To identify and put in place articles of the rights youth in The Somali Constitution
- ✓ Establish a National Council that isn't impermanent leaders as to learn in good leadership and the interests of Somali youth.
- ✓ To acquire and learnt the historical of Somali country in order to learn and be experienced the previous faults.

2. Education

- ✓ To get National Education Policy with clear youth in participation.
- ✓ To provide free education, especially adolescent girls and young among Special Needs groups (disabled).
- ✓ Strengthen and enhance the Somali language be encouraged young people to speak and write (Other Somali dialect such as May iyomaxaatiri).
- ✓ Implementation of national libraries with taking crucial role in young concubine from the program commenced (National re-construction program (Isxilqaan)), led by the President of the Federal Republic of Somalia, Mohamed Abdullahi Farmaajo.

3. Voyage

- ✓ To create on job skill training to work through the Peace line social development team in among the Cabinet of Ministers of Somalia Mr. Hassan Ali Kheyre FGS.
- ✓ To get a great awareness based the critical life of young face the voyage through the media (religious awareness, Somali Literature songs).

4. Security

- ✓ To complete all the rights of the National Army's and monthly allowance on period and be part young people in the Security Stabilization Plan in particular, in the Capital City of Somalia Mogadishu.
- ✓ Finding out the hotline call numbers of security agencies in the capital, to address threats to the security of the communities in their settlements warnings.

5. Job Creation

- ✓ Clearly establish the National Development Plan, to create job opportunities and construction in: Public Buildings, Construction of Regions, Ports, Airports and Sports Stadiums in the country, to find young people in work opportunities that will be a chance for all the country.
- ✓ Promote the country's production, with giving priority the government sparingly funding in farmers, fishermen, pastoralists, and industrialists, especially young people will get job opportunities with these skills.
- ✓ Strengthen a policy attracting foreign investors and Somali entrepreneurs, which can create opportunities for young people to work.
- ✓ Promote the labor law and employment (the grade) since our young people are well educated with academic university.

6. The young's role in Medias

- ✓ To Take part the role of Medias awareness, education, young delivering notifications messages.
- ✓ Private Media owners are to enhance and improve young skills talent by providing training and edification programs as to be aware the needs to do and where they need to go (among Girls and boys)
- ✓ Strengthen and monitor the media independence by protecting media Law.