

Concerned Somalis Diaspora reject the unlawful and unilateral extension of the TFP and the Draft Constitution Process

We, the under-signed members of Concerned Somalis in Diaspora, are gravely concerned about the unilateral extension of the Transitional Federal Parliament (TFP), on February 3, 2011, in violation of the Transitional Federal Charter, and the fast pace with which the draft constitution is moving to a ratification stage without any adequate input from the Somali public.

We believe that Somalis must chart their own destiny and have the ownership of the planning, process, and outcome of the next political dispensations beyond August 2011. However, we are bothered by the TFP's unilateral action in violation of Article 32(4) of the Transitional Federal Charter that clearly states "the term of the Transitional Federal Parliament shall not be extended."

We are also deeply disturbed by the persistent interference of some of the front-line states in the affairs of Somalia. The constant, nefarious pre-emptive interferences of the Ethiopian Government in the internal affairs of Somalia have been an obstacle to the success of the Somali reconciliation processes and the consolidation of any independent and effective Transitional Federal Institutions (TFI) in the last twenty years. Not stopping the unfettered involvement of the Ethiopian Government in the affairs of Somalia will definitely prolong and expand the current instability and war in the Horn of Africa.

Additionally, given the acute absence of peace and lack of security in much of the country coupled with the limited authority of the TFG, we strongly believe the tabling of the draft constitution for ratification phase is a premature action. In the eyes of the Somali citizens, ratifying the draft constitution through a non-referendum process will not lend any legitimacy to the proposed constitution. Moreover, lack of robust citizen participation both inside the country's stable regions and in the Diaspora will undermine any potential confidence in the nascent Transitional Federal Institutions.

The under-singed concerned members of the Somali Diaspora including Somali intellectuals, educators, activists and professionals recommend the following:

- To work on quickly reversing the recently passed unilateral motion extending the TFP mandate for a period of three more years.
- To put an end to the last twenty years' *de facto* policy in which the international community has mismanaged the search for solution of the Somalia crisis.
- To minimize the role of front-line states' involvement in the internal affairs of Somalia, especially those countries whose vested political interests are contrary to the aspiration of the Somali peoples' effort to restore peace and stability to their country.

- To encourage the TFI to reach out to and seek direct negotiation with the opposition groups with the goal of achieving a comprehensive cease fire, cessation of hostilities, and sustainable reconciliation.
- To delay the ratification of the draft constitution until most of the country is peaceful and ready for robust citizen participation in the constitutional process.
- To foster an environment that all Somali groups and emerging political parties will receive a level field to run for the head of the state, after August 20, 2011, the end of the current TFG mandate.

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