



Somalia South Central Non-State Actors (SOSCENSA)

ONE DAY REGIONAL CIVIL SOCIETY CONSULTATION MEETING ON CONSTITUTION MAKING PROCESS IN BAIDOA



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Baidoa Somalia

Introduction

Somalis had undergone very brutal and bloody civil unrest since 1991 which led many to die and made the country to become a failed state. Thus the federal system had been recognized as the best solutions to the hatred and longtime mistrust among Somalis when they fought by clans, groups etc and Federalism might enable them to come up with constructive political maneuvers that will pave the way to have elections peacefully if the international community supports them Thus, as a way of understanding and consultation, SOSSENSA had held a one day consultation meeting with civil societies from Bay and Bakool regions in southwest of Somalia in order to understand the civil society's perspectives in the federal system and the power sharing system that Somalia had adapted since 2004. In this meeting, the draft constitution was the main focus especially in the power and natural resources sharing points in the constitution.

This consultation meeting was held at Bay Women Development Network (BWDN) workshop hall in Baidoa. The meeting started welcoming the participants to the venue.

Welcoming

Mulki Ibraahim Ahmed, the BWDN chairlady had welcomed the participants to the meeting and at the same did introductions among the participants and the SOSSENSA facilitators; after that someone of the participants was asked to open the meeting with verses of the Holy Quran.

Opening speech

The Baidoa D.C (District commissioner) had officially opened the meeting and warmly greeted the participants while expressing his appreciation to attend such important meeting. He thanked to SOSSENSA facilitators and highly praised the great role it plays in the peace building process of the country. "I am very proud to attend such a meeting in which one of the most important agenda is being discussed, the constitution.He said. But I greatly ask SOSSENSA to pay more efforts how such important meetings and discussions would be continued and even reach the country side" he added.

After the Baidoa D.C had opened the meeting, the agenda of the meeting was distributed to the attendants and the meeting facilitators Abdullahi Sheik Adam and Shukri Ahmed briefly introduced about SOSSENSA to the attendants while they described the main objectives behind the establishment of SOSSENSA and its members.

Participants

Eighteen people from the civil societies were invited to the meeting; these people were mainly from Bay and Bakool regions. These people included: traditional and religious leaders, women and youth groups, intellectual society and business people. The list of the participants is annexed below.

Meeting methodology Role of facilitator

This consultation meeting was designed as group discussions. In that respect, the role of the facilitator was to lead the process step-by-step to ensure the groups clearly understood the impetus and concepts based for each question, and discuss it accordingly. To do that, the facilitator applied the following participatory learning techniques: Encouraging groups to come up with clear and important views towards the federal system in Somalia. The eighteen participants were grouped into three groups and each group was assigned with a different topic.

Each Group discussion and the agenda

Group one was assigned to discuss on Federalism of the country, and the appropriate type of federal system.

Results of their discussion are presented as follows:

- Federalism is not a solution for Somalia, because it further created hostility than to solve the prolonged civil conflicts. Each zone with the same group or clans formed a state and claims to be independent from the central governments.

- Lack of enough knowledge of the federalism
- Federalism is appropriate for a country with different communities with different cultures, beliefs, religion etc. and Somalia is not like that.
- The system of president and a prime minister with clearly defined authorities is fine, if not there must only president and a vice president

Group two was assigned to discuss on **Nationality** (is everyone whose father and mother are Somali considered to be a Somali or anyone who is born and live in Somalia) and their results is as follows:

- Anyone whose father and mother are Somali is considered to be a Somali.
- Anyone who is born and live in Somalia can be a Somali citizen if and if only he/she is a Muslim.
- Any resource is fine to be distributed at federal level if it is done justly and there is no any corruption, discrimination, if not, any state must be free for its resources and pay only the share for the central government.
- The authorities of the country must be shared on state based system.

Finally the group three was given an assignment in the status of Mogadishu, its borders and as the capital city of the country and Defining judiciary authorities including the constitutional court. And after their discussion their views and suggestion is as follows:

- Mogadishu is capital city of the federal government but it must have be in state because its population have right to form a state
- Or else it must be independent and its administration must be shared
- The constitutional court is the main court that has the final decision after the state courts

After group discussions, the groups presented their views and suggestions in very clear and attractive manner.

Conclusion

According to the perspectives and knowledge of the participants, there is great need of broader awareness raising campaigns on the federalism. Most of the participants had suspicion of the federalism, and think it is a new mechanism to exploit their natural resources.