

Will Warlordism End or It Will Grow Stronger?

Some Reflections on 2016 Agenda Conference and Participants!



⁽¹⁾ Somalia's current tribal semi-state factions and weak SFG leaders meeting with their Boss Dr. Tedros..

Somalia's window of opportunity is closing fast. The provisional constitution and national election are on the horizon, separatists, religious sect leaders, tribal semi-states warlords (*so called presidents*) and abusive secessionist's militia commanders are becoming more and more entrenched. The international community and the Somali intellectuals must act soon to improve the human rights situation. After elections, scheduled for August 2016, it may be too late.

These feelings were buttressed by the impression that the international actors were interested in working with semi tribal-states factions than with more legitimate Somali civilian representatives. The images of U.S and European diplomats, IGAD and UN aid officials meeting with Somalia's tribal semi-state warlords (*so called presidents*)⁽¹⁾ served to further disenchant civil society, intellectuals and political organizations.

In the year since the leader of *Damul Jadid Loy Jirga*, President Hassan Sheikh made some efforts to limit the worst effects warlords (*presidents of tribal semi- states*). Unable to dismiss local semi-state tribal leaders, Hassan Sheik has little capacity to enforce his orders without the support of powerful Semi-State warlords (*so called presidents*), or Ethiopia influence-he has instead tried to erode their power gradually. He has worked to increase the power central government ministries over which he has power like –Interior Ministry –and he shuffled some key posts, appointing 4 different new prime ministers in one year. Though in many cases, Hassan Sheik's appointed Prime ministers have been unable to rein local semi-tribal warlords (*so called tribal presidents*), when asked to work with the Fed and PM, they have simply refused. Defense minister has blocked some of Semi-tribal state leaders, especially those who enjoy Ethiopian political supports. Hassan barely retains control over Mogadishu-based African security forces (AMISOM).

Meanwhile, the primary power broker in Somalia –the United States (through Ethiopian influences)-continues to embrace a divided strategy toward Somalis: on the one hand, U.S-Ethiopia supports Hassan Sheik in Mogadishu, while on the other hand, U.S supports Ethiopian forces to cooperate (strengthen) in areas within outside of Mogadishu, some of whom seek merely to enrich themselves or strengthen their own power at the expenses of Hassan Sheik and the Fed administration.

Outside of Mogadishu, power dynamics are more diverse. In central regions, President Hassan has appointed figures from his *Damul-Jadid movement*, but they have had difficulties asserting their influences when local tribal militia commanders are hostile, for the most part, either are independents, refusing to come fully under President Hassan’s authority, or they are loyal to different authorities such as neighboring countries.

Civil society, intellectuals, and Somali diaspora said loudly “*A just peace requires negotiations between all stakeholders including women advocacy groups as well as diaspora and unarmed civil society groups*”

Outside from the *Mogadishu-Kismayo Meetings*, Somali civil society called for international support for their peace building efforts to address conflicts, including the sectarian divisions and warlordism evidenced gaining moments again in Somalia – and it is this call that we as a global community must listen to, one of western envoys in Somalia said.

An exhausted international community eager to leave Somalia and preaching a “talk and fight” strategy is no recipe for a just or durable peace. Too many regional government warlords (“*Presidents*”)-self-appointed tribal politicians still govern from the intimidating power of the gun rather than leading through the legitimacy that comes from providing public services. The international community’s programs to improve governance have too often relied on inexperienced, highly-corrupted tribal semi- states warlords (*so called presidents*) who lack connections of local democratization and traditions rather than supporting and empowering local civil society to hold their own government to account...

Civil society’s voice in the peace process is a foundation for success, not a luxurious add-on. But opponents (*tribal semi-states leaders*) of Somali civil society’s participation in the 2016 Agenda Conference and in the peace process are plentiful. Tribal Semi state Government officials say that they represent civil society’s interests, or say, “Involving civil society is a nice idea, but we simply don’t have time to involve the public before the 2016 deadline.”

Yet negotiations have stopped. It seems from most accounts that no one is talking to the *Al-Shabaab* (See **Dr. Abdirahman M. Abdi Hashi and Dr. Abdirahman Badiyow** points of view on VOA: <http://www.voasomali.com/media/video/2964747.html>).



Baidao-Ethiopianization Projects : Moral values, and a culture and a religion, maintaining these values are far better than laws and regulations.

The US-Ethiopia “talk and fight” strategy exists only in theory. In practice it does not include “talking”. And the Somali week government’s peace and reconciliation plan is at a standstill. Given this impasse, civil society’s involvement in the peace process is not a luxury, but a necessity.

History shows that military victory ends only a small percentage of wars. Most end through peace agreements. But half of all peace agreements fail, primarily because the process excludes the public. Dozens of Somali Scholars agree that peace processes that include civil society are more successful and more often lead to stable, durable, democratic governance.

Somehow the voices echoing from Beethoven Hall need to reach the ears of those in power. Designing a process that includes the Somali public and works out a way to deal with difficult justice issues is essential to the success of any peace deal in Somalia.....

This report, based on research conducted from April 2012, through May 2015, documents also a human rights abuse in the **SSC regions** of Somalia, the most nomadic populated part of Somalia. A climate of fear exists in much of **SSC regions**. Northern tribal secessionists (Somaliland) militias are invading private homes, usually at night, robbing and assaulting civilians. By force or by ruse, Secessionists tribal militiamen gain entry into homes and shops and hold people hostage for days, terrorizing them with weapons, stealing their valuables, and sometimes rapping women and teenage girls.

In Conclusion; those calling for civil-society inclusion in the talks hope unarmed Somali society (Academics, diaspora, women and youth organizations) can bridge divisions among armed tribal semi-states parties and local communities now close to embroil in a war that had a dangerous tribal dimension from the start. International community’s inclusion of civil-society representatives is based on the widely held belief that they are broadly pro-peace and less tribally divided and ‘political’ than others – but still able to influence armed actors (tribal semi-states). These were the same reasons civil society can afford a large role in the 2016 peace process and election agenda. Numbers do matter: the civil-society delegation needs to be big enough both to

avoid further claims of unfair election/selection and to resist co-optation of individual members by the parties. Either way, civil-society representatives must, like the warring parties, provide substantive input to the mediation's outputs – from the basic framework agreement to, ultimately, a new constitution. Certainly civil society's participation should not wait for a national dialogue and reconciliation process, whose promise might be as fragile as the UN's pledge for democratization of the Somalis...

⁽¹⁾ Current Somali Warlords : Mr. Sheik Sharif, Mr. Dhegajun, Mr. Omar Abdirashid, Mr. Hassan Sheikh, Mr. Jawari, Mr. Ahmed Madobe, Dr. Abdiweli Ali Gas, and only missing the old tribal secessionist warlord Mr. Siilaanyo (No Woman there..!!)

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