



Puntland State of Somalia  
Garowe

## **Istanbul Conference II on Somalia**

Istanbul, Turkey

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### **Statement by the President of Puntland State of Somalia**

H.E. Abdirahman Mohamed Mohamud (Farole)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

**Mr. Chairman, Heads of State and Governments, Excellencies, Distinguished Speakers, Ladies and Gentlemen:**

It is a pleasure and delight for me to address this important conference on Somalia here in Istanbul and we thank the Turkish Government for organizing this conference and for hosting us. In Puntland State, we are particularly thankful to the Government and people of the Republic of Turkey for sending doctors on a humanitarian medical mission to Puntland.

We are here to exchange information and ideas and to reaffirm our unity of purpose towards ending the transition in Somalia. Our common goal is to find lasting peace in Somalia through strengthening security, political and economic institutions by upholding Somali cultural values and respecting the country's socio-political realities.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

As we are aware, delegations from Puntland and Galmudug raised serious concerns about the way the Somali civil society meeting in Istanbul was organized, managed and mandated. We are thankful to the Turkish Government for responding positively to our concerns.

I would like to reaffirm to this conference that the Consultative Meeting in Addis Ababa [21-23 May 2012] has finalized the constitutional review process and has incorporated all the submissions of Somali stakeholders into the Draft Federal

Constitution. In this regard, it is important to emphasize that the participants of the recently concluded 'civil society meeting' here in Istanbul have been purposefully selected by interest groups and are therefore unrepresentative of Somali civil society. As such, the outcome of that meeting does not concern Somalia, as the outcome was intentionally contradictory to the Roadmap process and the signed agreements. That meeting's four recommendations, which are unacceptable, include: 1) re-visiting federalism for Somalia; 2) enlarging the Lower House of Somali Parliament from 225 to 275 seats; 3) expanding the controversial and divisive 4.5 clan formula into a new '5 clan formula'; and 4) distorting the role of the Somali Federal Parliament's Upper House.

Somalia has suffered tremendously over the past 40 years of misrule under a military dictatorship, followed by the outbreak of civil war in 1991, leading to the endless crises that have plagued the country since then. It is imperative to underline that, while Somalia is one country as a whole, there have been two zones in Somalia – a zone of stability in the north, such as Puntland and Somaliland; and a zone in south-central Somalia plagued by contagious violence, warlordism and general lawlessness. We believe that all credible deliberations should be based on this reality.

Misbalanced economic development in Somalia is one of the root causes that led to the state collapse of 1991, along with injustice and conflict over scarcity of resources. Moreover, misbalanced economic development, which neglects vast regions of Somalia, stirred community resentment that created the first rebel groups to violently oppose the military regime in the 1970s and 1980s.

Our solemn recommendation to Somalia's international partners is to benefit from the lessons of history and to avoid creating a new misbalance in Somalia. Helping Somalia in terms of providing aid and development assistance should commensurate the varying needs and requirements in different parts of Somalia.

We request the international community, particularly the Turkish Government, to give full consideration to realities on the ground and to not create a new misbalance in Somalia, which could deepen underlying grievances, and potentially lead to new conflict and new fragmentation.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

As we all know, Puntland State is the major player in Somali national politics. Puntland has played a leading role in the Roadmap process by hosting two National Constitutional Conferences in Garowe, and a subsequent meeting of Somali leaders in Galkayo. In September 2011, marking the first visit of a Puntland delegation to Mogadishu in over 20 years, I personally led a Puntland delegation to Mogadishu to sign the Roadmap agreement and to underline the role of Puntland in the national arena.

On the issue of elders, we cannot hide our dissatisfaction in the way the role of Somali clan elders was mismanaged and manipulated in Mogadishu. Under the terms of the Garowe Principles I & II, and the Galkayo Principles, Somali clan elders – in consultation with their own constituencies – were mandated to nominate delegates to the National Constituent Assembly and new lawmakers in the reformed Somali Federal Parliament. In light of this, Puntland clan elders travelled to Mogadishu on 4 May 2012 to agree with fellow Darod clan elders from southern Somalia on the sharing of seats in the National Constituent Assembly and the Somali Federal Parliament. After achieving an understanding, our clan elders returned to Puntland to consult with their own constituencies, but we were very disappointed with the management of the elders' meeting in Mogadishu for political campaign purposes.

Since its inception in 1998, Puntland State has focused on peace, security, stability, governance, and socio-economic development into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We remain committed to preserving the sovereignty, national unity and territorial integrity of the Federal Republic of Somalia, united only under a negotiated and agreed-upon Federal Constitution.

To contribute towards peace and development, Puntland State needs peace-building development projects, in water sector, roads and energy development, and creating sustainable livelihoods by improving the productivity of livestock and fisheries sector. At this point, I wish to remind everyone that the Istanbul Declaration of May 2010 clearly mentioned Garowe and Bossaso airports as priority reconstruction projects in Somalia, but regrettably, nothing has been done yet to improve the airports.

Puntland State adheres to the values of peace, tolerance, and good relations with neighbors, and pursuing socio-economic development. I want to emphasize to the world at large that Puntland will continue to pursue a policy of self-development and will seek conflict resolution through dialogue. We are confident that our development is a benefit for Puntland, for Somalia as a whole, and for the wider world, as Puntland constitutes a key regional security pillar.

Thank you all and God bless.