



Somaliland Non State Actors Forum

Location: Jigjga-yar, Badda As, Behind WHO Office

Tel: +252-(0)-63-570536, +252-(0)-63-4414335

Website: www.sonsaf.org

Date 25/01/2016

Hargeisa

Press Statement on Voter Registration Observation

On January 16th – 22, 2016: Somaliland Non - State Actors Forum (SONSAF) in collaboration with Somaliland Civil Society Election Forum (SCISEF) deployed domestic observers in more than 90 out of 163 voter registration centers in the Togdher region. The CSO/NSA is undertaking this huge task to pave the way forward for how free and fair elections can be conducted in March 28th 2017. This civil society engagement both domestic observation and voter education has meaningful input to maximize the public participation, transparency and accountability and to help facilitate elections and stakeholders with equal term to reach common grounds on this process of the electoral system in Somaliland.

Moreover, the domestic observers confirmed that the people in the Togdher region were politely and peacefully entering the registration centres and the equipment deployed by the National Electoral Commission (NEC) was very sophisticated and capable of detecting any attempts of “double registration” and this system capability has contributed to the voter registration environment being more consistent and calm.

In the meantime, compared to the 2008-2009 voter registration, the observers confirmed that numerous improvements have been made in this year of 2016. Despite some small technical errors such as the networking system for the first day of the voter registration following other minor adjustments of the some individual kits, process of the voter registration concluded peacefully for the first seven days and it is worth mentioning that young people managing the voter registration centres were more dedicated and competent to resolve both technical issues and other cases of dispute such as a few number of people encountering challenges where the system did not recognize their eyes.

Therefore, SONSAF is recommending to the National Electoral Commission (NEC) to utilize lessons learned from the Togdher region voter registration in order to improve this process from region to region; the NEC should address the people who tried to register more than once to prevent this from happening again, political parties should send their observers constantly, the

Ministry of Interior should also be required to strengthen their representatives in the voter registration centers and civil society will continue their unwavering and complementary support during this process.

Finally, on behalf of Somaliland Civil Society and non- state actors SONSAF is congratulating the National Electoral Commissions (NEC) for their consolidated efforts in this process of the voter registration and voter education as well. In addition, SONSAF also commends the government of Somaliland for their efforts of the security deployment and verifying people who want to register; on the other hand, SONSAF welcomes the continued and generous support from the international community in this process of voter registration and elections at large.

Mustafe Sa'ad Dhimbiil

SONSAF Chairman