

Open letter: Request to consider the Independent Dispute Commission's proposal for the selection of delegates

To: The Independent Electoral Dispute Resolution Committee (IEDRM)

CC: The Federal Government of Somalia

Cc: Electoral Committee

To: Members of the international community, AU, IGAD, OIC, Arab League

We are concerned the manner in which the Electoral Committee is sabotaging the Dispute Commission's recommendations to resolve complaints submitted by Warsangeli elders. The elders reject the exclusion policies of the Puntland President, Abdiweli Gaas, which led to the legitimate demands stated that a pre-selected delegation not representing the Warsangeli community be questioned until the Dispute Resolution Commission approve the validity of the delegation. Earlier, the Dispute Commission decided to look into these complaints filed by various communities including the Warsangeli, however, contrary to the law, members of the the Electoral Commission is intervening and blocking that to happen.

Warsangeli and other communities expressed their dissatisfaction in the process and the circumstances in which delegations were selected. The Dispute Resolution Commission acknowledged grievances that come as a result of the mishandled delegation submission process. To be heard and listened is a critical step and citizen's right permitted by the Federal Constitution. Excellences, last week, in Sanaag and Haylaan regions-- elders, community leaders, women's organizations, and the youth staged demonstrations in Dhahar, Badhan, Erigavo, Yubbe, Hingalol, Bosaso, to name few. These localities clearly communicated their message to the media. Their grievances are stated and widely reported in the media.

The demonstrations flared after Suldán Said Abdisalan previously mentioned in the then 2012 UN Monitoring Report as reckless and corrupt Sultan, allotted delegations and parliamentary seats to his family and close associates. The Sultan in close collaboration with the Puntland President, Abdiweli Gaas, refused to consult with the elders and the Sanaag/Haylaan communities, in general.

As a result, a complaint was filed with the Dispute Resolution Commission to review Sultan Said's favorite listing submission. The Commission recognized the flaws in the selection process and proposed a dozen delegation recalls including the Warsangeli delegation list. The Commission also issued a press release and suggested certain submission be reviewed. To the disdain of the community and the Dispute Resolution Commission, some members of the Electoral Committee are intervening and pressuring the Dispute Resolution Committee to withdraw from the mediation.

Therefore, we urge the members of the International Community, IGAD, AU, OIC, Arab League, as well the Feral Government of Somalia, pay attention to the violations and abuse by the Electoral Committee, and to allow and make possible for the Dispute Resolution Commission reach a just decision in these cases.

We warn that the Electoral Commission illegal intervention in the selection and settling of the disputes, will further complicate and may even prolong the already delayed election. It is noteworthy that some of the Electoral Commission members are openly involved in seating misappropriations including allocating positions to their families and friends .

We appeal to the above mentioned authorities to let the Dispute Resolution Commission reach a binding decision in the delegations' selection. Clearly, the Warsangeli community: elders, intellectuals, women and youth in consensus demanded the recall of the delegation and members nominated to the Lower House (Somalia Lower House) through unfair means. We must choose who will represent us in the parliament and in the delegation pool; we refute Puntland's leadership and the Sultan's autocratic ruling, and we forewarn if the process is hijacked by the few, the election may take longer than scheduled or even lead to communal conflicts.

Thank you

Sincerely,
Hon. MP. Asha A. Abdalla (2000 - 2012)