

**To the Opposition Political Parties and the President of Somaliland  
Fragile Democracy entails Conflict Resolution and Management!**

**By Adam Muse Jibril**

The Somaliland Political Stakeholders need to underline the delicate relationship between fragile democracy and conflict, that the democratic order in a backward country like ours calls for scientific approach and devotion to dealing with these two conflicting sides of the equation. This dilemma requires constant efforts for balancing. The background for the fragility of the democratic order in Somaliland is closely related to the State Formation process in the Somaliland soil.

The initial step towards the process of state formation in Somaliland first begun with the British Colonial administration. This step was not compatible with the existed traditional Somali type of governance (Pastoral Democracy). The period from 1960 to 1969 experienced faithful attempts to cope the Colonial originated government structures in a hostile environment of the Somali Paternalistic Society ruled by incompetent political elite guided by clan politics. These attempts have ended-up with failure as they couldn't produce coherent paradigm for coexistence between Pastoral Democracy and Modern Colonial State system of governance.

The state-formation process in this African Somali soil had entered into stage of crisis in 1969, out of which Military Junta hijacked the country's political power, as a result, all kinds of blunders occurred and developed the worst military dictatorship that finally led to a dead end. The emergence of SNM was a natural fate. Unfortunately, the other Somali resistance movement's leadership of Somalia, 1980s to 1990s, characterized by short-sightedness and guided by clan ideology, and thus failed to create a positive alternative to the Military Dictatorship.

On the other hand, the Somali National Movement SNM and the Somaliland people in general have put in place a distinct model in the approaches to peace and state building processes. Throughout the armed resistance SNM had been practicing on two parallel types of political instruments, Modern and traditional means (the Central and executive organs) and the Military Command on one side, and on the other Council of Elders representing the Traditional System

After the defeat of the military regime and liberation of Somaliland, the SNM as a National liberation and democratic oriented organization decided to build a new world entirely different from both pre- and post-Siyad Bare regime. They have concluded this notion not from elaborated conceptual strategy, but through instinctive practical manner, and thus, the building of new Somaliland started with the grand Somaliland Conference in Burao Town in 1991 with deliberate action of Conflict resolution done by cooperation of both Traditional and Modern minded elites of Somaliland. The relevant question here is why Conflict resolution became the point of departure to a long process to Peace, State building and Democracy in Somaliland. Westminster Democracy was a product of four hundred years out of European historical wars for democracy and human rights which led to total defeat of Feudalism and religious Fundamentalism in Europe during which all kinds of transformation occurred, from Secularism, Social Contract, Enlightenment, and liberalism. While Somaliland Democracy is just about Peace and State Building from the ashes of what was left by the British State Formation that was deeply rained by Siyad Barre regime, the background we had was Nomadic Pastoralism Social Reality. Therefore, Democracy in our land is a combination of two systems, Traditional-Customary law and Modern Westminster Multi-Party system, none of which can't stand on one foot alone.

**Conclusion:** To make Somaliland Democracy work, you need that the Government and Opposition Representatives meet and discuss about the points of dis-agreement on elections and seek consensus agreement, without which the country will be getting itself in a historical cul-de-sac. Failing to do this, both sides will equally be responsible of the consequence of decline of the Somaliland Democracy, and possibly worst.

