

# The Horn Tribune

Vol IV/ Issue 1573 Sunday 10 November 2024

Jumada I 08/ 1446 AH

An Independent Weekly Newspaper of Dawan Media Group, Tel: 0634414181/0634424590/0634615145

## President Musa Bihi appeals to the nation to vote for KULMIYE party to achieve national aspirations

**"Somaliland has also established a democratic government that has held five successful universal suffrage elections to date, a rare feat in the Horn of Africa", he stated.**



By M.A. Egge

The President of the Republic of Somaliland H.E. Musa Bihi Abdi made a passionate appeal to the nation on Wednesday evening asking the members of the public to re-elect him to the top-most executive office of the Presidency in the general elections due to be held this week, on

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## A matter of time: Somaliland determined to see through MoU



**Mark my words, the MoU implementation will happen. It is a matter of time. The spirit and commitment is there**

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**I stand for the defense of the people, country and nation of Somaliland, says WADDANI presidential candidate Abdirahman Irro**



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## NEC Urges Voters, Election Stakeholders to Properly Gear Up for Election Day



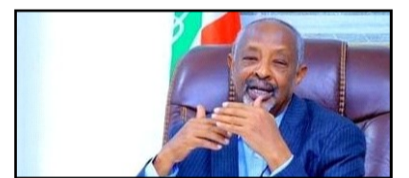
The Chairman of the Somaliland Electoral Commission (NEC), Hon. Musa Hassan Yussuf, addressing the nation on Thursday last week urged all election stakeholders to properly and correctly gear up for polling day on 13 November,

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**Interior minister urges for non-interference of electioneering processes**

By M.A. Egge

The Minister of Internal Affairs Hon. Mohamed Kahin Ahmed, said that the only



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**Ethiopia and Somaliland Can Convince Trump To Help Mitigate Regional Tensions**



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## Somaliland: Media Ethics Committee Reinforces Electoral Coverage Guidelines



The Media Code of Conduct and Ethics Monitoring Committee (MCCEMC) has commended Somaliland's media outlets for their professional conduct while issuing comprehensive guidelines for election coverage

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**SL-SAG: We call on all communities, political leaders, and stakeholders to stand united in the spirit of democracy**



**Somaliland Strategic Advisory Group (SL-SAG) wishes November 13, 2024 a safe and peaceful election day**

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## Somaliland's Road to Elections and Its Commitment to Stability in the Region



The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Republic of Somaliland, is happy to inform the

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**Reasons for Somalilanders to vote for President Musa Bihi again**

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# President Musa Bihi appeals to the nation to vote for KULMIYE party to achieve national aspirations



Wednesday the 13<sup>th</sup> of November 2024. In his address to the nation beamed live, the President revisited the monumental tasks whose challenges the KULMIYE administration faced and overcame over time. Of the pros and cons, he underpinned the main hurdles having been threats and conspiracies tailored to undermine the state and nation of Somaliland in general by enemies of the country; but subsequently, he pointed out, they were overcome.

The President noted that after the long struggle for the liberation of the country after a period of 34 years, Somaliland is today a nation that most of the world acknowledged to work and deal with bilaterally. "Somaliland has also established a democratic government that has held five successful universal suffrage elections to date, a rare feat in the Horn of Africa", he stated. He observed the monumental strides the government of Somaliland has similarly made in achieving practical developmental progress as far as infrastructure,

education, health and associated public services are concerned. He underpinned the fact that the main adversary to the to the essence and nationhood is the Mogadishu administration who ironically refuse to comprehend that Somaliland and Somalia were basically two different nations who once made an ill-fated union which practically got subsequently got dissolved once Somaliland opted to re-assert its original independence gained from the Great Britain 64 years ago. He defended the KULMIYE administration while outlining its achievements over time thus justifying its caliber to warrant re-election; while at the same time hinting its leadership veterans of the struggles that liberated the nation and that the challengers had no experience in running a government at all. The president stated the steadfastness of the KULMIYE administration in lobbying for international recognition, whose efforts he said were at an advanced stage. He outlined various policies the party had in store if re-elected and pledged to the adherence and implementation of its programmes.

## NEC Urges Voters, Election Stakeholders to Properly Gear Up for Election Day



emphasizing the Commission's extensive readiness measures implemented over recent weeks. Chairman Musa stated that all preparations for the polling day were on course and that all 2,648 polling stations across the country were at this moment fully readied to receive voters on the appointed day. He detailed how the Commission has successfully distributed essential electoral materials, including ballot boxes, voting booths, and indelible ink to all locations, with security arrangements firmly in place. The Chairman reminded voters not to leave their voting cards behind as no other kind of identity will be

accepted in lieu at polling stations. This strict measure, he explained, follows comprehensive voter verification exercises conducted throughout the preparatory period to ensure electoral integrity. The chairman expressed appreciation to the conflict resolution and election monitoring committee for their vigilant, responsible role in managing ethical issues during the election campaigning period which is to end on Sunday. He highlighted their successful mediation of several potential conflicts and praised their deployment of over 800 domestic observers across the regions. The

committee's swift response to campaign violations and their collaborative work with international observers has significantly contributed to maintaining a peaceful pre-election environment. The NEC's preparations have included extensive training programs for polling station staff, implementation of robust vote-counting procedures, and establishment of clear channels for reporting any irregularities. These measures, combined with regular consultations with political parties and civil society organizations, demonstrate the Commission's commitment to conducting free and fair elections.

# Somaliland: Media Ethics Committee Reinforces Electoral Coverage Guidelines



ahead of next Wednesday's polls. During Thursday's press conference at the National Electoral Commission headquarters, the Committee highlighted the media's skillful navigation of potentially divisive issues and responsible reporting practices. Building on this positive foundation, the Committee outlined critical ethical principles for media practitioners across all platforms. Central to these guidelines is the fundamental requirement for impartial reporting, emphasizing the necessity for balanced coverage that gives fair representation to all political parties and candidates without showing favoritism. The Committee stressed the paramount importance of fact-checking and accuracy in election coverage. Media outlets are mandated to verify all information thoroughly before dissemination, preventing the spread of misinformation that could potentially mislead voters or disrupt the electoral process. This includes a strict directive against publishing unverified claims or defamatory content about candidates' personal lives unless directly relevant to their public duties.

Transparency emerged as another crucial element, with the Committee requiring clear disclosure of any political affiliations or sponsorships. This measure ensures public awareness of potential biases in endorsements or opinion pieces. The guidelines explicitly prohibit content that could incite violence or discrimination among communities or political groups. In its comprehensive approach, the MCCEMC emphasized the media's role in fostering an informed electorate. Outlets are encouraged to provide detailed coverage of candidate platforms and campaign promises, enabling citizens to make educated voting decisions. The Committee reminded practitioners that all coverage must align with Somaliland's election laws and the National Electoral Commission's established guidelines. The MCCEMC concluded by appealing to journalists' professional integrity, urging them to prioritize ethical reporting that serves both their outlets' reputation and the public interest. This balanced approach aims to maintain peace and stability while ensuring comprehensive coverage of this crucial democratic exercise.

## I stand for the defense of the people, country and nation of Somaliland, says WADDANI presidential candidate Abdirahman Irro



By M.A. Egge  
The WADDANI presidential flag-bearing candidate Dr. Abdirahman Mohamed Abdillahi, popularly known as Irro, has stated that the stands for the "defense of the people, country and nationhood of Somaliland".

He expressed the sentiments as he addressed a massive campaign rally at the Hargeisa Freedom Gardens on Wednesday in which thousands of supporters adorned and clad with clothes and dresses bearing the party's symbols

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# Somaliland's Road to Elections and Its Commitment to Stability in the Region



international community of the immense developments Somaliland is making in preparation for the forthcoming presidential and party elections scheduled to take place on November 13, 2024, and to address recent security challenges that impact our democratic process.

The NEC has been able to take meaningful measures that assure the credibility and transparency of this election: it has concluded verification of voter registration, finalized candidate nominations with a strict code of conduct, and ensured the necessary budget for the election. Accreditation for international observers is in process, adding weight to the transparency noted, while NEC commissioners have been sent out across all the regions to oversee

polling stations. This therefore underlines Somaliland's long-term commitment to ensuring a democratic and free electoral process.

Somaliland continues to be at the forefront in pursuit of peace and stability in the Horn of Africa. It spends over a third of its national budget on security, and despite heightened regional tensions, it has continued to invest in peaceful diplomacy and dialogue.

Our approach toward conflict management, whether internally or externally, is the path of diplomacy and constructive engagement, which includes our commitment to addressing the Lasanod crisis through peaceful dialogue after the election.

In this region of complexity and volatility, Somaliland is deeply

committed to the pursuit of stability and economic integration.

Our progress in implementing initiatives such as the Berbera Corridor will be crucial in fostering economic connectivity for landlocked nations most exposed by recent regional crises.

This is, however, a grave concern for the security and sovereignty of Somaliland in light of the recent escalations of hostilities in the Qorilugud area. We are really concerned by reports that confirm the Mogadishu administration is collaborating with extremist groups to disrupt Somaliland's electoral process, destabilize our regional standing. We do not want war, but as a sovereign nation, it is the right and duty of Somaliland to protect its citizens and territory against such threats.

We call on the international community to condemn any action that would undermine the security of Somaliland and place pressure on the parties concerned for them to desist from destabilizing support in the region. The international community stands in solidarity with us against terrorism and regional stability in support of those principles of peace, democracy, and sovereignty which Somaliland stands for the benefit of the whole of the Horn of Africa.

## I stand for the defense of the people, country and nation of Somaliland, says WADDANI presidential candidate Abdirahman Irro

thronged the venue while waving miniature flags.

Shrill sounds of support and enthusiasm in the form of songs, slogans and phrases filled the air. Speaker after speaker sold the parties policies while pledging and promising a better administration if elected given their rallying cry as being the 'coalition of change'.

He hailed the security forces as a whole for their impartial conduct all through the campaign period which is about to halt in a few days' time. He at the same time profoundly praised the supreme committee of the Habar-je'lo community who were instrumental in striking an

accord that was adopted which culminated in the holding of the elections; the holding of the elections was dotted with a lot of hues and cries that elicited violence and set-back the whole exercise for a couple of years.

He urged the populaces to elect a leader that they deemed fit hence would be instrumental in taking the country and the nation to higher heights.

He cautioned public servants from indulging in active politics.

The WADDANI presidential candidate is leading a formidable force that makes it the only serious challenger to the KULMIYE party.

The only three official political parties vying for the top seat has the Ucid presidential candidate as being the other challenger, making it a replay of the 2017 presidential elections.

Similar WADDANI campaign rallies were held on the same day across the nation in readiness for the presidential and political party elections which would be held on Wednesday the 13<sup>th</sup> of November 2024.

The three political parties will have to defend their ten-year official mandate from a horde of seven other political organizations, as per the country's elections regulations.

## Interior minister urges for non-interference of electioneering processes

persons who can communicate about the issues of the electioneering processes are the National Elections Commission who are the mandated institution to do so.

He noted that the others who are commenting about the issues of the elections at this time are only out to dent the procedures underway hence can negatively impact on the expected elections to be held on the 3<sup>th</sup> of November 2024.

The minister cautioned naysayers to stop and desist from indulging in election matters that do not concern

them at all.

He said that the electioneering processes are governed by laws, regulations and the by-laws that enshrine the procedures and etiquettes whose norms and tenets are expected to be adhered to.

He pointed out that there is the administrative body charged with running the elections and are aided by a taskforce committee that comprises of stakeholders who rein in erring entities, be they individuals, public, private or political institutions and hold them to account.

He said that the committee has so



far been busy and already held many individuals and organizations to account.

He warned that the duties of the electoral commission should not be undermined at all.

## Ethiopia and Somaliland Can Convince Trump To Help Mitigate Regional Tensions



By Andrew Korybko

***They need to inform his team about them right away, highlight the advantages in taking their side to de-escalate these self-same tensions and remind them of the Asmara Axis' role therein.***

The Horn of Africa has been tense since Eritrea backstabbed Ethiopia after its peace deal with the TPLF, Somalia threatened war with Ethiopia following the latter's Memorandum of Understanding with Somaliland, and then Somalia allied with Eritrea and Egypt against Ethiopia. Trump can help mitigate these tensions, seeing as how he promised to end all existing wars and prevent the outbreak of new ones, but his team must urgently be made aware of these problems first.

To that end, Ethiopia and Somaliland must immediately begin lobbying his transition team since most probably don't have the Horn on the forefront of their minds right now for obvious reasons since it's not an immediate priority for them, but that could change through creative diplomacy. Somaliland's quest for international recognition of its redeclaration of independence from one-third of a century ago, its proudly democratic reputation, and its geostrategic location could be the key to having that happen.

Ethiopia is the US' traditional regional partner and members of its American diaspora turned against the Democrats due to Biden's support for the TPLF during the Northern Conflict. Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed also enjoyed excellent relations with Trump during the latter's first term. These factors can combine to give its leader, diplomats, and activists access to Trump's transition team or at least members of his next government, after which they can make the case for him to manage tensions in the Horn.

His incentive to do so isn't just a principled one per his previously mentioned pledge to prevent the outbreak of new wars, but also pragmatic due to the possibility of recognizing Somaliland in exchange for a military base in the Gulf of Aden-Red Sea (GARS) region. Moreover, he could reinstate Ethiopia's membership in the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) that Biden rescinded if US

companies are promised privileged access to its rapidly growing economy and privatization bids in return.

Somalia could also cast a heavy shadow over his second term's African policy due to the risk of Al-Shabaab replicating the Taliban's capture of Afghanistan upon the possible withdrawal of Ethiopia's anti-terrorist troops, thus leading to a regional security crisis and a huge embarrassment for the US. He repeatedly lambasted Biden for his bungled withdrawal from Afghanistan so he'd be loathe to experience something similar, though such a scenario might not even be on his radar right now.

Therein lies the national security importance of Ethiopia and Somaliland's proposed efforts to raise maximum awareness of regional tensions among his team so that they come to see on their own how the US' interests align with mitigating them as soon as possible. Former Democrat Senator Bob Menendez's Egyptian corruption scandal also highlights the role of Cairo's meddling in US foreign policy, which Trump and his team should be reminded of as well in connection with its role in regional tensions.

The US objectively has much more influence over Egypt than the inverse, however, so the first could leverage this to coerce the second into behaving responsibly in the region instead of continuing to stoke the flames of war by encouraging Somali aggression against Ethiopia and Somaliland. Additionally, Trump is a hardcore anti-communist, which naturally predisposes him to dislike Eritrea's leftist president. He and his team should therefore also be reminded of that country's traditionally destabilizing role too.

The stage is therefore set for Trump to mitigate tensions in the Horn provided that Ethiopia and Somaliland successfully inform him and his team about them, highlight the advantages in taking their side to de-escalate these self-same tensions, and remind them of the Asmara Axis' role therein. To be sure, this part of the world isn't a priority for him, but that could change if he fears the scenario of Al Shabaab replicating the Taliban's return to power, the possibility of which Ethiopia must also emphasize.

# A matter of time: Somaliland determined to see through MoU

Ambassador Abdillahi M. Duale, AU and IGAD Envoy

It has been nearly a year since Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and Somaliland President Muse Bihi announced they had signed a deal that would see Ethiopia lease a portion of Somaliland's coast in exchange for the recognition of the latter's sovereignty, among other incentives.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed in January has been the focal point of diplomatic developments in the region over the past 11 months, particularly in the rising tensions between Addis Ababa and Mogadishu.

Meanwhile, Somaliland, which has been a de facto state since 1991, is preparing to hold national elections this month.

Among the people who are watching the lead up to the elections closely is Ambassador Abdillahi Mohamed Duale, Somaliland's special envoy to IGAD and the AU. He has been one of Somaliland's foremost champions in its fight for recognition, serving in no fewer than six ministerial posts during his career in government.

A senior member of the Somali National Movement (SNM), Duale has been serving as special envoy to IGAD and the AU since 2018.

*The Reporter's* Ashenafi Endale spoke with him to get an inside look at expectations for the upcoming vote, its potential effects on the MoU, Somaliland's views on foreign interference in the region, its quest for sovereignty, concerns over an Al-Shabaab resurgence, and relations with Mogadishu, among a range of other pertinent topics. EXCERPTS:

**The Reporter: Somaliland is preparing to conduct an election. What are the updates?**

**Abdillahi Mohamed Duale:** The presidential election will take place on November 13. It is in the hands of the electoral commission. Political organizations have already started campaigns. We believe it will be very peaceful. My country is not new to the democratization process. We have changed our leadership at least five times since 1991. We are the only country in the region; and by and large on the continent, to change our leadership five consecutive times peacefully.

A lot of international organizations and press from all around the world come to witness the election. We are excited about the election. The international community is excited about it, and the region is watching it. IGAD, AU and others are watching closely.

There are over seven million people in Somaliland and everybody has



eyes on the election. We are not concerned about irregularities. Over 96 international observers are already boarding to Hargeisa and Somaliland. Observers and the press are free to go to any part of the country.

**If President Muse Bihi does not win this election, will there be alterations to the MoU with Ethiopia?**

Not at all. The current president and his team have done tremendous work in terms of security, advancing the case of Somaliland to the international community.

I am Somaliland's special envoy to IGAD and AU.

We have very good friend countries in all the five RECs in Africa.

We look forward to Raila Odinga taking over as the AU chairperson, because he is the best qualified person. We have been lobbying and talking to friends. Our case is becoming very imminent.

The MoU we have signed with Ethiopia cannot be revoked. Ethiopia deserves sea access. We have been contemplating this MoU even before the previous leadership. We have been planning and talking about this informally for a long time with Ethiopia's leadership, intellectuals and political groups; that it is a necessity Ethiopia obtains access to the sea. It is good for us; for the region.

South Sudan is also another landlocked country in the region. We have been talking to South Sudan for quite a long time. They also need this corridor through Somaliland. The whole region needs the Berbera corridor. Everything else has been agreed. But there are some who want to make it like the whole world is collapsing.

Countries like Egypt; what affairs does Egypt have with the Horn region? This is something Somaliland cannot accept. For instance, Egypt has had an office (cultural or educational) in Somaliland for a long time, with over 700 staff. But since they are not working in the interests of the region, and respecting the integrity of Somaliland, we are telling them they do not have to stay in Somaliland. We are not blindfolded. Anybody who tries to decide on the region's affairs is not welcome.

**It has been nearly a year since the MoU was signed. What**

**progress has been made?**

It is a work in progress. We are working on technical issues on both sides. The MoU is very active, and imminent.

Yes, there are political concerns and others. But whatever an agreement we enter, it is our business. Ethiopia can also make agreements with anybody. It is an issue of common agreement. There is no room for naysayers.

**Ethiopians and Somaliland are looking forward to seeing the operationalization of the MoU. But the doubts mount the longer it takes. What is your view?**

Mark my words, the MoU implementation will happen. It is a matter of time. The spirit and commitment is there. It is only about finalizing technical issues. The MoU is crucial and helpful for the whole region, including Somalia. There is no reason why someone would question the MoU. It is an economic package. We have been talking to South Sudan. Ethiopia, Asmara, Djibouti, South Sudan and others all need our corridor.

Ethiopia is too large an economy and country. It needs several port outlets including Mombasa, Djibouti, Berbera and others. But in terms of physical proximity, Somaliland is the ideal outlet for Ethiopia. You can drive to Hargeisa, have your breakfast, and get back to Addis in a day for dinner.

**How do you see the moves from Egypt, Turkey and others in relation to Mogadishu following the MoU?**

Egypt's actions are practically interference. Egypt is pouring weapons into Somalia. We do not need additional weapons in Somalia and the Horn region. In every household and fiefdom in Somalia, there are weapons. We are not hungry for weapons. Ethiopia, Burundi, Uganda, Djibouti and Kenya have paid the price due to the destabilization in Somalia. For how many years have the boys and girls of the regional countries paid the life price to keep peace in Somalia? Families have lost their loved ones for years due to the instability in Somalia.

Now all of a sudden, Egypt is coming and saying 'we are here. Guess who is here for lunch.' That does not work.

Somaliland has put its house in

order. We collect tax from our people, pay our government, parliament, and cover our own budget. We do not rely on foreign aid like Mogadishu. It is the donors, UN, and international community that cover Somalia's bills. We are a world apart. Hassan Sheikh is not in any position to say 'Ethiopia cannot sign an agreement with Somaliland.' Ethiopia and Somaliland can sign any agreement with any country.

**How serious is the threat from Egypt's involvement in the region?**

It is a very serious threat. If Egypt wants to do something, let her do it with the Palestinians and Arabs there. Why now bring weapons, planes and troops to the Horn? We are very much concerned and alarmed. We want the international community, AU and IGAD to know that this is an imminent threat to Somaliland also. Egypt clearly stated they will not allow Ethiopia to access Somaliland's waters.

**What position do the US and UK have on this?**

We are talking to everybody on this matter. We have been part and parcel of regional geopolitical stabilization and security for many years. We should have been brought out of the cold.

Currently, Somalia is trying to interfere in Somaliland's election. Hassan Sheikh is paying some groups in Somaliland, including one of the key opposition parties, to disrupt the upcoming election. We have the evidence and told the international community. We will not allow that.

**Al-Shabaab recently attacked Somaliland, which was unusual and I think the first in years. What can you tell us about this?**

The threat of Al-Shabaab is imminent. They are trying to align with small groups, trying to create skirmishes in the eastern part of Somaliland. Puntland is also involved. We have evidence and shown it to the international community. We repelled Al-Shabaab's recent attack. But a lot of people died during this attack. Abdi Madoobe, a well known Al-Shabaab terrorist member in the Somalia government, is also involved in instigating attacks on Somaliland. They are trying to disrupt the elections in Somaliland. We told the international community and our neighbors that if anything goes wrong with the elections, it will be because of Al-Shabaab and Hassan Sheikh. Both these people are basically from the Islamic court. They only change clothes. They are all part and parcel of the Islamic court; the Al-Itahad. Somaliland has nothing to do with them.

**What is the secret behind Somaliland remaining the most peaceful nation in the region?**

Democracy is in our genes. We struggled to liberate our country from Ziad Barre, who was a threat to the whole region. He waged war to build the greater Somalia, which Hassan Sheikh and his team are still doing. It is also on the Somalia flag. Somalia's irredentism is a threat to the whole region. We broke that cycle. Ziad Barre bombed Hargeisa, Harar, and other several cities in Somaliland and eastern Ethiopia. We could not live in that situation. We are not anti-Somalia. We are against Somali irredentism.

It was Somaliland that gained independence from colonial powers in 1960, June 26. Somalia did not get that independence for us. Somaliland was the only Somali speaking nation who gained independence first. Djibouti and Somalia were under fascist control at the time.

After late independence, Somalia took everything from Somaliland, including relocating the capital seat from Hargeisa to Mogadishu. They took all ministers from Somaliland to Somalia. We said take it.

**How is public sentiment in Somaliland and Somalia regarding Somaliland's statehood quest?**

Imagine in 1991, when Somaliland was liberated from Somalia. The children born in Somaliland since 1991, they have never known Somalia. When Somalia was bombing Hargeisa, so many Somaliland people migrated to Ethiopia and sheltered in five camps in Ethiopia. Their children never knew Somalia but Somaliland. At that time I was a student in America. Somalia's Mig-21 and Mig-23 [jets], devastated Hargeisa and many towns in Somaliland. Over a million Somaliland people died.

The Somaliland generation, born in 1988/9 and later, never saw Somalia's flag; only the Somaliland flag. Today, over 85 percent of Somaliland population do not know anything about Somalia. Myself, I have never been to Mogadishu.

**How important is Ethiopia's recognition of sovereignty to Somaliland?**

Ethiopia is our neighbor. You can choose your friends but you cannot choose your neighbors. The same thing with Djibouti and others.

Today, I travel with a Somaliland passport. The first nation to allow accepting Somaliland passports, as a passport, as a traveling document, is Ethiopia. This was during the late PM Meles Zenawi, and it was historic. No one else allowed that

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# A matter of time: Somaliland determined to see through MoU

before Ethiopia. Until that day, we were forced to use a Somalia passport. You can imagine the paradox. Before Ethiopia allowed our passport, we had issued our passport but nobody accepted it. Until that day, we used to carry an empty Somaliland passport whenever we traveled to any country. We begged many countries to accept our passport, until Ethiopia accepted it. Today, we can travel to any country using our own passport, as a courtesy passport. I will never forget the day Ethiopia, under Meles, approved Somaliland to use its own passport as a travel document. And it was Somaliland's previous president at the time, and his delegation, who first traveled with a Somaliland passport, to Addis Ababa. Until that day, we all used to carry empty passports and beg every country. After Ethiopia accepted Somaliland passports, every other country also started accepting Somaliland passports as courtesy passports. We are very thankful to Ethiopia for opening for us.

When it comes to recognizing Somaliland, we understand the sensitivity. Everybody is thinking Somaliland is breaking away from Somalia because of Ethiopia. That is baseless. Somaliland is already a country. Somaliland is a completely different case.

Ethiopia is not the only country willing to recognize Somaliland. We have other friends on board. We have other countries in East Africa, West Africa and elsewhere who are willing to recognize Somaliland.

Kofi Anan was pushing for the Somaliland cause.

**What is the UK's and Italy's position?**

The UK is the pen holder on Somalia in the UNSC. The issue of Somaliland statehood has been discussed in the UK house of parliament several times. But Italy is number one country against Somaliland cause, because Italy has ruled Somalia and has a vested interest in Somalia. When Italy colonized Somalia, what happened to Somali Bantus?

We were not colonized. In 1887, when Europe was partitioning Africa, Somaliland elders signed an agreement with the British, making Somaliland a protectorate. The agreement was, 'whenever we want our independence, you leave us'.

Not a single British girl or boy was born in Somaliland. Throughout the colonial era, every pregnant British woman in Somaliland had to go to Britain to give birth there, so that their children would never get the citizenship of Somaliland. That was due to the agreement. So, Somaliland was not colonized, but a British protectorate, as per the

agreement.

Today, the British are divided over Somaliland's statehood quest. It is an issue gaining momentum.

**Do you believe the Somaliland quest is not solely an African issue?**

Exactly. It is also the case of former colonial powers. That is why we talk to every friend around the globe. We talk to America, former British colonies, French colonies and even Portuguese colonies. This is because these countries still have influence over their former colonies, and can influence our cause.

**What do you think is holding back Ethiopia from recognizing Somaliland?**

Simply because Hassan Sheikh and his people are going everywhere and acting crazy, crying and making deals with everybody. Just to get favor, Hassan Sheikh is telling European countries to send Somaliland migrants back home. We talked to every top brass official in Ethiopia. We pray the internal issues in Ethiopia will be resolved.

**How do you see the recent deal between Somalia, Eritrea and Egypt?**

This is a very bad alliance. This region does not need an alliance to fight somebody. They have to be peacemakers. We need an alliance for peace.

**What is your take on Turkey?**

They have their own interests. They are friends with Ethiopia and Somalia. We are cautious, and pessimistic about Turkey. We are cautious about the Turkey-Somalia relationship. Turkey is not honest about Somaliland's cause. We know that. They tried to play a game with both sides.

Somaliland is here to stay, with people like Ethiopia. Somaliland, with one arm, is fighting for its recognition, voting with the other arm, defending our country with another arm, and fighting political gun and propaganda with another arm. This propaganda includes turning our own people against us, using proxy war. Ethiopia is with us.

**Do you think the outcome of the US elections will have an impact on Somaliland's recognition?**

First and foremost, I would like to congratulate the President-elect of the United States of America, President Trump, on behalf of Somaliland.

Back to your question, when I was Somaliland's foreign minister, I learned that the US has a two track diplomacy. The first is helping Somaliland's democratization. At the same time, America has a policy of letting what Somalia wants [happen], which led to proliferation of terrorism in Somalia. So America has a two-track approach.

But when the previous Somaliland administration tried to talk to Somalia, that was where the biggest mistake occurred. Now, we have decided there should be no talk with Somalia. As soon as we finalize this election in Somaliland, we will adopt legislation that will completely stop any further discussion with Somalia. We are two separate entities, and we will never talk to them.

**Do you have faith in Trump?**

He is very erratic. And the policy of everything has changed. The international geopolitical equation has completely changed. We are not talking about normalcy now. We have to concentrate on our own small region. Whoever comes to help, whether it is the UK, EU, US or other, they have other priorities. Forget about Somaliland and Ethiopia. Let them give priority to the continent. It is Africa that needs priority. Particularly our region. West Africa is also suffering from several coups and needs priority.

We do not expect much from others. We must be able to solve our problems, as far as Somaliland is concerned.

**So you expect more from the neighbors than others?**

Exactly, the neighbors. That must be our focus. And we have to make sure it is a give and take.

It is unnecessary to make an alliance against Ethiopia, as we are seeing. Why is Egypt sending troops to Somalia? Hassan Sheikh cannot even defend himself from Al-Shabaab. Jubaland and Puntland are now fighting against former Farmajo sects. They are all ganging up against Hassan Sheikh. Hassan Sheikh made blunders and could not even control his own little fiefdom in Mogadishu. He is escalating the war with Ethiopia.

**What is your take regarding the relationship between Al-Shabaab and Hassan Sheikh?**

In my opinion, they are the same. Hassan Sheikh and his parliament members are die hard fundamentalists. These are serious groups. Their ideology is the same as Al-Shabaab ideology. Al-Shabaab is an offspring of Al-Itihad. Very recently we captured Al-Shabaab members. They cannot mingle with us. The creation of all this fundamentalism, is the Wahabi. Al-Shabaab mostly trains in Eritrea. It is a very complicated issue. But the underlying issue is that this ideology of fundamentalism, Islamic court and AL-Shabaab, is a threat to everyone including Ethiopia, Somaliland, Djibouti and others. We must have cooperation and collaboration to fight this ideology and its forces.

The major aim of the

fundamentalists is to establish Islamic states in the Horn of Africa. Mark my words, eventually they will get rid of Hassan Sheikh. He was a member, now he came to power and up to now he has links with them. They have Hassan Sheikh by the balls.

**The US reportedly wants to relocate or diversify its military presence in the Horn from Djibouti, due to the saturation and tensions in Djibouti. One of the ideal options for relocation is Somaliland. Some analysts claim the US can greenlight Somaliland's statehood for its own interests in the Horn and Red Sea. Does that make sense to you?**

Whoever comes in on our terms, and does not threaten our integrity, and advances Somaliland recognition, we welcome them.

We are very sensible people. We gave Ethiopia access. Dozens of powers have military bases in Djibouti and nobody cared.

**There is news about Israel also coming to establish a base in Somaliland?**

I have no information. We have not been approached. This is social media stuff.

**Somaliland has not met requirements to be a state, according to reports. What are the major factors holding that back?**

Very simple. We need recognition from our African brothers and sisters. Everybody knows Somaliland has all the infrastructure of governance, democracy and decency. You can open a business in 20 minutes in Hargeisa, a one-stop shop. You can get all the currencies on the streets in Hargeisa. Everything is peaceful. Yes, we have our own problems like poverty. Our budget is very small. But we are on the right track. We have to continue strengthening the infrastructure of democratization.

**You are special envoy to IGAD and AU. Neither organization recognizes Somaliland. Why do you think that is?**

You ask them.

In 2005, Alpha Oumar Konare, former chairperson of AU, sent a high level delegation led by the AU deputy chairperson. The deputy chairperson was Patrick Mazimhaka, a Rwandese, who passed away. The delegation was in Somaliland for six consecutive days. I was one of the guides of the delegation. The delegation visited all regions of Somaliland. They talked to everybody and especially the elders. They read all the documents and studied the history of Somaliland. The AU delegation finally wrote a report, stating there is no reason why Somaliland should

not be recognized. The report states Somaliland has the legal case, the moral case, the historical case and all the infrastructure of self governance and democratization. The report was submitted to the AU. And the second AU summit was in Sirte, Libya at the time. The report was brought to the AU summit. Egypt and the former Sudan rejected the report. Egypt always uses Sudan as a lynch pin. Sudan trains all the terrorist forces including Al-Shabaab. There is an Islamic university in Sudan. Al-Bashir's Sudan created all the messes because of the Islamic fundamentalism.

Libya, the host of the AU second summit, also rejected the report about Somaliland recognition.

So, Egypt is always behind the case. Some Arab countries like the UAE and Qatar are also now involved. Most of the GCC countries were not involved but now they are.

It is Egypt that is always behind our case, and that is why they are here now.

**What about the position of Eritrea on the Somaliland case?**

Eritrea is always against Somaliland's independence because Somalia helped Eritreans during their independence. It is a paradox that Eritrea became a country when we gained independence from Somalia.

Further, Eritrea continues training Al-Shabaab and intervening in Somaliland to disrupt us. We captured a lot of Al-Shabaab forces trained in Eritrea. After training, they come to Somaliland shores by sea. They also go to Djibouti.

We know who is meddling in our internal affairs. But our leaders are sensible.

**Do you think Djibouti also fears Somaliland's independence?**

Why would she fear? They have nothing to do with our independence.

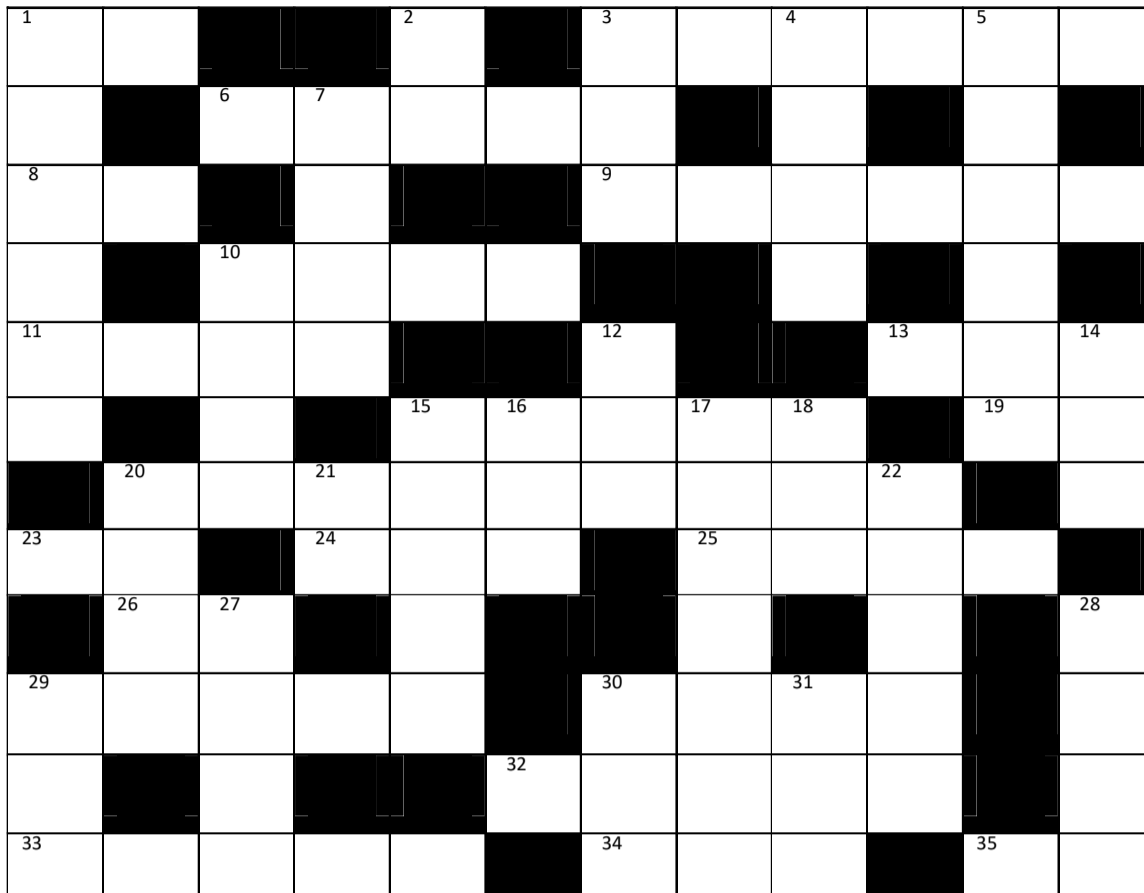
**Because they depend on Ethiopian logistics.**

Ethiopia is a huge country and needs so many more ports including Mombasa, Port Sudan and others. So we all can benefit from Ethiopia. Djibouti could have been a good player. They have nothing to lose. Not only Ethiopia, South Sudan is also landlocked and facing a lot of problems. Let them come and access the sea through Somaliland. The people in west Ethiopia are the same as in South Sudan. Djibouti is between a rock and hard place. Djibouti and Eritrea have fought over a small island, for a long time up to now. Djibouti might have their own problems. But you cannot be this selfish.

Recently, Djibouti offered a small dry

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# THT Puzzle



**ACROSS**

- 1 Therefore
- 3 have enough money.
- 6 Wait for
- 8 Being as
- 9 Escaping
- 10 Quantity used on papers
- 11 Eye or lookout
- 13 damaging/opposite of good
- 15 Municipal
- 19 Towards
- 20 Speech
- 23 Go off
- 24 Ocean
- 25 Change or control
- 26 Upon
- 29 Shouts or cracks
- 30 Ticket or meal
- 32 Salaries
- 33 Crash
- 34 Reddish
- 35 Remain

**DOWN**

- 1 Secure
- 2 not available in short forms
- 3 breakfasted
- 4 Stand facing
- 5 Repetition
- 7 Calendar week
- 10 Rootle
- 12 amount in cash
- 14 Puppy
- 15 Stairs
- 16 Drink
- 17 Juvenile
- 18 Ending
- 20 Shortly
- 21 BEING AS
- 22 Occasions
- 27 Surname
- 28 Family tree
- 29 Witnessed
- 30 Far away
- 31 Reddish

## Previous Answer

R 1	E	P 2	U	B 3	L	I	C 4		O 5		N 6	
E		A		U			L 7	A 8	R	G	E	
S 9	P 10	R	I	T			S 11	A	M		T	
O 12	U	T		T 13	O		N 14	O	U	N 15		
U 16	R	I	N 17	E			S 18		N		E	
R 19	E	C	O	R	D	I	N	G		W		
C		U		F			G		U 20	S	E	
E		L		L 21	A	N	D		S			
	M 22	A	N 23	Y			A		P 24	U	R	E 25
S 26	U	R	E		I 27	L	L 28		A		N	
	S		A			S 29	E	A	L	E	D	
S 30	T	O	R	Y			D					S

### SL-SAG: We call on all communities, political leaders, and stakeholders to stand united in the spirit of democracy



The Somaliland Strategic Advocacy Group (SL – SAG) would like to extend its heartfelt wishes to the people of Somaliland as they prepare for the historic elections set for November 13, 2024. This pivotal day marks yet another testament to Somaliland’s continued commitment to democracy, peace, and stability. As citizens prepare to exercise their right to vote, we call on all communities, political leaders, and stakeholders to stand united in the spirit of democracy. Somaliland has consistently demonstrated that it is a beacon of democratic values in the Horn of Africa, and we are confident that this election will once again reflect the nation’s unwavering dedication to peaceful and fair electoral processes. The SL-SAG acknowledges the tireless efforts of Somaliland’s electoral bodies, security forces,

civil society organizations, and international partners in ensuring that the electoral process is transparent, safe, and inclusive. We encourage voters to participate fully and responsibly, knowing that their voices are crucial to shaping the future of Somaliland. We remain hopeful that the election day will be peaceful, orderly, and reflective of the strong democratic foundations that Somaliland has built over the years. This is a moment for all Somalilanders to come together, uphold the rule of law, and further showcase the nation as a model of stability and governance in the region. In these crucial times, let us all commit to safeguarding the peace and unity of Somaliland. Together, we can ensure that democracy triumphs once again, and that our collective future is one of prosperity and harmony.

### Reasons for Somalilanders to vote for President Musa Bihi again

2024: Somaliland’s Election Year



There are several reasons for Somaliland public to vote for President Musa Bihi again, among others are follows;

- Continuity of Development Projects.** President Musa Bihi’s administration has launched numerous development projects across various sectors, including infrastructure, healthcare, and education. Voting for him ensures these initiatives reach completion, benefiting our nation’s long-term stability and prosperity.
- Strengthening Diplomatic Relations.** Under President Bihi, Somaliland has expanded its diplomatic efforts, establishing stronger ties with regional and international allies. His leadership has improved Somaliland’s position on the global stage, and continued support will further reinforce our international relationships.
- Finalizing Key Agreements, such as the MOU with Ethiopia.** President Bihi’s administration has fostered important agreements, including the Memorandum of Understanding with Ethiopia. Completing these agreements under his leadership will ensure they are implemented effectively, fostering economic growth and regional stability.
- Securing Against Foreign Threats.**

Somalia may try to exploit a change in administration to destabilize Somaliland. President Bihi has consistently taken a firm stance on Somaliland’s sovereignty and security, safeguarding our nation from potential external threats.

- Maintaining Stability in Foreign Policy.** A change in leadership risks a shift in foreign policy, potentially undoing the progress made toward international recognition. President Bihi’s foreign policy agenda is based on stability and strategic alliances, which are crucial for Somaliland’s future.
- Economic Growth and Job Creation.** The President’s focus on attracting foreign investment has already created jobs and spurred economic growth. By continuing this approach, President Bihi will help foster a stronger economy and improved livelihoods for Somaliland’s citizens.
- Strengthening National Security and Defence.** President Bihi has prioritized national security, bolstering our defence capabilities to protect our borders and citizens. His dedication to a strong, self-reliant security strategy remains essential in preserving

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# A matter of time: Somaliland determined to see through MoU

port for Ethiopia. Ethiopia is wise enough to say no. Unless Djibouti gives Ethiopia full power to control the port, then it will be Djibouti controlling Ethiopia's logistics. It is a mentality that does not work.

**It seems that Egypt, Somalia and Sudan are making Ethiopia's port access case an issue of the Arab world. The whole thing is taking on the appearance of a religious clash mixed with regional and historical clashes of interest. But PM Abiy's diplomacy in the Middle East seems to have positive acceptance. Do you think this diplomacy can reverse Egypt, Somalia, and Sudan's push to make it an Arab League case?**

The Arab League is nothing but Egypt. Egypt is in Africa but it is the most powerful country in the Arab world. We are sub-Saharan African countries. Egypt does not see things eye to eye.

Now, Egypt has only one policy. They say Egypt is the Nile, and the Nile is Egypt. All the foreign policy of Egypt concentrates on this. Now, the Nile is all the upstream countries. Egypt is one eyed. They only see the Nile, nothing else.

For ages and centuries, Ethiopia remains the focus of Egypt. It is written in their blood. Now, because we are on the side of Ethiopia's interest, Egypt considers us enemy number one. We are not on their good page.

Egypt is the cause for everything's failure. They interfere in the internal affairs of everyone. Do you think they are helping Somalia? No. Egypt is using Somalia as a bridge to harm Ethiopia. By the way, if anything happens in Mogadishu, it will be only a few people who will run to Egypt for asylum. East African nations must understand this interference of Egypt in the region. If the whole Horn region descends into fighting each other, it will be Egypt that will benefit. We have to make sure that we have a strong regional bloc. IGAD must be strong. Unfortunately, some Horn countries are focusing only on their small interests. They are not seeing the bigger picture. We are concerned as Somalilanders. This is a serious issue.

IGAD is at odds with itself. IGAD is toothless. Who is contributing to the budget of IGAD and AU? Somalia was not even contributing anything but starting a little bit now. Previously, IGAD was a bit good towards Somaliland, they used to send delegations to Somaliland. Since the so called euphoria of 'Somalia being rehabilitated', IGAD stepped back. Now, IGAD is under the chairmanship of Ismael Omer Guelle. He is using IGAD now. The chairmanship must rotate.

Fundamentally, IGAD knows Somaliland has a seven million population and we are part of the Horn system. Djibouti is less than a million and an IGAD member. Eritrea also has less than the

Somaliland population.

IGAD used to send a delegation to Somaliland. But now they say 'Mogadishu is watching.' Mogadishu is a lame duck, toothless. With all those weapons, Somalia cannot do anything to Somaliland. They only want the weapons to disrupt Ethiopia. Al-Shabaab is beating the war drum, for the greater Somalia concept. This is a concern for Ethiopia. Somaliland has been a buffer and cooperating with Ethiopia in every aspect. You can fly to Hargeisa peacefully.

**Is Somaliland building its embassy in Addis Ababa?**

We have the land in Addis Ababa and we have commenced the construction. We also gave land to Ethiopia in Hargeisa, to build their embassy. Somaliland has a mission in Ethiopia led by an ambassador, and Ethiopia as well. The Somaliland mission to IGAD and AU is also in Addis Ababa, together with the Somaliland mission to Ethiopia. Until we get de jure recognition, we continue. But we want good countries like Ethiopia and Djibouti to lead the way and recognize Somaliland. We believe Ethiopia will be the first.

**Let us assume Ethiopia is excluded from the upcoming peacekeeping mission in Somalia. What do you think will happen? Do you think Al-Shabaab will get stronger and begin attacking Ethiopia and Somaliland?**

Al-Shabaab is already getting stronger. Mogadishu is using the MoU as a lynchpin to exclude Ethiopia from the peacekeeping mission. Mogadishu has only one policy toward Ethiopia: cancel that MoU, and we will do everything for you.

Ethiopia cannot cancel, because Ethiopia has a better offer than anything else. The MoU is trade, economy and everything else. We must be able to see through the forest.

By using Djibouti's ports, Ethiopia is feeding nearly one million people in Djibouti. By diversifying its ports to Somaliland, Ethiopia can feed seven million people in Somaliland. We are determined, serious and very committed to the MoU. It is a matter of time. Our delegations are going back and forth as we speak.

**Let us assume the MoU becomes operational, and Ethiopia recognizes Somaliland. Do you think Somalia will attack Somaliland and Ethiopia?**

No. They will think three times before attacking. Mogadishu cannot attack Puntland, let alone Somaliland.

**Maybe with the support of Egypt?**

Once before, Egypt tried to attack Yemen. Thousands of troops were taken to Yemen. Egypt never won a war, let alone coming across the Mediterranean to Somalia and

fighting from there. Egypt is only using Somalia to disrupt Ethiopia. Ethiopia is a giant elephant in the region.

GERD is Egypt's only bargaining chip. Somaliland has invested in GERD bonds. Since Ethiopia inaugurated GERD, Somaliland's business people, individuals have bought GERD bonds. I have GERD bonds. The dam is a huge investment for the whole region. Our economies should be integrated. We are very much concerned about the Red Sea and the new alliances. And IGAD should be involved before the AU.

**What about the Red Sea?**

Who is in the Red Sea? We have 850 kilometers of coastline on the Red Sea. Djibouti is a one city state and has a very small coastline on the Red Sea. It is Somaliland on the Red Sea coastline, nobody else. We want Ethiopia to get that fish from the Red Sea, and bring it to Addis, for their fasting season. That is all we want.

**If Ethiopia does not recognize Somaliland in the near future, will Somaliland grant the ports for commercial use and naval bases?**

Recognition or no recognition, Somaliland already granted ports to Ethiopia.

**What about the naval base for Ethiopia?**

That is only an issue of technicality which we are working on. We have our own small navy. These are technicalities that will lead to a win-win situation, not only for the two of us, but also for the wider region.

In West Africa, you can drive from Accra, to Togo to Benin, with one driver's license. SADC is doing well. They ask me 'what is happening to you guys in east Africa?'. Unlike IGAD, SADC is much better than us. In east Africa, Ethiopia is isolated while everybody has sea access. This is a paradox. Ethiopia is the elephant. We have to wake up the elephant too.

**Do you trust the Turkish mediation efforts?**

We do not trust them. Turkish relations with Ethiopia and Somalia are different.

**Between IGAD and the AU, which do you believe is failing you more?**

Both. And they will regret it. The AU never followed up on the 2005 report. AU ignored that report just because Gaddafi, Egypt and Sudan rejected the report. What happened to the voices of other African countries. The sub-Saharan countries need Somaliland, as much as we need them. We have been part and parcel of the solution.

We will never forget. The problem is AU has so many agendas that it relies on others. Let others solve their problems. They failed us, and we are utterly disappointed both in IGAD and AU. There are certain member states we appreciate, and the first one is Ethiopia. The rest,

we know it. Ethiopia understands the role we have played in the region since 1991. We have been part and parcel of regional geopolitical security.

**Finally, why has the MoU implementation been delayed?**

The MoU is there, a bilateral

agreement between two administrations. I encourage the Ethiopian people to encourage their leaders as much as we are encouraging ours. This is a worthwhile deal.

## Reasons for Somalilanders to vote for President Bihi again

our sovereignty.

8. Encouraging Private Sector Growth.

President Bihi has implemented policies to empower the private sector, encouraging entrepreneurship and innovation. By supporting his leadership, we ensure a favorable environment for businesses to flourish and for local industries to grow.

9. Protecting Somaliland's Independence and Recognition Efforts.

President Bihi's administration has consistently worked to strengthen Somaliland's case for international recognition. His dedication to our nation's independence has been steadfast, and his reelection will reinforce this commitment.

10. Upholding National Unity and Cohesion.

Under President Bihi, Somaliland has seen initiatives to promote unity across tribal and regional lines. His focus on inclusivity strengthens our social fabric and promotes a shared vision for the future.

11. Building Long-Term Plans for Education and Health.

President Bihi's administration has invested in long-term projects to improve

education and healthcare, ensuring access to quality services for all citizens. His continued leadership is essential for the successful implementation of these critical social services.

12. Promoting Accountability and Good Governance.

President Bihi has made strides toward transparent governance and accountability, ensuring that resources are used effectively for public benefit. Supporting him is a vote for a government that values responsibility and ethical leadership.

13. Countering Destabilization Efforts from Somalia, Egypt, and Eritrea.

Voting for President Bihi represents an opportunity to counter destabilization efforts by external actors such as Somalia, Egypt, and Eritrea, who may seek to undermine Somaliland's sovereignty and stability. His strong foreign policy stance and focus on safeguarding our national interests make him a reliable leader to protect Somaliland from these external pressures.

Ahmed O. Abdi- Germany

### SOMALILAND

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