Somaliland Strategic Advisory Group (SL-SAG)
Email: info@slsag.org
Website: https://slsag.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SL-SAG Condemns Somalia's $600K Lobbying Campaign Against Somaliland's Re-Recognition Efforts

Washington, DC – December 21, 2024 – The Somaliland-American Support Group (SL-SAG) vehemently condemns the Somali government's deeply misguided decision to allocate $600,000 to a lobbying contract with the BGR Group in Washington, DC. This campaign aims to oppose Somaliland's Re-Recognition Bill (H.R.) currently before the U.S. Congress. This decision reflects Mogadishu's continued disregard for its own internal crises and its relentless attempts to undermine Somaliland's sovereignty and democratic progress.

As Somaliland-American citizens, we categorically reject the misuse of taxpayer funds for such lobbying efforts. We are sharply critical of the current U.S. administration for permitting the squandering of American taxpayer dollars on endeavors that contradict the principles of democracy and progress.

For over three decades, Somaliland has stood as a beacon of stability, democracy, and economic growth in the Horn of Africa. It has consistently demonstrated a commitment to self-reliance, peacebuilding, and the rule of law—values that sharply contrast with the governance challenges and conflicts that persist in Somalia.

Rather than addressing its critical security, humanitarian, and governance issues, the Somali government has chosen to divert substantial resources toward undermining Somaliland's legitimate aspirations. These funds would have been far better spent on supporting Somalia's struggling citizens or rebuilding essential infrastructure. It is particularly egregious that the U.S. government recently forgave $1.1 billion in Somali debt, only to see such funds misused. SL-SAG unequivocally condemns the exploitation of American taxpayer money for lobbying efforts aimed at stifling Somaliland's democratic progress.

"This campaign is a desperate attempt to obstruct Somaliland's rightful pursuit of international recognition," said an SL-SAG spokesperson. "Recognition is earned through stability, democracy, and progress—not through expensive lobbying to suppress the genuine aspirations of a thriving democracy."

On November 13, Somaliland held its sixth presidential election, further solidifying its reputation as a stable and mature democracy. The seamless transfer of power showcased the nation's political maturity and readiness to be a key player on the global stage. Somaliland's stability, democratic governance, and geopolitical significance underscore its readiness to be recognized as a sovereign state.

Strategically located near the Bab al-Mandab Strait (باب المندب) and the Gulf of Aden, Somaliland controls critical maritime corridors and boasts the Berbera Port, one of Africa's most important ports. This makes Somaliland a focal point in the geopolitical landscape, attracting interest from global powers such as China, Turkey, and Russia. The United States, however, has lagged behind in forging meaningful partnerships with Somaliland—a missed opportunity that SL-SAG urges President-elect Trump to address. Immediate recognition of Somaliland and the establishment of military and economic relations would advance U.S. interests in the region while countering China's expanding influence.

The Biden administration's adherence to the outdated and ineffective "One Somalia Policy" has failed to address the realities on the ground, wasting valuable time and resources. Somaliland's independence and recognition are not only a matter of justice but also a strategic imperative for regional and global stability.

SL-SAG calls on the U.S. government, NGOs, and policymakers to see through this misguided lobbying effort and engage with Somaliland as a reliable partner committed to peace and prosperity. We urge all stakeholders to reject divisive tactics and support Somaliland's legitimate aspirations for recognition.

###