



34th Anniversary



18th May Somaliland Celebrating again its 34 Anniversary (The day Somaliland regained its Sovereignty)

This week, starting from May 18th, marks the beginning of the celebration of Somaliland's reclamation of independence. The commemoration of this day is linked to the historic day of June 26. Whilst both days are national days, they hold distinct historical significance. The celebration of 18th May is the day we left the dubious failed merger with Somalia, while 26th June is the day we gained our independence from Britain.

First of all, I extend my heartfelt wishes to all Somalilanders, wherever they are, a happy 34th anniversary, hoping that it will be a wonderful occasion for us and have bigger celebrations in the coming years. The joy and feelings of this occasion are not confined to those in Somaliland alone. I and thousands of Somaliland Diaspora are certainly celebrating. It is a day that is dear to us all.

The celebration event of this year, 2025, is expected to be as spectacular as in the previous years. Celebration events have already started two weeks ago in the cities of Hargeisa, Buroa, Borama, Berbera, Erigavo and Gabliley. The atmosphere in these cities as they prepared for the May 18th celebrations was beautiful and attracted thousands of people waving the Somaliland flag. The people of these cities and towns have shown their support for the Somaliland cause through the power of their unity. This is a direct message to all enemies of Somaliland.

Buroa



Borama



Erigavo



Berbera



Despite Somaliland not being recognised as an independent country by the international community since 1991, on this occasion, there is much to celebrate. Since 1991, Somaliland has come a long way, having experienced ups and downs in various stages in our journey of nationhood.

This day is marked by the people of Somaliland, both at home and abroad, being fully united in the cause of Somaliland and demonstrating the strength and determination of the people of Somaliland. It is a day to reflect on the struggles that Somaliland has gone through to achieve where it is today in terms of peace and stability, accompanied by a government rooted in transparency and accountability.

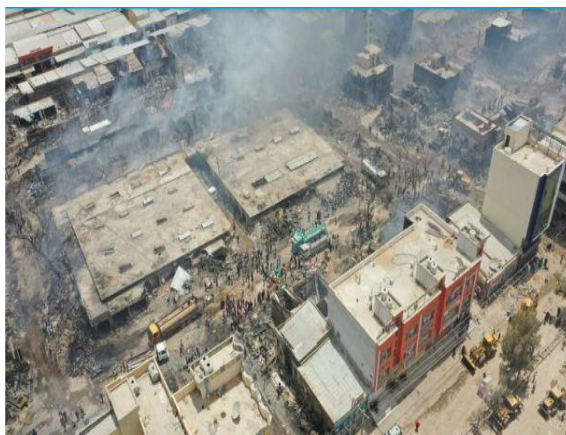
In this brief article, the purpose is not to delve into the details the historical past and especially the struggle that finally led Somaliland to regain its freedom. If you need more information about this, you may want to refer, for this, to my article on the 30th Anniversary (Somaliland-30th-anniversary-2021-pdf-new.pdf (horndiplomat.com)).



Why is this day so special for Somaliland and its people?

This significant day marks the end of more than three decades of Somali Government rule (from 1960-1990). It is a day that reminds us of the freedom and independence that we regained after a painful struggle in which we lost thousands of lives. It is a day to remember and appreciate our patriots and heroes who sacrificed their lives so future generations could live in freedom and security. On this occasion, we should remember the following:

1. The Buroa Conference held between 27 April and 18 May 1991 is also remembered on this day. It is a day when the representatives and delegates of the different clans of Somaliland, after a lengthy consultation, fully agreed to reclaim the sovereignty of Somaliland to create a broad government based on the representation of all the regions of the country.
2. This day also reminds us of the reconciliation conference held in the towns of Berbera, Sheikh, Borama and Buroa, all of which were organised to bring the Somaliland communities closer and create a peaceful environment. National consultation conferences eventually created a peaceful environment in which a government system based on law and order was established. It is also unforgettable and especially remembered on this day the demobilisation of SNM fighters, who were disarmed to provide them with a system of reintegration and discipline.
3. This day also reminds us of the resilience of the people of Somaliland and the long journey they have gone through to achieve their nation-building. It is clear that the resilience of the people of Somaliland is strong, and a good example is the burning of the Waaheen market in 2022, which had a devastating impact on the livelihood of thousands of people. It was heart-breaking to see how the fire devastated Waaheen Market. With the spirit and resilience of the people of Somaliland, the Waaheen Market has been rebuilt and officially opened at the end of 2024. The people of Somaliland have achieved great progress in 34 years with their resilience.



4. Elaborating on the value of this day, we also remember that on this day, the democratic elections were held in Somaliland. The last good example is the presidential and political organisation elections held on November 13, 2024. The manner and the style in which the power was transferred from the former president, His Excellency Muse Bihi Abdi and the elected president, His Excellency Abdirahman Abdillahi (Ciro), showed professionalism. The event of power transfer went well, and it is a testimony to the fact that Somaliland and its

people are committed to holding fair and free elections since 2003. Both leaders mentioned in their speeches that it is marking a significant moment in Somaliland's democratic journey. Somalilanders will never forget and will remember for a long time that the power transfer model between the two leaders was smooth and peaceful.

Since 1991, Somaliland has had six successive presidents, most of whom were elected through direct elections. These presidents all came with a leadership vision based on the stability and maintained the peace and security that Somaliland has enjoyed during the last 34 years.



5. May 18th is a day we remember the institutions we have established since 1991, such as the executive branch, the legislative branch, the judicial branch, the police and military force, the electoral commission, the central bank, political parties and many more institutions and independent organisations.
6. The celebration of 18th May reflects on the rebuilding efforts and progress in social and economic aspects that Somaliland has made with little help from the international community. There is hope and optimism for vibrant towns and cities in Somaliland, which every morning see thousands of children and young people going to their schools and colleges with peace and stability.



The role of Somaliland youth in strengthening the existence of Somaliland

With this anniversary, thousands of Somaliland youth took part in the celebrations ahead of May 18th in cities and towns across Somaliland, expressing their pride and happiness for their country. This is a direct message to all enemies of Somaliland.

Somaliland youth have always played a vital role in shaping Somaliland and its future. The youth of yesterday, now elders, were the ones who fought and sacrificed for Somaliland to regain its sovereignty. Throughout history, Somaliland youth have been the backbone of all struggles aimed at restoring Somaliland's sovereignty. Somaliland youth spend much of their time defending the existence and progress of their country. This is evidenced by the fact that young people use various social media platforms to unite their actions to support Somaliland's recognition.

It is time for Somaliland youth to shoulder their responsibility on their shoulders to play a positive role in the progress of their country. The 18th May is a key lesson for today's youth, who make up the majority of Somaliland's population, estimated at 6 million. The only flag they know is the Somaliland flag, which combines green, red and white with a black star in the middle. One of the hundreds of songs that young people and children sing while waving the Somaliland flag during the commemoration is as follows:

Kani waa calankaan lahaa (This is my flag)

Kaygii weeyaan kani (This is my own)

Aniga kii laygu dhalay (The one that I was born into)

Haddana laygu hoos korshoo (The one that I was raised under).

To value the commemoration of May 18th, the youth of today must be aware that Somaliland can build a better future if they thoroughly study their country's background. To shape a bright future and prosperous life, the youth must learn from the mistakes made by our country in the past. From the point of view of Somaliland's journey, young people need to learn from our history. It is an opportunity for youth to learn more about the struggle Somaliland has endured and the visible achievements it has made. "A nation that forgets its past has no future"-Winston Churchill. Finally, it is clear that Somaliland Youth cannot aim for a better future if they do not unite their strength. It is vital for them to work together more for the interest of Somaliland.

Somaliland Diaspora

The Somaliland Diaspora is not only celebrating the 18th May, the day of sovereignty was reclaimed, but also reflecting on the significant contributions of the Somaliland Diaspora to the economic and social progress of Somaliland.

The Somaliland Diaspora has always played an important role in Somaliland's quest for international recognition. They will continue their commitment to promoting their country. Evidence of this is that thousands of Somaliland Diaspora members across the world are preparing events to welcome the celebration of the 18th of May.

The Somaliland people are confident that their Diaspora will effectively and intelligently promote the case of Somaliland. They believe it is time for the international community to recognise the reality on the ground. Somaliland and Somalia have been apart for 34 years. Somaliland Diaspora is committed to continuing its fight until the voice of Somaliland is heard. The Diaspora is part of the hope and aspirations of Somaliland, and it is hoped that they will keep the hopes alive.



Somaliland and neighbouring countries

We are aware that Somaliland has many enemies who do not want to see Somaliland succeed in gaining recognition from the international community. Among those enemies are the leaders of our neighbouring countries, such as Somalia and Djibouti. These leaders openly and directly expressed their opposition to Somaliland gaining any recognition.

We have witnessed that these two leaders have dedicated time and resources to weakening the existence of Somaliland. I do not shy away from stating that the regimes in Djibouti and Mogadishu have long opposed Somaliland's case being brought to the platforms of the international community. My aim is not to campaign for a situation where Somaliland will eventually enter into conflict or war with neighbouring countries. Also, my purpose is not to express any hostility or hatred towards other Somali people living in Somalia, Djibouti, Kenya and Ethiopia, but it is important for the international community to know that the Somali Government has crossed all red lines and is attacking the existence of Somaliland. Somalilanders also need to understand their collective responsibility to defend the country together when it comes to sovereignty and the interest of Somaliland.

A word to Somaliland friends

Our deepening relationships with friendly nations are increasing by the day. We have many supporters in the international community both political and non-political. We must work with our friends to continue advocating for Somaliland's recognition, which is the only viable option for true stability in the Horn of Africa region and beyond.

Conclusion

Somaliland faces challenging yet exciting times as it enters its 34th year. The current President is key to maintaining and strengthening the unity of our nation. This is also true of the opposition parties; despite differences in political ideology what is common is the need to protect our sovereignty and its borders. We face naked aggression from Somalia in our eastern districts resulting in death and displacement. What we must not do is follow them into chaos and anarchy. Somaliland has been a beacon of hope in a sea of despair, a nation where each individual is truly free.

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