

Jubbaland Conference: Ethiopia's web of obstruction to Somalia's Statehood

Jubbaland State Conference held in Nairobi Kenya on June 28-30, 2012 is part of the overall web of obstruction strategy unfailingly pursued by Ethiopia to prevent any chance for the rebirth of Somali State accountable to its people in the foreseeable future. The strategy is operationalized through multiple fronts, e.g., the misuse of UN Security Council rule- "*the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD)*¹ decides to actively remain seized of the matter of Somalia", which means Somalia remains under IGAD's jurisdiction, execution of counter-productive reconciliation initiatives, military occupation, creation of multiple armed factions, imposition of clan-based federalism for establishing local dependent clienteles, promotion of unscrupulous personalities for leadership and marginalization of responsible leaders, hyping up of international threats emanating from Somalia by conducting biased diplomatic campaigns.



Figure 1: Somali Conference Participants



Figure 2: Ethiopia (IGAD) Representative

The immediate reasons behind this ad hoc conference could be three. First, Ethiopia strives to make the overwhelmingly rejected sub-clan-based federalism as fait accompli after the United Nations declared unseen Draft Constitution as a Provisional Federal Constitution (PFC) on June 22, 2012. The expected voting of the Traditional Leaders (TLs) and the National Constituent Assembly (NCA) on the PFC is inconsequential. Second, Ethiopia wants to strengthen its grips on Somalia's political dispensation and to thwart all efforts for Somali Unity spearheaded by few international actors. Parenthetically, with regard to Somali Unity, the extraordinary message of Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton on Somalia's National Day July 1 to the people of Somalia raises a glimmer of hope.² Third, Ethiopia wants to deepen clan antagonisms among Somalis as a source for long term political destabilization.

Somali groups, IGAD/AU/UN, and Puntland Government issued separate communiqués highlighting certain aspects of the outcome of the conference. The reading of below reported IGAD/AU/UN communiqué³ is important because it reveals specific information.

¹ IGAD and Ethiopia are interchangeable

² [Message of Secretary of State Hillary Clinton on Somalia's National Day](#)

³ [IGAD/AU/UN and Somali Participants Communiqués](#)

Jubbaland State is becoming a reality with this foundation now being adhered to by the International Community, Regional States, and the main groups involved. The Communiqué from the conference prepared and hosted by IGAD and the AU with support from the UN was signed by the 5 important groups representing the State.

- 1. TFG represented by the Deputy Minister Dr. Abdi Ali Hassan (Marehan/Uurmidig)*
- 2. Gedo Defense Forces represented by Gen Abdullahi Sheikh Ismail “Fartag” (Marehan/Reer Ugaas Sharmarke)*
- 3. Azania represented by Prof Mohamed Abdi Mohamed “Ghandi” (Ogaden/Talomoge)*
- 4. Ras Kambooni represented by Macalim Mohamed Ibrahim (Ogaden/Mohamed Suber)*
- 5. Ahlu Sunna Wal Jamee represented by Sheikh Mohamed Yusuf Mohamud “Aw Libaax” (Marehan/Celi)*

The foundations agreed to is thus:

- ❖ Jubbaland State is to be a regional federal state under the Federal Constitution of Somalia*
- ❖ Jubbaland State is to be formed by the merger of Gedo, Lower Jubba, and Middle Jubba Regions.*
- ❖ Jubbaland State representation will be based on current state and district partition*
- ❖ Jubbaland state will have three branches of state government: Executive, Legislative and Judicial*
- ❖ Jubbaland State will united differing militias as unitary state security.*
- ❖ Jubbaland State will be democratic and respects the rights of minorities.*
- ❖ Jubbaland state will be based on Sharia law.*

The groups will now have subsequent meetings and interactions to work out the attainment of this plan.

Three observations are in order. (a) In accordance with the Transitional Federal Charter (TFC) or Provisional Federal Constitution (PFC), the merger of regions and districts is subject to popular referendum certified by legitimate National Government and it is not the prerogative of five individuals representing factions. (b) The participation of TFG is immaterial because the Roadmap suspended the TFC, dismantled the internationally recognized TFG and empowered clan entities -Puntland, Galmudug and Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama (Mogadishu Faction). (c) The creation of Jubbaland State under the PFC and under Sharia Law will breed political turmoil and defeat the formation of Somali State.

The communiqué (agreement)⁴ of Somali participants states that Jubbaland State will live in peace with its neighbor countries and with other regions of Somalia. Also, it requires that the Jubbaland State should be established before the ending of the transitional federal period scheduled on August 20, 2012 and that the process for establishing the Jubbaland State must be in conformity with the stabilization plan of IGAD and TFG, titled “[Draft IGAD Strategy on managing the territories liberated areas in Somalia.](#)” The plan allows IGAD to manage the territory, people and politics of the three regions with a strategy and tactics based on clan allegiance to its desired outcome.

⁴ [IGAD/AU/UN and Somali Participants Communiqués](#)

With no explanation, representative of Harti group did not sign the final Communiqué. In a radio interview, a spokesman of the conference said that a Harti group led by Gen. Mohamed Warsame Darwish, former Chief of the Somali National Security Service (NSS) during President Abdullahi Yusuf's government participated the conference. The Puntland Government welcomed the establishment of Jubbaland State with mix feelings-suspicion and support.⁵

It is not clear how the five groups planned to address the complications the agreement generates within various communities in the regions. Influential leaders from the five groups have already voiced their objection to the agreement. The Wagosha Community (Somali Bantu) expressed their strongest objection against the Jubbaland State.⁶ The history and sub clan composition of the Jubbaland population is different from the close kinship existing in Puntland State although all Somali communities (clans) proudly share territory, religion, language, citizenship, solidarity, and common aspirations.

As part of their tradition and culture, Somalis do not consider and classify certain groups or individuals as "minorities" It is my personal view that Somalis are aware of clan distinctions, injustices and economic disparity but they generally disapprove minority status classification. Under the impracticable Federalism, there will be indefinite kinds of minorities in each village, district, and region of Somalia.

In parallel to IGAD's mismanagement of Somalia, the international community is less concerned about what works and is best for the Somali people. The international community is delighted to spend resources and efforts on initiatives or experiments of their preference with the liberty to blame the Somalis for failures and for not grasping the "golden opportunities" offered to them. Jubbaland State is another spurious enterprise undertaken to abuse and confuse the exhausted people of Somalia. Will the Somali Elite be able to regain audacity, wisdom, stamina and sense of duty needed to challenge the current debilitating approach and steer Somalia to the right direction for the common good? Time will tell.

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⁵ [Puntland Government supports Formation of Federated States of Somalia](#)

⁶ [Wagosha Youth vows to sacrifice lives for their rights](#)