

# In the run-up to the elections, political turmoil prevails in Somalia

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## Introduction

Somali people as well as the international community were eager to witness a universal suffrage election that happen in Somalia. Such an election would have been the first of its kind in half a century. Since 2000 when the first interim government was initiated for Somalia after the collapse of the military regime in 1991, the custom has been the 4.5 power-sharing formula. Although 4.5 had relative usefulness in the context of Somalia for sometimes, the system was marred by prejudices and corruption. Always the aim has been to pass through it to another viable and legitimate system, not to keep it for a long time. Successive administrations proclaimed their will to direct the country to one-person-one-vote (OPOV), but nothing has changed. The current administration underlined time and again its unequivocal intention to hold OPOV elections but at the end due to multilayered reasons they were forced to renege from that promise and accept the ill-fated clan-based system.

Currently, Somalia is heading to parliamentary and presidential elections in late 2020 and the beginning of 2021 after the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and Federal Member States (FMS) agreed on last September an indirect election model which resembles the 2016-2017 election mock-up. Clan elders in tandem

with representatives from the civil society will designate the electoral college of 101, whom in their turn expected to elect the assigned seat for their respected clan, while according to the agreement the members of the Upper House will be elected by the assemblies of the FMS. The long-awaited agreement between the FGS and the FMS came after political bickering over a myriad of issues which was exasperating as the constitutional term of the FGS institutions close to the end. The sparring political environment that prevailed since President Mohamed Abdullahi Farmajo came to the helm in early 2017 and the fear of the opposition from a fatal outcome if the Farmajo re-elected, fanned the flame on to the election dispute, thus the election issue morphed into a question of life and death for the different political actors.

The latest sign-off the “Mogadishu Model” was a positive signal from the FGS and the FMS leaders, particularly as the agreement got the acceptance of almost the political spectrum, but the latest events uncovered that the implementation process is not as smooth as it appeared when the agreement was sealed. After the agreement, discords on several critical issues emerged which needed to be dealt with shrewdness and openness in order to prevent any negative repercussions to the political stability. Now the opposing actors

are divided into two camps; the FGS and some federal member states, which defend the current modus operandi by arguing that procedures are in accordance with the terms of the latest agreement. On the other hand, there are some federal member states like Puntland and Jubaland with the alliance of presidential candidates who show

resentments and rejections towards how the FGS manage the process. The oppositions are against what they called the self-tailored election process operated by the federal government.

### **The abandoned Universal Suffrage elections**

As the president of the federal government of Somalia, one of the tasks expected from Mohamed Abdullahi Farmajo in his early days in the office was to leave behind the clan-based elections to an election model that gives the right to every eligible adult to elect his constituency representative, hence taking the necessary steps towards that ambitious target. The spirit and the expectation of conducting universal suffrage were high, owing to the fact that, the Somalis and the international community have been very eager to see shifting from political makeup which based on clan-dispensation of legislative and other government posts to a democratic and more legitimate system. The National Independent Electoral

Commission (NIEC) was rejuvenated to handle the organization of a democratic elections in 2020-2021.

The NICE commenced the job by fashioning the administration and structural requirements in one side and engaging with the stakeholders and the international community on the other side. Halima Yarey the chairperson of NIEC has told that the Independent Electoral Commission is tasked with the duty of preparing the country to embrace the General election where every Somali citizen can vote in 2020 (MCRS,2016).

President Mohamed Abdullahi Farmajo and then prime minister Hassan Ali Khayre time and again vowed the government's decision of not to go back to the clan-based elections. If the objective of universal suffrage has been accomplished, the FGS leadership would be considered heroes who achieved a historical achievement as the country have not had democratic elections in 50 years. Given his relative popularity among the ordinary people, the president and his close circle believed that they have a higher opportunity of reelections through the one-man-one-vote, rather than voters picked up by the clan elders, therefore, at least rhetorically, they insisted on the inevitability of transitioning from the previous election playbook

Contrary to the FGS stance, the opposition parties, and some Federal Member States like Puntland and Jubaland voiced loudly against what seem for them an impossible mission due to insurmountable political and security challenges that lays ahead.

Meanwhile, the International Community exerted pressure on the Somali authorities to enact the Electoral law, amended political parties' law and political and security scheme necessary to hold a peaceful and transparent election in 2020/2021. They shored up the idea of conducting a universal suffrage election, they repeatedly urged the political leaders to reach a consensus on key electoral issues. The International Community urged Somalis to reach a consensus as a prerequisite for conducting a credible election. In a statement in front of the Security Council, the Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia remarked that "Progress on the ambitious agenda for 2020 will require a high degree of political consensus" (UN,2019).

The FGS pledged to the International Community to include at least 30 per cent minimum quota for the representation of women in parliament in line with commitments made before the previous electoral cycle; to establish security arrangements to allow as wide a participation of the Somali voting population as possible; and to conclude the electoral processes on the basis of credible, peaceful, "one person, one vote" free and fair elections by the end of 2020/early 2021 (UNSOM,2019). The partners call on the House of the People and the Upper House of the Federal Parliament to complete the adoption of the Electoral Bill

and the revised Political Parties Law by the end of 2019, they also call on all stakeholders and institutions in Somalia to set aside their differences and engage in constructive dialogue (Ibid).

The two houses of the parliament intensified the deliberations on the election bill to be approved and then to be signed by the president. In December 2019, after a special review committee presented an election bill, the People's House of the Parliament has approved the bill, where 171 lawmakers voted in favor of the legislation, 5 rejected and 2 abstained. Subsequently, the upper house of the parliament did the same manner by approving the electoral bill. This was considered a major significant step towards a universal suffrage election. In spite, skepticism displayed by the majority of the political stakeholders towards the possibility of translating the bill into action, certainly, a wide segment of the population felt jubilant to the possibility of going one-man-one-vote elections.

On 21, February president Mohamed Abdullahi Farmaajo signed the electoral bill after two weeks the bill passed by the federal parliament and eventually the bill became an electoral law. The president was nevertheless optimistic at the signing ceremony, which was attended by then Prime Minister Hassan Ali Khaire, Deputy Prime Minister Mahdi Guleid, and the speakers of the two houses of the parliament (Hassan,2020). The International Community welcomed enthusiastically the new electoral law. The UN envoy to Somalia James Swan described the law as a historic step towards peacebuilding and urged the

passage of time to coincide with the 2020 election (Somali Dispatch,2020).

Besides the opposition political figures, Puntland and Jubaland States rebuffed the electoral law on the bases that president was not sincere rather he wanted a to buy time for term extension and to cement his chance of re-election. President of Puntland State Said Abdullahi Deni called for the suspension of electoral law. Deni, who addressed the opening of the 46th session of the Puntland parliament, said the law contains several provisions that are against the country's provisional constitution (SA,2020). Not only the opposition figures and some Federal Member States have peddled the impossibility of conducting a timely and transparent one-person-one-vote (OPOV) election, by the same token, parts of civil society and intellectuals rejected the new election law.

According to observers, the electoral law had a major flaws that sparked criticism. The deficiencies included, representation for Somaliland and Bandari, ensuring a women's quota, clarifying the role for political parties and the complex mixture between clan power sharing formula and the political parties. To rectify the imperfections the necessary elements for political inclusivity and consensus were missing. The security issue was another obstacle that raised concerns given the control of Al-Shabaab movement a large piece of land in central and southern Somalia. The remaining relatively stable regions have not been secure from the insurgence of Al-Shabaab and ISIS. Securing a nationwide election for a country as big and sparsely populated as Somalia would require tens of thousands of security personnel deployed across key areas (Heritage,2020).

An other hurdle faced (OPOV) election was the finance required which was estimated to be more than \$100 million, the amount was very hard to be paid by the federal government and federal member states, as the international donors were not ready to allocate a substantial amount. Although it was a common knowledge that an election would take place in 2020, the FGS has not allocated money in the 2020 budget, except for the operating costs of the National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC) (Ibid).

After nearly five months of signing the electoral bill by the president, the NIEC announced the impossibility of conducting elections within the time frame on the table. The chairperson of the NIEC Halima Ismail Ibrahim told to the parliament that, the biometric system for conducting a popular voting as stated in the electoral law cannot be completed in time, thus the commission proposed a modified system by registering half of the people who are eligible to vote which is up to 3 million voters with 5,000 polling stations across the country. But even through this system, the election cannot be conducted in time. According to the commission, the preparation of the preferred electoral system will take nine months, starting from July 2020 and ending by March 2021.

The chairperson of the NIEC referred the failure due to several interconnected hurdles. She said buying the registration equipment, securing registration sites, conducting public awareness, registering voters, issuing a list of voters, registering political parties and the candidates, among

other tasks need more time and budget (Harun Maruf,2020). Before the statement

of NIEC chairperson Halima, the NIEC has repeatedly reassured an exhausted Somali public and weary political stakeholders and International Partners that an OPOV election would take place as scheduled despite mounting evidence to the contrary.

### **The resentment towards the NIECE's quest for election postponement**

Soon after the announcement of the NIECE, a heated debate has blown over the next step to be taken and who has a right to lead the transition process. The call of the NIECE faced criticism from different sides of the political spectrum. Some political parties, Puntland and Jubaland whom been known of their fierce opposition to the FGS, and the upper house of the federal parliament showed a vivid opposition to the new election road map proposed by the commission. The NIECE's call of election postponement for several months became a vindication for the opposition's argument against the pursue of Villa Somalia of upholding the notion of universal suffrage election in this time around.

Prior the NIECE's proposal for extra time to conduct (OPOV) election, Puntland State took a bold decision by shutting down the office of NIECE in the state's capital Garowe. The action has marked the uneasy relations between the federal state and the FGS and how the region was not convinced the electoral system backed by the federal government. Puntland and Jubaland states rejected the motion of

commission as they called for an electoral system agreed on by the political

stakeholders. The two states denounced repeatedly what they described a unilateral move taken by the FGS in the preparation process for the upcoming elections. Likewise, The Forum for National Parties (FNP) loudly skepticized the idea the universal suffrage election even before the chairperson of NIECE requested the additional time beyond the designated time, thus their objection against the election process magnified. FNP, which brings together six political parties, has called on the electoral commission to resign for failing to hold the election on schedule (Harun Maruf,2020).

To prevent a wide contestation which would precipitate total security collapse, the International Community engaged extremely to facilitate finding a common ground for the political stakeholders. The US ambassador in Somalia Donald Yamamoto engaged in contacts with the Somali political leaders to compel them to create a new road map for political agreement on the pressuring political issues. The US embassy issued a consecutive post on its twitter account, that sent a message about the US stance towards the unfolding political realities and to bush the tussling Somali politicians to reach a consensus before situation gets out of the hands. The ambassador paid visits to almost all FMS to talk with them and grasp their intentions. The Americans were very keen to prevent further security deterioration in Somalia as they spent millions of dollars to boost the sector in the last years.

In mid-June,2019 prior to his departure to Djibouti to participate talks with

Somaliland, president Farmajo took a bold step towards the elections. Farmajo

announced a conference which will be held in Mogadishu after he come back from Djibouti ad he extended invitation to the presidents of the FMS to participate. Also, unexpectly, Villa Somalia recognized the president of Jubaland State as an interim president for two years. Puntland and Jubaland states declined the invitation and the subsequent other attempts by Villa Somalia to hold consultation conference in Mogadishu. The rejection of the inviation reflected a wider disagreement among the political stake holders on a range of issues, where letting these disagreements to grow created an atmosphere prevailed by a mistrust among the political actors.

### **Dhusamareb Conference (One)**

After an online confrence the FMS leaders agreed to convene emergence meeting on 9th of Julay,2019 in Dhusamareb the capital city of Galmudug State, purposely, the leaders of the FGS have not been invited to the meeting. The UN Political Office in Somalia (UNSOM) has welcomed the declared meeting in a statment from UNSOM as a prelude to larger FGMS-FMS conference to be held to sort out the misunderstandings and to set solutions for pressing challenges in the transitional period. After days of deliberations the FMS leaders issued a communique, where they ruled out the possibility of OPOV elections to be held in the country. They have called for an alternative, inclusive model to be implemented before the government's mandate expires (HOL,2020). Also they exteneded hand to the leaders of the federal government to participate in a next meeting for further consultations. The confrence was the first of its kind for

several years. The federal government's "stick not carrot" policy against the federal members states which took form of violence in some instances, prevented from the FMS to form a common ground for the national agendas.

### **Dhusamareb Confrence (Two)**

The Dhusamareb two conference was the first altogether one since 2017. President Farmajo and then prime minister Hassan Ali Khayre participated along the presidents of five the five Federal Member States. Before the commence of the conference the FGS withdrew from Dhusamareb hundreds of elite Harm 'ad contingent of police officers. Although it is not confirmed from the FGS officials, but step was depicted as sign of good-will from the FGS towards the FMS leaders given the rift among some FMS leaders and the FGS over range of issues. After few days of deliberations, the leaders of the FGS and FMS agreed on several points. They agreed on holding elections on time and nominating a technical committee that will iron out details for the nature of the elections while the leaders have had agreed to convene at the same venue to complete modalities for the electoral process. The agreement of holding a elections on time have sent a message that the FGS is ready to renegade from the controversial election model of one-person-one-vote (OPOV). The conference gained praise from Somali political spectrum, civil society, and the international community.

### **Dhusamareb Confrence (Three)**

In accordance with the agreement of Dhusamareb conference two, the leaders of the FGS and FMS were supposed to meet in Dhusamareb and discuss the

election modalities proposed by the technical committees. The third meeting was slated to start on 15th August. This time, Puntland and Jubaland states boycotted the conference on the basis of irregularities that happened before the conference which violated what the leaders agreed in Dhusamareb two conference. The leaders of Jubaland and Puntland regional states have refused to attend the conference and accused President Mohamed Abdullahi Farmajo of breaching the outcomes of Dhusamareb-1 and Dhusamareb-2 Conferences (SA,2020). One of the conflicts triggering issues was the removal of the prime minister in a no-confidence vote immediately after Dhusamareb conference-2.

As a precondition, Puntland stated that it would participate the conference if a new prime minister is appointed by the president thus, the prime minister will be a part of the decisions to be taken which eventually will guarantee a smooth implementation of what would be agreed by the leaders. For its part, Jubaland accused President Farmajo of disregarding the agreements reached in Dhusamareb-1 and Dhusamareb-2 conferences by dismissing the prime minister and failing to appoint a new one, violating the agreement with Jubaland leader on non-interference in its affairs among other violations (Íbis). Somalia's International Partners emphasized the inevitability of reaching a broad based agreement. "The partners emphasize that the participation of all leaders in this summit is critical to sustain the consensus-building process and produce a broad-based agreement on modalities for the 2020/21 federal elections that satisfy all Somali stakeholders" bean said in a statement.

Notwithstanding, the fact that two federal member states (Puntland and Jubaland)

boycotted the meeting, the remaining leaders included president of FGS, the president of South West state, the president of Hirshabelle state and the governor of Banadir region, decided to proceed with the discussions and unanimously settled for a hybrid model that increases the electorate and voting constituencies, among other new provisions. On 20th of August the leaders reached an agreement that was based on the recommendations from the technical committees. The leaders opted out an enhanced model of the 2016 indirect election model.

According to the agreement, 301 electoral delegates whom would be picked up by the clan elders and civil society members will elect each seat of the House of the People of the Somali Federal Parliament. The seats of the Upper House will be elected by the federal member states assemblies. They agreed on, that elections will take place within one day in all over the country by holding it in four constituencies (districts) in each federal member state as the National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC) has the authority to relocate the seats which could not be elected in its original constituencies on the ground of insecurity to a more secure constituency.

One of the clauses in the agreement which flared up conflicting debates was the one stated that the seats will be contested by the political parties. Given the reality that, there were no fully registered parties in the country where full registration requirement is difficult to meet, political parties needed 10,000 eligible voters as members, and the party should have offices and members in at least 9 of Somalia's 18 pre-1991 regions. Also, the role of "NIECE"

has raised concerns as leaders agreed that NIEC will manage the process by cooperating with sub-committees appointed the federal member states. The legitimacy of NIEC's mandate to manage an indirect election was questioned, where the agreement was in contrary to what parliament and president approved previously.

Although, the Dhusamareb-3 conference was concluded with extraordinary agreement which relatively calmed down the anxiety over the elections, but it did not pass without criticism and dismay. Understandably, Jubaland and Puntland States rejected the results of the conference by declaring that they were not a part of it, hence they called for another all-included meeting to be convened. In a joint statement the two presidents of the Puntland and Jubaland underlined that “the resolutions that came out of the Dhusamareb conference on 19 August 2020, regarding the electoral model, are only the opinions of the leaders who participated, namely the president of the Federal Republic of Somalia and presidents of Galmudug, Hirshabelle and South West regional states,”.

Also, the Civil Society showed resentment towards the outcomes of the conference, particularly the renegading from the concept of holding a universal suffrage election where the Somali citizen could elect those who will represent them. The civil society argued that the agreed electoral model will prolong the dependence on the old, corrupted tradition system. Consequently, the International Community exerted pressure on the Somali political stakeholder particularly on Villa Somalia and the FMS presidents. In a consecutive appeals and communiques,

they urged the Somali leaders to convene again and draft an all-accepted model of election based on the previous understandings.

### **Mogadishu agreement and the unfolded impasse**

After view days of convening in Mogadishu, the president of the Federal Government along with the five presidents of the Federal Member States signed an agreement on 17<sup>th</sup> of September,2020. The “Mogadishu model” represents a major compromise between the federal government and member states and, in the present circumstances, was a positive development (ICG,2020). Under the terms of the Mogadishu agreement, representatives from across country will gather in two constituencies in each FMS to form electoral colleges that in turn will select parliamentarians of the lower house while the FMS assemblies will elect the members of Upper House. Then the bicameral Parliament will then vote for the president. This is similar to the model used in 2016, albeit with a slightly expanded number of delegates, a provision aimed at addressing international demands to demonstrate progress toward eventual universal suffrage (Ibid).

The terms of the agreement where included:

- The federal government and regional administrations will appoint federal and regional level electoral commissions that will manage the election process
- The number of delegates who will elect seats of the People's House will be 101, political party system will not be applied, and the

election will take place in two locations in every state.

- The leaders agreed on to preserve 30% of women seats in parliament
- Members of the Upper and Lower houses from Somaliland will be elected in Mogadishu.
- Election will be held between November,2020 and February,2021.
- As agreed, those who are going to compete for a seat in the People's House of the Parliament have to pay a whopping \$10,000 dollar, while candidates for the Upper House are required to pay \$20,000 dollar of amount.
- They also agreed to form a new independent election committee, a federal committee whom will be appointed by the FGS and state level committees whom will be appointed the FMS.

The agreed Mogadishu Model got the endorsement of the political stakeholders as the best way for this fragile transition where a prolonged deadlock will be a backlash to the modest stability achieved in the recent years. The announcement of the new electoral model was perceived as a good step forward toward political stability and holding timely elections, which will ultimately lead to a peaceful transfer of power (Mohamed, S. Ahmed,2020).

Like the previous agreements, the criticism and uproar have surged from different sides. The International Community showed disillusionment on Somalis Fiasco of holding credible universal suffrage elections. "The partners observe with regret that the announced model falls short of the longstanding Somali goal of direct voting for members of parliament in this electoral cycle " bean said in a press

statement from the Somalia's International Partners. Understandably, many Somali and external actors are deeply uncomfortable with yet another indirect election, given the odious aftertaste of the 2016-2017 process (HIPS,2020).

The price tag of the seats for both the Upper House of the parliament and the People's House considered to be unfair by many observatories. It has been accused that this clause will give access to the wealthy candidates and propels candidates to seek political sponsors to give their votes in exchange of financial support. In this way according to a commentary from Heritage Institute for Policy Studies the, (2020) "Somalia's political barons have effectively created a food chain in which they have sole control over both the supply and demand.

### **Mogadishu agreement and the ensued struggle over the process**

Certainly, the deal unblocked a deadlock and relieved political bickering, particularly between the president Farmajo and those regarded him as a man with no good faith. Yet many details remain unclear and implementation within the given timeframes will be fraught (ICG,2020). After the end of the Mogadishu conference by signing the agreement, the subsequent steps were to embark the implementation of the agreement. Arguably, the devil is in the implementation phase particularly in situations where the confidence and clear dispute mechanisms are absent.

A dispute mounted when the FGS announced the members of the Federal Electoral Implementation Team (FEIT). The adversaries accused the FGS of

picking up a senior official from both the Office of the President and the Office of the Prime Minister, senior officials working for regional leaders, diplomats, senior security officials and many civil servants. On the other hand, the government refused the accusations and started a training program for the newly appointed election committee. Puntland and Jubaland States abstained from submitting the list of their state-level election committee as stipulated in the agreement.

Jubaland president Ahmed Madobe called the federal government to withdraw troops from Gedo region and allow his administration to full administer the region before election to be held. Although, Madobe and Farmajo along other states presidents engaged in discussions during the Mogadishu conference, but have not agreed on how to conduct elections in Gedo. This problem could be significant, the “Mogadishu model” calls for the selection of sixteen of Jubaland’s 43 lower house seats to take place in Gedo’s capital of Garbaharey, where the federal government now exerts control (ICG,2020).

“The President and his team who are running for office have appointed my constituency election committee, thus the president and his team have become judge and jury,” Hashi said. Some members of the two chambers of the parliament from Somaliland discredited the claims of the Upper House speaker, by accused him of going to dominate the process of appointing the election committee.

The presidential candidates which included two former presidents, Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, and Hassan Sheikh Mohamud formed an alliance. The 14 presidential candidate’s alliance was formed to have a

say in the run-up to elections and to exert pressure on the Federal Government. In the first round of their consecutive meetings, they issued a communique in which they demanded the resignation of National Intelligence and Security Agency (NISA) director Fahad Yasin, accusing him of election interference. They have also called for the dissolution of the electoral commissions and the withdrawal of government-appointed forces from the southwestern Gedo region to reduce tensions during the election period (AA,2020). They alliance asked for independent election observers and lawyers to be included in the body to ensure maximum transparency (Ibid).

The escalation between the presidential candidates' alliance and FGS over the election issue gave the election issue momentum and bolstered the sense of seeking an amicable solutions .President of Jubaland State Ahmed Madobe supported the stance of the presidential alliance in calling the FGS to withdraw its troops from parts of Jubaland, hence he underlined the impossibility of holding elections without fulfilling that condition.

## **Looming perils**

As it is stipulated in the latest agreement between the FGS and FMS, the parliamentary election was supposed to be kicked-off from first of December, alas, Somalis failed to catch up with the deadline, yet, without a clear way out from the stalemate. All indications show the whole process will be late far from the agreed timeline thus, the constitutional mandate of the current FGS leadership may end before reaching a consensus on major issues related to the elections. Without direct and sincere talks among the

political stakeholders, the impasse will have a bad consequence on the embryonic state institutions, even the ramifications may leave unfixable flaws.

Due to the fraught rhetoric on the surface and fragility of the state of affairs, uncalculated steps may foment a fire on the complex situation. In Mogadishu, politicians started to use the clan affiliation as a tool to achieve gains from this transitional moment. In recent commentary issued by the International Crises Group, bean stated “Mogadishu residents told Crisis Group that clans in the capital have been arming themselves in case disputes over the polls escalate into violence, portending a return to the clan-based fighting that damaged the country so badly in the 1990s”.

By exploiting the political bickering in Mogadishu the Al-Shabab insurgency stepped up its operations in Somalia. In recent weeks Al-Shabaab waged bloody suicide attacks in Mogadishu which claimed the lives of dozens. As planned the African Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) will hand over some primary responsibilities to the Somali security agencies by the end of 2021, certainly, the political infighting in the capital will hinder the process and give opportunity to the spoilers, chiefly Al-Shabaab.

In recent years Somalia achieved milestones in financial sector reforms, as the international financial institutions announced at the beginning of this year, Somalia has achieved a hardy won success under the successive IMF Staff Monitored Programs and reached the Decision Point. This meant a recognition that Somalia is on the way to be considered as a relevance partner in the

international arena, thus the country qualified for debt relief under the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative. If the infight over the elections would not be tamed in a way negotiation gets room in order to reach a political settlement, certainly, Somalis will jeopardize those economic and financial achievements which are inevitable for state-building. Also, the impasse will allow unavailing meddling by external actors to dictate political stakeholders what they should do and do not which will be a disillusionment an embarrassment to the whole Somalis.

## **Conclusion**

Somalia stands at a critical juncture, besides the fragile security and the weak institutions, the recent polarization and the political fight set by the disagreement on election process shows how the state of affairs in Somalia is very susceptible to be broke out in full swing. Up to now, the Federal Government insists the continuation of the election process despite the objection of the alliance of the presidential candidates and two federal members states, the newly appointed election committee took steps towards structuring itself to hold the elections on time. If the modus operandi go in this way, it means given the objection of some federal member states to the process, we will see an election held in some parts of the country and boycotted by the opposition candidates.

The Somali political stakeholders and the International Community should co-work on; preventing the deterioration of the fragile political landscape and to protect the credibility of the elections in order to get a legitimate leadership. The International Community could have an effective role by utilizing its leverage to push different sides towards a consensus on main contestation points related to the elections, hence the international

community's role should not be an accessory in this political juncture in Somalia.

Before going ahead in the process, the FGS and FMS leaders should come to gather and create a clear framework which solves the discontents from some parts. Without a process which incorporates the FGS and FMS it will be difficult if it is impossible to hold a credible election. Also, the process of settlement should consider the concerns of the alliance of presidential candidates which represents the largest opposition single block in the time being. Hence, the dispute over the Electoral Implementation Team (FEIT) and State-Level Electoral Implementation Teams (SEITs) should be settled in a way that convinces the different actors, the members of the two commissions should comprise non-partisan and credible individuals and able to manage the duty effectively.

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