

**Global Somali
Diaspora
Highlights since
2014**

Officebearers and members of the GSD are drawn from the many Somali Diaspora communities living in North America, Australia, Africa, Asia and Europe. This booklet is the highlights of selected events, launches, conferences and other crucial activities held by GSD in Somalia and countries hosting Diaspora communities since 2014.

BACKGROUND

Global Somali Diaspora (GSD) is a global not-for-profit organization working to bring together and mobilize members of the Somali Diaspora for positive action. GSD advocates and promotes the full integration of Somali Diaspora communities within their host nations while also remaining connected to their cultural heritage. Work is also undertaken by GSD to encourage members of the Somali Diaspora to contribute to efforts promoting peacebuilding, reconciliation, reconstruction and development in their homeland of Somalia. Established in 2014 by participants of an international Somali Diaspora conference convened in Istanbul, Turkey, today GSD has representatives from Somali communities around the world including the US, United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, Norway, Sweden, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Italy, Denmark as well as other countries in Africa and Asia. It is a foundational belief of GSD that a connected and unified Somali Diaspora offers opportunities to meet mutual challenges as well as opportunities shared by their communities living in their host countries while also playing a strong and positive role in the rebuilding of Somalia.

MISSION AND VISION

Mission Statement

GSD has been established to advocate, implement and support projects, programs and initiatives that advance the cultural and social development of Somali Diaspora communities as well as make a positive contribution to the rebuilding of Somalia.

Vision

To empower members of the Somali Diaspora to realize its full potential while also empowering them to contribute to the building of harmonious, cohesive, educated, informed, harmonious, creative, powerful and prosperous communities both in their host nations and their homeland of Somalia.

OBJECTIVES

- To mobilize, organize and empower Somali communities living in the Diaspora;
- Provide a platform to improve communication and ties between members of the global Somali Diaspora and serve as a focus point of action and advocacy on issues of importance to their communities;
- To promote the language, culture and heritage of the Somali people;
- To enhance the capacity and skills of young Somalis living in Somalia and the Diaspora;

- To contribute to the development and rebuilding of Somalia;

Highlights of Global Somali Diaspora

The Global Somali Diaspora (GSD) was established as the result of a series of consultations and meetings that took place among members of various Somali Diaspora communities. These discussions continued during an international Somali Diaspora conference that took place in Istanbul, Turkey, from 21-22 June 2014. It was during this conference that more than 100 delegates from around the world – including community representatives, academics, professionals, community representatives and activists – agreed to the creation of a unified Somali diaspora organization and elected an interim executive leadership and two boards – Board of Advisors and Board of Directors - as well as leaders of national chapters. The new name chosen for this organisation was the Global Somali Diaspora (GSD).

Since its inception the GSD has worked to support and advocate on behalf of Somali communities and their members living across the Diaspora. Each national GSD chapter has worked to actively engage with local Somali communities, regardless of clan affiliation, to address their needs, interests and any other issues of concern. This has included organizing local events and workshops, empowering members of their communities to transfer skills and investment back to Somalia, organizing humanitarian relief in response to natural disasters and terrorist attacks as well as participating in various national, regional and international conferences.

GSD ACTIVITIES IN 2019

Turkish Airlines Headquarters in London May 8th, 2019



GSD had a very productive meeting with Turkish Airlines Team in their HQ Office in London in May 8th 2019 and discussed on how to support GSD's international conference in Istanbul in June 2019. A Big Thank You to Turkish Airlines



Office of the Somalia's President May 1st 2019. Dr Yusuf Sheikh Omar, GSD Board Member met with Amina Said Ali Chief of Staff, and Hussein Ladane, Director, Social Affairs at the Office of President in May 1st 2019. The talk has focused on the relationship between Global Somali Diaspora and the Office of the President Mohamed Abdullahi Farmaajo.



Meeting with H.E. Deputy Prime Minister of Somalia in London. Jawaahir Daahir and Dr Yusuf Omar met in London 8th Febraury 2019 H.E. Somali Deputy PM, in London and discussed with him range of issues including how Somali Federal Gov can engage more effectively with Somali diaspora, GSD's Istanbul conference & how they can contribute to it.

Clear understanding of the importance of working more together in addressing challenges in the diaspora and back home as well as increasing diaspora investment in homeland



Meeting with Hormuud team in London 6th March 2019. Ms Jawaahir Daahir, GSD Chairwoman and Dr Yusuf Omar GSD Board Member met in London with Hormuud's high delegation visiting UK and talked about strengthening the relationships between GSD and Hormuud.

SOAS-SOMALI DIASPORA CONFERENCE: Challenges & Opportunities in UK

One day conference held in February 15th 2019 at SOAS

The British Somali community is one of the largest black and ethnic minority groups in UK. The community is diverse and complex and the general public know little about it. Being reliant on mainstream media, which inflates issues such as terrorism, famine and piracy, the average British citizen may form negative images.

The community is often described as hard to reach and understand. The misconception of the community and a very limited understanding of its specific challenges and needs related to education, employment, mental health, immigration and legal issues, youth identity crises, housing and so on, can influence policy makers, service providers and the wider British community in negative ways. Such misunderstandings and misconception have disadvantaged the community from gaining adequate access to the British mainstream services. Alongside settlement and social integration difficulties facing the community in UK, the dysfunctional politics and power struggles happening in Somalia have had a negative impact on the function and coherence of the community.

This conference aimed to explore challenges, opportunities and solution in four main areas which are:

1. **Social integration** including: Youth identity, cultural adaptation, language as a tool of social integration, identity and belonging.
2. **Education and employment:** School performance, community tuition, access to higher education, parent-school relationships, unemployment, barriers to employment, employment/unemployment impact on social integration and community upward mobility.
3. **Security, transnationalism and homeland engagement:** Transnational security, community business transnationalism, finance, including remittance and money transfer.
4. **Health, housing and wellbeing:** Mental health and emotional wellbeing, healing trauma, diet, physical and social wellbeing.

The conference brought together academics specialised in Somali studies particularly in the diaspora, with community practitioners representing diverse voices and experiences, and service providers. The combination of academics, community members and practitioners put forward ways to address these challenges. Besides gaining knowledge about the community, the conference was a good platform for networking and collaboration for those who are involved and interested in the community affairs or willing to understand the community situation from its own perspectives as well as academic findings.

Achieved outcomes for participants:

- Increased knowledge of challenges facing Somali-British community in UK in the four main areas specified in the concept note;
- Gained an excellent understanding of effective ways to address community needs and challenges from a variety of community perspectives and academic findings;
- Increased knowledge and awareness of how to utilize the opportunities available for the community in UK;
- Increased collaborative work between Somali diaspora UK, policy makers and service providers;

- Establishing connections which will build networks that enable participants get access to expertise, skills, knowledge and resources;
- Online publication of conference proceedings.

Conference was held in Brunei Gallery, SOAS University of London. It was **Organised by** Global Somali Diaspora (GSD) in partnership with Anti-Tribalism Movement (ATM), African Foundation for Development (AFFORD) and Department of Development Studies, SOAS University of London and hosted by Centre for African Studies, (SOAS). The conference was coordinated by Dr Yusuf Sheikh Omar is a Board Member of GSD and a research associate at SOAS University of London.



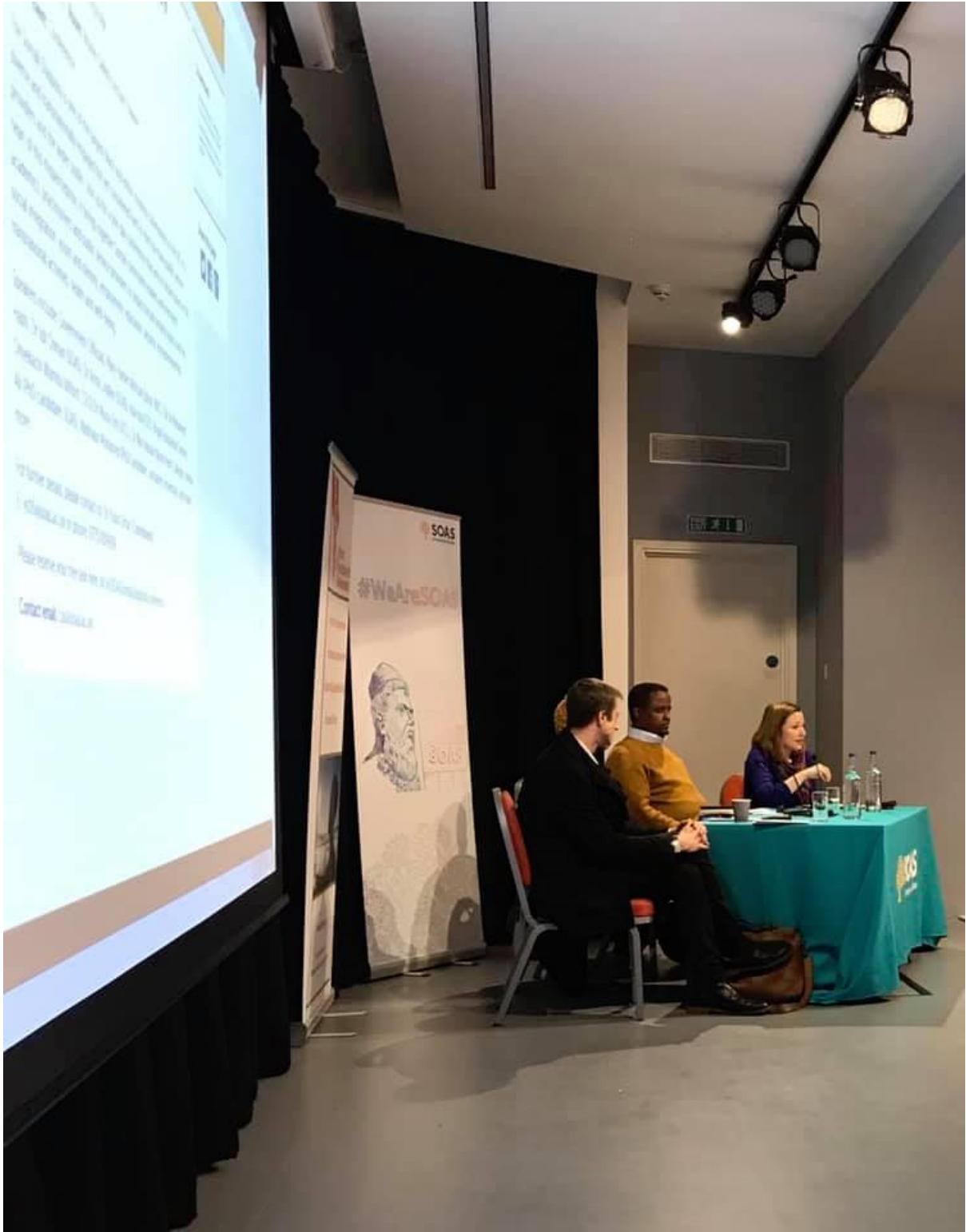
Ms Jawaahir Daahir MC of the conference at SOAS



General participants in SOAS conference



SOAS-Somali Diaspora Conference's distinguished keynote speakers included H.E. Abdi Aynte the former minister of Somali Federal Government who is currently UN Director of Strategic Partnership. Abdi Aynte is one of the key founding members of Global Somali Diaspora, February 15th 2019.



Social integration panellists moderated by Dr Anna Lindley Senior Lecture at SOAS



Education panellists as SOAS conference moderated by Adam Matan Managing Director of Anti-Tribalism Movement based in London



Security and economic panellists as SOAS conference moderated by Onyekachi Wambu Executive Director, Foundation for African Development based in London



Health panellists moderated by Dr Muna Elmi from UCL

“Somali-Turkish Diaspora Relationship Forum organised by GSD and Yunus Emre Institute’s (YEI) branch in London in January 4th 2019 held at UEI’s Headquarters in UK.

GSD organized a community consultation forum in partnership with the Yunus Emre Institute. This event brought together key community leaders including academics, professionals and business people from both the Somali and Turkish communities in the UK to discuss how diasporic communities can better work together. While the event was a success it also served to highlight the very close and strong nature of the ties between Somalia and Turkey as well as the enduring friendship of their peoples.



Panel discussion: From right Dr Yusuf Sheikh Omar GSD Board Member, Ms Jawaahir Daahir GSD Chairwoman and Dr Mehmet Karakus from Yunus Emre Institute



Dr Yusuf Sheikh Omar delivering his paper on Somali Diaspora- Turkish Relationships during the forum



Photo opportunity after the forum in UEI Headquarters in London January 4th 2019



Forum participants in UEI Headquarters in London January 4th 2019



Jawaahir Daahir and Dr Yusuf Omar had very successful meeting with H.E. Umit Yalcin, Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey in UK in January 30th 2019. They discussed about the relationships between Global Somali Diaspora and Turkish community in UK and beyond. The Ambassador was very welcoming and engaging.

GSD ACTIVITIES IN 2018



Former GSD Executive Director Ms Zahra Shirwac and Dr Yusuf Omar had sideline meeting with the late Somalia's Constitution Minister H.E. Abdirahman Hosh Jibril during Heritage's

conference in Djibouti in December 17th- 19th 2018 and talked GSD's potential role in mobilising Somali diaspora to get involved in the constitutional development.



East African Development Forum entitled “Turkish-Somali Partnership conference: Stepping Forward” 1-2 December 2018. Both Ms Jawaanir Daahir and Dr Yusuf Omar from GSD were invited as speakers. After the conference, GSD met with Professor Ali Sheikh, General Director of East African Association for Research and Development (DAD) and discussed the future partnerships and collaboration starting with GSD's International Conference in Istanbul 14-17 June 2019.



Jawaahir Daahir had sideline meeting with young Somali women during Turkish-Somali Partnership conference: "Stepping Forward" 1-2 December 2018 in Istanbul

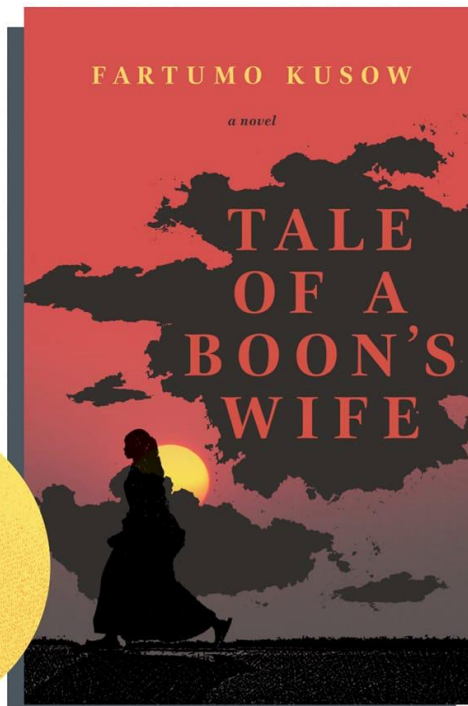


Jawaahir Daahir and Dr Yusuf Omar met H.E. Amb. Gamal Hassan Minsiter of Planing, Investment and Economic Development during Turkish-Somali Partnership conference: "Stepping Forward" 1-2 December 2018 in Istanbul

NOVELIST FARTUMO KUSOW



*"At turns
harrowing,
heartbreaking,
and ultimately
hopeful."
- Harvard
Review*



SATURDAY NOVEMBER 24TH, 2018

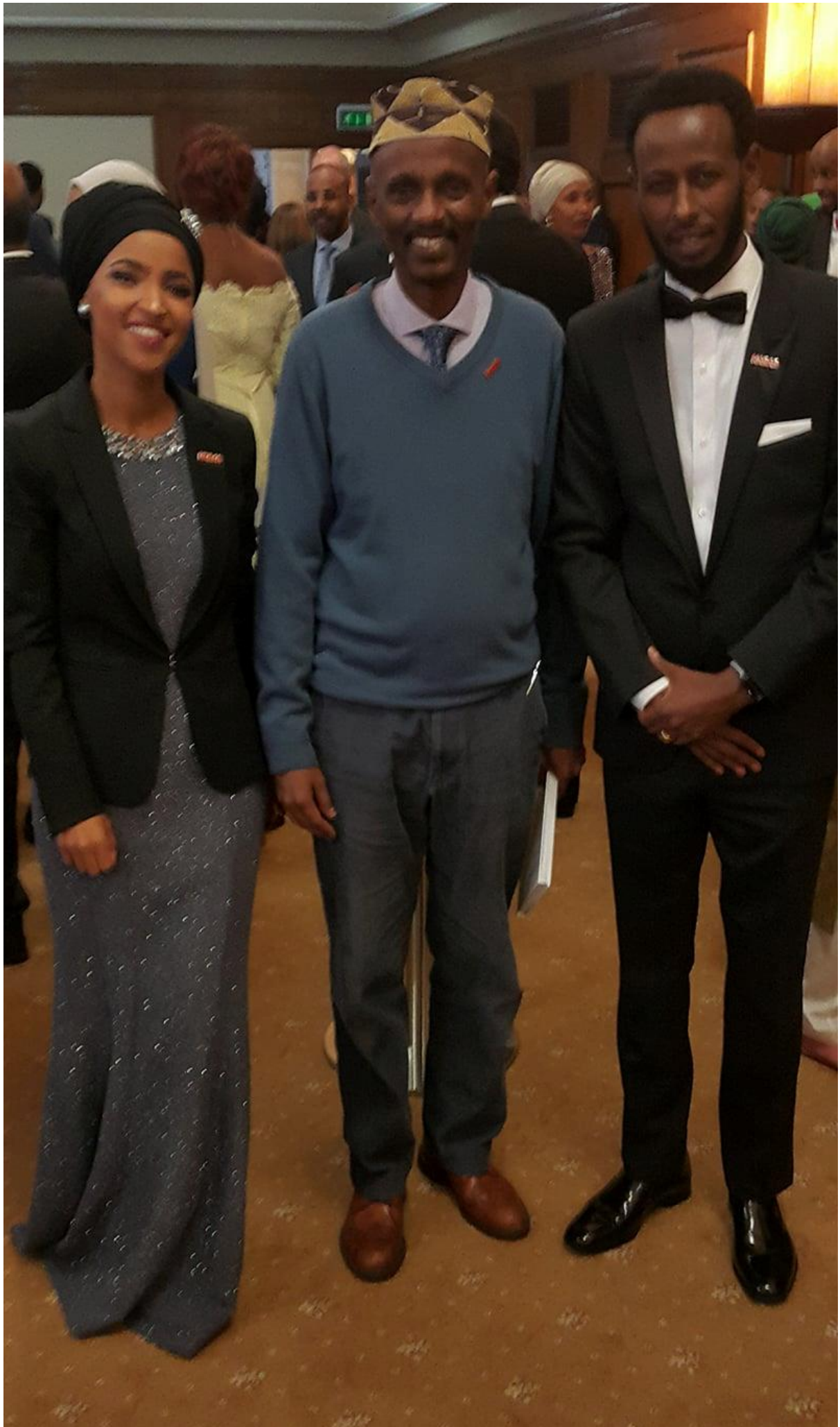
16:00 - 21:00 at the Brunei Gallery:

SOAS University of London
Thornhaugh Street, Russell Square, London WC1H 0XG

For Information Call: Dr Yusuf Omar (Organizer) : +44 7757009939
Jawaahir Daahir BEM (Chair GSD) : +44 7375051582



GSD in partnership with SOAS University of London, Anti-Tribalism Movement and Looh Press organised a book launch at SOAS November 2018. The book was entitled "Tale of a Boon's Wife Written by Farumo Kusow



Meeting with Senator Ilhan Omar in April 2018, London. Dr Yusuf Omar, GSD Board Member met with Senator (now Congresswoman) Ilhan Omar and briefly talked to about about the potential GSD's International conference in 2019.

GSD ACTIVITIES IN 2017



Jawaahir Daahir, Dr Yusuf Omar, Lul Kulmiye, and Zahra Shirwac the former GSD executive director participated in Somalia's London conference May 2017



Jawaahir Daahir and Dr Yusuf Omar organised online forum through Puntland TV focused on the role of Somali diaspora in rebuilding Somalia March 22nd 2017.

Inagural GSD, Turkey, 2014





<https://www.facebook.com/papa.bayow/videos/678441925559948/>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d7-0Njusqlc&feature=share&fbclid=IwAR2MGaDhW8j_HHQj1V7HlbDV9S0ONZkAjj92WiO_WU9lo-bMnOC7bxdLE5g

GSD Chapter launches

Australia June 2015

Launch of the Australian chapter of GSD in Melbourne, Australia.



GSD launch event in Melbourne Australia: Keynote speakers ie: front row from the right -former GSD Executive Dir. Abdi Barud with H.E Mehmet Kucuksakalli former Consulate General of the Republic of Turkey in Australia and Mr. Mohamed Atosh



GSD Launch Keynote Speaker H.E Mehmet Kucuksakalli former Consulate General of the Republic of Turkey in Australia



Former GSD Executive Director Abdi Barud and GSD Australia chapter members and its volunteers

Malaysia (15/06/2016)

Launch of the Malaysian chapter of GSD in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.



Photo: From the left former GSD Executive Director Abdi Barud, Malaysia Chapter Dr Abdulahi Ali and Mowliid.



GSD Malaysia launch general participants



Photo: From the left former GSD Executive Director Abdi Barud with members of Malaysia Somali Diaspora academics and community leaders

Somalia (27/01/2015)

Launch of the Somali chapter of GSD in Mogadishu, Somalia.



GSD board member Lul Kulmiye giving a speech at the GSD Mogadishu launch

Launch of the American chapter of GSD in Minnesota, United States of America
21st Feb, 2015



GSD Former Deputy Executive giving speech during the launch



GSD former Executive Director giving speech during the GSD Minnesota launch



From the right welknown Somali singers Ahmed Naji Sa'ad and Ahmed Ali Igal and other singer at the background during Minnesota launch



From the right GSD Board member Eng. Jibril Afyare giving award to Ahmed Naji Sa'ad at GSD Minnesota launch

United Kingdom 2014

Launch of the British chapter of GSD in London, United Kingdom.





Launch of the Dutch chapter of GSD in the Netherlands November 2014





Abdi Waare Nederland Chapter leader at the launch

Canada

Launch of the Canadian chapter of GSD in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. 29 March 2015





The above photos are Canadian Somali diaspora who attended the launch.

GSD Launch in Stockholm Sweden November 2015



Former GSD Executive on the podium



Somali diaspora in Sweden attended GSD launch

GSD Kigali International Conference in partnership with Somali Office of Diaspora Affairs (January 2015)

The conference held in the Rwandan capital Kigali in 2015 was organized under the title of 'Diaspora Policy Consultation'. The initial idea for this conference originated with the Somali government's Office of Diaspora Affairs. In addition to the participation of members of GSD other attendees included representatives from African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM), the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD) as well as from the Government of Rwanda which hosted the event. Focussed on issues of interest to or impacting the Somali Diaspora the conference also looked into the role of its communities on the development and reconstruction of their homeland. Discussion also focused on the topic of the Somali government's policy towards the Diaspora including how to encourage its members to return and live, work and invest in their homeland. The conference also aimed to explore ways in which the global Somali Diaspora can be mobilised for the purpose of national reconciliation and dialogue. Kigali was specifically chosen as a venue because of Rwanda's civil war and the enormous role its own Diaspora played and continues to play in rebuilding that country.

Photo Kigali



From the right former chief of staff Ali Omar and Amb. Maman S. Sidikou Formal African Union Special Representative for Somali Head of Amisom and other Key Dignitaries













The above photos are Global Somali and local delegates attended Kigali conference **GSD International Conference (GSDIC), Mogadishu Somalia (August 13-15, 2016)**

To date the most ambitious international conference organized by the GSD in Somalia was held in Mogadishu in 2016. Bringing together policy-makers, business people and representatives of civil society organizations from both the Diaspora and Somalia the

conference was also attended by representatives of international organizations including the United Nations. Participants in this land-mark event engaged in a series of workshops and discussions on issues affecting Somali communities living in the Diaspora as well as an examination of topics regarding investment opportunities in Somalia. This built upon the success of the of an earlier conference convened in the Somali capital by GSD in August 2015 titled “A Showcase of Somali Diaspora Success”. This previous event had brought together entrepreneurs, intellectuals and representatives from small and medium sized businesses who shared their stories, ideas and experience drawn from their experience operating in Somalia and overseas in order to encourage greater involvement by members of the Diaspora in the development of their homeland. The 2016 GSDIC was an event completely led and owned by Somali’s for Somali’s and for the benefit of Somalia and the international Somali Diaspora. The conference provided what was at the time a unique opportunity for all stakeholders to discuss and identify collective strategies required to deal with the challenges facing their communities in both in the homeland and in the Diaspora.







From left Ahmed Tohow and Director of Hormud Mogadishu

GSD Delegate met members of Somalia electoral commission





Ahmed Qahira presenting GSD conference in Mogadishu

Diaspora Success Stories

Mogadishu Book Fair (2016)

The annual Mogadishu Book Fair promotes literacy, the pursuit of knowledge as well as Somali culture; a notable feature of which is a high regard for poets and their work. Since its beginnings in 2015 this event has attracted both Somali and foreign intellectuals, authors, scholars, playwrights, poets, musicians and other professions eager to display their latest work and showcase their talents.

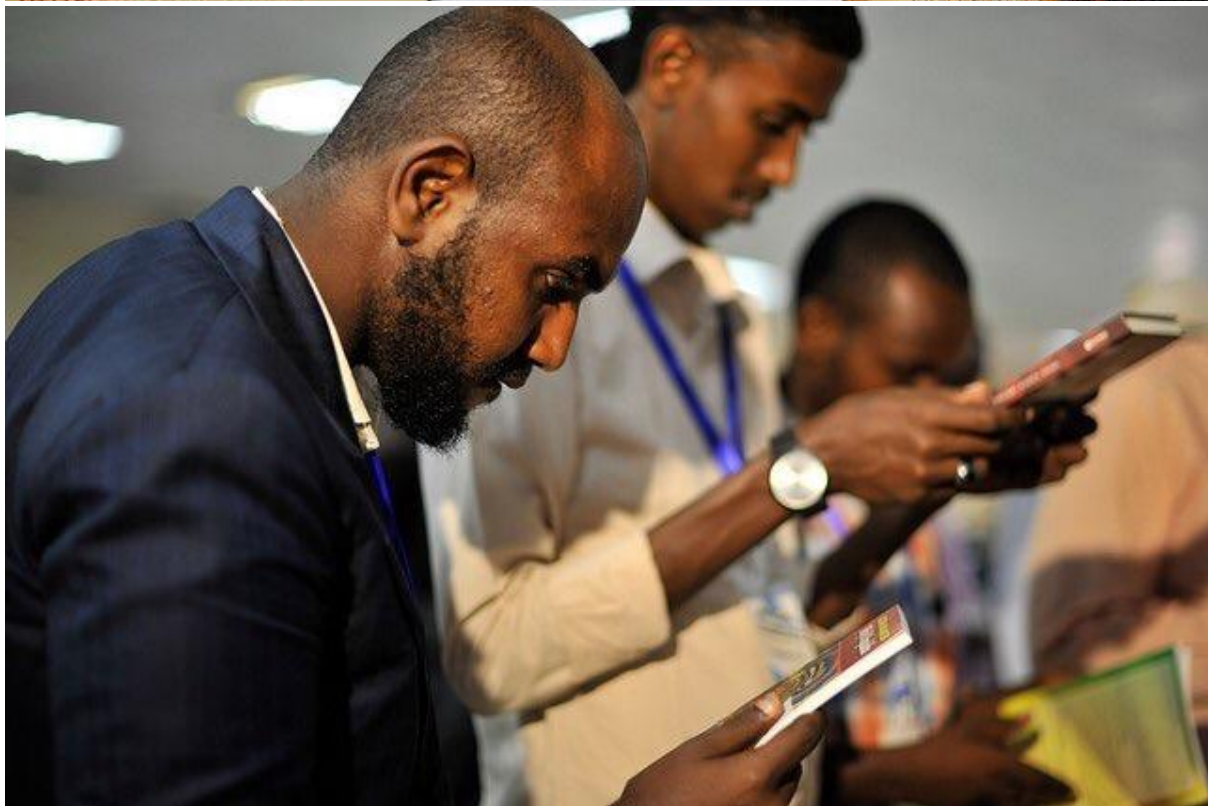
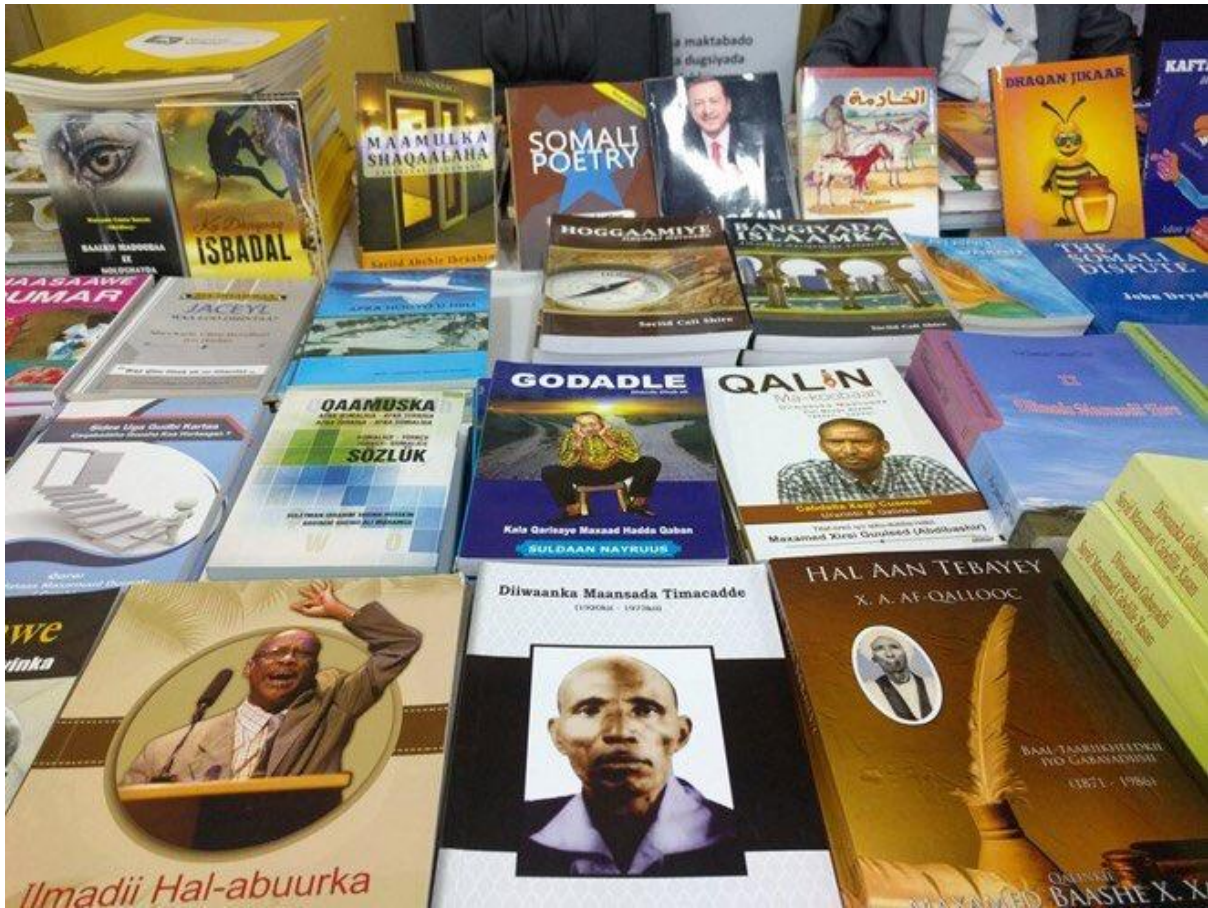


Mohamed Dini the founder Mogadishu Book fair and Turkish [foreign diplomats](#)

GSD members and other Somali Diaspora attended Mogadishu bookfair







<https://www.somalispot.com/threads/mogadishu-book-fair.47672/>

http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/africa/2018-08/17/c_137398303.htm

<https://lithub.com/at-the-mogadishu-book-fair-literature-is-hope/>

<https://thenewpublishingstandard.com/mogadishu-book-fair-oasis-tranquility-troubled-land/>

<https://wardheernews.com/mogadishu-book-fair-a-cause-for-celebration/>

GSD Success Story: Ilays Academy August 2016

In 2011-2012 member of the global Somali Diaspora Mr. Abdinasir Ali Ahmed returned to Mogadishu from London in order to establish the Ilays Academy. In 2013 the school opened with the goal of providing students from Grades 1 to 12 an education that meets the highest international standard. It is expected that by providing students with a quality education that this will open doors to work and further educational opportunities for them in Somalia and elsewhere around the world. The success of this effort has been demonstrated when students have returned to schools back in the UK, United States and Canada and have had no problems in meeting the standards expected of them at their grade level.

<https://www.facebook.com/GlobsomDiaspora/videos/1788521611363856/>

GSD Success Story: al-Nur School for the Blind

On 21 July 2005 the al-Nur School for the Blind was opened in Mogadishu in order to meet the educational needs of Somali youth affected by blindness or having other special needs. This school was established by member of the global Somali Diaspora Mr. Abdifatah Mohammed Dahir who returned to Somalia from the Netherlands. This institution provides a free education to youth aged between 7 and 18 years old. Since founding the school Mr. Dahir has also undertaken further studies in special education for disabled people, especially the blind. The school teaches students to use Braille, which despite its use elsewhere for over two hundred years was still new to Somalia, as well as computers as part of their education.

<https://www.facebook.com/100005564148228/videos/529944267201040/?id=100005564148228>

<https://www.facebook.com/GlobsomDiaspora/videos/1789435474605803/>

https://hiiraan.com/news4/2015/Jan/97735/somali-diaspora-conference-opens-in-kigali.aspx?fbclid=IwAR2S3gca_cZabiQeKYI-MmQ-9oZcJRX_Sh4n3U8n8YGjspRbAH7py8Yup5Q

https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2014/Nov/67087/gsd_has_been_formally_launched_in_netherlands.aspx?fbclid=IwAR3XfRvZaGxpAFJ5yQmtXGg2KaA_2ph5vwWg5WQx7QpLJS1jo1s6CHoprws

GSD Mini Events

GSD Australia 13 October 2017

This mini-event organized by the GSD Australian chapter brought together members of the community to discuss issues around youth, family, inter-generational barriers and the challenges of raising children in a 'Western' environment. The event also highlighted the efforts given by the Somali diaspora to support the drought-affected families in Somalia in addition to the general support given towards rebuilding their homeland. The keynote speaker at this event was Jawaahir daahir, the chairperson of GSD, and was also attended by a number locally based practitioners from among the Diaspora community living in Australia.



Keynote speaker Jawaahir Daahir presenting GSD mission and future programs



Nur Fiqi Osman- former GSD board member



Awes Amin at GSD speaking at GSD event



Liban and Hodan sharing MC the GSD event

GSD Advocacy:

- **GSD Drought Campaign**

In 2011 and then again in 2016 Somalia was struck by severe drought which resulted in food insecurity as well as the death of many cattle, goats and camels on which the livelihoods of many Somali's depend. In response to these crises the GSD organized a campaign which mobilized more than thirty (30) other Somali organizations already working on the ground to support communities living in drought affected regions. This campaign was successful in helping to raise millions of dollars among Somali Diaspora communities, whose members gave extremely generously, and supported efforts to provide food and other support many needy people back home.





GSD Australia on fund raising mission: from Dr Nur Fiqi, Awes Amin and Ali Kar, Omar Abdirahman

- **Fundraising on Behalf of Zobbe Boming Victims (2017)**

On October 14, 2017 a massive truck bomb exploded in the area of Zobbe Square in Mogadishu. This horrific attack killed more than 500 innocent civilians including students, small business owners and other ordinary people who were going about their daily-life. Given the scale of the devastation and number of casualties many Somalis have called this attack Somalia's own '9/11' The GSD not only issued an official

statement condemning the sickening attack but also organized a campaign to advocate on behalf of its victims and raise funds for their support. The GSD provided an important and valuable forum for the mobilization of this campaign across multiple Diaspora communities which resulted in the donation of food, clothing and other relief for the benefit of victims and their families. GSD national chapters also organized public demonstrations and undertook other activities to demonstrate their anger at al-Shabaab for having committed such an appalling atrocity.







Jawaahir Dahir and Ahmed Dini and Somali community in Victoria at Victorian Parliament showing solidarity with Zobbe victims

GSD with Somali Somali community Australia supported Turkey Coup victims
OCT 2016



- GSD Somali Refugee Advocacy (06 October 2016)



- From the right former GSD Executive Abdi Barud and UNHCR delegate

References

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https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2014/Jun/55329/conference_communiqué_global_somali_diaspora_horusocod.aspx

Turkey Looks to Support Somali Diaspora

<https://www.dailysabah.com/politics/2014/06/24/turkey-looks-to-support-somali-diaspora>

Global Somali Diaspora: Hope of Diaspora effectiveness ahead.

https://www.hiiraan.com/op4/2014/jun/55362/global_somali_diaspora_hope_of_diaspora_effectiveness_ahead.aspx

The Global Somali Diaspora conference starts in Istanbul

https://hiiraan.com/news4/2014/Jun/55290/the_global_somali_diaspora_conference_starts_in_istanbul.aspx

Global Somali Diaspora Conference Opens in Istanbul

https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2014/Jun/55287/global_somali_diaspora_conference_opens_in_istanbul.aspx

Global Somali Diaspora conference day 1: Motion passed

https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2014/Jun/55297/global_somali_diaspora_conference_day_1_motion_passed.aspx

Toward A More Unified Somali Diaspora

https://www.hiiraan.com/op4/2014/sept/56515/toward_a_more_unified_somali_diaspora.aspx