

# PROPOSAL



**HORN DIALOGUE CONFERENCE**  
Hargeisa . Somaliland

**2023**

**HORN DIALOGUE CONFERENCE 2023,**  
Hargeisa, Somaliland.

The Role of Civil Society: Somalia and Somaliland Reconciliation Dialogue

Legal Name of Proposing Organization / Firm:	Horn Dialogue Conference & Hargeysa Cultural Centre
Country of Registration:	Somaliland
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Name of Signatory for this Proposal:	Abdinasir Suleman Cumor Kujoog
Designation of the Signatory:	Convener, Horn Dialogue Conference
Date of Preparation:	2 April 2023
Email:	saqbadhe72@gmail.com
Business Address:	Hargeysa Cultural Center, Shaabca, Hargeisa Somaliland
Phone / Fax:	

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## 1.0 Abstract

This document puts forth our proposal statement to the Norwegian Embassy in Somalia, in request, for support and funding for the **Horn Dialogue Conference 2023**. This proposal reflects a concerted effort by **Horn Dialogue Conference** and **Hargeisa Cultural Center**.

## 2.0 Consortium Profile

**Horn Dialogue Conference (HDC)** is the lead proposer and will lead the program efforts. It is joined by its strategic partner **Hargeisa Cultural Centre** under stewardship of **Dr. Jama Muse Jama**, who brings critical multidisciplinary expertise. Together, they constitute the Consortium.

### 2.1 Horn Dialogue Conference

This conference will lead the conversation on Somalia and Somaliland dialogue and put healthy pressure on political leaders to enhance reconciliation process and reach meaningful political settlement for all parties involved in the negotiations. Through dialogue and knowledge sharing/civil society engagement will build collaborations and ownership of their identity and shared future/challenges. **Such conference and cross dialogue will provide soft landing for future dialogue between Somalia and Somaliland. In the final analysis, politicians on both sides are navigating a very difficult political environment and audience who must accept and take ownership of any political agreement reached in such dialogue.** This conference is the first in its kind in Somalia and Somaliland that will rekindle a new spirit of cooperation and reconciliation between civil society and will be a platform, a soft power tool for future dialogue between Somalia and Somaliland

### 2.2 Hargeysa Cultural Center

The Hargeysa Cultural Center was opened in August 2014 in Hargeysa, Somaliland. The Center was established by Redsea Cultural Foundation (RCF). Since its establishment, the Hargeysa Cultural Center has become an important feature in Hargeysa's cultural landscape. The success of the center owes much to the respect that RCF has gained from its work on running the annual Hargeysa International Book Fair, which, now in its eighth year, has become one of the most admired cultural events in the region.

The center features a library, reading rooms, a gallery, two public event spaces, and a shaded outdoor café space. By the end of its first year, it had become a hub of students, scholars, artists, and musicians, in addition to a unique resource for our community. It has also undertaken a variety of collection and archival projects essential to the study and preservation of Somaliland culture and history.

The centre's public library holds over 15000 titles, including books, journals, magazines, e-books, and cassettes. The collection offers resources unavailable elsewhere in Somaliland and continues to grow according to visitor requests. Members can use public workspaces, borrow books, and access our growing archive of music, journalism, and other historical and academic materials.

## 2.3 Relevant Consortium Project References

See below table for project references most relevant for this assignment.

Project & Description (Swaye Ventures)	Year/s
<p><b>Hargeysa International Book Fair</b> HIBF has focused on a specific theme and has previously explored themes including Freedom, censorship, citizenship, collective memory, visualization the future, Journey, Imagination, Spaces and Leadership &amp; Creativity. In the last nine years, HIBF has had six guest countries including Nigeria, Malawi, Ghana, Kenya, and Djibouti as well as none African countries such as the United Kingdom. <a href="http://www.hargeysaculturalcenter.org/hargeysa-international-book-fair/">http://www.hargeysaculturalcenter.org/hargeysa-international-book-fair/</a></p>	Since 2007
<p><b>Research Urbanization Dynamics in East Africa Insights from Malawi</b> PhD Session, researching urbanization dynamic in east Africa: insights from Malawi Academic dialogue in Hargeisa aims to assist in the production of knowledge in the field of Somali studies, also to act as a network for student and scholars during fieldwork in Hargeisa. Similarly, ADIH aims to help scholars gain a better, more nuanced understanding of Somaliland as a subject of study whilst exposing students to a wealth of locally produced knowledge. Dr. Jama Musse Jama started the event with the importance of research cooperation introducing Dr. Donald Brown to the audience and stage. Dr. Donald Brown is from the Development Planning Unit (DPU), University College London (UCL) he started sharing his research experience on his research titled "Researching Urbanization Dynamics in East Africa: Insights from Malawi" Sub-Saharan Africa is simultaneously the world's least urbanized and one of the most rapidly urbanizing regions. However, while the sub-continent's population is urbanizing, there are substantial Differences in urbanization patterns and trends within and between regions. In this talk, Donald Brown shared his experiences from his PhD researching urbanization dynamics in East Africa based on the case of Malawi. Particular attention is focused on to how the research process unfolded, with a focus on study approach and design, and methodological issues faced in the field. The objective of the talk was to spark discussion on what makes Somaliland's urban transition exceptional in the East African context, and how its study might be approached from both an academic and policy perspective. <a href="http://www.hargeysaculturalcenter.org/research-urbanization-dynamics-in-east-africa-insights-from-malawi/">http://www.hargeysaculturalcenter.org/research-urbanization-dynamics-in-east-africa-insights-from-malawi/</a></p>	March 2019
<p><b>Somali Studies International Association</b> Somali Studies International Association was established in 1978. It is an organization that has played a central role in defining the field of modern Somali Studies, and since its establishment, it has organized 12 International Congresses, and many other regional and continental conferences. Out of the 12 International congresses, only four took place in the Somali speaking territories. 40 years later, it is high time for SSIA to hold its Congress in the Horn of Africa. In fact holding 2018 SSIA in Hargeysa will enable Somali studies to reconnect with the current reality on the ground. The last time a full congress was held on Somali soil was in 2001 in Hargeysa and in 2007 Djibouti co-hosted.  The initiative would assist young Somali scholars to close the feelings of disconnect they feel with academia as whole and thereby positively encourage young Somalis to be more active and feel ownership over scholarly contributions. Additionally, the legitimate subjects of Somali Studies are not necessarily Somali's who have avenues to participate, object, contribute and debate in the Diaspora, but rather local Somali people in Somali territories that lack the academic platforms to engage with Somali Studies beyond being subjects of study. Holding it here in conjunction with state and private Universities will provide legitimacy and access to a hard reached population. Local Somali scholars are missing two fundamental things: firstly, institutions to provide backing of their work and secondly the recognition and platform to showcase their work. For this reason, 2018 SSIA congress will be</p>	June 2018

jointly held in Hargeysa by Somali institutions and some western Universities who already work in the Somali territories to benefit key stakeholders.

<http://www.hargeysaculturalcenter.org/somali-studies-international-association/>

## 2.4 Key Personnel Biographies

The Consortium team is a mix of international and local experts in financial and investment, senior economists, agriculture, and market systems consultants. The profiles of some of the key Senior Con are below. Full CVs of the entire team can be found in ANNEX 1.

No.	Name of the Personnel	Position in the Consortium Team	Nationality	Professional Experience
1	Abdinassir Omar Kajoog	Convener / Team Lead	Somaliland / British	27
2	Dr. Jama Muse Jama	Backstop/Quality Assurance	Somaliland / British	35
3	Jama Abdillahi	Program Manager	Somaliland / Kenyan	13

### Abdinassir Omar Kajoog - Convener / Team Lead

Abdinassir has over 27 years' experience in public policy. He studied Mechanical Engineering at Kingston University in the UK. He has previously worked with the Youth Service and later at the Hedge Fund PIER Finance. He is the founder of Somali Week that is held annually in London, Toronto, Malmo and Helsinki since 1994.

### Dr. Jama Muse Jama - Backstop/Quality Assurance

Jama attended the Somali National University, where he studied mathematics for four and half years. Fluent in Italian, Jama left Hargeisa to study as a mathematician at Pisa University, in Italy and he went on to obtain a PhD in Computational linguistics at Università degli Studi di Napoli "L'Orientale". He has a particular interest in civil liberties, and he is the author (or co-author) of six books, two of them on Somali traditional games.

His interests include Education in Somaliland, and as an activist, Jama is deeply involved in the affairs of the Somali diaspora during festivals and conferences which he chairs or is present as a key contributor. A specific interest of Jama's is to promote Somali language, literature, and promoting reading, he is the founder and the organiser of Hargeysa International Book Fair. In 2014 he founded the Hargeysa Cultural Centre and become its director. In 2019 Dr. Jama Muse joined as Research Associate the Centre of African Studies at SOAS, University of London and in 2020 as a senior research associate The Bartlett Development Planning Unit, University College London, United Kingdom.

### **Jama Abdillahi Jama - Program Manager**

Jama Abdillahi holds a B.Sc. in Biotechnology and Bioinformatics from Kenyatta University, Kenya. He has over 13 years' experience in research, agricultural economics, transactional advisory, investment structuring, start-up funding, MSME development and governmental policy on international trade. Jama was also the keynote speaker in the 2020 Global Entrepreneurship Conference in Djibouti City

Jama is the Senior Analyst and Management Board member at Swaye (Capital) Ventures based in the Seychelles and Switzerland. Where he works on Digitization, Entrepreneurship, Regulatory Affairs, Investment Structuring for Start-ups/SMEs with a focus, although not limited to, the Eastern Sub-Saharan African region. Jama was instrumental in the development of the Ethiopian Trade Policy Framework (TPF 2023) for the Ethiopian Government, the development of the USD 50M Ethiopian Entrepreneurship Fund (EEF) and provision of advisory services to the Ethiopian Centre for International Private Enterprise (CIPE) and the Jobs Creation Commission of Ethiopia (JCC). He has also previously worked with Reckitt Benckiser (UK), Sandoz GmbH (Germany) and Novartis Pharma (Switzerland) where he was the Head of Compliance and Ethics for East Africa. He has held diverse independent roles in the Horn of Africa including consulting for GIZ in Somaliland on Agricultural Technology Transfer, Value Chains, Agricultural Infrastructure, Greenhouses and Supply Chain Development for the WFP.

## **3.0 HORN DIALOGUE CONFERENCE 2023**

Somalia's protracted challenges and complete state collapse has been unprecedented and has defied expectations and explanation. The inability of Somalia's and Somaliland's leaders to cobble together political agreement and final settlement has been very challenging due to the operating environment and political differences on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Somalia. This political impasse has led to disputes over territory, the management of resources and security cooperation. There have been several internationally supported conferences to mediate and reduce tensions between Somalia and Somaliland. However, the political differences and structural challenges has been monumental task for all and relations between both political entities has been frosty since Somaliland broke away in 1991.

### **Somalia and Somaliland Grassroots Civil Society Initiative**

While talks between Somalia and Somaliland has been step in the direction, they faced sizeable obstacles leading to failure and lack of sustain progress. The challenges on the table such as humanitarian assistance, security and co-management of Somaliland airspace have been very difficult to bridge. Currently these conferences and dialogues has involved state officials on both camps who have failed to agree on structural issues relating to statecraft. This one-sided approach has been problematic and has yet to yield tangible results for both sides. We take the view these negotiations have been essential, but the role of civil society has been overlooked for many decades to bridge the gaps relating to political reconciliation between Somalia and Somaliland.

The civil society in Somalia and Somaliland that include traditional elders, women, youth, academics, advocacy groups, universities, cultural institutions have all been the backbone of respective societies, defending the rights of the poor and marginalised people while engaging and advocating for better future for Somalia and Somaliland with vital source of information, often providing essential service delivery that has been the traditional role of government. In a political environment and societies blighted by civil strife, mistrust, hostility, and misunderstanding, they can be essential building block

for national cohesion and development. This why we believe civil society should take the centre stage for the Somalia and Somaliland talks to build foundation for the potential meaningful dialogue between both political entities. This is a soft power that has not yet been fully utilised. While negotiations have been principally focused officialdom structural dialogue between Somalia and Somaliland, there is enormous potential for civil society to lay the foundation for reconciliation across Somalia and Somaliland.

### **3.1 Objectives**

#### **A. Level the playing-field.**

The key objective is to “level the playing-field” between the parties during the HDC Conference, with the aim being to forge a consensus. Governments in the Horn of Africa and especially the governments of Somaliland / Somalia, often show resistance to conferences because of this “equal status” dilemma, as it often has the effect of lowering their own status and according real status to parties that previously they may have regarded as enemies.

#### **B. Prevent conflict.**

*Initially, the objective of a national conference may be simply to prevent conflict by motivating political opposition groups to postpone violence while testing the government’s actual commitment to peaceful political change.*

#### **C. Politics, Peace, and Security**

- i. To reaffirm that for genuine peace to take hold in Somalia/Somaliland we should seek dialogue, reconciliation and political cooperation including establishing inclusive, accountable and legitimate governance.
- ii. The Conference is grateful for the wide-scale and strong Somali participation, including women, in this Conference, and the powerful and meaningful messages they have pronounced.
- iii. To affirm that at this critical period in Somalia/Somaliland history, the security, political, social and economic achievements of the past year have given Somalia/Somaliland and the international community a renewed hope for the future. Somalia/Somaliland have made considerable progress towards achieving stability, security and reconciliation: this opportunity should not be missed.
- iv. To initiate the beginning of a new phase of peacebuilding, in which all Somalis would contribute to peace and have their voices heard.

#### **D. Build national consensus on Somalia / Somaliland political future.**

A fundamental objective of the HDC conference is to provide an opportunity for representatives of all sides to discuss, plan, and reach a maximum level of consensus on Somalia/Somaliland political future, hence addressing potential and actual political crises. National conferences can be seen as democratic conflict management tools designed to negotiate democratic transitions by establishing new rules and institutions. A national conference or national debate also may be interpreted as a preliminary move toward limited democracy, in that it lays the foundation for crafting more inclusive institutions and democratic mechanisms, legalizing multipartyism, drafting a new constitution and electoral system, achieving peaceful alternation of power, and setting a timetable for democratic transition.

- i. To highlight the primary responsibility for establishing a political solution lies with Somalia/Somaliland.
- ii. To emphasize the role of the international community is to support Somalia/Somaliland provide leadership and ownership in rebuilding a functioning state and local governments that can provide security, ensure the rule of law and respect for human rights, provide basic social services and create an enabling environment that allows for economic opportunity for all citizens.

#### **E. Economic Development and Recovery**

- i. To recognize the continued fragility of the humanitarian situation, effects of climate change and famine.
- ii. To recognize the primary role of the Somalia/Somaliland authorities as well as the important role of the international community in assisting Somalis in strengthening resilience.
- iii. To build consensus on preventive and pre-emptive policies in this regard, and to pledge to continue the dialogue.
- iv. To underline the importance of finding durable solutions for refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs).
- v. To stress that protection of civilians in accordance with international humanitarian and refugee law must be maintained at all times by all parties.
- vi. To recognize the need for a new phase in the approach to Somalia's economic recovery.
- vii. To emphasize the importance of creating the right investment climate and agreed that offering conditional investment guarantees will provide a strong incentive for economic development with equity.

### **3.2 Measurable Outcomes for the HDC Conference**

- i. The generation of sufficient trust between key political actors, enabling them to agree on non-violent mechanisms to pursue their differences: reconciliation to enable the end of political violence.
- ii. Trust that citizens have in political institutions necessary for 'positive' coexistence: reconciliation as civic trust.
- iii. The redefinition of social relationships between communities separated by communal identities: reconciliation as social coexistence.
- iv. Informed citizens/civil society about their role in national reconciliation efforts – Increased Public Awareness
- v. Increased Partnership between Somalia and Somaliland governments with Civil society groups in the pursuit of shared future for all.

### **3.3 Implementation Prerequisites**

#### **Organisation: HDC Conference.**

While governments generally take the initiative in convening a national conference, internal and external pressures often have a significant influence. A foreign third, such as HDC, may play a role in convincing the government to hold a conference. A national conference can be organized by a committee consisting of members of various political groups, including opposition groups, as well as government members and the international community.



### **Participants.**

To maximize the impact of the conference, participants must include representatives of the key social, religious, professional, and political interest groups who wish to participate in the process. All possible participants should be invited to endorse the results of the conference, within limits of reason. The presence of international observers may be helpful in assuring the process and results of the conference. Other participants may include academics, local government personnel, representatives from non-governmental organizations, human rights organizations, women's associations, trade unions and religious authorities, peasant groups and students, and aid donors.

The criteria for the selection of key speakers will be as such.

- **Credibility:** Acceptability to both stakeholders and government
- **Competence:** Relevant skills and experience, proven track record
- **Local knowledge**
- **Representation:** Community ties, accountability to members or beneficiaries, gender sensitivity
- **Governance:** Sound internal management, transparency, financial accountability, efficiency
- **Legal status**
- **Institutional capacity:** Sufficient scale of operations and nature of programs.

### **Cost considerations.**

See Annex 1

### **Timeframe.**

Two months will be needed to plan and organize the HDC Conference

## **4.0 Methodology and Approach**

### **4.1 Approach**

Establishing a multi-dimensional and multi-layered approach by ensuring the conference is attended by high level representatives, international and regional organizations, as well as by the leaders, the regional administrations, and representatives from wide-ranging segments of Somali society, including youth, women, business community, elders, religious leaders, and the Diaspora. Horn Dialogue Conference & Hargeysa Cultural Center will carry out Somalia and Somaliland civil society - wide conference, the first in its kind, to discuss and explore the following questions in two phases during the conference:

- Somali History
- Who is ethnically Somali and where do they live?
- What are their common priorities and challenges?
- The relationship between the Somalia and Somaliland and its people's
- What are society aspirations and expectations from dialogue between Somalia and Somaliland?
- What are the specific needs and opportunities for reconciliation between Somalia and Somaliland at a given historical moment, and how can these be addressed?
- How can the concrete, specific needs for trust and reconciliation can contribute to the overall, holistic needs of a reconciled and trusting society in Somalia and Somaliland?
- In a post-conflict setting, how can the specific needs of victims of violence be reconciled with those of society in general?

- How can reconciliation interventions not only address the needs of societies immediately after the signature of political agreement, but also tackle the underlying fault-lines that led *to the conflicts*.

## 4.2 Methodology

### A. Peace & Security

- Conduct research and map critical issues impeding reconciliation and collaboration between Somaliland and Somalia
- Identify key political issues and factors impeding reconciliation and collaboration between Somaliland and Somalia
- Identify the basis of the current political positions impeding reconciliation and collaboration between Somaliland and Somalia.
- Identify historical issues and their basis.
- Identify, monitor and measure the impact of the political and historical issues and factors on the populations, development and security of Somaliland and Somalia.
- Consult with partners engaged in the programme to determine quality of implementation.
- Provide qualitative and quantitative reports of the monitoring activities conducted.
- Conduct comprehensive risk assessment of regional and national level dynamics that potentially affect programme activities.

### B. Dialogue and conference

- Identify key opinion leaders and political players and invite them to the conference.
- Identify key civil society groups and have them participate in the conference.
- Map all critical issues to be discussed.
- Ensure attendance from representatives from wide-ranging segments of Somali and Somaliland society, including youth, women, business community, elders, religious leaders and the diaspora.

### C. Contribution to research

- Within the data collection responsibility, conduct independent research and publication to contribute to Somali and Somaliland regional knowledge repository

### D. Partnership and cooperation

- Produce an inventory and analysis of all partners engaged throughout the implementation of the conference.
- Provide recommendations on relevant actors to be engaged in subsequent activities to ensure improved impact and scale of the conference.

## 5.0 Future of the HDC Conference

HDC conference's ability to design sustainable institutional structures and mechanisms for conflict management is key to its future. The impact of the HDC conference will be sustained by using the conference successfully to develop a broad consensus on the region's "rules of the game" and political future, and if genuine follow-on actions are initiated. Adherence to the rules and mechanisms agreed upon largely depend on the political commitment of the parties and the underlying balance of power.

### 5.1 Post Conference Actions.

The HDC conference will draft an agenda, clarify the issues to be discussed, and convey the goals of the conference to all the participants. Depending on the outcome of the conference, it is necessary for parties to agree on additional issues as well as on the implementation of the conference agreement, if any is reached.

#### Establishment of Standing Committees

HDC will ensure post conference follow-up and standing committees consisting of key parties, and perhaps members of the international community, will be formed and given the appropriate responsibility to ensure that progress made at the conference is consolidated and translated into action.

The following activities will also be carried out;

- i. Conduct research and map critical issues, impeding reconciliation and collaboration between Somaliland and Somalia.
- ii. Build databases on key players and pertinent issues.
- iii. Identify key political issues and factors impeding reconciliation and collaboration between Somaliland and Somalia.
- iv. Identify the basis of the current political positions impeding reconciliation and collaboration between Somaliland and Somalia.
- v. Identify historical issues and their basis.
- vi. Identify, monitor and measure the impact of the political and historical issues and factors on the populations, development and security of Somaliland and Somalia.
- vii. Consult with partners engaged in the programme to determine quality of implementation.
- viii. Provide qualitative and quantitative reports of the monitoring activities conducted.
- ix. Conduct comprehensive risk assessment of regional and national level dynamics that potentially affect programme activities.

### 5.2 Long-term Impact & Outcome

HDC Conference will ultimately lead to positive change. In many instances, similar conferences laid the groundwork for sustainable peace. The comparative experience suggests the following long-term impact and outcomes:

- i. The HDC conference will be a useful democratic conflict management tool, as it is both inclusive and participatory, and initiates political dialogue to ease political crises. The HDC conference can have a significant impact on governance, on the political system, and even on forming a new political culture based on negotiation and compromise, by persuading groups to participate more actively in the political decision-making process.

- ii. As a conflict resolution mechanism, the HDC conference will have a decisive influence on negotiating democratic transitions from authoritarian rule to democratic pluralism. It can provide a framework for achieving a peaceful coexisting society.
- iii. The HDC conference will have a significant impact on promoting democracy. However, to sustain the political results of the conference, the public must continue to pressure the governments to continue with democratic political development.
- iv. Through the HDC conference, political groups and representatives from various sectors can negotiate a plan for the country's political future.
- v. Conference participants, representing a country's diverse civil society groups, can set guidelines for formulating new political institutions, such as a legislature and an electoral system, that could contribute to easing tensions among various groups in the country.
- vi. The HDC conference will help establish stable civilian governance and control, at least in the short term, reduce the attraction of resorting to armed opposition to achieving political change.