

# NEWS LETTER

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*Building inclusive and accountable parliaments for a peaceful Somalia*

UNDP Parliamentary Support Project supporting the capacity development of inclusive and effective parliamentary institutions in Somalia.

## PSP - News Updates

### Transitional Handover to Newly Elected Speaker of the House of the People

On 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2018, transitional event took place at Villa Hargeisa for handover to newly elected Speaker of House of the People. The event partook by members of standing committee of the parliament.

During the transitional event, former Speaker Hon. Jawari briefed the new Speaker on the ongoing progress and plans for the parliamentary business so as to ease the management affairs of House of the People. Former Speaker Jawari mentioned in his handover to the new Speaker on key priority legislations before the house for consideration; agreement signed with Turkish Government for the Construction of parliament building, in addition to that, the Turkish will also construct temporary building at Villa Hargeisa where the House can work from. Also, the former Speaker clarified the rumors about stolen constitution and made clear that there is no stolen constitution stressing that the ongoing constitution review process is based on the provisional constitution adopted in Aug 2012. He also handed over to the new speaker copy of the provisional constitution adopted as well as options papers and report produced by the 9th parliament. In his speech, the former speaker also mentioned the technical support provided to the House and committees and handed over the project document notably signed with



UNDP and agreement with SSG and other international organizations. Hon. Jawari also highlighted status of progress regarding renovation works to the offices of the Speakers at the Villa Hargeisa supported by UNDP parliamentary support project. Furthermore, the new Speaker commended his predecessor, Jawari, for his commitment and the tireless work he did during his tenure as Speaker. He pledged to conduct the house business in accordance with the provisional constitution of Somalia as well as the Standing Orders of the House. On his part, Jawari pledged to work with the new Parliament leader.

After the former Speaker resigned on 12 April 2018, the members of the House of the People elected in highly contested race former Defense Minister and Ambassador of Somalia to Turkey, Hon. Mohamed Mursal Sheikh Abdirahman to become the new Speaker of the House of the People.

### Highlights

- ◆ Transitional Handover to the newly elected Speaker of House of People
- ◆ Joint Parliamentary Oversight Committee (OC) Trained on State Formation in Constitutional Review Perspective
- ◆ Introductory meeting of UNDP Country Director with new Speaker
- ◆ Project briefing to the new speaker
- ◆ Puntland House of Representative Study Tour to Nigeria
- ◆ Inaugural meeting of Forum of Federal & Federal Member States Parliamentary Committee on Constitution
- ◆ MPs Jubbaland HoR Outreach Visit to Lower Jubba Region
- ◆ Joint Constitutional Review Oversight Committee meets with Boundaries and Federation Commission
- ◆ Swiss Donor meeting with House of the People on Parliament Project

### Joint Parliamentary Oversight Committee (OC) Trained on State Formation in Constitutional Review Perspective

On 17 April 2018 UNDP Parliamentary and Constitutional Support Project facilitated a workshop on State Formation for the members of the Joint Parliamentary Oversight Committee with the aim of introducing the members a session on regularization of the constitution and state formation process in order to align the thinking of the members and the urgent steps needed to move the federation and state building process forward.

The workshop facilitator Mr. Hassen Ibrahim, a senior policy advisor on parliament and constitution had walked the participants through articles and

other provisions in the Provisional Constitution 2012, that deals with state formation and examples on best practices about establishing federal structures in other countries. In addition to that, the consultant also discussed on the importance of regularizing the constitution by removing the technical and translation errors to move ahead with the review process.

The participants of the workshop having realized the fact that the 9<sup>th</sup> parliament has not passed any legislation on the state formation and now it is not possible to comply with the articles 48 and 49 in the constitution there is need for urgent action

to find constitutional solution to this matter to address the concerns of the Somali People. Also, the oversight committee members will reach out to consult with Border and Federalization Commission (BFC) and other relevant government institutions to start working on some initial amendments and adopt necessary legislations through the Federal Parliament which will give the Federal State Members legal status. In this regard, UNDP parliamentary support project will provide the technical advisory support to the oversight committee with draft resolution for their review and consideration and presentation to the floor of Parliament for debate and approval.



## Introductory Meeting of UNDP Country Director with New Speaker of House of People

UNDP Country Director, George Conway along with the Chief Technical Advisor of Inclusive Politics Portfolio Ms. Nahid Hussein and other project team member held an introductory meeting with Rt. Honourable Mohammad Mursal Abdulrahman on 16 May in Villa Uganda, Somalia and congratulated him as new elected speaker of the House of the People (HoP) of the Federal Parliament. Mr. George underlined the critical role of the Federal Parliament in state and peace building process as well as reconciliation efforts and expressed UNDP commitment to support its leadership to continue and implement the mandate and strategies for progressing the legislative agenda of the Parliament. The country director briefed the newly elected Speaker about the UNDP technical and capacity building support provided to the House of the People as well as the support extended to the other Somali parliaments. The conversation also touched upon

cooperation, priorities and support in different areas including legislative priorities and constitution review process, adding that UNDP will further



advance the strategic partnership with the Federal Parliament.

The Rt. Hon. Speaker HoP welcomed UNDP Country Director for Somalia and

the team thanking for the continued support to the House of the People and to the regional parliaments as well as to other branches of the Somali Government. He reiterated that he would continue to build on the long-term partnership between the House of the People and UNDP and pointed out the importance of having regular meeting to discuss priorities and the support to the House and Committees. With the development of the new parliamentary support project for the coming four years from 2018-2020, UNDP will continue to engage with the federal parliament and other regional assemblies to enhance its legislative performance, provide technical support and deliver capacity building training to improve the capacities of the committees and the secretariat staff to strengthen the parliament's role to work as an effective institution.

## Project Team Meeting with New Speaker of HoP – Briefing on 2nd Phase of the Parliament Support Project

UNDP Chief Technical Advisor of Parliament Support Project met with the newly elected speaker of the House of the People Hon. Mohamed Mursal Abdirahman on 27 May at Villa Uganda Mogadishu, Somalia. She briefed the new Speaker on the 2nd phase of the Parliamentary Support Project and informed him that the new project document was developed through a consultative process with the parliaments and donors. She added, the project document was based on the recommendations of final evaluation reports of the first phase of the UNDP Parliamentary Support Project. Ms. Nahid Hussein stated that the objective of the 2nd phase of the project is to foster Inclusive Politics through the strengthening of the effectiveness and accountability of Somalia's parliamentary institutions to be more responsive to the needs of Somali women and men in promoting

participation in political processes contributing to national peacebuilding, state building and development goals. The project advisor also presented a summary of each output of the new project document, highlighting the existence of new output to help with parliament taking a developmental role and build the capacity of the parliament to monitor the implementation of the National Development Plan in line with the Sustainable Development Goals committed by the Somali Government as agenda 2030.

Secretary General of HoP, Mr. Abdikarim Buh, recognized that the new project document encompasses the needs of all the parliaments and regional assemblies and based their strategic plans. He stressed UNDP has been flexible to the HoP and despite the limited funding challenges, UNDP remained committed to supporting the HoP with its core resources and supporting the current

renovation of offices of the Speaker in Villa Hargeisa. Buh added that the new Speaker inherited a parliament where almost half of MPs are not trained on their roles and responsibilities and consequently committee are not functioning well due to capacity gaps. At the end, the new speaker stated that the document was the answer to the many of the queries regarding capacity development of the MPs and Committees of the House of the People and thus would help in solving the capacity challenges. The Speaker added that time is very limited as compared to what is to be accomplished by the House. He requested Second Deputy Speaker to attend the upcoming pillar and sub working group meetings to convey the message of the leadership and expedite the approval workplan so that parliament can make use of the available limited resources in fulfilling its mandate.





## Puntland House of Representative Study Tour to Nigeria



judiciary, Budget Enactment and Budget Reform Processes, as well as law-making process in the Nigerian Assembly.

During the study tour, the delegation visited the National Secretariat of Nigerian Legislatures and the Speaker of the Nigerian House of Representative and discussed the challenges confronting parliaments in the African continent.

The formation of Puntland emerged from Somalia's failure to restore an inclusive central administration for the eight years between 1991 to 1998. Following its establishment in 1998, the Puntland HoR has played a critical

UNDP's Parliamentary Support Project (PSP) has supported a five-day exchange visit of Puntland House of Representative (HoR) delegation comprising on the Speaker of Puntland Parliament, two MPs, one Secretariat staff and to Abuja, Nigeria from 22-26 January 2018. The

The objectives of the study tour was to provide Puntland HoR with an insight to the working of Nigerian National Assembly and its various committees; acquaint the members Parliament's finance and budget systems with a special focus on executive oversight; and help the delegate to learn how MPs discharge their functions of representation and manage constituency offices of the parliament.

To support the visit of delegation, the Nigerian National Assembly organized a weeklong training workshop at National Institute for Legislative Studies of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The workshop helped Puntland HoR to deepen their knowledge on various functions of its parliament's standing committees, enhanced their understanding on common issues pertaining to the legislative practice and procedures, structure, management and administrations of the Nigerian National Assembly, managing relations among legislature, executive and



role in the ongoing peace-building and state-building process in Somalia both at Federal and State Levels.



*Somali House of Representatives visited UNDP office, Nigeria*



## Inaugural Meeting of Forum of Federal & Federal Member States Parliamentary Committee on Constitution



The Joint Parliamentary Oversight of Constitution Review and Implementation Committee with the support of UNDP Constitution Review Support Project organized a meeting from 18 - 19 Apr 2018 in Mogadishu with the aim of establishing a Forum that brings together all parliamentary constitution committees at the federal and state level. During the meeting,

the joint oversight committee of the federal parliament shared updates and progress made on constitution review process with the participants. Similarly, the FMSs constitution committees also briefed the participants on their work at state level. Also, the Independent Constitution Review and Implementation Commission attended this meeting and made remarks on

achievements on the constitution review process and current plans to complete the review process. The forum is expected to serve as platform where constitution mandated parliamentary committees at both Federal and State level can meet to discuss progress, concerns and challenges that can be faced during the review process.

At the end of the two days meeting, the participants issued communique and signed memorandum of understanding (MoU) to formally establish OC Forum to have working relationship, share information regularly, cooperate and coordinate their efforts with regard to the constitution review process and harmonization of state constitutions with federal constitution.

## MPs Jubbaland HoR Outreach Visit to Lower Jubba Region

A delegation of the Jubbaland House of Representatives consisting of 5 Member of Parliament (MPs) and 1 parliamentary staff conducted constituencies visit to Dhobley town of Lower Jubba region to assess the overall situation of the area.

MPs organized several meetings with local authority, clan and religious leaders, businessmen, women and youth as well as minority groups to assess the security, access of water, education and humanitarian needs of the local communities. It was the first time Jubbaland MPs have a wider

discussions with this community to hear their voices. These interactions have risen the morale of the people



and given parliamentarians the opportunity to educate the community about their respective rights in

stability, better social service delivery and empowerment of youth and women. MPs have noted down grievances, observed devastating humanitarian needs and promised to advocate for prompt response from Jubbaland administration and humanitarian aid agencies. After the mission, findings of this mission was presented to the full house and parliament who appealed to the humanitarian aid agencies, business community, Jubbaland administration and federal government to urgently provide humanitarian aid to the poor households in Dhobley town. Action plans to follow up with relevant institutions of the government for action.





## Joint Constitutional Review Oversight Committee meets with Boundaries and Federation Commission



On 24<sup>th</sup> May 2018, the Joint Constitutional Review Oversight Committee (OC) met with the Boundaries and Federation Commission (BFC) at the SYL Hotel in Mogadishu. The objective of the meeting was to share information and to discuss on how best the two bodies can work together on matters of federalism and borders in the constitution.

In the meeting, OC Chairperson shared a summary of key activities and workplan of the OC with Boundaries and Federation Commission. The OC Chair explained the accomplishments mentioning that they have tasked ICRC

to review Constitution chapters 1-5 in view of any remaining technical errors within one-month time. He also highlighted that they have requested the Ministry of Constitutional Affairs to facilitate political discussions and follow

up with Federal Government and Federal Member States on articles containing in the chapter 5 that will require political agreement. The Chairperson of Boundaries and Federation Commission has presented a brief on the history, achievements as well as challenges of the commission since its establishment.

In addition, the commission members stated that there are Articles within chapters 1-5 of the provisional constitution that are related to issues of federalism and borders for instance

Articles 48 and 49; and thus, urged importance of engaging the commission on such discussions.

The Members of the commission stressed that the legalization of the Federal Member States cannot be completed until their borders demarcations are set and their constitutions are harmonized with the in the Federal Constitution.

Finally, the members agreed to have regular meetings and continue the



discussions, so that both bodies can have a common ground on federalism and border issues in the constitutional review process. It was further urged to bring on board all the concerned government institutions involved.

## Swiss Donor Meeting with House of the People on Parliament Project

On 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2018, National Federal Parliament hosted a donor meeting with Switzerland at parliament premises in Mogadishu. The objective of the meeting was to discuss on Parliament project document, resources mobilization, financial challenges and activities to be implemented.



The meeting was opened by Hon. Speaker Mohamed Mursal of House of the People who welcomed the participants. He stated that Somalia is moving forward and as the newly elected speaker he looks forward to moving the parliament ahead. Hon.

Speaker, emphasized that the HoP need to focus on implementation of strategic plan of the parliament.

In addition, Secretary General of HoP, Mr. Abdikarim Buh, highlighted that despite funding constraints affected parliamentary business. He mentioned that House of the People cannot afford losing more time, one year and a half since inauguration of the 10<sup>th</sup> Parliament, we have almost half of the MPs that are not trained on what their roles are, and thus committees that cannot function to the deliver their mandates.

Also, Hon. Speaker Mahad Awad mentioned that in terms of quality of work and delivering of services, UNDP has been the best organization except their bureaucratic processes. He also accentuated the House of the People and state assemblies need timely intervention and support in terms of capacity building training for their staff and committees to

start functioning as an effective institution fulfilling their responsibilities such as outreach to represented communities and reporting back to plenary on the finding for follow up with concerned ministries.

Finally, Ms. Laila Ruttimann, from Switzerland Embassy suggested that another meeting between HoP and UNDP to be held to further discuss on technicality regarding the project implementation and how to bring forth the priorities of the parliament as well as strategies to resources mobilization.



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