

BENADIR-WATCH

(Southern Somalia)

benadirwatch@yahoo.com

www.benadir-watch.com

August 26, 2004

TO: IGAD Secretariat
P.O. Box 2653, Djibouti
Republic of Djibouti
igad@intnet.dj

IGAD Technical Committee
Somali National Reconciliation Conference
Mbagathi, Kenya
somalipeaceconf@yahoo.com

IGAD Facilitating Committee
Somali National Reconciliation Conference
Mbagathi, Kenya
somalipeaceconf@yahoo.com

Dear Mr. Chairman,

1. In accordance with our mission to advocate for the political, economic, and social rights of the indigenous population of the Benadir of Southern Somalia, the purpose of this letter is to submit to your office the following complaint regarding the denial of the right of the Benadir people to have their elected parliamentary representatives at the IGAD sponsored Somali Reconciliation Conference in Nairobi.

2. We understand that recently the Conference resolved that the distribution of parliamentary seats be carried out along clan lines and that political parties will have no say whatsoever in the matter. Be that what it is, as far as national unity is concerned, the indigenous people of the Benadir were not allowed to exercise this right as set forth for all the Somali clans, across the board, without exception. The IGAD Conference Facilitating Committee, in collaboration with certain obscure personalities, forced that the six seats allocated to the Benadiri people be equally divided between the two unrepresentative parties of the SNU and SANU. This is a violation of the right of the indigenous people of the Benadir to have equal rights.

3. To give you the specifics of the matter, of the six seats allocated to the Benadiri people, five seats were nominated after the light skinned families of Middle Eastern origin (the *gibil cad*), on account of the color of their skin and the money in their pockets, but who in real terms do not constitute even 10% of the Benadiri population. Of these five seats, one seat was given to an individual from Brawa, despite the fact that the population of Brawa have their seats set aside under a totally separate account. The remaining one seat was given to Fahma Ahmed Nur, who does not even have a constituency nor the endorsement of her own clan. In fact, two months ago, her own clan officially expelled her and nominated another lady to represent them in the Reconciliation

Talks. The Benadiri people believe that, because of the total lack of support for her nomination, Fahma Ahmed Nur is one of the notorious figures behind the plot to shut off the indigenous black Rer Hamar clans and have their seats distributed on party basis.

4. We have reports that members of the indigenous people at the Conference were intimidated, threatened with arrests inside Kenya, threatened with the kidnapping of family relatives back in Somalia, and threats of murder, if they do not keep quite. We have reports that some Benadiri delegates have already fled the Conference and the country of Kenya in fear. We have reports of entire families being forced to stay indoors in the indigenous town of Hamar Weyne for days because of fear of reprisals. We hold the perpetrators responsible for anything that happens to the safety of the members of the Benadiri delegation at the Conference. Typical non-state violators of human rights who continue to believe that international law is a joke and that Reconciliation Talks are nothing more than a money making industry.

5. Mr. Chairman, the indigenous people of the Benadir believe that money was passed around to purchase the Benadiri seats. The Benadiri people believe that the six seats allocated to the Benadiri people were already sold lump sum to a presidential candidate at the rate of US \$3,000 per seat. There is grounds for investigation in order to restore the credibility of the Talks. For the record, attached you will find the list of 25 plaintiffs consisting of the black Rer Hamar indigenous clans whose rights to choose their own representatives at the Conference were suppressed.

6. We believe that, as far as political representation is concerned, the rights of the indigenous population of the Benadir, namely the black indigenous clans of the Rer Hamar in this case, cannot be truncated by anybody. These rights are established and are as millenary as the Benadir itself, the most densely populated region in the country. This is a population which bears the scars of a century of direct colonial rule and forty years of abusive clan rule, injustice, destruction and alienation. The right of the Benadiri people to have equal rights in the selection of their own political representatives cannot be stolen, usurped, purchased, nor delegated to any political party. We strongly believe that neither the various Conference Facilitating Committees nor the corrupt individuals working behind the scenes can set up a different standard for the Benadiri people, manipulate the process to determine the outcome, or bully the Benadiri people into submission.

7. There is no doubt in our mind, that what we face today at the Somali Reconciliation Conference in Nairobi, in historical terms, is similar to the plunders of the First Committee of the United Nations in November 1949, when the wishes and welfare of the Somali population as a whole, and the interests of peace and security, were not taken into consideration. Half a century later, the suffering people of Somalia continue to pay the mistakes of the First Committee with their own blood and with the blood of their future generations. All this is simply not fair.

8. Mr. Chairman, destiny has placed IGAD and the Somali people in the same region. By all accounts, the suffering people of Somalia will knock at your doors again. But should Somalia be dismembered before then, responsibility aside, as the case may

very well be set up for, we hope that IGAD will have a humanitarian contingency plan to take care of the refugees.

If we can provide you any further information on this matter, please do not hesitate to contact us. We hope that you will review this case in the interest of justice.

Sincerely,

Abdulaziz Hagi Mohamed Hussein
Benadir-Watch

NB: Please note that we have submitted to your office, over the past two years, three other historic letters regarding the international standards that need to be followed in the formation of a transitional government in Somalia. These letters are posted on our web page: www.benadir-watch.com.

THE 25 INDIGENOUS RER HAMAR CLANS OF THE BENADIR (S. SOMALIA)
(They were not allowed to have their own representatives at the IGAD Sponsored Somali Reconciliation Conference in violation of the norms set forth under the Conference Resolution to distribute the parliamentary seats on clan basis).

1. Morshe
2. Wale Mage
3. Dhul Hade
4. Gabatey
5. Abdalla Dayle
6. Dhabar Weyne
7. Makaraan
8. Mohamed Jabril
9. Misigaale
10. Rer Maclo
11. Aweys Ali
12. Qalma Shube
13. Sheikh Muumin
14. Rer Ali Musse
15. Askaray
16. Iskashato
17. Indha Weyne
18. Rer Manyo
19. Saddah Ghedi
20. Sicis Gurgate
21. Ban Dhabo
22. Ori Wayle
23. Sheybo
24. Ahmed Nur
25. Ali & Mohamed

C.c Copies distributed to UN, human rights organizations, and interested parties.