
Joint Media Release

63rd Commission on the Status of Women

Somali women issue Charter that calls for equal gender representation across Somalia’s government and other socio-economic sectors


The Charter was presented by Minister Yasin at a side event of the CSW led by the Ministry of Women and Human Rights Development and co-chaired by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the Canadian Government.

Speaking during her presentation the Minister said the Women’s Charter and its acceptance by the government of Somalia was a milestone for women and girls in her country. “The demands of the Women’s Charter are ambitious, and rightly so. To ensure they become a reality, we must invest in a real way in the future of women and girls. By doing so we will create a bright future for a peaceful and resilient Somalia.”

The Women’s Charter was developed during a three-day Women’s Convention in Mogadishu on 4-6 March, which was attended by 350 female and male gender champions from across Somalia. The event was led by the Ministry of Women and Human Rights Development together with Somalia’s Federal and Federal Member State governments, and Somali civil society organisations. The Convention was supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UN Women, and the Somalia Stability Fund.

The development of the Women’s Charter comes at a time when the provisional Constitution of Somalia is undergoing a review process, and as key electoral, security and political laws are being developed in the country. It has also taken place in advance of universal suffrage (one-person-one-vote) elections, scheduled to take place across Somalia in 2020-2021.

The fifty percent women’s representation outlined in the Charter includes all three levels of government, including elected and appointed officials in the public and private sector. The document also calls for zero tolerance towards sexual and gender-based violence and for women’s rights to be enshrined in the revised Constitution, and in the finalised electoral, security and political laws. Socio-economic rights in the form of equal access to economic opportunities and technologies, are also a key call in the document. The Charter affirms that such equal access will help build resilience and stability in Somalia.

Anou Borrey, Senior Gender Advisor for UNDP Somalia said UNDP, together with its UN partners, was fully committed to integrating the principles of the Women Charter across all of its interventions in
Somalia. “The joint commitment by Somali women from across Somalia, is crucial in advancing an inclusive peace and development process, which is needed to attain the Sustainable Development Goals and a prosperous future for the country,” she said.

Michael Callan, Director of the Conflict Prevention, Stabilization and Peacebuilding Division (IRZ) of Global Affairs Canada, said Canada supported the positive step being taken by Somalia to address gender equality with the development of the Women’s Charter, and the Charter’s call for the full inclusion of women across the political, economic and social spectrum in Somalia. “Canada firmly believes that promoting rights-based, open and inclusive societies where all people, regardless of their gender, can fully benefit from equal participation in economic, political, social and cultural life, is an effective way to build a safer and more prosperous world,” he said.

Ends

**Media Contacts:**

Ahmed Elmie, Communications Advisor, Ministry of Women and Human Rights Development, Federal Government of Somalia. Email: ahmed.elmie@gmail.com

Keelin FitzGerald, Communications Specialist, UNDP Somalia. Email: keelin.fitzgerald@undp.org