



## *United States Mission to Somalia*

18 November 2016

HE Mr. Abdikarim Hussein Guled  
President of Galmudug

President Guled:

The United States government remains concerned by reports coming out of the Galmudug electoral process of intimidation, threats, fraud, bribery, suppression of women's participation by refusal to accept seat designations for women, rejection of delegate lists from traditional elders, and the arrest of candidates. All of these tactics damage the credibility and legitimacy of the electoral process. While we understand politically-motivated allegations are common, we believe many of the allegations to be credible. We understand your position that the State-level Independent Electoral Implementation Team (SIEIT) should function independently, but as the president of Galmudug, and the one who appointed the SIEIT, you have a responsibility to ensure it acts without political bias and in accordance with the laws and regulations that apply to the electoral process. A non-credible process in Galmudug will reflect poorly on you, as the state's leader, and on all the senior officials involved in administering the electoral process.

There are numerous credible reports that NISA Director Abdullahi Gafow Mohamud deployed security personnel at the election center and the accommodation location for delegates to influence polling by creating a sense of fear. We understand Gafow threatened other candidates to withdraw and used NISA personnel to intimidate elder Hassan Madobe, detain Hassan Madobe and candidate Maxamed Maxamuud Guure, and physically beat Guure. Gafow's interference in this process was to benefit his brother, Abdiqadir Gafow Mohamoud, who is a candidate. Such use of public resources to influence polling through violence and intimidation is unacceptable and undermines the credibility of the process and your administration.

We understand candidate Mahad Salad, State Minister for the Presidency, allegedly replaced names of legitimate delegates on the Cayr list with his relatives, employees, and security guards, and a female candidate running against Salad was denied access to the election hall.

We continue to receive complaints from Ugaas Abdullahi Ugaas Farah regarding the SIEIT disregarding his designation of one of the Salebaan sub-clan seats to be exclusively competed by women. As a member of the National Leadership Forum, which developed the guidelines for achieving the women's quota and committed to meeting this goal, you have a responsibility to ensure your state does not directly undermine this effort.

We are concerned by allegations that Ahlu Sunna Waljama (ASWJ) was cut out of the upper house and is facing similar obstacles in the lower house, despite its popularity. We fear that isolation of ASWJ will erode the space for reconciliation and could create a post-election flash point, destabilizing your region, which is already fractured and unable to control and administer

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much of its territory. The electoral process should have been used to foster reconciliation and inclusion, but the opposite seems to be occurring.

It is also our understanding that the agreed rules of procedure for the electoral process require that voting be carried out by secret ballot, but we are aware of several cases of voting in Galmudug being conducted by a show of hands. This also seriously undermines the integrity of the vote.

Reports of collusion between the Galmudug administration and individual members of the SIEIT and members of the Federal Indirect Electoral Implementation Team (FIEIT) embedded with the SIEIT are particularly concerning. Galmudug's process thus far has been marred by more reports of overt interference than any other state. These examples have captured Washington's attention, and they are only a few of the many examples we have received. We urge you to take seriously your role, as state president and NLF member, to safeguard the integrity and credibility of this process.

I appreciate your willingness to discuss my concerns about the electoral process over the past few weeks, and hope you will use the remaining days to improve its fairness and transparency.

Sincerely,

Stephen Schwartz  
U.S. Ambassador to Somalia

CC: Mr. Xuseen Sheekh Maxamed  
Chairperson of the Galmudug SIEIT

Ms. Zahra Maxamed Maxamud  
Deputy Chairperson of the Galmudug SIEIT

Mr. Yasin Abdi Jama  
FIEIT Member

