

**REPUBLIC OF SOMALILAND
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS & INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION
SOMALILAND DIASPORA OFFICE**

**GUIDE TO 18 MAY & 26 JUNE NATIONAL DAYS
PLANNING CELEBRATION EVENT ABROAD**

THIS IS A BASIC GUIDE FOR DIASPORA INFORMATION

INTRODUCTION

Somaliland is the former British Protectorate that gained its independence on 26 June 1960 from the United Great Britain & Northern Ireland and entered into the failed union with Somalia on a dubious legal basis on 1st July 1966 to form Somali Republic with the intention of the never achieved dream as establishing “Greater Somali Republic” and afterward reclaimed its sovereignty from the Somali Republic following the Burao Grand Brotherhood Conference on 18 May 1991. Consequently, both **26 June and 18 May** are historic national days of the Republic of Somaliland annually celebrated in nationwide and by the Somalilanders in the diaspora.

In short, 26 June marks Somaliland declaration of receiving independence in 1960 whereas 18 May marks Somaliland declaration of the independence reassertion and permanently dissolving the dubious failed union with Somalia

18 May is commemorated as the greater National Anniversary because of its costs to the people of Somaliland in restoring independence, the systematic discrimination, the mass killings and the injustice against the people of Somaliland during thirty of union with Somalia, and also as Memorial Day for those lost their lives for the reassertion of sovereignty, and the freedoms of life that Somalilanders has enjoyed since the last three decades – recognized as one of the most stable and democratic De Facto States in the world. It is for this reason that Somaliland has two public holidays for 18 May Anniversary and one day for **June** under the Somaliland Civil Service Code. It is this time of the year that encourages all citizens including those Somalilanders in the diaspora to come together and celebrate with joy, happiness, being grateful to their country and observing statehood, peace, unity, democracy, achievements, and prospective future, remembering history and past mistakes and instilling national values into the hearts of younger generations.

Somaliland has a large diaspora population estimated about one million mainly scattered into Western Europe, North America, Australia, Gulf Cooperation Countries and East Africa, and who have had more crucial role than sending remittances back to home since late twenty century. Commemorating national days abroad is not only imperative for the preservation of history and national identities and educating diaspora-born children, but also serves as a significant opportunity *for advancing the cause of Somaliland through showcasing country's profile, support nation branding, public diplomacy, educating the world in the real story, the ultimate*

determination, achievements and the quest for international recognition of Somaliland, because holding high level community celebrations, receptions, engaging prominent people and friends for their events, making rallies before parliamentarian palaces, ministries of foreign affairs, submitting petitions to constituencies' parliamentarians and councilors for pushing motions, similarly to political parties, and the heads of states in the host countries, and also making more media campaign for exposure etc.

The Diaspora Office under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs & International Cooperation of the Republic of Somaliland reiterates every year circulating key instructions to the Somaliland Associations, Committees, all the dedicated activists/lobbyists and or volunteers and to the Somalilanders abroad in general in order to achieve inspiring celebrations abroad.

- Provide guidance in proper planning and organizing successful events abroad;
- Achieve more impressive celebrations as many countries as possible abroad;
- Promote history preservation, cultural heritage, and effectively engage diaspora-born children and younger generations of Somaliland origin abroad through organization of the National Anniversaries' Events;
- Raise community awareness about national unity, national values, patriotism and participation in the national development processes;
- Strengthen cohesion, unity and cooperation of the Somalilanders in the diaspora as well as their linkages and cooperation with homeland;
- Uphold Somaliland's image and abroad and ensure country branding;
- Raise awareness of the international community about Somaliland's case of self-determination and how the people of Somaliland deserves statehood recognition and how vital extent this lack of recognition costs to Somaliland including in access to international aid and foreign investment;
- Lobby foreign countries and draw more attention of governments, parliaments, political parties, and the international media towards Somaliland appeal;
- Make more friends and supporters for the case of Somaliland;
- Raise funds for charitable causes in Somaliland;
- Invite high level delegations from varied countries and organizations.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS:

1. What is between Community Event and Reception Event in the Annual Celebrations Abroad?

1.1. Community Celebration Event:

- a) This is the main celebration that brings together large number of participants comprising of Somaliland diaspora community groups including youth, women, elders as well as Somaliland friends and other prominent foreign guests in the host country. It can have music play and cultural dancing in the program;
- b) Through experience and over the years Somalilanders were celebrating their national days abroad, younger people like to have music play and dancing in the program whereas older adults prefer non-music events keynote speeches from prominent persons and sharing stories. Since participation of both groups are necessary, to match up things well, the occasion should either complement the program schedule by preceding everything else to the music session, or more preferably separating the two events;
- c) The community association/committee is responsible for organizing, funding and managing the main community event while Somalilanders are encouraged to celebrate in every city they are good number of residents;
- d) The organizers should consult with the Somaliland Representative about planning and program of the event (In the countries Somaliland is represented).

1.1. Reception Event:

- a) Reception is an Advocacy Meeting with at least 30 foreign guests in the receiving country including *Politicians, Diplomats, MPs, Councilors, Academicians, Authors, and Media Groups, both old friends and new friends* plus at 10-15 Somalilanders as community leaders, activists, intellectuals, and it is done often with a lunch or dinner. Number of the participants for foreign guests and the citizens may vary based on certain issues in the receiving country and the plan of the Mission;
- b) The Somaliland Mission is responsible for holding this event in collaboration with the Ministry Foreign Affairs & International Cooperation. The Ministry will support it provided that the Representative submits a proposal with cost estimate and list of names and details of the suggested/invited guests at least 30 days before 18 May 2022, and it

also at times depends on the financial capability, the annual operation plans as well as strategic importance of the receiving country;

- c) However, Due to the limited budget, MoFA neither supports Representatives or other Organizers to finance community celebrations, nor rather encourages Somalilanders abroad to sponsor and contribute to their events and in addition to that raise funds for charitable projects during annual celebrations.

2. Can the Community hold a Reception Event?

Yes, particularly in the host countries Somaliland is not politically represented, the elected community committee or any other members entrusted to organize the anniversary event in cooperation with the community members can sponsor a Reception Event as specified above or otherwise are to merge and engage as more friends and other prominent guests as possible to attend and celebrate with them.

3. Can the Community Event and the Reception be combined as one Event?

It does not always happen and particularly is not encouraged in the countries there is a good number of Somalilanders. However, if the Mission or the Representative of Somaliland in the receiving country is not conducting a Reception nor have other program different from the community celebration event, he/she should then invite all guests including the friends of Somaliland, officials from the receiving country and all other foreign participants to the community event.

4. What are recommended strategies and activities to be undertaken by the Somaliland Diaspora for celebrating Annual National Anniversaries abroad?

For proper planning of successful Annual Anniversary Community Celebration Event in the host country, key pertinent strategies and tactics are categorized into three parts as following:

4.1.To increase community awareness, social integration, participation, philanthropy, cohesion, collective action and contribution and promote cultural identity:-

- a) Consider variety of the community groups and their inclusive participation and attendance in the Event i.e. *youth, women, elders, professional cadres, businesspeople, community activists, representatives of political parties, cultural icons, religious persons, charities and diverse social institutions;*

- a) Engage as many as possible younger generations (2nd and 3rd) to attend and give them roles in the initial planning, organizing and preparatory works of the event;
- b) Add a question-and-answer session and use the event as a counseling opportunity when the Somaliland Representative or delegates from Somaliland are in and when not;
- c) Invite one or two influential guest speakers to talk about history and cause of Somaliland;
- d) Present 20-30 minute documentary video about: *Somaliland's history, political system, peace & stability, democracy, recent, achievements, natural/untapped resources, tourism attractions, investment potential, role of diaspora, major challenges etc. or at least any 2-3 items of these topics with condition that history is included;*
- e) Distribute IEC materials (Information, Education and Communication materials) about Somaliland profile, untapped resources, national priorities, and the roles diaspora community can play as well as T-shirts, cups etc with Somaliland flag and the annual theme on printed;
- f) Encourage introducing and interaction among groups and exchange of experiences and best practices in the issues about bringing up and educating children in the diaspora, cooperative efforts on community services, fundraising initiatives for charitable projects, success stories of role model individuals and organizations within the community, and on the other hand vital challenges, social and other problems facing the community abroad and or of the nation at home, Somaliland;
- g) Discuss and share printed handouts about positive and negative event within last year such as *raised funds and donations sent to home either in form of monetary value or material resources i.e. new or used equipments, community needs assisted within the host country, youth, women, professional, charitable or other social groups formed and registered, cultural events , sportive or volunteering diaspora youth short trips facilitated back to home, statistics of the young people or other members involved in crimes, arrested, or suffered discriminating treatments etc., cultural, social, economic or political rights challenges or other barriers the community suffers within the host country and recommendations for possible solutions.*
- h) Recognize and award members (**Community Annual Achievement Award**) groups or organizations belonging to the community for praiseworthy achievements or philanthropic initiatives they carried out in contribution to the diaspora community

wellbeing or of wider national interests at home, Somaliland. Presenting such Achievement Awards to the selected most deserving winners of the year (Individual, group of community or organization) should be done for every year. The Annual Achievement Award can also be honoured to the Ambassador/Representative or other personnel at the Somaliland Mission in the receiving country if they so deserve it, and it may be granted to a non-Somalilander such as an individual or institution of the host country for extending outstanding cooperation to the community or to common good for Somaliland;

- i) Make fundraising for a national priority project in Somaliland as appealed by the Government of Somaliland for that year such as *responding to emergencies or financing new or ongoing project of public purposes* in Somaliland or of the community itself;
- j) Properly register all participants of the event;
- k) Start the program with Verses of Holy Koran and Somaliland National Anthem;
- l) **And at the same consider the following:-**
 - A short folklore/cultural session entertainment in form of Somali traditional dance, music/songs, telling stories about popular beliefs, myths etc.;
 - As minimum as possible one or two types of traditional Somali cuisine;
 - A few members of the organizers and participants to wear some of the traditional notable costumes/attire such as the sarong-like garment, the plain-white two sheets (*Maxamuudi*), women's long stretch of cloth (*Guntiin*);
 - Some of the handmade crafted wooden or utensils for cooking or storage etc. knitted or hand-woven textiles etc.;
 - Some artifacts about cultural traditions and heritage in form of objects, pictures, cloth etc. or printed papers, brochures, booklets of them etc.

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4.2.To promote national image, nation branding and public diplomacy:-

- a) Sponsor a Reception Event and invite both old and new friends, officials from the host/receiving country such as MPs, Councillors, Mayors, Politicians etc. or other guests and famous persons such as journalists, media institutions, authors, academicians etc. and work to establish new friends for Somaliland among MPs, Councillors and others;
- b) Deliver most of the keynote speeches in the first language spoken in the host country;
- c) Make demonstrations and rallies by the community before parliamentary houses,

ministries of foreign affairs or other politically strategic places;

- d) Write petitions to your constituencies' parliamentarians, local/municipal councils asking for a debate or pushing motions for recognizing Somaliland, and urging their Governments to step to direct dialogue with Somaliland to create bilateral relations and cooperation on areas of mutual interests;
- e) Help your community members to have standard template translated in the first language spoken in the host country to submit petitions to MPs, Councillors, Political Parties and even to the Head of State;
- f) Invite at least two prominent persons (I.e. *MPs, Politicians, Journalists, Academicians etc*) from the host country that can come to Hargeisa and participate in 18 May Event with focus on those who are interested to come to Somaliland on the event with their own cost particularly the their travelling tickets. This may include media institutions, authors or senior academicians doing their PhD degrees who can choose Somaliland to make news/documentary or write their books about Somaliland respectively.
- g) Put up Somaliland flag over homes and private businesses of Somalilanders and friends;
- h) Extensively use both local and international media for exposure.

4.2.1.To promote cultural identity, heritage and engage younger generations:-

In fact most of the suggested activities above and main objectives of the Annual Anniversaries Celebration help preserving national identity, cultural heritage, educating and engaging younger generations (2nd, 3rd and even 4th diaspora-born). However, also other ways to facilitate general awareness on this subject should be considered including the following:-

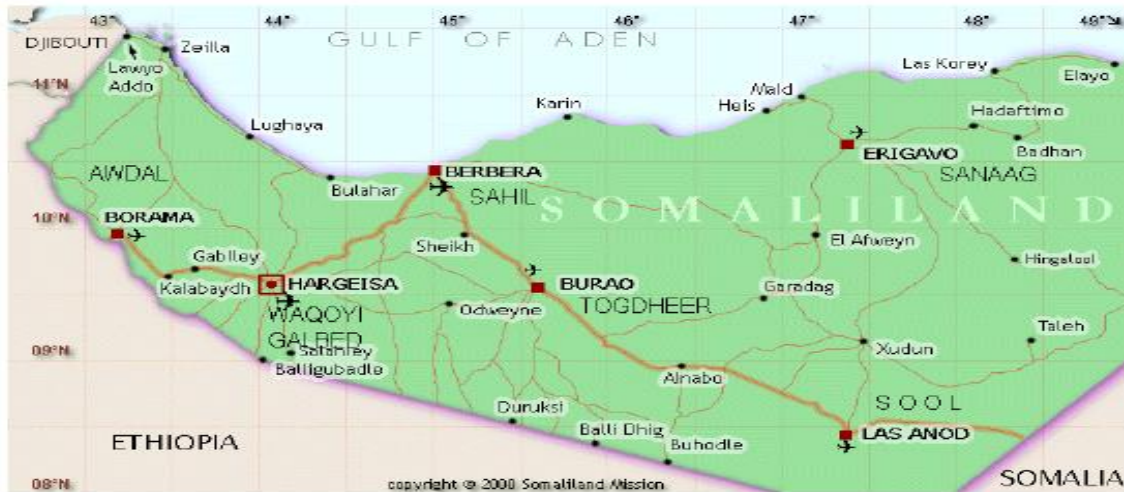
4.3.To carry out successful media campaign exposure:-

- i) Encourage community members to extensively use mass media outlets for exposure – all broadcasting channels and types be it internet and social media, print media and broadcast media as well, and write more articles using the host country's first language in support of Somaliland's case;
- j) All community members to make their profile pictures Somaliland flag and the theme of the year through May and June;
- k) Each Community Association to publish one press statement before or on 18 May and give at least two interviews to the local media i.e. TV, Radio etc. of the host country as well as to any international media institutions.

5. What are effective strategies recommended for planning and organizing successful celebrations of National Days' Anniversaries abroad?

- a) Plan your Event at least three months in advance in consultations with the community groups and Somaliland Mission (Where Somaliland is represented), defining your goals and objectives on account of the lessons learnt from past events and considering to improve celebrations year after the other;
- b) Appoint National Event Preparatory Committee of small number of people (5-7 members) as Event Management Task Force comprising of the Community Association Committee and other members selected for their influence, competence, volunteering and capability;
- c) Develop Event Organizing Work Plan, and assign roles and responsibilities to members;
- d) Identity all your needs for successful celebrations, resource members, dedicated young persons, experts, women, activists, resource persons, talented members, possible sponsors, organizations, clubs and other purposeful social groups etc. (*Assistant Organizers*);
- e) Encourage more volunteering and assign different people different tasks both as teams and as individuals too. Different activities may include *fundraising, technical paperwork, technology-related services and tools, bringing material resources of importance and relevance, event publicity and promotion, translation services, guiding members in submitting petitions, event agenda etc., inviting important foreign guests, making registration*;
- f) Identify different required resources that may be found as in-kind contribution such as cultural artifacts in the host country and similarly Somaliland flag and any other thing about the national identities;
- g) Introduce a good initiative that every member of the community visiting Somaliland takes with him/her on returning some flags, other items of cultural heritage and national identities and brings to the committee;
- h) Establishing Community Trust Fund and saving money as monthly subscriptions from members of the community for sponsoring not only National Days Anniversaries Events but also other cultural and historical events.

SOMALILAND HISTORY IN SUMMARY:



- **British Protectorate:** 1887-1960,
- **Received Independence:** 26 June, 1960 (From United Kingdom of Great Britain & Northern Ireland),
- **Sovereign de jure state:** between 26 -30 June 1960 (Independent Republic of Somaliland),
- **United with Somalia:** on 1st July 1960, the majority of Somaliland population rejected the Union constitution in a referendum on 26 June 1960, and fought for liberation war to regain independence between 1981-1991,
- **Withdrew from Somalia:** 18 May 1991 (Reassertion of independence),
- **De facto state as Republic of Somaliland:** since 18 May 1991, (De facto state).

Somaliland Symbols before the Independence 26 June, 1960:

The first emblem of British Somaliland 1903-1950:



When the British annexed and occupied the area that encompasses Somaliland in 1903, they established a protectorate and made it part of the British Empire. The British developed a flag for the region and also an emblem.



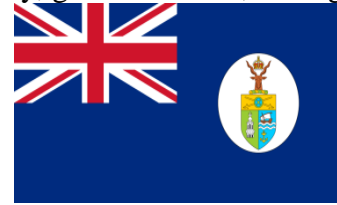
The emblem featured a white disc with an image of a Kudu, one of the main antelopes in Somaliland. The emblem was also featured on the flag.

The last emblem of British Somaliland 1950-1960:

During 1950, the emblem of British Somaliland was adapted and changed to a very intricate emblem. The coat of arms consisted of an escutcheon divided vertically, green and blue, having a



chief with a Somali shield in front of two spears in saltire, heads downwards, in natural colors. The green portion contained a representation of a minaret in white, and the blue portion had an Arabian dhow in full sail on waves of the sea,



with a golden anchor in the base. A Kudu's head, with the Royal Crown between the horns - all in natural coloring, on the "wreath of the colors." i.e. white and green - forming the Crest.

NOTE: the British Somaliland gained independence on June 26, 1960, united with Italian Trust Territory of Somalia on July 1, 1960, and regained its independence from Somalia on May 18, 1991.

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY 18 MAY 2022

Updated by H. Afgaab
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