

# Communiqué

## Somalia at Crossroads Conference

Foreign Intervention, Humanitarian Crisis & Aspirations for Statehood

The Ohio State University- Columbus, Ohio

On January 27-28, 2012, the conference, “Somalia at Crossroads: Foreign Intervention, Humanitarian Crisis and Aspirations for Statehood,” was held at the Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio.

Participants were drawn from throughout the world and speakers included experts in politics, culture, and social affairs, coming from governmental organizations, academia, and civil society.

Coming at a critical time in Somalia’s history, when decisions are being made about the country’s future, the aims of the conference were to serve as a forum for dialogue, without partisan intent, in order to enlighten debates on a satisfactory settlement of the country’s political organization. The conference sought to entertain a broad range of perspectives, particularly those that have been excluded from current models of policymaking.

The conference thanks the Ohio State University for generously hosting the conference and is grateful to the participants for their careful preparation, creative and insightful contributions, and goodwill that inspired genuine dialogue.

After a series of seventeen panels at which spirited discussion took place with contributions from the audience, the conference has reached a consensus on the following central concerns and recommendations:

1. The conference underscored the priority of protecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Somalia without pre-judging the form that the permanent political organization of Somalia should take.
2. The conference expressed its concern about impending dangers to the existence of a future political state of Somalia in light of the ongoing tendencies towards the disintegration of the territories of post-independence Somalia.
3. In relation to the threats to Somali statehood, the conference expressed its concerns about the present lack of mechanisms of a Somali-owned process of national reconciliation and conflict resolution.
4. The conference urged the Somali people to unite to safeguard the political integrity of Somalia against external domination, dependence on external forces, and national humiliation.

5. The conference expressed its deep concern over the plight of the Somali people and the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Somalia, and recognized the linkages between the situation and the threats to Somalia's sovereignty.
6. The conference emphasized the need for Somalis to undertake a serious self-examination of their responsibilities for the impairment of national integrity.
7. The conference called for Somali political organizations, civil society and the Diaspora to reach out across existing divisions to take charge of their political destiny by working through past resentments and current zero-sum conflicts of interests.
8. With regard to international involvement, the conference urged the international community to show serious commitment to and provide the needed resources for empowering a strong political organization to be created through a genuine Somali-owned process of negotiation, dialogue, and discovery of the will of the Somali people through field studies going beyond present contending groups – a process that has yet to be undertaken.
9. The conference recommends that the United States government reassess the efficacy of its present dual-track policy, which threatens to impair Somalia's political integrity.