



GSD

GLOBAL

SOMALI

DIASPORA

International Conference 2023

London, United Kingdom

Economic Growth and Peacebuilding

16 - 17 December, 2023

Break the Cycle

Report



About Global Somali Diaspora



Global Somali Diaspora (GSD) is a global not-for-profit organization working to bring together and mobilize members of the Somali Diaspora for positive action. GSD advocates and promotes the full integration of Somali Diaspora communities within their host nations while also remaining connected to their cultural heritage. GSD encourages the members of Somalia's international community to contribute to their homeland by promoting peacebuilding, reconciliation, reconstruction, and development efforts in Somalia.

Established in 2014, after participants convened in a conference in Istanbul, Turkey, today GSD has representatives from Somali communities around the world, including the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, Norway, Sweden, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Italy, Denmark as well as other countries in Africa and Asia.

It is a foundational belief of GSD that a connected and unified Somali diaspora offers great opportunities to meet the challenges of their host countries, while also playing a strong and positive role in the rebuilding of Somalia.

Mission

GSD has been established to advocate, implement, and support projects, programs and initiatives that advance the cultural and social development of Somali diaspora communities, as well as make a positive contribution to the rebuilding of Somalia.



Vision

To empower members of the Somali diaspora to realize their full potential while also empowering them to contribute to the building of harmonious, cohesive, educated, informed, creative, powerful, and prosperous communities both in their host nations and their homeland.

Objectives

GSD seeks to mobilize, organize, and empower Somali communities living in the diaspora. We want to provide a platform to improve communication and ties between members of the global Somali diaspora and serve as a focal point of action and advocacy on issues of importance to their communities. We will also promote the language, culture, and heritage of the Somali people, as well as enhance the capacity and skills of young Somalis living in Somalia and in the diaspora. Lastly, GSD aims to contribute greatly to the development and rebuilding of Somalia.

Global Somali Diaspora' Annual International Conference in London, United Kingdom

Economic Growth and Peacebuilding: “Break the Cycle“

Historical Context

Somalia has experienced decades of political instability, civil unrest, and economic downturns that have severely hindered its progress. The collapse of the central government in 1991 led to a prolonged period of statelessness, leaving a power vacuum that allowed armed factions to emerge, leading to internal conflicts. These conflicts, coupled with droughts and famines, have resulted in immense suffering for the Somali people and a lack of strong social, economic, and political development.



Background

The Somali diaspora is a large and growing community, with over 2 million people living in over 100 countries around the world. The diaspora has played a significant role in supporting the Somali people, peacebuilding and economic development in Somalia through remittances, direct engagement in development initiatives, advocacy, and investment. However, the diaspora is also divided along clan, political lines and individual interests. These challenges have made it difficult to contribute collectively and effectively to the peacebuilding and stability in Somalia, and has also

limited the diaspora's ability to participate collaboratively in the economic development in Somalia. The theme of this conference is a follow up from the outcome of GSD's international conference in 2022 in Finland where it was evidenced the need for a healthy resolution within the Somali community for any economic growth. Therefore, the conference will explore a diaspora-led initiative on peacebuilding and economic development in partnership with local community within Somalia. They possess valuable skills, networks, and resources that can be harnessed to foster sustainable peace and economic growth in their home country. Thus, GSD could be a uniting platform that can bring Somali diaspora together for common goals.

About the International Conference, 2023



The GSD's international conference aims to create a platform for dialogue, knowledge exchange, and collaboration among members of the Somali diaspora, scholars, practitioners, international communities and policymakers. The conference will focus on the critical nexus between peace building and economic development within the Somali diaspora context, exploring how these two aspects can mutually reinforce each other for the advancement of both the diaspora community and Somalia as a whole.

Conference Objectives

- **Knowledge Sharing and Learning:** To facilitate the exchange of experiences, best practices, and lessons learned in both peace building and economic development within the Somali diaspora and Somalia, fostering a culture of collaboration and mutual learning.
- **Inspiring innovation and creativity:** To enable members of the Somali diaspora with critical thinking, self-reflection, tools, and knowledge necessary to actively and effectively contribute to peace building and sustainable economic development initiatives within diaspora and in Somalia.
- **Strengthening Networks:** To provide a space for networking and collaboration among Somali diaspora individuals, organizations, academic institutions, and developmental agencies interested in advancing peace and economic growth.
- **Policy Dialogue:** To engage policymakers, academics, and practitioners in discussions on effective policy frameworks that can support peace building and economic development initiatives within the Somali diaspora and Somalia, nurturing a supportive environment for sustainable change.

Conference Themes:

1. Leveraging the Diaspora's Role in Peacebuilding

This theme explores the various ways the diaspora community can contribute to peacebuilding efforts in Somalia. It will focus on initiatives such as traditional mediation and reconciliation

processes, conflict resolution programs within grassroot level, and community centred peacebuilding initiatives led by diaspora and local members. The discussions will also address the challenges and opportunities of diaspora engagement in peacebuilding and identify best practices.

2. Theme: Harnessing private sector and diaspora networks to support peacebuilding

3. Promoting Economic Development through Diaspora Investments

This theme will explore the potential for diaspora investments to drive economic development in Somalia. It will discuss strategies to mobilize financial resources, knowledge transfer, and technology exchange from the diaspora community to support entrepreneurship, job creation, and the growth of local industries. The discussions will also address the importance of fostering a conducive business environment and strengthening public-private partnerships to attract diaspora investments.

4. Innovation and Technology for Economic Growth

This theme will focus on harnessing the power of innovation and technology to promote economic growth within Somalia. It will examine success stories of diaspora-led startups, showcase innovative solutions for agriculture, renewable energy, and digital infrastructure, and discuss ways to bridge the digital divide and promote inclusive growth. The discussions will also address the challenges and opportunities of leveraging technology for economic development in Somalia.

5. Strengthening Collaboration between Diaspora, local community, government and international communities

This theme will highlight the importance of collaboration between diaspora members and local community in advancing peacebuilding and economic development efforts. It will explore mechanisms for partnership building, knowledge sharing, and capacity development between diaspora organizations, local communities, international communities and government institutions. The discussions will also address how to create an enabling environment that fosters trust, collaboration, mutual understanding and common goals.

6. Gender Equality and Social Inclusion

Examining the importance of gender equality and social inclusion in promoting peace and economic development, and exploring strategies to ensure that these principles are integrated into all initiatives.

7. Cultural Preservation and Identity

Recognizing the significance of Somali cultural heritage preservation and identity in promoting a sense of belonging among the Somali diaspora and how these elements can contribute to peace building and economic progress through the cultural exhibition and continues dialogue.

Sponsor





Established in 1951, and joining the United Nations (UN) system in 2016, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) is the leading intergovernmental organization in the field of migration and works closely with governmental, intergovernmental and nongovernmental partners. With 175 Member States, and eight States holding observer status and offices in over 100 countries, IOM is dedicated to promoting humane and orderly migration for the benefit of all. In the East and Horn of Africa region, IOM has 10 country offices. In Somalia, IOM operates from its main office in Mogadishu, field offices, as well as the Nairobi support office in Kenya. Operational in Somalia since 2006, IOM has set a strong record on the delivery of humanitarian services to crisis-affected populations while steadily developing models and partnerships for longer term recovery and migration governance. To address overall migration challenges in Somalia, IOM works closely with the Federal Government of Somalia (FGoS), regional and local authorities, the UN, donor governments and civil society. IOM Somalia's overarching goal is to contribute to a stronger, more resilient Somalia through an effective and principled approach to migration, displacement, peacebuilding and strengthening of strategic partnerships.

For IOM Somalia, this goal is reflected in three strategic objectives: 1) Emergency and post-crisis; 2) Transition and Recovery; and 3) Migration governance and development. IOM Somalia's Strategic Plan 2022-2025 is guided by the three main pillars of IOM's Global Strategic Vision 2019 to 2023: Resilience, Mobility and Governance. The Mobility Pillar aims at promoting inclusion and conditions that empower migrants and the diaspora to contribute to sustainable development. With over 2 million of nationals living outside their country of origin, members of the Somali diaspora are known to be excellent agents for human and economic development, as well as humanitarian actors in crisis situations, and entrepreneurs in business, trade and innovation. Since 2008, IOM Somalia has been actively supporting the pivotal role of diaspora as key development and humanitarian actors through the Migration for Development in Africa (MIDA) programme. Recognizing the importance of Somali diaspora's role and contribution in humanitarian and development actions, IOM has facilitated the recruitment and temporary return of highly qualified diaspora experts for capacity building, transfer of knowledge and mentoring purposes. There is indeed high potential for harnessing the development dimension of human mobility to contribute to state-building, job creation and income generation through transfer of knowledge, skills development, financial investments, remittances and networking.

Why London?

GSD strategically chose to hold this year's conference in London, United Kingdom as it is home to one of the largest Somali diaspora communities in the world. According to the UK Census in 2021, there are an estimated 176,645 Somalis living in England and Wales, with many of those calling London their home. Furthermore, the event was held in Earl's Court in West London and the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, which also boasts a sizable Somali community, including having an elected Somali-British Councillor in their town hall.



GSD's International Conference

DAY ONE

Introduction from the Hosts: Ladan Jama and Abdelfatah Shirwa



The days' proceedings began with a warm introduction by our hosts Ladan Jama and Abdelfatah Shirwa, who welcomed the delegates and thanked the participants in advance, as well as laying out the schedule for the next two days.

Quran Recital



As is customary in our tradition, the event was blessed with a recitation of verses from the Quran by Sheikh Omar Qulatey.

Keynote Speakers, Panels and Workshops

Welcoming Remarks by Ben Coleman, Councillor for Hammersmith and Fulham



Ben Coleman, Councillor for Hammersmith and Fulham, and Deputy Leader, spoke about how honoured he felt that GSD had chosen London for their annual conference. Saying that 1 in 50 of the locals who live in the borough claim to be of Somali origin. He also spoke about diversity in the borough and how important it is to have an international approach to policy-making.

Remarks by Andy Slaughter, Member of Parliament for Hammersmith



Andy Slaughter, Member of Parliament for Hammersmith spoke about how he welcomes everyone in his constituency. He also mentioned how his area is a thriving hot spot for the Somali diaspora. He also mentioned that he speaks to the local Somali community often about their concerns, not only in the UK but internationally as well, namely their home country in Somalia and the situation in the Middle East.

Welcome Message from the Chair of GSD, Jawaahir Daahir, MBE



Chair of GSD, Jawaahir Daahir addressed the delegates and discussed the meaning behind this year's theme, and how important it is to focus the lens on the youth and Somali women and girls. She also reiterated the aims of GSD as an organisation. One is that it aims to support the Somali diaspora abroad, and the other is that it aims to help rebuild Somalia.

Music and Entertainment by Somali Singer Aasha Karaama



Entertainment was provided by the daughter of the legendary Somali singer Faduma Qasim, who is also a performer in her own right, Aasha Karaama

Remarks by HE Abdulkadir Ahmed Khayr, Somali Ambassador



HE Abdulkadir Ahmed Khayr, Somali Ambassador to the UK spoke about his role as representative of Somalia and how all Somalis in the room should also see themselves as representatives of their country. He also mentioned his wish to have a sitting Somali MP in the British House of Commons in the next few years, regardless of party affiliation. He also wanted to highlight that it has been only recently that Somalia has been able to have an embassy in the UK and that future diplomatic efforts look bright.

A Message from Andrew Mitchell, Member of Parliament, Minister for Africa (via Video)



The Right Honourable Andrew Mitchell, Member of Parliament, and Minister for Africa appeared via video to congratulate GSD on the conference, as well as highlighting how the UK government has been helping Somalia. This is particularly true in the case of recent floods, as he mentioned that Prime Minister Rishi Sunak has pledged to support the Somali-led disaster relief, as well as providing immediate aid of £11m.

A Message from His Excellency Ahmed Moallim Fiqi, Somalia's Minister of Interior, Federal Affairs and Reconciliation (MOIFAR) (via Video)



His Excellency Ahmed Moallim Fiqi, Somalia's Minister of Interior, Federal Affairs and Reconciliation also appeared via video and to greet the delegates at the conference. He spoke about the problems with terrorism in the country and the federal government's approach to liberating the citizens from such terror. He said that the biggest challenge facing Somalia today is insecurity and division among the citizenry. But he feels that the people are united in their hopes to reach progress and further develop their country.

A Message from Yunis Emre Institute's President, Prof. Dr. Şeref Ateş (via Video)



Yunis Emre Institute's President, Prof. Dr Şeref Ateş sent a message via video in which he spoke about the long relationship between his country of Turkey and the people of Somalia and how his country is committed to peacebuilding efforts in Somalia. He also spoke about the fact that his organisation has been working with Global Somalia Diaspora for over 6 years, and how fruitful this partnership has been over the years.

Remarks by Kassim Ali, Councillor for Kensington and Chelsea, Opposition Leader



Kassim Ali, Councillor for Kensington and Chelsea, and Opposition Leader, began his speech by thanking all the international guests and the international community that supports the Somali cause and the peacebuilding efforts in the country. He also spoke about how pleased he was that GSD chose to hold the event close to his constituency. He mentions the three things that are important to him and his local Somali community, which he works very hard to fix; 1) Education. 2) Housing. 3) Economic growth.

Remarks by Amal Ali, Councillor for Frome Vale Bristol



Amal Ali, Councillor for Frome Vale Bristol spoke about how important it is for her to be a part of the political framework in the UK. And that as an immigrant she can represent her people in this way. She said that she would also love to see a Somali Member of the United Kingdom's Houses of Parliament one day - as this will make a huge difference to the community, as the current MPs do not understand the needs of the Somali community.

Remarks by Hodan Haili, Councillor for Ealing



Hodan Haili, Councillor for Ealing spoke about how important a conference like this is for the community. She spoke about her role in the Ealing council and the pressures she feels as a Somali woman in politics. She also mentioned that she is one of the generations that has never seen Somalia, as she was not born nor raised there. She also spoke about how she's an advocate for diversity as she was very much marginalised while growing up in the UK, having two different cultures.

Panel A: British-Somali Diaspora, their contribution to the British society, opportunities and their current challenges

Panel Lead: Hashim Duale MBE

Panel Members: Dr Salah Ayderuus Nasir, Naima Hareed, and Abdallah Moalim



After brief introductions, the group began to discuss the theme as they spoke about the British-Somali diaspora, their contribution to British society, opportunities and their current challenges. One panellist spoke about how we have contributed in the areas of health and medicine, while another panellist mentioned that it is the uniqueness of being Somali that the diaspora contributes to British society and that we deserve our seat at the table for all our efforts. Another panellist spoke about the skills that Somali women bring to the table.

Panel B: British - Somali diaspora, and their contribution to investing in livelihood of Somali nation and the country

Panel Lead: Mohammed Artan

Panel Members: Cllr Kassim Ali, Abdikayf Farah, Rashid Gacal, Hanaan Abdullahi and Abdiqani Hassan



This panel was concerned with the ways in which the Somali diaspora is working towards creating a positive impact on the homeland, with regards natural resources in East Africa, as well as livestock, farming and agriculture.

Panel C: Harnessing private sector and diaspora networks to support peacebuilding

Panel Lead: Faiza Ali

Panel Members: Fadumo Aweis, Layla Abubakar, Ramadan Haji and Mohamed Mohamud



This session explored further the following: Leveraging the Somali diaspora's expertise and resources, engaging the private sector in peacebuilding initiatives, building partnerships between the private sector, the Somali diaspora, and the Somali government, and creating an enabling environment for private sector and diaspora engagement.

Presentation by IOM Somalia



Our platinum sponsor, IOM Somalia brought with them visuals that document and showcase the work they are doing in various parts of Somalia. They also highlighted how they are improving the livelihoods of the population through the building of institutions and infrastructures.

Remarks by Frederico Madrid, Curela Health



Frederico Madrid from Curela Health is another one of our sponsors for this year's event. He spoke about the business model of Curela Health and how it provides digital solutions to growing health and medical concerns in Somalia and elsewhere in Africa.

Remarks by Dr Mark Charlton, Net Zero and Climate Action Research Theme Director, Associate Director of Sustainable Development Goal Impact at De Montfort University



Dr Mark Charlton, Net Zero and Climate Action Research Theme Director, Associate Director of Sustainable Development Goal Impact at De Montfort University, spoke about the global sustainability in climate change across the world, and how this will impact Somalia. He also spoke about how varying countries are pledging a certain amount to relieve climate crises, such as floods and displacements. He also mentioned that the Somali diaspora is in a good place to assist in this way to their home country.

Remarks by Ramadan Haji Elmi (MOIFAR)



Ramadan Haji Elmi (MOIFAR) spoke about how his department in the federal government of Somalia is working alongside other agencies to enable stability in all areas of the country. He also spoke of how important it is for Somalis across the world to establish a new social contract, as we

are hoping to move away from the legacy of the civil war. He says that only through this holistic approach can we learn lessons from the past and implement innovative ones for the future.

Panel A: Leveraging the Diaspora's role in Peacebuilding and stability:

Panel Lead: Hashim Duale MBE

Panel Members: Sagal Osman, Layla Abubakar, Muktar Ahmed Mohamed, Fadumo Aweis Mohamed, Ramadan Haji Elmi (MOIFAR)



After introducing each of the panel members, the panel lead began to ask questions regarding the theme of the panel, as one panellist said that everything starts at home and that we have to start teaching our children that we want peace and stability. Another panellist said that it is incumbent on the Somali diaspora to dispel any negative narratives that perpetuate the idea that Somalia is a problem-country. More importantly, they said that we have to start working with the Somali government and their efforts to transition the country into a peaceful nation, one that is a model for the region.

Panel B: Promoting Economic Development through Diaspora Investments

Panel Lead: Ahmed Tohow

Panel Members: Dr Abdishakur Mohamed Tarah, Anders Knudsen, Abdinur Dahir and Hassan Diriye



This theme explored the potential for diaspora investments to drive economic development in Somalia. It focuses on how the diaspora builds businesses in the homeland and the monetary role they play today and in the future in stabilising the country's economy.

Panel C: Gender Equality and Social Inclusion

Panel Lead: Samira Ali

Panel Members: Cllr Hodan Haili and Sheikh Mustafa



This panel examined and discussed the importance of gender equality and social inclusion in promoting peace and economic development, and exploring strategies to ensure that these principles are integrated into all initiatives.



DAY TWO

Introduction from the Hosts



As with the previous day, the second day's proceedings began with a warm introduction by our hosts Ladan Jama and Abdelfatah Shirwa, who welcomed the delegates and thanked the participants in advance, as well as laying out the schedule for the entire day.

Quran Recital



Sheikh Mustafa Ali provided a holy Quran verse recital so that the day could begin with a blessing.

Keynote Speakers, Panels and Workshops

Opening Remarks by Nimco Noor



A member of the GSD's Board of Directors, Nimco Noor gave welcome remarks to the entire delegation and showed gratitude to those who have contributed to the conference and those who have shown support.

Presentation on Stabilisation in Somalia (via Video)



A video featuring a showcase of all the transitional efforts of Somalia was displayed for the delegates. It showed the combined efforts of Somalia's many agencies and their plan to stabilise the country, in varying ways, namely its security and to combat division within the people.

Remarks by Hassan Diriye, Premier Bank



One of our sponsors for this year's event, Hassan Diriye, Premier Bank, spoke about the importance of building a robust economic system in Somalia. He spoke about how the diaspora with remittances has a very important place in the functioning of the banking system in the country. He also spoke about Premier Bank, as a business, and how it's been rapidly growing recently, launching in many markets and establishing many branches across the entire country of Somalia.

Remarks by Layla Abubakar



Layla Abubakar, from the Department of Diaspora Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, at the Federal Government of Somalia, gave a presentation on the Somali government's national policy on diaspora relations. She said this is an ongoing policy that was created in 2016 and that its central aim is to give agency to the Somalis living abroad so that they may have a say in the work that's being done in their home country. This includes making amendments to the Somali constitution as well as building partnerships with foreign embassies to ensure diaspora outreach.

Panel A: Strengthening the contribution of Somali Diaspora and private sector on Humanitarian, Peacebuilding and Development (Triple Nexus)

Panel Lead: Hodan Haili, Councillor for Ealing

Panel Members: Ramadan Haji Elmi, Layla Abubakar, Fadumo Aweis Mohamed, Abdullahi Sharmarke Mohamed



After some brief introductions, the panel went on to discuss how the Somali Diaspora and the private sector are strengthening humanitarian, peacebuilding and development efforts in Somalia. The panel first discussed the issues facing Somalia currently, as it relates to the floods and the humanitarian crisis it has caused throughout the country. They also mentioned how the Somali diaspora has always been supporting the home country, as one panellist said that through remittances, a Somali person usually supports up to three families in the homeland. But beyond sending money and fundraising for these disasters, the diaspora has to be strategic about where the money goes and how it will be spent, the panel agreed.

Panel B: Innovation and Technology for Economic Growth

Panel Lead: Dr Abdishakur Tarah

Panel Memembrs: Abdallah Moallim, Dr Abdishakur Tarah and Mohamed Omar Hassan



This theme's primary focus was on how we can harness the power of innovation and technology to promote economic growth within the diaspora and Somalia, and the impact this will have on the future of Somalia, as the world becomes more and more dependent on digital technologies.

Panel C: Strengthening collaboration between diaspora, local community, government

Panel Lead: Ladan Jama

Panel Members: Abdullahi Hamud and Ladan Jama



After Abdullahi Hamud, Former State Minister Office of Prime Minister and ED of Management Institute 4 National Development (MIND), gave a keynote speech, the panel discussed how, as a Somali community, we can work together to strengthen collaborative efforts, at the local level. Working with both local, regional and national governments in ways that ensure positive outcomes for the Somali communities across the globe.

**Dialogue Session: Ahmed Tohow, Vice-Chair of GSD and Abdullahi Sharmarke Mohamed –
Third Secretary Somalia Embassy to Burundi**



Ahmed Tohow, Vice-Chair of GSD and Abdullahi Sharmarke Mohamed, the Third Secretary Somalia Embassy to Burundi, joined together to share with the audience Abdullahi's remarkable journey of attending a conference in the past and ultimately getting his current role in the embassy in Burundi. Interestingly, this particular conference was held by none other than GSD.

Remarks by Ibrahim Hersi – Poet and researcher of Somali poetry



Poet and researcher of Somali poetry, Ibrahim Hersi, shared with us his knowledge of Somali poetry and the language that's often used in its production. He spoke about the complexity of Somali poetry, as it relates to the stanzas and couplets that are used and the etymology of the language and its roots.

Panel: Language, Cultural Preservation and Identity; Recognizing the significance of Somali cultural heritage preservation including the language and identity in promoting a sense of belonging among the Somali diaspora and how these elements can contribute to peace building and economic progress through the cultural exhibition and continues dialogue.

Panel Lead: Mohamed Artan

Panel Members: Nimco Noor, Abdikayf Farah, Omar Deria, Ibrahim Hersi, Dr Abdishakur Mohamed Tarah



In discussing the Somali language and its relationship with the diaspora, the panel agreed that language is one of the main signifiers of identity and that it gives a sense of belonging to your community when you speak to each other, and speak about your shared histories and cultures. They spoke about the problems of some Somali people in the diaspora who do not speak Somali at home, which is very different to other immigrant groups, and that Somali parents need to do better to support their children in attaining their mother tongue.

Presentation by IOM Somalia



Once again, our platinum sponsor for this year's event provided an insightful presentation on the work some of its workforce is conducting on the ground in Somalia and also gave the audience information on how they may be able to support those projects or how IOM Somalia can facilitate new projects, as proposed by the diaspora.

Remarks by Abdallah Moalim, Global ICT Net



A prominent Somali educator, who is highly regarded in his profession, spoke about the ways this year's theme of "Break the Cycle" was important to his personal history. He said that his support network was the reason he got involved in information technology and programming. He encouraged the audience to support their children in their dreams, and that way they will flourish.

Closing Remarks by Jawaahir Daahir, MBE, Chair of Global Somali Diaspora



Closing remarks were given by the Chair of GSD, who also gave a recap of all the information that was shared throughout the two days, and the types of speakers and presentations that were given - from policy ideas to business strategies on how to improve the condition for Somalis both in the diaspora and the homeland. She also thanked all the participants and audience members for taking part.



CEREMONY

Awards and Honours

As with every year, we ended the two-day-long conference with an awards ceremony that highlighted some of the work and contributions people have made to our community. Not only within the GSD community but the wider, international Somali community. Awards were given to politicians, musicians, artists, writers, humanitarians and those involved in the production of the conference. Below are images of the awards ceremony.





Entertainment and Music by Somali Singer, Aasha Karaama



Once again, the daughter of legendary Somali singer Faduma Qaasim Hilowle, Aasha Karaama, gave a riveting performance to end the event, as she sang patriotic songs about Somalia as well as popular hits.

Somali Folklore Dancing





As the participants departed and the two-day event came to a close, we were transported to the cultural homeland with traditional Somali folklore dancing.

Digital and Social Media

We put together a wide-ranging digital and social media campaign throughout the event, as well as the weeks leading up to the conference. Our main focus was ensuring that we were able to put forward the details regarding the conference, as it relates to keynote speakers, distinguished guests, and sponsors. We ran a multi-channel campaign, that included Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), Instagram, Youtube and our website. We shared the poster, and video highlights from the event in the previous year, and ran an event registration campaign on Eventbrite. In the two weeks leading up to the event, our output on X (formerly Twitter) was the most impactful as we had the highest engagement and impressions for our content in December, reaching almost 70,000 views for our posts. Our Facebook and Youtube Live feeds were shared with our media partners in Horn Cable TV and the viewing figures for both days of the event have reached a total of almost 25,000 viewers across the world.

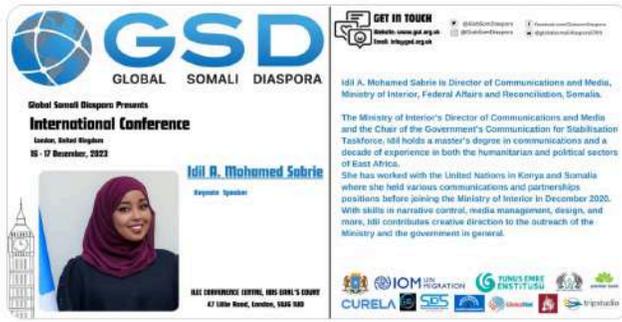
Facebook Live



Live feed from day two, December 17th.

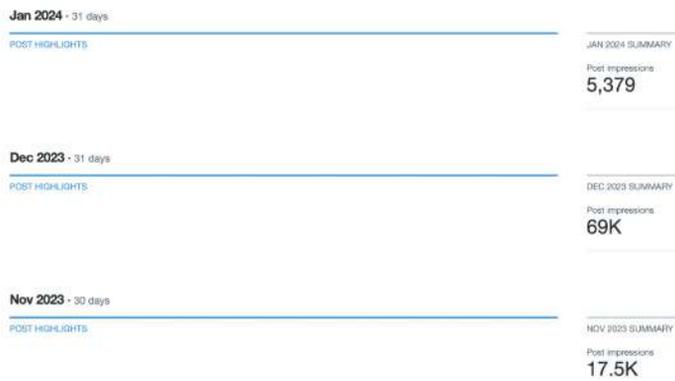
Twitter / X Promotional Campaign in December 2023

Excited to announce that Idil A. Mohamed Sabrie will be joining us as a keynote speakers at this year's GSD International Conference in London on the 16th and 17th of December 2023, sharing her media expertise in Somalia and the globe. Register here: gsd.org.uk/upcoming-events



6:00 PM · Dec 9, 2023 · 13.2K Views

An example of the Twitter / X cards that we used to create momentum for the event.



The rise in the number of views (impressions) that occurred during December is visible in the above image. This is noteworthy, as you compare the views in previous months and the ones after. Our campaign started in November.

Impressions	16,741
Total engagements	788
Media engagements	298
Profile clicks	231
Detail expands	184
Likes	35
Retweets	21
Link clicks	12
Follows	5
Replies	2

The highest reaching post on twitter during or campaign, reaching a staggering 16,741 views.

KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THE CONFERENCE

One of the main discussions throughout the panels and the keynote speeches, was the subject of **diversity** and how the Somali diaspora have greatly contributed their unique culture and set of skills to the United Kingdom and other parts of the world. Moreover, much of the discourse surrounded how such a diversity could be used as strength, particularly in leveraging benefits for those in the homeland, with regards to economic growth, peacebuilding and ensuring equality and empowerment for both women and youth in Somalia.

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The panellists and keynote speeches also discussed how the diaspora could be **more involved in the politics of the host countries**, particularly in the United Kingdom, where upon it is noted that there is yet to be a politician in national politics who is of Somali origin. This is something that the participants feel would be beneficial in terms of creating and amplifying Somali voices, not only for those living in the United Kingdom, but that they would also be able to correctly identify the needs of

those in their home country, particularly as it relates to the provision of aid and rescue packages in times of major concern.

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The representatives from the Somali government shared with the diaspora delegates the improvements the country has been making over recent years, regarding security and stability. They also explained the many ways in which the diaspora could help with these endeavours. This includes eradicating tribalism and division within the global Somali population and building trust among each other, so that Somalia could be unified in its efforts to bring about **peace, stability, and economic prosperity** to the country.

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The sponsors of the conference, particularly IOM, highlighted the various ways they are working to **develop key infrastructures and institutions in Somalia**, and more importantly, how they are paving a way for the diaspora community to take charge in many of these projects. They presented their ideas and funding plans for Somalia organisations and how they wish to support them in future projects, inviting all of those in the diaspora to get involved.

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Female speakers, and representatives, spoke about the ways in which we can further **empower and positively effect the lives of young girls and women**, and mothers, not only in Somalia but as a community at-large. They spoke of the discrimination that they faced while reaching their ambitions and how marginalisation of women could be detrimental to the success of Somalia.

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Educators and those involved in youth programs in Somalia and the diaspora, spoke of the multiple things that are holding back the youth in Somalia and the diaspora from reaching success. Much of this, they said is due to the community not realising the potential quality of the youth, and how, as a Somali community, we need **make young people feel reassured and supported** by their parents and elders.

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The fundamental importance of the Somali language was also discussed throughout the conference, and how it is the responsibility of those in the diaspora to continue enriching the lives of their offspring by introducing them to **the beauty of the Somali language and its artistic elements** such as poetry and music.

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Technology was also a mainstay conversation topic at the conference, as many discussed the ways it is helpful to the global Somali community, not just in terms of communication, but in areas such as banking, remittance, and education. They also advised that, as the world is becoming more and more reliant on digital services and automation, **we should collectively embrace technological change**. Moreover, that the diaspora should increase its investments in this area, when it comes start-technology-based businesses in Somalia.

Message from the Chair



It was a pleasure to see members of the Somali diaspora, including academics, professionals, technocrats, diplomats, leaders, and guests from various countries, attend the GSD International Conference in London in December 2023.

The conference explored the link between peace building and economic development for the Somali diaspora, and how they can mutually benefit each other to support the community and Somalia.

*The conference's slogan "**break the cycle**" resonated with many delegates. It involved discussing taboo topics like gender equality, disability, and marginalized groups, with a focus on achieving peace, justice, security, and economic development for all.*

The conference included keynote speeches and workshops on topics such as the Diaspora's role in peacebuilding, economic development through Diaspora investment, and collaboration between the Diaspora, local community, government, and international communities on issues of gender equality, cultural preservation, and social inclusion.

The videos showcased the potential of Somalia and the benefits of investing there, as well as the work of IOM Somalia.

IOM Somalia, the Platinum Sponsor, held an interactive session with the UK Somali diaspora and shared their diaspora engagement framework.

The conference showcased Somali culture through singer Asha Karama, folklore dance, and Somali food.

The conference was live on various social media platforms, drawing over 70,000 viewers.

The feedback from the delegates and viewers was positive, with room for improvement in the coming future events.

The conference has met its goals and provided recommendations for integrating peace-building and economic empowerment.

The conference report highlights key insights, results, and recommendations, followed by an action plan.

Jawaahir Daahir, MBE, Chair of Global Somali Diaspora

Global Somali Diaspora's Board of Directors



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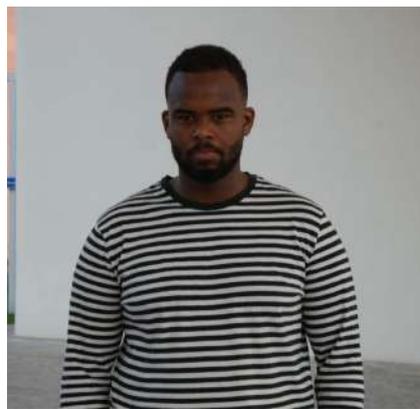
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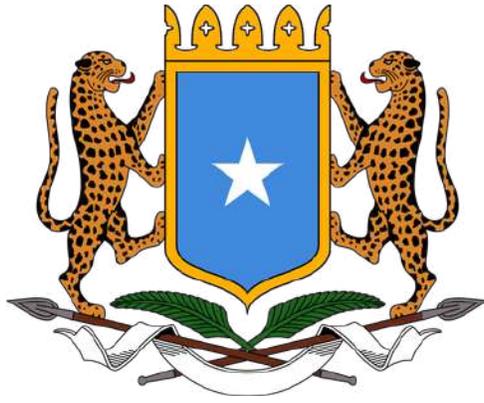
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