

SOMALILAND LOCAL ELECTIONS 2002
(Source: Academy of Peace & Development)

CODE OF CONDUCT For THE POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS
December 5, 2002

[\[1\]](#)

PREAMBLE:

After holding a series of discussions and consultations during the month of Ramadan regarding the upcoming elections;

Acknowledging that democratic elections will advance the noble struggle of the people of Somaliland during the past ten years;

Recognizing that free and fair elections offer new opportunities to enlarge freedom and justice in Somaliland;

Appreciating also the risks and threats arising from inexperience in political campaigns and elections, aggravated by limited technical know-how and scarcity of financial resources;

Having further understood the apprehension and anxiety of our people about political campaigns and elections absent from their political life for over thirty-three years;

Realizing that the practice of democracy is never perfect yet, despite the hurdles and risks, the march forward toward democracy must continue with, courage, patience and patriotism,

The political Organizations agreed to follow in letter and spirit the Code of Conduct which they had developed jointly and stated in this document.

First of all, the political Organizations and the Election Commission agreed to give utmost priority to:

1. The existence and independence of Somaliland over the success of political Organizations or personal interest;
2. The maintenance of peace since peace is foundational to democracy as it is life;
3. Solve all disputes arising among the political Organizations through dialogue; and
4. Advance free and fair elections.

[\[2\]](#)

The political Organizations further agreed that **prior to**, **during**, and **after** elections:

1. All political Organizations will actively and unambiguously transmit to their members and supporters that peace is sacrosanct (*nabadu waa muqadas*) and that therefore they will order all their members and supporters to avoid statements or actions that threaten the public order of Somaliland; the political Organizations will take joint activities to raise public awareness on the vital need for peace.
2. All political Organizations will abstain from statements and actions that can undermine peaceful, free, and fair elections; the political Organizations will take joint activities to inform the public that success for Somaliland rests on peaceful, free, and fair elections.
3. All political Organizations will respect the members and supporters of other political Organizations, avoiding at all times attacks of personal, group, and clan nature; political campaigns must be issue-oriented and offer solutions to national problems.
4. All political Organizations will avoid disinformation and dishonest activities that undermine the existence and functioning of other political Organizations;
5. All political Organizations will disseminate and strictly enforce a ban on arms, clubs, and other dangerous tools carried by their members or supporters; in addition, they will end all political campaigns **forty-eight hours** before the day of elections and inform their members and supporters that they will not campaign at voting sites, carry with them any signs of party affiliation (like party emblems, beat drums, or carry out any party activities).
6. All political Organizations will avoid use or mobilization of non-citizens and other non-qualified persons in their political campaigns and in casting votes; taking into consideration the welfare of Somaliland, all their campaigns and party activities will not aggravate immigration problems of Somaliland.

7. If two or more political Organizations accidentally meet in the same venue during their campaigns, the party that came first will have right of use for that venue; if the Organizations can not determine who came first, they will find mutually agreeable solution.
8. All political Organizations accept the Election Commission as the sole and legitimate “referee” of the upcoming local and national elections; any political party that does not accept in good faith the Election Commission’s sincere decisions or judgment on the results will accept, without improper acrimony or incitement of disturbance, the **final judgment** handed down by the last legally mandated authority.
9. After the elections, all the political Organizations (winners as well as losers) will take joint initiative to calm their members and supporters to ensure that an atmosphere of peace and national unity prevails after the elections;
10. The political Organizations (winners as well as losers) will carry themselves with due respect and regard to their competitors (winners as well as losers) in order to promote harmony and cooperation among their members and supporters;
11. All political Organizations will avoid the dangers of *zero-sum game* or *winner-takes-all* outcome and, in particular, the party winning the presidential election is encouraged to form an inclusive and broad-based government;
12. If deadlines for presidential election are not met, the political Organizations emerging from the local elections, being the primary stakeholders in the new political landscape and supported by the losing political Organizations, will work with other legally mandated national actors to avoid the prospect of political vacuum.
13. All the political Organizations endorse the formation, terms of reference, management, and procedures of the Integrity Watch Committee as described in the attached document.
14. It is the responsibility of the political Organizations to inform their members and supporters in all areas (including remote locations) regarding the terms contained in this Code of Conduct; that a given members or supporters had infringed the Code of Conduct because they did not know better is not acceptable excuse; the responsibility for infringement of the Code always rests with the political party.

The articles in this Code of Conduct constitute “gentlemen’s agreement” developed to serve the common good. While their infringement does not carry legal penalties, the articles have moral and social weight; hence, their breach must adverse political repercussions for the offending political party.

Infringements of this Code will be dealt with as follows:

- 1) The Election Commission, in consultation with the political Organizations, will form an Integrity Watch Committee (see Attachment 1 for the Committees purpose, functions, and other details);
- 2) The Integrity Watch Committee will be managed and supervised by the Academy for Peace and Development;
- 3) If the Integrity Watch Committee observes infringement of the Code by any political party, or receives formal complaint from a political party, the Committee will carry out thorough investigation of the infringement;
- 4) If the infringement is **proven without reasonable doubt**, the Integrity Watch Committee, in consultation with the Election Commission, will present a first and then (if necessary a second) written warning to the offending political party;
- 5) All the political Organizations will receive a copy of all warnings submitted by the Committee;
- 6) If the offending political party continues the infringement, the Integrity Watch Committee, the Election Commission, and the other political Organizations will jointly make public announcement when third written warning for the infringement is being submitted to the offending party;
- 7) If the political party continues the infringement, the Integrity Watch Committee, the Election Commission, and the other political Organizations will jointly and widely inform the citizens of Somaliland that the offending party is working for sure working against the Code of Conduct agreed upon and therefore against the common good.

SIGNATURE

Name of the political Organizations	Name of Person Signing	Signature
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ASAD	_____	_____
HORMOOD	_____	_____
KULMIYE	_____	_____
SAHAN	_____	_____
UCID	_____	_____
UDUB	_____	_____

Note: This Code was endorsed by the above political organisations which were contesting the first nation-wide local elections in Somaliland since the 1960s and were also aspiring to become the three political parties allowed under the Somaliland Constitution.

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[1]

As the declared by law, there are no political organizations before the local elections. Only the three political organizations that emerge from the local elections will be called political Organizations. This Code of Ethics applies to before and after the local elections to all registered organizations or Organizations competing for elections.

[2]

These four principles were affirmed in the agreement of political Organizations on 24th July 2002.