

Land Reform Coordination Meeting

The Academy for Peace and Development (APD) in collaboration with seven ministers held a consultation meeting to discuss impediments to effective land management, at the APD office in Hargeisa Somaliland on the 18th of March.

High level government officials and representatives from development agencies such as UN Habitat attended the fruitful consultation meeting. Minister of Environment and Rural Development, Minister of Planning, Minister of Agriculture, Minister of Minerals, Minister of Livestock, Security Affairs Vice-minister of the Ministry of Interior, Vice-Minister of Public Works, Director General of Ministry of Water, and the Chairman of the Sub-committee of the Natural Resource of the Parliament.



The general theme of the discussions centered on the fact that Somaliland does not have a comprehensive land policy, ambiguous legal framework and the lack of effective enforcement mechanism; however there exists an array of legal instruments and sector policies that affect land governance. The existence of

multiple laws that bestow land management and regulation responsibilities on different institutions is one of the greatest challenges facing land management in Somaliland. In addition, addressing the lack of effective coordination and information sharing among government institutions and the various development agencies in dealing with land and law issues was also discussed extensively.



APD's Executive Director Mohamed Farah Hersi; who opened the session stated that this meeting is the 4th of its kind as a part of the on-going efforts initiated by the government and APD team to find strategic solutions to realize effective land management in Somaliland. The main challenges to land management include; enclosures, establishment of new clan villages, unsustainable charcoal production causing deforestation and desertification, and the illegal occupation of government premises.



In cognizance, of the need for all stakeholders to mobilize on this major peace threatening issue

In cognizance of the presidential decree JSL/M/WM/222-2689/092014 which banned the sedentarization of pastoral land, the legal framework regulating land use, and the extensive research materials compiled by APD on land disputes which identifies methods to improve the current resolution mechanisms; dating back to 2004.



In a bid to consolidate long-standing efforts, the following points were agreed;

1. An agreement was reached to conduct a 'National Land and Environment Conference' in Burao, Togdheer in the near future.
2. In enhancing the government efforts and information co-ordination, all eight government ministries empowered with a land management mandate, mobilize in unison on the preparation of the national level conference on land and environment management. More specifically, the ministries should nominate technical focal persons by March 23, 2015 to prepare the upcoming land and environment conference in collaboration with APD.
 - 1) The inter-ministerial land body and the technical committee which coordinates by the Ministry of Public has been agreed to be revived and APD will serve as secretariat
 - 2) As a necessary step towards improving the available legal framework regulating land use; all parties agreed that legal review must be conducted on all laws governing land management and it's use in order to amend and/or draft new laws. APD is responsible to perform this task

- 3) In conclusion, the government agreed to co-ordinate progressively towards developing a land management policy, revising legal framework and improving enforcement mechanisms.
- 4) The lead ministers are responsible to assure the required highest political commitment to restore land management, and called for civil society and local and international development agencies to support the processes.
- 5) APD is responsible to accommodate weekly technical meeting and monthly ministerial meeting; but extraordinary meetings can be held as required.
- 6) Action plan with timeline will be prepared by the technical committee with the assistance of the Academy for Peace and Development as secretariat during the 5th meeting to be held at APD on Wednesday, March 25; 9:00am-11:00am to be approved by the ministers.

