

**IN THE MATTER OF THE FORUM ON MINORITY ISSUES**  
**UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS**  
**SESSION NO.: 13<sup>th</sup>**

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**STATEMENT TO THE UN FORUM ON MINORITY ISSUES 13<sup>TH</sup> SESSION:**  
**SOMALIA’S HATE SPEECH THROUGH THE 4.5 POLITICAL**  
**REPRESENTATION FORMULA**

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1. In *Flaubert's Parrot*, Julian Barnes submits that "The greatest patriotism is to tell your country when it is behaving dishonorably, foolishly, viciously".
2. Since 2000, the Federal Republic of Somalia has been governed by the 4.5 Political Representation Formula. In Somalia's bicameral Federal Parliament only 32 of 329 parliamentarians are from the 17 ethnic minority tribes. Each of the four major tribes, however, has 69 members of parliament, giving them a total of 276. It is disproportionate representation in every sense, which makes this formula racially discriminatory, an affront to democracy, and in violation of international human rights standards. The 4.5 Formula is state created, embodied, and endorsed hate speech. It is a source that provides the foundation for systemic racial discrimination on the ground and on social and mainstream media.
3. As the four major tribes have 88.8% control of the Parliament, it is important to recognise that this type of representation does not only limit political participation, but more importantly it affects civic, territorial, economic, social, linguistic, and cultural rights of Somali Minorities. A good example is the incident that occurred in my home city of Baraawe, Somalia, on 21 April 2020, when the then Minister of Information of the South West State of Somalia ordered the closure of 'Radio Baraawe'. The Minister reasoned that the 'Chimini' language, my mother tongue, is not a Somali language and is not recognised in Somalia.
4. To implement the 'United Nations Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech', the Council for Somali Minority Groups proposes a twofold technical and practical solution for specialised agencies, with the support of the United Nations, to implement. The solution is that:
  1. provision of development aid to the government of Somalia should be conditional upon the eradication of the 4.5 Formula. It is unquestionable that the Somali government would respond to such pressure because it exists and functions by the grace of the international community providing such aid; and
  2. parameters for political power-sharing should be introduced through *ad interim* arbiter in the form of a central body to control the four tribes' monopoly on

political, civic, territorial, economic, social, linguistic, and cultural rights in Somalia.

5. To halt Somalia's hate speech, the Council for Somali Minority Groups respectfully invites the Chairperson to include this binary solution in her summary of the discussion of the Forum and the UN Special Rapporteur to include it in his report on the recommendations of the Forum to be presented at the 46<sup>th</sup> session of the Human Rights Council in March 2021.

**Dr. Omar S I Abasheikh**

**Director of Legal Affairs**

**Council for Somali Minority Groups, London, England**

**20 November 2020**