

EAST AND HORN OF AFRICA HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS NETWORK

Public Statement**EHAHRD-Net Index SOM 022/ 005/ 2008****KAMPALA: EHAHRDP/Net condemns the death in Somalia today of peace activist Mohammed Abdulle Mahdi**

11th June 2008

EHAHRDP/Net is saddened and shocked by the killing of Somali peace activist, Executive Director of the Women Care Organisation (WOCA) and founding member of the Peace and Human Rights Network (PHRN), Mr Mohammed Abdulle Mahdi “Qeylow”, in Swk Ba‘ad in Northern Mogadishu at 12h50 today. The circumstances of Mr Abdulle Mahdi’s death are still unclear.

Mr Abdulle Mahdi’s death is a great loss to the human rights movement in Somalia and represents a further dash to hopes that a lasting peace will ever be achieved in this war-torn country.

Qeylow , as he was more widely known, was a vehement and prominent peace activist. More recently he had played a crucial role in helping to reconcile pastoralist groups and local farmers in the Middle Shabelle Region of Southern Somalia and had also been involved in a series of activities which sought to improve the livelihoods of particularly marginalised groups in this region. He had also been involved in capacity building activities for civil society organisations and was an important partner of Oxfam Novib and Oxfam GB.

“This most recent death reveals once again that the TGF authorities are largely failing in their responsibility to offer protection to human rights defenders (HRDs) in Somalia, notably in Mogadishu which is supposed to be under their control; and yet without active HRDs the rapidly deteriorating human rights situation in Somalia will continue to worsen and peace and stability will become an increasingly difficult aim to achieve. The TGF must ensure that it abides by this responsibility and puts in place mechanisms which will offer the defenders the necessary protection for them to pursue their vital work” stated Mr Hassan Shire Sheikh, Chairperson of EHAHRD-Net.

EHAHRDP/Net would like to express its sincere condolences to the family of Mr Abdulle Mahdi as well as to his colleagues of WOCA.

EHAHRD-Net appeals to the TGF authorities:

- To abide by its responsibility of ensuring the protection of human rights defenders and notably their right to life as stipulated in the Transitional

Federal Charter and in numerous international human rights instruments to which Somalia is party;

- To investigate in an impartial manner the killing of Mr Abdulle Mahdi;
- To ensure that those responsible for this killing are brought to justice and accorded a fair, independent and impartial trial.

Finally EHAHRD-Net calls upon the UN, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights and all other concerned international humanitarian bodies:

- To ensure that independent and impartial accountability mechanisms which conform to international standards are put in place in order to bring an end to impunity and to ensure that those responsible for current and past violations are brought to justice.

All Network members are encouraged to write to the Somali authorities furthering this appeal.

Send appeals to:

The Somali Ambassador in Kenya , asking for them to be forwarded to Somalia 's President, [Col. Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed](#): TFG Ambassador, Mohamed Ali Nur,
PO Box 623-00606
Jabavu Road, Hurlingham
Nairobi, Kenya
Email: mali@somaliembassy.co.ke
Salutation: Dear Sir

For further information, please contact:

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