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PRESS RELEASE: A Political Milestone for Somaliland

We, the CENTER FOR DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE do take this opportunity to congratulate all stakeholders who made it possible to make the “Agreement on 27th February 2020” which by any standards is a political milestone. First, we wish to congratulate the mediation committee made up of elders, religious leaders, traders and EU delegation on their effort to broker the agreement that will see Somaliland Council and Parliamentary Elections conducted in 2020. Our special congratulations also go to the ruling party Kulmiye and both opposition Waddani and UCID parties for accepting the recommendations of the mediation committee

With our constitutionally-based and popularly elected government, the Republic of Somaliland, has a democratic system matched by few other countries in Africa and the Middle East. However, as a country key challenges persist and need urgent attention, such include but not limited to the following;

- i) Somaliland first presidential election was delayed several times a conflict of interest between the three political parties.
- ii) Somaliland parliamentary elections were conducted in 2005 for a 5-year term we are already in our 15th year without elections.
- iii) The local council term also finished April 2019 but still working without proper legality.

We note with satisfaction that the Election Commission which has been subject of much critique, has been replaced by the neutral “Technical Election Management Unit (TEMU)”, with all parties agreed Terms of Reference. We are therefore seeing a lot of light at the end of the tunnel. We are hoping that when the time comes, the elections will be free and fair and that we will have

more inclusivity through gender mainstreaming, the youth, the vulnerable communities and the disabled. Most of all, we hope that TEMU whose membership should be all inclusive, will be able to conduct elections regularly in a free and fair manner.

With NEC reconstituted as TEMU, we further propose the following recommendations:

1. Ensure Elections are conducted within set timelines to avoid any disagreements
2. Have an arrangements and budgetary provisions to conduct capacity building for political parties
3. Have set criteria for candidature to both council and Parliament, so that those representing the people can cope with the responsibilities of legislation and oversight
4. Develop a system of Information sharing between TEMU and the Political Parties, whereby all the intentions and program of TEMU towards elections are shared without let or hindrance
5. Political Parties should have a program of engaging the local communities as currently, there is a very distinct disconnect
6. Political Parties should have a national outlook, by having a minimum representation (say 25%) in at least half of the regions

ONCE AGAIN CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL STAKEHOLDERS FOR THIS EYE-OPENING POLITICAL MILESTONE!

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