

## Project plan for the 2012 Conference in Bergen

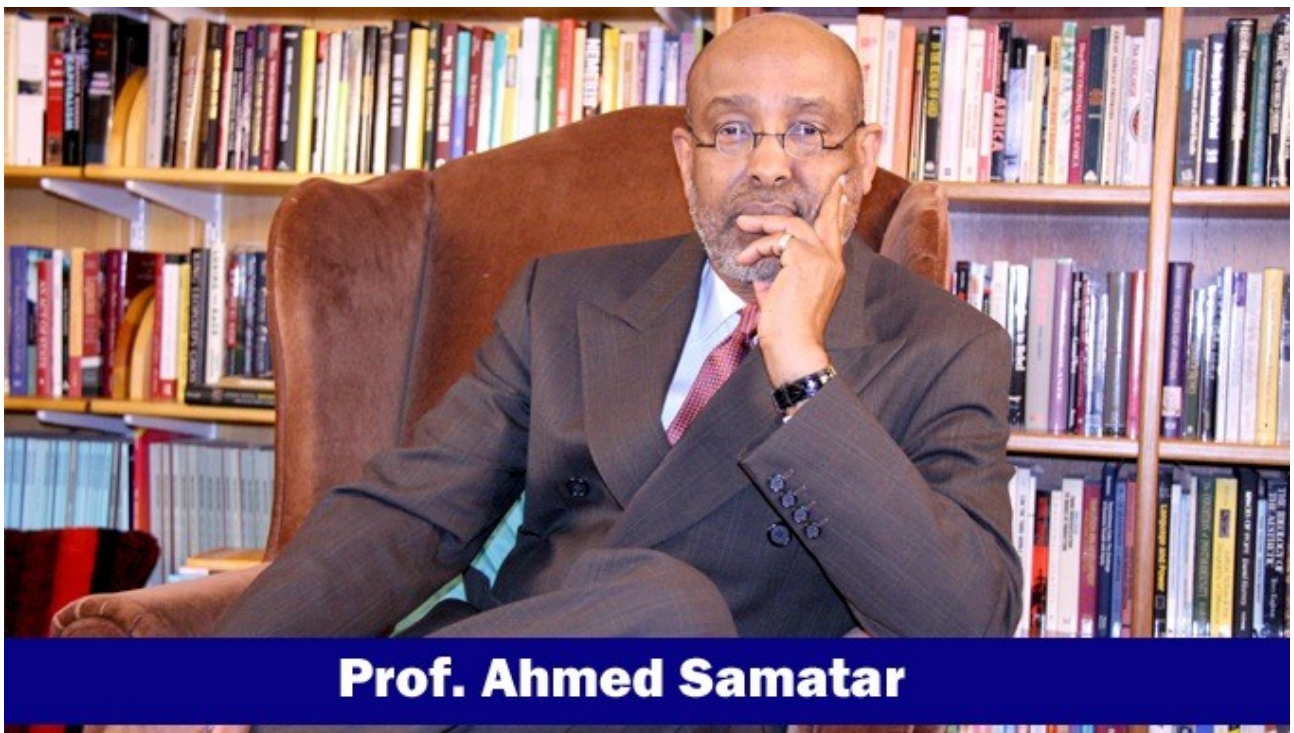
Project Theme:

### “SOMALI INTEGRATION: EXPERIENCES FROM NORWAY, NETHERLANDS, AND NORTH AMERICA”

A project pioneered by the Global Relief Somali Foundation (GRSF)



and powered by Professor Ahmed Samatar  
(Citizen of United States of America and born in Somalia)



## Background information

Contemporary Norway, in the eyes of informed observers, is one of the most successful societies in the world. This judgment is based on, among others, such indicators as: (a) non-violent intergroup relations, (b) civic inclusion and participation, (c) health, education, and social wellbeing, and (d) cultural tolerance. This remarkable evolution and accomplishments make Norway into a model for societies working towards ways of improving the quality of life of their citizens.

In addition to the above, Norway looms large in terms of the country's record in international co-operation. In this context, the country's humane sensibilities have led to an undertaking of bringing into its midst tens of thousands of refugees and asylum seekers from some of the most devastated societies in the Global South. None is more conspicuous in this regard than the arrival of Somalis fleeing their destroyed country. In the city of Bergen alone, it is estimated that about nine hundred individuals Somalis have been resulted.

While succor to refugees ( women, Children, and men) from war-torn societies is a noble and generous act, the ultimate test of such a project must be gauged against the degree of civic mutuality (i.e. integration) that takes place. To be sure, Norway and the city of Bergen can point to success stories that have taken place. That has to be duly noted and publicized. Yet, the general view, at this time, is that the Somalis who have been relocated in the country and the city are not making as much headway in becoming stakeholders as could be possible. If this assumption is true, the time might be ripe for an exploration, in a comparative perspective, why this is so and what insights might be gleaned from other similar experiences such as those in The Netherlands and North America (USA and Canada).

## Details of the project

### Core idea

This project proposal, then, advances the idea of convening a *two and half day* conference that facilitates:

1. a sharing of experiences and insights, and
2. distills these perspectives to identify lessons that might benefit all, but particularly the city of Bergen and the larger Norwegian society. The conference would end with an evening of Norwegian and Somali Cultural performances. Furthermore, if the conference is successful in producing tangible practices, we envisage the design of a second activity (at a later date), in the form of workshops, to be offered in different and appropriate Somali-Norwegian communities such as schools and work places, as well as Norwegian public and private institutions that are directly engaged with the new citizens. We expect the conference to be revolved around, among others, these four questions:
  - What is the difference between a refugee and a citizen?
  - What are the challenges of integration?
  - What are the successes and difficulties from each experience?
  - What specific lessons can be learned from each that could be of applied value to the city of Bergen and Norway?

## Structure

This sections gives a clear insight on how the conference is structured in terms of days and the different actors who are to participate.

### ***Day One (Thursday)***

- Registration: 1:00 pm –2:30 pm
- Opening Remarks: 3:00 pm – 4:00 pm
  - \* Speech by the Mayor or a representative of the Mayor of Bergen (20 minutes)
  - \* Representative from the Department of Immigration (20 minutes)
  - \* Respected and articulate member of the Somali-Norwegian community (20 minutes)
- Keynote: *On Citizenship and Integration* (Prof. A. Samatar) 4:00 pm – 5:30pm
- Opening Reception/Dinner 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm.

### ***Day Two (Friday):***

**Noregian Panel (9:00 am – 12:00 am) - 20 minute for each panelist and the rest for questions.**

- Chair (a Norwegian is recommended)
- Norwegian interacts with Somalis by talking about Norwegian culture and tradition.
- Somalis interacts with Norwegians by talking about somali culture and tradition.

**The Netherlands Panel (1:30 pm- 4: 30) - 20 minute for each panelist and the rest for questions.**

- Chair (a Norwegian is recommended)
- Abdimalik Yusuf : studied international management in Nijmegen in The Netherlands and currently works for Dalmar Foundation – a local NGO in The Hague.
- Ms. Shamso Said : studied law both in Somalia and in The Netherlands. Works as an advisor and trainer with Dutch Knowledge and Information Center.
- Ms. Muna Handule, Studying public health at the University of Amsterdam.
- Dr. Asad Mohamed : studied accounting and working for Dalmar Foundation. Recent Ph. D in Economics from the University of Helsinki

### ***Day (Saturday) Three.***

**North America Panel. (9:00 am- 12:00 noon) - 20 minute for each panelist and the rest for questions.**

- **Chair** (a Norwegian is recommended)
- **Dr. Hussein Ahmed Warsame :**  
Associate Professor of Business and Accounting, University of Calgary, Manitoba, Canada.
- **Ms. Hamdi Abdulle :**  
Executive Director, Somali Youth and Family Club, Seattle , WA. USA.
- **Faysal Ali :**  
Principal, Lincoln International High School, Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA.
- **Dr. Ahmed I. Samatar**

James Wallace Professor of International Studies, Macalester College.

**Recommendations (1:30 pm- 4:00 pm)**

**Closing and Cultural Performance (7:00 pm -10:30 pm)**

- Somali OUD playing and singing (Prof. Samatar as leading vocal and Co!).

## **Project team**

### **Consultant:**

***Professor Ahmed Samatar***

*Samatar will (a) help design the conference, (b) recruit and give assignments to the speakers from Finland, Canada, and USA, (c) deliver the keynote, (d) contribute to the North American panel, (e) perform in the closing cultural activities, and (e) edit the final recommendations.*

*See attached CV for Professor Samatar's academic credentials.*

### **Project Leader:**

***H. E. Ibrahim Farah Hassan***

*Ibrahim Farah Hassan is a born somali who is currently living in Norway, Bergen. During the 2011 conference at CMI (Ch. Michelsen Institute), the leader of Batteriet in Bergen, said these words about Ibrahim, "With Ibrahim, nothing is impossible". And this is true. Ibrahim has a very positive spirit and a dynamic driving force in implementing positive ideas about the integration of foreigners (especially somalis) in Norway.*

### **Project Advisors:**

***Kisimi Kayleemasa***

*Kisimi Kayleemasa, is a born Sierra Leonean currently living in Norway, Bergen. Kisimi is currently studying Computer Science (Programming) at the University of Bergen (UiB) and he hopes to end his studies with masters (M. Sc. in Software Development). Kisimi and Ibrahim came to know each when both of them were resettled as asylum seekers in a small place in Norway called Kinsarvik (a place in Ullengsvang Kommune). Since then, they remained to be close and Kisimi is the one working untiringly to structure and edit the project plans of Ibrahim's organization. This project plan and the CV of professor Smatar are edited/compiled by Kisimi.*

***Stefano Gardone***

*Stefano is a british born currently living in Norway, Bergen. He is currently the leader of Batteriet Bergen and he is doing an excellent job in energizing this project team. As a project advisor; Stefano will help to push through the project plan when it comes to the matter of catering for support of the project in Bergen and Norway as a whole.*

## Target group

- government institutions, for example, Immigration Department (UDI).
- higher educational institutions
- somalis in Europe especially those in Norway
- the general public

## Method / Concept

This is made up of two main aspects which are equally important.

1. A three days conference and if successful (we are optimistic about its success), will be followed by a series of workshop to implement ideas got from the conference.
2. A publication (sort of a guide report) on how to succeed in integrating somalis. Such publication will be of great importance to the immigration department (UDI) and other government institutions. Non-government institutions will also find it very useful.

## Available resources

- A webpage called [www.grsf.no](http://www.grsf.no)
- A viable contact with reliable and highly educated people around the world who know a lot about Somalia.
- A viable contact with educational institutions like CMI and UiB.
- A positive contact with Bergen Kommune and Batteriet Bergen.
- Good contact with the somali community in Bergen and Oslo.

## Needed resources

- An auditorium that can hold at least 100 guests
- Big conference room preferably in a hotel to hold the opening ceremony
- Hotel, Food and Air Tickets for main guests.
- Writing and publication of a report about the conference and also about what Norway as a country can learn from Somalis in America.

## Time line

Conference is to take place in September 2012 (this year).

### *January – August*

During this time line, all will be done to finalize the following issues on time:

- Catering for financial support to cover costs to implement this project by distributing this project plan to potential sponsors.
- Scheduling (final dates and time for events) all the conferences/workshops of the year.
- Informing all actors in Norway and abroad and to commit them.

- Making related promotion.
- Organizing at least two somali oriented activities as a reminder to the conference to be.
- Realizing a container “charity” project (the second one) – sending container full of basic necessities for Somalis in need in the Horn of Africa.
- Promoting a project called 1kroneprosjekt for the mentally ill people in the horn of Africa.

## Budget for 2011 - 2012

<p><b>Travelling : 9 prominent intellectuals:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 from Canada</li> <li>• 5 from America</li> <li>• 4 from Netherlands</li> <li>• 1 from Finland</li> </ul> <p><b>Professional artist:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 OUD player from Denmark</li> </ul> <p><b>Other:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 From Norway</li> </ul>	Approximately 50000 Norwegian Kroner for all travelling tickets.
Hotel cost for say 5 nights inclusive breakfast for each guest not living in Bergen.	Approximately 48000,- Norwegian Kroner for hotel cost.
Food for main guests. We assume 500,- NOK per person. Say for 15 main guests.	Approximately 37500,- Norwegian Kroner.
Consultancy fee for Professor Samatar including writing of a report about the conference.	35000,- Norwegian Kroner (equivalent of about 5000 USD).
1 OUD Player who is to perform live with Professor Samatar as leading vocal.	8000,- NOK (about 1000 USD)
Miscellaneous (showing our guests the beauty of Bergen – tour around Bergen on daily basis)	10000,- NOK

**Total Budget: 188500,- NOK**

## Appendix A – References

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