

# **The Serious Information Needing Attention from Somali Region: An Investigative Report on the Seven-Year Leadership of President Mustafe Omar.**

## **Executive Summary**

This report presents a detailed investigation into the political, economic, social, and security consequences of the seven-year rule of Mustafe Omar, President of the Somali Regional State of Ethiopia. The findings expose a pattern of systemic corruption, widespread human rights abuses, failed governance, politicized clan conflicts, dangerous foreign alignments, and escalating security threats. Under the leadership of Mustafe Omar and his inner circle — notably his cousin Husen Hashi, head of the President's Office — the region has undergone severe institutional degradation and social fragmentation. These issues demand immediate national and international attention.

Renowned scholar Dr. Ali Mazrui once warned, "When leadership loses moral authority, governance transforms into legalized plunder." This analysis applies to the Somali Region, where political office has been weaponized for personal and financial gain at the expense of public interest and intercommunal harmony.

## **1. Corruption and Misuse of Public Resources**

Corruption undermines development, fuels inequality, and erodes trust in government. In the Somali Region, corruption is no longer an incidental issue but a defining characteristic of the current regime.

The Somali Region is under the grip of a state-sponsored corruption network led by President Mustafe Omar and his close relatives, particularly Husen Hashi. Over the past seven years:

- More than \$200 million USD has reportedly been funneled abroad.
- Lavish properties, hotels, and vehicles have been acquired in Dubai, Canada, Turkey, Nairobi, and Qatar.

- Procurement contracts, budget allocations, and foreign investments have been channeled to shell companies and family-owned businesses.
- The regional budgeting process has become opaque and unaccountable, leaving vital sectors — education, health, infrastructure — underfunded.

The implications of this corruption are profound. In the words of political economist Susan Rose-Ackerman, “Corruption stunts growth by redirecting funds from productive to unproductive uses.” This is vividly seen in Somali Region’s stunted development despite federal support and donor engagement.

## **2. State-Sponsored Killings and Human Rights Violations**

Human rights form the moral and legal bedrock of governance. The government’s duty is to protect, not violate, these rights. Unfortunately, the Mustafe Omar administration has turned state power against its own citizens.

The regime has employed violence to silence dissent and instill fear:

- Documented mass killings across several localities have resulted in the deaths of approximately 2,421 innocent civilians, including:
  - Dacawaley (250)
  - Bonbaas (11), Raaso (9), Waykaal (8), Qalaafo (5)
  - Awbare (6), Birqod (unknown), Duhun (unknown), Degahmadow (unknown)
  - Jigjiga – Jidwaaq Prison (54)
  - Doolo Zone (13), Higlaley (5), Gurdumi (3), Doolo Ado (4)
  - Afar-Isa border conflict (1,700)
  - Shiniile (6), Lababaaal (9), Laaso Caano (14)

These killings often lacked judicial oversight, violating Ethiopia's constitutional guarantees and international human rights standards. Victims are frequently buried in unmarked graves, and families denied justice or answers.

Legal expert and former UN rapporteur Philip Alston wrote, "Mass executions without due process are not just human rights violations—they are crimes against humanity." The Somali Region's record is fast approaching this threshold.

### **3. Political Repression and Silencing of Dissent**

A healthy democracy is measured by its tolerance for dissent and its protection of individual freedoms. Under Mustafe Omar, these principles have collapsed.

- Journalists, activists, elders, and opposition figures have been arrested, detained in undisclosed prisons, or disappeared.
- Torture, including poisoning, has reportedly been used to suppress political dissent.
- Independent media outlets have been blocked or threatened, leaving only state-aligned narratives.

This systemic repression has silenced critical voices that could otherwise hold power accountable. According to scholar Noam Chomsky, "If we don't believe in freedom of expression for people we despise, we don't believe in it at all." The Somali Region government, by this standard, has abandoned all pretense of democratic values.

### **4. Development Failure and Economic Stagnation**

Despite seven years of relative peace, the Somali Region has failed to achieve meaningful development. This failure cannot be blamed on instability or lack of resources but rather on poor governance.

- Poor infrastructure development.
- Failed implementation of the regional five-year development plans.

- Favoritism and nepotism in project tenders.
- Widespread mismanagement of donor and federal funds.

While public relations campaigns showcase selective projects, the overall development trajectory has regressed, especially in rural zones. Public services in health, education, water, and roads remain inadequate.

Development economist Jeffrey Sachs has noted, “Corruption is development’s deadliest enemy.” In Somali Region’s case, corruption has weaponized underdevelopment to keep the public disempowered and dependent on the ruling elite’s patronage networks.

### **1. Clan Conflict as a Political Tool**

The manipulation of inter-clan conflict for political purposes is a devastating strategy that weaponizes social divisions for regime survival. The Mustafe Omar administration has systematized this approach:

- 294 clan conflicts were documented between 2018–2025.
- 1,230 individuals lost their lives in violence often sparked or exacerbated by regional officials.
- In many cases, government actors deliberately incited conflict to weaken opposition-aligned communities or to assert territorial claims.

This divide-and-rule strategy echoes colonial administrative policies, where communal divisions were exploited to fragment resistance. As Somali political thinker Dr. Abdi Ismail Samatar notes, “When leaders see society not as citizens but as segmented tribes, governance turns into organized anarchy.”

These conflicts have displaced thousands, disrupted livelihoods, and deeply eroded inter-clan trust — weakening the very foundations of Somali communal cohesion and governance.

## **1. Dangerous Political Alliances and Identity Crisis**

A stable and accountable leadership must exhibit ideological clarity and national loyalty. Mustafe Omar's inconsistent political alliances reflect neither:

- Publicly supports the Ethiopian federal structure, but privately collaborates with anti-federalist actors.
- Maintains covert support for the Amhara nationalist militia Fano, including alleged financial assistance.
- Members of his cabinet and inner circle hold dual citizenships (Canada, Somalia, Kenya, Denmark, UK, Australia) and lack long-term commitment to Ethiopia's stability.
- They adopt different political personas depending on the audience — federalist in Addis Ababa, nationalist in Jigjiga, diasporic in the West — revealing a crisis of identity and values.

Such duplicity undermines regional and national unity. Political theorist Dr. Francis Fukuyama emphasized, "Legitimacy requires both consistency and rootedness in the people being governed." In the Somali Region, opportunistic alliances and shifting identities have bred confusion, alienation, and distrust among citizens.

## **1. Escalating Security Threats**

The Somali Region is becoming a dangerous frontier for extremist actors and ideological infiltration:

- Radical groups such as Al-Shabaab, Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, Tadaamun, and Takfir movements are now reportedly active in the region.
- These groups are expanding their influence through:
  - Religious institutions
  - Local recruitment

- Business investments
- Their long-term objective appears to be regional domination and potential encroachment into the Ethiopian heartland, including Addis Ababa.

This development represents a ticking time bomb. The late Prof. Ali Mazrui warned, “Religious radicalism, when married with political neglect, breeds violent puritanism.” The failure of the regional government to tackle these threats reflects both incompetence and alarming negligence, exposing Ethiopia to foreign and ideological subversion.

### **1. Governance Breakdown and Institutional Erosion**

Sound governance requires functional, autonomous institutions. In the Somali Region, such institutions have been systematically hollowed out:

- The Justice Bureau acts as an arm of political repression.
- Local councils are controlled by party loyalists with no autonomy.
- Oversight institutions, including audit offices, are paralyzed.
- Federal mechanisms for accountability have been blocked or misled.

The destruction of checks and balances has transformed governance into personal rule. The community now experiences institutions not as service providers but as instruments of coercion and cronyism. As Nigerian scholar Claude Ake once said, “When state institutions serve the ruler instead of the ruled, the people become orphans in their own country.”

### **1. Diplomatic Concerns and International Image**

Reputation is currency in international relations. Under this regime, the Somali Region has become a liability to Ethiopia’s diplomatic standing:

- Human rights reports have been manipulated or suppressed.

- International NGOs and embassies are given curated access while atrocities are concealed.
- The diaspora is polarized, with some used as propaganda tools while others are criminalized for criticism.

This strategy not only damages Ethiopia's global image but endangers its diplomatic capital. In a time of intense geopolitical competition in the Horn of Africa, trust and transparency are essential — both of which the current leadership has eroded. Diplomatic scholar Anne-Marie Slaughter cautions, "Soft power relies on moral credibility; without it, a nation's influence crumbles."

## **1. Call to Action**

This report calls for urgent and categorical action:

### **A. Federal Government of Ethiopia:**

- Launch an independent investigation into corruption and human rights abuses.
- Suspend and prosecute responsible officials.
- Restore judicial independence and democratic institutions.

### **B. Ethiopian Human Rights Commission and Parliament:**

- Dispatch a fact-finding mission to Somali Region.
- Hold public hearings on political repression and killings.

### **C. International Human Rights Organizations (Amnesty, HRW, etc.):**

- Document violations in Somali Region.
- Call for sanctions against complicit officials.
- Demand access to political prisoners and undisclosed detention centers.

#### **D. Embassies and International Partners:**

- Re-evaluate aid and development projects linked to corrupt officials.
- Demand transparency and accountability from regional authorities.
- Support civil society and press freedom initiatives.

#### **E. Somali Region Community and Civil Society:**

- Demand justice for victims and truth about lost lives.
- Resist divisive politics and embrace unity.
- Promote grassroots leadership and rebuild trust in public institutions.

#### **F. Intellectuals and Traditional Elders' Role**

- It is imperative that the intellectuals of the Somali Region take the initiative and take the lead in leading the local people in holding the Jigjiga administration accountable for the bloodletting and mismanagement that they have committed.
- The traditional elders should mobilize and raise awareness on how to protect their dignity, demand decent public services, and act against any evil actions done by Mustafe's administration.

#### **Conclusion**

The Somali Region stands at a dangerous crossroads. The last seven years of Mustafe Omar's leadership have inflicted deep wounds — moral, institutional, and political. The region needs renewal through justice, transparency, reconciliation, and competent leadership.

The silence of stakeholders is no longer acceptable. Ethiopia's unity, the wellbeing of Somali citizens, and the integrity of its federal system depend on timely and decisive intervention.



As the late Chinua Achebe warned, “The trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely a failure of leadership.” The same now holds true for the Somali Region — and the cost of inaction will be paid in blood, broken institutions, and lost generations.

**Investigation Report by Joint Team of Scholars and Experts**