

Editorial

**MOGADISHU 24**

**Sharif's  
Stance: Balance  
Of Power  
Or Step  
to The Abyss**

The President of the Federal Government Somalia, Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, held a meeting with the 7th President, Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, on July 4, 2023. This meeting marked the second encounter between them in two weeks, taking place in Mogadishu.

As per the statement from Villa Somalia, the meeting served the purpose of providing a comprehensive briefing on the general situation of the country and updating on the government's ongoing efforts in the fight against Al-Shabaab. However, this meeting was widely perceived as having minimal significance, often regarded as a normal meeting between the incumbent President and a former President.

However, after few hours, Sharif released a brief statement clarifying that the meeting served as a preliminary discussion, setting the stage for broader conversations with politicians who have expressed their opposition to the National Consultative Council's Agreement reached in Baidoa, aimed to establish a new system of governance.

Sharif had intended to dispel any notions that the meeting was motivated by personal interests or he joined the government's efforts to combat Al-Shabaab. Rather, he sought to establish himself as a serious opposition politician by utilizing the platform to critique the government's management system.



## One Meeting; Two Agendas Navigating Divergent Objectives



Villa Somalia 

"Today, President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud and I held an important meeting, which marks our second encounter. This is a preliminary meeting of broader deliberations involving politicians who have opposed the National Consultative Council's Agreement."



Sharif Sheikh  
Ahmed 

"President Hassan and I agreed on the urgent need to convene the meeting, with a specific focus on ensuring the presence of the politicians who voiced their opposition to the National Consultative Council's agreement."

*In this report, Mogadishu24 delves into Sheikh Sharif's decisions, plans, and the outcomes of his activities.*

## Sharif's arrival in Mogadishu

The former President of the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia, Sharif Sheikh Ahmed made a highly anticipated arrival in the capital. His arrival has triggered a significant political upheaval and sparked the emergence of a fledgling opposition movement against the current Government.

According to information gathered by Mogadishu24, it appears that Sheikh Sharif is discontented with President Hassan Sheikh's administration. He claims to have been denied the positions he expected, despite believing that he played a significant role in the victory of the incumbent president.

During the last presidential election held on May 15, 2022 in Mogadishu, President Sharif secured a disappointing 5th place, receiving only 39 votes and failing to advance beyond the first round. This marked his worst performance as a four-time candidate. Nevertheless, Sharif continues to be regarded as a prominent and influential figure in the political landscape for the following reasons.

- ★ The Government's need for political support, particularly on the security agenda and the electoral reform proponents.
- ★ Preparedness to lead the opposition in the upcoming elections.

## Opposition coalition:

Sharif is seen as someone who can unify the opposition parties and politicians who politically disagree with Hassan Sheikh against the Government, including various notable politicians in Somali politics:



Source: AFP

**Said Deni:** The President of Puntland whose term is coming to an end, finds himself engaged in a significant dispute with the leaders of the Federal Government. In order to pursue his goal of re-election through constitutional amendments and the electoral process, Deni requires political support from Mogadishu.

Meanwhile, Puntland's overall opposition to the security and political agenda set forth by Hassan Sheikh Mohamud can be solidified through an alliance with Sharif. Consequently, Deni emerges as the politician who particularly relies on Sharif's alliance, at least in the near future.

**Ali Gudlawe:** As the most recent regional state established under the Federal Government, Hirshabelle lacks strong government institutions. However, with the support of Sheikh Sharif, they can acquire the necessary power to affect any changes in the Government's decision-making process. This close association will safeguard Gudlawe's presidential seat and will also empower President Sharif in the National Consultation Council.

**Omar Abdirashid, Abdiweli Gaas, and the Farole Family:** This is a group of Majeerteen Sub-clan who undermines the Prime Minister. They view any political pressure faced by Hassan Sheikh as an opportunity to potentially assume the role of Prime Minister themselves. Consequently, they align themselves as temporary allies of Sharif Sheikh Ahmed to further their own political ambitions.

**Hassan Ali Khayre:** the former Prime Minister of Somalia is viewed as having a promising opportunity in the upcoming elections, particularly if the previous election method is used. To achieve this, he sees Sharif Sheikh Ahmed as a means to challenge the one person-one vote electoral system. Simultaneously, aligning with Sharif Sheikh Ahmed can help diminish the influence of the Hiraab, which is currently aligned with Hassan Sheikh Mohamud.

**Abdulkadir Osole and Adow Aligees:** these two candidates along with others who have similar interests, harbor concerns over losing their previous contracts or not being granted new ones. As a result, they perceive every political action and crisis as a potential opportunity for negotiation. This group holds approximately 30 Members of Parliament (MPs) who are involved in these exchanges and seek to leverage their influence in pursuit of their interests.

## Parliamentary relations

Upon arrival at the airport, Sheikh Sharif was warmly welcomed by numerous MPs who are allied to him. Their speeches carried a tone of political satire, signaling the beginning of an enthusiastic campaign that resembled an election campaign in its fervor. In a Twitter statement, Sheikh Sharif affirmed that the meetings would continue.

"I held a consultation meeting tonight with several members of the Federal Parliament, where we deliberated on the country's situation and sought solutions to the challenges. We intend to continue these meetings across different segments of society," reads his Tweet.

The Speaker of the House of the People (Lower House), Adan Madobe, is considered a close ally of Sheikh Sharif, indicating Sharif's influence in the decision-making processes in the Parliament. Undoubtedly, this shows that Sharif plays a pivotal role in the Somali parliament in spite of him being a member, and his impact should not be underestimated.



Source: AFP

May 27, 2009

*Somalia's President Sharif Sheikh Ahmed (L) speaks with the speaker of Somalia's parliament Aden Madobe at the Presidential palace in Mogadishu*

## Farmajo's collaboration as a solution



Despite their previous disagreements, it is noteworthy that Sheikh Sharif, during his presidency, played a role in introducing Farmajo to the politics in 2010 when he appointed him as the Prime Minister of Somalia. Additionally, the group associated with Farmajo shares a common ideological affinity with Sheikh Sharif, and many of its members joined politics during his tenure.

This convergence of factors could potentially foster collaboration between Sheikh Sharif and the Farmajo, as they are currently seeking representation from the Hawiye clan to challenge and oppose Hassan Sheikh.

### Support of Mudullood clan

The Mudullood community, to which both presidents belong, perceives that President Hassan Sheikh has marginalized them in favor of the Habargidir clan. This issue holds significant importance for Sheikh Sharif, who sees an opportunity to leverage this sentiment to his advantage.

By taking advantage of the concerns of the Mudullood clan, Sheikh Sharif seeks to mobilize a base of support and position himself as a viable alternative to President Hassan Sheikh.

In order to accomplish this, Sheikh Sharif made a significant gesture by visiting Haji Ali Ugas Abdulle in the hospital, along with the Ugas of the Muddullood clan, despite his brief stay of only 24 hours in Mogadishu.

Key figures in Muddullood clan including elders, businessmen, and professionals seems to show a strong inclination to support Sheikh Sharif, which greatly bolsters his campaign in various aspects

# Sharif's next steps



A reliable source has confirmed that Sheikh Sharif has abandoned his aspirations of power-sharing with the government and is now gearing up to confront a formidable opposition that can effectively balance the government and make crucial decisions.

His expected next moves include increased media appearances, and meetings with several parliamentarians. These steps mirror the strategy employed by the current president upon his return to Mogadishu in 2018, which ultimately led to his successful bid for the presidency of Somalia. The response of the ruling president to this political storm remains unknown, but it will serve as a significant test of the ruling group's maturity and ability to navigate the challenges ahead.



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