

Somalia's political chaos is dividing the country into eleven small regions based on clans and not zones".

In his conclusion, he requested the participants to remember that "Somalia's strength lies as a united society, and that separation is the worst enemy among us".

Presentations by two panellists - Mrs. Zaynab Aden from the north-west (known as Somaliland) and Mr. Ahmed Haji Jama from the north-east (known as Puntland) followed Mr. Shell's speech. They presented the perspectives of the Recovery Zones in north-east and north-west Somalia known as Puntland and Somaliland. Both these regions rejected the Arte National Peace Process and its outcome, including the recognition of the Transitional National Government.

In his presentation, Mr. Jama stated that "the Djibouti peace process was undemocratic, unrepresentative and illegal", while, Mrs. Aden pointed out that, "this new administration will bring another civil war and chaos to the recovery zones". In conclusion, both presenters stated that their perspectives on Somalia peace making in general are not different from fellow Somalis. They just did not agree with the clan-based approach that Arte conference adopted.

It is important to note that the positions that the panellists represented (those of the Puntland and Somaliland administrations) generated a in-depth and heated debate among the participants. It was noted that both regions used the same clan-based approach when they were establishing their administrations.

The participants also raised very important questions regarding how to enhance the overall peace process in Somalia and maintain the stability of the recovery zones. Would the New Transitional Government be able:

- to promote their views and interest in all parts of Somalia without resorting to violence?
- to preserve sufficient support from the international community and the Somali diaspora to unify the country?
- to face the threat posed by warlords and regional leaders intent on dividing the country into small regions with the support of neighbouring countries?
- to decentralize power and share resources equally in all Somali regions?

At the end of the session, all participants agreed to continue to support the national reconciliation process through more dialogue, forgiveness and confidence building among all regions in Somalia.

With the **Friday afternoon session**, the conference opened officially. The focus was an update on the current political achievement, challenges ahead and possible commitments of the international community including Canada and the United Nations.

At the opening, Ms. Ebyan Salah, the Executive Director of the Som_Can Institute for Research and Development (SCIRD) welcomed all the participants and shared some inspiring remarks with them.