

through a very critical phase on its path to peace, reconciliation and reconstruction. This line of thinking inspired Som-Can Institute for Research and Development and Partnership Africa Canada to organize the Ottawa Conference, which was held in November 3-4, 2000.

Aims of the Conference

The aims of the conference were to:

- to raise awareness among the Canadian Government, Canadian NGOs, the private sector and the Somali diaspora, and to seek their support for the efforts of the peace process and democratic development in Somalia;
- to distill concrete recommendations with respect to the peace process, and issues of good governance and democratic development;
- to share the recommendations with the new Somali authorities and the international community;
- to strengthen and empower Somali civil society.

Som-Can Institute for Research and Development and Partnership Africa Canada strongly believed that presenting the lessons learned from the Somalia peace process would allow the Canadian government and NGOs the possibility to identify options for supporting the ongoing peace process and reconstruction. Canada is known to its leadership role in peacebuilding and citizen diplomacy in the world.

Participants of the Conference

Over a hundred participants and seven prominent speakers attended in this conference. Participants included representatives from the Canadian Government, NGOs (including Somali- Canadian NGOs) and other institutions, individual friends of Somalia and Somali activists.

The guest speakers were:

- His Excellence Mr. Roble Olhaye, the Djibouti Ambassador to the United States and Canada and representative to the United Nations.
- Dr Babafemi Badejo, a representative of the United Nations' Political Office for Somalia in Nairobi.
- Mr. Ahmed Dahir Shell, a co_chair of the Somali Technical Committee for Somalia National Peace Conference, who came from Djibouti.
- Mr. Abdishakur Abdulle, a Researcher and Scientist who is based in the United Arab Emirates.

Other speakers were:

- Dr Osman Salaad, Geologist and Researcher, from Quebec City.