

SOMALILAND STANDARD

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Ilhan Omar Turns Her Back on Somaliland's Aspiration for Freedom

By [admin](#) - August 28, 2019



Israel was the first country to recognize Somaliland's independence from the United Kingdom.

Democratic Minnesota Rep. Ilhan Omar gave a shout-out to the land of her birth, Somalia, in honor of its Independence Day. "Happy Independence Day Somalia," Omar tweeted on July 1st. "Somalia hanoolaato," she added, which means "Long live Somalia." Omar should have included a shout-out to Israel, the country she loves to bash as racist and colonialist, for being the first of 34 countries, including the United States, that recognized Somaliland after it gained independence from the United Kingdom on June 26, 1960. Unfortunately, things did not go as smoothly for Somaliland as its people had hoped for in their yearning to be free, something that Omar neglected to mention in her celebration of her homeland's independence.

Somaliland first decided to join the larger area to its south that had been under Italy's control and form what became known as the Republic of Somalia. However, Somaliland tried to declare its own independence in 1991 from what had become a failed state beset by civil war. That happened to be the same year that Omar fled the civil war in Somalia with her family, settling in a Kenyan refugee camp. Omar and her family then came to the United States when she was 12 and became a U.S. citizen several years later. "The lesson is to be hopeful, to dream and to aspire for more," said Omar last year. The people of Somaliland also aspire for more than remaining tied to the corrupt regime that Omar and her family managed to escape from. But the Somaliland people have not been as lucky as Omar.

By an overwhelming supermajority of 97 percent, the Somaliland people voted for adopting an independent constitution in a 2001 referendum monitored by an outside group, the Initiative and Referendum Institute that is affiliated with the University of Southern California. Somaliland has taken significant steps to demonstrate its preparation for independence. It has, for example, its own constitution, bicameral legislature, court system, and executive branch, along with its own police force and currency. However, Somaliland remains in limbo. No countries have stepped forward to recognize it as a sovereign state separate and apart from the corrupt, war-torn Somalia regime to the south. Somalilanders are in effect being held hostage to this regime.

Without being recognized as an independent country in the international community, the Somaliland government cannot participate directly in forums in which international aid distribution is discussed. This means that international humanitarian aid, including food, that Somaliland's food insecure people so desperately need is routed first through Mogadishu. The Somaliland government cannot get loans from the World Bank or attract a significant number of international investors until it is able to break away entirely from the failed state of Somalia.

But the Somalia regime in Mogadishu refuses to let go of Somaliland. Omar, who sits on the powerful House Foreign Affairs Committee, has not spoken out to address the hopes and aspirations of the Somaliland people. For Omar, it's all about her beloved Palestinians, baby.

On the other hand, Israel, the country that Omar loves to hate, reportedly [put out feelers nearly a decade ago](#) indicating its willingness to consider restoring its recognition of Somaliland as an independent state – this time, independent from the Mogadishu regime. And the people of Somaliland, where Islam is the official religion, appear interested in developing a good relationship with the Jewish State of Israel. Abdirahman M. Dirye is a Somaliland activist and Senior Editor at The Democracy Chronicles, African news edition who [wrote](#) that “other Somalis hate Somaliland for its pronounced stand with suffering Jews.” He added, “Somaliland needs not only Israeli economic and military assistance to remain a bulwark against growing terror in the Horn of Africa but also needs world Jews to stand by Somaliland's outright independence.”

[Somalia's government in Mogadishu fired a high-level official in its Foreign Ministry](#) for daring to suggest that it would be a good idea for the Somali government to establish diplomatic relations with Israel. “It is in our interest to welcome Israel,” he wrote, while criticizing the Palestinians for being their own worst enemies. Also, Somalia's envoy to Switzerland and representative to the United Nations in Geneva drew the ire of her bosses when she abstained from a United Nations Human Rights Council condemning Israel over its control of the Golan Heights. The Somali Foreign Ministry immediately summoned her to return to Mogadishu.

A [report claims](#) that Somali Foreign Minister Ahmed Isse Awad took the action to summon the ambassador only after receiving a call from Congresswoman Ilhan Omar. The Somali government denied the report, which could not be verified. The report is plausible, however, since Omar and the foreign minister do know each other. Moreover, Omar endorsed Somalian President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed (known as “Farmaajo”) in an election described as one of the [“the most fraudulent political events in Somalia's history.”](#) Omar's brother-in-law, who is a U.S citizen, by no coincidence entered Somalia's government as the permanent secretary of Farmaajo's hand-picked prime minister. Nevertheless, despite (or probably because of) her high level connections with the corrupt Somali government, Omar has done nothing as a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee to help the people oppressed by that regime.

Just like Omar herself, the government of the land she escaped hates Israel. You can take Rep. Ilhan Omar out of Somalia, but you can't take the anti-Semitic hatred for the Jewish State of Israel out of Omar, which she no doubt began to learn during her childhood days in Somalia. And she has turned her back on the people of Somaliland who deserve to be free from the corrupt regime to the south.