



National Endowment for Democracy

Supporting freedom around the world

It is with grief and outrage that the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) learned of the targeted assassination of our esteemed colleague, Ali Iman Sharmarke, the director of *Horn Afrik* radio. He was killed when a remote-controlled mine was detonated on the route of the funeral procession for *Radio Capital Voice* director Mahad Ahmed Elmi, who was shot only a few hours earlier by unidentified gunmen in the outlying Mogadishu neighborhood of Gubta.

All parties to the armed conflict in Mogadishu have demonstrated a wanton and horrific disregard for the loss and disruption of civilian lives. The deaths of Mr. Elmi and Mr. Sharmarke must be regarded as a coordinated attempt to silence the voices of those committed to the promotion of peace and human rights in Somalia. The Endowment calls on the authorities of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) to investigate and prosecute those responsible for these horrific crimes.

We also condemn the targeted persecution of journalists in Somalia that has claimed six lives this year. The TFG should affirm the principles of press freedom enshrined in the Somali Transitional Federal Charter by taking immediate and public action to ensure the protection of all journalists and media houses.

The Endowment wishes to express its solidarity with the Somali media outlets that temporarily suspended programming in protest of the assassinations of their colleagues, and with the nongovernmental organizations and civic groups that continue to press for the realization of basic human rights in Somalia. We offer our sincere condolences to the bereaved families of Mr. Sharmarke and Mr. Elmi, who have suffered profound loss on behalf of the Somali nation. We extend our sympathy to Sahal Adulle of *Reuters News Agency*, who was injured during the detonation, and to Abdihakim Omar Jimale of *Radio Mogadishu*, who was the target of a failed assassination attempt last week by unidentified gunmen in the Yaqshid neighborhood of Mogadishu.

It is our profound hope that the sacrifice of these courageous people has not been in vain and that their efforts will lead to peace and a better future for the people of Somalia.

Carl Gershman, President