

INTERNATIONAL ELECTION OBSERVATION

Somaliland Elections

2024

International Election Observation Mission to Somaliland's 2024 elections launches final report

20 March 2025

The University College London International Election Observation Mission (IEOM) to Somaliland's presidential and political party elections on 13 November 2024 has published its final report.

The mission, led by Tim Cole, a former UK ambassador, was invited by Somaliland's National Electoral Commission (NEC) to provide an impartial and independent assessment of the electoral process. In all, 28 observers from 13 countries observed the electoral process in all of Somaliland's six regions. The mission was conducted in accordance with the Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation, emphasising the strict impartiality of the mission.

In the elections, the main opposition party's candidate won the Presidency and a new political party was elected for Somaliland's future elections. The mission observed a well-managed and peaceful election process, with the results widely accepted.

However, the elections highlighted a number of areas where Somaliland's electoral process falls short in comparison to international democratic standards.

In the report, the mission makes 26 recommendations with a view to further enhance the conduct of elections in Somaliland and to support efforts to bring them fully in line with international obligations and standards for democratic elections.

Priority recommendations include:

- *Ensuring that Somaliland's electoral process is not subject to delays that compromise the democratic rights of Somalilanders*
- *Eliminating Somaliland's limit on three political parties and allowing independent candidates to run for office*
- *Making sure that the secrecy of the vote is upheld in future elections in line with international standards*
- *Permanent staffing in all NEC departments to preserve institutional memory and enhance running of future elections, and a permanent NEC presence throughout Somaliland at district level*
- *Reviewing the voter registration system and updating the voter register more regularly to allow maximum participation by eligible voters*

Says Tim Cole: "We congratulate the NEC and Somaliland for its successful holding of elections in a calm and peaceful environment. There is still work to be done to bring Somaliland's elections up to international standards. As we launch our final report, we hope our recommendations will be useful in helping Somaliland as it continues its democratic journey. With the next parliamentary elections not at all far away, the focus must be kept and this important work must go on."

The full IEOM Somaliland 2024 final report is at:
<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/consultants/sites/consultants/files/sml7.pdf>