

## **Redsea Cultural Foundation, Rift Valley Institute and the European Union launch Hargeysa's first "Centre for Somali Culture"**

*Hargeysa, 08/08/2014*

Today, the Redsea Cultural Foundation supported by the Rift Valley Institute, with the assistance of the European Union, launched the "Hargeysa Cultural Centre". This new Centre, the first of its kind, will contribute to the protection of the Somali cultural heritage and the revival of Somali culture. It will create new spaces for cultural exchanges and inter-generational dialogue, and promote culture as a pillar of reconciliation, recovery and development.

The "Hargeysa Cultural Centre" will organise an annual programme of cultural events, including art exhibitions, drama, film screenings, poetry readings, public lectures, and book launches. It will create a public library, develop the Hargeysa International Book Fair and will organize writing, dance, photography, music and other classes for young people interested in arts and culture.

"The Somaliland National Vision 2030 recognises the unique contribution of culture and arts to the building of social cohesion", said Dr. Saad Ali Shire, Minister of National Planning & Coordination. "Our values are deeply rooted in the arts and culture. The Government supports the aims of the center to place youth at the centre of cultural revival and to foster a literate, creative and open minded generation that will contribute to the development of our society."

"The EU is very much engaged in supporting the preservation and development of the Somali culture", said the EU Special Envoy, Michele Cervone d'Urso. "Culture lies at the heart of human development and civilization. It is what brings together people from all walks of life and generations. We hope that the Centre will train a new generation of Somali poets, writers, performers and artists in order to revive the Somali culture as an indispensable feature to achieve peace and security."

"Our new Centre will be a venue for Somali artists, especially young people to showcase their work and talents, while acquiring new skills through a range of cultural classes. It will also stimulate debate on key issues relating to culture, identity, and freedom of expression, providing a platform for all sectors of the community, especially youth and women to express their ideas and aspirations. Our hope is that the Center will inspire and encourage young Somalis in Somaliland to expand their horizons, imagine and aspire to new possibilities." said Jama Musse Jama, Executive Director of Redsea Cultural Foundation. **(END)**

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**EU MISSION TO SOMALIA**

**Delegation of the European Union to Kenya**

P.O. Box 45119 Nairobi | Insurance House, Ragati Road, Upper Hill

Tel.: +254 (0)20 280 20 00

Email: [SOMALIAMISSION@eeas.europa.eu](mailto:SOMALIAMISSION@eeas.europa.eu)

Website: <http://www.eu-somalia.eu>

Twitter: [@SomaliaEU](https://twitter.com/SomaliaEU) | Flickr: [EUSomalia](https://www.flickr.com/photos/eusomalia/) | Youtube: [EU SOMALIA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC8wvYUgUgUgUgUgUgUgUgUg)