

Communiqué

Climate Change and Conflict in the Horn Challenges, Responses and New Mandates

Annual Forum for Ideas
4 –6 December 2022, Djibouti

The Heritage Institute for Policy Studies' Sixth Annual Forum for Ideas, held in Djibouti between 4 – 6 of December 2022 successfully concluded today. Over 500 participants consisting of policymakers, academics, business leaders, and civil society, of whom 350 came from countries in the Horn region and worldwide, spent three days of research findings presentation, deliberations, and policy dialogue.

The Republic of Djibouti hosts the annual event under the auspices of His Excellency President Ismail Omar Guelleh. The Presidents of the Federal Republic of Somalia, H.E. Hassan Sheikh Mohamud and H.E. President Ismail Omar Guelleh, jointly participated on the last day of the conference and presented closing statements. Other high-level delegations from Somalia, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Djibouti participated in this year's AFI, which focused on Climate Change and Conflict in the Horn. Participants include Somalia's Deputy Prime Minister, His Excellency Salah Ahmed Jama, and other senior ministers and MPs from Ethiopia, Djibouti, Kenya, and Somalia.

This Annual Forum for Ideas coincided with Heritage Institute's 10th Anniversary. Since its inception, the institute has created a culture conducive to dialogue and thus contributed to the transformation of the policy environment in Somalia and the broader Horn of Africa. As Somalia's leading think tank, the institute has promoted a culture of evidence-based policymaking. It has become a locally respected and internationally recognized brand.

As the institute's flagship program, the Annual Forum for Ideas offers an interactive platform for Somali and Horn of Africa's policymakers, practitioners, business leaders, civil society, academia, and activists.

Throughout the three days of the conference, participants engaged in a substantive dialogue on the nexus between climate change and conflict and governance in the Horn of Africa.

Following three days of extensive policy dialogues and substantive exchange of ideas among over 500 participants from around the Horn of Africa and beyond;



The Participants of the Annual Forum for Ideas have noted:

- The findings of 43 peer-reviewed academic papers presented at the Forum by eminent scholars and practitioners on the nexus between climate change and conflict;
- The dramatic and adverse impact of climate change on the lives and livelihoods of citizens across the Horn of Africa;
- IGAD's Regional Climate Change Strategy (IRCCS) 2022-2030 and the African Union Climate Change and Resilient Development Strategy and Action Plan (2022-2032) which provides a broad outline for harmonized and coordinated actions to respond to the impacts of climate change
- Republic of Djibouti's recently inaugurated Regional Research Observatory on the Environment and Climate (RROEC) which will highly contribute to the Horn region's ability to augment the mitigation and adaptation with regards to climate change. Participants also noted the Climate Change Summit held in October this year which inspired the theme of the 2022 Annual Forum for Ideas.
- That climate change is the single most pressing public policy issue facing the Horn of Africa and the larger world today.
- The urgent need for a collective regional action and coordination to mitigate the worst effects of climate change.
- That Member States of IGAD face significant capacity challenges in terms of scientific information, tools, and knowledge as they strive to implement their adaptation and mitigation plans.
- The inadequate response from the international community, particularly the most polluting countries, to help the most vulnerable countries in the world who are located in the Horn of Africa.
- That many member states of IGAD have not adopted the National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), a key pillar in the mainstreaming of climate-friendly policies



ESTABLISHMENT OF HIGH-LEVEL REGIONAL TASK FORCE

The participants of the Forum for Ideas, having considered the above points:

PROPOSED to establish the Horn of Africa High-Level Task Force on Climate Change with the objective to:

- **Promote** coordinated action among IGAD member states in their implementation of the environmental and climate change dimensions of the 2030 and 2063 Agendas and other relevant multilateral environmental agreements.
- **Identify** and recommend policy measures designed to strengthen environmental and climate change governance, improving environmental resources management sustainably, and climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- **Assess** the existing institutional and governance capacities and identify key environmental and climate change challenges within the regional countries, such as inter-institutional cooperation, enhancement of legal and regulatory frameworks, and exchange of knowledge and good management practices.
- **Examine** environmental and climate risks and pro-policy guidance on preparedness, prevention, and risk reduction measures to regional countries and other relevant institutions.

SECRETARIAT OF THE HIGH-LEVEL TASK FORCE

Participants tasked the Heritage Institute to act as a secretariat for the Horn of Africa High-Level Task Force on Climate Change, in close collaboration with IGAD and its member states and relevant civil society organizations with the view toward identifying and convening an inclusive group of experts and government officials who can facilitate a collective regional action.

The high-level task force should appoint, by January 2023, a qualified Senior Coordinator who is responsible for the operationalization of the High-Level Task Force as soon as possible.



To this end, the governments of Djibouti, Somalia and Ethiopia (through the Somali Region) commit to providing necessary facilitation for the High-Level Task Force within their respective ministries of environment. Furthermore, the forum urged IGAD, as a regional body, to provide necessary support to the work of the High-Level Task Force.

The High-Level Task Force is expected to provide and present its comprehensive workplan within four months after formation. Furthermore, the work of the Task Force will be featured at every Annual Forum for Ideas given the importance of this issue.

NOTE OF APPRECIATION

Participants registered their profound appreciation to the Republic of Djibouti's people and government, led by its leader, His Excellency Ismail Omar Guelleh, for generously hosting the Annual Forum for Ideas for the fifth year and supporting the Heritage Institute's commendable work.

The participants further thanked H.E. President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud of Somalia making close remarks at the 2022 Annual Forum for Ideas despite his busy schedule focused largely on confronting Al-Shabaab extremists. Participants expressed their solidarity with the people and the Government of Somalia in their just war against terrorism.

Participants also appreciated the co-conveners of the 2022 Annual Forum for Ideas – the Heritage Institute for Policy Studies and the University of Djibouti for the timely topic, superb organization, and unmatched hospitality. The participants further congratulated the Heritage Institute on the successful tenth anniversary and wished the institute many more years of exemplary leadership in research and deliberations.

