

Somali diaspora community meets officials from the Netherlands' ministry of foreign affairs



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Reporter



Somali diaspora organisations in the Netherlands have on Thursday met with Tijmen Rooseboom, the former head of the Somali office of the Nederland embassy to Nairobi for the last three years and his successor Roelof Haveman over diaspora's role towards rebuilding and reinstating Somalia.

The meeting which took place in the Hague, was facilitated by ministry of foreign affairs in the Netherlands particularly by the department of the sub-Sahara countries in Africa and coordinated by the Federation of the Somali Associations in the Netherlands (FSAN).

During his mandate, the outgoing deputy ambassador Roose Boom gave more detailed report over his embassy's activities in Somalia involving in peacekeeping, business enhancing, anti-pirate missions and other projects relating public developments and supporting the current Somalia's federal government to find better judicial system.

Rooseboom said that he went to many places in Somalia, namely Garowe, Hargeysa and Mogadishu to ensure the continuation of the projects in which the Netherlands government carried out on the ground.

"A lot of movements of progress are underway in many parts of Somalia by the diaspora. In every town I visit, I could see many active Somali-Dutch community who were contributing in the efforts of rebuilding their country." Rooseboom said. "Netherlands is among the donor nations in the EU that strongly support financially the peacekeeping mission by the African union troops in Somalia."

He has underlined the importance of the diasporas' role in rebuilding, development and peacekeeping efforts of their country.

The diaspora community members asked Mr. Rooseboom many questions over his report from Somalia during his mandate.

After that, Mr. Haveman, the new deputy ambassador, expressed his pleasure over the meeting the Somalia diaspora in the Netherlands and his readiness to accept all their positive thoughts and advices.

He said he worked in number of African countries that witnessed conflicts like Mali, Rwanda and South Sudan. He stressed that he is willing to closely work with the Somalis in the country and give more attention to the needs of the ordinary people by travelling to many places of Somalia

The officials of the Netherlands' ministry of foreign affairs asked the participants to contribute their constructive suggestions on the strategical plans in which the ministry wants to implement in Somalia.

The representatives of the Somali diaspora in the Netherlands appreciated the plan and gave more suggestions in both writing and oral, particularly they pointed out that Netherland government would be better to help Somalia in water management, agricultural system, fishing skills, commercial development, and sustainable energy.

The Netherlands government was strongly advised by the diaspora community to increase its role in Somalia issues according to the other European nations.

During the meeting, the attendees discussed over the necessity that Hague government should contribute in helping Somalia how to function the local governments.

Women's role was also being remarked in session and seen as more important among society. Members of the Somali diaspora and the officials from the Dutch ministry of foreign affairs made a standpoint for the protection of the human rights denouncing all kinds of oppression against freedom of speech in Somalia.

Somalis have urged the Netherlands government to show a direct involvement in the support of Somalia's rebuilding efforts by encouraging the diaspora people. The officials from the ministry welcomed that initiative as a key point for the future.

Members of the Somali diaspora organisations in the Netherlands agreed to have another meeting in which they will put all their thoughts and suggestions together and then make a joint communique that will be submitted to the ministry of foreign affairs in the Netherlands before October 2018.

The Senior Policy Officer - Sub-Saharan Africa Department of the ministry Ismael Moalim have asked for representatives of the diaspora to let him know about the outcome of their next meeting.