



Concept Note

Somali First Annual Justice Conference 2025

1. INTRODUCTION

The Federal Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs (MoJCA) will convene the First Annual Justice Sector Conference in 2025, grounded in the vision and commitments of the 2024 Justice Sector Strategy (JSS). This gathering will bring together national institutions, judicial leaders, Federal Member States, development partners, civil society, academia, and international experts to reflect thoughtfully on Somalia's justice journey and shape the road ahead. It offers a rare space where experience, wisdom, and modern ambition meet — honouring the foundation that has carried our country while preparing the reforms that must follow.

Through inclusive dialogue and shared resolve, the conference will focus on advancing legal and institutional reforms, strengthening judicial independence, broadening fair access to justice, and building sustainable financing models. It will also reinforce accountability and transparency, essential pillars for restoring public trust and confidence in justice institutions. By meeting each year to align vision and responsibility, Somalia signals its commitment to a justice system that protects every citizen, upholds the rule of law, and contributes to lasting stability, peace, and development.

2. CONTEXT

Somalia's justice sector remains at a critical juncture. Despite progress in recent years, significant structural, legal, and operational challenges continue to undermine the delivery of fair, efficient, and accessible justice:

- Outdated and fragmented legal frameworks that fail to reflect constitutional values, international human rights standards, or the evolving needs of society.
- Limited access to justice, particularly for women, children, internally displaced persons (IDPs), persons with disabilities, and marginalized communities.

- Weak institutional capacity and governance gaps, exacerbated by overlapping mandates and limited inter-agency coordination.
- Chronic underfunding and dependency on donor resources, leaving justice institutions ill-equipped to perform their constitutional mandates.
- Weak judicial independence, coupled with inadequate accountability mechanisms and rising perceptions of corruption and impunity.
- Limited public trust in justice institutions, resulting in low case reporting, reliance on informal systems, and weakened rule of law.

3. RATIONALE

The 2025 Justice Sector Conference responds to the need for an inclusive, structured dialogue that will:

1. Accelerate legal and institutional reforms to harmonize Somalia's legislative framework with constitutional principles, international standards, and the realities of Somalia's pluralistic justice landscape.
2. Expand access to justice by identifying and promoting models that effectively serve vulnerable and marginalized populations across federal and local levels.
3. Tackle financing challenges by exploring sustainable domestic resource mobilization strategies while ensuring coordinated donor support.
4. Strengthen judicial independence, ethical conduct, and institutional accountability
5. to restore public confidence and credibility in the justice system.
6. Foster public engagement and transparency, creating pathways for citizens to participate in shaping justice sector priorities and oversight.
7. Build consensus on priority reforms and institutional strengthening, paving the way for coordinated implementation and donor alignment.

The conference aims to become an annual platform for monitoring progress, refining strategies, and reinforcing shared commitments to justice sector transformation.

JSS Implementation Framework

To ensure the Justice Sector Strategy translates into sustainable transformation, the conference will finalize the sector-wide Implementation Framework, defining the mechanism for action and progress monitoring:

1. **Pillar-Based Action Plans:** The JSS will be executed through concrete, time-bound annual work plans for each strategic pillar (e.g., Legal Reform, Access to Justice, Institutional Capacity).
2. **Coordination and Leadership:** The Federal Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs (MoJCA) will be the central coordinator, supported by a Justice Sector Steering Committee for high-level policy direction involving FMS, the Judiciary, and key partners.
3. **Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E):** A robust M&E framework linked to performance indicators and targets from the JSS will be adopted. The Annual Conference will formally serve as the primary annual review and accountability platform.
4. **Information Management:** Commitment to developing an integrated, sector-wide information system to track institutional performance, inform policy decisions, and enhance transparency.

4. OBJECTIVES

Guided by the newly developed Justice Sector Strategy the key objectives of the conference are to:

1. Discuss institutional and legal reform priorities that modernize Somalia's justice system, promote human rights, and reflect Somalia's federal constitutional framework.
2. Facilitate a dialogue on approaches to improving access to justice, including strengthening justice sector institutions, expanding legal aid, mobile courts, alternative dispute resolution (ADR), and community-based justice initiatives.
3. Identify and address financing gaps, including sustainable domestic resource mobilization strategies, efficient resource use, and alignment of donor support with sector priorities.
4. Strengthen judicial independence, integrity, and accountability mechanisms, ensuring merit-based appointments, ethical standards, and professional capacity.
5. Enhance transparency and citizen engagement to foster public trust and promote participatory justice.

5. METHODOLOGY

The conference will adopt a dynamic, highly participatory format aimed at producing clear and actionable results. It will open with keynote addresses delivered by senior Somali government officials, distinguished international legal experts, and development partners, setting the tone for discussion and outlining priority reforms. The agenda will feature thematic panel sessions covering core pillars of the justice transformation agenda, including legal and institutional reforms, access to justice and legal aid services, justice sector financing and long-term sustainability, judicial independence and accountability, and strategies to strengthen public trust and transparency. Finally, a follow-up and monitoring session will bring participants together to identify priority actions, assign responsibilities, and agree on mechanisms for regular review and reporting to ensure sustained progress beyond the conference.

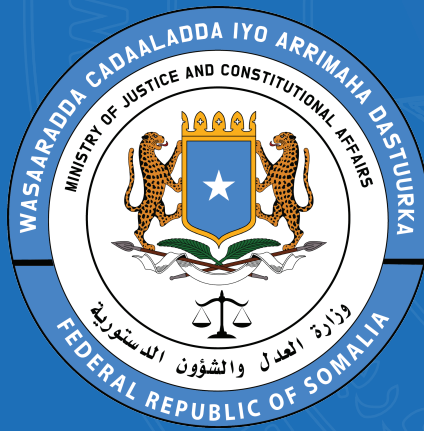
6. EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The conference is expected to deliver the following:

- Prioritized policy recommendations for justice sector reforms aligned with the Justice Sector Strategy (2024-2029).
- Suggestions on potential funding pathways for sustainable financing, from stakeholders.
- Political will to strengthen judicial independence and accountability frameworks.
- Increased public awareness and trust to advance greater understanding among citizens about justice sector issues, legal rights and accountability mechanisms.
- Strengthened collaboration between government institutions, civil society, donors and international partners.
- Knowledge Sharing to adopt successful justice models and innovation from other countries and regions.

10. CONCLUSION

The First Somali Justice Sector Annual Conference is poised to be a landmark event for justice sector stakeholders. By uniting diverse voices and expertise, the conference will drive the agenda of judicial accountability and human rights reform in Somalia. Through a focused theme, a refined agenda with actionable outcomes, and a dedicated follow-up framework, this event aims to catalyze meaningful legal reforms and strengthen the overall justice system in Somalia.



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