

### Somaliland Program Summary

Somaliland, a break-away territory in the northern region of Somalia, uniquely blends democratic principles, traditional clan structures and Islamic faith. Somaliland declared independence from Somalia in 1992, and since 2002, the International Republican Institute (IRI) has collaborated with civil society groups, political parties and the national parliament. Through funding from the United States Agency for International Development, IRI's program provides support to marginalized groups, campaign and internal party strengthening assistance to Somaliland's three political parties, and parliamentary staff development training for both houses of the national legislature.

### Legislative Support

The House of Representatives saw an influx of new members following the 2005 elections, thus requiring training in the legislative process. IRI, in partnership with the house, has helped members learn the principles and tools of constituency outreach, as well as the foundation for serving constituents, planning for action, working with media and media relations, and enhancing communication. In October 2010 IRI and the Northern Ireland Co-operation hosted five Somaliland legislators in Belfast to participate in a legislative study tour and to take an in-depth look at Northern Ireland's reconciliation process.

Currently, IRI works with members to encourage them to use academic and scientific research to formulate policies and platforms driven by an understanding of constituent needs. IRI works with political, civic and academic leaders to foster a culture of policy-making in Somaliland that is based in scientific research and addresses the citizens' priorities regardless of clan or regional affiliation. In addition, IRI works with members to develop strategies to modernize its legislative processes through good records keeping and building in-house research capacity.

### Political Party Assistance

In 2008, as part of a comprehensive voter registration initiative, IRI trained more than 1,000 political party agents to monitor the voter registration process in the 982 registration centers throughout Somaliland. IRI's successful training of party agents helped the parties participate directly in the process, resulting in broad-based support and buy-in among party leadership and members. The agenda for IRI's training focused on the technical requirements of registration, as well as education on general themes of promoting democratic governance in Somaliland.

Starting in late February 2009, IRI conducted a series of training sessions for representatives of Somaliland's three political parties. The trainings focused on door-to-door campaign skills, internal party communication, organizing a successful electoral campaign and the importance of message discipline. The trainings continued in late May 2009 when IRI hosted a training for the women's leagues of the political parties that focused on developing female political leaders' ability to craft a message and platform, lobby decision-makers, effectively communicate to constituents and draft an electoral agenda for their respective women's leagues.

### Elections Support

In June 2010, IRI fielded a delegation of international monitors to observe the Somaliland presidential election. IRI deployed a team of international monitors from Africa, Europe and the United States.