



Civil Society Working Group Oversight Report on the 6th Plenary Session of the House of the People of the Federal Parliament of Somalia

15 February 2025 – 22 June 2025

Brief Note

This report explores the 6th plenary sessions, debates, decision-making processes, parliamentary performance, and the progress of bill debates across their rounds as observed during the 6th Plenary Session of the House of the People of the Federal Parliament of Somalia. Covering the period from **15 February 2025 to 22 June 2025**, it provides an independent civil society observation of how legislation was introduced, discussed, amended, and approved, as well as the obstacles and the performance of Members of Parliament that shaped the functioning of the House of the People. The objective of this report is to promote **accountability, transparency, and public accessibility**, while strengthening the connection between Somali communities and the Federal Parliament. The report reflects the work of the Civil Society Working Group observers, offering an impartial perspective on parliamentary performance and governance throughout the 6th Plenary Session of the House of the People of the Federal Parliament of Somalia.

This Report Prepared by Civil Society Working Group Oversight Report on the 6th Plenary Session of the House of the People of the Federal Parliament of Somalia

1. Introduction

The 6th Plenary Session of the Federal Parliament of Somalia was officially opened on **22 February 2025**, marking the beginning of a legislative period of high national importance. The opening of the first 6th plenary session was attended by senior leaders from both Houses of Parliament, including the Speaker of the House of the People of the federal parliament of Somalia, **H.E. Hon. Adan Mohamed Nur (Madoobe)**; the first deputy Speaker H.E. Hon. Sadia Yasin Haji Samatar, and the speaker of the Upper House, **H.E. Hon. Abdi Hashi Abdullahi**; and the two respective deputies of the upper house (Somali Senate) first deputy speaker H.E. Hon. Ali Shacban Ibrahim and the second deputy speaker Abdullahi Ali Hirsi (Timacadde), and other high-level state officials. The session signaled the renewal of the legislative mandate for both chambers and established the political direction.

In his opening address, **Speaker H.E. Hon. Adan Mohamed Nur (Madoobe)** highlighted the achievements of the House of the People during the previous 5th session and outlined the core responsibilities facing Parliament in the 6th session. He emphasized Somalia's ongoing national security operations against terrorist groups and expressed deep appreciation for the Somali National Army, state-level security forces, and citizens supporting the liberation effort. He further noted his recent parliamentary diplomacy engagements including official visits to the UAE, the United Kingdom, and other countries aimed at strengthening cooperation between Somalia's Parliament and international legislative bodies. The Speaker underscored that the key priorities for the 6th session would include completing pending bills carried over from the 5th session, finalizing the remaining chapters of the constitutional review, processing new government-submitted legislation, and enhancing oversight of federal institutions.

The session was formally inaugurated by **H.E. Dr. Hassan Sheikh Mohamud**, President of the Federal Republic of Somalia, in accordance with **Article 90 of the Somali Provisional Constitution 2012**, which empowers the President to open the joint parliamentary sessions, address the legislature, and sign approved laws into effect. In his address to the joint Houses, the President commended lawmakers for the legislative progress achieved in the previous session and urged them to intensify their efforts in the 6th session to pass essential laws required for state-building, stabilization, and institutional strengthening. He emphasized the importance of cooperation between both chambers of Parliament and reiterated the executive branch's commitment to supporting legislative reforms.

The opening 6th plenary sessions was also attended by the Prime Minister of the federal government of Somalia **H.E. Hamza Abdi Barre**, Deputy Prime Ministers H.E. Salah Jamac, the Chief Justice Avv. Suleiman Mohamed Mohamud, the Mayor and the Governor of Banadir Administration H.E. Mohamed Ahmed Amir, and other senior officials reinforced the constitutional significance of the 6th Plenary Session. The statements delivered by the President and the Speaker established a clear framework for the legislative period: one that prioritizes national security, constitutional completion, governance reforms, and effective parliamentary

oversight. Their messages set the tone for a session expected to advance crucial legislation and strengthen Somalia's state-building.

2. Legislative Developments During the 6th Plenary Session

The 6th Plenary Session of the House of the People of the 11th parliament was marked by significant legislative activity, with Parliament advancing and finalizing several important national bills. Civil society observers documented the passage of two major pieces of legislation: the **Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) Bill** and the **Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Bill**, both of which successfully completed their third readings and were approved with overwhelming support. These approvals reflect Parliament's recognition of the urgent need to improve protection for displaced communities and establish a functional national population registry system. The strong consensus surrounding these bills also signals growing institutional willingness to address long-standing administrative and humanitarian challenges.

In addition to these major achievements, Parliament conducted first readings of two internationally significant proposals: the **African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child** and the **International Judicial Cooperation Bill**. These debates revealed a wide range of views among MPs, from strong support for aligning Somalia with regional and global standards to concerns over constitutional compatibility, religious values, and the capacity required for implementation. Because of these divergent opinions, both proposals remained at their initial stages and were deferred for further committee review and consultation. This cautious approach reflects Parliament's awareness of the complexity and sensitivity of international treaty alignment.

The House of the People also considered the **Agreement Establishing IGAD (1986)**, which underwent its first reading on 12 May 2025. The debate highlighted differing perspectives on Somalia's regional integration, including questions about financial commitments, geopolitical influence, and the strategic value of IGAD membership. While some MPs emphasized the importance of regional cooperation, others argued for a reassessment of Somalia's role within IGAD. The Speaker ultimately referred the agreement to the Foreign Affairs Committee for detailed analysis, and the item remained pending at the end of the session.

Beyond formal bills, the 6th session also featured debate on a motion related to **public taxation protests**, which raised concerns about transparency, fairness, and administrative practices in national tax collection. Although the motion did not develop into a draft bill during this session, it underscored Parliament's responsiveness to citizen concerns and highlighted governance issues requiring future legislative or policy reform. Overall, the legislative developments of the 6th Plenary Session show a Parliament capable of advancing key national bills, while also revealing areas where more thorough consultation, technical review, and committee accessibility are needed.

3. CSOs Monitoring Activities and Access to Parliamentary Processes

3.1. CSOs Monitoring Activities During Plenary Sessions

Civil society monitoring during the 6th Plenary Session was coordinated by the Somalia Non-State Actors (SONSA) platform through the **GOLE-KAAB** project in partnership with **Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD)** and funded by the European Union Mission in Somalia. SONSA facilitated the participation of civil society observers and ensured that they were granted full and unrestricted entry to all plenary sittings of the House of the People. This guaranteed level of access significantly strengthened transparency and enabled civil society to closely follow legislative debates, observe parliamentary conduct, and document the progression of major bills. CSOs consistently attended the plenary sessions where key legislative items were discussed, including the IDPs Bill, the Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Bill, the first readings of the IGAD Agreement and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, and the taxation grievance motion.

As observers, CSOs were able to monitor debates in real time, track attendance patterns, assess procedural adherence, and evaluate the effectiveness of parliamentary leadership in managing debates. This visibility allowed civil society to play a meaningful oversight role by highlighting both positive developments such as constructive debate, timely sittings, and strong legislative progress and challenges, including periods of disorder, procedural inconsistency and quorum of the parliament. Plenary monitoring during this session provided a crucial foundation for understanding parliamentary performance and strengthening public trust in the legislative process.

Despite this full access to the plenary hall, civil society participation remained limited to the political and surface-level aspects of lawmaking. Plenary debates, by their nature, present final political positions and voting outcomes but do not reveal the technical, analytical, and negotiation processes that shape legislation before it reaches the floor. This gap made it difficult for CSOs to provide timely, evidence-based feedback during the most critical stages of law formation.

3.2. Accessibility to Committee Meetings and the Importance of CSOs Inclusion

Although civil society enjoyed full access to plenary sessions, but they faced **complete exclusion from committee meetings**, where detailed legislative analysis and technical decision-making take place. Committees are responsible for clause-by-clause bill reviews, questioning ministries and government agencies, receiving expert opinions, and drafting the reports that guide plenary debates. However, these committee sessions were not open to CSOs, with only one exception: a single consultative meeting held on 7 March 2025 by the Budget, Finance, Planning, International Cooperation, and Oversight Committee. Notably, this meeting did not reflect institutional

openness; it occurred **only due to strong pressure from civil society, private sector actors, religious scholars, and academics**, who publicly opposed aspects of the amended Financial Institutions Act and demanded inclusion in the consultation process.

The absence of systematic civil society access to committee meetings represents a major gap in parliamentary transparency. More than 30 committee meetings were held during the reporting period of the 6th plenary sessions, yet CSOs could not observe any of them. The committees did not publish minutes, detailed summaries, or member contributions, not access the real insights and the little information made public post typically appeared only as short Facebook posts showing photos, committee names, and brief headlines one of the committee meetings and had a contractive discussion but the CSOs and entire public not available that insight of the meeting. This lack of documentation undermines the constitutional right to access information and prevents independent oversight actors from understanding the rationale behind legislative amendments or policy changes. For civil society to play a genuine oversight and advisory role, participation must extend beyond the plenary hall into committee spaces and pre-legislative consultations.

Furthermore, early consultation **before bills are submitted to the House of the People** is critical. Most draft bills are developed within executive ministries and approved by the Cabinet Council before reaching Parliament. Without involving CSOs, experts, and community actors during these early stages, Bills risk being misaligned with social needs, Islamic principles, or practical realities on the ground and the cultural context. In contrast, structured and routine civil society participation would improve legislative quality, enhance public trust, support more effective implementation once laws are passed and the implementation of the assent will be easy.

In this context, CSOs view committee accessibility not as an optional courtesy but as an essential component of accountability, transparency, and inclusive governance. Their participation strengthens the legitimacy of the lawmaking process, enriches debate with technical knowledge, and ensures that national legislation reflects the realities and priorities of Somali society.

However, the 6th session also experienced moments of disruption. The sitting on **30 April 2025**, which addressed the taxation criticisms motion and the second reading of the Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Bill, was marked by verbal disputes and disorder among some MPs. The disruptions temporarily affected the progress of the session and raised concerns about adherence to parliamentary decorum. Civil society observers noted that such incidents undermine the credibility of the legislative institution and highlight the need for consistent enforcement of rules of procedure. Despite these challenges, parliamentary leadership managed to restore order, and the session continued with the scheduled agenda.

Overall, the conduct and attendance during the 6th Plenary Session reflect a functioning legislative body capable of handling complex national issues while also revealing areas for improvement particularly in maintaining dignity and ensuring smooth proceedings. The consistent quorum levels

facilitated meaningful legislative progress, including the successful passage of major bills and the introduction of internationally significant agreements.¹

3.3. Key Developments Bill Passed the House of the People Include the Four Economic Reform Bills

The 6th Plenary Session of the House of the People featured several high-impact legislative sittings that shaped Somalia's governance and reform landscape. Among the most significant achievements were the approval of two socially critical bills: the **Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) Bill** and the **Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Bill**, both passed during their third readings with overwhelming parliamentary support. These bills directly addressed long-standing national challenges, including legal protection for displaced populations and the establishment of a modern, unified population registry.

One of the important features of the 6th Plenary Session was the **passage of four major Economic Reform Bills**, forming part of Somalia's broader economic governance and financial sector modernization agenda. These bills represented significant steps toward strengthening fiscal management, expanding regulatory oversight, and enhancing financial integrity. The four economic reform bills passed were:

- **Financial Institutions Bill** – Modernizes financial sector regulations and increases the oversight powers of the Central Bank of Somalia, ensuring that more financial institutions operate under standardized regulatory frameworks.
- **Income Tax Bill** – Enhances domestic revenue mobilization, strengthens tax administration, and contributes to long-term fiscal stability.
- **Insurance Companies Bill** – Establishes a comprehensive regulatory framework for supervising insurance companies, promoting investor confidence, and enabling access to insurance for small and growing businesses.
- **Anti-Money Laundering (AML/CFT) Amendment Bill** – Reinforces controls over financial flows, improving Somalia's capacity to detect and prevent money laundering and the financing of terrorism.

The passage of these four economic reform bills marked a major milestone for Somalia's Public Financial Management (PFM) and financial regulatory reform agenda. They also highlight

¹ Article 22 of the Somali Provisional Constitution 2012 is titled "Right of Political Participation." It guarantees every citizen the right to participate in public affairs and politics.

¹ Qodobka 28aad, faqrada 5(f) XH-GSH-B10 "Xubinta cabiraysa fekerkeeda laguma samayn karo gunuunuc, qaylo, sacabbin, foori iyo wixii kale ee dhaqan xumo ah". Goluhu wuxuu ansixiyey waxkabadelkaan Kalfadhiga 2aad, Kulanka 6aad ee dhacay Diseember 31, 2022.

Parliament's role in supporting macroeconomic stability, governance reforms, and compliance with regional and international financial standards.

4. Impact of Civil Society Observations

The presence of civil society observers during the 6th Plenary Session played a visible role in promoting transparency and improving the behavior of Members of Parliament. Before systematic CSOs monitoring began, the House of the People was frequently characterized by debates that strayed far beyond the official agenda, with MPs introducing unrelated political arguments, pushing competing priorities, or attempting to disrupt scheduled bill discussions. Several sessions were marked by heated political exchanges that had no direct connection to the topics under consideration. In some cases, the tension escalated to the point where sittings nearly collapsed, and on various occasions, plenary meetings were called off due to lack of quorum many times. The introduction of regular civil society oversight from SONSA through **GOLE-KAAB** project contributed significantly to creating a more disciplined environment by providing an external, impartial presence that reminded MPs of public analysis and accountability.

Despite this positive influence, CSO observers still documented several incidents of serious misconduct within the parliament hall. These included cases of “Gacan-ka-hadal” (physical confrontation) among some MPs, damage to parliamentary equipment, and security police including the breaking of microphones and behavior that disrupted the normal flow of debate. Such incidents undermined the credibility of the legislative institution and raised concerns about adherence to parliamentary norms and professionalism. The Speaker was eventually compelled to issue disciplinary measures against MPs involved in these behaviors, including temporary suspensions from attending debates and decision-making sittings. These sanctions highlighted both the severity of the misconduct and the commitment of parliamentary leadership to restoring decorum.

Although civil society lacked access to committee meetings the most technical stage of lawmaking their continuous presence in the plenary hall helped reduce the frequency of off-agenda debates, discouraging attempts to politicize sessions or manipulate the House's agenda. CSOs' consistent documentation of parliamentary behavior also increased public awareness of the challenges faced in ensuring orderly proceedings. Over time, this visible monitoring contributed to a gradual improvement in debate structure, session focus, and parliamentary discipline. However, sustained progress will require deeper CSOs access increase, not only to the plenary hall but also to meeting of the committees, where timely engagement could further strengthen transparency, legislative quality, and adherence to good governance practices.

5. MPs' Performance and Attendance

Civil society working group of the parliamentary observers expressed significant concern regarding the overall performance and attendance of Members of Parliament during the 6th Plenary

Session. A central challenge repeatedly highlighted by CSOs is the **absence of a Hansard system**, which prevents systematic tracking of parliamentary attendance, voting records, individual MP participation, and contributions across the three rounds of bill readings. Without a modernized recording and reporting system, it becomes impossible for the public—and even for parliamentary oversight bodies—to evaluate MPs’ consistency, voting behavior, policy positions, or the extent to which they engage substantively with legislation. This lack of documentation severely limits transparency and undermines accountability, as citizens cannot assess how their elected representatives perform in fulfilling their legislative duties.

From an attendance perspective, the performance of the House of the People during the 6th session was notably weak when compared with the constitutional expectation of a functioning 275-seat legislature. Across the session, plenary attendance frequently ranged between **140 and 160 MPs**, meaning that **more than 100 Members were absent** during many sittings. This pattern was consistent across regular sittings and even more pronounced during extraordinary sessions, where attendance levels dropped further. CSO observers noted that low attendance not only weakened debate quality but also contributed to delays in legislative business. On several occasions, **at least four sittings of the 6th session failed due to lack of quorum**, forcing postponements and undermining the integrity of parliamentary work.

In addition to absenteeism, the quality of MP participation also raised concerns. CSOs observed that many lawmakers did not engage actively with bills during their three reading stages, failing to raise objections, propose amendments, or examine sub provisions of proposed bills in detail. This limited participation created uncertainty about whether MPs had thoroughly reviewed legislative texts before voting. Moreover, several sittings were disrupted by off-topic political debates, attempts to divert the parliamentary agenda, and heated arguments unrelated to the issues proposed for debate. These behaviors at times nearly derailed proceedings and contributed to an environment of inconsistency and disorder.

The opening of the 6th session conducted as a **joint bicameral sitting of the House of the People and the Upper House (Somali Senate)** illustrated the constitutional procedure governing parliamentary sessions. The joint sitting opened with a quorum of **180 members**, and the President of the Federal Republic of Somalia, H.E. Dr. Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, formally inaugurated the session in accordance with **Article 90 of the Provisional Constitution**. This article outlines the President’s powers, including the authority to: **formally open parliamentary sessions, address the joint session of both Houses, sign draft bills passed by Parliament, and hold annual and occasional addresses**.

The Rules of Procedure of the House of the People of the federal parliament of Somalia also reaffirm the President’s role in opening sessions, as stipulated in Article 23. While the opening ceremony adhered to constitutional standards, the subsequent performance of MPs throughout the session revealed structural and behavioral challenges that continue to affect Somalia’s legislative effectiveness.

6. Critical Incidents During the 6th Plenary Session

The 6th Plenary Session of the House of the People experienced significant disorders, political confrontation, and disciplinary interventions unprecedented in recent parliamentary cycles. Civil society observers were present **only as neutral observers**, not participants, and witnessed events that highlighted deep institutional unpredictability within the legislature.

A major flashpoint was the case of **MP Dr. Abdullahi Hashi Abid (HOP#201)**. He was accused of failing to attend mandatory sittings as required under **Article 59aad (d)** of the Provisional Constitution and **Articles 8aad (4)** of the House Rules, which allow removal of an MP who fails to attend two consecutive ordinary sittings without a valid reason. A decision issued on **15 March 2025** declared his seat vacant, pending further constitutional and procedural processing. Dr. Abdullahi, however, was also one of the most outspoken critics of the government, frequently publishing detailed allegations on X/Twitter concerning corruption, failures in World Bank financial projects, and systemic fraud. Many MPs believed his political criticism contributed to the procedural action taken against him, triggering intense division inside the chamber.²³

On **29 April 2025**, the Speaker issued a formal letter returning the Committee on Rules, Discipline, Welfare, and Immunities' decision regarding HOP#201, citing procedural violations of **Articles 4, 33, 59** and **Article 50-aad (2)(D)**. This was followed by a second letter on **30 April 2025**, ordering the suspension of MPs who, according to the Speaker, had engaged in obstruction, noise, disorder, or violation of parliamentary ethics during the debates related to Dr. Abdullahi Hashi's case. The letter invoked **Articles 14aad, 16aad, 18(a)(b), and 28aad** of the Standing Orders.⁴

- **First Group of MPs Prohibited from Attending (29 & 30 April 2025)**

According to the Speaker's letters, the following MPs were prohibited from attending plenary sittings, committee meetings, debates, and voting due to "security-related and disciplinary concerns":

Group 1 — 20 MPs Prohibited from Attending the House of the Peoples Plenary Sessions

1. Hon. Mohamed Dek Barre Omar (Fiyoore)
2. Hon. Sadam Mohamud Abdi (Jubeer)

² Article 59 of the Somali Provisional Constitution is titled **Disqualification of Membership of the Federal Parliament**, and it deals with how a member can lose their seats.

³ Qodobka 17aad (4) "Xil-waayidda Guddoomiyaha Golaha& Labadiisa Ku xigeen" waxey u qorneyd "Moshinka xil ka-qaadista waxaa laga doodayaa loona codeynayaa toban (10) cisho oo maalin shaqo ah Gudahood, laga bilaabo taariikhda moshinka la keeney Golaha". Waxaa loo baddelay sida ku xusan kor. Goluhu waxay isla ogolaadeen Kalfadhiga 4aad, kulanka 20aad ee 31/10/2018

⁴ Qodobka 33aad (1) ee "Xeerarka Guud ee Gudiyada" waa cusub tahay. Goluhu wuxuu isla ogolaaday kalfadhiga 4aad kulanka 21aad ee 3/11/2018. Qodobka 16aad faqrada 5(a) XH-GSH-B10 si warbahinta loo saaro waxaa soo jeedin ku soo gudbinaya xildhibaan kadibna Golaha ayaa u codeenaya. Goluhu wuxuu ansixiyey wax-ka-badelkaan Kalfadhiga 2aad, Kulanka 6aad ee dhacay Diseember 31, 2022. 41 Qodobka 16aad, faqrada 5(c) waa cusub tahay. Goluhu wuxuu ansixiyey Kalfadhiga 2aad, Kulanka 6aad ee dhacay Diseember 31, 2022. 42 Qodobka 16aad Faqrada 5 (d) waa cusub tahay. Goluhu wuxuu ansixiyey Kalfadhiga 2aad, Kulanka 6aad ee dhacay Diseember 31, 2022.

3. Hon. Dahir Amin Jesow
4. Hon. Hassan Abdi Ismail (Xasan Yare)
5. Hon. Abdirsak Hassan Ahmed (Dhookhir)
6. Hon. Mohamed Bashir Ali (Baxnaan)
7. Hon. Ahmed Mohamud Jama (Buux)
8. Hon. Ali Mohamed Sheikh (Cali Bagadi)
9. Hon. Sadak Abdullahi Abdi
10. Hon. Mohamed Abdirahman Ahmed (Xayle)
11. Hon. Mowlid Abdi Mohamud
12. Hon. Mohamed Ali Omar (Caananuug)
13. Hon. Feisal Ahmed Mohamud (Wahaabi)
14. Hon. Ali Mahdi Mohamed (Qalato)
15. Hon. Hassan Abdinur Abdi
16. Hon. Abdirashid Jire Qalinle
17. Hon. Abdirahman Ahmed Osman (Gurey)
18. Hon. Abdirahman Isak Mohamed
19. Hon. Dr. Abdirashid Mohamed Nur (Jilley)
20. Hon. Abdirashid Mohamed Hidig

Group 2 — 4 Ministers/MPs Prohibited About Attending the House of the People

1. Hon. Mohamed Abdulkadir Haji
2. Hon. Omar Ali Abdi Mohamed
3. Hon. Isak Mohamed Mursal
4. Hon. Mohamed Osman Omar

These MPs were accused of participating in the physical disruptions (“gacan-ka-hadal”), shouting, disorder, and actions deemed to threaten parliamentary security.

- **MPs Reinstated by Deputy Speaker of the House of the People H.E. Hon. Abdullahi Omar Abshirow**

A few days later, the **Deputy Speaker**, exercising his authority under the Standing Orders, issued letters reversing the Speaker's earlier bans. He emphasized parliamentary unity, procedural fairness, and maintaining the functioning of the House.

He reinstated the following 24 MPs a consolidated list combining both groups:

1. Hon. Mohamed Dek Barre Omar (Fiyoore)
2. Hon. Sadam Mohamud Abdi (Jubeer)
3. Hon. Dahir Amin Jesow
4. Hon. Hassan Abdi Ismail (Xasan Yare)
5. Hon. Abdirsak Hassan Ahmed (Dhookhir)
6. Hon. Mohamed Bashir Ali (Baxnaan)
7. Hon. Ahmed Mohamud Jama (Buux)
8. Hon. Ali Mohamed Sheikh (Cali Bagadi)
9. Hon. Sadak Abdullahi Abdi
10. Hon. Mohamed Abdirahman Ahmed (Xayle)
11. Hon. Mowlid Abdi Mohamud
12. Hon. Mohamed Ali Omar (Caananuug)
13. Hon. Feisal Ahmed Mohamud (Wahaabi)
14. Hon. Ali Mahdi Mohamed (Qalato)
15. Hon. Hassan Abdinur Abdi
16. Hon. Abdirashid Jire Qalinle
17. Hon. Abdirahman Ahmed Osman (Gurey)
18. Hon. Abdirahman Isak Mohamed
19. Hon. Dr. Abdirashid Mohamed Nur (Jilley)
20. Hon. Abdirashid Mohamed Hidig
21. Hon. Mohamed Abdulkadir Haji
22. Hon. Omar Ali Abdi Mohamed
23. Hon. Isak Mohamed Mursal
24. Hon. Mohamed Osman Omar

7. Challenges and Gaps Identified During the 6th Plenary Session

Despite achieving several notable legislative milestones, the 6th Plenary Session was marked by deep structural, procedural, and governance challenges that significantly undermined the quality, consistency, and integrity of parliamentary work. Civil society observers, present throughout the period, documented recurring issues that highlighted both institutional weaknesses and internal political conflict. The challenges below synthesize the defects observed during regular sittings, committee processes, disciplinary interventions, and leadership decisions.

1. Absence of a Hansard System and Weak Documentation of Parliamentary Proceedings

One of the most critical institutional gaps remained the absence of a Hansard system—an official transcript that records debates, attendance, voting patterns, and the contributions of each MP. Without this basic democratic tool, it was difficult to track the performance of MPs, verify parliamentary decisions, or hold members accountable for their participation. The lack of consistent documentation facilitated disputes over attendance, such as in the case of **MP Dr. Abdullahi Hashi Abib**, and hindered public oversight of parliamentary activity.

2. Limited Transparency and Access to Committee Meetings

Although civil society observers were fully granted access to plenary sessions, they were **entirely excluded** from committee sittings, despite these being the most critical arenas for clause-by-clause bill review. More than **30 committee meetings** took place without public minutes, summaries, or voting records. Committees routinely shared only superficial Facebook posts containing photos and generic statements. This lack of transparency contravened constitutional information-access rights and prevented any external understanding of how legislative decisions were shaped.

3. Political Confrontations and Breakdowns in Parliamentary Discipline

The 6th Plenary Session experienced escalating disorder, including shouting, off-agenda debates, and in extreme cases, Legislative violence (physical confrontation (“gacan-ka-hadal”). Several sittings nearly re-scheduled due to procedural breaches including the lack of enough quorum. The situation culminated in the Speaker issuing multiple disciplinary letters invoking **Articles 14, 16, 18(a)(b), and 28** of the Standing Orders to suspend more than **24 MPs** across two groups. This included MPs who defending Hon. **Dr. Abdullahi Hashi Abib** as well as other four ministers who against and accused of disorderly behavior. Such actions exposed the fragility of parliamentary discipline and inconsistent enforcement of internal rules and procedure of the house of the people.

4. Inconsistent Application of Standing Orders and Conflicting Leadership Decisions

A significant governance gap emerged when the **Deputy Speaker** later issued a separate letter reversing the Speaker’s suspensions. This contradiction highlighted inconsistent leadership interpretations of the Standing Orders, weakened institutional coherence, and created confusion

about the legitimacy of disciplinary processes. The conflict further exposed internal power divides within parliamentary leadership and raised serious concerns about procedural fairness.

5. Repeated Quorum Failures and Weak MP Attendance

Attendance during the 6th session remained below acceptable levels for a 275-seat legislature. Most sittings were attended by only **140–160 MPs**, while extraordinary sessions saw even lower participation. At least **four sittings were re-scheduled entirely due to lack of quorum**, delaying crucial debates and obstructing legislative progress. Low attendance also weakened debate quality, particularly during bill readings where only a small number of MPs engaged substantively with legislative proposals.

6. Limited Depth of Debate and Weak Legislative Engagement

Although numerous bills were introduced, very few MPs offered detailed input, proposed amendments, or reviewed the sub-articles of the draft legislation. Many debates drifted into political disagreements between some MPs from the opposition and others aligned with government blocs, rather than focusing on the substance of the bills. This imbalance resulted in poor discussions that overshadowed meaningful bill analysis and reduced the level of technical analysis and ultimately undermining the overall quality of the legislation passed.

7. Insufficient Public Consultation and Technical Input

Except for a single consultation held on **7 March 2025** for the Financial Institutions Act prompted by civil society and private sector pressure there was no systematic engagement with experts, CSOs, scholars, or community representatives. Draft bills were developed exclusively by executive ministries, approved by the Cabinet, and forwarded to the legislature without early-stage public input or consultation. This approach risked misalignment with community needs, Sharia considerations, and on-the-ground realities of the context.

8. Minimal Transparency in Committee Outputs and Delayed Legislative Processing

Committees consistently failed to publish detailed reports, amendment proposals, or rationales for decisions (Minutes Meeting). As a result, the legislative process lacked efficiency and predictability. Several priority bills carried over from the 5th session—including governance and constitutional matters faced delays due to inadequate committee follow-up, poor coordination, and lack of consultation with relevant stakeholders before return in the parliament.

8. Recommendations

1. Create a Hansard System (Official Record of Debates)

The House of the People should create a Hansard system that records everything said in Parliament, including debates, votes, and MP attendance. This record should be available to the public so that citizens, researchers, and civil society can see how MPs perform their duties.

2. Improve Transparency in Committee Meetings

Committees should publish clear notes of their meetings, including attendance, the discussion of the bill articles, amendment made, inputs added and decisions made. They should also allow civil society to attend when appropriate. All committee reports would be better to follow the same format and be shared publicly so people can access what real discussions were made.

3. Allow Civil Society to Join Committee Sessions

Civil society has mostly been kept out of committee meetings. Parliament should create a rule that allows approved CSO would attend as observers or either contributors to the committee meetings, except when the topic is secret or related to national security. Ministries should also consult CSOs before sending bills to Parliament.

4. Keep Debates Orderly and Respectful

Parliament should enhance the enforcement of the rules that stop noise, disorder, off-topic arguments, and bad behavior. The Speaker should use the rules fairly to keep debates focused and respectful manner. Bad behavior, like the incidents seen in the 6th session, should result in clear and fair disciplinary action.

5. Improve MPs' Skills for Lawmaking

MPs and committee staff need more training on how to read, analyze, and improve draft laws. Parliament should create an independent research office to give MPs clear information and explanations about each bill before voting.

6. Improve Public Access to Information

Parliament should update a public website linked through the Hansard system, where people can find everything while using the Hansard records which allow them to have access the committee reports, draft bills, approved bills, minutes, MPs debate arguments, list of attendees, list MPs participated the bills inputs and videos of sessions. An archive office should also save and organize all official documents to make them easy to access.

7. Standardize and Clarify Disciplinary Procedures

Parliament needs a single, clear process for suspending, warning, or reinstating MPs. During the 6th session, the Speaker and Deputy Speaker made different decisions, which caused confusion. A unified rule will help avoid misuse of disciplinary powers and make Parliament more trustworthy.

8. Require Public Consultations for Major Bills

For important laws such as economic reforms, taxation, or financial regulations, the government should hold consultations with civil society, the private sector, academics, and religious leaders before sending the bill to Parliament. This will help ensure that laws fit the needs of the Somali people and follow cultural and constitutional values.

9. Enforce Rules of Procedure on attendance:

The House of the People should adopt a modern system for tracking MP attendance and apply disciplinary measures when members are absent without legitimate justification. Attendance records and MP performance should be made publicly available to promote accountability.

10. Conclusion

The 6th Plenary Session of the House of the People achieved several important legislative results. During the session, Parliament passed the **Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) Bill**, the **Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Bill**, and four major **Economic Reform Bills**: The *Financial Institutions Bill*, the *Income Tax Bill*, the *Insurance Companies Bill*, and the *Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) Amendment Bill*. These bills showed that Parliament has the ability to approve legislation that can strengthen national administration, improve financial management, support better public services and while there are other major gaps. However, public participation in these processes remained very limited, and many citizens did not have a meaningful opportunity to contribute to these bills.

At the same time, continuous observation by civil society highlighted several weaknesses that affected the quality and transparency of the legislative process. The House of the People lacked a **Hansard system**, which made it difficult to follow voting records, debates, and MP performance. Access to committee meetings was extremely limited, which prevented the public from understanding how decisions were made. Low attendance by MPs, frequent disorder inside the house of the people, and a lack of clear reporting from committees further reduced public confidence in parliamentary work.

The governance crisis that occurred during the session made these concerns even more serious. Several formal letters issued by the Speaker showed procedural disputes, disciplinary actions, and cases where MPs were suspended and later reinstated. These events demonstrated that parliamentary rules were not always applied consistently, creating confusion and tension within

the House of the People. Despite these challenges, Parliament managed to complete its legislative agenda for the 6th plenary session.

The official press release from the leadership of both Houses on **21 June 2025** confirmed that the 6th Plenary Session formally closed on **22 June 2025**. It also announced that the 7th Plenary Session would open on **22 August 2025**, in accordance with Article 66(2) and Article 74(2) of the Provisional Constitution, Article 23(1) of the Upper House Rules of Procedure, and Article 21(1) of the House of the People Rules of Procedure. The leadership thanked all MPs for their work during the session and wished them a peaceful recess.

The press release further encouraged MPs from both Houses to continue their constitutional responsibilities during the break period and prepare for the next the 7th plenary session. These duties include committee follow-up, constituency engagement, and reviewing draft bills that will be discussed in the upcoming session. This reminder reflects the need for continuous work even when plenary sittings are not taking place.

In conclusion, addressing the challenges identified during the 6th Plenary Session will require strong **institutional reforms** especially improved documentation, transparent committee procedures, and stronger attendance systems as well as **cultural changes** that promote discipline, cooperation, and meaningful consultation with civil society. If the recommended reforms are implemented before the opening of the 7th Plenary Session in August 2025, Somalia's Parliament will make significant progress toward better lawmaking, stronger accountability, and more inclusive governance. Ultimately, these improvements will help ensure that bills passed by the House of the People of the Federal Parliament of Somalia are transparent, effective, and widely supported by the Somali public.

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