

PRESS RELEASE

Somaliland Conference on the Isaaq Genocide Commemoration

December 22, 2022 - The Somaliland Conference for the Isaaq Genocide Commemoration was held on the International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of this crime.

The conference - consisting of two important events - was the first ever commemoration of the Isaaq Genocide held in the city of Hargeisa, Somaliland. Over 200 attendees participated in both the genocide commemoration and the launching of a book authored by Mr. Nuur Ismail.

The book titled *Tiiraanyo iyo Tixraac (Account of Sorrow)* narrates Ismail's experience as an eyewitness of the dehumanization that the genocide exerted, and aims to spread awareness of the horrors enacted toward the Isaaq peoples.

In the commemorative conference, several speakers and performers spoke movingly about their different experiences during the genocide. Amongst them, Ms. Sahra Halgan, who was a nurse during the Isaaq Genocide, spoke powerful words about genocide around the world and the painful scars left onto the Isaaq people, and recalled having slept in a morgue with dead people due to exhaustion. Mr. Abdirahman Farah Guri Barwaaqo, former Minister of Information & Culture, recited a heartfelt poem, and spoke of the cultural genocide that preceded the genocide in Somaliland, and how its history was diminished.

Moreover, former diplomat, religious scholar and activist, Sheikh Abdirizak S.A Rooble participated in the conference as an avid advocate for the Isaaq Genocide

recognition in Somaliland. Lastly, the commemoration was attended by PH Yusuf, a world class photographer who, as a teenager, had taken vivid photographs of the ruins in the aftermath of the genocide.

The Lemkin Institute for Genocide Prevention's co-founder, Irene Victoria Massimino, recorded a video to express the Institute's solidarity with the victims of the Isaaq Genocide and all genocide victims around the world, as well as to convey support to the conference and all endeavors carried out to bring justice to the Isaaq People.

The Lemkin Institute is a US based non-governmental organization focused on preventing genocide globally. The Institute believes that the most effective type of work is implemented at the grassroots' level, by utilizing law, research, and advocacy to attain recognition, accountability, and prevention. Justice is at the very core of the Lemkin Institute's efforts.

The **Lemkin Institute for Genocide Prevention** is a US-based nongovernmental organization focused on the prevention of genocide worldwide through education and grassroots empowerment, national and international advocacy, and legal accountability.