



Is Osoble the Man for the Moment?

Osoble's father taught him:

"A true citizen is one who serves his country and his people before he serves himself."

He clearly believes it and is obviously committed to it.

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By **ABDI AHAMED**

The honorable Abdulkadir Osoble Ali, MP, has strategically positioned himself to have his best run ever at securing the Somali presidency in 2022.

Internationally, Osoble has spent the past decade in the House of the People as the influential Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, where he has taken time, honed his message, and identified and built a series of personal relationships with key international partners.

He has done the same domestically, building a strong voting block and constructing coalitions across clan and factional lines. He is widely respected and acknowledged for his integrity and honesty. As a man of faith, Osoble holds strong convictions, and his colleagues know that when he makes a promise, he is committed to following through.

His gravitas was obvious when he spoke about the ongoing multi-year drought. He was deeply frustrated with the incumbent administration and their complete lack of focus on the unfolding disaster; and he was quick to outline a series of measures that needed to be implemented to stave off the death of hundreds-of-thousands of Somalis.

"This reminds me of the same disaster in 2011. International funding was not forthcoming and 260,000 poor Somalis needlessly died. We are a quarter way through the 21st century and this has happened twice in a decade. We need change! We need real change if Somalia is ever going to get out of this endless cycle of death and destitution."

They were passionate, heartfelt words, and it was easy to see why he commands the respect of his peers. He knows immediate action is required and wants the ability to act now.

When questioned, he spoke on disparate subjects with ease. Always relating them back to Somalia: How they impacted Somalia; What needed to be done; What was not being done and why it was not being done. It was a real

lesson for an outsider who now knows that politics in the capital is far more complex and nuanced than I could have ever imagined.

Where does his passion come from? He replied with a quote from his father:

“A true citizen is one who serves his country and his people before he serves himself.” He clearly believes it and is obviously committed to it.

Siblings relate that Abdulkadir always had a predisposition for politics and social change. He got that from his father. He was gifted at school. He never studied but always got high grades. He could read something once and know it by heart; and he could summarise whole books and give you the key takeaways.

Was the skill natural or did he learn how to do it?

“It’s a little of both, I think. I excelled at Koranic school, and that recitation process has kept me in good stead.”

His degree in journalism and media from Al Azhar University in Cairo deeply influenced his beliefs and view of the world.

“My experience in Cairo was life changing. It reinforced my faith and commitment to Islam. I came away a bit of a firebrand. I’m older and wiser now, but my commitment to social justice and social change is undiminished.

Islam is a religion of tolerance, moderation, and peace. All are equal before Allah. In Somalia, not all Somalis are treated equally. That has to change. The level of social and economic inequality is repugnant to me. One of the ontological causes for ongoing conflict in Somalia is social and economic injustice.

For a decade now, I have watched administrations come and go, and none of them have had any commitment, or even any idea of the importance of social and economic justice. Somalia does not move forward and into the 21st century without a core commitment to equality for ALL Somalis.”

Abdulkadir is in a passionate rhythm now as he continues to highlight the paradigmatic shift that needs to occur if
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5 pledges

1 The Economy

He wants to focus on macro-economic infrastructure development to kick-start the economy and overcome bottlenecks.

2 Constitution

He commits to finalizing a draft constitution and constitutional court with the bicameral legislature and regional states and preparing it for ratification.

3 Federalism & Democracy

He pledges to finalize center-periphery relations with the regional states and commits to make tangible progress toward genuine democracy.

4 Judicial & Law & Order Reform

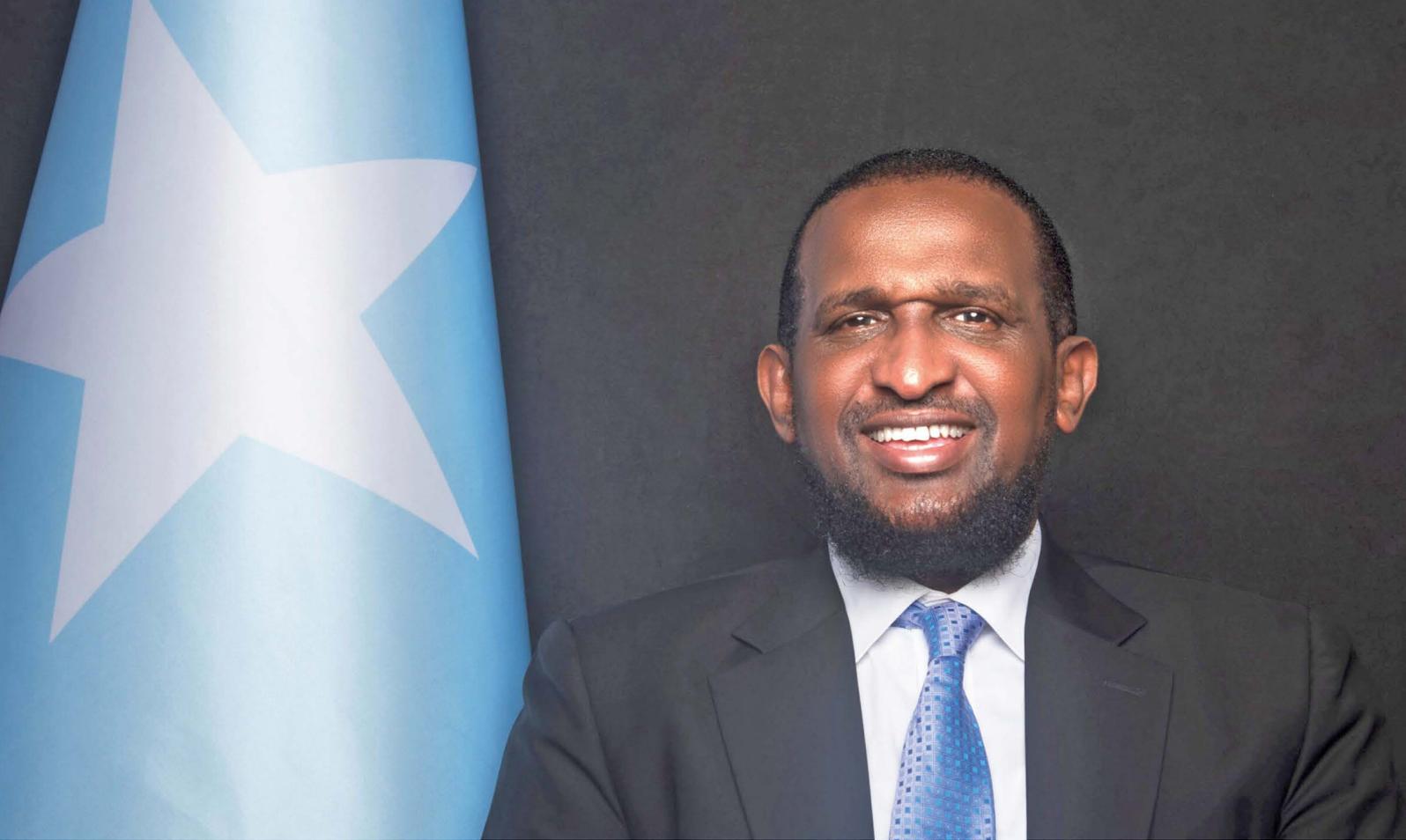
He pledges to separate the judicial and legislative branches from the executive, and separate policing from politics.

5 International Cooperation

He pledges to build bridges to the global economy and bring Somalia into the 21st century.



Abdulkadir Osole Ali | Presidential Candidate | 2022-2026



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Somalia is to have a future.

“Are you aware that more than 70% of Somalia’s population are under 30, with about 70 percent of those people unemployed? Less than 40 percent are literate, and less again in rural areas. Opportunities for Somali women are even more dire.

This is the real time bomb that Somalia is facing, and no one - no one - is talking about the issue, nor attempting to develop any kind of policy or planning development. If this is not addressed, it could become dangerous - not only for Somalia, but the Horn and beyond.

Let me tell you, I consider this election the most significant since Arta 2000. If the incumbent Farmajo administration gets back in, I genuinely fear for Somalia’s future. Remember, more than 70 percent of Somalia’s population are under 30. They are demanding real change, not more of the same hapless clannish politics.

If you conflate this risk with the ongoing security context that we face in Somalia, the many macro-economic and political issues that I have highlighted will become, at best, problematic.

If this generation decide that there is no future with this governance model and

decide to take things into their own hands, everything falls apart, and we are back to a pre-Arta 2000 era. Who wants that? Can anyone take that risk?

This election will determine what path Somalia will take for the next 30 years. I want Somalia to be a peaceful fertile land; a Somalia where ALL Somalis have genuine hope for a better life. The alternative is dystopian.”

“Wow,” I thought to myself, and asked him what he thought his real chances of winning the upcoming presidential election were.

“Only Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful, really knows. Farmajo and

his team have built up a huge money chest, and they are hoping to buy the majority of the MPs and win victory.

From my knowledge, all the opposition presidential candidates have very little funding in comparison to Farmajo. We have a couple of advantages though. First, in five years of government, Farmajo has burned all his bridges with his political contemporaries. Second, there is hope that the MPs also see the danger in re-electing Farmajo and vote for change.

As we finish, Abdulkadir apologies for slouching in his chair. I look at him quizzically.

“I’m always being reprimanded by my family and friends for slouching. I’m a tall guy. No one makes chairs or couches for tall people.”

I laugh, and tell him that if he becomes president, I am sure that someone will make a chair that fits his height and stature. He laughs in turn, “Inshallah,” he says.

It has been an enlivened and interesting interview. I came away more serious, pondering what will Somalia’s future be. It all depends on the upcoming election. Can the Man defeat the Money, or does the Money defeat the Man? We will all know soon enough.

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