

## EDITOR'S NOTE

Greetings to all of you! As we celebrate the tenth anniversary of *Bildhaan: An International Journal of Somali Studies*, I would like to, one more time, express my gratitude to the five institutions that helped establish the journal: Macalester College, Wellesley College, the University of Pennsylvania, the College of the Holy Cross, and California State University, Chico.

Second, I am pleased to report that the 2011 spring (April 7–9) annual Macalester College Civic Forum is programmed to focus on *New American Citizens: Opportunities and Obligations for Somalis*. An exciting combination of academic essays will be led by a keynote address by Cawo Abdi (Sociology, University of Minnesota), entitled “The Newest African-Americans? Somali Struggles of Belonging.” In addition, there will be a “life interview” of Macalester College Professor/Dean Ahmed I. Samatar by Professor Hussein Warsame (University of Calgary, Canada) and Nimo Farah (African Development Center). The program will also include *oud* performances by the renowned craftsman Omer “Bongo,” accompanied by Ahmed I. Samatar singing choices of classical Somali tunes. Thus, all in all, we will host three evenings of fresh intellectual exploration, artistic playfulness and cultural glow. It is our hope that as many members of the International Advisory Board as possible would try to join us. Please let us know if you intend to do so—we would want to welcome you.

Third, the next volume (2011) will carry an extensive interview with Mr. Yusuf Garaad Omer Ahmed, head of the BBC Somali Service and widely recognized as an accomplished and entrepreneurial radio journalist of the first order.

Fourth, the Somali condition continues to be as disheartening as a year ago; that is, a *poisoned public sphere*, the denudation of civic culture, an absence of national institutions, and pervasive and ambitious incompetence among the current crop of the *lumpen* elite. Yet, the dream and search for a genuine and united civic resurrection is detectable within and outside of the country.

Fifth, the Somali diaspora, particularly in the United States, was stunned by the horrible news that one of their youth was apprehended as he tried to trigger a bomb in the main square of the city of Portland in Oregon during a large and festive gathering by ordinary citizens. Only a mixture of a twisted mind and foul values could respond with such intended destruction to the generous welcome of Somali refugees

by the Oregonians and the American people. But there is a companion truth here that ought to be always kept in mind—particularly in such moments of flammable passions: the vast majority of the Somali-Americans are at once grateful for the succor extended to them and they are, by the day, exerting themselves to become responsible and successful citizens of their new country.

Finally, as we move into the next decade of the publication of *Bildhaan*, we appeal to you, dear reader, *to make a contribution to defray the cost of the journal*. *Bildhaan* is an attempt at institution-building and it can only be sustained by a collective effort. Please send whatever you can.

A safe and happy holiday to all of you.