



PRESS STATEMENT

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17-Jan-2018

NAFIS IN SOLIDARITY WITH PASSAGE OF SOMALILAND'S FIRST ANTI-RAPE LAW

NAFIS (Network against Female Genital Mutilation in Somaliland) applauds the fruitful efforts by different stakeholders throughout seven years that has seen the passage of Rape law by lower House of Representatives. Our sincere prayer is to the upper house to pass it also; not withstanding any amendments that may be required. This will save our daughters, sisters and mothers who have suffered for a very long and it will be a memorable legacy that our new government will bequeath our coming generation.

We appreciate the new minister of Labor and Social Affairs who relentlessly lobbied and made the whole idea real. This law will ban partially sexual gender based violence that has been meted on women notwithstanding Female Genital Mutilation that is not yet seen as violence against women and girls. NAFIS as part of **anti-rape movement**, welcome this milestone with open hands.

This step will change community attitudes to violence against women, such as attitudes of entitlement to sex and victim blaming, as well as attitudes of women themselves such as self-blame for violence against them witnessed in Somaliland. It will also promote in future changes to rape laws or laws of evidence which enable rapists from avoiding penalties; because, for example, victims are discouraged from reporting assaults against them, or because the rapist is entitled to some immunity or because a rapist (as a defendant) is capable in law of denigrating the victim.

For instance, NAFIS as Anti-FGM/C network in Somaliland remains committed to reproaching all forms of violence against women and girls especially FGM/C, recognizing the need for long-term, persistent messaging to drive change in Somaliland. It's time that our women and girls should have a break from this sexual violence meted against women and girls. Therefore, NAFIS takes a forefront acknowledgement to members of parliament(Lower house) who worked tirelessly to see the passage of the bill and call earnestly the upper house to fast track the finalization and look forward to the president signing it into law.