



# Media Release

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## **FROM PRESTON TO PUNTLAND: FORMER SPECTRUM EMPLOYEE NOW PRESIDENT**

Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre (SMRC) warmly congratulates its employee and former Board Member, Dr. Abdirahaman Mohamed Farole, on becoming the President of the Somali Region of Puntland after winning the elections in his home country on 8 January.

“It hasn’t been a complete surprise,” said **Settlement & Family Services Manager, Sonia Vignjevic**, “I was aware of his interest in politics and I believe in his ability, commitment, professionalism and passion. However, it is a surprise to think that someone you know and work with would become president. It is a bit surreal for him to go from Preston to Puntland, but we are very proud of his achievements and pleased that he has taken this desire to empower people to a new level,” said **Ms Vignjevic**.

“Because of his work and commitment as a Somali Men’s and Family Relationships Project Officer, Abdirahaman is very well known in the Somali communities of Melbourne,” explained **Ms Vignjevic**, “and when the news of his election came through, the Somali communities were ready to organise a huge party to celebrate the event. We join with the Somali communities in congratulating him on his election to public office.”

“As a Somali Project Officer, Abdirahaman has helped many Somalis in Melbourne. His achievements include the establishment of the Somali Social Support Men’s group and delivering group education sessions with the aim of enhancing the understanding of the Australian system, law, politics and regulations, with an emphasis on improving family relationships, parenting and men’s health issues. Somalia is very challenging country,” explained **Ms Vignjevic**, “and we at SMRC every year see people whose families are affected by the civil conflict in Somalia and assist them with their broader settlement issues.”

“With Abdirahaman’s talent, experience and wisdom,” concluded **Ms Vignjevic**, “SMRC has every reason to believe that the Region of Puntland will prosper under his leadership. On behalf of all associated with SMRC, I wish the new elected president a bright future.”

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