

## **Video 6: MP Maryan “We’re worried about resources at El Ali”** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=573XIVfBe0>

Maryan: First, my warmest greetings to Radio Kulmiye. Hello to the entire team at Radio Kulmiye. To begin, my regards go to the Federal Government of Somalia: President Farmaajo and my Prime Minister. After greetings, in the last several days, there was uproar and chorus of noise regarding the constituency that I represent, El Ali. The area is a no go but when we move to one person one vote elections, that is my polling location. El Ali is where my seat will go. Lately, there was talk of a big rock that was taken away from El Ali district. As you know, El Ali district has been a no go zone lately. For a long time, a violent group [Al Shabaab] was controlling it. At first, we gave up on our young kids from the area. Some of them joined militias to be used against their people. The brainwashing of those kids was bothering me. Some of the people got displaced to save their children and they came to Hiiran region. The only thing left was the resource in the land. There is no administration there except the [terrorist] group that uses force. As such, some locals were killed, others were injured and a big truck to excavate the rock was brought in. It was transported from El Ali to Mogadishu. It was confiscated at the tall tower [outside Mogadishu]. This resource should have been protected as we are counting on it.

Reporter: Can you tell us where the rock ended up?

Maryan: The rock came from very far. It came from El Ali and arrived in Mogadishu. It changed hands along the way. It was seized by the police and now it is in the custody of the intelligence agency. Of course, there is an ongoing investigation and we do not want to preempt it. I will share the outcome of the investigation with the people I represent.

Reporter: Who is the target? is being investigated in the ongoing investigation?

Maryan: The rock is being investigated and its movements. It came from a place controlled by a terrorists. Was it brought by business people or the terrorist group? There are conflicting stories and we do not want to preempt. We will wait for the outcome.

Reporter: What about the individuals transporting the rock? Are they in custody?

Maryan: Of those transporting it, only one person is in custody. But as the investigation goes, it will unfold itself.

Reporter: There are reports that competing political and financial interests have resulted from the issue of the rock?

Maryan: That is true. I understand that many businesspeople who were not attentive are now paying attention after we posted the arrival of the rock on social media. I have heard about businessmen, both local and even foreign, saying that good resources are available in that area. And we do not have sufficient means of defense. The government has done its best to tackle [terrorists] in Shabelle regions and other areas. In order to avoid further robbery of the resources which will enrich Al Shabaab, I hope the government will send troops to liberate the area in order to save our people and end their suffering.

Reporter: The question is, what can you tell us about foreigners and Somalis who have just become aware of and want to extract more resources from El Ali? Where are they and who is leading this campaign?

Maryan: The people who can go to an area that no one can go, where terrorists control, may have links with the terrorist. The only way to end this is to get government support for our local militia in the form of weapons and food rations. That's when the government can count on the resources from the area. That is how locals can count on it too. It is a region that has no schools, no education. It is a resourceful region. Since this district of El Ali is resourceful, I suggest that those of us in the diaspora do fundraisings and those in the area take up their guns and we can get ammunitions, foods and medicines in order to remove the enemy.

Reporter: People are questioning why members of parliament including yourself are calling for the government to liberate El Ali area when these rocks were in the area for thousands of years. It can be argued that you are only in this for financial interests since you never spoke about the suffering of locals in the past?

Maryan: No, we are not in it for finances. The area was important to us and we advocated for its recognition as a district. Even during [President Mohamed] Siyad Barre, when my father was a minister, he wanted to designate that location as a district. And when I came, I put on his shoes. The reason was that we believed it is strategically located and it has all kinds of resources. We had setbacks as a result of civil wars and terrorists. We are similar to the many areas controlled by terrorists. Since this rock was removed from the area, people do copycat and that is why we request the government and the locals to be ready. The locals said their men are ready. They requested for weapons and medicines. They said they do not need salaries. The government is ready to do so.

Reporter: Why are you speaking up now? Are you after private interests or the public interest?

Maryan: I never look for private interests. The issue occurred in my constituency. I have to stand up for the people killed and injured there. That is my sworn duty as a member of the National Assembly from the constituency. The reason I am looking for this rock is not personal. I am not a private citizen. I am a national legislator.

Reporter: To those listening to you from Kulmiye media, what would you tell them about expected solutions regarding the rock?

Maryan: I want to tell the people, as Maryan Ahmed Harun, your member of Parliament, I am fighting for all – young, old, those in the country and the diaspora. I am representing the constituency and we will explore every avenue to have the rock come back to our possession. We will sit down with the government. When I say government, I am in government as MP. There are three branches: the National Assembly which is the legislature, the executive and the judiciary. As a member of these institutions, I say to the President of the Somali Democratic Republic Farmaajo and my Prime Minister Khaire, since they were focusing on resources for the last three or four years, such as petroleum exploration. We passed the bill the other day. I will stand up for the resources found in my region and I will hold the government accountable.

I say to my people, stay safe. As a member of parliament, I am committed to this issues on your behalf.

Reporter: You are looking for a solution. Are you trying to take the rock back to the area? Or are you trying to sell it? What is the plan?

Maryan: I cannot talk about that right now. Whether it will be taken to the area or put up for sale, that is a decision we will have to take in conjunction with the government. We will decide together and share the outcome with the public.

Journalist: Various leaders from Hirshabelle have spoken out. Are you not able to meet and discuss this? Why are you making different statements?

Maryan: I speak on behalf of my constituency. Also, my brother MP Jesow spoke out. The Speaker also spoke. They are with me. If there is a little problem in their constituency, I would do the same for them. We are a team that works together for the good of our people and land. There is no difference in what we said. We all have the same principles.