



## **Dialog for sustainable change**

**“What can we learn from the Civil rights movement?”**

**Monday, September 26<sup>th</sup> at Café Teater**

**from 16:00 – 18:00**

**Registration required due to limited seating. Please send mail to [registration@norsombro.no](mailto:registration@norsombro.no) by September 23rd, 2011**

**Facilitator:** Gerhard Helskog

Journalist and author of *“Immigrants Superpower: What can Norway learn from America’s success”*.

**Main Speaker: Congressman John Lewis, Georgia.**

We are in discussion with Somali poet, **Maxamed Hashi Dhamac**, whom we hope will read a poem to open the dialogue

**NORSOMbro** (A Norwegian Somali bridge building project) invites you to the first in a series of dialog meetings.

This meeting will feature Congressman John Lewis of Atlanta, Georgia in a dialog with representatives from the Somalian community and others working on integration.

The meeting will focus on how the Congressman’s experience from the Civil Rights movement can be relevant with regard to the opportunities and challenges we are facing today in integrating the Somalian community in the Norwegian society.



**The dialog will focus on answering the following questions:**

- How do we foster a greater understanding of each other's customs and cultures and build mutual respect for individuals?
- How to strengthen the commitment to a non-violent approach on an individual and community level, especially in the aftermath of 22/7?
- What can the Somali community do and where do we go from here?

**Program:**

16:00- 16:10	Registration
16:10- 16:15	Welcome, Lisa Cooper, Leadership Foundation
16:15- 16:18	Introduction to Congressman John Lewis, Ambassador Barry White
16:18 – 16:48	Congressman John Lewis, “Experience from the Civil rights movement in strengthening group identity”
16:50-17:50	Panel discussion and question and Answer with Congressman and Panel Delegates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Former Prime Minister Kjell Magne Bondevik</li><li>• Cindy Horst (PRIO)</li><li>• Bashe Mohamed Musse (SOMNOR)</li><li>• Kadra Noor Ahmed (Primærmedisinsk verksted)</li><li>• Alexander Harang (Norwegian Peace Association)</li><li>• Mohammed Farah (Pofessor of Economics)</li></ul>
17:50 – 18:00	Wrap-up



### **Congressman John Lewis**

Born February 21, 1940 in Troy, Alabama, Representative Lewis grew up on his family's farm and attended segregated public schools. Inspired by the non-violent civil rights movement, Lewis organized sit-in demonstrations and participated in the Freedom Rides while attending the American Baptist College. While carrying out his Freedom Rides, Lewis was severely beaten by an angry mob and arrested. From 1963-1966 Lewis was Chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), an organization he helped create, and later served on the board. In SNCC, Lewis coordinated voter registration drives and coordinated a march, which was later known as "Bloody Sunday". Continuing his commitment to civil rights, Rep. Lewis became the associate director of the Field Foundation in 1966, and focused his attention on voter registration movements. In 1977, he was selected by President Jimmy Carter to direct the federal volunteer agency ACTION, and later in 1981, he was elected to the Atlanta City Council. In 1986, Mr. Lewis was voted into the 5<sup>th</sup> U.S. representative congressional district, where he has served ever since. He has over 50 honorary degrees and numerous awards and accolades including the Non-Violent Peace Prize and the National Education Association Martin Luther King Jr. Award. He co-authored his biography *Walking With the Wind: A Memoir of the Movement* (1998) and in 2006 two books were written about him. While in Norway, Representative Lewis will give the 2011 PRIO Annual Peace Address: *The Role of Nonviolence in the Struggle for Liberation*.

### **Maxamed Hashi Dhamac 'Gaariye'**

Maxamed Hashi Dhamac was born in Hargeisa in 1949. He went to school in Sheikh in Somaliland and graduated in biology at the Somali National University. After his education he worked as a teacher in secondary schools. When he gained his reputation as a poet and literary scholar, he worked at the Academy of Culture in Mogadishu and as a lecturer in Somali literature at the National University. From the 1970s onwards he has been one of the most important Somali poets, composing on a great variety of topics from nuclear weapons to Nelson Mandela. He was also a poet who was not afraid to engage in the politics of Somalia through his poetry, and he was the initiator of one of the largest 'chain poems', 'Deelley', to which many poets contributed, each one alliterating in 'd', hence the name of the chain. Gaariye was the person who first articulated the metrical patterns of Somali poetry. He published his findings in articles in the national newspaper in 1976. Gaariye now lives in Hargeisa. A few of his best known poems are: Fad galbeed, Madax doodir and Watergate.