After years of transition, Somalia’s national legislative body--the House of the People--is taking shape. Parliament established new Parliamentary Committees tasked with considering policy issues, scrutinizing the progress and expenditures of the government, and analyzing legislation.

Honorable Abdi Hashi, a veteran member of the House, knows the importance of this step all too well. After years as a member of the Transitional Federal Parliament, Hon. Hashi is keen to underscore the symbolic significance of the new Parliament.

“This parliament enjoys the highest level of confidence and legitimacy in a really long time,” he says. “People believe this Parliament and its organs will deliver their aspirations,” he concludes.

In February 2013 USAID supported a workshop for House Committee Chairs on developing a legislative agenda. Implemented by the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, (NDI), the training focused on the role of legislative committees and how they may interact with the Executive, consult with civil society groups, and build consensus.

In lively sessions, the legislators examined sections of the provisional constitution that call for legislative action and discussed the details of committee work. As the workshop drew to a close and MPs braced for the new parliamentary season, an air of confidence pervaded the sessions.

“I’m grateful that this workshop was held a week before the opening of the new season of the House. MPs are now energized from the interactions and sessions they’ve had and will act on what they have learnt,” said Honorable Adan Sadiq Mohamed, Chair of the Judicial Committee.