Last update: October 14, 2010, 2:09 PM

Somali-American is new prime minister in Somalia

50°

ForecastRadar

Published:October 14, 2010, 11:16 AM

Updated: October 14, 2010, 2:09 PM

MOGADISHU, Somalia (AP) - Somalia's president named a new prime minister on Thursday, bringing into the government a Somali-American who has taught at a community college in New York state.

Prime Minister Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed replaces Omar Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke, who had a long-running feud with the president and resigned last month.

A statement from the Somali government said that Mohamed is a former Somali diplomat. He worked in the Somali Embassy in Washington from 1985 to 1988, according to the government's website.

Mohamed has taught conflict resolution and leadership skills at Erie Community College, a member of the State University of New York (SUNY) system, according to his resume. He has a master's degree in political science from SUNY-Buffalo, it said.

Mohamed will be asked to name a Cabinet within one month.

Mark Bowden, a top U.N. official with oversight of Somalia, said Mohamed's Cabinet is expected to be smaller than the bloated group of politicians that Sharmarke had control over. Among officials in Sharmarke's Cabinet was a minister of tourism in a violence-plagued country that sees only a handful of tourists each year.

Somalia's Transitional Federal Government controls only a few blocks of Mogadishu and is generally seen as corrupt, weak and ineffective. The government

has accomplished little since its inception in 2004. Somalia hasn't had a fully functioning government since 1991, when warlords overthrew the president.

The U.S. last month announced a new, dual track approach to Somalia that will see continued American support of the transitional government but also new, direct support of other groups and regions in Somalia. The new approach includes increased support to the semiautonomous Somali regions of Somaliland and Puntland.

Copyright 1999 - 2010 - The Buffalo News copyright-protected material.