

# Fadumo Dayib

## *Defiance & Bravery Personified*

Africa has this year been gripped with the news of mother-of-four Fadumo Dayib's declaration to stand as the first ever female Presidential candidate in the upcoming Somali Presidential Elections. Not since Africa's first female president, one of the only two currently serving - President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf's race in Liberia - has news of a woman politician seeking high office been so exciting. And in Fadumo's case even raising concern. We caught up with the 44-year-old icon-in-the-making at her Mogadishu base to find out why even death threats and the nightmare scenario of leaving her children without their mother won't deter her. You may need to read this sitting down.

Interview by reGina Jane Jere

**N***ew African Woman:* You have been one of the most exciting names of 2016, your name is literally everywhere for the fact that you are the first woman to dare stand as a presidential candidate in Somalia and vehemently challenge the status quo. Just give us a bit of a background - Who is Fadumo?

**Fadumo:** Oh my God! I wish I knew why they are getting excited about Fadumo. In a nutshell I was born into displacement to two illegal Somali immigrants in Kenya. My father was a truck driver who spoke several different languages fluently, although he was illiterate and he couldn't read and write. My mother was a nomad who had a head for numbers and she was a brilliant mathematician. She could

just calculate figures off the top of her head while others struggled with the calculator, despite the fact that she was also not formally educated. She only started reading and writing at a very late stage of her life, just before she died in Finland. These are the two wonderful human beings who brought me into this world.

My mother had been married off at a young age as a child bride