

Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale

Bilagsnr.:	1014
Land:	Somalia
Kilde:	Heritage Institute
Titel:	State of Somalia. 2022 Report
Udgivet:	24. marts 2023
Optaget på baggrundsmaterialet:	14. august 2023

State of Somalia

2022 Report

Contents

1	Executive Summary	3
2	National Politics / Federal Elections	5
3	External Relations	13
4	Somaliland	15
5	Puntland	17
6	Southwest	22
7	Galmudug	25
8	Jubaland	26
9	Hirshabelle	28
10	Banadir /Mogadishu	30
11	Conclusion	31

1. Executive summary

The Heritage Institute's State of Somalia (SOS) report focuses on the main developments and key trends in politics, security, the economy, social services and the role of external actors in 2022. The objective of this annual report is to document key events that shaped Somalia throughout the year as well as provide analysis and context for policymakers, academics and the general public in order to support peace and state building efforts in the country.

On 15 May, Hassan Sheikh Mohamud was elected as Somalia's new president for the second time, defeating the incumbent Mohamed Abdullahi Farmaajo. This peaceful, though drawn out and contested, transfer of power marked noteworthy progress in Somalia's democratic consolidation.

Donors and ordinary Somalis alike were relieved that the election was over, as the first months of 2022 were marred by repeated delays, procedural irregularities and the power struggle between Farmaajo and Prime Minister Mohamed Hussein Roble who had resisted the president's push for an extension to his term. Farmaajo tried to oust Roble, resulting in an armed confrontation between security forces loyal to the two leaders at the presidential palace.

Donor support to Somalia was suspended in the first half of the year because of the delayed election, which had brought government activities and service delivery to a standstill. The US also threatened the officials responsible with sanctions.

Mohamud selected Hamza Abdi Barre as prime minister who chose a cabinet that was noteworthy for the appointment of former al-Shabaab number two, Mukhtar Robow, as minister of religious affairs. Barre also appointed most of the president's allies; allies of the presidential candidates who were eliminated but propped up Mr. Mohamud in the final rounds of the election were not however included in the cabinet.

On the security front, al-Shabaab continued to carry out deadly attacks around the country. One of the worst was the 30-hour siege of the Hayat hotel near Mogadishu airport, resulting in more than 20 fatalities. A twin bombing targeting the federal ministry of education in Mogadishu killed at least 100 people in October and wounded about 300 others, making it Somalia's second-deadliest attack after the 2017 truck bombing that killed over 500 people at the same location.

The Somali National Army continued its campaign to recapture territory from al-Shabaab, helped by the local clan militias known as Ma'awisley which led an uprising at the grassroots level and had significant success in liberating dozens of villages. They were supported by the federal government, US drones and African Union peacekeepers.

“
The Somali National Army continued its campaign to recapture territory from al-Shabaab, helped by the local clan militias known as Ma'awisley which led an uprising at the grassroots level and had significant success in liberating dozens of villages

The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), which has been essential in damaging al-Shabaab and supporting the Somali government's state-building and peace-building journey over the past 15 years, saw its mandate expire on 31 March. AMISOM was reconfigured into the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) and will remain in the country until 2024.

On the humanitarian front, the war in Ukraine and severe drought significantly impacted the country's food output and livestock exports. According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), around 7.8 million Somalis (nearly half the population) are affected by the ongoing droughts, which have sparked fears of a famine.

Around the country, the breakaway region of Somaliland intensified its lobbying to leave Somalia. In late December, a massive uprising broke out in Laas Aanood, the capital of the Sool region, which is controlled by Somaliland and claimed by the regional state of Puntland.

Parliamentary elections began in Puntland in January and went on for three months. Almost all of the 37 MPs elected were handpicked by President Said Abdullahi Deni who wanted to secure his base ahead of his presidential bid. This created a rift between Deni and key segments of Puntland society such as traditional elders and politicians.

Though Southwest's parliamentary election was marred by irregularities and gerrymandering, the state government made significant strides in decentralizing power by continuing to support the formation of district councils. Elections in Hudur and Bardale districts were conducted successfully. The state's ministry of interior affairs is currently carrying out pre-district council formation processes for El-Berde, Burhakaba and Wallaweyn.

In Galmudug, parliamentarians amended the state's constitution and gave themselves and President Ahmed Abdi Karie (Qoorqoor) a one-year extension. Galmudug was the last of the four south-central states to extend the president's term.

Election-related political infighting and insecurity were the dominant issues in Jubaland in 2022. Relations between the centre (Kismaayo) and the periphery (the Gedo region which was aligned with and was the home base of President Farmaajo) ruptured.

In Hirshabelle, Amina Mohamed, a senior member of the opposition party led by Hassan Sheikh Mohamed, was killed by a suicide bomber while campaigning for re-election in March. Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility.

In Banadir, the seat of national government, repeated terror attacks killed or maimed more than 600 citizens.

2. National Politics / Federal Elections

The year 2022 started with intense political uncertainty due to the impending federal election. Politicians agreed on 17 September 2020 to organize the indirect election,¹ but it took almost 12 months to start the process. The first senator was selected in July 2021,² while the first MP was chosen in November.³

“

The election was marred by procedural irregularities and election rigging orchestrated by the National Consultative Council (NCC) leaders, damaging its legitimacy and integrity

The election was marred by procedural irregularities and election rigging orchestrated by the National Consultative Council (NCC) leaders, damaging its legitimacy and integrity. The first week of January 2022 saw an NCC meeting called by Prime Minister Mohamed Hussein Roble to defuse the tensions and correct election-related issues.⁴ The meeting concluded with an 18-point agreement. The election managers also agreed to complete the long-delayed lower house elections by 25 February 2022.⁵

The international community urged swift implementation of the agreement,⁶ and the US government threatened the officials responsible for sabotaging the election process with sanctions if they did not adhere to the NCC's agreed-upon timeline.⁷ However, the NCC extended the deadline to 15 March. In response, the US announced visa restrictions on an expanded list of Somali officials “responsible for undermining the democratic process”.^{9/10}

Repeated delays, procedural irregularities and frequent disputes between the executive branch plunged the country into a period of uncertainty and created a security crisis. The power struggle between President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed (Farmaajo) and Prime Minister Mohamed Hussein Roble fuelled an armed confrontation between security forces loyal to the two leaders at the presidential palace.¹¹ In January 2022, following their week-long deliberations, the NCC agreed to deploy AMISOM troops to strengthen the presidential palace's security. The political skirmish between the two leaders erupted once again when Roble declared the AU Chair's representative, Francisco Madeira, a persona non grata. Farmaajo invalidated Roble's decision, citing his lack of authority to expel ambassadors.¹²

1. See “Somali Leaders Agree on Revised Election Model.” Aa.com.tr, September 2020. Accessed at: <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/somali-leaders-agree-on-revised-election-model/1977240>.

2. See “Jubbaland Announces Its First Four Senators to Somali Parliament.” The East African, July 2021. Accessed at: <https://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/tea/news/east-africa/jubbaland-elects-senators-to-somalia-parliament-3491104>.

3. See “Mahdi Gulaid 1st MP to Be Selected to Somalia's next Parliament,” Hiiraan.com, November 2023. Accessed at: https://www.hiiraan.com/news/2021/Nov/184427/somalia_set_to_kick_of_lower_house_elections.aspx.

4. See “Somali PM Roble Calls for Talks to Fix Electoral Fraud,” KEYDMEDIA ONLINE, December 21, 2021. Accessed at: <https://www.keydmedia.net/news/pm-roble-calls-for-talks-to-fix-electoral-fraud>.

5. See “Somalia: The NCC Meeting Concludes in Mogadishu, Most Issues Solved,” Garowe Online, January 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.garoweonline.com/en/news/somalia/somalia-the-ncc-meeting-to-conclude-in-mogadishu-most-issues-solved>.

6. See “International Community Calls on Somalia's Leaders to Adhere to Electoral Schedule, Avoid Violence,” Hiiraan.com, January 2022. Accessed at: https://www.hiiraan.com/news/2022/Jan/185049/international_community_calls_on_somalia_s_leaders_to_adhere_to_electoral_schedule_avoid_violence.aspx?utm_source=hiiraan&utm_medium=SomaliNewsUpdateFront.

7. See “Promoting Sustainable Peace and Responsive Governance in Somalia - United States Department of State,” February 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.state.gov/promoting-sustainable-peace-and-responsive-governance-in-somalia/>.

8. See “NCC Push Back Somali Elections Again to March 15,” Hiiraan.com, February 2022. Accessed at: https://www.hiiraan.com/news/2022/Feb/185409/ncc_push_back_somali_elections_again.aspx?utm_source=hiiraan&utm_medium=SomaliNewsUpdateFront.

9. See “US Announces Sanctions for Somali Officials after Election Delays,” Al Jazeera, February 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/2/26/us-announces-sanctions-for-somali-officials-after-election-delays>.

10. See “US Expands Number of Somalis Subject to Visa Restrictions,” Middle East Monitor, March 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20220317-us-expands-number-of-somalis-subject-to-visa-restrictions/>.

11. See “Security Forces Loyal to Somalia PM Gather Outside Presidential Palace,” Reuters, December 28, 2021. Accessed at: <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/us-says-supports-somalian-pms-efforts-rapid-credible-elections-2021-12-28/>.

12. See “Somali Prime Minister Orders African Union Envoy to Leave Country,” VOA. Voice of America, April 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.voanews.com/a/somali-prime-minister-orders-african-union-envoy-to-leave-country/6518735.html>.

Farmaajo had appointed Roble on 18 September 2020 after he negotiated a detailed indirect election roadmap with regional leaders, not expecting the new prime minister would get involved in the process.¹³ Farmaajo and his allies assumed Roble was a docile and harmless political novice. However, Roble began to resist the president's push for an extension to his term in office and hawkish policies towards the opposition. Farmaajo responded by twice unsuccessfully attempting to oust the prime minister.¹⁴

“
On 15 May,
both houses
elected Hassan
Sheikh Mohamud
who defeated
Farmaajo 214-110
in the final vote

After a protracted, highly manipulated, and contentious political dispensation, the Upper House selection process was completed in November 2021 while the members of the Lower House of parliament were sworn in on 14 April 2022.¹⁵ On 15 May, both houses elected Hassan Sheikh Mohamud who defeated Farmaajo 214-110 in the final vote.¹⁶ Mohamud previously held the position from 2012-2017, making him the first president to be re-elected. Somalis were relieved that the successful conclusion of the presidential and parliamentary elections had reduced the risks of another civil conflict caused by the outgoing president trying to stay in power by delaying or manipulating the electoral process.

“
The peaceful
transfer of
power marked
noteworthy
progress in
Somalia's
democratic
consolidation

The peaceful transfer of power marked noteworthy progress in Somalia's democratic consolidation. Mohamud was inaugurated in June 2022¹⁷ and selected Hamza Abdi Barre as prime minister. Barre had served as the secretary general of the Union for Peace and Development (UPD) which the president now chairs. Barre was also an MP before returning the seat to his clan.¹⁸ Barre subsequently stood before MPs in parliament and obtained their vote of confidence.¹⁹ He revealed his new government in August after a series of consultations that lasted for over a month. The cabinet is distinct in three ways: the appointment of former al-Shabaab number two, Mukhtar Robow, as minister of religious affairs; the domination of cabinet by president Mohamud's political allies and absence in the cabinet of allies of other political groups.²⁰

On the security front, al-Shabaab continued to carry out high-profile attacks during the parliamentary elections, including targeting the parliament building where the newly elected MPs were meeting to approve procedures for the election of speakers with mortars.²¹

13. See “Somali President Names Newcomer Roble Premier as Elections Loom.” Reuters, September 2020. Accessed at: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-somalia-politics-idUSKBN2683BD>.

14. See “Somalia's President Suspends Prime Minister amid Election Spat.” Al Jazeera, December 2021. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/12/27/somalias-president-suspends-pm-amid-tensions-over-elections>.

15. See “New Members of Somalia's Parliament Sworn In.” VOA News, April 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.voanews.com/a/new-members-of-somalia-s-parliament-sworn-in-/6529995.html>.

16. See “Somalia's New President Elected by 327 People,” BBC News, May 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-61438047>.

17. See “New Somali President Inaugurated, Warns of Famine.” VOA News, June 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.voanews.com/a/new-somali-president-inaugurated-warns-of-famine/6610524.html>.

18. See “New Somali President Appoints Prime Minister.” VOA News, June 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.voanews.com/a/new-somali-president-appoints-prime-minister/6618879.html>.

19. See “Somalia Parliament Approves New Prime Minister.” VOA News, June 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.voanews.com/a/somalia-parliament-approves-new-prime-minister/6632962.html>.

20. See “Somalia's Prime Minister Appoints 26-Member Cabinet,” Hiiraan.com, 2023. Accessed at: https://www.hiiraan.com/news/4/2022/Aug/187240/somalia_s_new_prime_minister_names_long_awaited_26_member_cabinet.aspx.

21. See “Al-Shabab Claims Mortar Attack on Somali Parliament.” VOA News, April 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.voanews.com/a/al-shabab-claims-mortar-attack-on-somali-parliament/6534121.html>.

“

By August, Somalia's newly elected president Mohamud announced an all-out war against al-Shabaab. Mohamud understands that the economic and ideological fronts will be as important as the military operations in winning that war

“

Most of the towns and villages were abandoned without any resistance from al-Shabaab

The group also claimed responsibility for attacks which killed Amina Mohamed Abdi, a female opposition MP and an outspoken critic of the outgoing government. More than 40 people died and city's main hospital was destroyed.²² Roble insinuated that the disappearance of Ikran Tahlil, the young cyber security officer at the National Intelligence and Security Agency (NISA), and the killing of Abdi were related.^{23/ 24}

In February 2022, al-Shabaab attempted a suicide attack targeting a bus full of delegates on their way to the polling station in Mogadishu's Halane area. Although none of the passengers were harmed, six civilians were killed.²⁵ One week later, the group carried out another suicide attack in Beledweyne, targeting a restaurant where politicians gathered. More than 15 people died including a deputy district commissioner.²⁶ In August, al-Shabaab besieged the Hayat hotel, located near Mogadishu airport in an area frequented by businessmen and government officials, for more than 30 hours, resulting in more than 20 fatalities. By August, Somalia's newly elected president Mohamud announced an all-out war against al-Shabaab.²⁷ Mohamud understands that the economic and ideological fronts will be as important as the military operations in winning that war.²⁸

Local clan militias known as Ma'awisley began to revolt against al-Shabaab, marking a renewed uprising at the grassroots level.²⁹ The federal government has supported this central Somalia-based clan revolt from the beginning.³⁰ The Somali army and Ma'awisley militias, supported by the United States and the African Union, had significant success in liberating dozens of villages in Hiiraan before advancing to the Galgaduud region. Government officials confirmed that a Turkish drone was also used in the ongoing operation against al-Shabaab.³¹ Ahmed Moallim Fiqi, the federal minister of interior affairs, said the government had liberated 40 settlements in Hiiraan and six in the Galgaduud regions in three weeks.³² Most of the towns and villages were abandoned without any resistance from al-Shabaab. In December 2022, government troops and the Ma'awisley retook the crucial town of Adan Yabaal and the surrounding villages.³³

22. See "Somalia Twin Attack: Politician Killed in Bomb Blasts." Deutsche Welle, March 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.dw.com/en/somalia-twin-attack-politician-killed-in-bomb-blasts/a-61239115>.

23. See "PM Roble Says Ikran Tahlil's Killers Masterminded MP Amina's Assassination," Hiiraan.com, March 2023. Accessed at: https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2022/Mar/185672/pm_roble_says_ikran_tahlil_s_killers_masterminded_mp_amina_s_assassination.aspx.

24. See "Female Opposition MP among Dozens Killed in Somalia Bombings." The Guardian, March 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2022/mar/24/female-opposition-mp-among-dozens-killed-in-somalia-bombings>.

25. See "Several Killed in Attack Targeting Somalia Election Delegates." Al Jazeera, February 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/2/10/car-bomb-targeting-somalia-election-delegates-kills-six>.

26. See "Two Pre-Election Attacks in Somalia Kill at Least 15, Injure Dozens," Voice of America, February 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.voanews.com/a/somalia-beledweyne-suicide-blast/6450369.html>.

27. See "Somalia's President Vows 'Total War' against Al-Shabab." VOA News, August 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.voanews.com/a/somalia-s-president-vows-total-war-against-al-shabab/6714508.html>.

28. See "Somali President Says Al-Shabaab 'Cannot Be Defeated Militarily' | Somali Guardian, December 2022. Accessed at: <https://somaliguardsian.com/news/somalia-news/somali-president-says-al-shabaab-cannot-be-defeated-militarily/>.

29. See "Somalia's Men in Sarongs Taking on Al-Shabab Militants." BBC News, November 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-63486013>.

30. See "Ma'awisley' Militias in Central Somalia Mobilizing against Al-Shabab." VOA. October 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.voanews.com/a/ma-awisley-militias-in-central-somalia-mobilizing-against-al-shabab-/6776048.html>.

31. See "Somalia Confirms Turkish TB2 Deployed against Al Shabaab," Hiiraan Online, September 2022. Accessed at: https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2022/Sept/188002/somalia_confirms_turkish_tb2_deployed_against_al_shabaab.aspx?utm_source=hiiraan&utm_medium=SomaliNewsUpdateFront.

32. See "Somalia Military Makes Gains in Large-Scale Offensive against Al-Shabab," Hiraan Online, September 2022. Accessed at: https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2022/Sept/188000/somalia_military_makes_gains_in_large_scale_offensive_against_al_shabab.aspx?utm_source=hiiraan&utm_medium=SomaliNewsUpdateFront.

33. See "Somalia Forces and Allies Retake Key Town from Al-Shabab." Al Jazeera, December 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/12/7/somalia-forces-and-allies-retake-key-town-from-al-shabab>.

“

US President Joe Biden approved redeploying hundreds of US troops to assist the government in its war against al-Shabaab

In response, al-Shabaab burned villages in the Hiiraan and Galgadud regions, blew up water wells and destroyed communication towers.³⁴ Al-Shabaab also retaliated against the rural offensive by intensifying attacks in Mogadishu and other cities. In October, a twin bombing targeting the federal ministry of education in Mogadishu killed at least 100 people. It wounded about 300 others, making it the country's second-deadliest attack after the 2017 bombing that killed over 500 people in the same location.³⁵ A few weeks later, the group besieged a hotel near the presidential palace frequented by government officials for more than 20 hours, killing at least 10 people and injuring many others, including Somalia's federal minister of security Mohamed Ahmed Doodishe.³⁶

In May 2022, US President Joe Biden approved redeploying hundreds of US troops to assist the government in its war against al-Shabaab. Biden also authorized a plan to increase airstrikes targeting the al-Shabaab leadership.³⁷ Mohamud welcomed Biden's decision.³⁸

US government has been training a Somali commando unit called Danab since 2015. Danab has been one of the most influential and critical factors in the success of the ongoing operation to liberate the country.³⁹ However, the military operations against the militants depend heavily on the US Africa Command's (AFRICOM) airstrikes. In 2022, US AFRICOM aerial bombardment increased by 30 percent compared to the previous year. A total of 15 drone attacks killed 107 al-Shabaab fighters. Although human rights groups and US lawmakers continue to question the accuracy of civilian casualty reports, US AFRICOM claimed that no civilians lost their lives in its 2022 operations.⁴⁰

In late December, thousands of Somali soldiers trained in Eritrea were brought back to Mogadishu.⁴¹ Since their first deployment to Asmara in 2019 and 2020, the status of these soldiers has been the subject of much controversy. The Somali government has been accused of deploying them to support the Ethiopian army's offensive against the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF). Both governments have denied these accusations.⁴²

34. See "Al Shabaab in Central Somalia Destroy Drinking Wells, Communication Towers," Hiiraan Online, September 2022. https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2022/Sept/187648/al_shabaab_in_central_somalia_destroy_drinking_wells_communication_towers.aspx?utm_source=hiiraan&utm_medium=SomaliNewsUpdateFront.

35. See "2 Car Bombs Leave Scores of Casualties at an Intersection in Somalia's Capital," October 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.npr.org/2022/10/29/1132604501/somalia-mogadishu-car-bombs-civilian-casualties>.

36. See "Somalia Villa Rays Attack: Siege Ends Leaving Eight Civilians Dead," BBC News, November 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-63773425>.

37. See "Biden Approves Plan to Redeploy Several Hundred Ground Forces into Somalia," The New York Times, May 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/16/us/politics/biden-military-somalia.html>.

38. See "Somalia President Welcomes Re-Deployment of US Forces," Hiiraan Online, May 2022. Accessed at: https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2022/May/186310/somali_president_welcomes_re_deployment_of_us_forces.aspx?utm_source=hiiraan&utm_medium=SomaliNewsUpdateFront.

39. See "Somalia Military Rebuilding Shows Signs of Improvement," VOA News, November 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.voanews.com/a/somalia-military-rebuilding-shows-signs-of-improvement/6856894.html>.

40. See "US Airstrikes in Somalia Increased in 2022, Killing More than 100," Yahoo, September 2022. Accessed at: <https://news.yahoo.com/u-airstrikes-somalia-increased-2022-195251448.html>.

41. See "First Batch of Somali Troops Trained in Eritrea Arrives Home," VOA News, December 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.voanews.com/a/first-batch-of-somali-troops-trained-in-eritrea-arrives-home-/6885944.html#:~:text=FILE%20%2D%20Mothers%20of%20missing%20Somali,%2C%20on%20June%2010%2C%202021..>

42. See "Clandestine Training of Somali Forces in Eritrea Stirs Families' Concern," VOA. Voice of America (VOA News), February 2021. Accessed at: <https://www.voanews.com/a/africa-clandestine-training-somali-forces-eritrea-stirs-families-concern/6202295.html>.

AMISOM, whose presence over the last 15 years has been essential in degrading al-Shabaab and supporting the Somali government's efforts in its state-building and peace-building journey, saw its mandate expire on 31 March.⁴³ The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) adopted a resolution that endorsed the reconfiguring of AMISOM into the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) from 1 April.⁴⁴ The UNSC's decision came after a series of deliberations between Mogadishu and the AU technical teams in Mogadishu over the "mandate, composition, size, structure, and the Concept of Operations (CONOPs) of the new mission".⁴⁵

“
ATMIS, which currently provides a limited support to the operations against al-Shabaab, will remain in Somalia until the end of 2024, after which its security responsibilities will be taken over by the Somali security forces

Somalia's permanent representative to the UN, Abukar Osman, expressed his deep regret that the UNSC had disregarded the Somali delegation's suggestions on the modalities of the mission "in regard to planned logistical support, the need for unified and centralized command and control and the exclusion of the agreed enhanced civilian component". He said that Somalia wanted a new mission that "focuses on conducting effective, agile, and mobile operations".⁴⁶ The AU Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security, Bankole Adeoye, responded, saying that "ATMIS is designed to be more agile, more mobile, more flexible" in reacting to security threats.⁴⁷ ATMIS, which currently provides a limited support to the operations against al-Shabaab, will remain in Somalia until the end of 2024, after which its security responsibilities will be taken over by the Somali security forces, as per Somalia Transitional Plan.⁴⁸

“
Al-Shabaab derives revenue from many sources, including imports into Mogadishu's main port

The federal government took extraordinary measures to halt al-Shabaab's financial flows including closing up to 250 bank accounts linked to the militant group and threatening businesses that pay extortion taxes with legal action.⁴⁹ The government also launched an investigation into the group's revenue generation network in Mogadishu's main port.⁵⁰ Al-Shabaab derives revenue from many sources, including imports into Mogadishu's main port.⁵¹ The group generates around \$50-\$100 million per year and spends about \$25 million on military operations.⁵²

43. See "BBC World Service - Focus on Africa, the End of AMISOM Mandate in Somalia," March 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0byqcn>.

44. See "Unanimously Adopting Resolution 2628 (2022), Security Council Endorses Decision to Reconfigure Existing Entity into African Union Transition Mission in Somalia" Un.org, March 2022: Accessed at: <https://press.un.org/en/2022/sc14847.doc.htm>.

45. See "African Union, Federal Government of Somalia and Partners Start Second Phase of Technical Discussions on New AU Mission in Somalia - AMISOM," February 2022. Accessed at: <https://amisom-au.org/2022/02/african-union-federal-government-of-somalia-and-partners-start-second-phase-of-technical-discussions-on-new-au-mission-in-somalia/>.

46. See "Unanimously Adopting Resolution 2628 (2022), Security Council Endorses Decision to Reconfigure Existing Entity into African Union Transition Mission in Somalia | UN Press," March 2022. Accessed at: <https://press.un.org/en/2022/sc14847.doc.htm>.

47. See "African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) Transitions to African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS)- African Union - Peace and Security Department." African Union, Peace and Security Department, April 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.peaceau.org/en/article/press-release-african-union-mission-in-somalia-amisom-transitions-to-african-union-transition-mission-in-somalia-atmis>.

48. See "African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) Transitions to African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS)- African Union - Peace and Security Department." African Union, Peace and Security Department, April 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.peaceau.org/en/article/press-release-african-union-mission-in-somalia-amisom-transitions-to-african-union-transition-mission-in-somalia-atmis>.

49. See "Somalia Warns Traders Not to Pay off Islamist Militants," VOA, October 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.voanews.com/a/somalia-warns-traders-not-to-pay-off-islamist-militants/6791421.html>.

50. See "Ports Ministry Investigating al Shabaab Extortion at Mogadishu Port," Hiiraan.com, October 2022. Accessed at: https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2022/Oct/188337/ports_ministry_investigating_al_shabaab_extortion_at_mogadishu_port.aspx?utm_source=hiiraan&utm_medium=SomaliNewsUpdateFront.

51. See "A Losing Game: Countering Al-Shabab's Financial System." Hiraal Institute, October 2020. Accessed at: <https://hiraal institute.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/A-Losing-Game.pdf>.

52. See "United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Res 2610 (July 2022) UN Doc S/2022/547. Accessed at: <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/S%202022%20547.pdf>

21) Washington Post. Accessed at: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2021/09/18/somalia-political-crisis-shabab/>



In January 2023, the federal government hosted more than 300 Somali religious scholars in Mogadishu to gain their support for the efforts to liberate the country



Somalia remains highly dependent on donor support to address its development needs

In January 2023, the federal government hosted more than 300 Somali religious scholars in Mogadishu to gain their support for the efforts to liberate the country.⁵³ At the end of the conference, the religious scholars denounced al-Shabaab and ISIS-affiliated militant's extremist ideologies, declaring that they had no religious basis for their actions and were enemies of Islam and the Somali people.⁵⁴ Meanwhile, the federal government launched its own TV channel with programming aimed at countering extremist ideology and supporting the war against terrorism in the country,⁵⁵ as well as closing hundreds of social media accounts linked to al-Shabaab.⁵⁶

In terms of the economy, Somalia remains highly dependent on donor support to address its development needs. In 2022, the federal government budget was \$929 million, with just 26.5 percent coming from domestic revenue and the remaining 73.5 percent coming from donors.⁵⁷ Donor support to Somalia was suspended in the first half of 2022 because of the prolonged election, which slowed down government activities and service delivery.⁵⁸ Poll delays and divisions between political leaders also jeopardized the billion dollar debt relief arrangements that successive Somali governments had negotiated with international creditors. In February 2022, the IMF warned that if Somalia failed to conduct elections before the planned 17 May review, its support program would be “automatically terminated”.⁵⁹

The IMF and World Bank approved Somalia's debt relief eligibility under the Enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative in March 2020. Somalia has also reached the decision point in the complex HIPC debt relief process. Somalia's debt is predicted to drop from \$5.2 billion to \$557 million by the end of 2023 if the government maintains economic reforms and reaches the HIPC completion point. As a result, the government could re-engage with international financial institutions and unlock much-needed external funding from international development partners.

The war in Ukraine and severe droughts have significantly impacted the country's food output and livestock exports. The agricultural and livestock sectors account for 70 percent of Somalia's economic output and more than 90 percent of its exports.⁶⁰ Food inflation increased from 4.7% in 2021 to 7.8% in 2022.⁶¹

53. See “Clerics in Somalia Vow to Counter Al-Shabab,” VOA News, January 2023. Accessed at: <https://www.voanews.com/a/clerics-in-somalia-vow-to-counter-al-shabab/6937171.html>.

54. See “Somali Clerics Denounce Religious Extremism and Commend the Government on the Offensive against Terror Groups,” African Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS), January 2023. Accessed at: <https://atmis-au.org/somali-clerics-denounce-religious-extremism-and-commend-the-government-on-the-offensive-against-terror-groups/>.

55. See “Somalia Launches Anti-Al-Shabab TV Channel,” Hiiraan.com, November 2023. Accessed at: https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2022/Nov/188852/somalia_launches_anti_al_shabab_tv_channel.aspx.

56. See “Somalia Launches Anti-Al-Shabab TV Channel,” Hiiraan Online, November 2022. Accessed at: https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2022/Nov/188852/somalia_launches_anti_al_shabab_tv_channel.aspx?utm_source=hiiraan&utm_medium=SomaliNewsUpdateFront.

57. See “APPROPRIATION ACT for the 2022 BUDGET (ENGLISH VERSION)” Ministry of Finance - Somalia” 2022. Accessed at: <https://mof.gov.so/publications/appropriation-act-2022-budget-english-version>.

58. See “BUDGET STRATEGY for FISCAL YEAR 2023 | Ministry of Finance - Somalia,” 2023. <https://mof.gov.so/publications/budget-strategy-fiscal-year-2023>.

59. See “IMF Says Somalia Funding at Risk over Election Delays,” Al Jazeera, February 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/2/22/imf-says-somalia-funding-at-risk-over-election-delays>.

60. See “Investing in Social Development in the Federal Republic of Somalia Budget Brief,” UNICEF 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.unicef.org/somalia/media/3291/file/Somalia%20Budget%20Brief%20November%202022.pdf>.

61. See “BUDGET STRATEGY for FISCAL YEAR 2023 | Ministry of Finance - Somalia,” 2023. <https://mof.gov.so/publications/budget-strategy-fiscal-year-2023>.



Comparatively, the price of electricity in Kenya, Somalia's neighbour, is \$0.20 per kilowatt hour and \$0.65 in Somalia, nearly three times more

The droughts and global rise in energy prices caused by the war in Ukraine have increased food prices and have had a significant impact on the country's electricity prices.⁶² As electricity providers in Somalia generate most of their power from expensive imported diesel, households are bearing the cost.⁶³ Comparatively, the price of electricity in Kenya, Somalia's neighbour, is \$0.20 per kilowatt hour and \$0.65 in Somalia, nearly three times more.⁶⁴ The fragmented private sector domination of the electricity sector has been identified as the main culprit.⁶⁵ In late October, the government with the support of the World Bank launched the Somali Electricity Sector Recovery Project (SES RP) which is aimed at increasing access to affordable and reliable electricity.⁶⁶



Mohamud relaunched the country's application for membership in the East African Community (EAC)

In July 2022, Mohamud relaunched the country's application for membership in the East African Community (EAC), an Arusha, Tanzania-based regional intergovernmental organization of seven East African countries: Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Uganda and Tanzania.⁶⁷ In August, he appointed Abdisalam Hadliyah Omar, a veteran diplomat and a former foreign minister and governor of the Central Bank, to serve as his special envoy to lead Somalia's bid to join the community.⁶⁸ During his first term 10 years ago, Mohamud also applied to join the regional economic community.⁶⁹

Membership in the EAC is billed as opening up more opportunities for mutual economic growth and development. Considering its geostrategic location, Somalia would serve as a bridge connecting the regional bloc with the Arabian Peninsula and beyond. Somali businesses would benefit from the EAC's free movement of people and goods within and beyond the region and its access to worldwide markets. In January 2023, the EAC's verification mission arrived in Mogadishu to assess the country's readiness to join.⁷⁰ Even though Somalia faces serious challenges, the notion that it is unprepared for EAC membership owing to its political instability and security concerns is unconvincing. The Democratic Republic of Congo, a similarly troubled country, was allowed to join the regional bloc last year.⁷¹

62. See "Shirkadaha Korontada Ee Muqdisho Oo Gaaray Heshiis Ka Dhan Ah SHACABKA - Caasimada Online," Caasimada Online, March 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.caasimada.net/shirkadaha-korontada-ee-muqdisho-oo-gaaray-heshiis-ka-dhan-ah-shacabka/>.

63. See "Somalia | Power Africa | U.S. Agency for International Development," 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.usaid.gov/powerafrica/somalia>.

64. See "Somalia Plans Lower Electricity Costs as Recovery Project Launched," The East African, October 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/tea/news/east-africa/somalia-launches-project-to-revamp-electricity-supply-4000780>.

65. See "Somalia encourages foreign investments to fix its energy crisis; 2022; accessed at <https://www.trtworld.com/opinion/somalia-encourages-foreign-investments-to-fix-its-energy-crisis-56727>

66. See "Somalia Plans Lower Electricity Costs as Recovery Project Launched," The East African, October, 2022. <https://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/tea/news/east-africa/somalia-launches-project-to-revamp-electricity-supply-4000780>.

67. See "Overview of EAC," 2016. Accessed at: <https://www.eac.int/overview-of-eac>.

68. See "Somali President Appoints Special Envoy to EAC," Hiiraan.com, August 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.hiiraan.com/news/4/2022/Aug/187421/somali-president-appoints-special-envoy-to-eac.aspx>

69. See "We Are Ready to Join the Community, Somalia President Says," October 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.eac.int/press-releases/151-international-relations/2624-we-are-ready-to-join-the-community,-somalia-president-says>.

70. See "EAC Officially Launches the Verification Mission to Assess Somalia's Readiness to Join the Community," January 2023. Accessed at: <https://www.eac.int/press-releases/2711-eac-officially-launches-the-verification-mission-to-assess-somalia-s-readiness-to-join-the-community#:~:text=The%20verification%20team%20comprising%20of,the%20establishment%20of%20the%20EAC..>

71. See "The Democratic Republic of the Congo Joins EAC as Its 7th Member," March 2022. <https://www.eac.int/press-releases/2402-the-democratic-republic-of-the-congo-joins-eac-as-its-7th-member>.



Around 7.8 million Somalis (nearly half of the population) are affected by the ongoing severe droughts



The new administration has appointed Abdirahman Abdishakur Warsame, the chair of the Wadajir Party and an MP, as his special envoy for drought response to alleviate the humanitarian suffering and to mobilize local and international support

On the humanitarian side, according to OCHA, around 7.8 million Somalis (nearly half of the population) are affected by the ongoing severe droughts. “About 5.6 million people are facing acute food insecurity. It is feared that Somalia’s cyclical drought is becoming a full-blown famine, and national and international humanitarian organizations have sounded the alarm bells. An estimated 1.5 million children under five are suffering from acute malnutrition, of which 386,000 are at a high risk of disease and death.”⁷² Conflicts and insecurity remain core drivers of displacement. According to OCHA, the number of displaced people in the country is around 2.9 million, one of the highest numbers in the world.⁷³ More than 50,000 people, including those who escaped the catastrophic droughts in Somalia, have made it to the neighboring countries of Ethiopia and Kenya.⁷⁴

The new administration has appointed Abdirahman Abdishakur Warsame, the chair of the Wadajir Party and an MP, as his special envoy for drought response to alleviate the humanitarian suffering and to mobilize local and international support.⁷⁵ Warsame has travelled across Somalia and visited drought-stricken areas, including IDP camps, to assess the situation.⁷⁶ He also embarked on an international trip to raise the profile of the unfolding disaster in Somalia and solicit international assistance to stop another famine.

Prime Minister Hamza Barre created the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change to address the country’s rising vulnerability to climate change. Khadija Mohamed al-Makhzoumi, the former ambassador to Iraq and Pakistan, was appointed minister.⁷⁷ Elsewhere, the council of ministers has also endorsed a bill to reinstate the Somali Disaster Management Agency (SoDMA) to oversee the government’s efforts to mitigate the country’s humanitarian situation.⁷⁸

A new UN report indicated that the risk of a famine comparable to 2011 has diminished, but the situation remains alarming. It says that because of severe food insecurity, “several parts of the country are in danger of famine in the coming months.”⁷⁹

72. See “Somalia | World Food Programme,” January 2023. Accessed at: <https://www.wfp.org/countries/somalia#:~:text=WFP%20works%20in%20Somalia%20to,such%20as%20floods%20and%20drought..>

73. See “About OCHA Somalia,” Accessed at: . <https://www.unocha.org/somalia/about-ocha-somalia#:~:text=Somalia%20has%20one%20of%20the,2.9%20million%20people%20in%202022..>

74. See “Somalia: Drought Response and Famine Prevention (15 November - 15 December 2022) - Somalia,” January 2023. Accessed at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/somalia-drought-response-and-famine-prevention-15-november-15-december-2022>.

75. See “Hassan Sheikh Picks Abdirahman Abdishakur as Special Envoy to Tackle Drought,” Goobjoog, May 2022. Accessed at: <https://goobjoog.com/english/hassan-sheikh-picks-abdirahman-abdishakur-as-special-envoy-to-tackle-drought/>.

76. See “Somali Presidential Envoy Visits Drought-Stricken Dolow, Urges Humanitarian Intervention.” Aa.com.tr, June 2022. <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/somali-presidential-envoy-visits-drought-stricken-dolow-urges-humanitarian-intervention/2618546>.

77. See “Somalia’s First Environment Minister Aims to Alleviate Suffering from Climate Disasters,” September 2022. Accessed at: <https://theworld.org/stories/2022-09-12/somalia-s-first-environment-minister-aims-alleviate-suffering-climate-disasters>.

78. See “Somalia: Prime Minister Hamza Abdi Barre Forms National Committee That Will Direct and Support the Drought Emergency Operations.” Mustaqbal Media, August 2022. Accessed at: <https://mustaqbalmedia.net/en/somalia-prime-minister-hamza-abdi-barre-forms-national-committee-that-will-direct-and-support-the-drought-emergency-operations/>.

79. See “Famine Averted but Situation ‘Catastrophic’ in Somalia: UN.” Aljazeera.com. Al Jazeera, December 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/12/14/famine-averted-but-situation-catastrophic-in-somalia-un#:~:text=Famine%20has%20been%20narrowly%20averted,other%20experts%20released%20on%20Tuesday>.

By April, less than four percent of the required \$1.5 billion in humanitarian response aid had been secured.⁸⁰ The United States has done the heavy lifting and has donated \$476 million for drought relief. With nearly \$707 million in humanitarian assistance in 2022, it is by far the most significant contributor to Somalia's catastrophic humanitarian crisis.⁸¹

3. External relations

During the first five months of 2022, Somalia's election-related disputes almost took the country to a political implosion level. On 21 December 2021, infighting between the president and prime minister reached a point where Farmaajo claimed he had suspended Roble and barred him from using state media.⁸² During these tumultuous months, the international community was busy preventing an implosion and securing a peaceful election.

In late January, the new US ambassador, Larry André, arrived in Mogadishu. On 17 February, General Stephen Townsend, the commander of the US Africa Command, also visited Somalia. He met in Mogadishu with the Chief of Defense Forces Brigadier General Odawa Yusuf Rage and also visited the Kismayo and Baledogle military airfields. In May, André and Townsend visited Somaliland. They toured Berbera port and the airport and met with the president of Somaliland, Muse Bihi Abdi, about furthering cooperation "within the context of our single Somalia policy".⁸³

By February, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken had announced sanctions against current and former leaders who were undermining the democratic process in Somalia.⁸⁴ The United Nations, the EU, the African Union and most of Somalia's accredited diplomats also issued a joint statement calling for Somalia to meet the election deadlines and avoid conflict.⁸⁵

Also in February, the African Union, the federal government and Somalia's international partners held a 10-day technical discussion on the new AU mission that will replace AMISOM. This came on the heels of a tumultuous 2021 for the African Union and Somalia. The two sides had vehemently disagreed on the future of the reconfigured AMISOM. In late 2021, an AU Peace and Security Council field mission to on the future of AMISOM produced an options document without the input of the government which rejected all of the options, saying they meddled in Somalia's affairs and impeded its sovereignty.

“
US Secretary
of State Antony
Blinken had
announced
sanctions against
current and
former leaders
who were
undermining
the democratic
process in
Somalia

80. See "NGOs Warn of Possible Famine In Somalia As Droughts Worsens. Accessed at: <https://www.nrc.no/globalassets/images/countries/somalia/2022/ngos-warn-of-possible-famine-in-somalia-as-drought-worsens/full-letter-and-signatory-list/drought-appeal-letter-to-united-nations-secretary-general--april-2022.pdf>

81. See "Foreignassistance.gov" 2023. Accessed at: <https://www.foreignassistance.gov/cd/somalia/>.

82. See "Somali President Suspends PM over Election and Mismanagement." VOA. Voice of America, December 27, 2021. Accessed at: <https://www.voanews.com/a/somalia-s-president-suspends-prime-minister-/6371056.html>.

83. See "Amb. André and Gen. Townsend met with Muse Bihi" Accessed at: <https://twitter.com/US2SOMALIA/status/1524788760235454467>

84. See "Visa Restrictions on Individuals Responsible for Undermining the Democratic Process in Somalia; Accessed at: State Department; 25 February 2022; <https://www.state.gov/visa-restrictions-on-individuals-responsible-for-undermining-the-democratic-process-in-somalia/>

85. See "UNSOM PRESS STATEMENTS. Accessed at: <https://unsom.unmissions.org/press-statements?page=3>

The agreement included a joint Concept of Operations (CONOPs) plan detailing how to secure the country. The document outlined the mandate, composition, size, and structure of the proposed transition mission that will succeed AMISOM. It took into consideration the Somalia Transition Plan (STP) which documents how the government wants the drawdown of the 15-year AU peacekeepers to unfold by 2024, which is the expiration date of the mission.

In March, the African Union Peace and Security Council (AU PSC) authorized the replacing of AMISOM by the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) from 1 April.

On 31 March, the UN Security Council adopted a resolution authorizing ATMIS to begin its operations in Somalia. Somalia's Ambassador to the United Nations, Abukar Osman, stated that the "decision leaves Somali security forces with little to no logistical support"⁸⁶ and asked the Council to increase its support.

In early April, the prime minister's office declared the Special Representative of the African Union Commission Chairperson for Somalia (SRCC), Ambassador Francisco Madeira, persona non grata and ordered him to leave within 48 hours. The president rescinded that order, but the damage was done. Madeira's deputy continued his work in his absence, and in September, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission appointed Ambassador Mohammed El-Amine Souef of the Union of the Comoros as his Special Representative to Somalia and the head of ATMIS.⁸⁷

In May, al-Shabaab mounted its largest attack since 2019, on the ATMIS base in Ceelbaraf in Middle Shabelle. More than 30 Burundian soldiers were killed and many more were wounded. The extremist group has since controlled the village and the base.⁸⁸

On 25 July, USAID Administrator Samantha Powers visited Mogadishu and announced that the United States had provided nearly \$707 million in humanitarian assistance in 2022.⁸⁹

In August, General Michael E. Langley, who had replaced Townsend as the commander of US Africa Command, visited Somalia during a time when tensions were high between China and the US. Somalia issued a statement saying that "the government of Somalia declares its full solidarity with the People's Republic of China in defending its sovereignty and territorial integrity while affirming its firm position to respect the one-China policy, considering Taiwan an inalienable part of China's territory."⁹⁰

86. See "Unanimously Adopting Resolution 2628 (2022), Security Council Endorses Decision to Reconfigure Existing Entity into African Union Transition Mission in Somalia" Un.org, March 2022: Accessed at: <https://press.un.org/en/2022/sc14847.doc.htm>.

87. See "AU Commission Chairperson Appoints Mohammed El-Amine Souef as New Special Representative to Somalia and Head of the AU Transition Mission | African Union" September 2022. Accessed at: <https://au.int/en/pressreleases/20220901/chairperson-appoints-mohammed-el-amine-souef-new-special-representative>.

88. See "Crisis Watch Digest May 2022" Accessed at: <https://icg-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/somalia-may-2022.pdf>

89. See "USAID Chief Visits Mogadishu, Meets With Somalia's President; VOA Somali; 25 July 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.voanews.com/a/usaaid-chief-visits-mogadishu-meets-with-somalia-president/6672637.html>

90. See "Somalia supports China amid rising tensions on Taiwan" Anadolu Agency; 6 August 2020. Accessed at: <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/politics/somalia-supports-china-amid-rising-tensions-on-taiwan/2655345>



The Security Council extended until 31 October 2023 the UNSOM mission and asked it to maintain and strengthen its presence across Somalia and continue cooperating with the government

On 12 August, China's Foreign Ministry spokesperson reciprocated, saying that "Somaliland is an inalienable part of Somalia. We firmly support the Federal Government of Somalia's efforts to safeguard national unity, security and stability."⁹¹

From June until the end of the year, Somalia's new president Mohamud made whirlwind trips to Somalia's neighboring countries, the Middle East and beyond. The president twice visited the UAE and made two trips to Eritrea, as well as travelling to Turkey, Kenya, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Uganda, Tanzania and the US.

In October, the Security Council extended until 31 October 2023 the UNSOM mission and asked it to maintain and strengthen its presence across Somalia and continue cooperating with the government. Somalia's Ambassador to the UN, Abukar Osman, noted that despite the completion of the UNSOM strategic review, the transition from special political mission to a country team was not well-defined and also expressed concern with the low level of Somali national recruitment by UNSOM.⁹²

In November, the African Union's Peace and Security Council granted Somalia's request for a six-month delay of the withdrawal of 2,000 ATMIS troops who were scheduled to leave the country as part of the mission drawdown. However, the mission's overall exit date of 31 December 2024 was left unchanged.⁹³

4. Somaliland

Somaliland intensified its lobbying to break away from Somalia in 2022. On 18 January, the former UK defence secretary and MP Gavin Williamson tabled a motion asking the British parliament to recognize Somaliland though no vote has taken place. Government minister Vicky Ford stated, "it is for Somaliland and the Federal Government of Somalia to decide their future."⁹⁴ On 24 January, Somaliland suspended talks with Somalia, citing "ten year long fruitless talks".⁹⁵

In March, the Somaliland president, Muse Bihi Abdi, travelled to Washington for a trip to boost Hargeisa's efforts to secede from Somalia. A senior State Department official tweeted, "welcomed the opportunity to meet @musabiihi today and discuss strengthening US engagement with Somaliland within the framework of our single Somalia policy." ⁹⁶



Somaliland president, Muse Bihi Abdi, travelled to Washington for a trip to boost Hargeisa's efforts to secede from Somalia

91. See "Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Wang Wenbin's Regular Press Conference" August 12, 2022. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of People's Republic of China. Accessed at: https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/xwfw_665399/s2510_665401/202208/t20220812_10742529.html

92. See "Somalia: Vote on UN Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) Mandate Renewal" Security Council Report; 30 October 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/whatsinblue/2022/10/somalia-vote-on-un-assistance-mission-in-somalia-unsom-mandate-renewal-3.php>

93. See "AU delays pull-out of additional forces from Somalia" Goobjoog News, 24 November 2022. Accessed at: <https://goobjoog.com/english/au-delays-pull-out-of-additional-forces-from-somalia/>

94. <https://twitter.com/vickyford/status/1483498901973909505?lang=en>

95. See "Somaliland suspends talks with Somalia" 24 January 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.somaliland.com/news/somaliland/somaliland-suspends-talks-with-somalia/>

96. See "Bureau of African Affairs" 14 March 2022. Accessed at: <https://twitter.com/AsstSecStateAF/status/1503494667530346498>

On 17 March, Bihi met the US House of Representative's Foreign Affairs Committee.⁹⁷ Senators introduced a bill, the Somaliland Partnership Act, that required the Department of State to report to Congress on engagement with Somaliland. Though it did not recognize Somaliland, it nonetheless legalized military engagement and support.⁹⁸

In April, a massive fire engulfed and destroyed the biggest market in Hargeisa.⁹⁹ Damages were estimated at \$1.5-\$2 billion.¹⁰⁰ The federal government released about \$11.7 million of donor money previously earmarked for developmental projects in Somaliland to help with recovery efforts.¹⁰¹

In May, the US Africa commander visited Berbera port and the airport military facility (built in the 1970s by the USSR). US officials billed the inspection as "routine efforts to assess potential operating locations to be able to prepare for contingencies, exercise readiness or adjust force posture as needed".¹⁰²

In June at a function attended by the Kenyan President, the flag of Somaliland was displayed. The Ambassador of Somalia, Mohamed Ahmed Tarzan left the event and wrote a protest note. Kenya apologized saying, "the ministry further wishes to reaffirm its recognition of the sovereignty of one Federal Somali Government and the integrity of the Federal Somali State."¹⁰³

In August, an election-related dispute over the extension of Bihi's presidency resulted in deaths and injuries. Despite the protests, Bihi's term was extended in November, leading¹⁰⁴ opposition leaders to declare him as an illegitimate president.¹⁰⁵

In December, Norway and Turkey initiated shuttle diplomacy to restart the Somaliland talks, meeting leaders from both parties. Somaliland set seven preconditions for the resumption of talks including the implementation of previous agreements and international mediation.¹⁰⁶

“
Norway and
Turkey initiated
shuttle diplomacy
to restart the
Somaliland talks,
meeting leaders
from both parties

97. See "President Bihi Meets with Members of the U.S. Senate" Goobjoog, March 17, 2022. Accessed at: <https://goobjoog.com/english/president-bihi-meets-with-members-of-the-u-s-senate/>.

98. See "US President Biden signs act allowing Somaliland to 'participate in US military programs'" Horn Diplomat; 24 December 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.horndiplomat.com/2022/12/24/us-president-biden-signs-act-allowing-somaliland-to-participate-in-us-military-programs/>

99. See "Somaliland Market Fire Losses between 1.5 Billion-\$2 Billion (Preliminary Report)." Africanews, April 4, 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.africanews.com/2022/04/04/somaliland-market-fire-losses-between-1-5-billion-2-billion-preliminary-report/>.

100. See "Somaliland market fire losses between 1.5 billion-\$2 billion (preliminary report)" Africa News; 4 April 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.africanews.com/2022/04/04/somaliland-market-fire-losses-between-1-5-billion-2-billion-preliminary-report/>

101. See "The Somali Prime Minister orders the release of \$11.7 million in response to the Hargeisa market blaze" 3 April 2022. Accessed at: https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2022/Apr/185715/somali_prime_minister_orders_release_of_funds_to_response_hargeisa_market_fire.aspx?utm_source=hiiraan&utm_medium=SomaliNewsUpdateFront

102. See "US military may get access to strategic Somaliland port, airfield" South China Morning Post, 18 May 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3178257/us-military-may-get-access-strategic-somaliland-port-airfield>

103. See "Somali Envoy Walks out of Uhuru Kenyatta's Diplomacy Meeting," Hiiraan.com, June 2022. Accessed at: https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2022/Jun/186601/somali_ambassador_walks_out_of_uhuru_kenyatta_s_diplomacy_meeting.aspx. See also: "Kenya apologizes to Somalia over Somaliland flags" 15 June 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.keydmedia.net/news/kenya-apologises-to-somalia-over-somaliland-flags>

104. See "At Least Five People Killed, 100 Hurt in Somaliland Protests" Reuters, August 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/least-five-people-killed-100-hurt-somaliland-protests-2022-08-12/>

105. See "Opposition Leaders in Somaliland Declare Bihi Government 'Illegitimate,'" Hiiraan.com, November 2022. Accessed at: https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2022/Nov/188696/opposition_leaders_in_somaliland_declare_bihi_government_illegitimate.aspx?utm_source=hiiraan&utm_medium=SomaliNewsUpdateFront

106. See "Somaliland oo toddoba shardi ku xirtay wada-hadallada dowladda federaalka" VOA Somali, 8 December 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.voasomali.com/a/somaliland-oo-toddoba-shardi-ku-xirtay-wada-hadallada-dowladda-federaalka-/6867578.html>

In late December, protests erupted in Laas-Aanood in the Sool region where residents blamed the Somaliland government for assassinations and insecurity.¹⁰⁷ Many people in the region do not support Somaliland's secession bid. The revolt transformed into rejection of secession and a call for the unity of Somalia.

In January, the British-Taiwanese oil firm Genel announced it would start a drilling in Somaliland.¹⁰⁸ The Somali government, which does not accept Somaliland's claim for sovereignty called it a fake deal and warned Taiwan to cease its destabilization efforts.¹⁰⁹

5. Puntland

The chairman of the Transitional Puntland Electoral Commission (TPEC), Guled Salah, resigned on 2 January. The TPEC oversaw the direct election of local councils in three districts: Eyl, Qardho and Ufeyn. Guled cited unspecified "challenges" though media reports suggested he had differences with Puntland's leadership.¹¹⁰

“

Almost all of the 37 MPs were handpicked by President Said Abdullahi Deni who was positioning himself for the national presidential contest and wanted to secure his base

National parliamentary elections began in January and went on for three months. The first batch of seven MPs were elected on 22 January.¹¹¹ Almost all of the 37 MPs were handpicked by President Said Abdullahi Deni who was positioning himself for the national presidential contest and wanted to secure his base. New members of parliament included regional MPs, ministers, governors and other government officials, as well as Sadia Haji Yasin Dahir who was elected as the first female Deputy Speaker of Parliament.¹¹²

Deni and the traditional leaders of the Omar Mohamud sub-clan including Islan Bashir Islan Abdulle failed to agree the fate of the clan's two seats. Deni and his officials eventually engineered the victory of their preferred candidates for these seats - a decision that prompted the clan to release a strongly worded statement condemning the gerrymandering and what they termed as a highway robbery.¹¹³

On 15 June, the Puntland parliament convened for its 10th session.¹¹⁴ After a divisive election and Deni's unsuccessful presidential bid, governance issues and accountability, the drought and security/tribal conflict topped the agenda.

107. See "More than 20 'pro-greater Somalia' protesters killed in Lasanod" Garowe Online; 29 December 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.garoweonline.com/en/news/somalia/more-than-20-pro-greater-somalia-protesters-killed-in-lasanod>

108. See "Genel plans drilling on Somaliland block" 25 January 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.africa-energy.com/news-centre/article/genel-plans-drilling-somaliland-block>

109. See "Somalia says Taiwan's oil deal with Somaliland 'null and fake'" Hiiraan Online 28 February 2022. Accessed at: https://www.hiiraan.com/news/4/2022/Feb/185439/somalia_says_taiwan_s_oil_deal_with_somaliland_null_and_fake.aspx?utm_source=hiiraan&utm_medium=SomaliNewsUpdateFront

110. See "TPEC Chairman Resigns" Puntland Post, January 3, 2022. Accessed at: <https://puntlandpost.net/2022/01/03/tpec-chairman-resigns/>.

111. See "Five Members of Parliament Elected in Garowe" January 22, 2022. Accessed at: <https://goobjoog.com/english/five-members-of-parliament-elected-in-garowe/>.

112. See "Puntland oo Maanta soo geba-gabeeyay doorashada Golaha Shacabka" Radiio Markabley; 18 March 2022. Accessed at: <https://radiomarkabley.com/2022/03/18/puntland-oo-maanta-soo-geba-gabeeyay-doorashada-golaha-shacabka/>

113. See "Isimada Beesha Cumar Maxamuud Oo Ka Horyimid Doorashada Kuraasta Hop#198 Iyo Hop#199" Puntland Post, March 16, 2022. Accessed at: <https://puntlandpost.net/2022/03/16/isimada-beesha-cumar-maxamuud-oo-ka-horyimid-doorashada-kuraasta-hop198-iyo-hop199/>.

114. See "Ajandaha Kalfadhiga 50-aad ee baarlamaanka Puntland oo la shaaciyey manta" Radio Daljir; 18 June 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.facebook.com/RDaljir/photos/pcb.5381233838609062/5381233675275745/?type=3&theater>

In July, parliament rejected the Supreme Court nominees and other government-proposed agendas.¹¹⁵ Deni reappointed the rejected jurists the same day but parliament again rejected them three days later.¹¹⁶ Puntland's Minister of Justice and Religious Affairs accused his federal counterpart of corruption and usurping Puntland's Hajj quota.¹¹⁷ By July, the media was reporting mistrust emerging between Deni and local political operatives who had helped him to electoral success in Puntland in 2019.¹¹⁸

In July, Deni made an unannounced trip to Ethiopia¹¹⁹ and in mid-August senior Ethiopian military officers visited Garowe.¹²⁰ Two weeks later Hassan Sheikh Mohamud arrived in Garowe for three days of closed-door meetings to repair relations with Puntland.^{121/122}

By September, the conflict between Deni and his former political allies had moved into the public sphere. Deni replaced cabinet allies of the political operatives who had helped him win in 2019. The conflict culminated in the firing of Hassan Shire Abgaal, the powerful finance minister who was once an ally of Deni. Abgaal then held a press conference during which he said that Puntland should be saved from Deni and that the president was using the notion of the much touted but hard to implement one person, one vote as a camouflage to extend his term.¹²³

In September, Deni appointed Abdi Farah (Juxaa) as the Minister of Interior responsible for democratization. Juxaa was a former federal interior minister. He announced that conducting a one-person one-vote municipal election would be a priority and would take place throughout Puntland, following in the footsteps of the Eyl, Ufeyn and Qardho districts. However, the opposition remained skeptical.

In mid-October, a large delegation of Somalia's international partners including the UN envoy and ambassadors from the UK, US and EU visited Garowe and met the government, opposition and civil society. In a media briefing, the Secretary General's Special Envoy, James Swan, urged that "Puntland's electoral process [should] advance on the basis of broad consultation."¹²⁴

115. See "Deni oo dib u magacaabay xubnaha maxkamadda sare ee la diiday" Shabelle Media Network; 4 July 2022. Accessed at: <https://shabellemedia.com/saciid-deni-oo-dib-u-magacaabay-xubnaha-maxkamadda-sare-ee-puntland/>

116. See "Baarlamaanka Puntland oo Markale diiday meel marinta xubnaha Maxkamada sare ee Deni Soo Magacaabay" Gedo Times, 7 July 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.gedotimes.com/2022/07/07/baarlamaanka-puntland-oo-markale-diiday-meel-marinta-xubnaha-maxkamada-sare-ee-deni-soo-magacaabay/>

117. See "Puntland oo Wasiir katirsan Xukuumadda Soomaaliya ku eedeestay Xatooyo iyo Musuq maasuq" AllBanaadir; 6 July 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.allbanaadir.org/?p=226161>

118. See "Addis-Ababa: Shirka Madaxweyne Siciid Deni & Kooxda AARAN-JAAN!" Horseed Media; 12 July 2022. Accessed at: <https://horseedmedia.net/adis-ababa-shirka-madaxweyne-siciid-deni-kooxda-aaran-jaan-369374>

119. See "Madaxweynaha Puntland Siciid Deni oo magaalada Addis Ababa kula kulmay madaxda dawladda Itoobiya qaarkood" Qaranimo Online, 14 July 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.qaranimo.com/2022/07/14/madaxweynaha-puntland-siciid-deni-oo-magaalada-addis-ababa-kula-kulmay-madaxda-dawladda-itoobiya-qaarkood/>

120. See "Saraakiil Itoobiyaan ah oo ka degay Garoowe xilli Abiy uu cadaadis ku hayo Xasan" Daily Somalia; 12 August 2022. Accessed at: <https://dailysomalia.com/saraakiil-itoobiyaan-ah-oo-ka-degay-garoowe-xilli-abiy-uu-cadaadis-ku-hayo-xasan>

121. See "Somali president embarks on Puntland trip to 'fix cooperation'" KEYDMEDIA 25 August 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.keydmedia.net/news/somali-president-embarks-on-puntland-trip-to-fix-cooperation>

122. See "President Mohamud due to leave Garowe after meeting with Deni" HOL; 28 August 2022. Accessed at: https://www.hiiraan.com/news/2022/Aug/187601/president_mohamud_due_to_leave_garowe_after_meeting_with_deni.aspx

123. See "Xasan Shire Abgaal: Waxaan ku baaqayaa in Puntland laga badbaadiyo madaxweyne Deni" Hiiraan Online; 29 September. Accessed at: https://www.hiiraan.com/news/2022/sept/wararka_maanta29-182491.htm

124. See @UNSOMATwitter; 18 October 2022. Accessed at: <https://twitter.com/UNSOMalia/status/1582336243349667840?s=20>



Puntland issued a strongly worded press release saying it opposed the federal government's activities in the petroleum sector

Meanwhile, the rift between the federal government and Puntland continued. On 15 September, Puntland issued a strongly worded press release saying it opposed the federal government's activities in the petroleum sector.¹²⁵ Puntland's minister of fisheries asked his federal counterpart to retract a statement in which he said Puntland is against federalism, as well as past agreements on regional states' right to give fisheries license.¹²⁶

With respect to security, clan conflict claimed 20 lives on the border between the Nugaal and Sool regions in early January. Traditional elders such as Islaan Isse Islaan Mohamed and politicians including vice president Ahmed Osman Elmi "Karash".¹²⁷ went on mediation missions to the region and other Puntland chiefs appealed for an end to the conflict.¹²⁸

In February, the security of the already pressured port city of Bosaso deteriorated further when a conflict broke out between the Puntland government and the US-trained, semi-autonomous PSF security forces. In March, Deni reinstated the sacked PSF commander after intense, weeks-long discussions with traditional elders in the Bari region.¹²⁹ By then, it was an open secret that Deni planned to run for the national presidency in mid-2022 and needed to make peace with as many Puntland actors as possible.

On 19 February, a terror attack in a restaurant in Bosaso killed two traditional elders aligned with the Federal Minister of Planning Gamal Hassan who was there as part of his re-election bid. All 16 seats to be elected in Bosaso were filled by individuals approved by Deni in a half-day election criticized by both opposition and independent observers as rigged.¹³⁰

On 21 February, an improvised explosive device targeted Deni's convoy entering Bosaso and killed two soldiers. Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility.¹³¹ In early April, the Puntland government led by the vice president helped secure permanent peace among clans who were fighting in the Saaxa-meygaag and Sangejabiye villages on the border of the Nugaal and Sool regions.¹³²

125. See "Puntland Government Strongly Opposes the Federal Government Of Somalia's Current Activities On Petroleum" Idil News; 15 September. Accessed at: <https://www.idilnews.com/2022/09/15/puntland-government-strongly-opposes-the-federal-government-of-somalias-current-activities-on-petroleum/>

126. See "War saxaafadeed; Puntland Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resource" 22 September 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.oodweynemedia.com/2022/09/23/puntland-oo-ka-hor-timid-gaalan-ka-soo-baxay-dowladda-federaalka/>

127. See "Puntland oo baaq nabadeed kasoo saartay dagaal beeleedka Sool & Nugaal- Video" JANUARY 2, 2022. Accessed at: Horseed Media; <https://horseedmedia.net/puntland-oo-baaq-nabadeed-kasoo-saartay-dagaal-beeleedka-deegaannada-saax-maygaag-iyo-sanga-jabiye-359901>

128. See "Issimada Puntland oo baaq Nabadeed kasoo saaray dagaalada ka dhacay Sool & Nugaal- Video" JANUARY 2, 2022. Accessed at: Horseed Media; <https://horseedmedia.net/issimada-puntland-oo-baaq-nabadeed-kasoo-saaray-dagaalada-ka-dhacay-sool-nugaal-video-359923>

129. See "President Deni reinstates sacked PSF commander" Garowe Online 5 March 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.garoweonline.com/en/news/puntland/somalia-president-deni-reinstates-sacked-psf-commander-in-puntland>

130. See "Puntland polls team announces elections for 16 seats in Bosaso" Goobjoog 16 February 2022. Accessed at: <https://goobjoog.com/english/puntland-polls-team-announces-election-of-16-seats-in-bosaso/>; See also: "Wow! Bosaso set a new record, I think: The election of 16 seats concluded in half a day!" Harun Maruf, 5 March 2022. Accessed at: <https://twitter.com/harunmaruf/status/1500063806692728837>

131. See "Qarax miino oo lagu weeraray Kolonyo galbineysay Madaxweynaha Puntland Saciid Deni" Hiiraan Online 21 February 2022. Accessed at: https://www.hiiraan.com/news/2022/feb/wararka_maanta21-180367.htm

132. See "Puntland oo Ku Guulaysatay Heshiisiinta Beelo Dagaalamay" Goobjoog; 7 April 2022. Accessed at: <https://goobjoog.com/puntland-oo-ku-guulaysatay-heshiisiinta-beelo-dagaalamay/>

The conflict was between the Majerten (Isse Mohamud) and Dhulbahante (Xassan Ugaas) clans. The two clans are important in Puntland as the Isse Mohamud is the majority clan in the capital and the Dhulbahante has 17 MPs who decide Puntland's presidency. Any uncontained conflict between the two could spill over to the capital and destabilize Puntland.

On 27 April, Puntland forces in Galkacyo raided the home of Somalia's Foreign Minister Abdisaid Ali Muse. Muse was a candidate for one of the parliamentary seats that Deni helped himself with (by giving the seat to a supporter) against the express wish of the subclan and its elders. During the raid, a senior elder, Yaasiin Abdisamad, was wounded heightening the tension between the president and the Omar Mohamud clan which has Galkacyo as its stronghold.¹³³ Vice President Ahmed Karash condemned the attack, appointed an investigative committee, and pledged to prosecute the offenders.

On 11 July, a plane carrying the First Deputy Speaker of Parliament, Sadia Yasin Haji Samatar, landed in Bosaso to deliver aid. Clashes between two Puntland security forces – the PSF and the PMPF (in charge of airport security),¹³⁴ resulted in deaths and injuries and further destabilized the relationship between the federal government and Puntland. Samatar was blamed for the conflict and accused of not informing the Puntland government about her Bosaso visit.¹³⁵ She rejected the accusation.

In September, a suicide bomber killed five people in the village of Milxo near Laasqoray in the Puntland-controlled Sanaag region, which is claimed by both Puntland and Somaliland. This was the first suicide bombing in Sanaag, though al-Shabaab captured the city briefly in 2020.¹³⁶

On 31 October, Somaliland forces took over the town of Boocame in the disputed Sool region. There was no fighting as Puntland police withdrew. The city was one of the few towns in that region that Puntland controlled, and it had planned to conduct a local election.

“

A massive uprising occurred in Laas Aanood, the capital of the Sool region controlled by Somaliland and claimed by Puntland, in late December

A massive uprising occurred in Laas Aanood, the capital of the Sool region controlled by Somaliland and claimed by Puntland, in late December. This was triggered by a number of assassinations in the city which residents blamed on the government. Puntland's Vice President Ahmed Elmi Osman Karash, who hails from that community, along with ministers and MPs issued press statements supporting the revolt. They condemned what they described as “Somaliland occupation” and criticized the federal government for not standing up for the citizens fighting against secession.

133. See “Wasiirka Arrimaha Dibadda Somaliya oo lagu weeraray Magaalada Gaalkacyo” Universal TV, 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.universaltvsomali.net/topics/news/somali/35573>

134. See “Puntland: Dagaal dhex-maray ciidamada PSF iyo PMPF” VOA Somali 11 November 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.voasomali.com/a/puntland-dagaal-dhex-maray-ciidamada-psf-iyo-pmpf-/6653513.html>

135. See “Gaas Iyo Faroole oo Xildhibaan Sacdiyo ku eedeeyay Mas'uulliyada Dagaalkii Boosaaso” AwadalMedia, 13 July 2022. Accessed at: <https://awdalmedia.com/amwp/gaas-iyo-faroole-oo-xildhibaan-sacdiyo-ku-eedeeyay-masuulliyada-dagaalkii-boosaaso/>

136. See “Contested area of northern Somalia witnesses rare suicide bombing; Long War Journal” 12 September. Accessed at: <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2022/09/contested-area-of-northern-somalia-witnesses-rare-suicide-bombing.php>

On 19 March, Deni met the 48 senators and MPs from Puntland and announced his candidacy for the national presidency. This had been expected for some time, as Deni had engineered each MP's selection. By 1 April, senior Puntland politicians including the former Prime Minister Omar Sharmarke had called on Deni to transfer power to Karash as a result of his national leadership ambition.¹³⁷ On 31 March, Deni appointed the Supreme Court's Chief Justice, deputy and other high court members.¹³⁸ The Supreme Court had not been operational since 2019 when its president passed away. Deni also carried out a major cabinet reshuffle and filled seats vacated by at least seven ministers who had become federal MPs.¹³⁹

After Deni declared his candidacy for president, Karash requested he step aside and turn over the leadership. Deni refused and on 21 April, Karash announced he was the acting president of Puntland.¹⁴⁰ By 25 April, Karash had started appointing officials,¹⁴¹ citing the constitution, a move Deni declared as null and void.¹⁴² On 5 May, Karash sacked the pro-Deni ministers of finance, interior and security.¹⁴³

On 15 May, Somalia's presidential election took place in Mogadishu, with 35 candidates in the race. In the first round, Deni secured 65 votes, trailed by the incumbent Farmaajo with 59 votes. The eventual winner, Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, received 52 votes.¹⁴⁴ Deni lost the election but expected to get the job of prime minister, a position that went to Hamza Abdi Barre of Jubaland.

On the economic front, in February, Deni announced that Puntland had renegotiated a controversial 30-year concession for Dubai-based DP World to manage the port of Bosaso. The new agreement was a joint venture in which the state government owned one quarter.¹⁴⁵ On 22 October, the federal and Puntland presidents opened the first phase of the \$60 million port of Gara'ad project, which started in 2018 and will serve Ethiopia's more than 100 million landlocked people.

In December, Puntland and DP World signed an agreement to renovate and improve the port of Bosaso starting in 2023.¹⁴⁶ This is a 12-month project that will include the development of a 150-metre quay, as well as repairs to the current 215-metre quay.

137. See "Cumar Cabdirashiid iyo siyaasiyiin kale oo reer Puntland ah oo madaxweyne Deni ugu baaqay inuu iscasilo" Hiiiraan Online; 2 April 2022. Accessed at: https://www.hiiraan.com/news/2022/apr/wararka_maanta2-180793.htm

138. See "Siciid Deni Oo Magacaabay Guddoomiyaha Maxkamada Sare Puntland Iyo Xubno Kale" Jowhar; 31 March 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.jowhar.com/news/siciid-deni-oo-magacaabay-guddoomiyaha-maxkamada-sare-puntland-iy-xubno-kale.html>

139. See "Deni oo isku shaandheyn ku sameeyay golaha wasiirada Puntland" VOA Somali; 31 March 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.voasomali.com/a/deni-oo-isku-shaandheyn-ku-sameeyay-golaha-wasiirada-puntland-/6508982.html>

140. See: Axmed Karaash "Xilka Madaxweynaha Puntland Anaa La Wareegay" Puntland Post; 21 April 2022. Accessed at: <https://puntlandpost.net/2022/04/21/axmed-karaash-xilka-madaxweynaha-puntland-anaa-la-wareegay/>

141. See "Puntland: Karaash Oo Magacaabay Xilalkii Ugu Badnaa" Horseed Media; 25 April 2022. Accessed at: <https://horseedmedia.net/puntland-karaash-oo-magacaabay-xilalkii-ugu-badnaa-365508>

142. See "Madaxweyne Deni oo ka horyimid masuuliyiin uu magacaabay ku xigeenkiisa Axmed Karaash" Hiiiraan Online; 25 April 2022. Accessed at: https://www.hiiraan.com/news/2022/apr/wararka_maanta25-181022.htm

143. See "Madaxweyne Karaash oo ka takhalusey wasiiradii ugu cuslaa xukuumadda Puntland" Horseed Media; 5 May 2022. Accessed at: <https://horseedmedia.net/madaxweyne-karaash-oo-ka-takhalusey-wasiiradii-ugu-cuslaa-xukuumadda-puntland-366055>

144. See "Natiijada wareegga koowaad ee doorashada madaxweynaha" VOA Somali; 15 May 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.voasomali.com/a/natiijada-horudhaca-ah-ee-wareegga-koowaad-ee-doorashada-madaxweynaha-/6574195.html>

145. See "Puntland Renegotiates DP World Concession to Manage Bosaso Port" Puntland Post; 21 February. Accessed at: <https://puntlandpost.net/2022/02/21/puntland-renegotiates-dp-world-concession-to-manage-bosaso-port/>

146. See "DP World and Puntland Government sign construction agreement to upgrade Port of Bosaso" DP World Website; 8 December 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.dpworld.com/news/releases/dp-world-and-puntland-government-sign-construction-agreement-to-upgrade-port-of-bosaso/>

Other infrastructure will include the development of a new 3,000 square meter container yard and a 4,000 square meter container-stripping yard. The gate area to the port will also be upgraded to improve access control.¹⁴⁷ In 2018, parliament banned DP World from operating in Somalia after the port management firm signed a controversial deal with Somaliland, a self-declared breakaway region.¹⁴⁸

The drought was a government priority by summer. In late July, Deni met national and international entities and by August Puntland was coordinating with the recently appointed federal president's special drought envoy.¹⁴⁹ Other international partners including the Secretary General's Special Representative Ambassador James Swan also visited Garowe in July.¹⁵⁰

6. Southwest

Southwest faced many challenges in 2022 including security threats from al-Shabaab, which controls some districts and maintains checkpoints on the major roads connecting it with the rest of the country. This blocks humanitarian efforts, the free movement of people and the transport of goods – one of the core impediments to providing humanitarian relief to the region's drought victims.¹⁵¹

Last year, the Somali National Army (SNA), in cooperation with Southwest security forces and other partners, recaptured several settlements controlled by al-Shabaab including, Bayale, Aliyow Doyow, Hawa Dhaysile, Borame, Karanoy and Daawuudow.¹⁵² However, al-Shabaab regained control over some of the settlements including Deynuneey and Goofgaduud Buurey, about 30 kilometers from Baidoa.¹⁵³ In Barawe, al-Shabaab fired mortars at the polling station where the election of Southwest's second electoral constituency was underway. Four people died and five were wounded.¹⁵⁴

In July, al-Shabaab crossed into neighboring Ethiopia and clashed with the Liyuu police forces of the Somali Regional State in Ethiopia in Afdheer, an area bordering the Bakool region.¹⁵⁵

147. Ibid.

148. See "Somalia bans Dubai ports operator DP World, says contract with Somaliland null" Reuters; 13 March 2018. Accessed at: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-somalia-ports-idUSKCN1GP10E>

149. See "Somalia special envoy for drought to travel to Garowe" 13 July 2022. Accessed at: https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2022/July/186987/somalia_special_envoy_for_drought_to_travel_to_garowe.aspx

150. See "James Swan today ended a two-day visit to Garowe" Accessed at: <https://twitter.com/UNSomalia/status/1549004018097291264>

151. See "Somali Troops Still Vulnerable to Al-Shabaab Outside Mogadishu, Pentagon Says." The Defense Post, February 2020. Accessed at: <https://www.thedefensepost.com/2020/02/12/somalia-operation-badbaado-shabaab-mogadishu-shabelle/>.

152. See "Somali Forces, Local Militia Recaptured Villages in Bay Region," Hiiraan Online, September 2022. Accessed at: https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2022/Sept/187984/somali_forces_local_militia_recaptured_villages_in_bay_region.aspx?utm_source=hiiraan&utm_medium=SomaliNewsUpdateFront.

153. See "Al-Shabaab Retakes Strategic Towns in Southern Somalia," Garowe Online, December 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.garoweonline.com/en/news/somalia/al-shabaab-regains-strategic-towns-in-somalia>.

154. See "Al-Shabaab Shelling Kills Four in Somalia's Barawe on Election Day," Garowe Online, February 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.garoweonline.com/en/news/somalia/al-shabaab-shelling-kills-four-in-somalia-s-barawe-on-election-day>

155. See "Somalia's Al-Shabab Militants Launch Attack in Ethiopia; Heavy Casualties Reported." VOA, July 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.voanews.com/a/somalia-s-al-shabab-militants-launch-attack-in-ethiopia-heavy-casualties-reported/6669872.html>

“

Politically, the Southwest government made significant strides in decentralizing power and fostering the formation of district councils in Wajid, Dinsor, Hudur, Bardale and Barawe

More than 100 al-Shabaab fighters died in the three-day long battles.¹⁵⁶ Al-Shabaab claimed to have killed 87 soldiers from the Liyuu police.¹⁵⁷ This raid on Ethiopian soil came just one day after al-Shabaab attacked two towns in the Bakool region near the Ethiopian border, Yeed and Aato.¹⁵⁸

Politically, the Southwest government made significant strides in decentralizing power and fostering the formation of district councils in Wajid, Dinsor, Hudur, Bardale and Barawe. Two of the five district councils (Hudur and Bardale) concluded their four-year terms in 2022. The state’s ministry of interior affairs conducted elections in both Hudur¹⁵⁹ and Bardale¹⁶⁰ districts successfully. The ministry is currently engaged in pre-district council formation processes for El-Berde, Burhakaba and Wallaweyn.¹⁶¹

In December, violence broke out in Baidoa, the state’s temporary capital, as security forces loyal to Southwest president Abdiaziz Hassan Laftagareen raided the residence of Mohamed Adan Ibrahim (Farkeeti), the former federal minister of finance and a presidential contender.¹⁶² At least 10 people were killed during a long gun battle between militants loyal to Farkeeti and Southwest security forces which lasted for hours.¹⁶³ In protest, the state’s minister of communication, Ilyas Ali Noor, who hails from the same clan as Farkeeti, resigned. Ilyas stated in a video posted on Facebook that he was trying to reach a peaceful solution to the situation with opposition militants holed up in Farkeeti’s residence when Laftagareen issued the order to attack. “The bloodshed could have been avoided and resolved through negotiation. The state government did not respect us,” said Ilyas.¹⁶⁴

This came after a political flare-up between Southwest presidential candidates and Laftagareen over his term extension. In 2020, the state legislature approved a motion to align the president’s tenure with its own, which expires in 2024.¹⁶⁵

156. See “Al-Shabab Fighters ‘Destroyed’ in Ethiopian Incursion, Somali State Media Reports.” Voice of America (VOA News), July 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.voanews.com/a/al-shabab-fighters-destroyed-in-ethiopian-incursion-somali-state-media-reports/6671176.html>

157. See “Somalia Militants Claim to Have Killed 87 Ethiopian Police in Somali-Ethiopian Border Area,” July 2022. Accessed at: <https://hornobserver.com/articles/1674/Somalia-militants-claim-to-have-killed-87-Ethiopian-police-in-Somali-Ethiopian-border-area>

158. See “Al-Shabaab Attacks Somali Towns close to Ethiopian Border.” Voice of America (VOA News), July 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.voanews.com/a/al-shabab-attacks-somali-towns-close-to-ethiopian-border-/6667670.html>

159. See “Hudur Elections” September 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.facebook.com/100069203890176/posts/pfbid0Je4hhcRXELg2W2z4rsx9HouNZyKGYULfvzcVYqgJzQveoh3T5ojEnRBvWWvgwLgil/?mibextid=UUgoR4>

160. See “Bardale District Council Elections” November 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.facebook.com/100069203890176/posts/pfbid0ikAxNAYJDfDeK9R1HzTWakMdjVUwmxSjSPZpRQbitMx5n3CR7rsU3ojWNjmH7RTZl/?mibextid=UUgoR4>

161. See “El-Berde is Next On SWS District Formation” November 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.facebook.com/100069203890176/posts/pfbid0LTLrlyzGBQGQcoMcLEiBqxeULTtL4YisUC81tqCLGEEZRFcaDXykwWQeoTT26qrl/?mibextid=UUgoR4>

162. See “Somalia: Gvt Terms Political Violence in Baidoa Unfortunate, Urges All Political Parties to Resolve Their Differences through Dialogue.” Mustaqbal Media, December 2022. Accessed at: <https://mustaqbalmedia.net/en/somalia-gvt-terms-political-violence-in-baidoa-unfortunate-urges-all-political-parties-to-resolve-their-differences-through-dialogue/amp/>

163. See “Calm Returns to Baidoa after State Security Forces Clash with Fighters Loyal to Opposition Candidates,” Hiiraan.com, December 2022. Accessed at: https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2022/Dec/189206/calm_returns_to_baidoa_after_state_security_forces_clash_with_fighters_loyal_to_opposition_candidates.aspx?utm_source=hiiraan&utm_medium=SomaliNewsUpdateFront

164. See “Southwest State Information Minister Resigns in Protest after Bloody Gun Battle in Baidoa,” Hiiraan.com, December 2022. Accessed at: https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2022/Dec/189214/southwest_state_information_minister_resigns_in_protest_after_bloody_gun_battle_in_baidoa.aspx?utm_source=hiiraan&utm_medium=SomaliNewsUpdateFront

165. See “Somalia Stares at Old Problem on Term Limits for State Leaders.” The East African, December 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/tea/news/east-africa/somalia-stares-at-old-problem-on-term-limits-4065452>



President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud attended the opening ceremony of the first phase of the reconciliation, which kicked off in Baidoa in late January 2023



The leaders settled on a date range of November-December 2023 for regional assembly elections and January 2024 for speaker of the house and presidential elections

The presidential candidates rejected the term extension and requested elections by December 2022. Lower House Speaker Sheikh Adan Mohamed Nur Madoobe called for a reconciliation conference between Laftagareen and the state's leading opposition figures to defuse the tensions. Both parties welcomed the speaker's call.¹⁶⁶ President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud attended the opening ceremony of the first phase of the reconciliation, which kicked off in Baidoa in late January 2023.¹⁶⁷ The first phase centred on settling issues surrounding the clashes in late December and compensating the relatives of those who were killed or wounded.¹⁶⁸

In February 2023, Mohamud returned to Baidoa to resume the second phase of the reconciliation conference.¹⁶⁹ The leaders settled on a date range of November-December 2023 for regional assembly elections and January 2024 for speaker of the house and presidential elections. The ministry of internal affairs will oversee the process.¹⁷⁰

Laftagareen, like other state and federal political leaders, has used the indirect elections in Southwest to nominate his political allies as MPs and senators. Despite pre-election agreements in which the National Consultative Council (NCC) leaders committed to enabling all eligible candidates to run, many candidates vying for seats in parliament were barred from contesting and travelling to their constituencies. They included Sharif Hassan Sheikh Adan, the former Southwest president, Mohamed Sheikh Osman Jawaari, the former lower house speaker, and Abdiweli Sheikh Mudey, the former deputy speaker.¹⁷¹

On the economic front, the state legislature approved a \$43 million budget for 2023 in late December, the largest since the founding of Southwest.¹⁷²

The humanitarian situation in Southwest remained bleak. Natural disasters like dry rainy seasons for four consecutive years have put thousands of lives in danger and impacted the livestock and agricultural sectors, which are vital to Somalis in general and the population in Southwest in particular. Conflicts and a protracted election cycle have diverted focus away from the crisis and slowed a much-needed humanitarian response. As a result, almost one million people were displaced.¹⁷³

166. See "Laftagareen and Southwest Opposition Leaders Agree to a Reconciliation Meeting on January 5," Hiiraan.com, December 2022. Accessed at: https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2022/Dec/189289/laftagareen_and_southwest_opposition_leaders_agree_to_a_reconciliation_meeting_on_january_5.aspx?utm_source=hiiraan&utm_medium=SomaliNewsUpdateFront.

167. See "President Mohamud to Open Baidoa Reconciliation Conference," Hiiraan.com 2023. Accessed at: https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2023/Jan/189511/president_mohamud_to_open_baidoa_reconciliation_conference.aspx.

168. See "Southwest State and Opposition Leaders Reach Settlement over Baidoa Clash," Hiiraan.com 2023. Accessed at: https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2023/Jan/189705/southwest_state_and_opposition_leaders_reach_settlement_over_baidoa_clash.aspx.

169. See "President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud Arrives at Baidoa to Participate in the 2nd Phase of the South West Reconciliation Conference," -Mustaqbal Media, February 2023. Accessed at: <https://mustaqbalmedia.net/en/president-hassan-sheikh-mohamud-arrives-at-baidoa-to-participate-in-the-2nd-phase-of-the-south-west-reconciliation-conference/>.

170. See "What Was the Outcome of the South West Reconciliation Conference in Baidoa?" Mustaqbal Media, February 2023. Accessed at: <https://mustaqbalmedia.net/en/what-was-the-outcome-of-the-south-west-reconciliation-conference-in-baidoa/>.

171. See "Somalia: Ex-Regional Leader Blocked from Boarding a Flight at Mogadishu Airport," Garowe Online, March 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.garoweonline.com/en/news/somalia/somalia-ex-regional-leader-blocked-from-boarding-a-flight-at-mogadishu-airport>.

172. See "South West State of Somalia's Parliament Approves The Largest Budget" December 2022. Accessed at: <https://fb.watch/iphfPxc9?mibextid=UUgoR4>

173. See "'Time to Act Is Now,' Says UNICEF Emergency Director on Visit to Somalia," September 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.unicef.org/somalia/stories/time-act-now>.

There are 498 IDP settlements around Baidoa hosting about 596,931 people fleeing from insecurity and severe drought conditions in the Bay and Bakool regions.¹⁷⁴ Baidoa and Burhakaba are predicted to be experiencing famine by June 2023, according to a recent report by OCHA.¹⁷⁵

7. Galmudug

Media reports about Galmudug in 2022 revolved around the election, reconciliation and potent security threats from al-Shabaab, Ahlu Sunna Wajama'a (ASWJ) and from within and among warring clans.

On 21 January, Galmudug announced the start of parliamentary elections with seven seats in contention in Dhusamareeb.¹⁷⁶ In total, 37 MPs and eight senators were elected in Galmudug. Twenty-six MPs were elected in Dhusamareeb and 11 in Galkacyo, where elections began on 6 March.^{177/178}

In January, al-Shabaab attacked Baxdo and Cadakibir, killing senior SNA officials.¹⁷⁹ In March, Somali government media reported that more than 200 al-Shabaab fighters were killed in Galmudug by a US drone attack.¹⁸⁰ On June 17, al-Shabaab attacked Baxdo as the federal government, Galmudug and clans in the region prepared to take the war to al-Shabaab. The extremist group was defeated and, according to multiple news outlets, more than 70 of their fighters were killed. Al-Shabaab took the wounded to Eelbuur, where they seized a local hospital to treat 100 injured fighters.¹⁸¹

The armed Sufi group ASWJ attacked government positions in Dhusamareeb in May while most of Somalia's political class was busy with the presidential election in Mogadishu. The Sufi insurgents were defeated and the Galmudug police distributed posters of wanted ASWJ fighters and leaders.¹⁸² On 2 June, the federal president visited Dhusamareeb, weeks after his 15 May victory.¹⁸³ The president said his visit was to foster reconciliation and to learn more about Galmudug and its drought.

“
The armed
Sufi group
ASWJ attacked
government
positions in
Dhusamareeb in
May while most
of Somalia's
political class
was busy with
the presidential
election in
Mogadishu

174. See “CCCM Cluster Somalia - Baidoa Town Verified IDP Sites” July 2022. Accessed at: <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/94414>.

175. See “Somalia: Drought Response and Famine Prevention (15 November - 15 December 2022) - Somalia,” January 2023. Accessed at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/somalia-drought-response-and-famine-prevention-15-november-15-december-2022>.

176. See “Galmudug, Somaliland Announce Lower House Elections” Hiiraan.com, January 2022. Accessed at: https://www.hiiraan.com/news/4/2022/Jan/185124/galmudug_somaliland_announce_lower_house_elections.aspx?utm_source=hiiraan&utm_medium=SomaliNewsUpdateFront.

177. See “Tirada Xildhibaanada lagu doortay Galmudug iyo caqabadaha weli horyaala” Universal TV; 8 March 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.universaltvsomali.net/topics/news/somali/35322>

178. See “Galmudug to Hold Elections for Five Seats in Galkayo Today” March 6, 2022. Accessed at: <https://goobjoog.com/english/galmudug-to-hold-elections-for-five-seats-in-galkayo-today/>.

179. See “Al-shabaab oo dishay taliyihii guutada 13-aad ee Ciidanka Xoogga Dalka” VOA Somali 9 January 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.voasomali.com/a/6389123.html>

180. See “Al Shabaab oo la sheegay induqayn looga diley 200 oo dagaalame” Garowe Online 15 March 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.garoweonline.com/en/news/somalia/al-shabaab-oo-la-sheegay-in-duqeyn-looga-diley-200-dagaalame>

181. See “Al-Shabaab Seizes Hospital in Central Somalia, Admit Injured Fighters” Garowe Online, June 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.garoweonline.com/en/news/somalia/al-shabaab-seize-hospital-in-central-somalia-admit-injured-fighters>.

182. See “Galmudug oo shaacisay liiska xubno ka tirsan Ahlu Sunna oo la baadi goobayo” Shabelle Media Network; 18 May 2022. Accessed at: <https://shabellemedia.com/galmudug-oo-shaacisay-liiska-xubno-ka-tirsan-ahlu-sunna-oo-la-baadi-goobayo/>

183. See “President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud Arrives in Dhusamerab Town, Galmudug State to Assess the Drought Situation and Foster Peace” Radio Dalsan, June 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.radiodalsan.com/en/74955/2022/06/president-hassan-sheikh-mohamud-arrives-in-dhusamerab-town-galmudug-state-to-assess-the-drought-situation-and-foster-peace/>.

In August, a violent conflict between the Wagardhac and Saleemaan clans about grazing land near Dhabad resulted in the killing of 20 people and the maiming of many more.¹⁸⁴ The two communities had been at war for 40 years but with the help of Galmudug state signed a permanent peace in October.¹⁸⁵

In September, the Galmudug parliament amended the state's constitution and gave themselves and President Ahmed Abdi Karie (Qoorqoor) a one-year extension. Galmudug was the last of the four south-central states to extend the president's term.¹⁸⁶

In September, October and November, government forces and clan militias mounted an al-Shabaab-clearing offensive in Galmudug. Al-Shabaab responded by killing civilians and destroying water wells and communications equipment in towns such as Wabho, Qaayib, Bahdo and Cadakibir.¹⁸⁷

8. Jubaland

Election-related political infighting, humanitarian challenges and insecurity were the dominant issues in Jubaland in 2022.

The year began with a standoff between President Ahmed Madobe's Kismaayo-based regional government and its wayward Gedo region bordering Ethiopia and Kenya. The federal government, particularly Farmaajo whose clan dominates Gedo, propped up the local administration where he was the de facto ruler. The Farmaajo government had rejected Madobe's right to rule Jubaland but said he could stay on until mid-2021. Madobe insisted his term ended in mid-2022.

In January, Jubaland announced the election of 13 of the 43 parliamentary seats would start.¹⁸⁸ A previous agreement by federal and regional leaders said that each federal member state would have two designated cities for the 2021/2022 federal parliamentary elections.¹⁸⁹

Garbahaarey, the capital of the Gedo region, had also been chosen to host the election for Jubaland's seats. But in February, politicians from Jubaland, particularly those in the Gedo region aligned with the government, raised concerns about the viability of Garbahaarey as an election cite, citing security concerns.¹⁹⁰

184. See "Clan Conflict over Grazing Leaves 20 Dead in Galgaduud," August 2022. Accessed at: https://www.hiiraan.com/news/4/2022/Aug/187604/clan_conflict_over_pasture_leaves_20_dead.aspx?utm_source=hiiraan&utm_medium=SomaliNewsUpdateFront.

185. See "Reported by VOA Journalist; Yassin Wardere @YWardhere" 1 October 2022; Accessed at: <https://twitter.com/YWardhere/status/1576233939404230657>

186. See "Dhuusamareeb: Baarlamaanka Galmudug oo muddo kordhin u sameeyey Madaxweyne Qoor Qoor" SEPTEMBER 13, 2022. Accessed at: <https://horseedmedia.net/dhuusamareeb-baarlamaanka-galmudug-oo-muddo-kordhin-u-sameeyey-madaxweyne-qoor-qoor-373137>

187. See "Al-Shabaab destroyed communication Mast, wells in Qayyib town in Galgaduud region" Mustaqbal Media, 26 October 2022. Accessed at: <https://mustaqbalmedia.net/en/al-shabaab-destroyed-communication-mast-wells-in-qayyib-town-in-galgaduud-region/>; Also See: "Somalia retakes key town controlled by al-Shabaab for over 15 years" Anadolu, 11 September 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/somalia-retakes-key-town-controlled-by-al-shabaab-for-over-15-years/2733687>

188. See "Jubbaland Electoral Commission announces election of 13 seats in Federal parliament" HiiraanOnline, 17 January 2022. Accessed at: https://www.hiiraan.com/news/4/2022/Jan/185086/jubbaland_electoral_commission_announces_election_of_13_seats_in_federal_parliament.aspx?utm_source=hiiraan&utm_medium=SomaliNewsUpdateFront.

189. See "Nooca doorashada Soomaaliya oo laga heshiiyay; BBC Somali" 17 November 2020. Accessed at: <https://www.bbc.com/somali/war-54193509>

190. See "Anti-Jubaland Leader Protest Held in a Somali Border Town" February 28, 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.keydmedia.net/news/anti-jubaland-leader-protest-held-in-a-somali-border-town>.



Pro-Farmaajo factions of the election committee held an election in Garbahaarey for eight of the 16 Gedo seats while voting also took place in Elwak

Prime Minister Mohamed Hussein Roble appointed a seven-member committee to look into the possibility of the election taking place in Garbahaarey.¹⁹¹ On 5 March, the Gedo administration aligned with President Mohamed Abdullahi Farmajo rejected the committee sent by the prime minister and barred them from visiting Garbahaarey.¹⁹² On 14 April, the federal election management body allied with Roble announced the election for the 16 Gedo MPs would move to Elwak which is controlled by the Jubaland government.¹⁹³

On 22 April, pro-Farmaajo factions of the election committee held an election in Garbahaarey for eight of the 16 Gedo seats while voting also took place in Elwak. Farmaajo declared both polls null and void. However, on 25 April, Somalia's new interim speaker of parliament scheduled the swearing-in ceremony of the Elwak-elected MPs.¹⁹⁴ Security forces loyal to Farmaajo stopped the proceedings though the event took place later in a hotel inside Mogadishu's airport green zone.¹⁹⁵ On 9 May, the parliamentary speaker issued a statement saying the MPs elected in Elwak were the legitimate representatives of the Gedo region.¹⁹⁶

In July, the Jubaland government announced an anti-al-Shabaab offensive in collaboration with the federal government.¹⁹⁷ In November, Somalia's defence minister, accompanied by commanders of the SNA, visited Kismaayo and met Madobe who showcased Jubaland's military might.^{198/199} In December, Aden Duale, Kenya's defence minister (an ethnic Somali) visited Kismaayo and met Madobe to discuss the fight against al-Shabaab and border security.²⁰⁰

191. See "Somali Prime Minister Mohamed Hussein Roble Appoints a 7 Member Committee to Look into and Evaluate the Situation in Garbaharey Town, Gedo Region" Radio Dalsan, February 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.radiodalsan.com/en/73058/2022/02/somali-prime-minister-mohamed-hussein-roble-appoints-a-7-member-committee-to-look-into-and-evaluate-the-situation-in-garbaharey-town-gedo-region/>.

192. See "Press statement by Gedo Administration" 5 March 2022. Accessed at: <https://shabellemedia.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/202236637821238107023527-1.jpg>

193. See "FEIT Announces Election for 16 Gedo Seats Moved from Garbaharey to Elwak" Hiiraan.com, April 2022. Accessed at: https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2022/Apr/185840/fiet-shifts_the_election_of_16_seats_to_elwak_town_in_gedo_region.aspx?utm_source=hiiraan&utm_medium=SomaliNewsUpdateFront.

194. See "President Farmajo Issues Decree On Parallel Elections In Gedo Region" @TheVillaSomalia Twitter, April 2022. Accessed at: <https://twitter.com/TheVillaSomalia/status/1517471121473474562/photo/1>; Also see:

"Farmaajo Calls Parallel Elections in Garbaharey and Elwak Illegal, Calls on NCC to Convene," Hiiraan.com, April 2022. Accessed at: https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2022/Apr/185933/Farmaajo_calls_parallel_elections_in_garbaharey_and_elwak_illegal_calls_on_ncc_to_convene.aspx?utm_source=hiiraan&utm_medium=SomaliNewsUpdateFront.

195. See "Interim parliament speaker says Elwak MPs attacked by Somali police before being sworn in; Hiiraan Online, 25 April 2022. Accessed at: https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2022/apr/185966/interim-parliament-speaker_says_elwak_mps_attacked_by_somali_police_before_being_sworn_in.aspx

196. See "Lower House Speaker validates MPs elected from Gedo region" Goobjoog, 9 May 2022. Accessed at: <https://goobjoog.com/english/lower-house-speaker-validates-mps-elected-from-gedo-region/>

197. See "Jubaland and the feds launch joint offensive against Al Shabaab" Somali Dispatch; 9 July 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.somalidispach.com/latest-news/jubaland-and-the-feds-launch-joint-offensive-against-al-shabaab/>

198. See "Tweet by Garowe Online, 27 November 2022. Accessed at: <https://twitter.com/GaroweOnline/status/1596782567856181249>

199. See "Photos of troops and military equipment" Accessed at: <https://twitter.com/HShPrez2Ware/status/1597196086548271105>

200. See "Kenya's defense minister visits Jubaland state of Somalia" 25 December 2022. Accessed at: <https://shabellemedia.com/kenyas-defense-minister-visits-jubaland-state-of-somalia/>

9. Hirshabelle



A local militia took over parts of Baledweyne to prevent the visit of Hirshabelle President Ali Guudlaawe who had been planning to come to the city where he faces significant opposition from Hawadle clan politicians

On 2 January, Hawadle clan militias entered Baledweyne and exchanged fire with the governor Ali Jeyte.²⁰¹ On 25 January, a local militia took over parts of Baledweyne to prevent the visit of Hirshabelle President Ali Guudlaawe who had been planning to come to the city where he faces significant opposition from Hawadle clan politicians.²⁰² On 26 January, national military and police units were airlifted from Mogadishu to Baledweyne. The military commander, General Odawaa Raage, insisted the deployment was to secure the upcoming parliamentary election in Baledweyne where 25 seats were to be elected. However, media reports suggested the deployment was actually a protection force for Guudlaawe.²⁰³ On 6 February, Guudlaawe arrived in Baledweyne²⁰⁴ amid huge tension but on 8 February Guudlaawe and elders from the Hawadle clan held a press conference announcing they had reconciled.²⁰⁵

On the security front, al-Shabaab announced on 11 January it had captured Qalimow, a city between Balcad and Jawhar in Middle Shabelle near Mogadishu.²⁰⁶ The fighting between police in Baledweyne and federal police deployed to the city resulted in the death of the city's police commissioner.²⁰⁷ The SNA reported that it had killed 28 al-Shabaab fighters in the villages near Balcad in Middle Shabelle, about 40 kilometers from Mogadishu.²⁰⁸

On 13 February, the Hirshabelle election committee announced the first batch of 13 parliamentary seats would be chosen in Beledweyne including one that Fahad Yasin, Farmaajo's powerful right hand man, was running for unopposed.²⁰⁹ At the request of Roble, the election committee cancelled the vote for the seat being contested by Yasin.^{210/ 211}

201. See "Xaaladda Baladweyne oo kacsan" KeydMedia 2 January 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.keydmedia.net/so/news/xaaladda-baladweyne-oo-caawa-kacsan>

202. See "PM Roble Orders Withdrawal of Troops Deployed in Beletwyene" Hiiraan.com, January 2022. Accessed at: https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2022/Jan/185178/pm_roble_orders_withdr

203. See "PM Roble Orders Withdrawal of Troops Deployed in Beletwyene" Hiiraan.com, January 2022, Accessed at: https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2022/Jan/185178/pm_roble_orders_withdrawal_of_troops_deployed_in_beletwyene.aspx?utm_source=hiiraan&utm_medium=SomaliNewsUpdateFront.

204. See "Gudlawe 'Safely' Lands in Beletweyne over a Year since His Election amid Tensions," Hiiraan.com, February 2022. Accessed at: https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2022/Feb/185262/gudlawe_safely_lands_in_beletweyne_over_a_year_since_his_election_amid_tensions.aspx?utm_source=hiiraan&utm_medium=SomaliNewsUpdateFront.

205. See "Cali Guudlaawe iyo Beesha Xawaadle oo heshiis kugaaray Baledweyne+SAWIRRO" Wardoon; 8 February 2022. Accessed at: <http://wardoon.net/so/cali-guudlaawe-iyo-beesha-xawaadle-oo-heshiis-kugaaray-baledweyne/>

206. See "Al-Shabaab oo shaacisay inay dagaal kula wareegtay deegaan u dhow Balcad" Caasimada; 11 January 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.caasimada.net/al-shabaab-oo-dagaal-kula-wareegtay-deegaan-u-dhow-balcad/>

207. See "Turkish Trained Haram'ad Forces Shot Dead Beledweyne Police Chief" Hiiraan.com, February 2022. Accessed at: https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2022/Feb/185343/turkish_trained_haram_ad_forces_shot_dead_beletweyne_police_chief.aspx.

208. See "Somali Military Kills 28 Al-Shabaab Terrorists in 48 Hours" Hiiraan.com, January 2022. Accessed at: https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2022/Jan/185191/somali_military_kills_28_al_shabaab_terrorists_in_48_hours.aspx?utm_source=hiiraan&utm_medium=SomaliNewsUpdateFront.

209. See "Hirshabelle electoral commission announces polls for 13 seats in Beledweyne" Hiiraan Online 13 February 2022. Accessed at: https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2022/Feb/185315/hirshabelle_electoral_commission_announces_polls_for_13_seats_in_beledweyne.aspx?utm_source=hiiraan&utm_medium=SomaliNewsUpdateFront.

210. See "Farmaajo's Henchman Fahad Yasin Locked out as PM Roble Hints at Fresh Poll" April 2022. Accessed at: <https://goobjoog.com/english/farmaajos-henchman-fahad-yasin-locked-out-as-pm-roble-hints-at-fresh-poll/>.

211. See "Somalia: Elections of HOP#086 Seat to Be Suspended" Mustaqbal Media. February 15, 2022. Accessed at: <https://mustaqbalmedia.net/en/somaliaelections-of-hop086-seat-to-be-suspended/>.

On 18 February, two planes carrying voters and security for Yasin, Farmaajo's former chief of staff and the former NISA director, flew to the region. On 19 February, twin terror attacks killed 15 people and injured dozens more in Baledweyne.²¹² The election proceeded the next day as planned. While the city was under curfew, a sham election was organized and Yasin and a dozen of others won their seats.

In March, conflict erupted between Guudlaawe and his Vice President Yusuf Dabageed. Dabageed, who is from the Hawadle clan, was attempting to have his preferred candidates win parliamentary seats. Guudlaawe objected to his VP's schemes. Eventually, Guudlaawe succeeded, and the Hawadle sub-clans contested the seats without any manipulation.²¹³ On 20 March, Guudlaawe fired the leader of the region's election committee which was paralysed by the feud between the president and vice president.

“
Federal MP
Amina Mohamed
accused the spy
agency NISA of
being behind the
disappearance
and possible
murder of
a female
intelligence officer
Ikran Tahlil

Federal MP Amina Mohamed accused the spy agency NISA of being behind the disappearance and possible murder of a female intelligence officer Ikran Tahlil.²¹⁴ Mohamed, a senior member of the opposition party led by Hassan Sheikh Mohamed, was killed by a car bomb in March when she was campaigning for re-election. Roble said he believed NISA and his political opponents were responsible, despite al-Shabaab claiming responsibility. Roble said, “I know, the same people who killed Ikran Tahlil also assassinated Amina. I'm ready to die for the mission to seek justice for both Ikran and Amina.”²¹⁵

On 5 May, al-Shabaab attacked Ceelbraaf in Middle Shabelle and killed more than 30 Burundian soldiers and injured many more. The militants controlled the base for several days.²¹⁶ As government and clan militias continued with their operations against al-Shabaab, the militants began destroying water wells in seven villages near the Mahaas district.²¹⁷ On 17 July, al-Shabaab detonated a massive car bomb in a hotel near the president's office. Two ministers were among the wounded.²¹⁸ On 3 September, al-Shabaab burned seven vehicles and massacred 20 civilians near Baledweyne.²¹⁹

212. See “Two Pre-Election Attacks in Somalia Kill at Least 15, Injure Dozens” VOA News; 19 February 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.voanews.com/a/somalia-beledweyne-suicide-blast/6450369.html>

213. See “Khilaafka Guudlaawe & Dabageed oo Meel Xun Gaaray” Muqdisho Online, March 8, 2022. Accessed at: <https://muqdisho.online/khilaafka-guudlaawe-dabageed-oo-meel-xun-gaaray/>.

214. See “Farmajo Is ‘Impediment’ to Probe into Ikran Tahlil’s Murder - MP,” KEYDMEDIA ONLINE, October 10, 2021. Accessed at: <https://www.keydmedia.net/news/farmajo-is-impediment-to-probe-into-ikran-tahlils-murder-mp>.

215. See “Somali PM: I received a threatening text message before MP Amina killed” KeydMedia; 31 March 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.keydmedia.net/news/somali-pm-i-received-threatening-text-message-before-mp-amina-killed>

216. See “Al Shabaab claimed they killed over 170 Burundian soldiers” Accessed at: <https://www.garoweonline.com/en/news/somalia/al-shabaab-claims-scores-killed-in-attack-on-au-troops-in-somalia>

217. See “Al-Shabaab sets 7 villages on fire, blows up wells in Hiran region” Goobjoog; 8 August 2022. Accessed at: <https://goobjoog.com/english/al-shabaab-sets-7-villages-on-fire-blows-up-wells-in-hiran-region/>

218. See “Warar dheeraad ah oo ka soo baxaya Qarax is-miidaamin ah oo ka dhacay goor dhawayd Jowhar” Qaranimo Online; 17 July 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.qaranimo.com/2022/07/17/warar-dheeraad-ah-oo-ka-soo-baxaya-qarax-is-miidaamin-ah-oo-ka-dhacay-goor-dhawayd-jowhar/>

219. See “Photos of the carnage” Accessed at: https://twitter.com/Mo_Abdikani/status/1566059475613663232

“Government and local forces have cleared al-Shabaab from a number of districts and towns in the Middle Shabelle region including Adan Yabaal and Masajid Ali-Gadud

In October, al-Shabaab attacked a government compound and killed over 20 people in Beledweyne, including ministers and state officials.²²⁰ In a deadly attack in Jalalaqsi on 19 October, a car bomb exploded in a checkpoint near the bridge and killed the city’s mayor and a district commissioner.²²¹

From June to November, multiple drone attacks targeted al-Shabaab elements in Hirshabelle including three in one day on 10 August.²²² In September, US drones also killed more than 27 al-Shabaab fighters in Buulebrte.²²³

Along with drones, local militias known as Macawisley played a crucial role in removing al-Shabaab from the Hiiraan region.²²⁴ Government and local forces have cleared al-Shabaab from a number of districts and towns in the Middle Shabelle region including Adan Yabaal and Masajid Ali-Gadud. On 22 December, the Somali National Army took back Ruun-Nirgood from al-Shabaab, the only remaining village controlled by the militants in Middle Shabelle. One-hundred-and-fifty al-Shabaab fighters were killed.²²⁵

10. Banadir /Mogadishu

Election-related contests and political infighting among the national leaders played out in Mogadishu in 2022. The election of MPs and senators who represent Somaliland also took place in the capital city. In late 2022, a new mayor was appointed in Mogadishu.²²⁶ Two months later, deputy mayors were also appointed for the capital city.²²⁷

The capital and the Banadir region was at the epicenter of al-Shabaab attacks in 2022.

- On 12 January, a car bomb exploded in the 21 October/Afisyone area of Mogadishu, targeting a convoy of government security officials, killing and injuring two dozen people.²²⁸

220. See “Minister among 20 people killed in three explosions in central Somalia” hiiraan Online; 3 October 2022. Accessed at: https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2022/Oct/188088/minister_among_20_people_killed_in_three_explosions_in_central_somalia.aspx?utm_source=hiiraan&utm_medium=SomaliNewsUpdateFront.

221. See “Al-Shabab Attacks Key Bridges in Somalia, Kills at Least 21 People” VOA News; 19 October 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.voanews.com/a/al-shabab-attacks-key-bridges-in-somalia/6797032.html>

222. See “U.S. forces kills four Al-Shabaab fighters in Somalia airstrikes” Shabelle Media Network; 10 August 2022. <https://shabellemedia.com/u-s-forces-kills-four-al-shabaab-fighters-in-somalia-airstrikes/>

223. See “U.S. says it kills 27 al Shabaab militants in Somalia air strike; Reuters; 22 September 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.reuters.com/world/us-says-it-kills-27-al-shabaab-militants-somalia-air-strike-2022-09-21/>

224. See “Deegaanada ay illaa hadda Macawiisleyda ka qabsadeen maleeshiyada Al-Shabaab” Qaranimo Online 20 September 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.qaranimo.com/2022/09/20/deegaanada-ay-illaa-hadda-macawiisleyda-ka-qabsadeen-maleeshiyada-al-shabaab/>

225. See “Somali Military Takes Al-Shabab’s Last Stronghold in Middle Shabelle.” VOA. Voice of America, December 22, 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.voanews.com/a/somali-military-takes-al-shabab-s-last-stronghold-in-middle-shabelle-/6887466.html>.

226. See “Somali President Fires Mayor of Mogadishu, Appoints Replacement” VOA News. September 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.voanews.com/a/somali-president-fires-mayor-of-mogadishu-appoints-replacement/6735094.html>

227. See “President Mohamud Appoints Deputy Governors and Secretary General for Banadir Region,” Hiiraan.com, November 2022. Accessed at: https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2022/Nov/188798/president_mohamud_appoints_deputy_governors_and_secretary_general_for_banadir_region.aspx.

228. See “Somalia: Several Killed in Mogadishu Car Bombing.” Al Jazeera, January 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/1/12/several-killed-in-car-explosion-in-somali-capital>.

- On the night of 16 February, al-Shabaab raided police stations in the Kahda and Daarusalaam districts on the outskirts of Mogadishu. More than 20 people were killed and injured.²²⁹ Al-Shabaab fighters also attacked Mogadishu's highly fortified airport killing seven people including five AMISOM troops.²³⁰
- On 19 August Al Shabaab targeted the al Hayat hotel. The siege lasted for 30 hours; 21 people were killed and over 100 injured.²³¹
- On 20 September, Mogadishu's police commander Farhan Qarole was blown up by a landmine in the outskirts of Mogadishu while on an al-Shabaab security operation.²³²
- On October 29, a massive terror attack rocked the ministry of education offices in Mogadishu near the Zoppe Junction where in 2017 another al-Shabaab bombing killed or maimed more than 1,000 people. This attack claimed the lives of more than 100 people and injured 300 others.²³³
- Al-Shabaab conducted a terror attack at the Villa Rays hotel where the minister of national security and lawmakers were meeting. The minister and others were hurt in the siege which lasted more than 20 hours.²³⁴

11. Conclusion

“

Things got so out of hand that at one point the federal president and his prime minister had almost fired each other

The 2022 was a year of challenges for Somalia on the political, security and humanitarian fronts. Devastating election-related disputes, which almost destroyed the fragile federal institutions, and large-scale election rigging by all federal member state leaders were the hallmark of the year's election management processes. Things got so out of hand that at one point the federal president and his prime minister had almost fired each other. The international community, mainly the US, put number of unspecified political actors on sanction list.

Insecurity and devastating attacks were recurring events in the capital city. However, after the election of Hassan Sheikh Mohamud as president, the tables were turned. In the last quarter of 2022, Mohamud aligned his government with revolting clan militias in Hirshabelle and Galmudug, who moved to dislodge al-Shabaab from their communities.

229. See “Al-Shabab Attacks on Mogadishu Police Stations Leave at Least 5 Dead.” VOA. Voice of America, February 16, 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.voanews.com/a/al-shabab-attacks-on-mogadishu-police-stations-leave-at-least-5-dead/6444293.html>.

230. See “At Least 7 Dead in Somalia After Al-Shabab Attacks” VOA Somali; 23 March 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.voanews.com/a/six-dead-after-al-shabab-attacks-mogadishu-airport-/6497463.html>

231. See “Somali PM Vows Accountability after Deadly Hotel Attack” VOA News; 22 August 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.voanews.com/a/somali-pm-vows-accountability-after-deadly-hotel-attack/6712021.html>

232. See “Top Somali police commander killed in Al-Shabaab blast; Shabelle Media Network” 30 September 2022. Accessed at: <https://shabellemedia.com/top-somali-police-commander-killed-in-al-shabaab-blast/>

233. See “Jabuuti oo gargaar Caafimaad u soo direysa dadkii ku waxyeeloobay qaraxyadii ka dhacay Muqdisho” 2 November 2022. Accessed at: <https://horseedmedia.net/jabuuti-oo-gargaar-caafimaad-u-soo-direysa-dadkii-ku-waxyeeloobay-qaraxyadii-ka-dhacay-muqdisho-375013>

234. See “Somalia Villa Rays attack: Siege ends leaving eight civilians dead” BBC News; 28 November 2022. Accessed at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-63773425>

Election-related disputes were prominent across the Somali peninsula – from the breakaway region of Somaliland in the north to Jubaland in the south. Crippling drought also ravaged the country, although communities in Southwest state were hardest hit.

Somalia’s relations with external partners stabilized, and Mohamud’s mantra, “Somalis at peace with themselves and the world,” took root and gained shape. With the mandate of ATMIS ending in 2024, the government was mindful of the looming responsibility of taking charge of its own national security. The Somali president shored up relations with the Gulf countries, the African countries, and as far as Egypt and the US, all of whom pledged to support the operations against al-Shabaab.



*The year 2022
began with much
entanglement
and ended
with stabilized
national politics
and international
relations*

The year 2022 began with much entanglement and ended with stabilized national politics and international relations. Though the return of normalcy under President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud has not wholly eased the country’s humanitarian suffering and security challenges, 2023 brings an increased hope for Somalia’s peace-building and state-building endeavors.

HERITAGE

I N S T I T U T E