

**Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale**

|                                    |                                       |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Bilagsnr.:</b>                  | <b>1184</b>                           |
| Land:                              | Somalia                               |
| Kilde:                             | Heritage Institute for Policy Studies |
| Titel:                             | State of Somalia Report 2024          |
| Udgivet:                           | August 2025                           |
| Optaget på<br>baggrundsmaterialet: | 19. marts 2026                        |
|                                    |                                       |

# State *of* Somalia Report

August 2025



HERITAGE  
I N S T I T U T E

**SOS 2024**  
Year in Review

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# State of Somalia 2024

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**August 2025**

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# Executive Summary

The annual State of Somalia (SOS) report analyzes key events that shaped Somalia throughout the year, focused on the main developments and key trends in politics, security, the economy, social services and the role of external actors in 2024, all with the aim of supporting peace and state-building.

At the forefront of events last year was the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between Ethiopia and Somaliland. Somalia vehemently rejected this agreement, as it considers Somaliland to be an integral part of its sovereign territory. Somalia undertook a series of measures including diplomatic efforts to garner global and regional support including signing a defence and cooperation framework with Turkey. However, Turkey later stepped in as a mediator between Somalia and Ethiopia which culminated in the Ankara Declaration, a deal that Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan hoped would bring peace.

The electoral reform agenda proposed by the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) also featured prominently in 2024. The National Consultative Council (NCC) convened in October to discuss national security and future elections. A key outcome was the agreement to extend the terms of Federal Member State (FMS) presidents with the objective of transitioning to a unified universal suffrage electoral system, moving from the indirect clan-based electoral model. However, this plan faces significant opposition from key actors including Puntland's president, who was absent from this meeting; Jubaland's president who departed the meeting without signing the agreement; and several political parties.

Al-Shabaab continued to pose a significant security threat despite the sustained counterterrorism operations in many areas since 2022. The group continued to launch mortar attacks targeting key areas including Adan Adde international airport in Mogadishu which houses UN and international embassies. The group also carried out a devastating attack on a military base operated by the United Arab Emirates, resulting in the death of at least 18 Somali soldiers and four Emiratis.

The ISIS terrorist group, which has for years solidified its presence in the mountainous areas of Puntland's Bari region, became a security threat throughout Puntland. In Bosaso – the port city and business capital of the state – ISIS intensified their extortion of businesses. In response, authorities in Puntland commenced operations against the group aimed at dismantling its mountainous hideouts. A UN report in November 2024 estimated the group's strength at 600-700 fighters, with a significant number of foreign operatives.

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The African Union Transition Mission (ATMIS) concluded its mandate at the end of 2024. Concurrently, discussions continued regarding the composition, size, and mandate of its successor, the African Union Support Mission in Somalia (AUSSOM). In December, the UN Security Council adopted a draft resolution to establish AUSSOM replacing ATMIS. According to the draft, the new mission will see the deployment of up to 12,626 uniformed personnel from the AU including 1,040 police until 30 June 2025.

The humanitarian situation showed a slight improvement, with the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance decreasing from 8.3 million in 2023 to 6.9 million. However, internal displacement remained a significant challenge, with approximately 3.9 million people displaced, primarily driven by the conflict induced insecurity, exacerbated by climate related factors such as the “Gu” heavy rains and associated floods around the country.

Somalia’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) recorded a growth rate of four percent in 2024, a slight improvement from 3.7 percent in 2023. Domestic revenue collection also saw a notable increase, reaching \$369 million, up from \$329 million in 2023. However, this was insufficient to cover the government expenditure of \$569 million. The Ministry of Finance appropriated a budget of \$1.36 billion for the 2025 fiscal year, approved by parliament in November 2024. External grants continue to account for over 60 percent of the fiscal budget.

On the international stage, Somalia achieved a significant breakthrough in international relations when it was elected to a non-permanent seat at the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for 2025-2026. It was the early 1970s when Somalia last sat on the UNSC.

# National Developments

## Politics

On 1 January, the Prime Minister of Ethiopia Abiy Ahmed signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Muse Bihi Abdi, the president of Somaliland. The MoU has raised diplomatic tensions between Ethiopia and Somalia which does not recognise Somaliland's secession.<sup>1</sup> The Somalia's National Consultative Council (NCC), comprising national and regional executive organs led by President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, convened an emergency session which issued a resolute rejection, outlining five key points affirming Somalia's territorial integrity and sovereignty. Reinforcing its alignment with the federal government, the NCC urged the cabinet to consider further actions against Ethiopia's request, signaling a unified opposition.<sup>2</sup>

President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud also convened an urgent joint session of the Somali parliament to address "protecting territorial integrity and the nation's future". Parliament formally nullified the Somaliland-Ethiopia MoU which President Hassan signed into law on 7 January.<sup>3</sup>

On 24 January, 218 parliamentarians and lawmakers held a joint session to pass the 'Adoption Procedure for Constitutional Amendment' which outlined a three-stage process for reviewing and amending the Somali constitution, to be led by the Independent Constitutional Review and Implementation Commission. Some parliamentarians and former high-profile politicians at the federal level argued against the amendment, saying now was not the right time since the country was fighting in two fronts: with Ethiopia and al-Shabaab.<sup>4</sup>

The House of the People also approved the country's bid to join the East African Community (EAC) in February. The EAC is a regional political and economic bloc which aims to enhance cooperation among member states in trade, investment, and development.<sup>5</sup>

On 30 October, the regular National Consultative Council meeting ended with a communiqué detailing plans to consolidate election oversight under the federal government. A federal electoral committee will be formed and a schedule has been set for a "unilateral election," with local elections anticipated in June 2025 and regional elections in November 2025.

Opposition groups including the former president of Somalia Sharif Sheikh Ahmed rejected the NCC's decision warning that President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud would be held responsibility for any breaches of the national and regional constitutions that might result from these decisions.<sup>6</sup>

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3. "Somali President Condemns Ethiopia's Deal with Somaliland" <https://sonna.so/en/somali-president-condemns-ethiopia-deal-with-somaliland/>

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6. "Somalia's NCC, Without Puntland and Jubbaland, Concludes with Unilateral Election Plan, Deepening Divisions" <https://hornobserver.com/articles/3031/Somalias-NCC-Without-Puntland-and-Jubbaland-Concludes-with-Unilateral-Election-Plan-Deepening-Divisions>

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The meeting was marked by significant political tensions. Although the NCC had previously agreed to extend federal member states' terms by one year, it had yet to implement key aspects of a landmark political agreement intended to pave the way for regional parliamentary and leadership elections in November.

Puntland's leadership has been absent from the NCC since early 2023<sup>7</sup> and Jubaland's Ahmed Madobe withdrew from the October session.<sup>8</sup>

In the middle of this political crises, the House of the People approved the establishment of the 18-member Independent National Electoral and Boundaries Commission. Somalia's cabinet said this marked a significant step toward the first direct elections in more than 50 years.<sup>9</sup> However, opposition groups, including former President Ahmed, former Prime Minister Hassan Ali Khairi, and MP Abdirahman Abdishakur Warsame have strongly rejected the formation of the electoral commission, describing it as unconstitutional.<sup>10</sup>

In November 2024, the FGS deployed Turkish-trained Gorgor forces in Raskamboni, a town in southern Jubaland near the Kenyan border.<sup>11</sup>

The government claimed that the deployment was to fill the gap left by ATMIS forces. However, the deployment came amid heightened tensions between the FGS and Jubaland surrounding the re-election of President Ahmed Madoobe.<sup>12</sup> Former Somalia President Sharif criticized the deployment of federal troops to Jubaland territories, arguing that they were being "misused in a political vendetta rather than fulfilling their mandate to defend the nation."

The FGS had opposed President Ahmed Madobe's re-election,<sup>13</sup> accusing him of violating Jubaland's constitution which had been changed to allow him to run for a third time. Madobe captured the temporary capital of Jubaland, Kismaayo, from al-Shabaab with the help of Kenya and was first elected in 2012.<sup>14</sup> Jubaland has formally suspended relations with the federal government, citing constitutional and electoral law violations.<sup>15</sup>

## Security

The details of the MoU<sup>16</sup> between Ethiopia and the breakaway Somaliland region remain undisclosed.

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13. "Jubaland and Mogadishu standoff escalates after Ahmed Madoobe reelected President", November 26, 2024. Accessed at: [https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2024/Nov/199073/jubaland\\_and\\_mogadishu\\_standoff\\_escalates\\_after\\_ahmed\\_madoobe\\_reelected\\_president.aspx](https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2024/Nov/199073/jubaland_and_mogadishu_standoff_escalates_after_ahmed_madoobe_reelected_president.aspx); see also Somali Government rejects

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16. <https://x.com/RedwanHussien/status/1741833229319942479?t=1FEhW9PZhDc9l7VAVC6LRw&cs=19>

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However, according to Ethiopian officials, the deal allows Ethiopia to operate “a leased military base on the Red Sea”.<sup>17</sup>

In return, Ethiopia would recognize Somaliland as an independent state, according to the Somaliland president during the MoU signing ceremony.

Premier Abiy’s office praised the pact as “historic,” saying it is “intended to serve as a framework for the multisectoral partnership between the two sides”.

President Mohamud convened an emergency meeting of parliament and the NCC, declaring the agreement null and void and accusing Ethiopia of infringing on Somalia’s sovereignty. Somalia recalled its ambassador from Ethiopia for consultations and<sup>18</sup> warned that the MoU risked giving al-Shabaab a new recruiting narrative, posing a great danger to regional stability.

It triggered protests in the Somali capital and in the Awdal region where the port of Zeila is located which Ethiopia has coveted for centuries.<sup>19</sup> Opposition to the agreement was also evident within Somaliland’s administration, highlighted by the resignation of Defense Minister Abdiqani Mohamud Aateeye who is from the targeted coastal areas adjacent to Ethiopia.<sup>20</sup>

In the weeks that followed, Somalia took a series of measures to signal its determination to protect its sovereignty. On 17 January, an Ethiopian Airlines flight was denied access to Somali airspace. The aircraft, reportedly carrying a high-level Ethiopian delegation, was enroute to Hargeisa, the capital of Somaliland.<sup>21</sup>

In the following months, as tension over the MoU continued to simmer, Somalia grew closer to Egypt and Eritrea, two countries with a history of rivalry with Ethiopia.

President Mohamud traveled to Cairo for talks with his Egyptian counterpart President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi. Reaffirming his support, el-Sisi warned that Egypt would not tolerate any threats to Somalia’s sovereignty and security.<sup>22</sup> He also visited Eritrea five times for talks with President Isaias Afwerki.

In October, a tripartite dialogue between the three countries took place in Asmara, the capital of Eritrea, hinting at the formation of an anti-Abiy alliance. In a joint statement, the three nations committed to helping the Somali army confront “terrorism” and protect its land and sea borders.<sup>23</sup> This was clearly aimed at countering Ethiopia’s aggressive posturing towards its neighbors particularly Somalia.

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17. <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/somali-president-warns-ethiopia-somaliland-sea-deal-to-revive-al-shabaab-terrorist-group/3098408>

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22. <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/egypt-eritrea-somalia-agree-boost-security-cooperation-2024-10-10/>

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Egypt and Ethiopia have had ongoing dispute over the management of the Nile after Ethiopia built and went on to unilaterally fill the GERD dam. Afwerki had helped Ahmed decimate the TPLF but the two had fallen out after Eritrea was left out of the peace settlement between Ethiopia and the Tigray provincial administration.

In February, Somalia's defense minister Abdulkadir Mohamed Nur and his Turkish counterpart Yasar Guler signed the Defense and Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement as tensions over the MoU continued to flare.

While the details of the deal were not disclosed, Somali Prime Minister Hamza Abdi Barre hailed it as "historic," adding that the deal allowed Ankara to support Mogadishu in fighting "terrorism, piracy, illegal fishing, toxic dumping and any external violations or threats" to the country's coast.<sup>24</sup> A senior Turkish defense ministry official noted that Turkey will support Somalia "in the field of maritime security, as we did in the field of fight against terrorism".

Turkey tried to mediate between Somalia and Ethiopia, with the first round of talks taking place indirectly on 1 July without any progress. Progress was reported in the second round in August, although there were still sticking points related to the "language to withdraw the MOU and language of modalities to access the sea".<sup>25</sup>

A final breakthrough was reached in December when the leaders of Turkey, Somalia and Ethiopia held seven hours of talks in Ankara, culminating in the signing of the "Ankara Declaration." President Erdogan expressed hope that the deal would bring peace between the neighbors.<sup>26</sup> The agreement was to be followed by technical talks beginning no later than the end of February 2025, which are to be completed "within four months".

Although welcomed by the international community, in Somalia the agreement was received with skepticism, discontent, and public outcry, with the opposition in particular arguing that it undermined Somalia's sovereignty.<sup>27</sup>

Meanwhile, as the tensions continued, discussions over the composition, mandate, and size of the new African Union mission that would replace the African Union Transition in Somalia (ATMIS) continued.

Somali officials insisted that Ethiopian troops should not be part of the new mission, known as the African Union Support Mission in Somalia (AUSSOM), unless it revoked the MoU.<sup>28</sup> In June, Somalia's defense minister warned that Ethiopian troops would be labeled as "occupying forces" if they fail to withdraw from the MoU and stayed in Somalia beyond December 2024.<sup>29</sup>

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29. <https://hiiraan.com/news4/2024/Dec/199615/burundi-accuses-somalia-of-betrayal-over-aussom-exclusion.aspx>

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Burundi, which has contributed troops to the African peacekeeping missions in Somalia since 2007, withdrew from AUSSOM after being allocated 1,041 troops instead of the requested 2,000 which it said was disrespectful. Somalia insisted that troops numbers were in line with its quest for greater sovereignty, and were supported by bilateral agreements with countries like Egypt to deploy additional troops.<sup>30</sup>

By the end of December, Somalia and Ethiopia were discussing the normalization of relations. The State Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ali Omar, led a delegation to Addis Ababa on the same day the FGS accused Ethiopian troops seizing control of a base in Dolow town in Gedo region.

Earlier the same day, the foreign affairs ministry issued a statement saying, “this act of aggression comes at a time when the Federal Government of Somalia is engaged in peacebuilding endeavors to advance the Ankara Declaration, with a high-level Somali delegation dispatched today to Addis Ababa,”<sup>31</sup>

In other national developments, the foreign affairs ministry in May called for the termination of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) when its mandate ended in October.<sup>32</sup> Following discussions between Somalia and UN officials which began in March,<sup>33</sup> the Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2753 in October on the transition of UNSOM into the United Nations Transitional Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNTMIS) starting on 1 November.<sup>34</sup>

Somalia actively pursued efforts to strengthen its security forces by acquiring military equipment from allies. On 31 August, Italy made one of the most significant arm supplies to Somalia since the partial lifting of the UN arms embargo last year when it donated four Bell 412 multipurpose military helicopters. The helicopters were said to be critical in the fight against al-Shabaab, particularly for the rapid deployment of troops, supplies, and medical evacuations.<sup>35</sup>

In August<sup>36</sup> and September,<sup>37</sup> Egypt sent shipments of military equipment to support and build the capabilities of the Somali army amid tensions between Somalia and Ethiopia.<sup>38</sup> The shipments included “heavy artillery, anti-tank weapons, shields, and air-to-ground missiles”.<sup>39</sup>

In September, the cabinet approved a bill by the Ministry of Internal Security to establish the Office of National Security (ONS).<sup>40</sup> The ONS has functioned within the presidency and has been playing a lead role in “improving the coordination and integration of security efforts among government ministries and agencies”.<sup>41</sup>

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In the same month, PM Hamza Abdi Barre appointed General Asad Osman Abdullahi (Diyano) as the new commander of the Somali Police Force, replacing General Sulub Ahmed Firin who was appointed as the deputy Minister of Transport and Aviation.<sup>42</sup>

On 11 November, the cabinet dismissed the commander of the SNA, General Ibrahim Sheikh Muhyadin, and reinstated his predecessor General Odowaa Yusuf Rageh who held the post from 2020 to 2023 and oversaw operations against al-Shabaab during the initial phase of the offensive against the terror group.<sup>43</sup>

In November, two boats carrying 70 people capsized off the coast of Madagascar in the Indian Ocean claimed the lives of at least 28 Somali nationals. The incident was confirmed by Somalia's Ambassador to the African Union, Abdullahi Ahmed Warfa.<sup>44</sup> Insecurity, corruption and unemployment are pushing many young Somalis into perilous sea journeys in search of better opportunities.<sup>45</sup>

CIA Director William J. Burns made an unannounced visit to Mogadishu in November. Burns met with President Mohamud and intelligence chief Abdullahi Mohamed (Sanbalolshe) with discussions focused on counterterrorism efforts and tensions between Somalia and Ethiopia.<sup>46</sup>

Throughout 2024, ATMIS gradually reduced its forces as the end of the mission's mandate approached. By mid-November, the mission completed Phase Three of its drawdown, handing over the Burgabo base in Jubaland State. In December, the UN Security Council adopted a resolution to establish the African Union Support and Stabilization Mission in Somalia (AUSSOM), which would replace ATMIS. AUSSOM's mandate was set to begin on 1 January 2025, with up to 12,626 uniformed AU personnel—including 1,040 police officers—authorized for deployment. The transition from ATMIS to AUSSOM was expected to be finalized by 30 June 2025.<sup>47</sup>

On 6 June, Somalia was elected to a non-permanent seat at the United Nations Security Council for 2025-2026.<sup>48</sup> FGS and Somali commentators billed this as a historic because it was the early 1970s when Somalia last sat on the UNSC.<sup>49</sup>

In December, Somalia assumed leadership of the East African Standby Force (EASF) from Rwanda for the first time since the establishment of the force 20 years ago.<sup>50</sup>

In the same month, Turkey announced it would begin the construction of a space rocket launch facility outside of Mogadishu.<sup>51</sup>

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44. <https://www.garoweonline.com/en/news/somalia/cia-director-burns-makes-covert-visit-to-somalia-amid-rising-tensions-in-horn-of-africa>

45. <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/un-security-council-gives-mandate-for-new-mission-in-somalia/3436258>

46. Somalia: Widespread Unemployment Drives Youth to Perilous Sea Crossings." Shabelle Media Network, May 31, 2025. <https://shabellemedia.com/somalia-widespread-unemployment-drives-youth-to-perilous-sea-crossings/>.

47. <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cgee4j71ypqo>

48. [https://www.hiiraan.com/news/4/2025/jan/199676/somalia\\_joins\\_un\\_security\\_council\\_promises\\_justice\\_in\\_all\\_matters.aspx](https://www.hiiraan.com/news/4/2025/jan/199676/somalia_joins_un_security_council_promises_justice_in_all_matters.aspx)

49. <https://www.radiodalsan.com/somalia-takes-over-the-chairmanship-of-the-east-african-standby-force-easf-defense-ministers-council/>

50. IMF report, December 2024.

51. Ministry of Finance, Federal Government of Somalia.

## Economy

Key economic developments included an increase in gross domestic product (GDP), revenue mobilization, an increase in federal budget appropriations, as well as the launch of key infrastructure development projects.

Somalia's GDP growth was estimated to be four percent in 2024, compared to 3.7 percent in 2023.<sup>52</sup> This upward trend was primarily driven by key sectors such as agriculture, livestock exports, and remittances, as highlighted in recent IMF reports.

On the fiscal front, domestic revenue increased to \$369.35 million, up from \$329 million in 2023,<sup>53</sup> reflecting progress in the implementation of sales and property tax measures. However, despite these gains, total revenue remained insufficient to meet the government's expenditure of \$569.66 million for 2024. This uptick came after the FGS introduced a new electronic sales tax system in Mogadishu in August, enabling the collection of taxes directly from consumers through merchant mobile money and wallet accounts. While the initiative initially faced resistance from Somali businesses concerned about increased tax burdens, the government responded in September by enacting new regulations that introduced civil penalties for violations of revenue laws.

On the expenditure side, parliament approved a budget of 1.36 billion dollars for the 2025 fiscal year.<sup>54</sup> However, external grants still accounted for approximately 67% of fiscal resources, underscoring the country's heavy reliance on external support. The budget allocated \$731.6 million for recurrent expenses and \$610 million for development, focusing on infrastructure and economic growth. Domestic revenue was projected to be \$429 million, bolstered by stricter tax measures and a new five percent sales tax.

However, the economy remained beset by several challenges, including a persistent fiscal deficit resulting from substantial spending pressures on the security sector, the government wage bill and low domestic revenue mobilization.

High poverty rates – 54 percent of people live on less than \$2 dollars a day – ongoing unemployment and political and security fragmentation continued to hinder economic development. Taxation as a share of GDP is only two percent, one of the lowest globally, and Somalia's capacity to self-finance public service delivery and development initiatives is severely restricted. While future grants are expected to decrease, the World Bank's IDA has provided \$175 million in direct budget support to extend grant financing until June 2025.<sup>55</sup>

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52. IMF report, December 2024.

53. Ministry of Finance, Federal Government of Somalia.

54. [https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2024/Nov/198776/somali\\_parliament\\_approves\\_1\\_36\\_billion\\_budget\\_for\\_2025\\_fiscal\\_year.aspx](https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2024/Nov/198776/somali_parliament_approves_1_36_billion_budget_for_2025_fiscal_year.aspx)

55. See "Domestic Revenue Collection Increases in Somalia," Garowe Online, March 27, 2024. Accessed at: <https://www.garoweonline.com/en/news/somalia/domestic-revenue-collection-increases-in-somalia>

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In March, the cabinet has approved an oil and gas production agreement with Turkey. The council of ministers also passed key amendments to the Anti-Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing Bill and the Regulation of Public Registration and National Identity, further advancing Somalia's economic and governance reforms.<sup>56</sup>

Inflation continued to moderate, with a slight increase to 5.57 percent compared with 5.2 percent over the 12 months to November 2024, according to the National Bureau of Statistics.<sup>57</sup>

In July, EgyptAir inaugurated its first bi-weekly flight between Cairo and Mogadishu. Egypt's Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty arrived with the first flight.<sup>58</sup>

In December, President Mohamud launched the new Mogadishu Development Corporation, a development initiative that included the construction of a new airport, seaport and special economic zones comprised of modern commercial and residential hubs. The project was estimated to cost approximately \$650 million and is projected to create direct jobs, catalyzing international trade facilitation and economic growth.<sup>59</sup>

Hormuud Telecom launched 5G internet service across multiple cities including Mogadishu, offering internet speeds up to 400 Gbps.<sup>60</sup> This made Somalia one of the few Africa countries with 5G capabilities and enhanced digital connectivity among businesses and people.

## The Role of External Actors

On 23 January, Somalia sent a letter to the United Nations Security Council urgently requesting a meeting about the Somaliland-Ethiopia MoU which it described as “an unlawful transgression” of its sovereignty and territorial integrity. The request followed a phone call between the Somali President and UN Secretary-General António Guterres, during which Guterres reiterated the Security Council's longstanding respect for Somalia's sovereignty, territorial integrity and unity.<sup>61</sup>

In February, the federal parliament swiftly approved a defense cooperation agreement negotiated in January by the defense ministers of Somalia and Turkey. The agreement followed Ethiopia's controversial attempt to secure unauthorized access to the Gulf of Aden, prompting Somalia to reinforce its strategic and regional alliances.<sup>62</sup> On 22 February, President Mohamud signed into law the Turkey-Somalia Defense and Economic Cooperation Agreement.<sup>63</sup>

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56. See “Somali Cabinet Approves Turkey Energy Deal,” Hiiraan Online, March 28, 2024. Accessed at: [https://www.hiiraan.com/news/2024/Mar/195642/somali\\_cabinet\\_approves\\_turkey\\_energy\\_deal.aspx?utm\\_source=hiiraan&utm\\_medium=SomaliNewsUpdateFront](https://www.hiiraan.com/news/2024/Mar/195642/somali_cabinet_approves_turkey_energy_deal.aspx?utm_source=hiiraan&utm_medium=SomaliNewsUpdateFront)

57. SNBS report, December 2024. <https://nbs.gov.so/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/CPI-Report-DEC-2024.pdf>

58. See “Egypt Air Launches Inaugural Flight to Mogadishu, Strengthening Bilateral Relations,” Somali National News Agency, July 12, 2024. Accessed at: <https://sonna.so/en/egypt-air-launches-inaugural-flight-to-mogadishu-strengthening-bilateral-relations/#:~:text=Egypt%20Air%20Launches%20Inaugural%20Flight%20to%20Mogadishu%2C%20Strengthening%20Bilateral%20Relations,-By%20Abdiqani%20Abdullahi&text=M>

59. Mogadishu Development Project Brings Hope to Somalia,” Voice of America (VOA News), December 20, 2024. <https://www.voanews.com/a/mogadishu-development-project-brings-hope-to-somalia-/7907986.html>

60. “Hormuud Telecom Brings 5G to Somalia,” Capacity Media, March 21, 2024. Accessed at: <https://www.capacitymedia.com/article/2d02drv4nouyya7g5nev4/news/hormuud-telecom-brings-5g-to-somalia>

61. <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/whatsinblue/2024/01/consultations-on-the-situation-between-ethiopia-and-somalia-under-the-peace-and-security-in-africa-agenda-item.php>

62. “Somali parliament approves defense pact with Türkiye” <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/somali-parliament-approves-defense-pact-with-turkiye/3143707>

63. “Somalia Approves Defense Agreement With Turkey” <https://www.voanews.com/a/somalia-approves-defense-agreement-with-turkey-/7496758.html>

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In February, the African Union endorsed Somalia's candidacy as the East Africa representative for a non-permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council. Somalia has been largely absent from influential international arenas due to decades of political instability and security issues, and this marked a significant step in its re-emergence as a credible player in both regional and global affairs.<sup>64</sup>

In February, the Security Council underlined the need to uphold Somalia's sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity, following Ethiopia's controversial memorandum of understanding with Somaliland. The Council's discussions reflected growing concern among member states about the implications of external agreements that appear to challenge Somalia's internationally recognized borders.<sup>65</sup>

In August, the UNSC unanimously adopted Resolution 2478 (2024) extending the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia's (ATMIS) mandate until 31 December.<sup>66</sup>

Kenya and Uganda, which are also members of the EAC, attempted to mediate the Ethiopia-Somalia dispute in exchange for the possibility of recognition of Somaliland as an independent state. The dispute has created tensions and polarization in the Horn of Africa region. Ethiopia is a landlocked country with thousands of its troops stationed in Somalia and has repeatedly stated that it needs to get access to the sea either by peace or force.<sup>67</sup>

In recent years, Turkey has become an important geopolitical player in the Horn of Africa as it has close economic ties with Addis Ababa and security deals with Mogadishu.<sup>68</sup> Less than a week after the Kenya and Uganda attempt to reconcile Somalia and Ethiopia, Ankara said it had convinced the two countries to end tensions. According to this agreement, Ethiopia could access Somali seas for commercial purposes but under the sovereignty of Somalia.

Turkey described the Ankara agreement as "the first step towards a new beginning based on peace and cooperation between Somalia and Ethiopia."<sup>69</sup> It was warmly welcomed by the international community, including the African Union, European Union, and the US.<sup>70</sup> However, former Prime Minister Hassan Ali Khaire said it was "a grave threat to Somalia's sovereignty" as it did not address Ethiopia's unilateral agreement with Somaliland.<sup>71</sup>

A Somali delegation led by State Minister Ali Omar traveled to Addis Ababa to further consolidate the Ankara pact and strengthen bilateral relations.<sup>72</sup> From its side, Ethiopia promised to implement the Ankara Accord.<sup>73</sup>

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64. "AU endorses Somalia for 2025-2026 UN Security Council Seat" <https://eastleighvoice.co.ke/AU,AU%20somalia/18903/au-endorses-somalia-for-2025-2026-un-security-council-seat>.

65. "What's In Blue: Somalia" <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/whatsinblue/2024/02/somalia-briefing-and-consultations-11.php>.

66. "What's In Blue: Somalia" <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/whatsinblue/somalia>.

67. "Kenya, Uganda to mediate Ethiopia-Somalia Dispute", November 30, 2024. Accessed at: <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/kenya-uganda-mediate-ethiopia-somalia-dispute-2024-11-30/>

68. "Ethiopia and Somalia agree to end bitter Somaliland port feud", December 12, 2024. Accessed at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cvgr7v1evvgo>

69. Somalia, Ethiopia agree on a Compromise to end Tension, Turkish leader says, December 12, 2024. Accessed at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/12/12/somalia-ethiopia-agree-on-compromise-to-end-tension-turkish-leader-says>

70. See "Erdogan to visit Ethiopia, Somalia in early 2025 after Landmark Deal", December 16, 2024. Accessed at: <https://www.dailysabah.com/politics/diplomacy/erdogan-to-visit-ethiopia-somalia-in-early-2025-after-landmark-deal>

71. "Khaire denounces Ankara Agreement, calls Deal a 'Dormant Volcano'". Accessed at: [https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2024/Dec/199332/khaire\\_denounces\\_ankara\\_agreement\\_calls\\_deal\\_a\\_dormant\\_volcano.aspx?utm\\_source=hiiraan&utm\\_medium=SomaliNewsUpdateFront](https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2024/Dec/199332/khaire_denounces_ankara_agreement_calls_deal_a_dormant_volcano.aspx?utm_source=hiiraan&utm_medium=SomaliNewsUpdateFront)

72. "Somalia's Delegation heads to Addis Ababa to strengthen Ankara Declaration Commitment", December 23, 2024. Accessed at: <https://sonna.so/en/somalias-delegation-heads-to-addis-ababa-to-strengthen-ankara-declaration-commitment/>

73. "News: Ethiopia reiterates Commitment to 'Fully implement' Ankara Agreement Following Discussions with Somalia Delegation", December 24, 2024. Accessed at: [https://addisstandard.com/ethiopia-reiterates-commitment-to-fully-implement-ankara-agreement-following-discussions-with-somalia-delegation/?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTEAAAR3bLR5bkjvSkTqaTFBcXx5j18j9fh\\_qm8j\\_T0M9wQRbN1rF1iC-h1Ay938\\_aem\\_XAdHGPvSR4U4z5Qf-0hmbw](https://addisstandard.com/ethiopia-reiterates-commitment-to-fully-implement-ankara-agreement-following-discussions-with-somalia-delegation/?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTEAAAR3bLR5bkjvSkTqaTFBcXx5j18j9fh_qm8j_T0M9wQRbN1rF1iC-h1Ay938_aem_XAdHGPvSR4U4z5Qf-0hmbw)

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Turkey has signed an agreement to build a spaceport missile test site inside Somalia which is one of three ideal locations for “equatorial launches, alongside Kazakhstan’s Baikonur Cosmodrome and the launch complexes used by NASA and SpaceX in Florida, USA.”<sup>74</sup>

Initially, the FGS had excluded Ethiopia from the new African Union peacekeeping mission.<sup>75</sup> However, after the Ankara deal, Somalia changed its mind and allowed Ethiopia to participate in AUSSOM.<sup>76</sup>

Elsewhere in Africa, Somalia and Tanzania signed five bilateral MOUs covering foreign affairs, health, tourism, defense, and education, showcasing both nations’ commitment to fostering regional cooperation and sustainable development, further evidence of Somalia’s diplomatic growth and involvement in the East African community.<sup>77</sup>

Somalia and Tanzania agreed to establish direct flights between Mogadishu and Dar-es-Salaam which will save travelers’ time, reduce costs, and remove flight connection challenges that often force travelers through Nairobi or Addis Ababa. Dr Pindi Hazara Chana, Tanzania’s Minister of Tourism and Resources, pointed out that air connectivity is a lifeline for trade and tourism. It will also enhance the two countries’ cooperation on economic growth, cultural exchange, and political and trade integration. The agreement included the revival of the Joint Ministerial Cooperation Commission (JMCC), first established during the presidency of General Siad Barre.<sup>78</sup>

## Humanitarian Situation

The number of people in need of assistance decreased from 8.3 million in 2023 and 6.9 million in 2024<sup>79</sup> to 5.98 million in 2025.<sup>80</sup> For the first time in years, conflict-generated insecurity became the leading cause (52%) of displacement as inter-clan fighting intensified across some regions.<sup>81</sup> Around 3.9 million people were internally displaced as a result of conflict and climate-induced disasters as of 20 June.<sup>82</sup>

In January, the UN and FGS launched a \$1.6 billion humanitarian response plan to provide life-saving assistance to over five million people. This was a 37% reduction from the amount requested in 2023 and, as of 31 December, only 37.5% had been secured.<sup>83</sup> In March, senior UN officials from OCHA and FAO visited Baidabo to seek urgent support for the humanitarian crisis.<sup>84</sup>

74. “Erdoğan unveils Turkey’s plan to build a spaceport in Somalia: report”, November 22, 2024. Accessed at: [https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2024/Nov/199018/erdo%C4%9Fan\\_unveils\\_turkey\\_s\\_plan\\_to\\_build\\_a\\_spaceport\\_in\\_somalia\\_report.aspx?utm\\_source=hiiraan&utm\\_medium=SomaliNewsUpdateFront](https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2024/Nov/199018/erdo%C4%9Fan_unveils_turkey_s_plan_to_build_a_spaceport_in_somalia_report.aspx?utm_source=hiiraan&utm_medium=SomaliNewsUpdateFront)

75. Somalia insists Ethiopia not be part of new AU mission, November 10, 2024. Accessed at: <https://www.voanews.com/a/somalia-insists-ethiopia-not-be-part-of-new-au-mission-/7858887.html>

76. “Somalia ‘open’ to Ethiopian troop role”, December 19, 2024. Accessed at: <https://www.voanews.com/a/somalia-open-to-ethiopian-troop-role/7907731.html>

77. “Somalia and Tanzania Forge Stronger Ties with Landmark MOUs in Key Sectors”, December 19, 2024. Accessed at: <https://web.mfa.gov.so/somalia-and-tanzania-forge-stronger-ties-with-landmark-mous-in-key-sectors/>

78. “Somalia and Tanzania Restore Direct Flights to boost Trade and Tourism”, December 29, 2024. Accessed at: [https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2024/Dec/199588/somalia\\_and\\_tanzania\\_restore\\_direct\\_flights\\_to\\_boost\\_trade\\_and\\_tourism.aspx?utm\\_source=hiiraan&utm\\_medium=SomaliNewsUpdateFront](https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2024/Dec/199588/somalia_and_tanzania_restore_direct_flights_to_boost_trade_and_tourism.aspx?utm_source=hiiraan&utm_medium=SomaliNewsUpdateFront)

79. “As United Nations Somalia Mission Draws Down, Speakers in Security Council Urge Government Continue Efforts on Security Sector Reform, Fight against Al-Shabaab” - UN security Council meeting. Accessed at: <https://press.un.org/en/2024/sc15741.doc.htm#:~:text=On%20the%20dire%20humanitarian%20situation,3.8%20million%20people%20are%20displaced.>

80. “Somalia 2025 Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan (HNRP) - Summary - Somalia,” ReliefWeb. December 15, 2024. Accessed at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/somalia-2025-humanitarian-needs-and-response-plan-hnnp-summary>

81. OCHA Somalia 2025 Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan (HNRP) - Summary: OCHA. (2025). Somalia 2025 Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan (HNRP) - Summary. Accessed at: <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/somalia/somalia-2025-humanitarian-needs-and-response-plan-hnnp-summary>

82. UNHCR “Somalia Situation: Population Dashboard - 31 May 2024

83. See “OCHA”. Somalia: Humanitarian Dashboard, January - September December 2024. Accessed at: <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/somalia/somalia-humanitarian-dashboard-january-december-2024https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/somalia-humanitarian-dashboard-january-september-2024>

84. See “FOA”. Joint Press Conference at conclusion of visit to Somalia by OCHA and FAO Deputy Heads. Accessed at: <https://www.fao.org/newsroom/detail/joint-press-conference-at-conclusion-of-visit-to-somalia-by-ocha-and-fao-deputy-heads/en>

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In September, Somalia said climate change was one of the biggest threats to its national security.<sup>85</sup> The Gu heavy rains and flash floods affected at least 268,359 people and displaced 81,000 others, claiming 10 lives as of 19 May.<sup>86</sup> Both IGAD and the Somali Disaster Management Agency had warned of heavy rainfall in the Horn of Africa including Somalia from June to September, necessitating urgent preparations.<sup>87</sup>

In March, the Somali Disaster Management Agency also issued a warning about tropical cyclones.<sup>88</sup> While no fatalities were reported, the Somali government issued two separate warnings for tropical cyclones, Hidaya and Lally, between March and June. Hidaya killed 226 people<sup>89</sup> in Kenya and 166<sup>90</sup> in Tanzania.

The FGS released a post-disaster needs assessment for the Deyr floods of 2023. The report estimated total damage and losses of \$193.4 million and said \$250 million was needed for recovery.<sup>91</sup> According to the report, direct damages to agriculture, water and sanitation, education and other key sectors surpassed \$126.6 million, while losses amounted to \$49.5 million.

Following a visit by the Green Climate Fund's (GCF) Executive Director, Mafalda Duarte, in March, Somalia received \$94.4 million for the seven-year Ugbaad project, which is focused on building a climate-resilient agricultural sector.<sup>92</sup> As Somalia doesn't have the capacity or necessary GCF accreditation to implement the initiative it will be run by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

Finally, there was a significant rise in cholera, with 7,235 new cases and 75 deaths (1.0% case fatality rate) across 25 districts in Banadir, Puntland, Somaliland, Southwest, Jubaland, and Hirshabelle. According to WHO, the number of reported cholera cases in 2024 was three times higher than the average for the same period over the last three years.<sup>93</sup> Somalia received 1.4 million vials of an oral cholera vaccine worth \$2.5 million to combat the outbreak.<sup>94</sup>

# Regional Developments

## Banadir (Mogadishu)

On 10 December, President Mohamud appointed Mohamed Ahmed Amiir as the new governor of the Banadir Regional Administration and the Mayor of Mogadishu, replacing Yusuf Hussein Jimaale.<sup>95</sup>

85. UNDP Somalia. (2024, September 12). Somalia Names Climate Change One of Its Biggest Security Threats. Accessed at: <https://undpsom.medium.com/somalia-names-climate-change-one-of-its-biggest-security-threats-dbb21ee51de9#:~:text=Based%20on%20assessments%20of%20the,as%20droughts%2C%20floods%2C%20and%20resource>

86. "UNOCHA" SOMALIA: 2024 Gu (April to June) Season Floods Bi - Weekly Situation Report No. 3

87. "SODMA" SoDMA Warns Somali Community of Spring Rains Impact Following El Nino Floods.

88. <https://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/tea/news/east-africa/somalia-warns-of-impending-tropical-cyclone-ialy-4631146>

89. "Xinhua" Death toll of Kenya's devastating floods climbs to 228, tropical Cyclone Hidaya weakens after landfall

90. \$44 "Xinhua" Flash floods, Cyclone Hidaya raise death toll to 166 in Tanzania

91. "Relief web" Somalia 2023 Deyr Floods: Rapid Post-Disaster Needs Assessment Report. <https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/somalia-2023-deyr-floods-rapid-post-disaster-needs-assessment-report>

92. "FOA" Green Climate Fund approves funding worth over \$130 million for FAO-led projects in Somalia and Iraq. Accessed at: <https://fao.org/newsroom/detail/green-climate-fund-approves-funding-worth-over--130-million-for-fao-led-projects-in-somalia-and-iraq/en>

93. "UNICEF" Somalia receives 1.4 million vials of oral cholera vaccine

94. Ibid.

95. President Hassan Appoints Mohamed Ahmed Amiir As The New Mogadishu Mayor. Accessed at: <https://sonna.so/en/president-hassan-appoints-mohamed-ahmed-amiir-as-the-new-mogadishu-mayor/>

In April, the US government announced it would suspend ration support for Somalia's elite Danab – a unit that the US trains, mentors, and supports – after an investigation uncovered rations misappropriation. According to local reports, military resources including vehicles were reportedly sold in Mogadishu's Bakara market, in a scheme that involved senior officials within the Ministry of Defense and the Somali National Army (SNA).<sup>96</sup>

Somalia's defense ministry acknowledged the corruption saying that it had made arrests, although the identities of those involved were not disclosed.<sup>97</sup> These misappropriations came as the government forces supported by allied clan militias continue to battle al-Shabaab militants particularly in Galmudug and Hirshabelle.

The capital region remained relatively stable in 2024, although al-Shabaab continued to carry out terror attacks. In March, Somali police seized over 140 mortars during operations in Mogadishu targeting al-Shabaab hideouts.<sup>98</sup>

- On 11 January, al-Shabaab launched a mortar attack in the Aden Adde International Airport area where the UN and other international embassies are located, killing a member of the United Nations Guard Unit.<sup>99</sup>
- The group resumed its mortar attacks in September, targeting the heavily fortified Halane camp inside Aden Adde International Airport with four rounds, injuring one civilian living in a nearby residential area.<sup>100</sup> Al-Shabaab mortars again targeted the Halane camp in November, killing three people and injuring several others.<sup>101</sup>
- At least eight mortar rounds landed in the Hamarwayne, Yaqshid, and Hiliwaa districts. No casualties were reported.<sup>102</sup>
- On 16 January, an al-Shabaab suicide bombing outside Al-Hindi restaurant in Mogadishu's Hamar Weyne district killed three people and injured two others.<sup>103</sup>
- There was another suicide attack at a busy intersection near a petrol station, about one kilometer from Mogadishu's soccer stadium where a match was taking place, which killed two and injured another two.<sup>104</sup>
- Multiple blasts by al-Shabaab in the busy Bakara market in Mogadishu killed at least 10 people in February and injured more than 20 others.<sup>105</sup> In the same month, an al-Shabaab operative infiltrated the army and attacked an Emirati-run military base in Mogadishu killing at least 18 Somali soldiers, as well as four Emirati senior officers and one Bahraini military official. Facilitating the recruitment of their operatives into the army and using them to carry out deadly attacks is a new al-Shabaab tactic.<sup>106</sup>

96. See <https://www.garoweonline.com/en/news/somalia/somalia-danab-missing-food-rations-from-us-the-untold-story>

97. See <https://www.voanews.com/a/somalia-reports-food-diversion-involving-us-trained-soldiers/7585994.html>

98. <https://www.garoweonline.com/en/news/somalia/somalia-police-seize-over-140-mortars-in-the-capital-mogadishu>

99. <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/mortar-attack-kills-un-staffer-in-somali-capital/3107424>

100. <https://mogadishu24.com/al-shabaab-claims-responsibility-for-mortar-attacks-on-mogadishus-international-airport/>

101. <https://atmis-au.org/atmis-condemns-mortar-attacks-on-halane-base-camp-in-mogadishu/>

102. [https://x.com/ArlaadiMnetwork/status/1832523975399780401?t=r\\_VitqHlzB9tueggEd1UVQ&s=19](https://x.com/ArlaadiMnetwork/status/1832523975399780401?t=r_VitqHlzB9tueggEd1UVQ&s=19)

103. <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/suicide-bombing-kills-three-injures-two-somali-capital-police-2024-01-16/>

104. [https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2024/Jan/194739/suicide\\_bombing\\_kills\\_at\\_least\\_2\\_in\\_somali\\_capital.aspx?utm\\_source=hiiraan&utm\\_medium=SomaliNewsUpdateFront](https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2024/Jan/194739/suicide_bombing_kills_at_least_2_in_somali_capital.aspx?utm_source=hiiraan&utm_medium=SomaliNewsUpdateFront)

105. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/2/6/ten-dead-20-others-injured-in-multiple-blasts-in-market-in-somali-capital>

106. <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/terror-attack-kills-4-emirati-troops-1-bahraini-officer-in-somali-capital/3134324>

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- In a separate incident in February, at least five civilians were killed and over a dozen others wounded after a passenger minibus and a rickshaw were damaged by a suspected al-Shabaab roadside bomb in the Heliwaa district during the evening rush hour.<sup>107</sup>
- In February, Musa Harun Adan, a prominent traditional elder also known as Musa Maquni, was assassinated by suspected al-Shabaab militants in Mogadishu's Deyniile district.<sup>108</sup> Another prominent traditional elder, Abdi Hassan Muhidin, was killed by al-Shabaab operatives in Deyniile alongside his security guard. Two of the assailants were reportedly killed by security forces, while a third suspect was found dead.<sup>109</sup>
- Three soldiers were killed and 27 injured when five al-Shabaab gunmen stormed the SYL Hotel, located close to Somalia's presidential palace. The gunmen were shot dead by Somali security forces after exchanging gunfire for hours.<sup>110</sup> The hotel, which is frequented by government officials and politicians, has witnessed several al-Shabaab attacks in the past despite being located in a heavily guarded area of the city.
- In July, al-Shabaab orchestrated a prison break at Mogadishu's main jail where armed inmates and guards engaged in a firefight which resulted in the deaths of five prisoners and three soldiers. No inmates escaped. The militant group had previously used bribery to smuggle guns into the prison and infiltrate the security apparatus to free detainees.<sup>111</sup>
- At least 32 people died in an al-Shabaab attack at the Liido Beach Hotel in August. The attack was one of the deadliest incidents in Somalia in recent years. Several individuals, including security officers, were arrested. The attack sent shockwaves among Somalis as video clips were circulated showing the unfolding terror the beachgoers faced.<sup>112</sup>
- In October, al-Shabaab fighters killed three businessmen in the Hodan district after they installed CCTV cameras outside their premises, a directive which had come down from the security forces. Other incidents in which businesses complying with the directive to install CCTV were burned down took place in Bakara Market and Elasha Biyaha.<sup>113</sup>

In its efforts to disrupt al-Shabaab's financial networks, the Central Bank of Somalia in March ordered local banks to freeze the accounts of 16 individuals and companies sanctioned by the US Treasury for laundering money for al-Shabaab. Among the targeted companies was the Dubai-based Haleel Commodities LLC.<sup>114</sup>

107. [https://www.hiiraan.com/news/2024/Feb/195104/five\\_passengers\\_killed\\_as\\_bus\\_hits\\_landmine\\_in\\_mogadishu.aspx#:~:text=Mogadishu%20\(HOL\)%20%2D%20At%20least,Monday%20night%2C%20according%20to%20police.](https://www.hiiraan.com/news/2024/Feb/195104/five_passengers_killed_as_bus_hits_landmine_in_mogadishu.aspx#:~:text=Mogadishu%20(HOL)%20%2D%20At%20least,Monday%20night%2C%20according%20to%20police.)

108. <https://daljir.com/nabadoon-caan-ahaa-oo-xalay-lagu-dilay-muqdisho-oo-maanta-la-aasay/>

109. [https://www.hiiraan.com/news/2024/Mar/195304/mogadishu\\_security\\_forces\\_arrest\\_al\\_shabaab\\_members\\_after\\_murder\\_of\\_traditional\\_elder.aspx](https://www.hiiraan.com/news/2024/Mar/195304/mogadishu_security_forces_arrest_al_shabaab_members_after_murder_of_traditional_elder.aspx)

110. <https://www.cnn.com/2024/03/15/africa/somalia-hotel-attack-mogadishu-intl-afr/index.html>

111. <https://www.aljazeera.com/amp/news/2024/7/13/eight-killed-in-mogadishu-prison-breakout-attempt>

112. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/8/3/al-shabab-lido-beach-attack-somalia-mogadishu>

113. See <https://thesomalidigest.com/al-shabab-kills-three-businessmen-in-hodan-over-cctv-installations/>

114. [https://www.hiiraan.com/news/2024/Mar/195478/central\\_bank\\_of\\_somalia\\_orders\\_freeze\\_on\\_accounts\\_of\\_16\\_people\\_sanctioned\\_by\\_us\\_treasury.aspx](https://www.hiiraan.com/news/2024/Mar/195478/central_bank_of_somalia_orders_freeze_on_accounts_of_16_people_sanctioned_by_us_treasury.aspx)

In July, Somalia's anti-money laundering committee published a sanctions list targeting the financial networks of al-Shabaab. It identified eight key commanders such as Mahad Karate. Directions were issued to freeze their assets while the public was urged to avoid any financial dealings with them and report suspicious transactions to the Financial Reporting Center (FRC).<sup>115</sup>

In May, 70-year-old Ali Hussein Isaaq was sentenced to seven years in prison by the Banadir regional court in Mogadishu and fined \$3,000 for money laundering and financing al-Shabaab. Isaaq was charged with transferring \$500,000 to the militant group.<sup>116</sup> Also in May, the same court sentenced Ayan Abukar Mohamed to eight years in prison and fined her \$8,000 for collecting funds for al-Shabaab's terrorist activities. Ayan blamed her husbands, whose whereabouts are unknown, for opening the accounts and using her phone numbers, a claim the court rejected.<sup>117</sup>

In a similar incident in September, a court in Mogadishu sentenced Hassan Osman Adan to 13 years in prison and imposed a \$20,000 fine for setting up multiple accounts under family members' names and using them to conduct transactions totaling over \$12 million over four years to finance al-Shabaab. Adan's wife, daughter, and ex-wife were also sentenced to two-year prison terms.<sup>118</sup>

The death of Lul Abdiaziz, a pregnant mother of six who was set on fire by her husband, Sayid Ali Moalim Daud, in early February sparked widespread media coverage and public outrage. After fleeing the city, Daud was captured by his kinsmen and returned to authorities in Mogadishu where he was charged with murder. Efforts by Daud's kinsmen to settle the matter out of court were resisted by Lul's family who refused to bury her body until justice was served.

The case moved swiftly through the Somali justice system due to immense public outcry and pressure. The Banadir Regional Court sentenced Daud to death, a decision that the Supreme Court later upheld following an appeal by his legal team.<sup>119</sup> Despite the death penalty not yet being carried out, the judicial process has drawn significant attention and is expected to have a profound impact on how Somalis view their country's justice system.

Other developments in Banadir included the use of social media platforms, particularly TikTok, to incite violence. In August, a Mogadishu court sentenced seven female TikTok influencers to six months in prison for inciting violence and promoting public disorder. The group was initially arrested in May for fueling clan rivalries and spreading divisive content on TikTok.<sup>120</sup> 2024 saw a rise in the use of social media platforms, particularly TikTok, in inciting inter-clan conflict and content that clearly fits the definition of hate speech.

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115. <https://somaliguardsian.com/news/somalia-news/somalia-anti-money-laundering-committee-slaps-sanctions-on-top-al-shabaab-leader/>

116. [https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2024/May/196316/mogadishu\\_court\\_sentences\\_70\\_year\\_old\\_to\\_seven\\_years\\_for\\_al\\_shabab\\_financing.aspx](https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2024/May/196316/mogadishu_court_sentences_70_year_old_to_seven_years_for_al_shabab_financing.aspx)

117. <https://halqabsi.com/2024/05/woman-sentenced-to-eight-years-for-terrorism-financing-and-money-laundering/>

118. <https://shabellemedia.com/somalia-four-sentenced-over-al-shabaab-financing-in-mogadishu/>

119. <https://mogadishu24.com/somalias-supreme-court-upholds-death-sentence-for-sayid-ali-in-high-profile-murder-of-pregnant-wife/>

120. <https://mustaqbalmedia.net/en/mogadishu-court-sentences-seven-female-tiktokers-for-inciting-violence/>

## Galmudug

The President of Galmudug announced that his government was ready to hold a one-person-one-vote election (OPOV) as indirect elections were unfair and created uncertainty.<sup>121</sup>

Counterterrorism efforts in Galmudug that began in 2022 continued at a reduced pace. However, clan conflicts escalated, particularly in Mudug, resulting in hundreds of casualties.

On 10 January, a UN helicopter crashed in territory controlled by al-Shabaab as it departed from Beledweyne enroute to Wisil carrying nine passengers and crew members including nationals from Ukraine, Uganda and Egypt. The helicopter was quickly seized by al-Shabaab after it crashed in Gadoon village, near the frontlines of a government offensive against the militants.<sup>122</sup> The whereabouts of those onboard remains unknown.

Clashes between the Somali security forces supported by allied clan militias continued throughout 2024. In January, al-Shabaab attacked an army base in the village of Caad resulting in multiple casualties on both sides, though no official death toll was provided. Both sides claimed victory.<sup>123</sup>

Meanwhile, international security partners resumed their airstrikes on al-Shabaab killing at least 20 militants in Galhareri on 25 January;<sup>124</sup> 50 near Harardhere on 8 April;<sup>125</sup> nearly 30 in Rage Baris between Galgadud and Middle Shabelle on 17 June; and 23 in the Dharaarweyn area near Galcad on 11 November.<sup>126</sup>

Regular security incidents in Galmudug included inter-clan clashes, particularly in the Mudug region which cuts across Galmudug and Puntland. In January, a suspected clan revenge attack in Saaho village killed five family members.<sup>127</sup> This was followed by the killing of businessman Ahmed Tahliil by unknown gunmen in Galkayo on 15 February in what was becoming a trend of clan-motivated killings.<sup>128</sup> On 26 May, inter-clan conflict in Eel Barafange, near Dhusamareeb, resulted in the killing of at least five individuals.<sup>129</sup> In June, fierce clashes between rival clan militias in the Jiicboor area of Mudug resulted in over 50 deaths.

A delegation from Puntland and Galmudug negotiated a truce that led to a fragile peace.<sup>130</sup> In June, the two regional administrations agreed to devise plans to deploy joint military forces to prevent further escalation of the conflict.<sup>131</sup> Conflict between the two clans has been on and off for over 30 years. In 2020, following recurring and deadly conflicts, the two clans convened in reconciliation conferences in Bandiraadley in Galmudug, and in Galdogob in Puntland.

121. Madaxweyne Qoor Qoor “Galmudug waa u diyaar qabashada Doorasho Qof iyo Cod”, December 31, 2024. Accessed at: [https://www.hiiraan.com/news/2024/Dec/wararka\\_maanta31-188866.htm](https://www.hiiraan.com/news/2024/Dec/wararka_maanta31-188866.htm)

122. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-67934609>

123. <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/al-shabaab-terrorist-group-attacks-military-base-in-somalia/3117238#:~:text=MOGADISHU%2C%20Somalia,-Casualties%20are%20feared&text=Al%20Shabaab%20claimed%20responsibility%20for,and%20killed%20over%20191%20soldiers>

124. <https://www.voanews.com/a/officials-airstrike-in-somalia-kills-at-least-20-al-shabab-militants/7457251.html>

125. <https://sonna.so/en/somali-national-army-kills-50-al-shabaab-terrorists-including-a-leader/>

126. <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/over-23-al-shabaab-terrorists-killed-several-more-injured-during-operation-in-somalia/3392071#>

127. <https://www.caasimada.net/dad-oo-isku-qoys-ahaa-oo-mar-kale-lagu-laayay-mudug/>

128. [https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2024/Feb/195048/rising\\_clan\\_violence\\_in\\_galkayo\\_claims\\_life\\_of\\_loca\\_businessman.aspx](https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2024/Feb/195048/rising_clan_violence_in_galkayo_claims_life_of_loca_businessman.aspx)

129. [https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2024/May/196439/clan\\_conflict\\_in\\_galgaduud\\_leaves\\_5\\_dead\\_many\\_injured.aspx?utm\\_source=hiiraan&utm\\_medium=SomaliNewsUpdateFront](https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2024/May/196439/clan_conflict_in_galgaduud_leaves_5_dead_many_injured.aspx?utm_source=hiiraan&utm_medium=SomaliNewsUpdateFront)

130. <https://www.mustaqbalmedia.net/en/delegation-from-puntland-and-galmudug-establishes-ceasefire-in-mudug-region/amp/>

131. [https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2024/Jun/196840/puntland\\_and\\_galmudug\\_to\\_deploy\\_military\\_force\\_amid\\_deadly\\_clan\\_conflict\\_in\\_mudug.aspx](https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2024/Jun/196840/puntland_and_galmudug_to_deploy_military_force_amid_deadly_clan_conflict_in_mudug.aspx)

The result was the formation of a joint peace committee and joint security structure aimed at identifying and mitigating security risks between the communities.<sup>132</sup>

On 10 June, deadly clashes over grazing land in rural areas between Abudwak and Herale towns between the Marehan and Dir clans claimed the lives of at least 50 people and injured more than 155.<sup>133</sup> In July, Marehan militias attacked government forces near Abudwak town while escorting two truckloads of weapons from Ethiopia. Twelve people were killed. The militias, reinforced by clan members, overpowered the government forces and seized the trucks, which reportedly contained DShK and PKM machine guns, AK-47 rifles, pistols, and ammunition.<sup>134</sup>

The smuggling and sourcing of guns and ammunition from Ethiopia, as well as the nature of the seizure, were shrouded in contradictory and conflicting information. It was unclear who purchased the weapons, who transported them to Somalia, or who ultimately owned them. Because of the legal and internal arms embargo implications, these uncertainties created tension among clans, Galmudug politicians, local communities, and government officials, as well as between the FGS and Ethiopia.<sup>135</sup>

Somalia accused Ethiopia of smuggling illegal arms to clans, and rumors suggested that the shipment may have been procured by the federal or Galmudug governments or by individuals affiliated with, or sanctioned by, the governments.<sup>136</sup>

The development came just months after the UNSC unanimously adopted a resolution lifting the arms embargo on Somalia in December 2023.<sup>137</sup> In a report in December 2024, the Heritage Institute for Policy Studies warned that the acquisition of such sophisticated and significant amount of weapons could trigger an arms race as rival clans would also be keen to bolster their weapon stockpile and even encourage them to loot government weapons. The report also warned that the arms could end up in the hands of al-Shabaab.<sup>138</sup>

In October, Somali state media reported that government forces, in coordination with international security partners, killed 59 al-Shabaab militants near Gerile and Awsweyne in the Galgudud and in the Hawadley area of Middle Shabelle. From the government's side, four soldiers lost their lives during the operation in eastern Galgudud.<sup>139</sup>

Government operations against al-Shabaab in October in Qeycad area of Galmudug state led to the killing of 15 militants.<sup>140</sup> Likewise, at least 47 al-Shabaab fighters were killed in a military operation in November by the national army and international security partners in Bidda Isse and Gerille, situated in Galmudug's Eldher district.<sup>141</sup>

132. <https://stabilityfund.so/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/GIS-Local-Reconciliation-DIGITAL-SPREAD1.pdf>

133. <https://www.voanews.com/a/dozens-dead-in-somalia-clan-clashes-/7650081.html>

134. <https://www.voanews.com/amp/killed-as-somali-troops-local-militias-clash/7700406.html>

135. Clan Militia in Central Somalia Seizes Cache of Illicit Arms Associated with President Mohamud's Allies," Horn Observer, July 16, 2024. <https://hornobserver.com/articles/2852/Clan-Militia-in-Central-Somalia-Seizes-Cache-of-Illicit-Arms-Associated-with-President-Mohamuds-Allies>.

136. Ethiopia Rejects Somali Smuggling Accusations amid Deteriorating Relations over Somaliland MoU," Hiiraan Online, 26 July, 2024. [https://www.hiiraan.com/news/4/2024/July/197265/ethiopia\\_rejects\\_somali\\_smuggling\\_accusations\\_amid\\_deteriorating\\_relations\\_over\\_somaliland\\_mou.aspx](https://www.hiiraan.com/news/4/2024/July/197265/ethiopia_rejects_somali_smuggling_accusations_amid_deteriorating_relations_over_somaliland_mou.aspx).

137. <https://press.un.org/en/2023/sc15511.doc.htm>

138. <https://heritageinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Tackling-the-Proliferation-of-Illicit-Weapons-1.pdf>

139. <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/59-al-shabaab-terrorists-4-soldiers-killed-in-military-operations-in-somalia/3355404>

140. <https://x.com/sntvnews1/status/1851925658277990435?t=DojZPk8cVwzKEOkvqT7pJQ&s=19>

141. <https://x.com/HarunMaruf/status/1590391535983812609?t=aO-zpd7vkI9PX2TF9f8XaQ&s=19>

Somalia's National Intelligence and Security Agency reported killing over 23 al-Shabaab fighters and the destruction of their vehicles in the same month in the Dharaarweyn area near Galdad. NISA did not clarify in the statement whether the militants were killed in an air strike or during a ground operation.<sup>142</sup>

## Hirshabelle

In May, the humanitarian situation was dire due to floods when the Beledweyne river burst its banks, displacing 42,600 people.<sup>143</sup>

Fierce clan clashes between government forces and al-Shabaab militants as well as an increase in inter-clan conflicts forced hundreds of villagers to flee their homes and seek safety in camps in Mogadishu.<sup>144</sup>

On 28 January, joint operations between Somali national forces and international security partners in Buq-Aqable, in the Hiiraan region, killed six al-Shabaab leaders.<sup>145</sup> Another six al-Shabaab fighters were killed in February in the Beera Yabal area of the Hiiraan region while assembling a bomb inside a house which detonated prematurely.<sup>146</sup>

In the same month, a joint military operation between the Somali government and international partners killed over 30 al-Shabaab fighters in the Jilib Marka area of the Middle Shabelle region.<sup>147</sup>

In November, al-Shabaab targeted an ATMIS convoy in the Lower Shabelle region killing at least five Ugandan soldiers.<sup>148</sup>

NISA Director Abdullahi Mohamed Ali (Sanbalolshe) initiated an anti-al-Shabaab campaign in Hiiraan in May during the inauguration of Ugas Yusuf Ugas Hassan Ugas Khalif as the chief of the Hawadle clan. The chief rallied clan militias in his hometown and in a fierce speech underscored the importance of collaboration between the government and the community to defeat al-Shabaab.<sup>149</sup>

Following months of clashes between the Hawadle and Abgaal clans in the Middle Shabelle area, Hiiraan Governor, Muse Salad Wehliye, along with Hirshabelle State Minister of Justice Mahad Beyle and the Somali armed forces officers, brokered a ceasefire.<sup>150</sup>

The two clans have clashed several times over land and other resources compromising unity in the fight against al-Shabaab.<sup>151</sup>

142. <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/over-23-al-shabaab-terrorists-killed-several-more-injured-during-operation-in-somalia/3392071>

143. "OCHA" Somalia: 2024 Gu (April to June) Season Floods Bi-Weekly Situation Report No. 3 - As of 30 May 2024

144. "Radio Ergo" Hirshabelle clan clashes force hundreds to flee to Mogadishu camps. Accessed at: <https://radioergo.org/en/2024/04/hirshabelle-clan-clashes-force-hundreds-to-flee-to-mogadishu-camps/>

145. <https://www.garoweonline.com/en/news/somalia/horjoogeyaal-ka-tirsan-as-oo-lagu-dilay-magaalada-buq-aqable>

146. [https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2024/Feb/194916/explosion\\_in\\_hiiraan\\_region\\_kills\\_six\\_al\\_shabaab\\_members\\_during\\_bomb\\_assembly.aspx](https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2024/Feb/194916/explosion_in_hiiraan_region_kills_six_al_shabaab_members_during_bomb_assembly.aspx)

147. <https://shabellemedia.com/suspected-us-airstrike-kills-at-least-30-al-shabaab-militants-in-somalia/>

148. See <https://halqabsi.com/2024/11/five-ugandan-soldiers-killed-in-al-shabaab/>

149. [https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2024/May/196267/ugas\\_yusuf\\_ugas\\_hassan\\_inaugurated\\_as\\_21st\\_clan\\_chief\\_of\\_the\\_hawadle\\_community.aspx](https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2024/May/196267/ugas_yusuf_ugas_hassan_inaugurated_as_21st_clan_chief_of_the_hawadle_community.aspx) 147.

150. hiiraan Governor Brokers Ceasefire in Deadly Inter-Clan Conflict," Hiiraan Online, 2 December, 2024. [https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2024/Dec/199167/hiiraan\\_governor\\_brokers\\_ceasefire\\_in\\_deadly\\_inter\\_clan\\_conflict.aspx](https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2024/Dec/199167/hiiraan_governor_brokers_ceasefire_in_deadly_inter_clan_conflict.aspx)

151. [https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2024/Dec/199167/hiiraan\\_governor\\_brokers\\_ceasefire\\_in\\_deadly\\_inter\\_clan\\_conflict.aspx?utm\\_source=dlvr.it&utm\\_medium=twitter](https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2024/Dec/199167/hiiraan_governor_brokers_ceasefire_in_deadly_inter_clan_conflict.aspx?utm_source=dlvr.it&utm_medium=twitter)

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There have been accusations that government arming clan militias against al-Shabaab could intentionally or inadvertently affect existing clan conflicts and could contribute to communal and resource based conflict among clans such as the Hawadle and Abgaal.<sup>152</sup>

Development projects in 2024 included the rehabilitation of the Sabun Dam as part of the Jowhar off-stream storage program<sup>153</sup> which was launched by an FGS delegation led by Deputy Prime Minister Salah Jama in the capital city of Hirshabelle.

## Jubaland

President Ahmed Mohamed Islam (Madobe) of Jubaland was re-elected for a third term on 25 November, following a controversial constitutional change which allowed him to run.

Tensions had simmered for months between President Mohamud and Madobe after he rejected the election framework and constitutional amendments advanced by the FGS President. President Ahmed Madobe conducted indirect elections in Kismayo. As expected he emerged the winner which the federal government rejected and issued an arrest warrant for Madobe, accusing him of treason.<sup>154</sup>

The tensions turned into violent clashes by December after federal government forces were airlifted to Raas Kambooni town in the Lower Jubba region. This resulted a firefight around Manaraani, approximately 30 kilometers from Raas Kambooni, and both sides accusing the other of provoking the fighting. Jubaland forces routed the FGS troops – and photos of them fleeing into neighboring Kenya, with others disarmed and surrendering went viral on social media.<sup>155</sup>

Amid the tensions, the federal government suspended all passenger flights to parts of Jubaland, including the interim capital Kismayo, leaving hundreds of passengers stranded at Mogadishu airport.<sup>156</sup> The Mogadishu-based opposition decried the government's ill-fated assault on Jubaland and accused it of taking a trigger happy approach and attitude to political and constitutional disagreements. Former prime ministers such as Hassan Khaire slammed the move as “regrettable”, highlighting the consequences on innocent citizens. The federal government also accused Ethiopia of supplying Madobe with weapons and accused the Jubaland leadership of collaborating with Ethiopia.<sup>157</sup>

Security incidents in Jubaland also involved the fight against al-Shabaab. In February, six Ethiopians and one Somali were killed in an overnight attack by al-Shabaab militants in the border town of Beled Hawo, which is near the Kenyan and Ethiopian borders. The Ethiopian victims were identified as Oromo migrants seeking employment opportunities there.<sup>158</sup> The attack came amid tensions caused by the Ethiopia-Somaliland MoU which has triggered widespread anti-Ethiopian sentiments.

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152. Somalia's Men in Sarongs Taking on Al-Shabab Militants.” BBC News, November 3, 2022. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-63486013>.

153. “Sonna” Acting PM Salah Ahmed Jama Visits Hirshabelle State for Dam Inauguration and Inspection Tour.

154. <https://www.africanews.com/2024/11/28/somalia-and-jubaland-issue-warrants-of-arrest-for-their-respective-leaders/>

155. <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/fighting-erupts-between-somalias-jubaland-region-federal-government-officials-2024-12-11/>

156. Somalia Suspends Kismayo Flights after Plane Commandeered, Escalating Federal Rift,” Hiiraan Online, 25 December, 2024. [https://www.hiiraan.com/news/4/2024/Dec/199524/somalia\\_suspends\\_kismayo\\_flights\\_after\\_plane\\_commandeered\\_escalating\\_federal\\_rift.aspx](https://www.hiiraan.com/news/4/2024/Dec/199524/somalia_suspends_kismayo_flights_after_plane_commandeered_escalating_federal_rift.aspx).

157. <https://somaliguadian.com/news/somalia-news/somalia-accuses-ethiopia-of-weapons-smuggling-for-fourth-time/>

158. <https://www.voanews.com/a/six-ethiopians-among-7-killed-in-attack-in-southwestern-somali-town/7471811.html>

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Over 50 Al-Shabaab militants were reportedly killed in February during joint military operations in the Lower Jubba region between federal government forces and Jubaland's Dervish paramilitary forces, according to Somalia's information ministry. Twenty al-Shabaab operatives were also detained while territories were reclaimed.<sup>159</sup>

Six Kenyan street vendors working in Dhobley were killed in March by al-Shabaab militants. The victims were selling plastic utensils in the border town.<sup>160</sup> Al-Shabaab has frequently targeted Kenyan security officials and civilians on both sides of the border.

A joint operation by Somali government forces and Jubaland state forces in June took control of Buulo-Haji, south of Kismayo, from al-Shabaab. The militant group has used the strategic town to launch attacks on FGS and Jubaland troops.<sup>161</sup>

In a statement released in June, the US military denied al-Shabaab's claims that two Cuban doctors were killed in a February 2024 air strike. The doctors, Assel Herrera and Landy Rodríguez, were abducted by al-Shabaab in Kenya in April 2019 and reportedly held in Somalia. Al-Shabaab alleged that a US air strike targeting Jilib, the group's main stronghold in southern Somalia, resulted in the doctors' deaths. The US Africa Command (AFRICOM), however, rejected the claim, stating that there was no evidence civilians were harmed in the strike.<sup>162</sup>

Jubaland also witnessed interclan clashes particularly in Luuq town in the Gedo region. The conflict was initially reported in February 2024 but was resolved following mediation efforts led by clan elders.<sup>163</sup> The clashes resumed in June and July after several weeks of fighting, resulting in clashes that killed 20 people and caused damage to property.<sup>164</sup> Three clans were involved in the fighting – Mareexaan, Macalin Weyne iyo Gabaaweyn – and media reports suggested that the security forces in the district sided with their respective clans instead of difusing the conflict.<sup>165</sup> In October, just days after mediation efforts by Jubaland leaders, the clashes were renewed.<sup>166</sup>

Jubaland was among the states most severely affected by the Gu' rainy season in April. Flash floods on 27 April inundated roads linking Dhobley and Afmadow districts, rendering them temporarily impassable and impacting an estimated 60,000 people. Local airstrips in both towns were also flooded, further hampering access to the area.<sup>167</sup>

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159. <https://www.garoweonline.com/en/news/somalia/at-least-50-al-shabaab-militants-killed-in-somalia>

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161. <https://shabellemedia.com/somali-government-forces-capture-key-town-in-jubaland-state/>

162. <https://www.voanews.com/a/afcom-denies-us-airstrike-killed-cuban-doctors/7652023.html>

163. [https://www.hiiraan.com/news/2025/Feb/wararka\\_maanta9-189286.htm](https://www.hiiraan.com/news/2025/Feb/wararka_maanta9-189286.htm)

164. <https://somaliguadian.com/news/somalia-news/death-toll-soars-as-fighting-in-somalias-luuq-town-enters-third-day/>

165. <https://www.goobjooge.net/taahfaahinta-dagaal-beeleed-ka-socda-degmada-luuq-iyo-ciidamo-oo-ku-kala-biiray/>

166. <https://www.voasomali.com/a/dagaal-beeleed-dib-uga-qarxay-degmada-luuq/7829235.html>

167. "OCHA". Somalia Situation Report, 30 Apr 2024. <http://unocha.org/publications/report/somalia/somalia-situation-report-30-apr-2024#:~:text=The%20worst%20affected%20are%20Jubaland,people%20in%20the%20two%20districts>. See "Relief Web" Somalia: Conflict in Luuq District, Jubaland State Flash Update No.1 (as of 23 October 2024)

## Puntland

Puntland re-inaugurated Said Abdullahi Deni as president on 26 January following a contested election and internal conflicts that had marred the political landscape throughout 2024.<sup>168</sup> Despite ongoing tensions, Deni's administration succeeded in incorporating opposition elements and calming political divisions within Puntland's executive authority.<sup>169</sup> The inauguration drew a broad audience of political figures, including federal and regional leaders who were largely focused on the recent Somaliland-Ethiopia MoU. President Deni used the occasion to announce plans for reconciliation meeting in Garowe to resolve disputes among Soamli leaders.<sup>170</sup>

On 31 March, Puntland rescinded its recognition of Somalia's federal administration,<sup>171</sup> a move spurred by recent constitutional amendments perceived as altering the political landscape without adequate consultation. This intensified existing tensions between the federal government and member states, as Puntland criticized the lack of consensus surrounding these modifications. The situation underscored ongoing debates regarding governance, regional representation, and the balance of political power within the federal system, contributing to a complex and contentious political environment in Somalia.<sup>172</sup> Puntland stated this withdrawal would last until the constitution is approved via a referendum.<sup>173</sup>

Inter-clan conflicts in the Mudug region that erupted in June resulted in widespread displacement and significant casualties, particularly between the Sacad (who reside in Galmudugside of Mudug) and Lelakase (from the Puntland side) clans. The violence stemmed from a dispute over a territorial dispute near the town of Saaxqurun and a newly dug water well in Jiicboor, Galdogob district, leading to deadly confrontations that affected local communities. Around 500 people were either killed or wounded from both clans. Approximately 970 families—over 5,820 individuals—were forced to flee, seeking refuge in neighboring villages under harsh conditions.<sup>174</sup> Eyewitness reports indicated extensive damage to infrastructure, with six civilians including three children confirmed killed during the clashes.<sup>175</sup>

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168. "OCHA". Somalia Situation Report, 30 Apr 2024. <http://unocha.org/publications/report/somalia/somalia-situation-report-30-apr-2024#:~:text=The%20worst%20affected%20are%20Jubaland,people%20in%20the%20two%20districts>. See "Relief Web" Somalia: Conflict in Luuq District, Jubaland State Flash Update No.1 (as of 23 October 2024)

169. Garowe Online. "Puntland President Inaugurated for Second Term as Somalia Rules out Dialogue with Ethiopia," January 25, 2024. <https://www.garoweonline.com/index.php/en/news/somalia/puntland-president-inaugurated-in-for-second-term-as-somalia-rules-out-dialogue-with-ethiopia>.

170. "President Said Deni Unveils Unity-Focused Cabinet." The Somali Digest, March 2024. <https://thesomalidigest.com/president-said-deni-unveils-unity-focused-cabinet/>.

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172. PUNTLAND OO KALSOONIDA KALA NOQOTAY DFS AYAA SHEEGTAY INAY U DHAAQMASO SIDII DOWLAD MADAX BANAAN; [https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=8&v=ErAri-5NTh8&embeds\\_referring\\_euri=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com%2Fsearch%3Fq%3Dpuntland%2Bkalsoonidii%2Bkala%2Bnoqotay%26client%3Dfirefox-b-e%26sca\\_esv%3D8bb619a2ead404d%26ei%3DVEYsaMn2F4WjkdU&source\\_ve\\_path=Mjg2NjY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=8&v=ErAri-5NTh8&embeds_referring_euri=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com%2Fsearch%3Fq%3Dpuntland%2Bkalsoonidii%2Bkala%2Bnoqotay%26client%3Dfirefox-b-e%26sca_esv%3D8bb619a2ead404d%26ei%3DVEYsaMn2F4WjkdU&source_ve_path=Mjg2NjY;); 30 March 2024

173. Puntland Rejects Federal Institutions in Election Reform Dispute"

174. Clan Clashes in Mudug Displace over 5,820 Individuals, UNHCR Reports," Hiiraan Online, 9 July, 2024. <https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2024/July/196996/Clan-clashes-in-mudug-displace-over-5-820-individuals-unhcr-reports.aspx>.

175. "Somalia: Dispute Over Constitutional Amendment and Increased al-Shabaab Attacks" <https://acleddata.com/2024/04/26/somalia-situation-update-april-2024-dispute-over-constitutional-amendment-and-increased-al-shabaab-attacks/>.

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Puntland said it was ready to launch an offense on the Islamic State bases in the mountainous Bari region near the Gulf of Aden. President Deni urged Somalis to support the government's campaign against terror groups.<sup>176</sup>

The president announced that Puntland will print its own currency in 2025, a move that will further worsen the relations with the FGS as currency printing is a federal government prerogative. Use of the Somali Shilling in Puntland was suspended in 2021 due to inflation and was replaced by the US dollar.<sup>177</sup>

The NCC met on 27 October without Puntland and Jubaland and three days later released a communiqué that included term extensions of FMS leaders. Prominent politicians in Mogadishu including former president Sharif Sheikh Ahmed and former Prime Minister Hassan Ali Khaire denounced the term extensions.<sup>178</sup> President Mohamud spoke after the NCC and said he was willing to meet with the Jubaland and Puntland leaders in order to reconcile.<sup>179</sup> He said the process of state-building requires everyone's contribution and effort including those who are in a position of authority and leadership.<sup>180</sup>

In November, the SSC-Khatumo administration accused Puntland of undermining its autonomy and governance. Khatumo described Puntland's action as unlawful interference with its internal affairs as it was jeopardizing humanitarian and development projects in the recently-established administration.<sup>181</sup>

A military court in Puntland sentenced six Moroccan nationals to death on terrorism charges. An Ethiopian and a Somali were also arrested at the same time and were both sentenced to 10 years in prison.<sup>182</sup> The operation was part of a broader crackdown on individuals affiliated with both the Daesh and al-Shabaab terror groups operating in Puntland. The military court also sentenced six people for their involvement in passing explosives to al-Shabaab.<sup>183</sup>

In July, two Daesh fighters surrendered to Puntland security forces in Bari region's Balidhidhin area. Following interrogation, the fighters claimed they had been trained specifically to fight against al-Shabaab.<sup>184</sup>

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176. "Intense Clan Conflict in West Mudug Displaces Over 5,820 Individuals"  
Intense Clan Conflict in West Mudug Displaces Over UNHCR - The UN Refugee Agency  
<https://data.unhcr.org/documents/download>.

177. Somalia's Puntland Announces Readiness for Offensive Against Extremist Groups, December 22, 2024. Accessed at: <https://www.garoweonline.com/en/news/somalia/somalia-s-puntland-announces-readiness-for-offensive-against-extremist-groups>

178. Somalia's Puntland Braces for Major Assault on Al-Shabaab, ISIS Militants, December 26, 2024. Accessed at: <https://www.garoweonline.com/en/news/somalia/somalia-s-puntland-braces-for-major-assault-on-al-shabaab-isis-militants>

179. Puntland to introduce own currency deepening rift with Somalia's government. December 21, 2024. Accessed at: <https://garoweonline.com/en/news/somalia/puntland-to-introduce-own-currency-deepening-rift-with-somalia-s-government>

180. Shariif, Kheyre & C/raxmaan C/shakuur oo ka horjeestay muddo kororsiga kasoobaxay madaxweyne Xasan Sheekh; 30 October 2024; <https://www.puntlandes.com/?p=109242>

181. Puntland & Jubaland Haddii ay naga ogolaadaan waan utageynaa' "Haddii ay noo yimaadaana waan baryeenaa."  
; <https://www.facebook.com/share/v/15wFzjU5wi/?mibextid=wwXlfr>

182. Somali Leader seeks to Reconcile with Puntland, Jubaland Amid Political Rift, October 31, 2024. Accessed at: <https://www.garoweonline.com/en/news/somalia/somalia-leader-seeks-to-reconcile-with-puntland-jubaland-amid-political-rift>

183. SSC Khatumo Accuses Puntland of Interference in Regional Affairs. Accessed at: <https://mustaqbalmedia.net/en/ssc-khatumo-accuses-puntland-of-interference-in-regional-affairs/>

184. <https://www.voanews.com/a/somali-military-court-sentences-six-moroccans-to-death-for-terrorism/7508355.html>

The two extremist groups have been competing for power and territory in their Bari and Sanaag mountainous hideouts (which straddles territories claimed by Puntland, Somaliland and Khatumo).

Piracy showed signs of resuming on the shores of Puntland while the illegal smuggling of weapons also proved to be a challenging issue for Puntland's security forces. In May, the Puntland Maritime Police Force said they had seized illegal weapons and dismantled a pirate network in the coastal town of Eyl, arresting eight pirates.<sup>185</sup> Other incidents involving Chinese, Yemeni and other foreign vessels have been reported. Once again the issue of illegal fishing came up as this is intertwined with piracy.<sup>186</sup>

In Gaalkacyo, several inmates escaped from a high-security prison in August including individuals suspected of collaborating with al-Shabaab. This incident occurred shortly after Puntland suspended the execution of al-Shabaab prisoners following increasing pressure from international human rights organizations calling for alternatives to capital punishment for young offenders. The escapees were later on recaptured.<sup>187</sup> Two weeks later, Puntland authorities executed 10 men convicted of being members of al-Shabaab. The convicts were charged with carrying out assassinations. Some of the recaptured escapees were among those executed.<sup>188</sup>

Also in August, five explosive “kamikaze” drones were intercepted. Puntland authorities bolstered security due to fears of al-Shabaab infiltration after the security forces arrested seven terror suspects along the Galkayo-Garowe road transporting the drones. The authorities also urged residents to be vigilant and report any suspicious activities.<sup>189</sup>

In September, three trucks carrying military supplies crossed into Puntland's Mudug region from the Somalia-Ethiopia border. Attempts by residents to seize the trucks, akin to what happened in Abduwaq months earlier, were thwarted by Puntland security forces. The Somali government issued a statement condemning Ethiopia for illegally smuggling the weapons as a violation of its sovereignty.<sup>190</sup> The incident took place as Turkish-led mediation efforts between Somalia and Ethiopia over the MoU with breakaway Somaliland were taking place in Ankara.

Sporadic clan-related conflicts continued in Puntland, especially in the second half of 2024. In December, two people were killed and several others injured in clashes in the Mudug region between two clans over control of a water well. Security sources said the violence began in Harfo district when one clan destroyed a well. In previous months, clashes between two neighboring clans, Leelkase and Sacad, living along the border between Puntland and Galmudug claimed dozens of lives.<sup>191</sup>

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185. <https://mustaqbalmedia.net/en/puntland-armed-forces-court-sentences-6-al-shabaab-members-in-bosaso/>

186. [https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2024/July/196984/two\\_daesh\\_isis\\_militants\\_surrender\\_to\\_puntland\\_forces\\_in\\_bari\\_region.aspx](https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2024/July/196984/two_daesh_isis_militants_surrender_to_puntland_forces_in_bari_region.aspx)

187. <https://mustaqbalmedia.net/en/somalia-puntland-authorities-disrupt-suspected-piracy-network-seize-illegal-weapons-and-vessel/>

188. The Roots of Somalia's Slow Piracy Resurgence; 7 July 2024; <https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/horn-africa/somalia/roots-somalias-slow-piracy-resurgence>

189. <https://www.radiodalsan.com/somalia-al-shabaab-death-row-inmates-escape-from-prison/>

190. <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/somalia-s-puntland-executes-10-al-shabaab-terrorists-by-firing-squad/3306665>

191. <https://www.garoweonline.com/en/news/somalia/somalia-s-puntland-intercepts-suicide-drones-arrest-terror-suspects>

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The Daesh terrorist group, which have for years solidified its presence in the mountainous areas of Puntland's Bari region, become a security threat throughout Puntland and in Bosaso – the port city and business capital of the state. Daesh intensified their extortion of businesses.<sup>192</sup>

In response, authorities in Puntland commenced operations against the group aimed at dismantling its mountainous hideouts. In December, the Deputy Speaker of Parliament, Mohamed Shire, narrowly survived an attack by the group in Dharjaale, Bari region, after Daesh targeted a base housing Shire and his troops with a suicide bombing. At least eight foreign Daesh fighters were killed during the operation to repel the attack, but casualties among Puntland forces were unverified. A UN report in November estimated the group's strength at 600-700 fighters, with a significant number of foreign operatives.<sup>193</sup>

In May the heavy rains during the Gu' season caused floods that destroyed the Qalqalooc bridge between Garowe and Sinujiif.<sup>194</sup> Flash floods on 11 May displaced some 1,608 people (268 households) from the Khayrdoon displacement site in Bacadweyn town, according to the State Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management (MoHADM) and the local authorities.<sup>195</sup>

Separately, the Ministry of Health reported that the recorded number of AWD/cholera cases had reached 2,041 with 72 deaths since the beginning of the year.<sup>196</sup> Garowe was the most affected district with a total of 885 cases and 25 deaths; Bossaso had 611 cases and 21 deaths; Qardho had 314 cases and 23 deaths; and parts of Sanaag region had 176 cases and 2 deaths.<sup>197</sup>

## Somaliland

In January, Somaliland's defense minister Abdiqani Mohamud Ateye announced his resignation in protest of the controversial sea access-for-recognition agreement between President Muse Bihi and the Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed. Abdiqani hails from the area where Ethiopia wanted to set up a naval base and port. Abdiqani denounced the deal, describing Ethiopia as an "enemy".<sup>198</sup>

On 8 January, the Senate of Somaliland, known as the Guurti, approved electoral legislation aimed at breaking a longstanding deadlock between the opposition and President Bihi. The amendments were designed to grant the Somaliland electoral commission the authority to determine and announce election dates for the president, vice president, and national parties. However, shortly after this development, tensions within the electoral body escalated, further complicating the electoral process in Somaliland.<sup>199</sup>

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192. "Islamic State-Somalia: A Growing Global Terror Concern." Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, September 11, 2024. <https://ctc.westpoint.edu/islamic-state-somalia-a-growing-global-terror-concern/>.

193. <https://mustaqbalmedia.net/en/puntland-forces-seize-trucks-carrying-weapons-from-ethiopia-amid-border-tensions/>

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195. <https://somaliguadian.com/news/somalia-news/somalia-puntland-deputy-speaker-of-parliament-escapes-isis-attack-as-region-braces-for-major-offensive/>

196. See "Puntland Post" DAADAD JARAY BUUNDADA QALQALOOC EE U DHAXAYSA GAROOWE IYO SINUJIIF IYO GAADIID KU XANIBAN. Accessed at: <https://puntlandpost.net/2024/05/06/daadad-jaray-buundada-qalqalooc-ee-u-dhaxaysa-garoowe-iy-sinujiif-iy-gaadiid-ku-xaniban/>

197. See "UNOCHA" SOMALIA: 2024 Gu (April to June) Season Floods Bi - Weekly Situation Report No. 3

198. Ibid.

199. Ibid.

## State of Somalia 2024

On 21 April, President Bihi issued a directive expressing support for the electoral commission's timeline and the National Electoral Commission released the scheduled for November general elections in Somaliland. The commitment to these elections marked a crucial step in consolidating the democratic framework within Somaliland, amidst ongoing political dynamics and challenges.<sup>200</sup>

A recent report from Somaliland police claimed that over 28,000 crimes were committed in 2024 including homicides, sexual assaults and abandoned children. The data highlighted high levels of violence including 68 murders and 321 sexual assaults, raising concerns about crime rates.<sup>201</sup>

President Bihi announced on 26 June that the upcoming elections would use iris scanning technology, despite opposition from the political opposition. He emphasized that the biometric system would ensure the integrity of the elections and prevent multiple voting. The opposition, however, expressed concerns that the introduction of this technology might delay the elections. The president affirmed that the necessary funds were available and the system would be implemented.<sup>202</sup>

In a significant legislative development, Somaliland announced in July 2024 its decision to replace the Somali Penal Code, which had been in use since 1991. During a Cabinet meeting, the Minister of Parliamentary Relations and Constitutional Affairs, Abdinassir Muhumed Buuni, introduced a new penal code tailored to Somaliland's legal and societal context. The proposed law aims to be more accessible and reflective of current realities including provisions on cybercrime, social media offenses and mobile money-related crimes.

In a subsequent interview, Buuni noted that the new framework would be enforced by the courts once it receives final approval from the House of Representatives. The previous code, dating back to 1960, has been widely criticized as outdated and inadequate for addressing contemporary legal challenges.<sup>203</sup>

Somaliland opposition leader, Abdirahman Mohamed Abdullahi (Irro), won the presidential election with a landslide of 64% to become the sixth president since Somaliland seceded from Somalia in 1991. No country has recognized Somaliland as an independent nation.<sup>204</sup> To attract international recognition, Somaliland is considering offering the US a military base in Berbera in exchange for recognition. Berbera is located at a critical edge of the Red Sea, and some experts say that Donald Trump may recognize Somaliland as an independent nation.<sup>205</sup> In response, FGS hired a US lobbying firm, BGR Group.<sup>206</sup>

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200. "Somaliland Defense Minister Resigns in Protest Over Deal With Ethiopia" <https://www.voafrica.com/a/somaliland-defense-minister-resigns-in-protest-over-deal-with-ethiopia/7432281.html>.

201. See "Somaliland: Electoral Law gets approved by upper House" <https://www.somalidispach.com/latest-news/somaliland-electoral-law-gets-approved-by-upper-house/>.

202. See "Somaliland Sets Date For Dual Elections On Nov. 13" <https://www.horndiplomat.com/2024/04/21/somaliland-sets-date-for-dual-elections-on-nov-13/>.

203. See "Somaliland Police Report Highlights Surge in Serious Crime" <https://halqabsi.com/2024/10/somaliland-police-report-highlights/>.

204. See "Somaliland to deploy iris biometric equipment donated by Taiwan for November polls" <https://www.biometricupdate.com/202410/somaliland-to-deploy-iris-biometric-equipment-donated-by-taiwan-for-november-polls>.

205. See "Somaliland replaces 33-year-old Somali penal code" [https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2024/July/197044/somaliland\\_replaces\\_33\\_year\\_old\\_somali\\_penal\\_code.aspx](https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2024/July/197044/somaliland_replaces_33_year_old_somali_penal_code.aspx).

206. See. Somaliland opposition leader wins presidential election, November 19, 2024. Accessed at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cpvzxcg3n3dmo>

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A high level delegation from Taiwan attended Irro's inauguration ceremony which the government of China vehemently condemned. China praised the FGS for upholding the one-China principle and reaffirmed its support for Somalia's sovereignty and territorial integrity.<sup>207</sup>

Irro called for dialogue to resolve ongoing violent conflicts with the SSC-Khatumo administration. He emphasized his government's determination to have an unconditional peace process and dialogue with the administration. The UN reported that around 43,000 people were displaced and several people including children were killed in a recent confrontation in Erigabo City.<sup>208</sup>

Traditional leaders from SSC Khatumo met with a peace delegation from the Somali Regional State of Ethiopia in Las Anod, the capital city of the SSC-Khatumo administration. The peace delegation's visit followed a message delivered by Somaliland's newly elected leader which expressed his readiness for dialogue in order to resolve tensions and disagreements through peaceful means. Irro's approach was a departure from the confrontational policies adopted by Bihi.<sup>209</sup>

Somaliland made huge headlines when Bihi signed an MoU with Ethiopia's leader Abiy Ahmed leasing 20 kilometers of seacoast in exchange for recognition. In the aftermath of the MoU, Somalia signed an agreement with Turkey permitting the deployment of Turkish naval forces in Somalia's waters. Somaliland cautioned Turkey against "incorporating" its territories into the deployment, asserting that such actions would breach international law and infringe upon its claimed sovereignty.<sup>210</sup>

In July, Somaliland authorities arrested two men in Borama, Awdal region, on charges of spying for the federal government with Somaliland accusing the two of plotting assassinations to incite unrest in the area. The federal government did not comment on the arrests, which occurred amid tensions in the region over the MoU.<sup>211</sup>

## SSC-Khatumo

Tensions between Somaliland and SSC Khatumo persisted throughout 2024. In October 2023, SSC Khatumo, a territory claimed by the breakaway Somaliland and loosely connected to Puntland, had its transitional administration recognized by the Somali government.<sup>212</sup> On 1 May, SSC Khatumo raised alarm bells about a looming attack by Somaliland after the latter deployed forces to the Oog front. SSC-K accused President Muse Bihi's administration of inciting violence against SSC Khatumo civilians.<sup>213</sup>

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207. Somaliland Offers to Host US Military Base for Recognition, December 31, 2024. Accessed at: <https://somalilandsun.com/somaliland-offers-to-host-us-military-base-for-recognition/>

208. Somalia hires lobbyists, prepares for more combative Trump era, December 20, 2024. Accessed at: <https://www.theafricareport.com/372106/somalia-hires-lobbyists-prepares-for-more-combative-trump-era/>

209. China Condemns Taiwan's Presence at Somaliland Inauguration, Reaffirms One-China Policy, December 12, 2024. Accessed at: <https://mogadishu24.com/china-condemns-taiwans-presence-at-somaliland-inauguration-reaffirms-one-china-policy/>

210. Somaliland President Calls for dialogue to end conflicts in Sool and Sanaag regions, December 22, 2024. Accessed at: [https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2024/Dec/199476/somaliland\\_president\\_calls\\_for\\_dialogue\\_to\\_end\\_conflicts\\_in\\_sool\\_and\\_sanaag\\_regions.aspx?utm\\_source=hiiraan&utm\\_medium=SomaliNewsUpdateFront](https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2024/Dec/199476/somaliland_president_calls_for_dialogue_to_end_conflicts_in_sool_and_sanaag_regions.aspx?utm_source=hiiraan&utm_medium=SomaliNewsUpdateFront)

211. Somaliland and SSC Khaatumo Leaders Signal Readiness for Peace Talks, December 30, 2024. Accessed at: <https://somalimagazine.so/somaliland-and-ssc-khaatumo-leaders-signal-readiness-for-peace-talks/>

212. <https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2024/07/somaliland-warns-against-turkeys-naval-deployment-somalias-coast>

213. [https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2024/July/197307/somaliland\\_arrests\\_alleged\\_somali\\_intelligence\\_agents\\_in\\_borama\\_town.aspx#:~:text=%22We%20have%20captured%20a%20group,wanted%2C%22%20the%20statement%20read.](https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2024/July/197307/somaliland_arrests_alleged_somali_intelligence_agents_in_borama_town.aspx#:~:text=%22We%20have%20captured%20a%20group,wanted%2C%22%20the%20statement%20read.)

## State of Somalia 2024

Tensions between Somaliland and SSC Khatumo continued to simmer even after the election of Somaliland's new president, Abdirahman Mohamed Abdullahi (Irro), in November. Tensions escalated into clashes in the town of Ceerigaabo, in the Sanaag region, between Somaliland forces and militia reportedly aligned with SSC-Khaatumo. The multi-clan city had enjoyed 30 years of relative equilibrium, with communities from Somaliland, SSC Khatumo, and Puntland all coexisting and all laying claim to governance of their sections of the ancient city.

The violence coincided with the announcement of the newly-formed cabinet by Somaliland, which included individuals from the SSC Khatumo region. Both sides accused each other of starting the conflict.<sup>214</sup> The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) reported that the conflict in Ceerigaabo has displaced around 43,000 people and killed many others. The FGS urged an immediate ceasefire and the end of hostilities between Somaliland forces and SSC-Khatumo fighters, calling for dialogue and peace.<sup>215</sup>

Attempts to find solutions for the protracted conflict took place when traditional leaders from SSC Khatumo met with a peace delegation from Ethiopia's Somali Regional State in Las Anod. The delegation delivered a message from Somaliland's newly elected leadership, which according to the delegation, indicated Somaliland's readiness for dialogue.<sup>216</sup>

The Somali Immigration and Citizenship Agency (ICA) opened its eighth branch office in Las Anod, the capital city of SSC Khatumo, in August. ICA authorities said this new office would provide essential services to the SSC-Khatumo people including passport applications and other immigration-related services.<sup>217</sup>

## Southwest

On 14 February, seven al-Shabaab leaders and other militants were killed during a joint military operation conducted by the Somali army and international partners in the village of Ugunji, near Janale town in the Lower Shabelle region. Among those killed were senior figures responsible for crucial portfolios including the official in charge of money collection.<sup>218</sup>

Later in the same month, a similar operation targeted al-Shabaab gatherings in Kuntu Waarey district, Lower Shabelle, and Galcad town, Galguduud, killing at least 15 militants and injuring over 20 others. Key militant figures were among the casualties.<sup>219</sup> In March, a US air strike in al-Shabaab controlled territories in southwest state killed three of its leaders in Ugunji.<sup>220</sup>

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In March, further air strikes killed nearly 40 al-Shabaab militants during joint military operations between the Somali government and international partners in the villages of Baldooska and Baghdad, located in the Lower Shabelle region about 30 kilometers north of Mogadishu. Media reports suggested that Turkish drones conducted the airstrikes and that at least 22 civilians were among the casualties.<sup>221</sup>

Ten al-Shabaab militants surrendered to NISA in Baidoa in April. The defectors cited poor living conditions in areas controlled by militants and the offer of amnesty as reasons for their defection.<sup>222</sup>

In Hantiwadaag village of the Lower Shabelle region, a raid by Danab forces targeting al-Shabaab in early April resulted in the deaths of four militants, including a man identified only as Zubeir who was in charge of the group's security operations in the area.<sup>223</sup>

Another operation in April by the Somali army forces supported by the Macawiisley targeting al-Shabaab killed at least five militants. The operation was carried out on the road connecting the Bulaburte and Halgan districts in the Hiiraan region along the Wareertire mountains as militants were planning to launch an attack against Macawiisley clan fighters.<sup>224</sup>

Southwest experienced significant security challenges throughout 2024. Al-Shabaab still controls swathes of land despite sporadic anti-terror operations targeting the group. In a controversial move, the FGS announced a complete withdrawal of Ethiopia forces at the end of the ATMIS mandate on 31 December. State officials argued that such withdrawal could create a dangerous security vacuum.<sup>225</sup>

Joint operations between the Somali army and international partners killed Mohamed Mire, a top Al-Shabaab leader, near Kunyo Barrow in the Lower Shabelle region. The government described him as an “illegal extortion collector and militia mobilizer.”<sup>226</sup>

Dr. Elmi Mohamud Noor, the Minister of Public Works, Reconstruction, and Housing, signed an agreement with the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) for a comprehensive 15-month project agreement to assess and design an efficient drainage system for Baidoa. The project is expected to address issues related to the city's drainage system and contribute to its resilience against flooding and other water-related issues.<sup>227</sup>

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August 2025