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Briefing Notes Summary

Group 62 – Information Centre for Asylum and Migration

Somalia July to December 2025

31 December 2025

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21 July 2025

Hiiraan region: fighting and displacement

According to media reports, Al-Shabaab fighters captured the town of Tardo on 13 July 2025, shortly after taking the town of Moqokori and neighbouring villages in the central Somali region of Hiiraan. Moqokori is located at an important transport hub, while Tardo serves, among other things, as a supply depot for government units and clan militias cooperating with them. Both cities are therefore considered strategically important in the Hiiraan region, which has been the scene of intense fighting since early 2025. 12,500 families have fled Tardo and 1,130 families have fled Moqokori. The humanitarian situation among the displaced persons is tense and is deteriorating rapidly due to fighting, which is restricting the supply of essential relief goods.¹

28 July 2025

Al-Shabaab expands territorial control

The Islamist group al-Shabaab has expanded its control in the Hiiraan region (see BN dated 29 May and 21 July 2025). Most recently, it captured the town of Mahas on 27 July 2025. It is also moving closer to Mogadishu. According to al-Shabaab, more than 60 people were killed in the fighting for Mahas on the side of the Somali military and its allied clan militias. According to media reports, al-Shabaab has now regained control of approximately 90% of the territories that the group last controlled until the Somali and Ethiopian offensive in 2022–2023. Some of the reasons for this are said to lie in the shortcomings of the Somali government. These include, for example, the decline in international support, tensions between the federal government and the governments of individual states, and political tensions within the federal government itself. This is said to be preventing it from effectively containing al-Shabaab. More than 13,000 families have fled other cities in Hiiraan (see BN dated 21 July 2025). No information is available on the latest developments.²

11 August 2025

Security situation

In the absence of a stronger federal government with a central monopoly on the use of force, extremist groups such as al-Shabaab have been able to grow and expand again in the last two years, according to some media reports in the country (see BN of 21 July 2025 and 28 July 2025). Recently, however, the government, with the help of its allies, has stepped up its crackdown on al-Shabaab in some areas. During a four-day military operation in the Lower Shabelle region last week, between 50 and 70 al-Shabaab members were killed and several of their posts destroyed. The operation was carried out by the Somali National Army with international support from the AUSSOM stabilisation mission. They have also been able to push al-Shabaab back from some areas in Middle Shabelle and Hiiraan. In addition, the Somali intelligence service NISA killed five al-Shabaab members in Lower Shabelle, while the Somali army killed three members of the group in the Mudug region and another member, a bomb maker with an important role in the Bay region. The Somali government is expecting further reinforcements from Djibouti, with whose government it has signed an agreement to send more Djiboutian troops to Somalia.

In recent years, the Somali federal government has been working to limit the capabilities of terrorist groups by other means as well. These include the Counter-Terrorism Law of 2023, the expansion of the scope of action of the Financial Reporting Centre of the Central Bank of Somalia to, for example, block bank accounts or mobile phone numbers suspected of having links to al-Shabaab, and the recently announced launch of a nationwide identity card system.³

Drought in the north

On 22 July 2025, the government of the quasi-independent Somaliland region in north-western Somalia declared a humanitarian emergency due to persistent dry weather conditions. According to media reports, between 100,000 and several million people in the region are believed to be affected by food and water shortages as a result of several years of rainfall deficits. Important pastures and wells have dried up and grazing animals, which are the livelihood of most people in the region, have already died. The situation is similar in Puntland in north-eastern Somalia. The authorities there called for humanitarian aid on 2 August 2025. The number of internally displaced persons due to this situation, but also due to armed conflicts, currently stands at 3.6 million.⁴

Formation of a new member state and federal tensions

According to media reports, relations between the federal government of Somalia and the governments of individual member states or autonomous or semi-autonomous regions are tense. This is reflected firstly in the establishment of a new member state by the federal government at the end of July 2025. English-language online newspapers have so far referred to this as the "North East State" or "Northeastern State"; the constituent assembly at the level of the new member state has adopted the name "Waqooyi Bari", or alternatively "Waqooyibari". The member state encompasses areas claimed by Puntland and Somaliland, with the result that neither recognises the new administrative realities of the federal government. Secondly, from 24 July to 31 July 2025, units of the Somali National Army and the Jubaland military fought for control of the town of Balad Hawo and other areas in the Gedo region. Both governments claim Gedo. The federal government's military has now regained control of Balad Hawo. The armed conflict claimed dozens of civilian and military casualties. Thousands of people have fled to Mandera in neighbouring Kenya. Thirdly, tensions have been fuelled by the seizure of a cargo ship by the Puntland coast guard. According to the Puntland government, the ship was transporting undeclared military equipment. According to the Somali federal government, however, the cargo consisted of equipment for a Turkish military base and goods for Somali traders. Fourthly, a minister of the Somaliland government has called on the UN to impose a new arms embargo on the Somali military. The Somali federal government is arming the newly founded member state in the Lasanod region, which is also claimed by Somaliland. This is disrupting peace and the sovereignty of Somaliland.⁵

18 August 2025

Security situation

According to reports from the media and the Somali federal government, the Somali National Army, with international support, continued its fighting against al-Shabaab last week after the latter had been able to expand

its control in the previous months (see BN of 21 July, 28 July and 11 August 2025). For example, eleven al-Shabaab members were reportedly killed in targeted military operations in the regions of Hiiran, Middle Shabelle and Galguduud. In addition, on 16 August, they reportedly killed senior al-Shabaab member Hussein Moallim Hassan in the Bakool region. Hassan had been active in the group for over 15 years and had played a central role in carrying out several terrorist attacks throughout the country. The army also killed Hussein Macalin Hassan, who had been involved in the forced recruitment of minors for al-Shabaab. Other members of the group, some of them important, were also killed by the Somali army, in some cases with the support of the US Africa Command and AUSSOM. For its part, the Puntland army was able to dismantle an important Islamic State (IS) base in the Bari region, which was located in difficult terrain. This base had been the starting point for several attacks and had been in use since 2016.⁶

01 September 2025

Security situation in Puntland

According to media and military reports, the US military's Africa Command (AFRICOM) carried out a series of air strikes on Islamic State (IS) bases in the Al-Miskaad mountains of Puntland in the days around 23 August 2025. This marked the end of a two-week operation against IS in the region, which was part of an intensified US military campaign against terrorist groups in Somalia that began in 2025. On 23 August 2025, ground fighting also broke out between IS and Puntland units in Al-Miskaad, with the latter suffering casualties. Nevertheless, this was an important success in Puntland's latest efforts to drive out the terrorist group. Somali media and the Puntland police are already reporting a victory, or at least a foreseeable victory, over IS in the Al-Miskaad mountains. IS members of various nationalities had been hiding in the area, which is difficult for ground forces to access. From there, the group repeatedly carried out attacks in Puntland.⁷

08 September 2025

Security situation

According to media and military reports, Somali intelligence services, with international support, killed at least twelve members of al-Shabaab in the central Somali region of Galguduud last week. Thirteen other members of the Islamist group were reportedly injured and detained. In the Puntland region of Bari, military operations against IS are continuing (see BN of 1 September 2025). From 31 August to 2 September, the US military carried out further air strikes against IS posts, this time in the Golis Mountains. Media reports citing US military intelligence indicated that the cleared IS posts provided insight into the extensive financial network that the group had built up in Puntland. Their activities ranged from illegal gold mining and arms trafficking to trading in real estate and livestock. IS is also said to have collected an estimated USD 100,000 per month through extortion and illegal taxes. On 4 September 2025, al-Shabaab attacked American units stationed at Kismayo airport. Al-Shabaab cited US support for Israel in the Gaza war as the reason for the attack. There were no injuries or fatalities.⁸

22 September 2025

Security situation

According to media and military reports, the Somali National Armed Forces, with international support, have killed several members of the Islamist group al-Shabaab in recent weeks. This has happened in various regions, including more than 70 members in Galguduud and a senior member in Lower Shabelle. There have also been casualties on the Somali military side. A clan elder from the Sanaag region was also the target of an air strike by the American unit AFRICOM. According to AFRICOM, he was an al-Shabaab arms dealer; according to his relatives, he was an innocent bystander. The Puntland police are now investigating the case.

In recent months, the Somali federal government has been able to expand the support it receives from African states. Following the recent deployment of additional Djiboutian troops and an Eswatini police unit for the African Union Stabilisation Mission in Somalia (AUSSOM) (see BN of 11 August 2025), media reports indicate that Egyptian troops are also expected to arrive in Somalia this week. In August 2024, government representatives from Egypt and Somalia signed a protocol on military cooperation. This was followed in January 2025 by a joint declaration

providing for cooperation in the fight against terrorism, for example in the form of armament, special training or information exchange. The Egyptian troops are to operate in Somalia as part of AUSSOM and be stationed in the Middle Shabelle and Lower Shabelle regions, where al-Shabaab has been active for years. However, one reason for the timing of the Egyptian-Somali cooperation is also the shared mistrust of Ethiopia. At the beginning of September 2025, Ethiopia commissioned a dam on the Blue Nile that was criticised by Egypt, and at the beginning of 2024, it sought cooperation with Somaliland that was criticised by the Somali federal government (see BN of 01.07.24).⁹

Parliamentary elections 2026

According to media reports, the views of the federal government and the opposition are currently divided on the amendment of the general electoral law in 2026. In the previous electoral model, the heads of government of the member states elected the members of parliament together with the clan elders. This electoral model also provided for the division of parliamentary seats into four equal shares for the four largest clans and half a share for minorities. Jubaland, Puntland and other member states have rejected the change to the electoral law. Nevertheless, voter registration began in April 2025. According to the Somali federal government, the population supports the new electoral system, and 54 political parties have already registered to stand for election.¹⁰

29 September 2025

Confrontation between opposition-aligned assembly and state security forces

According to media reports, a confrontation took place in Mogadishu on 24 September 2025 between state security forces and opposition supporters at their assembly in front of a police station. Former President Sharif Sheikh Ahmed also took part in the assembly and was detained for several hours the following day along with two other participants. According to the opposition, security forces fired on the crowd and attempted to assassinate the former president. Their organisation accused the Somali federal government of illegal constitutional changes, corruption, human rights violations and negligence in the fight against al-Shabaab. According to the police and the Somali federal government, however, some people at the gathering were carrying weapons and attempted to storm the police station. They claimed that those gathered were breaking the law, endangering the safety of the civilian population and casting doubt on the political stability of the country.

Protests of this kind have been occurring repeatedly in Mogadishu since August 2025 due to the forced eviction of several properties in the capital. According to media reports, the properties are inhabited by tens of thousands of people and consist mainly of poor settlements. Government security forces had demolished the buildings, in some cases without warning, thereby risking personal injury. Opposition figures described the Somali government's actions as an abuse of power and a "land grab" of both state and private property and called for protests; The government, on the other hand, stated that the state property and land in question, which had been illegally occupied since 1991, was unsightly in the capital and posed a security risk that could be exploited by terrorist groups. The evictions were legal.¹¹

Security situation

According to reports from the Somali federal government and the press, the government, with the support of its allies, achieved some successes against al-Shabaab last week. For example, three senior al-Shabaab leaders were killed in fighting in Moqokori in the central Hiiraan region, and four more members of the Islamist group were killed in Galguduud between 20 and 21 September.

In recent months, the Puntland military and its allies have also stepped up their efforts against IS and its posts in the mountainous regions of the state (see BN of 1 September 2025). According to media reports, this led to the dispersal of IS in Puntland, with some members of the group fleeing and hiding in the mountains. A highly decorated commander of the Puntland military was killed in the fighting last week.¹²

Humanitarian situation

According to recent reports from various development organisations, the humanitarian situation in Somalia is deteriorating. This is due to critical funding gaps in programmes supporting populations affected by poverty, displacement and hunger. According to one organisation, 1.7 million of the estimated 6 million people in need

received assistance in August 2025. In the previous year, however, funds were available for approximately 2.2 million people per month. The humanitarian crisis is having the greatest impact on internally displaced persons, women, children and other vulnerable groups.¹³

13 October 2025

Security situation

According to media reports, on 04.10.25 al-Shabaab attacked a remand centre in Mogadishu where members of the terrorist group, among others, are being held and interrogated. Several of its members, presumably including some prisoners and security officers, were killed in the fighting. Al-Shabaab was able to enter Mogadishu unhindered in unmarked vehicles bearing the emblem of the Somali intelligence service NISA and thus carry out the attack. The occupants of the vehicle were also wearing intelligence service uniforms. According to the government, this security breach will soon be closed by new guidelines. These guidelines prohibit the use of military clothing, symbols or colours outside of authorised military operations.

The media and the government report that various members of al-Shabaab have been arrested since the beginning of October. The Somali military, together with African Union security forces, arrested two members in Lower Shabelle. In South West State, twelve members surrendered to the security forces. Al-Shabaab was also successfully expelled from the regionally important city of Awdhegale and other locations in Lower Shabelle. Lower Shabelle is considered one of Somalia's most important regions due to its irrigation systems and agricultural productivity, as well as its infrastructure, which connects Kismayo and Mogadishu, among other places. Al-Shabaab has its strongest presence there, as do the Somali military, American forces and those of the African Union.¹⁴

Humanitarian situation

According to reports from international organisations and the government, the humanitarian crisis in Somalia continues to worsen. In addition to the ongoing drought, conflict-related displacement and the resulting high number of internally displaced persons who are dependent on state or international support, the lack of funding for aid programmes is also to blame. International support therefore continues to dwindle (see BN 11.08. and 29.09.25). On 4 October 2025, for example, one of the UN agencies stated that, due to funding gaps, it was no longer able to provide emergency aid to more than a third of the Somali population it normally supports. Millions of people are threatened by hunger and malnutrition. Organisations are calling for urgent support in financing the programmes. The government and representatives of various member states have discussed the situation.¹⁵

20 October 2025

Humanitarian situation

According to reports, the Somali federal government submitted a request for financial assistance amounting to several million US dollars to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) at the beginning of October 2025. If approved, the requested amount will extend the existing IMF Extended Credit Facility (ECF) from the Poverty Reduction and Growth Trust (PRGT) of 2023. It would then bridge the financing gap caused by cuts in foreign aid, as well as the additional needs in the development sector caused by drought and conflict, and support the economic reform programme. In some places, medical facilities have ceased operations due to lack of funding (see BN dated 11 August, 29 September and 13 October 2025). For example, the organisation Save the Children had operated 128 facilities in Somalia, 47 of which had to close in March 2025. In other facilities, staff continue to work, albeit without pay. The health sector in Somalia is dependent on foreign support, with American funding by far the largest. The cuts in American aid have also been accompanied by a reduction in aid from other countries, such as Germany and the United Kingdom. The closure of health facilities is increasing the pressure on the remaining hospitals.¹⁶

Political tensions

According to media reports, the Somali federal government is using the heightened security measures following the al-Shabaab attack on a detention centre in Mogadishu (see BN of 13 October 2025) to tighten control over opposition figures and former military personnel suspected of having links to them. On 15 October 2025 and in the week before, security forces searched the homes of former commanders and seized firearms, armoured vehicles

and other equipment. However, this equipment is available for their personal protection, which is necessary in some cases, for example to be prepared for retaliatory attacks by al-Shabaab. The opposition criticised the measures and accused the government of endangering political rivals in the run-up to the elections. It also organised further demonstrations against the government's mismanagement. In particular, it criticises the allegedly unlawful confiscation of land in Mogadishu (see BN of 29 September 2025), the negligence towards al-Shabaab, which has led to its extensive territorial expansion (see BN of 28 July 2025), and the approach taken to introducing the new electoral model (see BN of 22 September 2025). The latter provides for universal suffrage, but has not been agreed with the governments of the federal states and is therefore meeting with their rejection. Meanwhile, the government's electoral commission registered almost one million voters in the capital region of Banaadir last week. Observers believe that the growing political divide in Somalia poses a serious threat to the country's internal stability. It also undermines the government's credibility abroad, for example when seeking international support.¹⁷

Security situation

According to media reports, the Somali military continues to crack down on al-Shabaab with increased support from local allies and international forces. In Lower Shabelle, it had destroyed several al-Shabaab posts and equipment by 14 October 2025. In Hiraan, Macawisley's allies killed a high-ranking al-Shabaab leader. In contrast, at least seven military personnel defected to al-Shabaab in Galmudug.

Furthermore, Puntland security forces continued to take action against remaining IS members in Puntland (see BN of 1 September 25). For example, a member of Turkish nationality was arrested on 15 October 25.¹⁸

03 November 2025

Security situation

According to media reports, AFRICOM successfully carried out air strikes against al-Shabaab in southern Somalia and against IS in the mountains of Puntland at the beginning of last week. The Puntland military is also continuing its ground offensive against the remaining and now scattered IS and al-Shabaab members in the federated state. In Middle Shabelle, local security forces killed a high-ranking al-Shabaab member. He was a commander of regional al-Shabaab units. In the South West State, three al-Shabaab fighters surrendered to state security forces. In contrast, at the end of last week, al-Shabaab attacked a group of Turkish nationals and their Somali bodyguards in the Banaadir capital region. They were in the process of exploring natural resource deposits.¹⁹

Humanitarian situation

According to reports from international organisations, the humanitarian situation in Somalia remains tense (see BN of 20 November 2025). New calculations confirm that approximately 1.7 million people in Somalia are affected by the closure of various medical care projects, which was caused by funding shortages and a high dependence on foreign aid. If this trend continues, 4.4 million people, or 23% of the population, could find themselves in critical or worse circumstances by the end of the year. Emergency food aid has already been reduced from 1.3 million to 375,000 people per month. On the other hand, the effects of the drought have been mitigated by rain in some areas (see BN dated 11 August 2025) and water levels in some rivers have risen. However, the situation remains critical, particularly in Somaliland, but also in some regions of central and southern Somalia.²⁰

10 November 2025

Security situation

According to media and government reports, fighting between state security forces and al-Shabaab resumed last week. For example, in the South West State, the Somali military killed several high-ranking al-Shabaab members on 9 November 2025. These included Mohamed Abdi Mohamed Nur, known as "Goofow", who was responsible for several attacks on civilians. Last week, the government took stock of the situation. According to these, more than 800 al-Shabaab members, including 52 senior members, have been killed since the beginning of 2025 by air strikes carried out by the US and the AUSSOM stabilisation mission. According to the government, this progress holds out the prospect of Somalia soon becoming independent in security matters. Media reports contradict this.²¹

Humanitarian situation

According to recent reports from the media and international organisations, the humanitarian situation in Somalia remains tense (see BN of 11 August, 20 October and 3 November 2025). Various regions are experiencing prolonged drought. In Puntland alone, 1 million people are affected, 130,000 of whom are in a particularly critical condition and require emergency aid. The Puntland government requested humanitarian assistance on 8 November 2025. The severe impact of droughts on the population is not only due to climate change and declining international support, but also to politics in Somalia. During the 2020-2023 drought, the central government denied thousands of people disaster relief, including access to food and health services. Despite the resulting worsening crisis, it did not increase government spending on the health sector. According to an international agreement, this should be 15%, but currently stands at only 5%. According to other reports, however, the government's priority is to improve the humanitarian situation and food security.²²

17 November 2025

Security situation

According to media and government reports, Somali and allied international security forces continue to crack down on the militant Islamist group al-Shabaab. On 16 November 2025, the Somali special forces unit Darwish killed at least seven members of the group in the central Somali state of Galmudug and wounded several others. In Lower Juba in southern Somalia, the Somali army and the American AFRICOM carried out several operations against al-Shabaab in the week of 10 November 2025. According to local authorities, the group's posts and equipment were destroyed, but several civilians were also killed. Al-Shabaab has had its strongest presence and activity in the southern and central Somali states for decades. Disrupting the group's structures there is currently a major focus of the various actors in Somalia.²³

24 November 2025

Security situation

According to media and government reports, Somali and allied international security forces continue to take action against militant Islamist groups in Somalia (see BN of 10 November and 17 November 2025). In Puntland, state security forces foiled an attack by IS members on a security camp on 15 November 2025. They killed four members of the group; three security guards died. The planned attack was presumably a response to the previous AFRICOM air strike against IS on 10 November 2025. In Jubaland, provincial and central government security forces killed 56 al-Shabaab members and detained 20 others. Parts of the group's infrastructure there were destroyed. The Somali military also killed three al-Shabaab members each in South West State and Lower Shabelle.

According to media reports, hundreds of families in the South West State are currently affected by conflicts between several clans. On 9 November 2025, for example, six members of one family were killed by members of a rival clan. An elderly member of the latter clan had also been killed earlier and his body set on fire. This led to retaliatory attacks. The provincial government warns that this is worsening the already tense humanitarian situation in the state due to the conflict with al-Shabaab and the ongoing drought. Killings of clan members often lead to prolonged conflict consisting of mutual acts of retaliation. Sometimes state security forces intervene, for example in the state of Galmudug. There, on 20 November 2025, a man was executed after the local court sentenced him to death for killing a member of a rival clan. Only four days passed between the crime and the execution of the sentence. The authorities hope that this will have a deterrent effect and prevent further escalation of violence between the clans involved.²⁴

Humanitarian situation

According to various reports, the humanitarian situation in Somalia remains tense (see BN of 3 November and 10 November 2025). According to new information, approximately 9.1 million people, or 47% of the population in Somalia, are currently affected by drought and/or armed conflict. Approximately 4.4 million people, or probably a quarter of the population, are affected by acute malnutrition.

According to the Somali government, the decline in development aid, combined with the Somali economy's high dependence on foreign support, is hindering the country's economic growth. Of the originally projected 4% economic growth in 2025, only 1% has been achieved. In contrast, recent progress in digitisation and automation of tax revenues has increased government income. In terms of government spending, the government is prioritising education and health care.²⁵

01 December 2025

Security situation

According to media and government reports, Somali and allied international security forces continue to crack down on militant Islamist groups in Somalia (see BN of 17 November and 24 November 25). For example, on 24 November 2025, Puntland anti-terror units and American special forces carried out a mission against Islamic State (IS) in the Al-Miskaad mountains. Several IS leaders were reportedly killed and various other members detained. On 25 November 2025, security forces in Galguduud killed an al-Shabaab commander who was suspected of involvement in attacks in Middle Shabelle, Hiraan and Galguduud. At around the same time, security forces, mainly from the American AFRICOM and the regional AUSSOM, killed a high-ranking al-Shabaab member in Lower Shabelle who had been involved in attacks that had led to significant transport restrictions in the country.

According to media reports, the Somali authorities are continuing to take action against those who support al-Shabaab or IS in other ways. In mid-September 2025, a Somali woman was sentenced to 15 years in prison for raising more than USD 1 million in financial aid for al-Shabaab. Now, another woman has been sentenced to six years in prison for maintaining direct links to al-Shabaab and participating in the financing of the group. The prosecution accuses her of operating six accounts and mobile phone numbers to divert nearly \$2.2 million, thereby contributing to al-Shabaab's attacks or murders.²⁶

Women's rights

According to media and government reports, on 20 November 2025, the Federal Cabinet in Mogadishu passed a draft law formulating measures to prevent female genital mutilation (FGM/C). The transitional constitution of the Somali federal government of 2012 already recognises female circumcision as a form of torture and prohibits it. So far, there has been a lack of concrete provisions and legal measures to implement this. The new draft could address this issue. However, details are still pending.²⁷

Death sentence and protests over the killing of a 14-year-old girl

According to media reports, on 24 November 2025, a court in Puntland found a woman guilty of killing a 14-year-old girl and sentenced her to death. The convicted woman's husband received a prison sentence and a fine. The accused denies killing the girl but confessed to repeatedly abusing her while she was living with her. The case caused outrage and protests in Gaalkacyo, during which one person died and property was damaged. The protests demanded justice in this case and greater protection for minors.²⁸

08 December 2025

Humanitarian situation

According to media and government reports, the humanitarian situation in Somalia remains tense (see BN of 10 November and 24 November 2025). A drought is affecting large parts of the country, particularly southern Somalia, western Somaliland and northern Puntland. Dying livestock, crop failures, food and water shortages continue to plague the local population. They are increasingly dependent on emergency aid for survival. According to new estimates, critical food insecurity currently affects 5.9 million people. On 4 December 2025, the Somali federal government held talks with representatives of the EU, the UN and the US to formulate and accelerate countermeasures. Meanwhile, in Hirshabelle in central Somalia, around 2,000 families have received emergency food rations provided by the African Development Bank.²⁹

Protests in Somaliland

According to media and government reports, security forces killed several people and injured others during protests in Borame in the Awdal region of Somaliland on 4 December 2025. The protests were reportedly directed against the launch and sale of a book about Xeer Ciise, the traditional customary or clan law of the Iise clan, which is recognised by UNESCO as intangible world cultural heritage. However, the region around Borame is also inhabited by members of the Gadabursi clan. There is a long-standing rivalry between the Gadabursi and Iise clans. The event was therefore seen in Awdal as a political provocation, but also as ignorance of regional sensitivities. The Somaliland government's harsh response has hardened the rejection in Awdal.³⁰

15 December 2025

Security situation

According to media and government reports, state and allied international security forces continue to crack down on militant Islamist groups in Somalia (see BN of 01.12.25). In the central Somali state of Galmudug, for example, the Somali military dismantled several al-Shabaab hideouts in the first week of December 2025. This secured transport routes in the region and protected the local population from potential attacks. In West Hiraan, the Somali military was able to drive al-Shabaab out of several villages on approximately 9 December 2025. The military is now pursuing the al-Shabaab members who fled. Twelve al-Shabaab members were killed in an air strike near the town of Afgoye in the Lower Shabelle state on approximately 11 December 2025. During an anti-terrorist operation in the town of Afgoye on 9 December 2025, the Danab special forces killed more than 30 civilians and injured many more. The operation came as a surprise to the local population, as al-Shabaab had not previously been present there. The incident highlights the challenges involved in combating al-Shabaab, which can repeatedly affect the lives and safety of civilians.³¹

22 December 2025

Humanitarian situation

According to various reports, the humanitarian situation in Somalia remains tense. This is partly the result of displacement in the wake of armed clashes between various parties to the conflict (see BN of 24 November and 1 December 2025) and the persistently poor supply of basic necessities to the population in many areas, which is currently exacerbated by the effects of a prolonged drought and the simultaneous underfunding of aid programmes (see BN of 24 November and 8 December 2025). According to new information, of the approximately 18 million people in Somalia, 4.4 million are affected by acute food shortages and 1.85 million children are affected by acute malnutrition, including 421,000 children suffering from critical malnutrition. According to reports, the Somali federal government officially declared a drought emergency on 10 November 2025. The governments of the worst-affected regions, Puntland and Somaliland, had done so earlier. On 18 December 2025, the government of the South West State also declared a humanitarian emergency. In some areas, there has been no rain for over a year. Water reservoirs have dried up, livestock is dying, river levels are at their lowest, the population is walking long distances in search of drinking water, and food prices are rising. Some organisations warn that the current situation is similar to the early stages of the 2011 famine and the 2021 emergency.³²

Domestic political tensions

According to media reports, the government of the southern Somali state of Jubaland announced Jubaland's independence, including a constitutional amendment, on 7 December 2025. This marks the breakaway of another state from Somalia's federal system, whose internal cohesion is weak due to, among other things, its complex social fabric and the mix of conflicts and crises (see BN of 11 August 2025). The Federal Government does not recognise the elections in Jubaland at the end of 2024 and thus the current regional government as legitimate, which has at times led to armed clashes between the security forces of both governments. According to observers, the new wave of secessionist efforts does not stem from a desire for regional autonomy, but is an expression of regional dissatisfaction with the uncoordinated constitutional amendments and other policies of the federal government.

For example, there are complaints about the change in the electoral system (see BN of 22 September 2025). Puntland also broke off relations with the federal government in early 2024 for these and other reasons.³³

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