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EASO Country of Origin Information Report

Somalia Security Situation



February 2016



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The following departments reviewed this report:

Belgium, Office of the Commissioner General for Refugees and Stateless Persons, Cedoca (Centre for Documentation and Research);

Denmark, Danish Immigration Service, Section Country of Origin Information;

Finland, Finnish Migration Service, Country Information Service.

Roberta Belli, Security Information Analyst from the UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS), Somalia, has reviewed the report as well.

Contents

Acknowledgments	5
Disclaimer	9
Glossary and Abbreviations	10
Introduction	11
Map of Somalia.....	13
1. General description of the security situation in Somalia.....	14
1.1. Background of the conflict in Somalia	14
1.2. Actors in the conflict	15
1.2.1. State’s armed forces.....	15
1.2.2. International forces.....	17
1.2.3. Armed groups.....	19
1.2.4. Map of areas of influence and AMISOM garrisons in Somalia	23
1.3. Armed confrontations.....	24
1.3.1. Operation Indian Ocean	25
1.3.2. Operation Jubba Corridor	25
1.3.3. Other armed confrontations.....	25
1.3.4. Impact on the population	26
1.4. Impact on State, Law and Order	27
1.4.1. The Judiciary	27
1.4.2. Security forces and State protection	27
1.4.3. Detention and death penalty.....	28
1.5. Geographical overview of the security situation.....	28
1.5.1. Mogadishu.....	28
1.5.2. Other parts of Somalia	29
2. Security situation per region.....	30
South Somalia	30
2.1. Lower Jubba.....	30
2.1.1. Short description of the region	31
2.1.2. Violence	31
2.1.3. Actors in the conflict	32
2.1.4. Areas of control/influence	32
2.1.5. Impact of the violence.....	33
2.2. Gedo	34
2.2.1. Short description of the region.....	35
2.2.2. Violence	35
2.2.3. Actors in the conflict	36
2.2.4. Areas of control/influence	36
2.2.5. Impact of the violence.....	37
2.3. Bay	38
2.3.1. Short description of the region.....	38
2.3.2. Violence	38

2.3.3. Actors in the conflict	39
2.3.4. Areas of control/influence	39
2.3.5. Impact of the violence.....	40
2.4. Bakool.....	41
2.4.1. Short description of the region	41
2.4.2. Violence	42
2.4.3. Actors in the conflict	42
2.4.4. Areas of control/influence	42
2.4.5. Impact of the violence.....	43
2.5. Middle Jubba	44
2.5.1. Short description of the region	44
2.5.2. Violence	44
2.5.3. Actors in the conflict	45
2.5.4. Areas of control/influence	45
2.5.5. Impact of the violence.....	45
2.6. Lower Shabelle	47
2.6.1. Short description of the region	47
2.6.2. Violence	48
2.6.3. Actors in the conflict	48
2.6.4. Areas of control/influence	49
2.6.5. Impact of the violence.....	49
2.7. Benadir-Mogadishu	50
2.7.1. Short description of the region	50
2.7.2. Violence	51
2.7.3. Actors in the conflict.....	53
2.7.4. Areas of control/influence.....	53
2.7.5. Impact of the violence	54
2.8. Middle Shabelle.....	55
2.8.1. Short description of the region.....	55
2.8.2. Violence.....	56
2.8.3. Actors in the conflict	56
2.8.4. Areas of control/influence	57
2.8.5. Impact of the violence	57
Central Somalia.....	58
2.9. Hiiraan	58
2.9.1. Short description of the region	59
2.9.2. Violence	59
2.9.3. Actors in the conflict	60
2.9.4. Areas of control/influence	60
2.9.5. Impact of the violence.....	61
2.10. Galgaduud	62
2.10.1. Short description of the region	63
2.10.2. Violence	63
2.10.3. Actors in the conflict	64
2.10.4. Areas of control/influence	64
2.10.5. Impact of the violence.....	65

2.11. Mudug	66
2.11.1. Short description of the region	67
2.11.2. Violence	67
2.11.3. Actors in the conflict	68
2.11.4. Areas of control/influence	68
2.11.5. Impact of the violence.....	68
Northern Somalia	69
2.12. Puntland	69
2.12.1. Short description of the region (terrain, urban areas, population)	69
2.12.2. Violence	70
2.12.3. Actors in the conflict	71
2.12.4. Areas of control/influence	71
2.12.5. Impact of the violence.....	72
The borderlands of Puntland and Somaliland.....	72
2.13. Sanaag	72
2.13.1. Short description of the region	72
2.13.2. Violence	73
2.13.3. Actors in the conflict	73
2.13.4. Areas of control/influence	73
2.13.5. Impact of the violence.....	73
2.14. Sool	73
2.14.1. Short description of the region	73
2.14.2. Violence	74
2.14.3. Actors in the conflict	74
2.14.4. Areas of control/influence	74
2.14.5. Impact of the violence.....	75
2.15. Somaliland.....	75
2.15.1. Short description of the region	75
2.15.2. Violence	75
2.15.3. Actors in the conflict	76
2.15.4. Areas of control/influence	76
2.15.5. Impact of the violence.....	76
Bibliography	77
Terms of Reference	94

Disclaimer

This report was written according to the EASO COI Report Methodology (2012) ⁽¹⁾. The report is based on carefully selected sources of information. All sources used are referenced. To the extent possible, and unless otherwise stated, all information presented, except for undisputed or obvious facts, has been cross-checked.

The information contained in this report has been researched, evaluated and analysed with utmost care. However, this document does not claim to be exhaustive. If a particular event, person or organisation is not mentioned in the report, this does not mean that the event has not taken place or that the person or organisation does not exist.

Furthermore, this report is not conclusive as to the determination or merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Terminology used should not be regarded as indicative of a particular legal position.

‘Refugee’, ‘risk’ and similar terminology are used as generic terminology and not as legally defined in the EU Asylum Acquis and the Geneva Convention.

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The target audience are asylum caseworkers, COI researchers, policymakers, and decision-making authorities.

The report covers the period between August 2014 and December 2015. The drafting of this report was finalised in December 2015. Any event taking place after this date is not included in this report. More information on the reference period for this report can be found in the methodology section of the introduction.

⁽¹⁾ The EASO methodology is largely based on the Common EU Guidelines for processing Country of Origin Information (COI), 2008, and can be downloaded from the EASO website: <http://www.easo.europa.eu>.

Glossary and Abbreviations

AMISOM	African Union Mission in Somalia
Amniyat	Special unit within Al-Shabaab, responsible for the intelligence and the internal security of Al-Shabaab
ASNE	Al-Shabaab North-East
ASWJ	Ahlu Sunna wal Jamaa
Complex attack	An attack including suicide bombers and remotely ignited explosives, executed by a large number of fighters.
<i>Deyr</i>	Short rainy season, usually from October to November
<i>diya</i>	Compensation
<i>Dumaashhi</i>	taking new brides by Al-Shabaab fighters
ENDF	Ethiopian National Defence Forces
GIA	Galmudug Interim Administration
<i>Gu</i>	Long rainy season, usually from March to June
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
IJA	Interim Jubba Administration
ISWA	Interim South-West Administration
ICU	Islamic Courts Union
KDF	Kenyan Defence Forces
Liyu police	Ethiopian special force
MPSR	Mobile patrol-surveillance and reconnaissance unit
NISA	National Intelligence and Security Agency
OPU	Oil Protection Unit
PMPF	Puntland Maritime Police Force
PIA	Puntland Intelligence Agency
RRU	Rapid Response Unit
SFG	Somali Federal Government
SNA	Somali National Army
SNAF	Somali National Armed Forces
SPF	Somali Police Force
SRCC	Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia
SSC	Sool, Sanaag and Cayn
TFI	Transitional Federal Institution
TFG	Transitional Federal Government
UNGU	UN Guard Unit
<i>xeer</i>	customary law
<i>zakat</i>	Islamic tax, one of the five pillars of Islam to distribute money to the poor

Introduction

This report was drafted by Country of Origin Information (COI) specialists from the COI units or asylum administrations listed as co-authors in the [Acknowledgements section](#), together with the European Asylum Support Office (EASO).

The report aims to provide relevant information for international Protection Status Determination (PSD, including refugee status and subsidiary protection). The Terms of Reference of this report can be found in the Annex.

Methodology

• Defining the terms of reference

This report is an update of the security section of the EASO COI report *South and Central Somalia Country overview* (August 2014 ⁽²⁾) and has been extended to other parts of Somalia: Somaliland, Puntland, and the disputed areas between these administrations (Sool, Sanaag, Khatumo).

In June 2015, members of the EASO COI Specialist Network on Somalia provided input for an update of the 2014 Country overview report. Main issues that needed to be updated, according to the feedback received, related to the security situation, not only in South and Central Somalia, but also in the northern areas of Somalia. Although information on human rights, migration and returns were found relevant, it was decided to concentrate this update on security issues only, taking into account the limited number of contributors and the time available for drafting.

During a recent EASO COI Network seminar on Somalia on 3-4 November 2015, the draft Terms of Reference were finalised and the tasks for drafting and reviewing were divided.

• Collecting information

The report presents information collected between August 2014 and 31 December 2015.

• Quality control

To verify that the Terms of Reference and the EASO COI Report Methodology were fully respected, a review was carried out by COI specialists from the countries listed as reviewers in the [Acknowledgements section](#). All comments made by the reviewers were taken into consideration and most of them were implemented in the final draft of this report. An external review was carried out by an expert from the UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) in Somalia.

Terminology

In this report, the areas are subdivided as follows:

1. Areas under the influence of or controlled by Al-Shabaab;
2. Areas under the influence of or controlled by the Somali Federal Government (SFG)/AMISOM;
3. Areas under the joint influence of Al-Shabaab and another actor.

An area **controlled** by an actor implies that the actor has military presence and capacity to uphold the security, and can defend it from competing armed interests in the area. The actor has a functioning administration, such as police and judicial system.

An area where an actor has **influence** implies that the actor has a military presence in the area, but there could also be competing armed interests present. The actor might have an administration in the area, but this may not be functioning.

⁽²⁾ EASO, COI report South and Central Somalia Country overview, August 2014.

Sources

- **Public sources**

Most of the information in this report results from desk research of public paper-based and electronic sources, which were consulted within the timeframe and the scope of the research.

- **Fact-finding reports**

The report uses information on the security situation from recent fact-finding missions (Danish, Swedish, Norwegian) to Somalia. These missions have interviewed a variety of local interlocutors, organisations and experts working in or with Somalia who cannot always be mentioned by name. In order to be as transparent as possible on the sources, reference is made to the interlocutors interviewed by these missions as primary sources, rather than to the mission reports themselves. Where possible, the information from these sources has been corroborated with public sources.

- **Anonymous sources**

A number of experts on the security situation in Somalia were interviewed by the drafters. These experts could not be mentioned by name for security reasons. The choice had to be made between not interviewing them at all or referring to them as ‘anonymous sources’. Considering the high added value of the information provided, the latter approach was preferred.

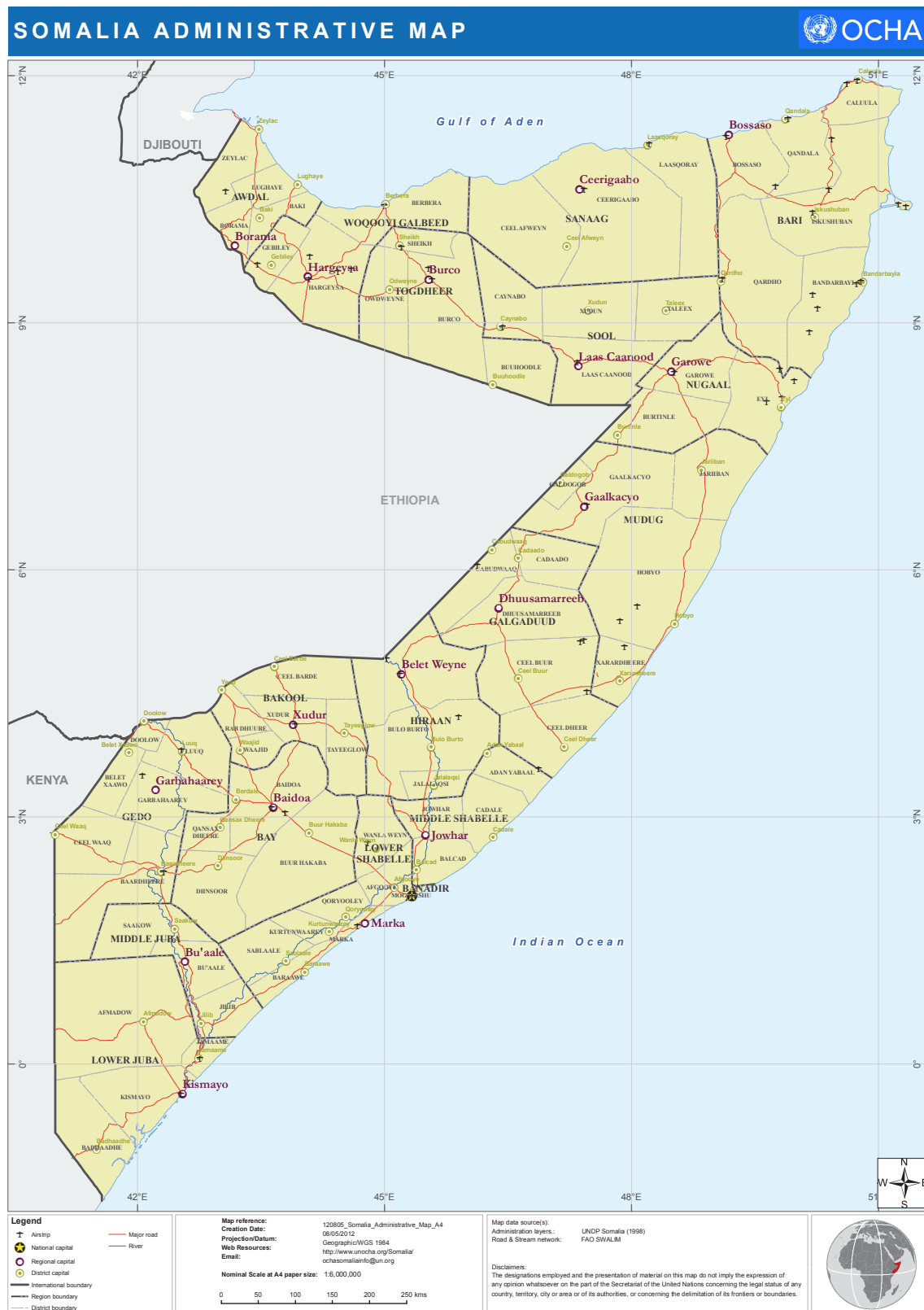
In the bibliography, a description is given on the expertise of the anonymous sources.

- **Security maps**

Two maps on the security situation in Mogadishu and Somalia as a whole, drafted by the Austrian Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum (BFA), provide an important added value to this report.

It should be noted that it is not possible to give a complete and absolutely accurate picture of the situation in Somalia. The marked areas of influence are approximate.

Map of Somalia



Source of this map and the regional maps in this report: UN OCHA, 2012⁽³⁾.

⁽³⁾ UN OCHA, Somalia Administrative Map [map], 8 May 2012. Other administrative maps at country, region, district and zone levels can be found at FSNAU (Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit), *Somalia, Administrative Maps Somalia* [web page], n.d. (<http://www.fsnau.org/products/maps/administrative-maps>).

1. General description of the security situation in Somalia

The security situation in Somalia in this report covers the period between August 2014 and December 2015. The security situation in the following regional divisions will be described: Lower Jubba, Gedo, Bay, Bakool, Middle Jubba, Lower Shabelle, Benadir-Mogadishu, Middle Shabelle, Hiiraan, Galgaduud, Mudug, Puntland, Sanaag, Sool and Somaliland.

The general security situation is still mainly determined by the resurgent threat posed by Al-Shabaab, primarily but not exclusively in South-Central Somalia ⁽⁴⁾. In 2014 Somalia suffered the most attacks and deaths from terrorism in its history and recorded an increase in terrorism for the fourth year in a row. Somalia ranks eighth on the Global Terrorism Index 2015 ⁽⁵⁾, and second after South Sudan and before the Central African Republic, on the Fragile State Index 2015 ⁽⁶⁾.

According to the Population Estimation Survey undertaken by UN Population Fund and Somali authorities, as of October 2014 Somalia counted 12,316,895 inhabitants of whom 5,216,392 were urban and 2,806,787 rural people, 3,186,965 nomads and 1,106,751 IDPs ⁷.

1.1. Background of the conflict in Somalia

For an extensive description of the backgrounds to the conflict in South-Central Somalia, reference is made to the EASO Country Overview report on South and Central Somalia (August 2014) ⁽⁸⁾. In this section, the main developments are highlighted.

The Somali Republic was created in 1960 by merging the protectorate of British Somaliland with the colony of Italian Somaliland. In 1969, Siad Barre took control of Somalia via a military coup and declared it a socialist state in 1970 ⁽⁹⁾.

In January 1991 Siad Barre's regime was overthrown and the country was torn apart by clan-based warfare. On 18 May 1991 Somaliland declared itself independent ⁽¹⁰⁾. In August 1998 Puntland also declared itself an autonomous state but, unlike its neighbour, sought recognition as an independent entity within a federal Somalia ⁽¹¹⁾.

In August 2004, after many failed attempts at peace talks, a new transitional parliament was inaugurated at a ceremony in Kenya and in October of the same year Abdullahi Yusuf was elected president of the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia (TFG). In February 2006, the parliament met for the first time in Somalia in the central town of Baidoa ⁽¹²⁾.

A coalition of Islamic Courts, the Islamic Courts Union (ICU), in alliance with other clan militia, took control of Mogadishu and other parts of South-Central Somalia in June 2006 ⁽¹³⁾. Although the ICU won public support by creating an unprecedented degree of security, Ethiopian forces, backed by Western Governments, entered Somalia and took control of Mogadishu in December 2006 ⁽¹⁴⁾.

On 20 February 2007 the UN Security Council authorised a peacekeeping mission called the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), after which a small contingent of African Union Troops landed in Mogadishu in March 2007

⁽⁴⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea pursuant to Security Council resolution 2182 (2014): Somalia, 19 October 2015, p. 10.

⁽⁵⁾ IEP, Global terrorism Index 2015, 17 November 2015.

⁽⁶⁾ FFP, Fragile State Index 2015, 17 June 2015.

⁽⁷⁾ UNFPA, Population Estimation Survey 2014, Somalia, October 2014, p. 31.

⁽⁸⁾ EASO COI report South and Central Somalia Country overview, August 2014.

⁽⁹⁾ BBC, Somalia profile – A chronology of key events, 5 May 2015.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Bradbury, M. & Healy, S., 'Endless war: a brief history of the Somali conflict', 2010.

⁽¹¹⁾ BBC, Puntland Profile, 20 April 2015.

⁽¹²⁾ BBC, Somalia profile – A chronology of key events, 5 May 2015.

⁽¹³⁾ BBC, Somalia profile – A chronology of key events, 5 May 2015.

⁽¹⁴⁾ Bradbury, M. & Healy, S., 'Endless war: a brief history of the Somali conflict', 2010.

to protect the Transitional Federal Institutions (TFIs) ⁽¹⁵⁾. Initially a mandate was given for six months, which has been renewed subsequently, most recently on 28 July 2015 ⁽¹⁶⁾. After Ethiopia withdrew its troops from Somalia in early 2009, the hard-line militant youth movement of the former ICU, called Al-Shabaab, took control of Baidoa and other parts of South-Central Somalia, including Mogadishu ⁽¹⁷⁾. By August 2010, Al-Shabaab controlled the majority of south and central Somalia, but the group started losing ground at the end of 2011. It had already withdrawn from Mogadishu in August 2011 ⁽¹⁸⁾.

From February to October 2012, AMISOM Troops and government forces recaptured key towns in South Somalia, such as Afgooye, Baidoa, Merka and Kismayo. In August 2012 the new Somali Federal Parliament was inaugurated in Mogadishu and elected president Hassan Sheikh Muhamud on 10 September ⁽¹⁹⁾.

In the spring of 2014, ‘Operation Eagle’, a major joint military operation of AMISOM and the Somali National Army (SNA), was launched and Al-Shabaab was driven out of several strategic towns in the regions of Benadir, Lower Shabelle, Bay, Bakool, Gedo, Hiiraan, Galgaduud and Middle Shabelle ⁽²⁰⁾. This strategy was continued under ‘Operation Indian Ocean’ and ‘Operation Jubba Corridor’ ⁽²¹⁾ (see sections 1.3.1 and 1.3.2).

In northern Somalia, the border regions of Somaliland and Puntland (Sool and Sanaag) have been contested since both states declared themselves independent and autonomous ⁽²²⁾. In addition, Al-Shabaab’s movement northwards poses an increasing destabilising threat in Puntland ⁽²³⁾. Finally, a border conflict between Mudug and Puntland has recently flared up ⁽²⁴⁾.

1.2. Actors in the conflict

1.2.1. State’s armed forces

Somali National Armed Forces (SNAF)

For a more detailed description of the Somali National Armed Forces, reference is made to the EASO Country Overview report on South and Central Somalia (August 2014), sections 1.4.5 and 3.2.2 ⁽²⁵⁾.

The number of SNAF troops is not quite clear. According to a Security Council report of September 2015, a total of 16,780 members of the Somali national army were biometrically registered in the human resources system by the end of August 2015 ⁽²⁶⁾. However, the number of active troops is probably much lower. Other sources estimate the total SNAF troops at about 10,000 ⁽²⁷⁾. The SNAF’s composition shows, according to the Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS), that ‘both key positions and the rank and file of the army are dominated by the Hawiye’ ⁽²⁸⁾.

In October 2015, the UN Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea reported that SNAF troops had been unpaid for several months and that senior military commanders had systematically inflated the troop numbers in order to secure greater funding for salaries and rations ⁽²⁹⁾. As a consequence of poor payment some soldiers sold their

⁽¹⁵⁾ Bradbury, M. & Healy, S., ‘Endless war: a brief history of the Somali conflict’, 2010; UN Security Council, Security Council Resolution 1744 (2007), 21 February 2007.

⁽¹⁶⁾ UN Security Council, Security Council resolution 2232 (2015), S/RES/2232, 28 July 2015.

⁽¹⁷⁾ BBC, Somalia Profile – Overview, 5 May 2015.

⁽¹⁸⁾ HSPI, Somalia’s Al-Shabaab: Down But Not Out, 27 August 2013, p. 1.

⁽¹⁹⁾ BBC, Somalia profile – A chronology of key events, 5 May 2015.

⁽²⁰⁾ France 24, In photos: Tracking Al-Shabaab in Somalia, 19 May 2014; UN Security Council, May 2014 Monthly Forecast – Somalia, 1 May 2014.

⁽²¹⁾ SIN, Why AMISOM Is Changing Its Tactics In Battling Out Al-Shabaab, 9 September 2015.

⁽²²⁾ Hoehne, M.V., Between Somaliland and Puntland Marginalization, militarization and conflicting political visions, 2015, p. 17.

⁽²³⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia (S/2015/702), 11 September 2015, p. 3.

⁽²⁴⁾ Horseed Media, Somalia: Seven dead in clashes between Puntland & Galmudug forces in Galkayo City, 29 November 2015.

⁽²⁵⁾ EASO COI report South and Central Somalia Country overview, August 2014.

⁽²⁶⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia (S/2015/702), 11 September 2015.

⁽²⁷⁾ DIIS, A Question of Trust: The African Union and the Somali Army, November 2015; Felbab-Brown, V., Saving Somalia (Again), 23 June 2015.

⁽²⁸⁾ DIIS, The politics of peacekeeping: A question of trust: The African Union and the Somali Army, November 2015.

⁽²⁹⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea pursuant to Security Council resolution 2182 (2014): Somalia, 19 October 2015, pp. 22, 24.

equipment⁽³⁰⁾, or defected to their respective clan militias or even Al-Shabaab⁽³¹⁾. According to a UNDSS security analysis, some soldiers turned to crime as a source of revenue (e.g. extortion at illegal checkpoints, armed robberies, etc.)⁽³²⁾.

Somali Police Force (SPF)

The exact number of the SPF is also unknown. A total of 5,200 personnel of the Somali police force were biometrically registered in the human resources system by the end of August 2015⁽³³⁾. Another source estimated the total at 4,000 to 5,000⁽³⁴⁾. Somaliland, Puntland and the Jubbaland Administration have their own police forces in their respective areas of control⁽³⁵⁾.

In January 2015 a new police unit was created to fight terrorism. The first squad comprises 150 officers and received training in Djibouti⁽³⁶⁾. According to an expert on Somalia, interviewed in Stockholm by Lifos on 2 December 2015, there is a lack of funding and a lack of technology such as computers⁽³⁷⁾.

National Intelligence and Security Agency (NISA)

Although the SPF created a new counter-terrorism unit, Somalia's national intelligence agency (NISA) still leads responses to terrorist attacks in Mogadishu⁽³⁸⁾.

In September 2014, NISA warned the media to refrain from reporting about the government's security operations in Mogadishu and beyond. It also restricted media coverage on stories about Al-Shabaab and interviews with the group's officials⁽³⁹⁾.

Human Rights Watch reported that 'Somalia's national intelligence agency, NISA, routinely carried out mass security sweeps, despite having no legal mandate to arrest and detain suspects. The NISA has occasionally held detainees for prolonged periods without judicial review and mistreated suspects during interrogations'⁽⁴⁰⁾.

On 21 June 2015 a training base of the NISA in Mogadishu was attacked by Al-Shabaab militants who set off a car bomb before storming inside. During the operation at least seven people were killed, including the attackers⁽⁴¹⁾.

Somaliland's forces

Although Somaliland is not internationally recognised, it has its own army and police forces⁽⁴²⁾. Exact numbers of these forces are not known, but according to the international service business Adam Smith International, which provided technical advice to the Somaliland Armed Forces, the army consists of 13,000 troops⁽⁴³⁾.

A special paramilitary unit, the so-called Rapid Response Unit (RRU), was created in 2012 as a counter-terrorism force, and was trained by the UK Government. The RRU is part of the Somaliland Police Forces⁽⁴⁴⁾. In September 2014 another paramilitary unit, the so-called Oil Protection Unit (OPU), was established within the Police Force in order to provide security and protection to oil exploration and extraction⁽⁴⁵⁾.

⁽³⁰⁾ Felbab-Brown, V., *Saving Somalia (Again)*, 23 June 2015.

⁽³¹⁾ Deutsche Welle, *Somalia: Al-Shababs defeat do means peace*, 10 October 2014; Reuters, *Failure to pay soldiers threatens Somalia's war on Islamists*, 8 October 2015.

⁽³²⁾ Roberta Belli, Security Information Analyst UNDSS Somalia, email, 26 January 2016.

⁽³³⁾ UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia (S/2015/702)*, 11 September 2015.

⁽³⁴⁾ Security analysis expert, Austria, Interview, BFA Staatendokumentation, 12 November 2015.

⁽³⁵⁾ US DoS, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2014 – Somalia*, p. 7.

⁽³⁶⁾ Hiiraan Online, *Somalia forms counter-terrorism police unit*, 7 January 2015; Horseed Media, *Somali Federal Government forms counter-terrorism police unit*, 7 January 2015.

⁽³⁷⁾ Expert on Somalia, interview, Lifos, 2 December 2015.

⁽³⁸⁾ US Department of State, *Country Report on Terrorism 2014 – Chapter 2, Somalia*, 19 June 2015.

⁽³⁹⁾ Somali Current, *Somalia: Press freedom under fire as security forces increases media crackdown*, 12 September 2014.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ HRW, *World Report 2015: Somalia*, n.d.

⁽⁴¹⁾ Daily Nation, *Shabaab militants attacks military intelligence base in Somali capital Mogadishu*, 21 June 2015; Somali Update, *Breaking News: Al-Shabaab's Attacks Second Somali's NISA Base in Mogadishu*, 7 killed, 21 June 2015.

⁽⁴²⁾ BBC News, *Somaliland profile*, 19 January 2015.

⁽⁴³⁾ Adam Smith International, *Building capability and accountability within the Somaliland Army and Coastguard*, n.d.

⁽⁴⁴⁾ HRC, *Somaliland Government: Accountable to no one – Annual Report on Human Rights Situation in Somaliland Volume 2 2014*, 9 December 2014, p. 30.

⁽⁴⁵⁾ Somaliland Sun, *Somaliland: State Constitutes OPU as a Specialized Unit within the Police Force*, 27 September 2014.

Puntland's forces

The security forces of the semi-autonomous state of Puntland, estimated at about 4,000, include a state-armed militia/police force known as the Puntland Dervish Force, the Puntland Maritime Police Force (PMPF) and the Puntland Intelligence Agency (PIA). The latter, previously known as the Puntland Intelligence Service, is dominated by the Majerteen subclan of the Darood clan ⁽⁴⁶⁾.

Galmudug Interim Administration (GIA)

In July 2015 Abdikarim Hussein Guled, the President of the newly formed Galmudug Interim Administration (GIA), was inaugurated ⁽⁴⁷⁾. The GIA consists of one region (Galguduud) and two Mudug districts (Hobyo and Xaradheere) ⁽⁴⁸⁾. The GIA is dominated by the Hawiye, specifically the Habar Gidir-Sa'ad sub-clan ⁽⁴⁹⁾. Numbers of GIA security forces are unknown. GIA troops clashed with Puntland forces regarding a territorial dispute in November 2015 ⁽⁵⁰⁾.

Jubbaland forces

On 12 May 2015, The National Integration Commission reached an agreement with SFG and the (Interim) Jubbaland Administration⁵¹ on the number of troops to be integrated in SNA in Jubbaland ⁽⁵²⁾. This was part of a national reconciliation agreement between the autonomous Jubbaland administration and SFG, signed in Addis Ababa on 28 August 2013 ⁽⁵³⁾. In total 2,880 Jubbaland forces (340 from Gedo, 1,000 from Jubba Dhexe and 1,540 from Jubba Hoose) will be integrated into SNA. On 26 July 2015 the first 1,350 troops were officially integrated ⁽⁵⁴⁾.

1.2.2. International forces

African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM)

The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) is a regional peace support mission set up in January 2007 ⁽⁵⁵⁾ by the Peace and Security Council of the African Union with the support of the United Nations. The principal aim is to provide support to the Federal Government of Somalia to stabilise the country and foster political dialogue and reconciliation. AMISOM is also mandated to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid and create the necessary conditions for the reconstruction and sustainable development of Somalia. AMISOM is headed by the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia (SRCC) Ambassador Mahamat Saleh Annadif. The mission has military, police and civilian components ⁽⁵⁶⁾.

The Security Council authorised the Member States of the African Union to deploy AMISOM in line with the Security Council's request to the African Union for a maximum of 22,126 troops. On 28 July 2015, in its Resolution 2232 (2015), the UN Security Council decided to extend the deployment of AMISOM to 30 May 2016 ⁽⁵⁷⁾.

The military element is by far the biggest of the three components of the AU Mission in the country. It comprises troops from Uganda, Burundi, Djibouti, Kenya and Ethiopia, which are deployed in six sectors covering South and Central Somalia ⁽⁵⁸⁾. Initially, Sierra Leone also contributed but due to the Ebola fears the African Union blocked the West African country from rotating its soldiers. By the end of 2014 Sierra Leone withdrew its troops ⁽⁵⁹⁾.

⁽⁴⁶⁾ Felbab-Brown, V., *Saving Somalia (Again)*, 23 June 2015; Reno, W., *Military Clientelism and State-Building in the Horn of Africa*, 4 May 2015.

⁽⁴⁷⁾ Garowe online, UN Envoy for Somalia welcomes inauguration of Galmudug Interim Administration President, 24 July 2015.

⁽⁴⁸⁾ RBC Radio, Somalia: Puntland should welcome Galmudug, 5 July 2015.

⁽⁴⁹⁾ ACSRT/CAERT, *Terrorism Bi-Weekly Press Review* 1-15 December 2015, Review No. 105, p. 36.

⁽⁵⁰⁾ Horseed Media, Somalia: Seven dead in clashes between Puntland & Galmudug forces in Galkayo City, 29 November 2015.

⁽⁵¹⁾ The regional state Jubbaland, formerly called Interim Jubbaland Administration (IJA), was installed on 15 September 2015 after the election of the Jubbaland Parliament and president Mohamed Ahmed Islaan 'Madobe'. IGAD, IGAD Successfully Concludes the Addis Ababa Agreement, 16 September 2015.

⁽⁵²⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia (S/2015/702), 11 September 2015, p. 6.

⁽⁵³⁾ Africa Review, Somali Government and Jubbaland strike a peace deal, 29 August 2013.

⁽⁵⁴⁾ UN Security Council, report of the Secretary-General on Somalia (S/2015/702), 11 September 2015, p. 6.

⁽⁵⁵⁾ Brenthurst Foundation (The), *Amisom – An African Success Story?*, n.d.

⁽⁵⁶⁾ AMISOM, *Frequently asked questions*, n.d.

⁽⁵⁷⁾ UN Security Council, Security Council resolution 2232 (2015), 28 July 2015.

⁽⁵⁸⁾ AMISOM, *AMISOM Military component*, n.d.

⁽⁵⁹⁾ Aljazeera, *Si Leone to withdraw its troops over Ebola*, 21 December 2014.

In September 2014 Human Rights Watch published a report titled ‘The Power These Men Have Over Us’, detailing how some African Union troops have sexually exploited and abused women who had gone to their camps for aid and medical assistance ⁽⁶⁰⁾. The African Union appointed a team to investigate the allegations and two cases of sexual abuse were found ⁽⁶¹⁾.

In July 2015 AMISOM was accused of randomly killing civilians in the coastal town of Merka ⁽⁶²⁾. On 21 July 2015, alleged AMISOM forces killed at least 11 civilians in separate incidents and 10 days later Ugandan army troops allegedly killed six men at a wedding ⁽⁶³⁾. AMISOM admitted that it was involved in the latter incident ⁽⁶⁴⁾. The independent expert reporting to the UN Human Rights Council on the situation of human rights in Somalia (October 2015) noted:

‘AMISOM had put in place a number of policies and measures designed to ensure that its uniformed personnel conducted their operations in a manner consistent with its international humanitarian principles. (...) a number of measures had been put in place, including the establishment of an investigation team by the African Union Commission to investigate the allegations and the setting up of an emergency helpline to receive reports of allegations of sexual exploitation abuse and complaints against AMISOM’ ⁽⁶⁵⁾.

UN Guard Unit (UNGU)

In addition to AMISOM, the UN Guard Unit (UNGU) started its duties on 15 May 2014. The task of the unit is to protect UN staff and facilities in Mogadishu ⁽⁶⁶⁾. After the Secretary-General decided to increase the troops from 410 to 530 ⁽⁶⁷⁾, a new UN Guard Unit came from Uganda to Somalia to replace the previous one that was to be rotated ⁽⁶⁸⁾.

Ethiopian National Defence Forces (ENDF)

Although the Ethiopian National Defence Forces (ENDF) joined AMISOM officially on 22 January 2014 ⁽⁶⁹⁾, the BBC reported that some Ethiopian troops operated independently in Somalia ⁽⁷⁰⁾. This was confirmed in August 2015 by a commander of AMISOM ⁽⁷¹⁾ and the Somali Government ⁽⁷²⁾. According to DIIS, Ethiopia only takes part in AMISOM to legitimise its presence in the country in order to obtain resources and to protect its border with Somalia ⁽⁷³⁾.

Only about a third (4,500) of the troops Ethiopia has deployed to Somalia is under the umbrella of AMISOM ⁽⁷⁴⁾. An expert on Somalia, interviewed in Stockholm by Lifos 2 on December 2015 reported that ENDF has no more than 2,000 men separately deployed from AMISOM ⁽⁷⁵⁾. Furthermore, several hundred Somalis are being trained and paid by ENDF to protect the border between the two countries. This group operates independently of AMISOM and SNA ⁽⁷⁶⁾.

⁽⁶⁰⁾ HRW, ‘The Power These Men Have Over Us’: Sexual exploitation and Abuse by African Union Forces in Somalia, September 2014.

⁽⁶¹⁾ Peace and Security Department (PSD) of the African Union, The African Union releases the key findings and recommendations of the report of investigations on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in Somalia, 21 April 2015.

⁽⁶²⁾ Hiiraan Online, AU soldiers arrested over civilian killings in Marka town, 2 August 2015.

⁽⁶³⁾ HRW, Somalia: AU Forces Linked to Wedding Killings, 13 August 2015.

⁽⁶⁴⁾ AMISOM, Statement by the African Union Special Representative for Somalia and Head of AMISOM, addressing the 31st July 2015 Incident in Marka, Lower Shabelle Region, 21 August 2015.

⁽⁶⁵⁾ UN Human Rights Council, Report of the Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Somalia, 28 October 2015, A/HRC/30/57, p. 11.

⁽⁶⁶⁾ UN News Service, Somalia: UN deploys new special force to protect staff in Mogadishu, 18 May 2015.

⁽⁶⁷⁾ UN Security Council, Letter dated 31 March 2015 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council, 6 April 2015.

⁽⁶⁸⁾ Dalsan Radio, Uganda military chief warns soldiers of relationships with Somalis, 14 June 2015.

⁽⁶⁹⁾ AMISOM, Ethiopian troops formally join AMISOM peacekeepers in Somalia, n.d.

⁽⁷⁰⁾ BBC, Somalia unrest: Baidoa raid ‘leaves eight dead’, 12 March 2015.

⁽⁷¹⁾ Shabelle News, Some Ethiopian troops in Somalia are not under AU Mission, 18 August 2015.

⁽⁷²⁾ Somali Current, Somali gov’t confirm the presence of Ethiopian troops in the country that are not part of AMISOM, 18 August 2015.

⁽⁷³⁾ DIIS, Fragmented peacekeeping: Regional interests define the African Union Mission in Somalia, DIIS Policy Brief November 2015.

⁽⁷⁴⁾ Security analysis expert, Austria, Interview, BFA Staatendokumentation, 12 November 2015.

⁽⁷⁵⁾ Expert on Somalia, interview, Lifos, 2 December 2015.

⁽⁷⁶⁾ DIIS, Fragmented peacekeeping: Regional interests define the African Union Mission in Somalia, November 2015; HRW, World Report 2015: Somalia, n.d.

1.2.3. Armed groups

Al-Shabaab

As mentioned in [section 1.1](#), Al-Shabaab (*Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujahedeen*) started as the hardline militant youth movement of the former ICU. After the ICU was forced out of Mogadishu by Ethiopian forces in December 2006, Al-Shabaab became an independent organisation that controlled the majority of South and Central Somalia by August 2010 ⁽⁷⁷⁾.

Al-Shabaab's goal is to drive out Somalia's government and allied foreign forces in order to establish an Islamic government of a "Greater Somalia". It also has a global jihadist agenda which has involved launching terrorist attacks in neighbouring countries such as Uganda, Kenya, and Djibouti in the past few years ⁽⁷⁸⁾.

Structure

Although Al-Shabaab has a centralised structure with a powerful leader ⁽⁷⁹⁾, the command and control structure has become more and more decentralised in recent years ⁽⁸⁰⁾. A special unit within the organisation, the so-called *Amniyat*, is responsible for the intelligence and the internal security of Al-Shabaab ⁽⁸¹⁾. The UN Monitoring group on Eritrea and Somalia reported in October 2014 that *Amniyat* had not only infiltrated the SNAF, but also the National Intelligence and Security Agency (NISA) and various levels within the Presidential Palace ⁽⁸²⁾.

The number of Al-Shabaab fighters is unclear. Although estimations vary between 3,000 ⁽⁸³⁾ and 15,000 ⁽⁸⁴⁾, the total number is unlikely to be more than 6,000, as mentioned by the Brookings Institute, a non-profit organisation devoted to independent research and innovative policy solutions ⁽⁸⁵⁾.

Recruitment

Recruitment by Al-Shabaab usually takes place via the established Islamic networks such as madrassas or religious schools. Children and women are also recruited to do chores in Al-Shabaab camps ⁽⁸⁶⁾. Women are also forced to marry Al-Shabaab fighters ⁽⁸⁷⁾.

According to a security analysis expert interviewed by the Austrian BFA Staatendokumentation, forced recruitment has become an exception, although recruitment via clan elders is ongoing. The number of casualties of Al-Shabaab troops is decreasing, so there is less need for new fighters ⁽⁸⁸⁾.

Control of the population

Al-Shabaab imposes a strict and harsh interpretation of Sharia law in areas under its control, which prohibits (a.o.) music, films, sports, and certain clothing ⁽⁸⁹⁾. Refusal to obey the law can lead to severe punishments, including amputations and beheadings ⁽⁹⁰⁾.

A Humanitarian international NGO, interviewed by DIS (May 2015) commented:

⁽⁷⁷⁾ BBC News, Who Are Somalia's al-Shabab? 3 April 2015; HSPI, Somalia's Al-Shabaab: Down But Not Out, 27 August 2013, p. 1.; Stanford University, Mapping Militant Organizations – Al-Shabaab, updated 31 October 2015.

⁽⁷⁸⁾ HSPI, Somalia's Al-Shabaab: Down But Not Out, 27 August 2013, p. 1; Mellgard, E., Backgrounder: What is al-Shabaab?, 22 April 2015; Reno, W., Military Clientelism and State-Building in the Horn of Africa, 4 May 2015; Stanford University, Mapping Militant Organisations – Al-Shabaab, updated 31 October 2015; Reuters, Al Shabaab claims responsibility for Djibouti suicide attack, 27 May 2014.

⁽⁷⁹⁾ HSPI, Somalia's Al-Shabaab: Down But Not Out, 27 August 2013, p. 5.

⁽⁸⁰⁾ Bryden, M., The decline and fall of Al-Shabaab? Think Again, April 2015, p. 5.

⁽⁸¹⁾ McGregor, A., After Garissa: Kenya Revises Its Security Strategy to Counter al-Shabaab's Shifting Tactics, 17 April 2015.

⁽⁸²⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea pursuant to Security Council resolution 2111 (2013) (S/2014/726), 13 October 2014, p. 65; RBC Radio/Raxanreeb Online, Somalia UN group identifies Al-Shabaab network in Mogadishu and infiltration, 22 October 2014.

⁽⁸³⁾ A Security analysis expert, Austria, Interview, BFA Staatendokumentation, 12 November 2015, estimates the strength of the core AS troops at 3000-5000.

⁽⁸⁴⁾ Weber, A., 'Al-Shabaab: Youth without God', June 2015, p. 17.

⁽⁸⁵⁾ Felbab-Brown, V., Saving Somalia (Again), 23 June 2015; Expert on Somalia, interview, Lifos, 2 December 2015.

⁽⁸⁶⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process, September 2015, p. 13.

⁽⁸⁷⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process, September 2015, p. 15; US DoS, Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2014 – Somalia, 25 June 2015.

⁽⁸⁸⁾ Security analysis expert, Austria, Interview, BFA Staatendokumentation, 12 November 2015.

⁽⁸⁹⁾ Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2015 - Somalia, n.d.

⁽⁹⁰⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process, September 2015, pp. 15-16.

‘In the areas they control, AlShabaab has full control of all aspects of society. All residents in these areas should follow any given instruction by AlShabaab i.e. dressing, living, marriage, tax payment, joining Al-Shabaab operations, shaving, spying, education etc. Failure to obey can result in serious punitive measures which include death’ ⁽⁹¹⁾.

The Monitoring Group documented (October 2015) grave violations in Al-Shabaab-held areas such as an increase in child recruitment, forced marriage and a practice called *Dumaashi* involving the taking of new brides by Al-Shabaab fighters ⁽⁹²⁾, and especially mentioned ethnic minorities (Bantu/Wagoshu) in Middle and Lower Jubba as victims.

Income

Al-Shabaab obtains its income from different sources such as the lucrative charcoal trade, protection and kidnappings for ransom, and the collection of the Islamic tax *zakat* ⁽⁹³⁾. Other sources reported that Al-Shabaab also receives money from the (Somali) diaspora ⁽⁹⁴⁾ and other aligned groups such as Al-Qaeda ⁽⁹⁵⁾.

Recent developments

During the reference period, Al-Shabaab suffered several heavy losses. One major blow was the assassination of its leader ‘Amir’ Ahmed Abdi Godane in a US drone strike in South Somalia on 1 September 2014 ⁽⁹⁶⁾. After his death Al-Shabaab named Ahmed Umar, also known as Abu Ubaidah/Ubayda, as his successor ⁽⁹⁷⁾.

Another blow for Al-Shabaab was the loss of the important port town of Baraawe in October 2014. The town was a supply route for weapons and food and functioned as a base for a lucrative charcoal business ⁽⁹⁸⁾. According to a report of the UN Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea (October 2015), Al-Shabaab’s overall share of income from the charcoal business has significantly decreased ⁽⁹⁹⁾. Throughout 2015, Al-Shabaab has lost control over a number of strategic towns such as Baardheere and Diinsoor ⁽¹⁰⁰⁾.

Despite these losses Al-Shabaab is still a force in Central and South Somalia and controls most of the rural areas ⁽¹⁰¹⁾.

Tactics

Several sources interviewed during the Danish fact-finding mission (DIS) in May 2015 stated that, in general, Al-Shabaab performs its attacks in towns it does not control, mainly on persons or institutions representing the international community including AMISOM and the UN, the Somalia Federal Government (SFG) and those supporting, or perceived to be supporting, them ⁽¹⁰²⁾.

Al-Shabaab still successfully carries out targeted suicide bombings, hit-and-run attacks, ambushes on convoys and other violent attacks. Until June 2015, Al-Shabaab continued with its strategy by avoiding large-scale confrontations with a larger, better equipped enemies such as AMISOM and concentrated on asymmetrical warfare ⁽¹⁰³⁾.

However, during Ramadan (June/July) 2015, Al-Shabaab launched an offensive which showed that it was ‘far from defeated’ and displayed an ‘improved intelligence-gathering’ ⁽¹⁰⁴⁾. On 26 June 2015, when hundreds of Al-Shabaab fighters raided an AMISOM military base in Leego, Lower Shabelle, more than 50 Burundian soldiers were

⁽⁹¹⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process, September 2015 [source: Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia], p. 16.

⁽⁹²⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea pursuant to Security Council resolution 2182 (2014): Somalia, 19 October 2015, pp. 244, 246.

⁽⁹³⁾ Weber, A., ‘Al-Shabaab: Youth without God’, June 2015, p. 27.

⁽⁹⁴⁾ Daily Nation, Kenyan admits raising funds for Al-Shabaab in US, 29 May 2015; Keatinge, T., ‘The Role of Finance in Defeating Al-Shabaab’, 30 December 2014.

⁽⁹⁵⁾ Telegraph (The), How Al-Qaeda and Islamic State are fighting for Al-Shabaab affections in Somalia, 26 November 2015.

⁽⁹⁶⁾ BBC, Ahmed Abdi Godane: Somali’s killed al Shabab leader, 9 September 2014; Bryden, M., The decline and fall of Al-Shabaab? Think Again, April 2015, p. 5.

⁽⁹⁷⁾ Aljazeera, Somalia’s al-Shabab names new leader, 6 September 2015.

⁽⁹⁸⁾ BBC, Somali troops in ‘full control’ of Barawe, 6 October 2014.

⁽⁹⁹⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea pursuant to Security Council resolution 2182 (2014): Somalia, 19 October 2015.

⁽¹⁰⁰⁾ Somalia News room, AMISOM and Somali Forces Take Major Towns from Al-Shabaab — What’s Next? 27 July 2015.

⁽¹⁰¹⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process, September 2015, p. 25.

⁽¹⁰²⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process, [sources: International organisation working in S/C Somalia (A), International organisation working in S/C Somalia (B), International organisation working in S/C Somalia (C), Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia] September 2015, p. 11.

⁽¹⁰³⁾ Bryden, M., The decline and fall of Al-Shabaab? Think Again, April 2015, p. 7.

⁽¹⁰⁴⁾ UK Parliament, House of Commons Library, Somalia: September 2015, 9 September 2015.

killed ⁽¹⁰⁵⁾. Another AMISOM base in Lower Shabelle, located in the town of Janaale, was attacked in a similar way on 1 September 2015 and at least 12 Ugandan soldiers were killed ⁽¹⁰⁶⁾. Large amounts of weapons and uniforms were looted by Al-Shabaab, supposedly to be used in disguised attacks ⁽¹⁰⁷⁾.

In both large-scale attacks, Al-Shabaab introduced a new tactic by destroying possible reinforcement routes ⁽¹⁰⁸⁾. Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility, referring to its new military unit Abu Zubeyr Battalion, named after the late Al-Shabaab leader ⁽¹⁰⁹⁾. According to a security analysis expert, interviewed by the Austrian BFA Staatendokumentation, this strong battalion is trained by Al-Qaeda trainers from Iraq ⁽¹¹⁰⁾.

Both attacks also displayed a ‘weakness in AMISOM’s command and control systems’, according to analysts ⁽¹¹¹⁾.

In its October 2015 report, the UN Monitoring Group noted on Al-Shabaab’s tactics:

‘Al-Shabaab continues to carry out frequent complex attacks within Mogadishu, typically employing a combination of vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices followed by the deployment of suicide gunmen. During the current mandate, Al-Shabaab has displayed a preference for targeting hotels, especially those frequented by Federal Government of Somalia and foreign government officials. The most notable of those hotel attacks include: Jazeera Hotel (26 July 2015); Makka al-Mukarama (27 March 2015); Central Hotel (20 February 2015); and SYL Hotel (22 January 2015). (...) Al-Shabaab terror operatives, both within and outside Mogadishu, frequently carry out their attacks while disguised in Somali National Army or other government military uniforms’ ⁽¹¹²⁾.

Al-Shabaab intensified its activities beyond Somali’s borders ⁽¹¹³⁾, especially in those countries that supply AMISOM troops ⁽¹¹⁴⁾. In the reporting period, in Uganda, the top state prosecutor in the trial of 13 men accused of a deadly Al-Shabaab bomb attack in Kampala 2010, was shot at the end of March 2015 ⁽¹¹⁵⁾. In April 2015 the group claimed responsibility for its most deadly attack after killing 148 people, mainly students, at the Garissa University College Campus in north-eastern Kenya ⁽¹¹⁶⁾. Earlier, in September 2013, Kenya had been targeted in a large-scale attack on the Westgate shopping mall in Nairobi ⁽¹¹⁷⁾.

Internal fissure

In July 2015, during a meeting in Jilib, Al-Shabaab officials were considering merging with the Islamic State (IS) ⁽¹¹⁸⁾, with Deputy Chief Mahad Karate pressuring Al-Shabaab leader Abu Ubaidah to agree to allegiance to IS ⁽¹¹⁹⁾. This led to a split within Al-Shabaab and there were reports of the arrests of senior Al-Shabaab members ⁽¹²⁰⁾ and a battle between two Al-Shabaab factions near Saakow in November 2015 ⁽¹²¹⁾.

In October 2015, a senior Al-Shabaab commander, Abdulqadir Mumin, and about 20 of his followers in the semi-autonomous Puntland region pledged allegiance to IS ⁽¹²²⁾. In response, Al-Shabaab warned its members against shifting allegiance from Al-Qaeda to IS ⁽¹²³⁾ and reportedly killed a number of pro-IS fighters in Middle Jubba ⁽¹²⁴⁾.

⁽¹⁰⁵⁾ Aljazeera, Al-Shabab claims attack on AU base in Somalia, 26 June 2015; Radio Dalsan, Somali and AU retake Lego from Al-Shabaab, 28 June 2015.

⁽¹⁰⁶⁾ Aljazeera, Al-Shabaab claims ‘scores’ killed in attack on AU troops, 1 September 2015; New Vision, UDPF loses 12 soldiers in Somali attack, 3 September 2015.

⁽¹⁰⁷⁾ Somalia Newsroom, ANALYSIS: AMISOM Vacates 10 Towns in Somalia Amid Al-Shabaab’s Ramadan Attacks [weblog], 3 July 2015; UN Security Council, Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea pursuant to Security Council resolution 2182 (2014): Somalia, 19 October 2015, p. 27.

⁽¹⁰⁸⁾ Security analysis expert, Austria, Interview, BFA Staatendokumentation, 12 November 2015.

⁽¹⁰⁹⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia (S/2015/702), 11 September 2015, pp. 2-3.

⁽¹¹⁰⁾ Security analysis expert, Austria, Interview, BFA Staatendokumentation, 12 November 2015. However, a UNDSS Senior analyst mentions ISIL as possible trainers of this battalion rather than Al-Qaeda.

⁽¹¹¹⁾ UK Parliament, House of Commons Library, Somalia: September 2015, 9 September 2015.

⁽¹¹²⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea pursuant to Security Council resolution 2182 (2014): Somalia, 19 October 2015, p. 27.

⁽¹¹³⁾ Bryden, M., The decline and fall of Al-Shabaab? Think Again, April 2015.

⁽¹¹⁴⁾ Weber, A., ‘Al-Shabaab: Youth without God’, June 2015, p. 24.

⁽¹¹⁵⁾ BBC, Uganda Prosecutor in Al-shabab case shot dead, 31 March 2015.

⁽¹¹⁶⁾ Weber, A., ‘Al-Shabaab: Youth without God’, June 2015, p. 14.

⁽¹¹⁷⁾ BBC, Somalia’s al-Shabab claims Nairobi Westgate Kenya attack, 22 September 2013.

⁽¹¹⁸⁾ Somalia, AU forces enter Bardera town after heavy fighting, 22 July 2015.

⁽¹¹⁹⁾ Somalia: Fissures emerge within Al-Shabaab for merger with ISIL, 15 October 2015.

⁽¹²⁰⁾ AMISOM Daily Media Monitoring: Al-Shabaab Detains Two Of Its Senior Officers [Source: Radio Dalsan], 25 October 2015.

⁽¹²¹⁾ Garowe Online, ISIL loyalty sparks off deadly battle in southern Somalia, 12 November 2015.

⁽¹²²⁾ Reuters, Small group of Somali Al-Shabaab swear allegiance to Islamic State, 23 October 2015.

⁽¹²³⁾ Mareeg Media, Somalia: Al-Shabaab warns members against joining IS, 25 November 2015; Star (The), Threat to behead IS, 25 November 2015.

⁽¹²⁴⁾ Voice of America (VoA), Suspected Leader of Pro-IS Al-Shabab Faction Reported Killed, 22 November 2015.

Although reports indicate that the number of Al-Shabaab fighters who pledged allegiance to IS is increasing ⁽¹²⁵⁾, others say that a massive shift to IS is unlikely due to the fact that the number of pro-IS fighters is not more than a few hundred ⁽¹²⁶⁾.

Al-Shabaab North-East (ASNE)

Armed groups affiliated with Al-Shabaab are operating mainly in the Golis (or Galgala) Mountains in Sanaag region, headed by an 'Amir' from the UK, Abdulqadir Mumin ⁽¹²⁷⁾. In October 2014 the UN Monitoring Group reported an increased presence and movement of Al-Shabaab North-East (ASNE) throughout Puntland ⁽¹²⁸⁾. Although Puntland Forces launched a renewed offensive at the end of 2014 (see also 2.11.2), ASNE's operational capacity does not appear to have been seriously affected ⁽¹²⁹⁾.

On 24 December 2015 heavy fighting broke out between Mumin and his followers, who had pledged allegiance to IS, and fighters of Al-Shabaab aligned with Al-Qaeda (see previous [section on Al-Shabaab](#)) ⁽¹³⁰⁾.

Ahlu Sunna wal Jamaa (ASWJ)

Ahlu Sunna wal Jamaa (ASWJ) is a pro-government militia that has significantly contributed to the relative security in the areas under its control. However, in November 2014 a conflict erupted between a faction of ASWJ, the so-called Sufa group, and the Somali National Army (SNA) in the regional capital of Galgaduud, Dhuusamarreeb ⁽¹³¹⁾.

On 11 February 2015, at least 16 people were killed and 14 others wounded during an armed confrontation between both parties in the town of Guricel, 400 km north of the capital Mogadishu ⁽¹³²⁾. On 7 June 2015, ASWJ overran Dhuusamarreeb, the capital of the Galgaduud Region, after SNA troops withdrew from the city ⁽¹³³⁾. The group refused to pull out despite calls for a peaceful solution ⁽¹³⁴⁾ and remained in control of Dhuusamarreeb and the northern part of Galgaduud ⁽¹³⁵⁾.

Sool, Sanaag and Cayn (SSC) and/or Khatumo State militias

In January 2012 the political elite and elders of the Dhulbahante clan declared the establishment of the so-called Khatumo State. The self-declared state is a follow-up of the Sool, Sanaag and Cayn (SSC) region which never became operational. Its borders roughly correspond to the land of the Dhulbahante clan. Although Khatumo State's territorial claims include portions of Sanaag region, it controls little of this territory. The coastal zones of Sanaag are inhabited by the Warsengali clan which has not expressed interest in joining Khatumo State and maintains its own militias. Khatumo State has its own militia as well but its governance structure is not operational yet ⁽¹³⁶⁾.

⁽¹²⁵⁾ Daily Nation, Fear as Islamic State fighters 'invade' village in Somalia, 11 December 2015.

⁽¹²⁶⁾ Hiiraan Online, Al-Shabab Officials Threatens Pro-Islamic State Fighters, 25 November 2015; Security analysis expert, Austria, Interview, BFA Staatendokumentation, 12 November 2015.

⁽¹²⁷⁾ Bryden, M., The decline and fall of Al-Shabaab? Think Again, April 2015, p. 7; Menkhaus, K., Conflict Assessment 2014: Northern Kenya and Somaliland, March 2015, p. 55. Mumin defected to IS in October 2015.

⁽¹²⁸⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea pursuant to Security Council resolution 2111 (2013) (S/2014/726), 13 October 2014, p. 69.

⁽¹²⁹⁾ Bryden, M., The decline and fall of Al-Shabaab? Think Again, April 2015, pp. 7-8.

⁽¹³⁰⁾ Garowe Online, Somalia: Pro-ISIL militants, clash in deadly Puntland infighting, 24 December 2015.

⁽¹³¹⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea pursuant to Security Council resolution 2182 (2014): Somalia, 19 October 2015.

⁽¹³²⁾ Aljazeera, Somali Troops in deadly clashes with Sufi fighters, 11 February 2015.

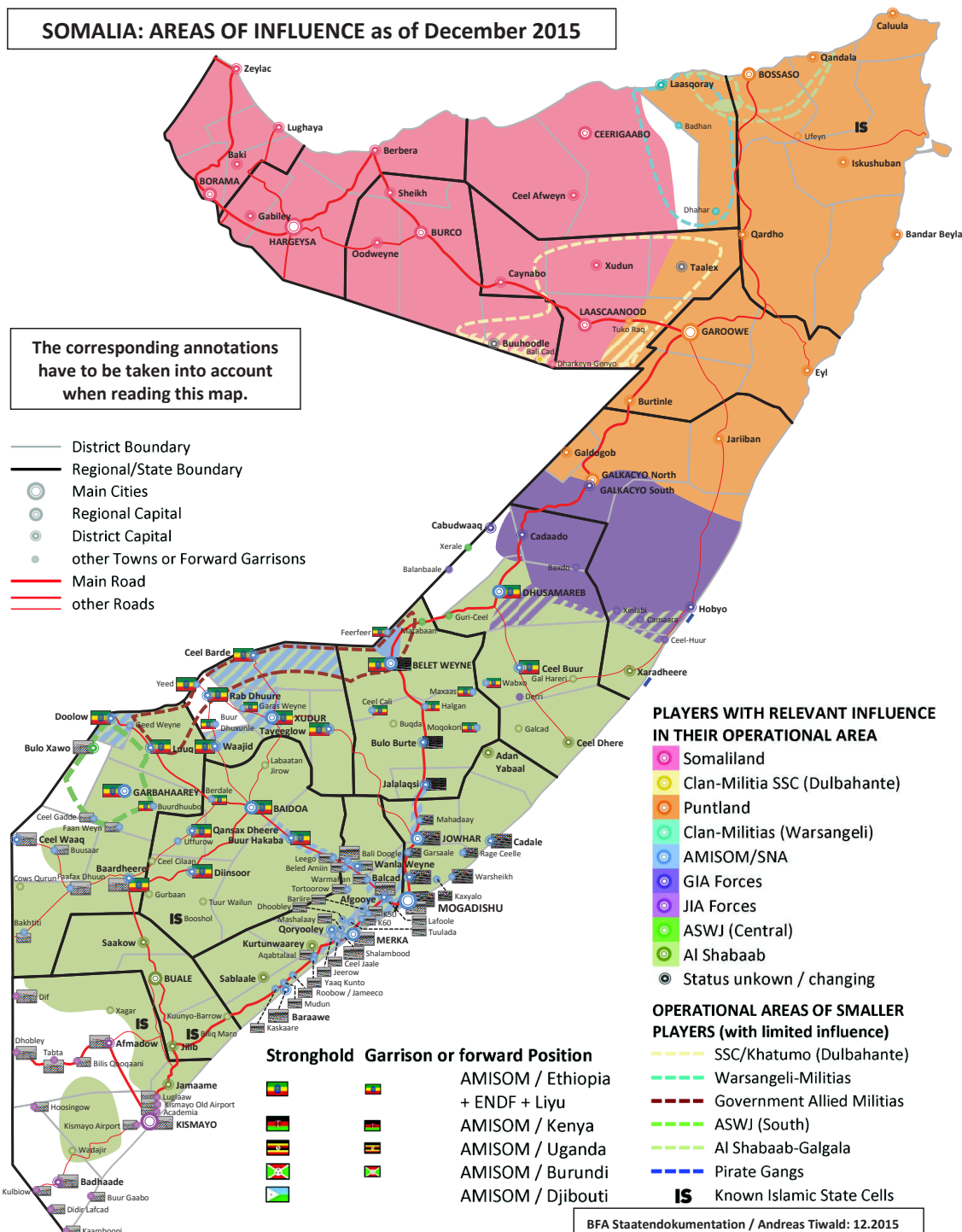
⁽¹³³⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea pursuant to Security Council resolution 2182 (2014): Somalia, 19 October 2015, p. 54.

⁽¹³⁴⁾ Garowe Online, Somalia: Paramilitary groups refuses to step back amid calls for dialogue, 9 June 2015.

⁽¹³⁵⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea pursuant to Security Council resolution 2182 (2014): Somalia, 19 October 2015, p. 13.

⁽¹³⁶⁾ Hoehne, Markus Vigil, Between Somaliland and Puntland Marginalization, militarization and conflicting political visions, 2015, pp. 99-107; Menkhaus, K., Conflict Assessment 2014: Northern Kenya and Somaliland, March 2015.

1.2.4. Map of areas of influence and AMISOM garrisons in Somalia



Source map: BFA Staatendokumentation/ Andreas Tiwald, December 2015 ⁽¹³⁷⁾. This map should be read and interpreted in conjunction with the annotations and comments listed below.

⁽¹³⁷⁾ BFA Staatendokumentation/ Andreas Tiwald, Somalia: Areas of Influence in Somalia [map], December 2015. The following sources have been used to create this map (and the one in section 2.7.4):

- Security Analysis Organisation: periodic reports; this organisation is working with and in Somalia for many years. The sole task of this organisation is to monitor and analyse the security situation in Somalia. The source uses its own informants and open sources.
- Security Analysis Department: periodic reports; this department is working with and in Somalia for more than 20 years. One of the tasks of this department is the monitoring and analysis of the security situation in Somalia with a special focus on the security of its own staff. The source mainly uses its own informants.
- Security Analysis Expert: interview, November 2015; this expert has been working on Somalia for several years and possesses profound knowledge about the security situation in the Horn of Africa. The expert visits the region regularly. This Security Analysis Expert has also been used as a primary source for this report.

Annotations

To aid readability of the maps, the different actors on the Somali security situation are categorised as follows:

- In the fully coloured areas of the map, the respective actors have significant influence. They have resources to guarantee their influence. Those actors are: Somaliland, Puntland, the Galmudug Interim Administration (GIA), AMISOM and the Somali National Army (SNA), the Jubbaland Interim Administration (JIA), Al-Shabaab and Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a (ASWJ) in Central Somalia. Some cities or villages are governed by other parties: the clan militia SSC (Dulbahante; Khatumo), the clan militias of the Warsangeli, ASWJ in Gedo region, clan militias bordering Ethiopia (in Gedo, Bakool and Hiiraan). Some areas – especially in South and Central Somalia – are influenced by two of those relevant parties.
- In areas surrounded by interrupted lines, there are additional parties with restricted influence. They act in addition to the abovementioned main parties and they only have limited resources.

Comments on the markings in the map:

- In Puntland and Jubbaland, cells of the 'Islamic State' (IS, also known as 'Daesh') have been marked, on the basis of anecdotal reports concerning bigger groups of AS defectors.
- Some of the smaller Al-Shabaab villages are marked on the basis of anecdotal reports.
- Concerning the towns of Buuhoodle (Togdheer) and Taalex (Sool), there are different reports and information that do not provide a basis for linking them to a relevant actor (Somaliland, Puntland, pro-Puntland militias, pro-Somaliland militias, SSC militia).
- The map does not indicate an AMISOM garrison in Qoryooley. Nevertheless, there is a garrison for AMISOM in place, and troops are attached to Qoryooley. However, those troops do not seem to be attached on a permanent basis; this is why Qoryooley is the only AMISOM-controlled district capital without a marked garrison (although there is a garrison of SNA).
- Dhuusamarreeb is marked as AMISOM/SNG because the Ethiopian AMISOM garrison is the main relevant party in town. However, political control in Dhuusamarreeb in December 2015 was still with ASWJ.
- The same applies for the towns of Ceel Buur and Wabxo: They might be under political control of the GIA but the main relevant party in town is AMISOM.
- The same applies for towns in Gedo: They might be under political control of the JIA; however, it is still not known if Kismayo controls the army in Gedo and the main relevant party is AMISOM.
- Ethiopian flags mark not only Ethiopian AMISOM garrisons but also Ethiopian troops outside the AMISOM mandate as well as Ethiopian Liyu police. The latter is mainly operating within the area marked 'Government Allied Militias' along the Ethiopian border.
- While Kenyan, Burundian, Ugandan and Djiboutian garrisons seem to be broadly covered, there might be some more Ethiopian garrisons than shown on the map. It is not possible to get a clear picture of the abovementioned Ethiopian troops outside AMISOM.
- All AMISOM-garrisons marked as 'strongholds' can be regarded as permanent. They are very unlikely to fall to Al-Shabaab.
- Most AMISOM-garrisons marked as '(forward) position' are of tactical importance and most of them seem to be permanent. However, as was shown in the past, they are more likely to be vacated when under pressure from Al-Shabaab.

1.3. Armed confrontations

The period of review was characterised by two major military operations against Al-Shabaab, respectively called 'Operation Indian Ocean' and 'Operation Jubba Corridor'. In both operations AMISOM did not face a lot of resistance due to tactical withdrawals by Al-Shabaab ⁽¹³⁸⁾.

⁽¹³⁸⁾ Roble, M.A., 'Al-Shabaab has changed its tactics. AMISOM must do so too', 9 September 2015.

1.3.1. Operation Indian Ocean

Operation Indian Ocean was launched in late August 2014 as a follow-up military offensive to Operation Eagle earlier that year ⁽¹³⁹⁾. The purpose of the operation was to end Al-Shabaab's control of coastal towns and to cut off its sources of revenue raised through port operations and taxes on goods ⁽¹⁴⁰⁾.

On 30 August 2014 the SNA, aided by AMISOM, took control of the strategic town of Buulo Marer after a fierce battle ⁽¹⁴¹⁾. One month later Baraawe was captured without any resistance after Al-Shabaab fled without a fight ⁽¹⁴²⁾. As mentioned in [section 1.2.3](#), this town was vital as it served as a base for a lucrative charcoal business. SNA and AMISOM also drove Al-Shabaab out of Tiyeeglow district, an important logistical hub located approximately 480 km north-west of Mogadishu in the Bakool region ⁽¹⁴³⁾.

Although Operation Indian Ocean was initially quite successful, in the first half of 2015 AMISOM lost momentum which led to a resurgence of Al-Shabaab and a number of spectacular attacks in Mogadishu, Kismayo and Garoowe. This was caused, according to DIIS, by the disarray in the AMISOM headquarters, the limitation of troops and the diverging national interests of neighbouring countries Kenya and Ethiopia ⁽¹⁴⁴⁾.

1.3.2. Operation Jubba Corridor

On 19 July 2015, after the large-scale Ramadan attacks at two AMISOM bases, AMISOM announced the resumption of its military operations against Al-Shabaab. This offensive, codenamed Operation Jubba Corridor, aimed to weaken Al-Shabaab further by removing its fighters from their strongholds in the Gedo, Bakool and Bay regions of Somalia ⁽¹⁴⁵⁾.

Three days after this announcement AMISOM and SNA took control of Baardheere, Al-Shabaab's last main stronghold in the Gedo region ⁽¹⁴⁶⁾. On 24 July 2015 another stronghold of Al-Shabaab, Diinsoor in the Bay region, was taken by AMISOM and SNA ⁽¹⁴⁷⁾.

Although in both operations, as in Operation Eagle, AMISOM 'managed to deprive Al-Shabaab of territory, they did not succeed in depriving it of its assets such as fighters and weapons or weaken its military command' ⁽¹⁴⁸⁾. Due to overstretched resources AMISOM could not maintain a presence in every town and village ⁽¹⁴⁹⁾, allowing Al-Shabaab to regroup in the rural areas and concentrate on asymmetrical actions to destabilise the captured towns ⁽¹⁵⁰⁾.

1.3.3. Other armed confrontations

Besides these two major operations executed by AMISOM, and Al-Shabaab's Ramadan 2015 attacks, other armed clashes with Al-Shabaab occurred. For example, in October 2014 Jubbaland forces clashed with Al-Shabaab fighters in the outskirts of Kismayo ⁽¹⁵¹⁾ and Puntland forces launched a renewed offensive in the Galgala Mountains in October and December 2014 (see [section 2.11.2](#)) ⁽¹⁵²⁾. As a consequence of the ongoing armed conflict with Al-Shabaab, the UN Monitoring Group reported in October 2015: 'As both the fight against Al-Shabaab and the group's grip on populations still under its control intensified, violations against civilians rose, with both sides using weapons and tactics that resulted in large civilian and military casualties' ⁽¹⁵³⁾.

⁽¹³⁹⁾ UN Security Council, October 2014 Monthly Forecast – Somalia, 30 September 2014.

⁽¹⁴⁰⁾ Roble, M.A., 'Al-Shabaab: On the Back Foot but Still Dangerous' 23 January 2015, p. 7.

⁽¹⁴¹⁾ Garowe Online, Somali, AU troops squeeze Al-Shabaab out of Bullo Marer, 30 August 2014.

⁽¹⁴²⁾ Reuters, UPDATE 4-African Union Sources and Somali forces claim Shabaab stronghold of Barawe, 5 October 2014.

⁽¹⁴³⁾ Roble, M.A., 'Al-Shabaab: On the Back Foot but Still Dangerous' 23 January 2015, p. 7.

⁽¹⁴⁴⁾ DIIS, Fragmented peacekeeping: regional interests define the African Union mission in Somalia, November 2015.

⁽¹⁴⁵⁾ AMISOM, Update on Operation on Jubba Corridor, 25 July 2015.

⁽¹⁴⁶⁾ Reuters, Somalia says captures strategic city held by Al-Shabaab, 23 July 2015.

⁽¹⁴⁷⁾ Reuters, African Union, Somali troops capture second southern town from Al-Shabaab, 24 July 2015.

⁽¹⁴⁸⁾ Roble, M.A., 'Al-Shabaab has changed its tactics. AMISOM must do so too', 9 September 2015.

⁽¹⁴⁹⁾ DIIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process, September 2015, p. 8.

⁽¹⁵⁰⁾ Roble, M.A., 'Al-Shabaab has changed its tactics. AMISOM must do so too', 9 September 2015.

⁽¹⁵¹⁾ Garowe online, Somalia: Jubaland forces clash with Al-Shabaab, Militants take over village, 26 October 2014.

⁽¹⁵²⁾ Garowe online, Somalia: Bad weather hampers advance in Galgala-Puntland Army Chief, 1 March 2015.

⁽¹⁵³⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea pursuant to Security Council resolution 2182 (2014): Somalia, 19 October 2015, p. 15.

Besides the fights with Al-Shabaab, other armed confrontations were reported during the reference period. For example, government troops and ASWJ clashed with each other in Guriceel in February 2015 ⁽¹⁵⁴⁾, and Somali militia and Ethiopian paramilitary forces, known as Liyu Police, clashed in the Galgaduud region in May/June 2015 ⁽¹⁵⁵⁾. Inter- and intra-clan conflicts over land and water resources were reported in Somaliland, Puntland and most other parts of Central and South Somalia ⁽¹⁵⁶⁾. For a more detailed and comprehensive overview of armed confrontations by region see the respective sections in Chapter 2.

1.3.4. Impact on the population

Several sources interviewed by DIS in May 2015 stated that Al-Shabaab performed violent attacks in towns it does not control, mainly on persons or institutions representing the international community including AMISOM and the UN, the Somalia Federal Government (SFG) and those supporting, or perceived to be supporting, them ⁽¹⁵⁷⁾.

UNHCR Somalia and a humanitarian international NGO, interviewed by DIS in May 2015, stated that there was a lack of reports from areas under Al-Shabaab's control due to limited access. As such, it should be noted that the information from these areas is to some extent uncertain. There are reports of infighting, arbitrary arrests, abductions, forced recruitment, forced marriages to Al-Shabaab and accusations of espionage leading to severe punishment ⁽¹⁵⁸⁾.

The COI unit of the Swedish Migration Agency, Lifos, reported in April 2015 that in the areas controlled by Al-Shabaab there were generally fewer armed clashes but that 'conflict in these areas primarily evinces human rights violations, like forced recruitments, forced marriages to Al-Shabaab members and the risk of being accused of espionage' ⁽¹⁵⁹⁾.

The UN Security Council reported that the security situation remained extremely volatile, particularly in South and Central Somalia ⁽¹⁶⁰⁾. In October 2015 the UN Monitoring Group reported that the conflict with Al-Shabaab showed an increase of violations against civilians and a large number of civilian and military casualties ⁽¹⁶¹⁾. Also the conflict between Puntland and Somaliland over the disputed regions in Sool and Sanaag resulted in civilian casualties ⁽¹⁶²⁾. According to UNHCR, in November 2015 the number of IDPs in Somalia was estimated at 1,100,000, including an estimated 369,000 in Mogadishu ⁽¹⁶³⁾.

Transport and food security

The violence has an impact on travel possibilities: Somalis do travel by road, though the risks are carefully weighed against the necessity of the trip ⁽¹⁶⁴⁾.

In December 2015, one million people were in a status of humanitarian emergency and crisis and 3.9 million in food security stress. This situation was aggravated by seasonal flooding in the riverine areas (Hiraan, Lower and Middle Jubba, and Lower and Middle Shabelle), which put 145,000 people in need of food aid ⁽¹⁶⁵⁾.

Households in riverine areas were vulnerable to emergency-level food insecurity during the October-to-December *Deyr* rains, as more than average rainfall resulted in additional flooding while below-average rain caused poor

⁽¹⁵⁴⁾ VoA, 12 Killed in Islamist Group Attack on Somalia Town, 10 February 2015.

⁽¹⁵⁵⁾ Hiiraan online, At least 50 killed in clashes between Somali, Ethiopian militias on border, 2 June 2015.

⁽¹⁵⁶⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea pursuant to Security Council resolution 2182 (2014): Somalia, 19 October 2015, p. 37.

⁽¹⁵⁷⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia – Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process [sources: International organisation working in S/C Somalia (A), International organisation working in S/C Somalia (B), International organisation working in S/C Somalia (C), Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia], September 2015, p. 11.

⁽¹⁵⁸⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process [sources: UNHCR Somalia, Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia], September 2015, pp. 16-19.

⁽¹⁵⁹⁾ Lifos (Migrationsverket), Säkerhetssituationen i södra och centrala Somalia, 29 April 2015, p. 6.

⁽¹⁶⁰⁾ UN Security Council, Children and armed conflict: report of the Secretary-General (A/69/926–S/2015/409), 5 June 2015, p. 25.

⁽¹⁶¹⁾ UN Security Council, Letter dated 9 October 2015 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea addressed to the President of the Security Council, 19 October 2015, p. 37.

⁽¹⁶²⁾ UN Human Rights Council, Report of the Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Somalia, 28 October 2015, p. 4.

⁽¹⁶³⁾ UNHCR, Somalia: Total IDPs by Region - November 2015, 7 December 2015.

⁽¹⁶⁴⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process, September 2015, p. 18.

⁽¹⁶⁵⁾ UN OCHA, Humanitarian Bulletin Somalia December 2015, 18 December 2015.

harvests. Flooding in riverine areas prevented harvesting, hindered humanitarian access, and limited trade, resulting in limited food access and increased food prices ⁽¹⁶⁶⁾. The below average *Gu* harvest in August/September 2015 put especially poor households in these areas in crisis ⁽¹⁶⁷⁾.

1.4. Impact on State, Law and Order

1.4.1. The Judiciary

The provisional constitution of SFG provides for a judicial framework that includes the creation of a constitutional court, federal government courts, and federal member state courts but these institutions have yet to be established ⁽¹⁶⁸⁾. As a result the judicial system is an amalgam of state law, clan-based customary law (*xeer*) and Islamic law ⁽¹⁶⁹⁾. Most conflicts and crimes are dealt through *xeer*, the clan-based customary law system in which payment of compensation (*diya*) is central ⁽¹⁷⁰⁾. The main challenge is the limitation of qualified staff and the capacity to manage an increasing caseload ⁽¹⁷¹⁾.

The regional governments of the self-declared Republic of Somaliland and Puntland are in control of their own respective jurisdictions. Although functional courts in Somaliland in Puntland exist, both administrations are facing capacity problems ⁽¹⁷²⁾. The Academy for Peace and Development, a research institute in Somaliland, reported that courts in Somaliland are influenced by clan-based nepotism ⁽¹⁷³⁾. In Somaliland and Puntland, the judiciary is a mixture of customary law (*xeer*), Islamic law and formal law ⁽¹⁷⁴⁾, and in Puntland *xeer* prevails ⁽¹⁷⁵⁾.

The Jubbaland Administration ⁽¹⁷⁶⁾, formerly called Interim Jubba Administration (IJA), and the Interim South-West Administration (ISWA) are partially in control of their respective jurisdictions ⁽¹⁷⁷⁾.

In the areas controlled by Al-Shabaab there is no functioning formal judicial system. In these areas there is strict interpretation of the Sharia law, according to a 2015 US Department of State report ⁽¹⁷⁸⁾. Al-Shabaab carried out public lashings, beheadings, stonings and amputations, and there have been numerous allegations from community members, international experts and Muslim scholars that Sharia law is misinterpreted and executed wrongly in various ways ⁽¹⁷⁹⁾.

1.4.2. Security forces and State protection

The US Department of State reported in its Country Report on Human Rights Practices for 2014 on Somalia: ‘Civilian authorities did not maintain effective control over the security forces’ ⁽¹⁸⁰⁾. Furthermore, several sources reported that Somali government security forces were responsible for indiscriminate attacks, sexual violence and arbitrary arrests and detention ⁽¹⁸¹⁾.

The US Department of State also mentioned in its report that SFG largely failed to provide security and protect rights in areas under its control: ‘Civilians continue to suffer from conflicted-related abuses, including killings, displacement,

⁽¹⁶⁶⁾ USAID Somalia, Somalia - Complex Emergency Factsheet #4, 17 August 2015.

⁽¹⁶⁷⁾ FEWS NET, Food Security Outlook Update, September 2015.

⁽¹⁶⁸⁾ Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2015 - Somalia, n.d.

⁽¹⁶⁹⁾ CIA, The World Factbook Somalia, last updated 8 December 2015; CISP, The complexity of sexual and gender-based violence: Insights from Mogadishu and South Central Somalia, October 2015, p. 22.

⁽¹⁷⁰⁾ EASO, COI report - South and Central Somalia Country overview, August 2014, p. 28.

⁽¹⁷¹⁾ UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Human Rights and Democracy Report 2014 - Somalia, 12 March 2015.

⁽¹⁷²⁾ US DoS, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2014 – Somalia, 25 June 2015.

⁽¹⁷³⁾ Interpeace/ADP, Somaliland's Progress Towards Peace: Mapping The Community Perspective, August 2015, p. 61.

⁽¹⁷⁴⁾ Human Right Center, Somaliland Government: Accountable to no one – Annual Report on Human Rights Situation in Somaliland Volume 2 2014, 9 December 2014, p. 19; Interpeace/ADP, Somaliland's Progress Towards Peace: Mapping The Community Perspective, August 2015, p. 63.

⁽¹⁷⁵⁾ PUNSA, Research on Human Rights' Situation in Puntland 2015, p. 2.

⁽¹⁷⁶⁾ UNDSS Security analyst, e-mail, 26 January 2016.

⁽¹⁷⁷⁾ US DoS, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2014 – Somalia, 25 June 2015.

⁽¹⁷⁸⁾ US DoS, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2014 – Somalia, 25 June 2015.

⁽¹⁷⁹⁾ Mellgard, E., Backgrounder: What is al-Shabaab? 22 April 2015.

⁽¹⁸⁰⁾ US DoS, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2014 – Somalia, 25 June 2015.

⁽¹⁸¹⁾ AI, Amnesty International Report 2014/15 – Somalia, 25 February 2015; HRW, World Report 2015 - Somalia, n.d.

and the diversion of confiscation of humanitarian assistance by armed groups, principally al-Shabaab’⁽¹⁸²⁾. Human Rights Watch (HRW) reported on the events of 2014 that SFG ‘largely failed to provide security and protect rights in areas under its control’⁽¹⁸³⁾.

The Independent Expert to the UN Human Rights Council concluded in his October 2015 report:

‘Overall, the situation of human rights in Somalia remains dire. Violations of freedom of expression, widespread reports of sexual violence and the continued use of the death penalty remain major concerns. Activities of the militant group Al-Shabaab disproportionately affect the civilian population and pose a threat to sustainable peace in Somalia. Reports of civilian casualties and displacements in the context of military operations conducted against Al-Shabaab persist. Similarly, the humanitarian situation is alarming and yet funding to meet humanitarian needs in Somalia appears to be declining’⁽¹⁸⁴⁾.

1.4.3. Detention and death penalty

Detention conditions are generally considered to be very poor. In February 2015 the UK Home Office reported: ‘Conditions in most prisons in Somalia, Somaliland and Puntland, including those administered by Al-Shabaab, are harsh with reports of poor levels of sanitation, overcrowding and disease; inadequate medical facilities; extensive use of lengthy pre-trial detention and the use of torture and other forms of ill-treatment’⁽¹⁸⁵⁾.

The US Department of State concluded in its Country Report on Human Rights Practices for 2014 that the conditions in detention centres were harsh and life-threatening, but living conditions in Puntland and Somaliland prisons were generally better than in other parts of the country⁽¹⁸⁶⁾.

Somalia, Puntland and Somaliland all carry out the death penalty⁽¹⁸⁷⁾. Amnesty International reported 14 executions and 52 death sentences in Somalia in 2014⁽¹⁸⁸⁾. Although the exact number of death penalties performed in Puntland is unknown, it continues to happen. Most cases are related to terrorism (i.e. Al-Shabaab members) or clan rivalry⁽¹⁸⁹⁾. The Human Rights Centre Somaliland reported in its annual report for 2015 that seven people are known to have been executed⁽¹⁹⁰⁾.

1.5. Geographical overview of the security situation

As mentioned earlier, the security situation in Somalia is still volatile. Nevertheless, differences can be distinguished among the various regions. Somaliland is considered relatively peaceful⁽¹⁹¹⁾, while the situation in Puntland and certain parts of Central and South Somalia is less stable and under threat from inter- and intra-clan fighting and Al-Shabaab attacks⁽¹⁹²⁾. According to DIS, the situation in South/Central Somalia is ‘fluid and unpredictable in particular regarding the security situation’⁽¹⁹³⁾.

1.5.1. Mogadishu

Some sources reported that the security situation in the capital Mogadishu was improving⁽¹⁹⁴⁾ and it was unlikely that Al-Shabaab would retake the capital⁽¹⁹⁵⁾. According to an international organisation, interviewed by DIS in

⁽¹⁸²⁾ US DoS, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2014 – Somalia, 25 June 2015.

⁽¹⁸³⁾ HRW, World Report 2015 - Somalia, n.d.

⁽¹⁸⁴⁾ UN Human Rights Council, Report of the Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Somalia, 28 October 2015, A/HRC/30/57.

⁽¹⁸⁵⁾ UK Home Office, Country Information and Guidance - Somalia: Prison Conditions, February 2015.

⁽¹⁸⁶⁾ US DoS, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2014 – Somalia, 25 June 2015.

⁽¹⁸⁷⁾ US DoS, Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2014 – Somalia, 25 June 2015.

⁽¹⁸⁸⁾ AI, Death sentences and executions in 2014, n.d.

⁽¹⁸⁹⁾ PUNSA, Research on Human Rights’ Situation in Puntland 2015, p. 4.

⁽¹⁹⁰⁾ HRC, Human Rights Centre Annual Review – Somaliland 2015, 9 December 2015, p. 7.

⁽¹⁹¹⁾ ICG, Somaliland: The Strains of Success, 5 October 2015, p. 1.

⁽¹⁹²⁾ DANIDA, Denmark – Somalia/Partnership Policy 2015-2017, March 2015, p. 6; BFA Staatendokumentation/Andreas Tiwald, Analyse zu Somalia – Lagekarten zur Sicherheitslage, 12 October 2015, see also the [Map of Somalia](#).

⁽¹⁹³⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process, September 2015, p. 8.

⁽¹⁹⁴⁾ Reuters, Somali Islamists warn against ‘immoral culture’ at hotels, beaches, 2 September 2015; Mareeg, Mogadishu, Somalia: Africa’s fastest growing economic City, 23 November 2015; Guardian (The), Where is the fastest growing city in the world?, 18 November 2015; Horseed Media: Somalia: Security stepped up in Mogadishu over fears of Ramadan attacks by militants, 18 June 2015.

⁽¹⁹⁵⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process, September 2015, p. 8.

May 2015, ‘in Mogadishu there is a presence of AMISOM, SNAF, the police and NISA. The town is generally secure, yet there still is a constant threat from AlShabaab’ ⁽¹⁹⁶⁾. Improvement was already reflected in a more optimistic perception of safety by Mogadishu residents by the Heritage Institute for Policy Studies in September 2014 (see also [section 1.5.1](#)) ⁽¹⁹⁷⁾.

In October 2015 the Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior published a security analysis for Somalia, and Mogadishu in particular. The number of incidents showed a downward trend in Mogadishu during the reference period ⁽¹⁹⁸⁾. However, there were still attacks on a weekly basis ⁽¹⁹⁹⁾.

1.5.2. Other parts of Somalia

In the aforementioned Austrian security overview (October 2015), a comparison was made of all types of armed clashes during the periods July 2014 to June 2015 and January 2011 to December 2014. According to this overview, the situation deteriorated between July 2014 and June 2015 in the following districts and regions:

- Laascaanood and Buuhoodle (Somaliland, Sool);
- Dhusamareb and Ceel Buur (Galgaduud);
- Belet Weyne and Bulo Burte (Hiiraan);
- Wanla Weyne, Afgooye, Qoryooley, Merka and Baraawe (Lower Shabelle);
- Baidoa and Burhakaba (Bay);
- Zudur, Waajid and Rab Dhuure (Bakool);
- Bulo Xawo (Gedo);
- Kismayo (Lower Jubba).

Improvements were noticed in the districts Ceel Waaq and Luuq (Gedo), while all other areas were considered more or less stable due to the low number of relevant incidents ⁽²⁰⁰⁾.

⁽¹⁹⁶⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process [source: International organisation working in S/C Somalia (C)] September 2015, p. 49.

⁽¹⁹⁷⁾ Heritage Institute for Policy Studies, Security Justice in Mogadishu, September 2014.

⁽¹⁹⁸⁾ BFA Staatendokumentation/Andreas Tiwald, Analyse zu Somalia – Lagekarten zur Sicherheitslage, 12 October 2015, p. 22.

⁽¹⁹⁹⁾ BFA Staatendokumentation/Andreas Tiwald, Analyse zu Somalia – Lagekarten zur Sicherheitslage, 12 October 2015, p. 22; Lifos (Migrationsverket), Säkerhetssituationen i södra och centrala Somalia, 29 April 2015, p. 6.

⁽²⁰⁰⁾ BFA Staatendokumentation/Andreas Tiwald, Analyse zu Somalia – Lagekarten zur Sicherheitslage, 12 October 2015, p. 17.

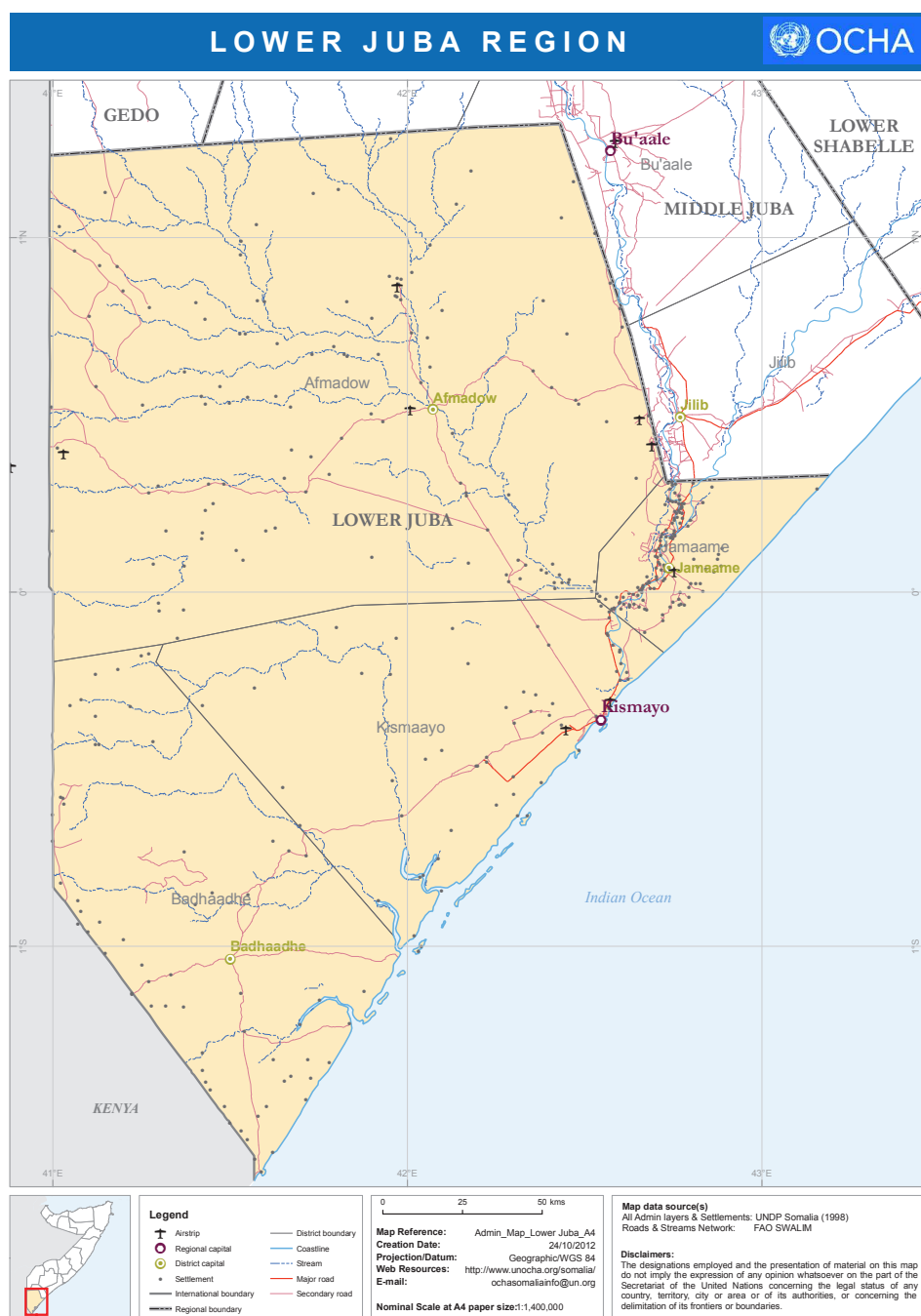
2. Security situation per region

In this chapter, the security situation by region is described during the reporting period, including the kind of violence and the actors involved, the areas of control (or influence) and the impact on the local population, including access to food.

The regions are listed from south to north and subdivided into: South Somalia, Central Somalia and Northern Somalia.

South Somalia

2.1. Lower Jubba



Source map: UN OCHA, Administrative maps [regional maps of South and Central Somalia], 2012.

2.1.1. Short description of the region

Lower Jubba is the southern-most region of Somalia, bordering with Kenya to the west, with Gedo to the north and with Middle Jubba to the north-east. The region covers four districts: Kismayo, Jamaame, Afmadow and Badhaadhe. The regional capital is the seaport city of Kismayo. Other urban areas include Buur Gaabo, Dhobley, Tabta, Xagar, Bilis Qooqaani. The Bajuni Islands belong to the region as well.

According to Lewis (1955) ⁽²⁰¹⁾, the main population groups stem from the Darood clan family: Ogaden and Harti with a Biyomaal group from the Dir clan family. Abikar (1999) ⁽²⁰²⁾ adds Abgaal from the Hawiye clan family.

According to a representative of an international NGO interviewed by DIS (May 2015), Kismayo is one of the most complicated towns in Somalia with regard to clan composition. Due to massive displacement and population movements during the past 25 years, a complex clan composition has been created. As a result, the largest number of clan conflicts in South/Central Somalia take place in Kismaayo ⁽²⁰³⁾.

The Population Estimation Survey conducted by UN Population Fund and Somali authorities (October 2014) estimates the population of the Lower Jubba region at 489,307 inhabitants, of which 172,861 are urban, 161,512 are rural, 124,334 are nomads and 30,600 are IDPs ⁽²⁰⁴⁾.

2.1.2. Violence

Although improved, the security situation in Kismayo remains volatile. SNA and AMISOM continue to be targeted by Al-Shabaab attacks, often resulting in civilian casualties ⁽²⁰⁵⁾. As a main pattern of violence, hit-and-run and ambushes targeting AMISOM and Jubbaland forces were reported; for instance an ambush on a convoy of Kenyan Defense Forces (KDF) in November 2015 killed several KDF soldiers ⁽²⁰⁶⁾. There were attacks against army bases in Kismayo reported in August ⁽²⁰⁷⁾ and November 2015 ⁽²⁰⁸⁾ and on an army base near Afmadow in October 2015 ⁽²⁰⁹⁾. The Interim Jubbaland Administration and AMISOM forces were targeted by landmines in Lower Jubba in May 2015 ⁽²¹⁰⁾. There were also targeted killings of public officials in Kismayo in June-July 2015 ⁽²¹¹⁾. Airstrikes targeted Al-Shabaab bases in Buulo Guduud, Yontoy, Qaanqaan, Jamaame in February 2015 ⁽²¹²⁾ and two Al-Shabaab camps in Anoole, Kuday in April 2015 ⁽²¹³⁾.

Troops of the Interim Jubba administration launched several operations to improve security in Kismayo, such as in May 2015 ⁽²¹⁴⁾ and in August 2015 ⁽²¹⁵⁾, the latter allegedly resulting in civilian casualties. The military offensive along the Jubba river corridor was expected to resume from September onwards. The towns of Saaxo, Bu'aale, Jilib and Jamaame were targeted for military recovery in Middle and Lower Jubba. The offensive was expected to last until the end of the year and even early 2016 ⁽²¹⁶⁾. As of December 2015 no information was available in the consulted sources on the actual restart of the operation.

Moreover, fighting occurred between Jubbaland soldiers and Somali National Army. The former troops were accused of destroying two army bases near Kismayo in October 2015 ⁽²¹⁷⁾.

⁽²⁰¹⁾ EASO, COI report - South and Central Somalia Country Overview [source: Lewis 1955], August 2014, p. 52.

⁽²⁰²⁾ EASO, COI report - South and Central Somalia Country Overview [source: Abikar 1999], August 2014, p. 53.

⁽²⁰³⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process [source: Representative of an International NGO working in S/C Somalia], September 2015, p. 41.

⁽²⁰⁴⁾ UNFPA Population Estimation Survey 2014, Somalia, October 2014, p. 31.

⁽²⁰⁵⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process, [source: UNHCR Somalia], September 2015, p. 27.

⁽²⁰⁶⁾ Shabelle Media Network, Somalia: Al-Shabaab claims killing of Kenyan soldiers in ambush attack, 3 November 2015.

⁽²⁰⁷⁾ VoA, Two Car Bombs Kill 18 in Somalia, 22 August 2015.

⁽²⁰⁸⁾ CrisisWatch Database: Somalia (August 2014-December 2015) n.d., regularly updated.

⁽²⁰⁹⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Al-Shabaab Militants Attack Govt Army Bases Near Afmadow City [source: Shabelle Media], 30 October 2015.

⁽²¹⁰⁾ CrisisWatch Database: Somalia (August 2014-December 2015) n.d., regularly updated.

⁽²¹¹⁾ ACLED, Realtime 2015 All Africa File, updated 28th November 2015.

⁽²¹²⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: 27 Militants Killed in Lower Jubba Airstrikes [source: Sabahi], 4 February 2015.

⁽²¹³⁾ AllAfrica.com, Kenyan Air Strikes 'Destroy' Al-Shabab Camps in Somalia [source: Al Jazeera], 6 April 2015.

⁽²¹⁴⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Jubba Forces Launched an Operation in Kismayo [source: Shabelle Media], 9 May 2015.

⁽²¹⁵⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Five People Shot Dead By Ija Soldiers Outside Kismayo [source: Shabelle Media], 22 August 2015.

⁽²¹⁶⁾ Somalia Protection Cluster, ALERT! and REPORT! –Somalia Protection Cluster reporting, 1 September 2015.

⁽²¹⁷⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Jubbaland Forces Accused of Destroying Somali Military Camps Near Kismayo [source: Shabelle Media] 12 October 2015.

2.1.3. Actors in the conflict

The main actors in the region are Jubbaland (formerly IJA) troops, while the Ras Kamboni militia of the former warlord, now Jubbaland President Ahmed Madobe, was incorporated into this force. There is an ongoing integration process of troops of the Jubbaland administration to the Somali National Army (SNA); in July 2015, 1,350 troops were officially integrated (see also [section 1.2.1](#))⁽²¹⁸⁾. Currently, AMISOM troops are drawn from the Kenya Defence Force and Burundi National Defence Force⁽²¹⁹⁾.

The Ras Kamboni militia controlling Kismayo has incorporated many former Al-Shabaab fighters into its ranks, which, according to the representative of an international NGO interviewed by DIS (May 2015), weakened Al-Shabaab in Kismayo⁽²²⁰⁾. However, there have been several attacks on Kismayo in the reporting period, showing, according to a UNDSS security analyst, that AS maintains an active, albeit covert, presence in Kismayo⁽²²¹⁾. Al-Shabaab remains active in the area, mainly in the rural area in the north of the region, along the regional border with Middle Jubba⁽²²²⁾.

The Marehan militia, led by former warlord Barre Hiirale, is outside Kismaayo⁽²²³⁾, in the Gobweyn area⁽²²⁴⁾.

2.1.4. Areas of control/influence

As of September 2015, KDF forces deployed under AMISOM held control over Dhobley, Tabta, Dif, Afmadow, Badhade and Kulbiow near the border with Kenya⁽²²⁵⁾. According to a humanitarian international NGO working in South-Central Somalia interviewed by DIS (May 2015), in Kismayo, AMISOM and local militias have secured an area of 5 to 10 km from the town centre. Anywhere outside that area is controlled by Al-Shabaab⁽²²⁶⁾. Another international organisation interviewed by DIS indicated that the Jubbaland administration is supported by Kenyan AMISOM troops and claims control of the town including a 12 km radius around it⁽²²⁷⁾.

According to the assessment made by The Observatory of Conflict and Violence Prevention in January 2015, formal security in Kismayo is delivered by a combination of the police (from Jubbaland Defense Forces⁽²²⁸⁾) and the military, supported by AMISOM troops. Security threats in Kismayo come from the possible presence of Al-Shabaab, clan-based fighting, and land and family disputes. There has been a decrease in incidences of conflict and violence in Kismayo⁽²²⁹⁾.

Al-Shabaab has managed to exploit clan tension in the city of Kismayo and gain support within certain minority groups. The city is still very vulnerable to sporadic attacks by the militant group and many surrounding villages are still influenced by Al-Shabaab⁽²³⁰⁾. Al-Shabaab is in complete control of Jamaame⁽²³¹⁾.

⁽²¹⁸⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia (S/2015/702), 11 September 2015, p. 6.

⁽²¹⁹⁾ AMISOM, AMISOM Force Commander Visits Troops in Kismayo, Commends Them For Vigilance and Dedication, 13 December 2015.

⁽²²⁰⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process, [source: Representative of an International NGO working in S/C Somalia], September 2015, p. 39.

⁽²²¹⁾ Mareeg, Somalia: mortar rounds rain down on Kismayo, 14 July 2015; Car bombings in two Somali cities kill 21, 23 August 2015; UNDSS Security analyst, e-mail, 26 January 2016.

⁽²²²⁾ BFA Staatendokumentation/Andreas Tiwald, Analyse zu Somalia – Lagekarten zur Sicherheitslage, 12 October 2015, p. 8.

⁽²²³⁾ Expert on Somalia, interview, Lifos, Stockholm 2 December 2015.

⁽²²⁴⁾ Security analysis expert, Austria, Interview, BFA Staatendokumentation, 12 November 2015.

⁽²²⁵⁾ BFA Staatendokumentation/Andreas Tiwald, Analyse zu Somalia – Lagekarten zur Sicherheitslage, 12 October 2015, p. 8.

⁽²²⁶⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process, [source: Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia], September 2015, p. 30.

⁽²²⁷⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process [source: International organisation working in S/C Somalia (C)], September 2015, p. 49.

⁽²²⁸⁾ Security analysis expert, Austria, Interview, BFA Staatendokumentation, 12 November 2015.

⁽²²⁹⁾ OCPV, District Conflict and Security Assessment Report, Kismayo District, February 2015, pp. iii-iv.

⁽²³⁰⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process, [source: UNHCR Somalia, September 2015, p. 27

⁽²³¹⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process, [source: Representative of an International NGO working in S/C Somalia], September 2015, p. 39.

2.1.5. Impact of the violence

As UNHCR states, the security situation in Kismayo, although improved, remains volatile. SNA and AMISOM continue to be the target of Al-Shabaab attacks, often resulting in civilian casualties ⁽²³²⁾.

In areas held by AS, mainly violence against civilians was reported, with child recruitment, forced marriage and the taking of new brides by Al-Shabaab ⁽²³³⁾. Al-Shabaab also maintained its ban on operations by most humanitarian agencies ⁽²³⁴⁾. In the town of Jamaame, held by Al-Shabaab, a man was publicly executed for insulting the prophet Muhammed in April 2015 ⁽²³⁵⁾.

Transport and food security

Most of the roads leading to Kismayo, the epicentre of trade in the region, frequently experience problems as Al-Shabaab extorts an illegal tax from traders and transporters of goods. Access to the villages outside the town and adjacent districts is still limited as most parts are still under the control of Al-Shabaab. In Kismayo, curfews are imposed for a few hours when security operations are carried out ⁽²³⁶⁾. Al-Shabaab mans checkpoints on all roads out of Kismayo, with passing trucks charged a toll of about US\$ 1,000 each, which provides a financial lifeline and source of revenue for Al-Shabaab ⁽²³⁷⁾. For instance, there are 5 checkpoints between Kismayo and Dhobley, 2 of them are manned by Al-Shabaab, while 3 are operated by the SNAF. At Al-Shabaab's checkpoints its fighters conduct searches ⁽²³⁸⁾.

The Assessment Capacities Project (ACAPS), a non-profit initiative of a consortium of three international NGOs, in its Global emergency overview, indicated that the current flooding in Lower Jubba was likely to hinder food security, especially for poor households having less resources to survive on ⁽²³⁹⁾. According to WFP information from December 2015, more than 28,000 people affected by the flooding in Middle Shabelle, Hiiraan and Lower Jubba have received emergency relief ⁽²⁴⁰⁾.

⁽²³²⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process, [source: UNHCR Somalia] September 2015, p. 27.

⁽²³³⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea pursuant to Security Council resolution 2182 (2014): Somalia, 28 October 2015, pp. 236, 244, 246.

⁽²³⁴⁾ UN Human Rights Council, Report of the Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Somalia, 28 October 2015, p. 5.

⁽²³⁵⁾ BBC, Somalia's al-Shabab kills man for 'insulting prophet', 24 April 2015.

⁽²³⁶⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process [source: UNHCR Somalia] September 2015, p. 28.

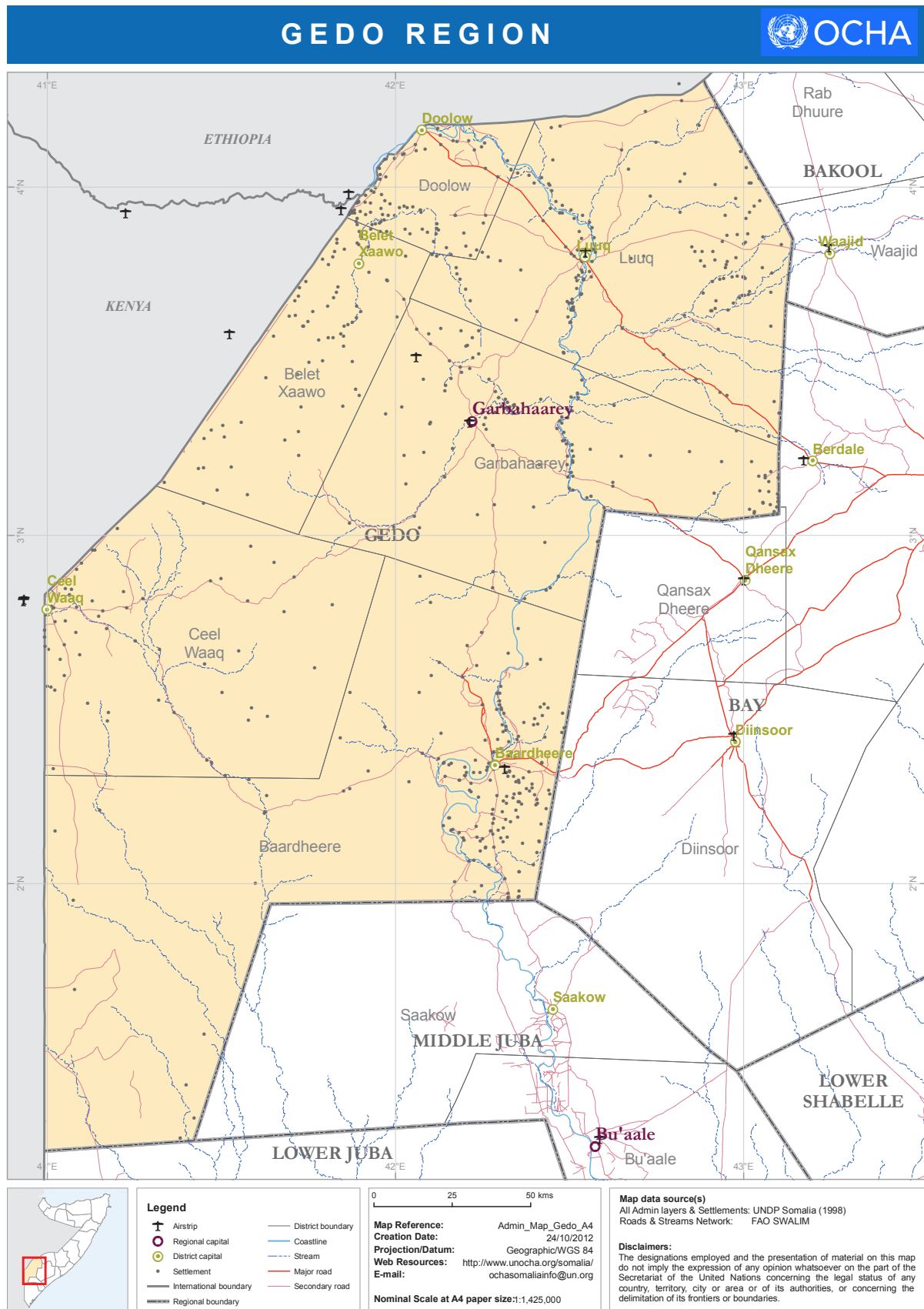
⁽²³⁷⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea pursuant to Security Council resolution 2182 (2014): Somalia, 19 October 2015, p. 30.

⁽²³⁸⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process [source: UNHCR Somalia] September 2015, p. 25.

⁽²³⁹⁾ ACAPS: Global Emergency Overview - Somalia, last updated 24 January 2016.

⁽²⁴⁰⁾ WFP (World Food Programme), Somalia El Niño Situation Report #3, 1 December 2015.

2.2. Gedo



Source map: UN OCHA, Administrative maps [regional maps of South and Central Somalia], 2012.

2.2.1. Short description of the region

The Gedo region is the second-largest region in Somalia. It is located in the south-west and borders with Kenya to the south-west, Ethiopia to the north-west and other Somali regions: Bakool to the north, Bay to the east and Middle Jubba and Lower Jubba to the south, respectively.

The region consists of 6 districts: Garbahaarey, Luuq, Doolow, Belet (Bulo) Xaawo, Ceel Waaq and Baardheere. The main urban locations correspond to the names of the districts. Smaller towns are Faafax Dhuun and Buurdhubo. The regional capital is Garbahaarey.

According to Lewis (1955) the main population groups include the Darod subclans Marehan and Ogaden (Awlihan), while the Rahanweyn and Gobaweyne minorities settle at the bank of the river Jubba ⁽²⁴¹⁾. Abikar (1999) adds some groups from the Hawiye family: Ajuran, Awramale, Ribbi and Garre ⁽²⁴²⁾.

A Population Estimation Survey undertaken by UNFPA and Somali authorities in 2014 estimated the population in the Gedo region at 508,405 inhabitants: 109,142 are urban inhabitants and 177,742 are rural inhabitants, 144,793 are nomads and 76,728 are IDPs ⁽²⁴³⁾.

2.2.2. Violence

In July 2015, Al-Shabaab activity intensified following sustained pressure by AMISOM troops and in particular Ethiopian troops in Bay and Bakool. According to the KDF spokesman, this pressure forced Al-Shabaab to flee to the west into Gedo and to the south towards Lower Shabelle ⁽²⁴⁴⁾. Advancing to Baardheere, the troops took Tarako in July 2015, an important supply route for Al-Shabaab ⁽²⁴⁵⁾. On 23 July the SNAF/AMISOM troops took over Baardheere although, according to reports, Al-Shabaab militants fled the towns after offering little resistance ⁽²⁴⁶⁾.

Pro-government forces clashed with Al-Shabaab in a village near Garbahaarey in August 2015 when government forces launched a heavy attack that killed Al-Shabaab militants and gained control over the village ⁽²⁴⁷⁾. Another fierce battle between government forces and Al-Shabaab was reported at the end of August in an area between Garbahaarey and Belet Xaawo near the Somalia-Kenya border, with 43 casualties ⁽²⁴⁸⁾. One hundred heavily-armed Al-Shabaab gunmen launched an ambush attack on Kenyan mobile patrol-surveillance and reconnaissance (MPSRs) units in the Faafax Dhuun area in September 2015 ⁽²⁴⁹⁾. Al-Shabaab militants attacked an army base at the outskirts of Baardheere on 6 October 2015 ⁽²⁵⁰⁾. Further clashes arose following Al-Shabaab presence in various localities around Garbahaarey later in October ⁽²⁵¹⁾.

A senior Al-Shabaab member, Zakariya Ismail Hersi, surrendered in December 2014 in Ceel Waaq ⁽²⁵²⁾. On 12 March 2015, a US drone strike killed Adan Garaar, a top official in al-Shabaab's security service, the Amniyat, near Baardheere ⁽²⁵³⁾. Senior Al-Shabaab commanders Ismail Jamhad and Jama Dere and several other militants were reportedly killed mid-July 2015 in a US drone strike near Baardheere ⁽²⁵⁴⁾.

⁽²⁴¹⁾ EASO, COI report - South and Central Somalia Country overview [source: Lewis 1955], August 2014, p. 52.

⁽²⁴²⁾ EASO, COI report - South and Central Somalia Country overview [source: Abikar 1999], August 2014, p. 53.

⁽²⁴³⁾ UNFPA, Population Estimation Survey 2014, Somalia, October 2014, p. 31.

⁽²⁴⁴⁾ AMISOM Daily Media Monitoring, KDF Kills Seven Al-Shabaab Militants In Somalia [Source: The Star], 15 July 2015.

⁽²⁴⁵⁾ AMISOM Daily Media Monitoring, AMISOM And SNA Close In Al-Shabaab-Held Town Of Baardheere [Source: Goobjoog News], 15 July 2015.

⁽²⁴⁶⁾ Daily Nation, Kenyan military routs Al-Shabaab out of Bardhere, 24 July 2015.

⁽²⁴⁷⁾ AMISOM Daily Media Monitoring, Somali Forces Kill 12 'Al-Shabaab' Militants Near Garbaharey Town [Source: Xinhua], 26 August 2015.

⁽²⁴⁸⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: 43 Dead in Fierce Gun Battle in Gedo Region [source: Shabelle Media], 27 August 2015.

⁽²⁴⁹⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: KDF Kills 36 Al-Shabaab Militants in Gedo Region [source: Shabelle Media], 4 September 2015.

⁽²⁵⁰⁾ Goobjoog News, One dies as Al Shabab fighters attack SNA military base in Bardhere, 6 October 2015.

⁽²⁵¹⁾ Dalsan Radio: Somalia: Fierce Fighting in Gedo Region, 5 Military Officers Killed, 18 October 2015; AllAfrica.com, Deadly Battle Leaves Several Militants Dead in Somalia [Source: Shabelle Media], 24 October 2015.

⁽²⁵²⁾ CrisisWatch Database: Somalia (August 2014-December 2015), n.d., regularly updated.

⁽²⁵³⁾ VoA, Sources: US Drone Strike Kills Somali Militant Commander, 12 March 2015.

⁽²⁵⁴⁾ CrisisWatch Database: Somalia (August 2014-December 2015), n.d., regularly updated.

There are political tensions in Garbahaarey between the Jubbaland-appointed governor of Gedo region and the deposed former governor who was allied to the federal government ⁽²⁵⁵⁾. In September 2015, media reported on military movements and fighting in the outskirts of Garbaharey town between the forces of Jubbaland Administration and local fighters loyal to the former Governor of Gedo ⁽²⁵⁶⁾.

In Gedo, clan battles are not a new problem, as there are numerous clan militias pursuing their own interests, according to the Swedish fact-finding mission (April 2015). Clan militias are loyal to those who help them; some are loyal to the Jubbaland administration, others to SFG in Mogadishu, some to Al-Shabaab, although loyalty to Al-Shabaab diminished substantially ⁽²⁵⁷⁾. In October 2015, renewed clan tensions were reported with an ensuing battle between two clan militias in Belet Hawa ⁽²⁵⁸⁾. There is no further information on the clans involved, nor on the kind of conflict.

2.2.3. Actors in the conflict

In the Gedo region, multiple actors are active. Besides the Somali National Army, supported by troops of ENDF and KDF deployed within AMISOM, there are ENDF troops outside the AMISOM contingent (see also [section 1.2.2](#) International forces) ⁽²⁵⁹⁾. Moreover, the militia previously known as the Ras Kamboni militia of the former warlord, now Jubbaland President Ahmed Madobe, is being integrated into Jubbaland Security Forces (JSF) ⁽²⁶⁰⁾. There are remnants of the ASWJ in Gedo, concentrated in the area around Luuq ⁽²⁶¹⁾. There is also a Marehan militia in Gedo, along the border to Ethiopia and Kenya ⁽²⁶²⁾. Al-Shabaab is present in rural parts in the south-east of the region around Baardheere and Buurdhuubo ⁽²⁶³⁾. There are also cells of Al-Shabaab south of Belet Xaawo ⁽²⁶⁴⁾.

2.2.4. Areas of control/influence

According to UNHCR Somalia, interviewed by DIS (May 2015):

‘In 2011 allied forces (SNA, AMISOM, Ethiopian National Defence Forces (ENDF)) have taken back control of most major towns in the region’s districts from Al-Shabaab - except for Bardheere. As a result, the region has been able to reestablish some district-level governments. Despite the reemergence of these authorities, Al-Shabaab is still able to operate and execute attacks in towns where it has lost control like Belet Hawa and has a significant presence in rural areas.

Luuq District is enjoying a relatively secure environment as a result of AMISOM/SNAF presence, particularly in close proximity to Luuq town. Nevertheless, Al-Shabaab remains a persistent threat in remote areas of the district where AMISOM and government troops are less present’ ⁽²⁶⁵⁾.

A humanitarian international NGO working in South-Central Somalia, interviewed by the same DIS mission added:

‘Al-Shabaab has easy access immediately outside of town and controls the surrounding villages. AMISOM is able to detect Al-Shabaab and able to confront them. Doolow, near the Kenyan border is considered very safe and is under AMISOM control. AMISOM only controls maybe 2 km around Doolow town. Beyond that AMISOM has no control or access’ ⁽²⁶⁶⁾.

⁽²⁵⁵⁾ Security analysis expert, Austria, Interview, BFA Staatendokumentation, 12 November 2015.

⁽²⁵⁶⁾ Warbahinta News, Tense Of Fighting Prevails In Garbaharey, 7 September 2015; Mareeg Media, Somalia: Rally against Ethiopian troops in Garbaharey town, 17 October 2015.

⁽²⁵⁷⁾ Lifos (Migrationsverket), Säkerhetssituationen i södra och centrala Somalia, 29 April 2015, p. 26.

⁽²⁵⁸⁾ Shabelle News, Somalia: Traditional elders to cease clan tensions in Baladhawo, 5 October 2015.

⁽²⁵⁹⁾ Security analysis expert, Austria, Interview, BFA Staatendokumentation, 12 November 2015.

⁽²⁶⁰⁾ UNDSS Security analyst, e-mail, 26 January 2016; Expert on Somalia, interview, Lifos, Stockholm 2 December 2015.

⁽²⁶¹⁾ Security analysis expert, Austria, Interview, BFA Staatendokumentation, 12 November 2015.

⁽²⁶²⁾ Expert on Somalia, interview, Lifos, Stockholm 2 December 2015.

⁽²⁶³⁾ BFA Staatendokumentation/Andreas Tiwald, Analyse zu Somalia – Lagekarten zur Sicherheitslage, 12 October 2015, p. 8.

⁽²⁶⁴⁾ Security analysis expert, Austria, Interview, BFA Staatendokumentation, 12 November 2015.

⁽²⁶⁵⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process [source: UNHCR Somalia], September 2015, p. 26.

⁽²⁶⁶⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process [source: Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia], September 2015, p. 31.

An AMISOM press release reported: ‘Bardheere was liberated during the Operation Jubba Corridor in July 2015 with some other villages of Gedo region such as Taraka, Jungal, Duraned, Eel-elaan, Habakhaluul, Meyon and Magalay’ ⁽²⁶⁷⁾. In Baardheere, the zones of ENDF and KDF are fluid and it is one of a few towns that have doubled their AMISOM presence. ENDF is present in the town, while the KDF garrison is outside of the town ⁽²⁶⁸⁾.

Garbahaarey is officially in the area of influence of AMISOM/ENDF ⁽²⁶⁹⁾. However, as of October 2015, the presence of Al-Shabaab was reported in the outskirts of the town ⁽²⁷⁰⁾.

2.2.5. Impact of the violence

Although most fighting affected armed actors only, it is possible that civilians were among the casualties as well. Kenyan troops were accused of launching airstrikes against residential areas, targeting innocent civilians ⁽²⁷¹⁾. In April 2015, Kenyan airstrikes launched against two Al-Shabaab bases in Gedo wounded three civilians and destroyed livestock and wells in an area without an Al-Shabaab presence ⁽²⁷²⁾. In July 2015, residents in Baardheere fled the city in search of safety in expectation of an offensive following the advance of troops from Ethiopia ⁽²⁷³⁾.

Transport and food security

According to UNHCR Somalia, interviewed by DIS (May 2015),

‘There is a relative freedom of movement inside Luuq town and in its surroundings for ordinary Somali citizens (...) Vehicle movement along main roads is considered to be more dangerous as a result of Al-Shabaab threats. For example the road leading to Garbahaarey, the roads around Shaatalow village, as well as the main road leading to Mogadishu and Bay/Bakool regions are all considered to have considerable amount of risk due to Al-Shabaab presence’ ⁽²⁷⁴⁾.

A security analysis expert, interviewed in November 2015 by BFA Staatendokumentation, explained that Luuq was a very important supply route for the ENDF ⁽²⁷⁵⁾. A humanitarian international NGO working in South-Central Somalia, interviewed by DIS (May 2015) said that ‘the road between Doolow and Luuq is relatively safe’ ⁽²⁷⁶⁾. There were reports on ambushes on AMISOM/SNAF convoys and explosions of landmines along roads ⁽²⁷⁷⁾.

UN OCHA, in its February 2015 Bulletin, noted that civilian movements, including those for commercial and humanitarian goods, in southern Somalia remain curtailed and this restricted the flow of food and other essential supplies, particularly along the road from Mogadishu via Baidoa to Doolow ⁽²⁷⁸⁾.

UN assessment teams in Baardheere noted in mid-August 2015 that the increased insecurity during the recent AMISOM/SNA offensive had affected livelihood in every town and that people lacked access to food, safe drinking water and basic services ⁽²⁷⁹⁾.

⁽²⁶⁷⁾ AMISOM, Update on Operation Jubba Corridor, 25 July 2015.

⁽²⁶⁸⁾ Security analysis expert, Austria, Interview, BFA Staatendokumentation, 12 November 2015.

⁽²⁶⁹⁾ Security analysis expert, Austria, Interview, BFA Staatendokumentation, 12 November 2015.

⁽²⁷⁰⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Fierce Fighting in Gedo Region, 5 Military Officers Killed [source: Dalsan Radio], 18 October 2015; AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Deadly Battle Leaves Several Militants Dead in Somalia [source: Shabelle Media], 24 October 2015.

⁽²⁷¹⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Gedo Officials Accuse Kenya of Carrying Out Airstrikes Against Civilian Targets [source: Shabelle Media], 17 November 2015.

⁽²⁷²⁾ BBC, Kenya bombs Somalia al-Shabab bases after Garissa attack, 6 April 2015.

⁽²⁷³⁾ AMISOM Daily Media Monitoring, AMISOM And SNA Close In Al-Shabaab-Held Town Of Baardheere [Source: Goobjoog News], 15 July 2015.

⁽²⁷⁴⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process [source: UNHCR Somalia], September 2015, p. 26.

⁽²⁷⁵⁾ Security analysis expert, Austria, Interview, BFA Staatendokumentation, 12 November 2015.

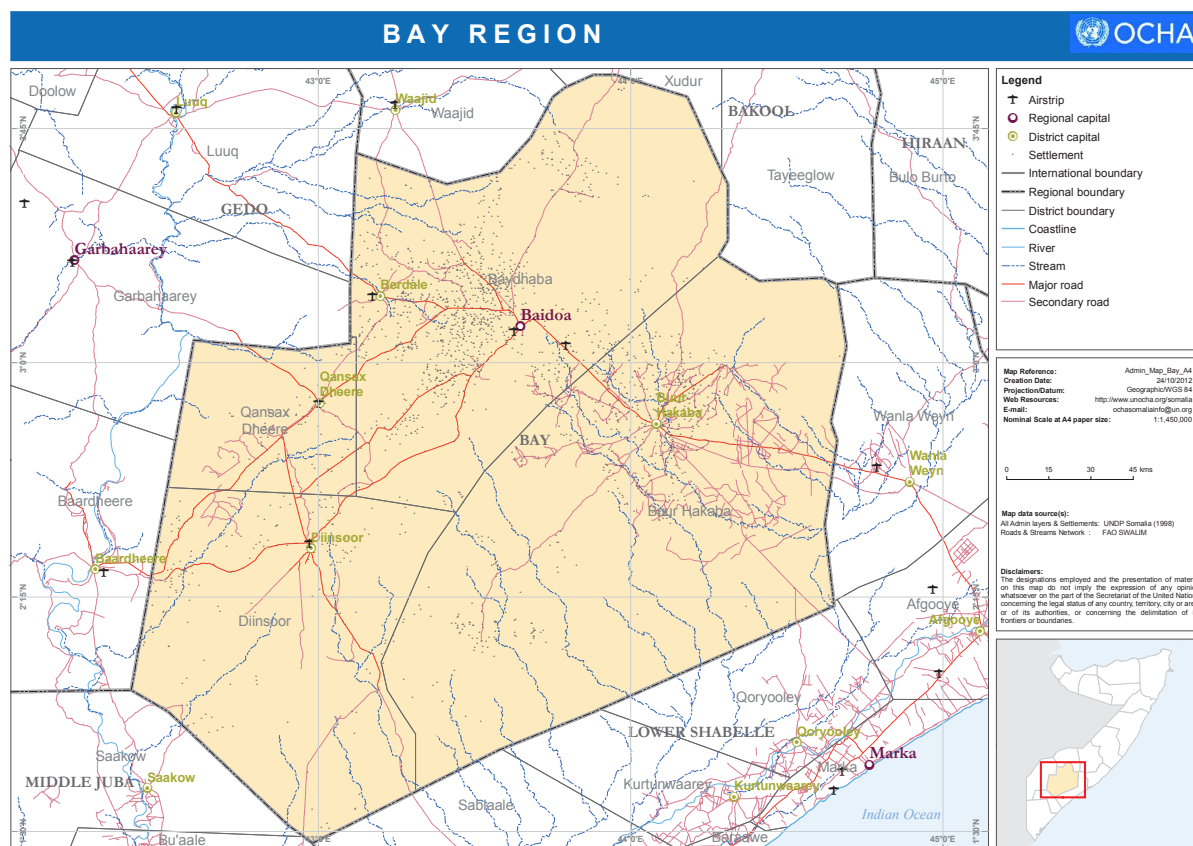
⁽²⁷⁶⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process [source: Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia], September 2015, p. 31.

⁽²⁷⁷⁾ E.g. AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Kenyan Army Vehicle Ambushed By Al Shababa in Gedo Region [source: Shabelle Media], 25 September 2015; SIN, Roadside Landmine Target AMISOM Peacekeeping Troops at Tarake, Gedo Region, 20 September 2015.

⁽²⁷⁸⁾ UN OCHA, Humanitarian Bulletin Somalia February 2015, 25 March 2015.

⁽²⁷⁹⁾ USAID, Somalia - Complex Emergency Factsheet #5, 30 September 2015.

2.3. Bay



Source map: UN OCHA, *Administrative maps* [regional maps of South and Central Somalia], 2012.

2.3.1. Short description of the region

Bay region borders with Bakool to the north, Lower Shabelle to the east and south-east, with Middle Jubba to the south-west and Gedo to the west. It consists of 4 districts: Baidoa, Buur Hakaba, Qansax Dheere and Diinsoor. Smaller towns are Bardaale and Ufurow. The regional capital is Baidoa, also referred to as Baydhabo.

The region is inhabited by Rahanweyn people (Lewis, 1955) ⁽²⁸⁰⁾ with small groups of Awramale (Hawiye clan family). Abikar (1999) ⁽²⁸¹⁾ adds various groups of Hawiye, in particular Doqondiide, Hawadle and Sheekhal in the south and Jajele, Sogow, Garre and Dirisamo in the east of the province.

According to the Population Estimation Survey (2014) ⁽²⁸²⁾, the division of population in the Bay region is as follows: 93,046 urban inhabitants, 463,330 rural settlers, 195,986 nomadic and 39,820 IDPs, making a total of 792,182.

2.3.2. Violence

Al-Shabaab remained active in Bay, targeting pro-government forces and regional administration. On 5 December 2014, in Baidoa, attacks targeted a crowd in front of the Dahabshiil money transfer office. After the detonation of a personnel-borne explosive, a vehicle parked close to the scene exploded, killing and injuring people who had gathered to assist victims of the first blast. Nineteen people were killed and 37 injured ⁽²⁸³⁾. In January and

⁽²⁸⁰⁾ EASO, COI report - South and Central Somalia Country Overview [source: Lewis 1955], August 2014, p. 52.

⁽²⁸¹⁾ EASO, COI report - South and Central Somalia Country Overview [source: Abikar 1999], August 2014, p. 53.

⁽²⁸²⁾ UNFPA, Population Estimation Survey 2014, Somalia, October 2014, p. 31.

⁽²⁸³⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia January 2015 (S/2015/51), 23 January 2015, p. 3.

February 2015, three Muslim clerics who were critical of Al-Shabaab were assassinated in Baidoa. On 12 March 2015, the residence of the President of the Interim South-West Administration in Baidoa was attacked, resulting in the death of three attackers and one AMISOM soldier ⁽²⁸⁴⁾.

On 11 June 2015, an AMISOM convoy was ambushed by a large number of Al-Shabaab fighters at Jama'a village. A reinforcement of AMISOM troops to Jamaame was ambushed twice by Al-Shabaab on 12 June. On 26 June 2015, more than 100 Al-Shabaab fighters stormed an AMISOM base manned by Burundian troops in Leego, in the district of Buur Hakaba, after detonating a vehicle-borne bomb, resulting in a significant number of AMISOM casualties; several soldiers on the mission were reported as missing in action. Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility, citing its Abu Zubeyr Battalion, a new military unit named after the late Al-Shabaab leader ⁽²⁸⁵⁾. Further attacks on military bases of government forces were carried out by Al-Shabaab in August 2015 in localities outside Baidoa ⁽²⁸⁶⁾.

Operations against Al-Shabaab were conducted in Bardale in May 2015 ⁽²⁸⁷⁾, in recently liberated Diinsoor in August ⁽²⁸⁸⁾ following attacks by Al-Shabaab earlier in the month ⁽²⁸⁹⁾, and in Diinsoor again in September 2015 ⁽²⁹⁰⁾. In September, AMISOM fighter jets launched air strikes against Al-Shabaab training bases in Labatan-Jirow area, 20 km from Baidoa town ⁽²⁹¹⁾. Further air strikes targeted localities in the Bay region in the beginning of October ⁽²⁹²⁾. As reported in October 2015, Al-Shabaab was present in two places near Dinsoor ⁽²⁹³⁾ and pro-government forces/ISWA forces attacked both areas. A recent Al-Shabaab attack was reported at the end of November in Bardale when it ambushed a convoy of Somali government troops. However, the attack was repulsed ⁽²⁹⁴⁾.

2.3.3. Actors in the conflict

In several areas of Bay region, apart from SNA presence, Ethiopian troops are deployed within AMISOM. Al-Shabaab remained present in rural areas. The Ethiopian special force called Liyu police is also active. Along the border with Ethiopia, government-allied militias are active ⁽²⁹⁵⁾. The ISWA has its own troops, which carried out operations in, for example, Diinsoor, Bay region ⁽²⁹⁶⁾.

Tensions were raised by proponents of two different federalism proposals, the so-called three-regions state (SW3) and six-regions state (SW6) ⁽²⁹⁷⁾, with demonstrations taking place in Baidoa in November 2014 ⁽²⁹⁸⁾.

2.3.4. Areas of control/influence

According to several sources interviewed by DIS (May 2015), AMISOM/SNAF had a presence in Baidoa ⁽²⁹⁹⁾. During Operation Jubba Corridor, which started on 19 July 2015, Ufurow, Eesow, Hasanow-Mumin, Lidaale, Makoon, Dhargo and Manaas were liberated ⁽³⁰⁰⁾. In a major success, Somalia troops together with AMISOM forces took over Diinsoor town in the Bay region on 24 July 2015. Diinsoor had served as a sanctuary for Al-Shabaab's top leadership cadre since the fall of Baraawe in October 2014 ⁽³⁰¹⁾.

⁽²⁸⁴⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia (S/2015/331), 12 May 2015, p. 3.

⁽²⁸⁵⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia (S/2015/702), 11 September 2015, pp. 2-3.

⁽²⁸⁶⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Al-Shabaab Ambushes Gov't Troops Outside Baidoa [source: Shabelle Media], 26 August 2015.

⁽²⁸⁷⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Federal Gov't Forces Attack Al-Shabaab Base in Bay [source: Walta Info], 27 May 2015.

⁽²⁸⁸⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia Soldiers Seize Alleged Al-Shabaab Members [source: Shabelle Media], 16 August 2015.

⁽²⁸⁹⁾ AllAfrica.com/Somalia: Ten Al Shabab Members Killed in Battle for Somalia [source: Shabelle Media], 10 August 2015; AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Heavy Battle Erupts Outside Diinsoor Town [source: Shabelle Media], 12 August 2015.

⁽²⁹⁰⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Al Shabab Suspects Seized in Diinsoor Operation [source: Shabelle Media], 2 September 2015.

⁽²⁹¹⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Amisom Warplanes Kill Dozens of Al-Shabaab Fighters in Southern Somalia [source: Shabelle Media], 23 September 2015.

⁽²⁹²⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Amisom Warplanes Hit Al Shabab Targets, Says Governor [source: Shabelle Media], 2 October 2015.

⁽²⁹³⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Somali Troops Capture Al-Shabaab Base Near Diinsoor Town, Kill 4 Militants [source: Shabelle Media], 14 October 2015; AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Interim South-West Admin Claims Military Victory Over Al-Shabaab Fighting Near Diinsoor [source: Shabelle Media], 24 October 2015.

⁽²⁹⁴⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Somali Troops Repulse Al-Shabaab After Militants Attacked Their Convoy [source: Shabelle Media], 27 November 2015.

⁽²⁹⁵⁾ BFA Staatendokumentation/Andreas Tiwald, Analyse zu Somalia – Lagearten zur Sicherheitslage, 12 October 2015, p. 8.

⁽²⁹⁶⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Soldiers Seize Alleged Al-Shabaab Members [source: Shabelle Media], 16 August 2015; AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Interim South-West Admin Claims Military Victory Over Al-Shabaab Fighting Near Diinsoor [source: Shabelle Media], 24 October 2015.

⁽²⁹⁷⁾ For more information about these federalism plans, please consult: Somalia News room, Analysis: Baidoa Becoming the Next Crisis in Somalia's Federalism Process, 11 February 2014, and EASO, COI report South and Central Somalia Country overview, August 2014, p. 60.

⁽²⁹⁸⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Baidoa Election Protests Leave Two Dead [source: Sabahi], 18 November 2014.

⁽²⁹⁹⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process [source: UNHCR Somalia] September 2015, p. 7.

⁽³⁰⁰⁾ AMISOM, Update on Operation Jubba Corridor, 25 July 2015.

⁽³⁰¹⁾ Roble, M.A., 'Al-Shabaab has changed its tactics. AMISOM must do so too', 9 September 2015.

AMISOM/ENDF troops are present in Baidoa, Diinsoor and Buur Hakaba, Qansax Dheere and Berdaale. After the large-scale June 2015 attack, the AMISOM outpost in Leego is now manned by Ugandan troops ⁽³⁰²⁾. According to an international organisation, interviewed by DIS (May 2015):

‘In Baidoa (Bay) plus its surroundings the situation can be regarded as relatively safe. However, throughout Baidoa district, even close to Baidoa, Al-Shabaab still has a presence and influence in several areas (“pockets”) where it is able to force the local population to pay taxes. In these pockets of influence, Al-Shabaab will disappear as soon as AMISOM forces come forward, but will reappear as soon as the AMISOM forces have left the area’ ⁽³⁰³⁾.

According to UNHCR Somalia interviewed by DIS (May 2015):

‘(...) security still remains unpredictable and SNAF and AMISOM, in particular, continue to be the target of Al-Shabaab attacks, resulting often in civilian casualties. However, a continued focus by AMISOM/SNAF on stabilizing Baidoa has resulted in a steady, though not broad, decline in incidents. Al-Shabaab, while no longer in control of any of Baidoa’s administrative zones, retains the capability to carry out asymmetric warfare through guerrilla-style improvised explosive device and vehicle-borne IED attacks, as well as targeted assassinations against prominent individuals. SNA forces and Al-Shabaab continue to engage in recurrent battles, armed confrontations and violent attacks over territory within the immediate outskirts of the city, with certain villages changing hands intermittently in response to retreats and regroupings from both sides’ ⁽³⁰⁴⁾.

2.3.5. Impact of the violence

Operation Jubba Corridor resulted in the displacement of more than 40,000 people in Bakool, Bay, Galgaduud, Gedo, Hiiraan and Lower Shabelle ⁽³⁰⁵⁾. Hundreds of IDPs fled their homes in fear of new military offensives against Al-Shabaab militants in Diinsoor town in July 2015 ⁽³⁰⁶⁾. In October 2015 hundreds of residents became internally displaced in Baidoa and its surroundings as a result of a military operation against Al-Shabaab ⁽³⁰⁷⁾.

Allegations of killing, sexual and gender-based violence and other violations against civilians in Bay and Bakool by the Ethiopian Liyu police have been recorded by the Monitoring Group ⁽³⁰⁸⁾.

Residents in Diinsoor were reported to be in dire humanitarian need as for many years only limited humanitarian assistance had been provided due to insecurity ⁽³⁰⁹⁾. Assessments indicated that increased insecurity during the recent AMISOM–SNA offensive influenced livelihoods in towns and affected access to food, safe drinking water and basic services ⁽³¹⁰⁾. As reported in April 2015, the insurgents’ control of the major supply roads to Bay (Qansax Dheere) has continued ⁽³¹¹⁾.

Transport and food security

According to UNHCR Somalia, interviewed by DIS (May 2015):

‘The main roads leading to Mogadishu and Bay/Bakool regions are all considered to have considerable amount of risk due to Al-Shabaab presence. (...) As the epicentre of trade in the region, most of the roads leading to Baidoa experience frequent problems as Al-Shabaab forces illegally tax traders and transporters of goods. AMISOM and SNA forces have put up security blockades around residential parts of the district limiting the freedom of movement for citizens. Curfews are also commonly imposed at night. Many hazards exist along the key supply routes in and out of the city’ ⁽³¹²⁾.

⁽³⁰²⁾ Security analysis expertSecurity analysis expert, Austria, Interview, BFA Staatendokumentation, 12 November 2015.

⁽³⁰³⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process [source: International organisation working in S/C Somalia (C)], September 2015, p. 50.

⁽³⁰⁴⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process [source: UNHCR Somalia] September 2015, p. 28.

⁽³⁰⁵⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea pursuant to Security Council resolution 2182 (2014): Somalia, 19 October 2015, p. 248.

⁽³⁰⁶⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Hundreds Flee in Fear of Deadly Battle [source: Shabelle Media], 21 July 2015.

⁽³⁰⁷⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Somali Military Offensive On Al-Shabaab in Bay Region Force Residents to Flee [source: Shabelle Media], 17 October 2015.

⁽³⁰⁸⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea pursuant to Security Council resolution 2182 (2014): Somalia, 19 October 2015, p. 38.

⁽³⁰⁹⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: UN in Somalia Appeals for Scaled-Up Assistance in Newly Opened Areas [source: Shabelle Media], 22 August 2015.

⁽³¹⁰⁾ USAID Somalia - Complex Emergency Factsheet #5, 30 September 2015.

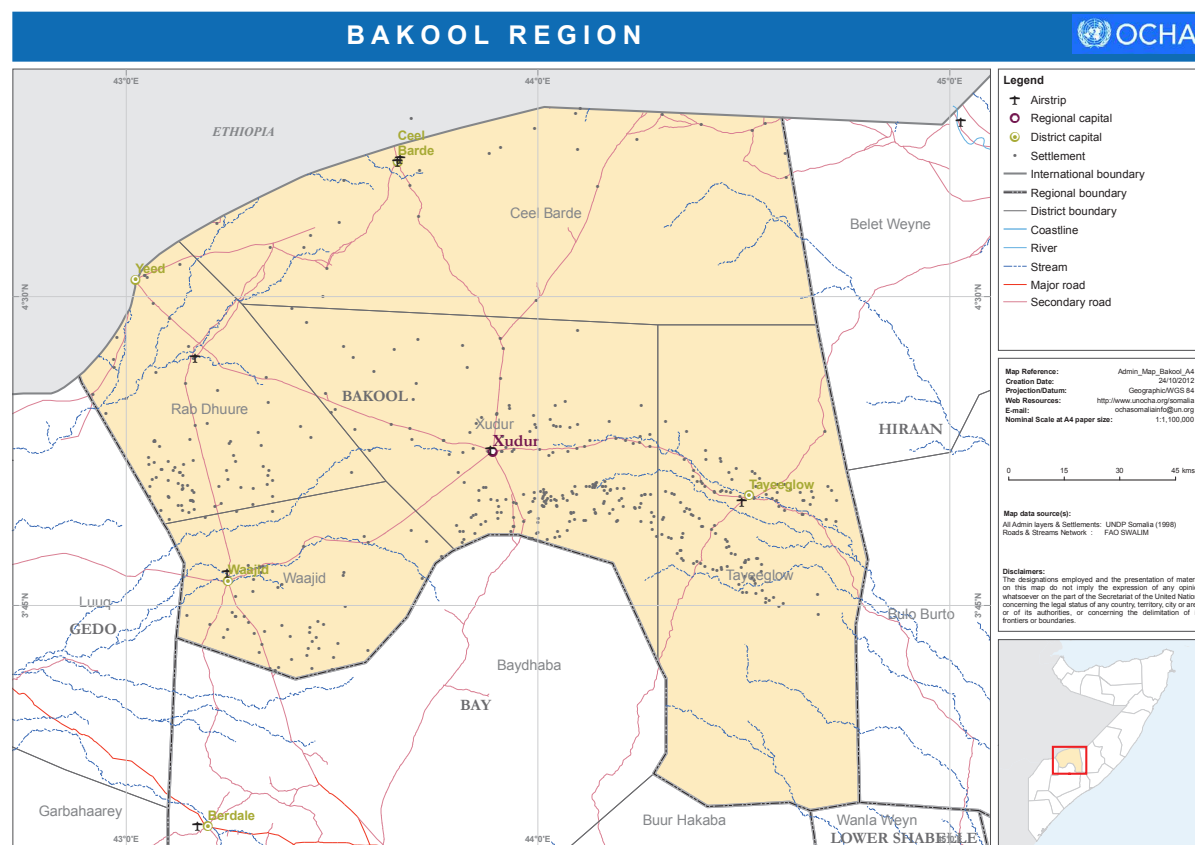
⁽³¹¹⁾ FSNAU, Quarterly Brief, 22 April 2015.

⁽³¹²⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process [source: UNHCR Somalia] September 2015, p. 29.

An international organisation working in South-Central Somalia, also interviewed by DIS in May 2015, noted:

'[The] Road between Mogadishu and Baidoa is not open to humanitarian access. (...) Al-Shabaab forces along the road still carry out hit and run attacks as well as multiple unauthorized checkpoints manned by a range of armed actors. Baidoa cannot be reached by road for humanitarian purposes because UN convoys are being targeted by Al-Shabaab [in Mogadishu]³¹³. Commercial traffic might be possible to some extent, but it is very risky, lengthy and costly. The road connecting Baidoa and Doolow is considered by sources as too dangerous. The route to Xudur from Ceel Barde is open, although there are checkpoints; they are manned by people who are aligned to the government' (³¹⁴).

2.4. Bakool



Source map: UN OCHA, *Administrative maps* [regional maps of South and Central Somalia], 2012.

2.4.1. Short description of the region

Bakool region borders Ethiopia to the north, Gedo to the west, Bay to the south and Hiraaan to the east. It also has a short border with Lower Shabelle. It consists of 5 districts: Xudur, Tayeeglow, El Barde, Rab Dhuure and Waajid. On the Ethiopian border lies the smaller town of Yeed. The regional capital is Xudur (also Hudur).

As Lewis (1955) (³¹⁵) states, the region is largely inhabited by various Rahanweyn groups: Hadama, Jiron, Lisan, Garwale, Luwai, Jelible, Gelidle, Reer Dumal and Ashraf. Abikar (1999) (³¹⁶) adds the Jajele group of the Hawiye clan family in the north.

(³¹³) A UNDSS security analyst, e-mail, 26 January 2016, pointed out that UN convoys have never conducted road missions on the Mogadishu-Baidoa-Luuq road since the area was 'liberated'.

(³¹⁴) DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process [source: International organisation working in S/C Somalia (D)], September 2015, p. 53.

(³¹⁵) EASO, COI report - South and Central Somalia Country Overview [source: Lewis 1955], August 2014, p. 52.

(³¹⁶) EASO, COI report - South and Central Somalia Country Overview [source: Abikar 1999], August 2014, p. 53.

The population in the Bakool region was estimated in 2014 ⁽³¹⁷⁾ to be 367,226, divided into 61,928 urban, 134,050 rural, 147,248 nomads and 24,000 IDPs.

2.4.2. Violence

Al-Shabaab remained active in Bakool, targeting pro-government forces and regional administration ⁽³¹⁸⁾. Attacks on military bases of government forces were carried out by Al-Shabaab in August 2015 in localities outside Wajid ⁽³¹⁹⁾.

Air strikes against Al-Shabaab were targeted at localities in the Bay and Bakool regions in the beginning of October ⁽³²⁰⁾.

2.4.3. Actors in the conflict

Ethiopian troops, apart from SNA presence, are deployed within the AMISOM in several areas of Bakool region. Al-Shabaab remained present in rural areas. In Bakool region, several garrisons of ENDF operate apart from the AMISOM police. The Ethiopian special force (Liyu police) is also active. Along the border with Ethiopia, government-allied militias are active ⁽³²¹⁾. The ISWA has its own troops, which carried out operations in, for example, Diinsoor, Bay region ⁽³²²⁾.

Security tensions have been exacerbated by proponents of two different federalism proposals, the so-called three-regions state (SW3) and six-regions state (SW6) ⁽³²³⁾.

2.4.4. Areas of control/influence

According to several sources interviewed by DIS (May 2015), AMISOM/SNAF was present in the town of Xudur ⁽³²⁴⁾.

During Operation Jubba Corridor, which started on 19 July 2015, Ufurow, Eesow, Hasanow-Mumin, Lidaale, Makoon, Dhargo and Manaas were liberated in the Bay region ⁽³²⁵⁾.

In Bakool, only five AMISOM/ENDF garrisons are known: Yeed, Ceel Barde, Rab Dhuure, Waajid and Xudur. However, there are several more ENDF garrisons operating outside the AMISOM contingent and the Liyu police is stationed in several villages. Liyu is known to man the garrison in Tayeeglow and bigger numbers of Liyu are concentrated in Xudur from where they stage search operations in rural areas. Al-Shabaab was repelled from the Ethiopian border area. This zone is described by a security analysis expert, interviewed by BFA Staatendokumentation in November 2015, as being under the control of ENDF, Liyu police and allied (clan) militias. Liyu police are keeping the zone free of Al-Shabaab influence. The Liyu are even based in small villages, patrolling the surroundings, clearing Al-Shabaab remnants and manning checkpoints along the roads. They do this in cooperation with local clan militias ⁽³²⁶⁾.

Al-Shabaab lost many territories in Bakool region to Somali government troops supported by AMISOM but is still able to launch hit-and-run attacks in the region ⁽³²⁷⁾.

⁽³¹⁷⁾ UNFPA Population Estimation Survey 2014, Somalia, October 2014, p. 31.

⁽³¹⁸⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia January 2015 (S/2015/51), 23 January 2015, p. 3.

⁽³¹⁹⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Five People Died in Deadly Battle in South of Somalia [source: Shabelle Media], 18 August 2015.

⁽³²⁰⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Amisom Warplanes Hit Al Shabab Targets, Says Governor [source: Shabelle Media], 2 October 2015.

⁽³²¹⁾ BFA Staatendokumentation/Andreas Tiwald, Analyse zu Somalia – Lagearten zur Sicherheitslage, 12 October 2015, p. 8.

⁽³²²⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Soldiers Seize Alleged Al-Shabaab Members [source: Shabelle Media], 16 August 2015; AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Interim South-West Admin Claims Military Victory Over Al-Shabaab Fighting Near Diinsoor [source: Shabelle Media], 24 October 2015.

⁽³²³⁾ For more information about these federalism plans, please consult: Somalia News room, Analysis: Baidoa Becoming the Next Crisis in Somalia's Federalism Process, 11 February 2014, and EASO, COI report South and Central Somalia Country overview, August 2014, p. 60.

⁽³²⁴⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process [source: UNHCR Somalia] September 2015, p. 7.

⁽³²⁵⁾ AMISOM, Update on Operation Jubba Corridor, 25 July 2015.

⁽³²⁶⁾ Security analysis expert, Austria, Interview, BFA Staatendokumentation, 12 November 2015.

⁽³²⁷⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Somali and Ethiopia Hold Security Meeting in Bakol Region [source: Shabelle Media], 28 June 2015.

An international organisation, interviewed by DIS (May 2015), noted that Xudur was supposed to have been cleared of Al-Shabaab two years ago but in 2014 the insurgent group started attacking AMISOM/SNAF in the town and the security situation was assessed as unstable ⁽³²⁸⁾. In Xudur district, Al-Shabaab conducted attacks in September and November 2015 ⁽³²⁹⁾.

2.4.5. Impact of the violence

Operation Jubba Corridor resulted in the displacement of more than 40,000 people in Bakool, Bay, Galgaduud, Gedo, Hiiraan and Lower Shabelle ⁽³³⁰⁾.

In July 2015, 18 civilians were reportedly killed during operations by the ENDF and the SNA in Bakool region ⁽³³¹⁾. Allegations of killing, sexual and gender-based violence and other violations against civilians in Bay and Bakool by the Ethiopian Liyu police have been recorded by the Monitoring Group ⁽³³²⁾.

Residents in Diinsoor were reported to be in dire humanitarian need as for many years only limited humanitarian assistance had been provided due to insecurity ⁽³³³⁾. Furthermore, assessments indicated that increased insecurity during the recent AMISOM/SNA offensive influenced livelihoods in towns and affected access to food, safe drinking water, and basic services ⁽³³⁴⁾. Reports from April 2015 noted that the insurgents' control of the major supply roads to Bakool (Xudur and Waajid) had continued ⁽³³⁵⁾. Al-Shabaab enforced economic blockades on towns and key access routes in Bakool, resulting in the killing of civilians and livestock and the burning of vehicles. The blockade against Xudur was also strictly enforced, although by July 2015 a UN staff member, interviewed by the UN Monitoring Group, reported an improved range and volume of food in the markets ⁽³³⁶⁾.

Transport and food security

An international organisation working in South-Central Somalia, interviewed by DIS (May 2015) noted: 'The route to Xudur from Ceel Barde is open, although there are checkpoints; they are manned by people who are aligned to the government' ⁽³³⁷⁾.

In November 2015 Somali troops, with the support of African Union soldiers, launched an operation aimed at opening the main highways in Bakool region blocked by Al-Shabaab ⁽³³⁸⁾. According to the Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit (FSNAU), roadblocks in Xudur have eased somewhat, facilitating the movement of goods to the town. However, the surrounding areas continue to be affected by violent clashes and cannot be accessed by humanitarian organisations ⁽³³⁹⁾.

⁽³²⁸⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process [source: International organisation working in S/C Somalia (B)], September 2015, p. 45.

⁽³²⁹⁾ Goobjoog News, Government Claims Victory over Clashes with Al-shabaab in Bakool, 1 November 2015; AMISOM Daily Media Monitoring, Two Wounded In Fierce Fighting Near Hudur Town [Source: Shabelle News], 8 September 2015.

⁽³³⁰⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea pursuant to Security Council resolution 2182 (2014): Somalia, 19 October 2015, p. 248.

⁽³³¹⁾ UN Human Rights Council, Report of the Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Somalia, 28 October 2015, p. 6.

⁽³³²⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea pursuant to Security Council resolution 2182 (2014): Somalia, 19 October 2015, p. 38.

⁽³³³⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: UN in Somalia Appeals for Scaled-Up Assistance in Newly Opened Areas [source: Shabelle Media], 22 August 2015.

⁽³³⁴⁾ USAID Somalia - Complex Emergency Factsheet #5, 30 September 2015.

⁽³³⁵⁾ FSNAU, Quarterly Brief, 22 April 2015.

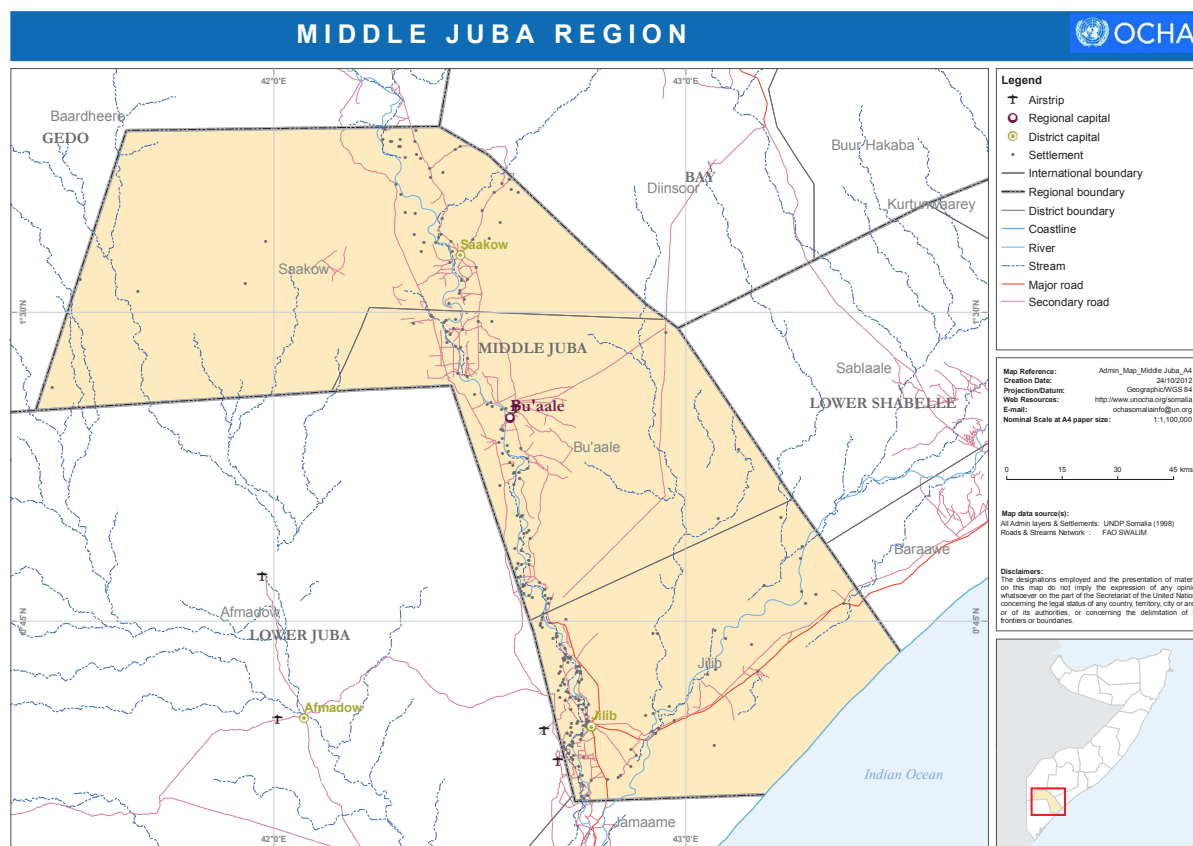
⁽³³⁶⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea pursuant to Security Council resolution 2182 (2014): Somalia [source: UN staff member, Nairobi, 7 July 2015], 19 October 2015, pp. 206-207.

⁽³³⁷⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process [source: International organisation working in S/C Somalia (D)], September 2015, p. 53.

⁽³³⁸⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Forces Begin Operation to Reopen Roads Blockaded By Al-Shabaab in Bakool [source: Shabelle Media], 2 November 2015.

⁽³³⁹⁾ ACAPS, Global Emergency Overview – Somalia [source: FSNAU, 2 October 2015], last updated 24 January 2016.

2.5. Middle Jubba



Source map: UN OCHA, *Administrative maps* [regional maps of South and Central Somalia], 2012.

2.5.1. Short description of the region

The region is located in the southern part of Somalia and borders Gedo to the north and north-west, Bay to the north-east, Lower Shabelle to the east and Lower Jubba to the south. It has three districts: Bu'aale, Jilib and Saakow (or Saaxo). The regional capital is Bu'aale.

The region has a very diverse population in terms of clan representation. According to Lewis (1955), there are Biyomaal (Dir), Bartire (Darod), Aulihan (Ogaden), Gosha (Isaaq), Ajuran and Galjaal (Hawiye), and Dabarre and Tunni (Rahanweyn) ⁽³⁴⁰⁾. Abikar (1999) adds more groups of the Hawiye clan family: Barsame, Jilid, Dirisamo and Sheikhah ⁽³⁴¹⁾.

According to the Population Estimation Survey undertaken by the UN Population Fund and Somali authorities (October 2014), 362,921 inhabitants live in Middle Jubba, divided into 56,242 urban and 148,439 rural people, 131,240 nomads and 27,000 IDPs ⁽³⁴²⁾.

2.5.2. Violence

In November 2015, clashes between two Al-Shabaab factions (pro-Al-Qaeda militants versus IS sympathisers) occurred in Raamo, Saakow district, leaving 9 dead ⁽³⁴³⁾.

⁽³⁴⁰⁾ EASO, COI report - South and Central Somalia Country Overview [source: Lewis 1955], August 2014, p. 52.

⁽³⁴¹⁾ EASO, COI report - South and Central Somalia Country Overview [source: Abikar 1999], August 2014, p. 53.

⁽³⁴²⁾ UNFPA, Population Estimation Survey 2014, Somalia, October 2014, p. 31.

⁽³⁴³⁾ Garowe Online, ISIL loyalty sparks off deadly battle in southern Somalia, 12 November 2015.

Air strikes against Al-Shabaab targets were reported in Middle Jubba. Kenyan fighter jets struck Al-Shabaab bases near Jilib in October 2014 ⁽³⁴⁴⁾. A US airstrike near Saakow killed a top Al-Shabaab leader Abdishakur, also known as Tahlil, on 29 December 2014 ⁽³⁴⁵⁾.

Apart from clashes with Al-Shabaab, clan conflicts also led to violence. According to the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea:

‘inter-clan conflict between Dhulbahante (Harti/Darod), Awliahan (Ogaden/Darod) and Sheikhal (Hawiye) clans over pasture lands broke out early in 2015. Al-Shabaab attempts to reconcile the competing groups in Bu’aale were ultimately unsuccessful, suggesting its weakening grip on inter-communal relations in the area ahead of the “Jubba Corridor” offensive led by AMISOM and allied anti-Al-Shabaab forces’ ⁽³⁴⁶⁾.

2.5.3. Actors in the conflict

The main actor within the region is Al-Shabaab which has control over the area. According to AMISOM, Kenyan Defense Forces deployed under AMISOM operate in the area, supported by Jubbaland administration forces ⁽³⁴⁷⁾. As mentioned above, local clans were also involved in violent conflicts over land.

2.5.4. Areas of control/influence

Sources interviewed by DIS (May 2015) agreed that ‘Middle Jubba region is AlShabaab’s main remaining stronghold and there is no government control’ ⁽³⁴⁸⁾. The regional capital Bu’aale and district towns Saakow and Jilib are under the control of Al-Shabaab ⁽³⁴⁹⁾. After Operation Jubba Corridor, AMISOM acknowledged that some of the Al-Shabaab leadership have fled and would most likely be in or around the towns of Jilib, Bu’aale and Saakow ⁽³⁵⁰⁾.

Middle Jubba falls nominally under the Jubbaland administration, although in practice this administration does not have any control in the region ⁽³⁵¹⁾. In October 2015, forces of Jubbaland administration together with their AMISOM counterparts were reportedly making preparations for an offensive against Al-Shabaab in Middle Jubba ⁽³⁵²⁾.

2.5.5. Impact of the violence

Between January and October 2015, violence against civilians was reported in the main localities of Bu’aale, Jilib and Saakow, such as abductions, executions because of accusations of spying, and forced recruitment ⁽³⁵³⁾. For instance in June 2015 Al-Shabaab publicly executed three people in Saakow for spying for the CIA ⁽³⁵⁴⁾. The independent expert on the situation of human rights in Somalia, Bahame Tom Nyanduga, reported in September 2015:

‘In areas under its control, Al-Shabaab maintained its ban against operations by most humanitarian agencies. This denial of access to vulnerable populations along with the threats and attacks levelled against them by Al-Shabaab has made it virtually impossible for humanitarian organisations to reach vulnerable populations and exacerbates an already dire humanitarian situation’ ⁽³⁵⁵⁾.

According to the Monitoring Group, a range of violations in Al-Shabaab-held areas including in Middle and Lower Jubba are taking place, such as child recruitment, forced marriage and the *Dumaashhi* practice (see [section 1.2.3 Al-Shabaab](#)) by Al-Shabaab fighters. It especially mentioned ethnic minorities in the region as victims:

⁽³⁴⁴⁾ Garowe Online, Somalia: Kenyan jets strike Al-Shabaab bases again, 11 October 2014.

⁽³⁴⁵⁾ CrisisWatch Database: Somalia (August 2014–December 2015), n.d., regularly updated; CBS News, Drone strike kills one of al-Shabab’s top leaders, 30 December 2014.

⁽³⁴⁶⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea pursuant to Security Council resolution 2182 (2014): Somalia, 19 October 2015, p. 16.

⁽³⁴⁷⁾ AMISOM Daily Media Monitoring, KDF Aids Illicit Sugar Trade In Kismayu, Says UN [Source: The Star], 27 October 2015. According to a UNDSS Security Analyst, AMISOM only has nominal coverage in Middle Jubba and currently does not deploy troops in the region. UNDSS Security analyst, *e-mail*, 8 February 2016.

⁽³⁴⁸⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process [sources: UNHCR Somalia, International organisation working in S/C Somalia (C), Representative of an International NGO working in S/C Somalia], September 2015, p. 16.

⁽³⁴⁹⁾ BFA Staatendokumentation/Andreas Tiwald, Analyse zu Somalia – Lagekarten zur Sicherheitslage, 12 October 2015, p. 9.

⁽³⁵⁰⁾ AMISOM: Update on Operation on Jubba Corridor, 25 July 2015.

⁽³⁵¹⁾ Lifos (Migrationsverket), Säkerhetssituationen i södra och centrala Somalia, 29 April 2015, p. 26.

⁽³⁵²⁾ AMISOM Daily Media Monitoring, Jubbaland Launches Operation To Liberate Bu’aale And Middle Jubba Region At Large [Source: Wacaal Media], 20 October 2015.

⁽³⁵³⁾ ACLED, Realtime 2015 All Africa File, updated 28th November 2015.

⁽³⁵⁴⁾ Garowe Online, Somalia: Militants execute three for spying for CIA, 29 June 2015.

⁽³⁵⁵⁾ UN Human Rights Council, Report of the Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Somalia, 28 October 2015, p. 5.

‘Members of the Bantu/Wagoshia farming community who inhabit the riverine villages and key towns have become increasingly subject to systematic violence by Al-Shabaab, including killing, maiming, torture and inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment of civilians, and sexual and gender-based violence’ ⁽³⁵⁶⁾.

Transport and food security

Several sources interviewed by DIS (May 2015) stated: ‘Travelling between Al-Shabaab controlled areas and areas with AMISOM/SNAF presence is considered to be extremely dangerous and challenging due to the many Al-Shabaab checkpoints’ ⁽³⁵⁷⁾. UNHCR Somalia added: ‘At these checkpoints Al-Shabaab will conduct searches’ ⁽³⁵⁸⁾.

According to some sources interviewed by DIS (May 2015), ‘people do travel from Al-Shabaab controlled areas to areas with AMISOM/SNAF presence. However, it depends on the individual’s relationship with Al-Shabaab and how those individuals weigh the risks involved against the purpose of the trip’ ⁽³⁵⁹⁾.

A humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia explained:

‘any person leaving Al-Shabaab controlled areas would be questioned about the purpose, destination and duration of their travel. (...) Likewise, every time people return to an Al-Shabaab controlled area they risk being accused of spying and collaborating with the government which could lead to execution, severe beatings and detention’ ⁽³⁶⁰⁾.

A news article from June 2015 reported that widespread food shortage in farming areas in the Jubba regions led to high levels of malnutrition among children ⁽³⁶¹⁾. In October it was reported from the Middle Jubba region that the river Jubba had broken its banks and flooded the surrounding villages in the riverine areas ⁽³⁶²⁾. This heavy flooding put 145,000 people in South Somalia in need of food aid ⁽³⁶³⁾.

⁽³⁵⁶⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea pursuant to Security Council resolution 2182 (2014): Somalia, 19 October 2015, pp. 236, 244.

⁽³⁵⁷⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process [sources: UNHCR Somalia, Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia, International organisation working in S/C Somalia (B), Representative of an International NGO working in S/C Somalia], September 2015, p. 18.

⁽³⁵⁸⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process [source: UNHCR Somalia], September 2015, p. 18.

⁽³⁵⁹⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process [source: Humanitarian worker in Somalia, Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia, International organisation working in S/C Somalia (B)], September 2015, p. 19.

⁽³⁶⁰⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process [source: Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia], September 2015, p. 19.

⁽³⁶¹⁾ AMISOM Daily Media Monitoring, Monitoring Malnutrition Rises In Jubba Regions [Source: Radio Ergo], 15 June 2015.

⁽³⁶²⁾ AMISOM Daily Media Monitoring, River Jubba Of Somalia Bursts Its Banks [Source: Mareeg Media], 22 October 2015.

⁽³⁶³⁾ UN OCHA, Humanitarian Bulletin Somalia December 2015, 18 December 2015.

LOWER SHABELLE REGION

Legend

- Airstrip
- Regional capital
- District capital
- Settlement
- Regional boundary
- International boundary
- District boundary
- Coastline
- River
- Stream
- Major road
- Secondary road

Map Reference: Admin_Map_Lower Shabelle_A4
Creation Date: 26/10/2012
Projection/Datum: Geographic WGS 84
Web Resources: <http://www.unocha.org/somalia>
Email: ochaadmin@unocha.org
Nominal Scale at A4 paper size: 1:1,550,000

Map data source(s):
 All Admin layers & Settlements: UNDP Somalia (1998)
 Roads & Stream Network: FAO/WHO/UNA

Disclaimer:
 The designations employed and the presentation of material on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of frontiers or boundaries.

Map of Somalia

2.6.2. Violence

Al-Shabaab is so active in launching attacks in Lower Shabelle that Horseed Media called the region a ‘hotbed of Al-Shabaab activity’⁽³⁶⁸⁾. It carried out attacks in public places such as the *khat* market in Janaale⁽³⁶⁹⁾ in April 2015 and the market in Afgooye⁽³⁷⁰⁾ in October 2015, resulting in casualties among soldiers but also civilians. In June 2015, militants attacked a police station in Afgooye⁽³⁷¹⁾ and later the same month the local police station and the regional administration’s offices in Qoryoley⁽³⁷²⁾.

Targeted assassinations of public figures have been reported, e.g. in August 2015 attackers shot and killed the District Commissioner in Janaale in an overnight raid on his residence⁽³⁷³⁾. Interim South-West State President Sharif Hassan survived an assassination attempt when his convoy hit a landmine in Lower Shabelle on 18 May 2015⁽³⁷⁴⁾.

In May 2015, militants from Al-Shabaab attacked and briefly captured two towns, Mubarak and Awdheghe, resulting in clashes with government troops that left at least 18 dead⁽³⁷⁵⁾. On 24 May militants captured the major town Janaale in Lower Shabelle after Somali forces vacated positions. Al-Shabaab launched a large-scale attack on the AMISOM base in Janaale on 1 September 2015. Later that month it took control over various localities in Lower Shabelle (the villages El Salindi and Kuntuwa). Al-Shabaab also claimed to be in control of Buulo Mareer⁽³⁷⁶⁾.

On 18 September 2015, Al-Shabaab fighters attacked an army base in Yaqbariweyne and held it for a short period, allegedly killing 13 Somali soldiers. The army later recaptured the base⁽³⁷⁷⁾. At the end of November Al-Shabaab attacked a military base in the town of Qoryoley manned by SNA; government sources said they repelled the attack and inflicted heavy losses on Al-Shabaab fighters⁽³⁷⁸⁾.

The leader of Al-Shabaab, Ahmed Abdi Godane, was killed on 1 September 2014 by a US drone strike in Sablaale district⁽³⁷⁹⁾. Air strikes on Al-Shabaab bases Torato and Amberso were conducted in March 2015⁽³⁸⁰⁾. Another drone strike on 21 November 2015 hit an Al-Shabaab base and reportedly killed at least 10 Al-Shabaab members near Balad Amin, Wanla Weyne district⁽³⁸¹⁾.

Besides fighting against Al-Shabaab, clan clashes over ownership of land in Merka were reported in August⁽³⁸²⁾ and over land-grazing rights in Afgooye district in October 2015⁽³⁸³⁾.

2.6.3. Actors in the conflict

AMISOM and SNAF are actively fighting Al-Shabaab in the area.

Clans are important elements of conflict in Lower Shabelle as well, as clan militias pursuing their own interests resort to violent acts, thus increasing the complexity of the security situation of the area. As an example, there is ongoing conflict between militias of Hawiye (Habr Gedir, Hawadle and Murosade) and the Bantu militia Salaax⁽³⁸⁴⁾. In 2014, fighting involved militia of the Biyomaal (Dir) and Habar Gedir (Hawiye)⁽³⁸⁵⁾ and resulted in a reconciliation

⁽³⁶⁸⁾ Horseed Media, At least five dead in Somalia market bomb attack, 7 October 2015.

⁽³⁶⁹⁾ AMISOM Daily Media Monitoring, Explosions Reported In Lower Shabelle Amid Recent Al-Shabaab Attacks In Mogadishu [Source: International Business Times], 30 April 2015.

⁽³⁷⁰⁾ Horseed Media, At least five dead in Somalia market bomb attack, 7 October 2015.

⁽³⁷¹⁾ Reuters, Islamists kill eight officers in attack on Somali police station, 20 June 2015.

⁽³⁷²⁾ AMISOM Daily Media Monitoring, Government And AMISOM Forces Repel Al-Shabaab In Qoryoley Attack [Source: Wacaa Media], 26 June 2015.

⁽³⁷³⁾ AMISOM Daily Media Monitoring, Janale District Commissioner Killed In Raid [Source: Garowe Online], 4 August 2015.

⁽³⁷⁴⁾ CrisisWatch Database: Somalia (August 2014-December 2015), n.d., regularly updated.

⁽³⁷⁵⁾ Aljazeera, Deaths as al-Shabab fighters attack two Somali towns, 23 May 2015.

⁽³⁷⁶⁾ BAMF, Briefing Notes, 14 September 2015.

⁽³⁷⁷⁾ BAMF, Briefing Notes, 21 September 2015.

⁽³⁷⁸⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Al-Shabaab Attacks Military Base in Qoryoley District [source: Shabelle Media], 1 December 2015.

⁽³⁷⁹⁾ CrisisWatch Database: Somalia (August 2014-December 2015), n.d., regularly updated.

⁽³⁸⁰⁾ AMISOM Daily Media Monitoring, Drones strike Shabaab strongholds in Somalia [Source: World Bulletin], 11 March 2015.

⁽³⁸¹⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Unknown Drone Strikes Al-Shabaab Base in Southern Somalia, 10 Militants Dead [Source: Shabelle Media], 22 November 2015.

⁽³⁸²⁾ AMISOM Daily Media Monitoring, Uneasy Calm Returns in Marka Following Ceasefire Brokered by Local Elders [Source: Wacaa Media], 9 August 2015.

⁽³⁸³⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Tribal Fighting Leaves Two Dead in Afgoye Town [Source: Shabelle Media], 20 October 2015.

⁽³⁸⁴⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea pursuant to Security Council resolution 2182 (2014): Somalia, 19 October 2015, pp. 228-229.

⁽³⁸⁵⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea pursuant to Security Council resolution 2111 (2013): Somalia, 13 October 2014, p. 22.

agreement in Afgooye in January 2015 ⁽³⁸⁶⁾. Several militias are reportedly allied with Al-Shabaab, e.g. Biyomaal and Tunni ⁽³⁸⁷⁾. However, militia alliances are built upon interests and can be dissolved very fast, as the Austrian Staatendokumentation explained in its security analysis (November 2015) ⁽³⁸⁸⁾. The towns Merka and Afgooye are particularly affected by clan conflict ⁽³⁸⁹⁾.

2.6.4. Areas of control/influence

AMISOM (Uganda People's Defence Force contingent) along with SNAF is present in the area. These troops operate in the towns of Afgooye, Baraawe, Merka, Qoryooley, Wanla Weyne and Kurtun Warey. They have a presence along supply roads, while bigger outposts are located in Bali Doogle near Wanla Weyne and Shalambood near Merka ⁽³⁹⁰⁾.

According to a security analysis expert, Al-Shabaab remains active in the area as there is still a significant number of Al-Shabaab sympathisers ⁽³⁹¹⁾.

As of May 2015 AMISOM/SNAF had a presence in Qoryooley and Baraawe ⁽³⁹²⁾. Qoryooley was liberated in 22 March 2014 and Baraawe on 6 October 2014 ⁽³⁹³⁾. An International organisation, interviewed by DIS (May 2015), explained:

'In Baraawe Al-Shabaab has successfully blended in with the local communities (...). Al-Shabaab here is seen as beaten, but it still maintains a military presence which can be called up. Still, this is usually not done. (...) In Lower Shabelle Al-Shabaab has melted back into the civilian communities but maintains a hidden presence all over the region' ⁽³⁹⁴⁾.

Al-Shabaab remains in control of Sablaale town and the rural areas north and west of the Lower Shabelle region ⁽³⁹⁵⁾.

2.6.5. Impact of the violence

As cited by OCHA, the Lower Shabelle region was among the areas most affected by conflict between May-September 2015 ⁽³⁹⁶⁾. Civilian casualties were reported as AMISOM intensified operations in Lower Shabelle in July 2015. In his September 2015 Report to the UN Security Council, the independent expert Bahame Tom Nyanduga noted that, in July 2015, 22 civilians were reportedly killed by AMISOM in two separate incidents in Merka. On 21 July 2015, 15 civilians, including women and children, were reportedly killed and five others injured. On 31 July 2015, seven civilians were killed in Merka ⁽³⁹⁷⁾.

Multiple roadblocks had been set up along the main road connecting towns in Lower Shabelle, manned by armed men collecting money from vehicles ⁽³⁹⁸⁾. There were reports of robbery and rape on the road between Afgooye and Mogadishu and Afgooye and Mareerey ⁽³⁹⁹⁾. The Biyomaal militia is manning checkpoints in the area between K60 and Merka ⁽⁴⁰⁰⁾. The Somali security forces carried out several operations to remove roadblocks along the road ⁽⁴⁰¹⁾.

⁽³⁸⁶⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Somali Clans Sign Reconciliation Agreement in Afgoye [Source: Sabahi], 29 January 2015.

⁽³⁸⁷⁾ Expert on Somalia, interview, Lifos, Stockholm 2 December 2015.

⁽³⁸⁸⁾ BFA Staatendokumentation/Andreas Tiwald, Analyse zu Somalia – Lagekarten zur Sicherheitslage, 12 October 2015, p. 22.

⁽³⁸⁹⁾ BFA Staatendokumentation/Andreas Tiwald, Analyse zu Somalia – Lagekarten zur Sicherheitslage, 12 October 2015, p. 21.

⁽³⁹⁰⁾ Security analysis expert, Austria, Interview, BFA Staatendokumentation, 12 November 2015.

⁽³⁹¹⁾ Security analysis expert, Austria, Interview, BFA Staatendokumentation, 12 November 2015.

⁽³⁹²⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process, September 2015, p. 7.

⁽³⁹³⁾ Lifos (Migrationsverket), Säkerhetssituationen i södra och centrala Somalia, 29 April 2015, p. 21.

⁽³⁹⁴⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process [source: International organisation working in S/C Somalia (C)], September 2015, p. 50.

⁽³⁹⁵⁾ BFA Staatendokumentation/Andreas Tiwald, Analyse zu Somalia – Lagekarten zur Sicherheitslage, 12 October 2015, p. 8.

⁽³⁹⁶⁾ ACAPS, Global Emergency Overview Snapshot 18 - 24 November 2015, 24 November 2015.

⁽³⁹⁷⁾ UN Human Rights Council, Report of the Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Somalia, 28 October 2015, p. 6.

⁽³⁹⁸⁾ AMISOM Daily Media Monitoring, Five Female Passengers Raped In Lower Shabelle [Source: Goobjoog News], 16 October 2015.

⁽³⁹⁹⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Gunmen Dressed in Govt Military Uniform Rape Women Near Afgoye Town [source: Shabelle Media], 17 October 2015; AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Increasing Roadblocks Cause Transportation Hindrance On Mogadishu-Afgoye Highway [source: Shabelle Media], 23 October 2015.

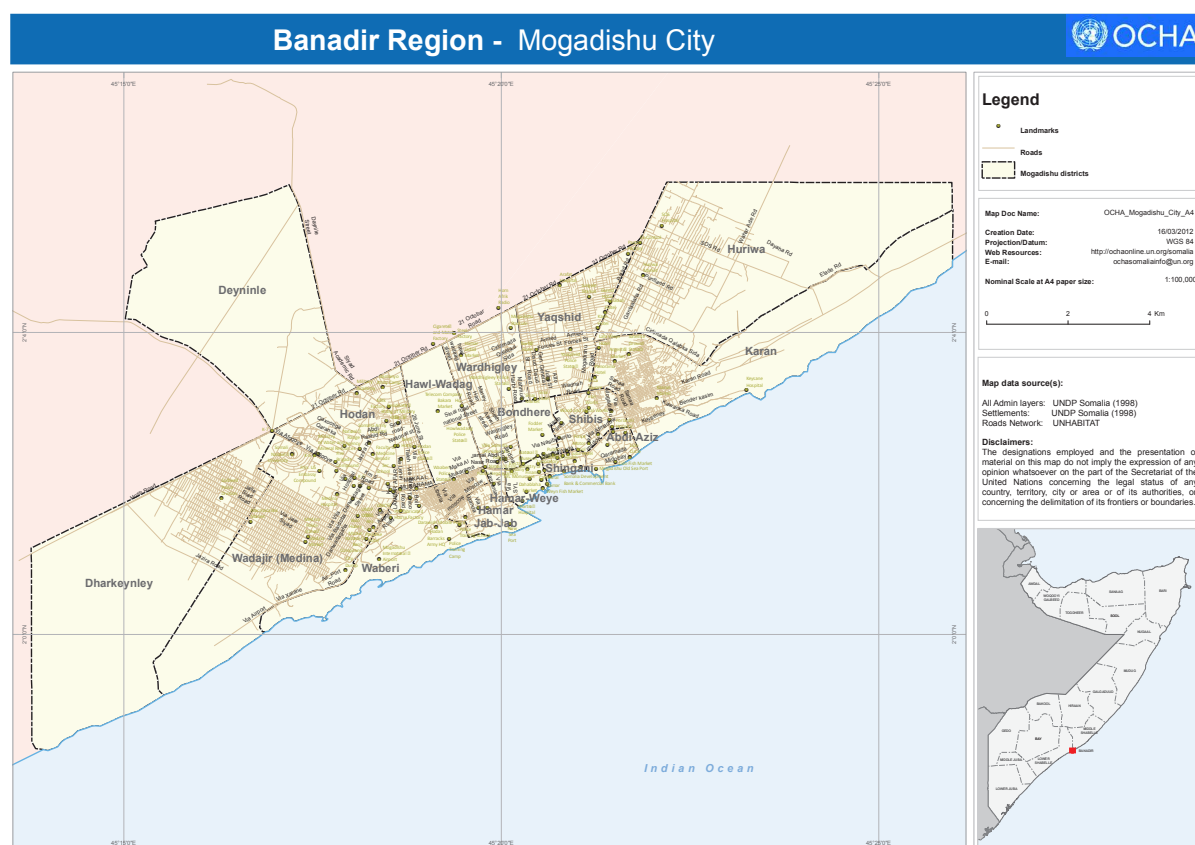
⁽⁴⁰⁰⁾ Security analysis expert, Austria, Interview, BFA Staatendokumentation, 12 November 2015.

⁽⁴⁰¹⁾ AMISOM Daily Media Monitoring, Security Forces Dismantle Illegal Roadblocks In Lower Shabelle [Source: Goobjoog News], 15 September 2015; AMISOM Daily Media Monitoring, Five Female Passengers Raped In Lower Shabelle [Source: Goobjoog News], 16 October 2015.

Transport and food security

Lower Shabelle was hit by heavy rains during *Deyr* in 2015; heavy flooding was reported in Afgooye district and in Janaale, Bullo-Mareer and Shalambood, Marka district. Transportation along the main roads has been hampered. The Afgooye-Awdhegale road, as well as the road between Mashane and Waagle in Marka district, has been affected ⁽⁴⁰²⁾. The floods are reportedly affecting food security in the region ⁽⁴⁰³⁾.

2.7. Benadir-Mogadishu



Source map: UN OCHA, Administrative maps [regional maps of South and Central Somalia], 2012.

2.7.1. Short description of the region

Benadir (or Banaadir) region historically refers to the coastal region in South Somalia. The administrative region Benadir is much smaller than that historical region and covers only Somalia's capital Mogadishu. Benadir is bordered by the Somali regions of Middle Shabelle and Lower Shabelle as well as the Indian Ocean.

Mogadishu, governed by the mayor who is also the governor of the Benadir region ⁽⁴⁰⁴⁾, is divided into 16 districts, each headed by a district commissioner ⁽⁴⁰⁵⁾.

According to Gundel (2009) the traditionally dominant clans in Mogadishu are the Abgal and Habr Gedir groups (Hawiye). There are also minorities such as Yibr (*sab*) and Sheikhal. The original inhabitants of Mogadishu are also

⁽⁴⁰²⁾ UN OCHA, SOMALIA Flash Update 5, 27 November 2015.

⁽⁴⁰³⁾ ACAPS, Global Emergency Overview - Somalia, last updated 24 January 2016.

⁽⁴⁰⁴⁾ Sheikh Yusuf Hussein Jimale was on 26 October 2015 named the Governor of Benadir Region and the mayor of Mogadishu. Mogadishu Center for Research & Studies, The Profile of the Governor of Benadir and Mayor of Mogadishu, Sheikh Yusuf Hussein Jimale, 27 October 2015.

⁽⁴⁰⁵⁾ UN OCHA/ Habitat, Banadir - Admin Level 2 Boundaries, updated 6 June 2014.

known as Reer Hamar who, according to Gundel, ‘can be regarded as minorities in terms of language and culture’. They live in the old, historical districts of Mogadishu ⁽⁴⁰⁶⁾. Lewis (1955) specifically mentions the Hawiye subclan Murosade ⁽⁴⁰⁷⁾.

In 2014, the total population of Banadir region was estimated to be 1,650,227 inhabitants, including 369,288 IDPs ⁽⁴⁰⁸⁾. According to a representative of an international NGO, interviewed by DIS (May 2015), Mogadishu has a complicated clan composition due to internal displacement and population movement during the past 25 years of conflict ⁽⁴⁰⁹⁾.

2.7.2. Violence

The security situation is more volatile in Mogadishu than in other cities. There are more frequent attacks which take place every week in larger or smaller size. In addition, the capital experiences more heavy and complex attacks than other areas. This concerns, for example, major suicide attacks but also car bombs and assassinations ⁽⁴¹⁰⁾.

According to UNHCR in Somalia, interviewed by DIS in May 2015, ‘a high number of security incidents continue to take place in Mogadishu, including targeted killings of journalists, judiciary, government officials and others. (...) civilians are injured and killed every week in targeted attacks by gunmen, or attacks involving IEDs and grenades’ ⁽⁴¹¹⁾. Some other sources interviewed by DIS in May 2015 stated that ‘Al-Shabaab currently seems to aim for spectacular attacks against high value targets, such as AMISOM, the government and the UN’ ⁽⁴¹²⁾.

Overall, the number of incidents in Mogadishu – especially bomb attacks – is decreasing, but is still high. According to a security analysis expert, interviewed by BFA Staatendokumentation (November 2015), Al-Shabaab seems to avoid collateral damage in order to improve its own reputation ⁽⁴¹³⁾. UNHCR in Somalia, interviewed by DIS (May 2015), explained that ‘Al-Shabaab wants headlines and therefore carries out spectacular attacks against high profile targets’ ⁽⁴¹⁴⁾. Al-Shabaab frequently targets hotels as prominent places where officials meet, e.g. a suicide attack outside the SYL Hotel in Mogadishu, hosting a meeting of Turkish officials on 22 January 2015 just before the visit of the Turkish President ⁽⁴¹⁵⁾. A double attack on 22 February 2015 hit the Central Hotel in Mogadishu and the hotel mosque, killing 20 people including senior officials, an MP and Mogadishu’s deputy mayor ⁽⁴¹⁶⁾.

This trend continued throughout 2015. On 27 March, Al-Shabaab fighters stormed the Maka al-Mukarama Hotel after a suicide car bomb explosion; the attackers held hostages during a 17-hour siege before the Somali national security forces regained control of the location. At least 14 people were killed, including Yusuf Mohamed Ismail, the Somali Permanent Representative to the United Nations Office at Geneva ⁽⁴¹⁷⁾.

On 10 July 2015, 11 civilians were reportedly killed and at least 20 injured in two consecutive complex attacks at two hotels. On 26 July 2015, a truck laden with explosives detonated outside the Jazeera Palace Hotel, killing 15 people, including one member of the Chinese diplomatic mission staying at the hotel. The blast caused significant damage to the hotel and nearby buildings, including United Nations compounds on Airport Road ⁽⁴¹⁸⁾. The last large-scale attack in 2015 took place on 1 November at the Sahafi hotel, killing at least 15 people, including at least one MP and the general who led the 2011 offensive that drove Al-Shabaab out of Mogadishu. A website associated with Al-Shabaab said the group was responsible for the attack, which was allegedly carried out early in the morning to

⁽⁴⁰⁶⁾ ACCORD, Clans in Somalia, December 2009, pp. 12, 15, 17. For more information on the clans and minority groups, please consult EASO, COI report - South and Central Somalia Country overview, August 2014, chapter 2.

⁽⁴⁰⁷⁾ EASO, COI report - South and Central Somalia Country overview [source: Lewis 1955], August 2014, p. 52.

⁽⁴⁰⁸⁾ UNFPA, Population Estimation Survey 2014, Somalia, October 2014, p. 31.

⁽⁴⁰⁹⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process [source: Representative of an International NGO working in S/C Somalia], September 2015, p. 41.

⁽⁴¹⁰⁾ Lifos (Migrationsverket), Säkerhetssituationen i södra och centrala Somalia, 29 April 2015, p. 16.

⁽⁴¹¹⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process [source: UNHCR Somalia] September 2015, pp. 11-12.

⁽⁴¹²⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process [sources: International organisation working in S/C Somalia (A), International organisation working in S/C Somalia (B), International organisation working in S/C Somalia (C)], September 2015, p. 11.

⁽⁴¹³⁾ Security analysis expert, Austria, Interview, BFA Staatendokumentation, 12 November 2015.

⁽⁴¹⁴⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process [source: International organization working in S/C Somalia (A)], September 2015, p. 42.

⁽⁴¹⁵⁾ BBC, Somali car bomb explodes outside Mogadishu hotel, 22 January 2015.

⁽⁴¹⁶⁾ BBC, Somali capital Mogadishu hit by double explosions at hotel, 20 February 2015.

⁽⁴¹⁷⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia, (S/2015/331), 12 May 2015, p. 3.

⁽⁴¹⁸⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia, (S/2015/702), 11 September 2015, p. 3.

avoid civilian casualties. This seems to imply a change in strategy of Al-Shabaab, according to BBC journalist Mary Harper. Previously, attacks in Mogadishu have been carried out during the day and evening, killing civilians who happened to be in the targeted area ⁽⁴¹⁹⁾.

Large-scale casualties are caused by targeting popular public places such as bomb attacks on restaurants and hotels. A car bomb attack on a popular restaurant frequented by politicians on 21 April 2015 killed at least 10 ⁽⁴²⁰⁾. Al-Shabaab allegedly targeted officials from government ministries and the presidential palace who used to dine at the restaurant ⁽⁴²¹⁾. A popular café was attacked on 12 October 2014 with at least 10 killed and 15 injured ⁽⁴²²⁾.

Among other security incidents are attacks on governmental premises, such as the 21 September 2015 attack on government convoys leaving Mogadishu's presidential palace Villa Somalia, killing 11 and injuring 23, and the 14 April 2015 attack on the Ministry of Education that left at least 17 dead including seven attackers ⁽⁴²³⁾.

Al-Shabaab attacked a high security prison on 31 August 2014, killing 12 ⁽⁴²⁴⁾. It also infiltrated the main AMISOM base Halaane on the edge of the Mogadishu international airport compound on 25 December 2014, killing three AMISOM soldiers and a civilian contractor ⁽⁴²⁵⁾. On 21 June 2015 a large blast and gunfire hit a training compound near the headquarters of the National Intelligence and Security in Mogadishu; however, Somali authorities claimed to have foiled the attack without any government casualties ⁽⁴²⁶⁾.

Throughout the reporting period, Al-Shabaab engaged in targeted assassinations of public figures in Mogadishu: a security official was killed by AS in September 2014, a senior military officer was assassinated on 23 April 2015, a former Prime Minister, two city council officials and senior prison officers were assassinated on 25-26 April 2015, a local government official was killed on 6 May 2015, and two police officers were killed on 28 November 2015 ⁽⁴²⁷⁾. At least 10 Members of Parliament have been killed within a year ⁽⁴²⁸⁾. On 7 November 2015, an MP was shot dead by Al-Shabaab insurgents in Mogadishu ⁽⁴²⁹⁾. On 3 December 2015 a female journalist was targeted and killed by a bomb planted in her car ⁽⁴³⁰⁾. Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for the attack ⁽⁴³¹⁾. A female employee of UNHCR and her driver were killed in a drive-by shooting on 14 December 2015 ⁽⁴³²⁾. Another drive-by shooting was carried out on 19 December 2015 allegedly targeting a government official. Subsequently a car loaded with explosives was detonated on a crowded shopping street ⁽⁴³³⁾.

In addition to the conflict between Al-Shabaab and SFG, a number of clans in Mogadishu are allegedly capable of carrying out larger attacks, although their actual involvement often remains unclear ⁽⁴³⁴⁾. An international organisation working in South-Central Somalia, interviewed by DIS in May 2015, commented on this:

'There may be a tendency to blame all sorts of violent incidents on AlShabaab. Nevertheless, many violent incidents in S/C Somalia are also related to clan conflicts or personal scores resulting from political rivalries, quarrels between warlords, land and criminal disputes. (...) In Mogadishu it could even be small local businesses that are in a fierce competition with each other that could lead to a murder. The business people involved would not oppose having that murder being pinned on AlShabaab and neither would AlShabaab as they would benefit from the fear created by such actions' ⁽⁴³⁵⁾.

⁽⁴¹⁹⁾ BBC, Somalia: Al-Shabab attack kills 15 in Mogadishu hotel, 1 November 2015.

⁽⁴²⁰⁾ BBC, Somali car bomb explodes outside Mogadishu restaurant, 21 April 2015.

⁽⁴²¹⁾ Reuters, Somali militants kill at least 10 in car bomb attack on restaurant, 21 April 2015.

⁽⁴²²⁾ CrisisWatch Database: Somalia (August 2014-December 2015), n.d., regularly updated.

⁽⁴²³⁾ CrisisWatch Database: Somalia (August 2014-December 2015), n.d., regularly updated.

⁽⁴²⁴⁾ CNN, 12 dead in Islamist attack on Somali prison, 31 August 2014.

⁽⁴²⁵⁾ Reuters, Islamist gunmen attack African Union base in Somalia, 25 December 2014.

⁽⁴²⁶⁾ Reuters, Four militants killed in raid on Somali government site, attack over, 21 June 2015.

⁽⁴²⁷⁾ CrisisWatch Database: Somalia (August 2014-December 2015), n.d., regularly updated.

⁽⁴²⁸⁾ IB Times, Federal Parliament Member Becomes Latest High-Ranking Victim Killed In Al-Shabab Attack In Somalia, 25 July 2015.

⁽⁴²⁹⁾ Horseed Media, Somalia: MP shot dead by al-Shabaab insurgents in Mogadishu, 7 November 2015.

⁽⁴³⁰⁾ Reporters sans Frontières, Somali Journalist Killed in Mogadishu By Bomb Planted in Her Car, 3 December 2015.

⁽⁴³¹⁾ Bloomberg Business, Somalia Journalist Killed by Al-Shabaab Car-Bomb in Capital, 3 December 2015.

⁽⁴³²⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Two UNHCR Staffers Shot Dead in Drive-By-Shooting in Mogadishu [source: Shabelle Media], 14 December 2015.

⁽⁴³³⁾ AFP, Four killed in Somali shooting, car bombing: police, 19 December 2015.

⁽⁴³⁴⁾ Lifos (Migrationsverket), Säkerhetssituationen i södra och centrala Somalia [source: Paul Kellett, telefonsamtal 2014-11-25], 29 April 2015, p. 18.

⁽⁴³⁵⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process [source: International organization working in S/C Somalia (A)], September 2015, pp. 43-44.

Another international organisation, interviewed by DIS in May 2015, noted: ‘Most murders in Mogadishu are not related to AlShabaab, although AlShabaab takes credit for them. The locals will always know if the murder was in fact AlShabaab or due to business, politics, ordinary crime or other reasons’ ⁽⁴³⁶⁾.

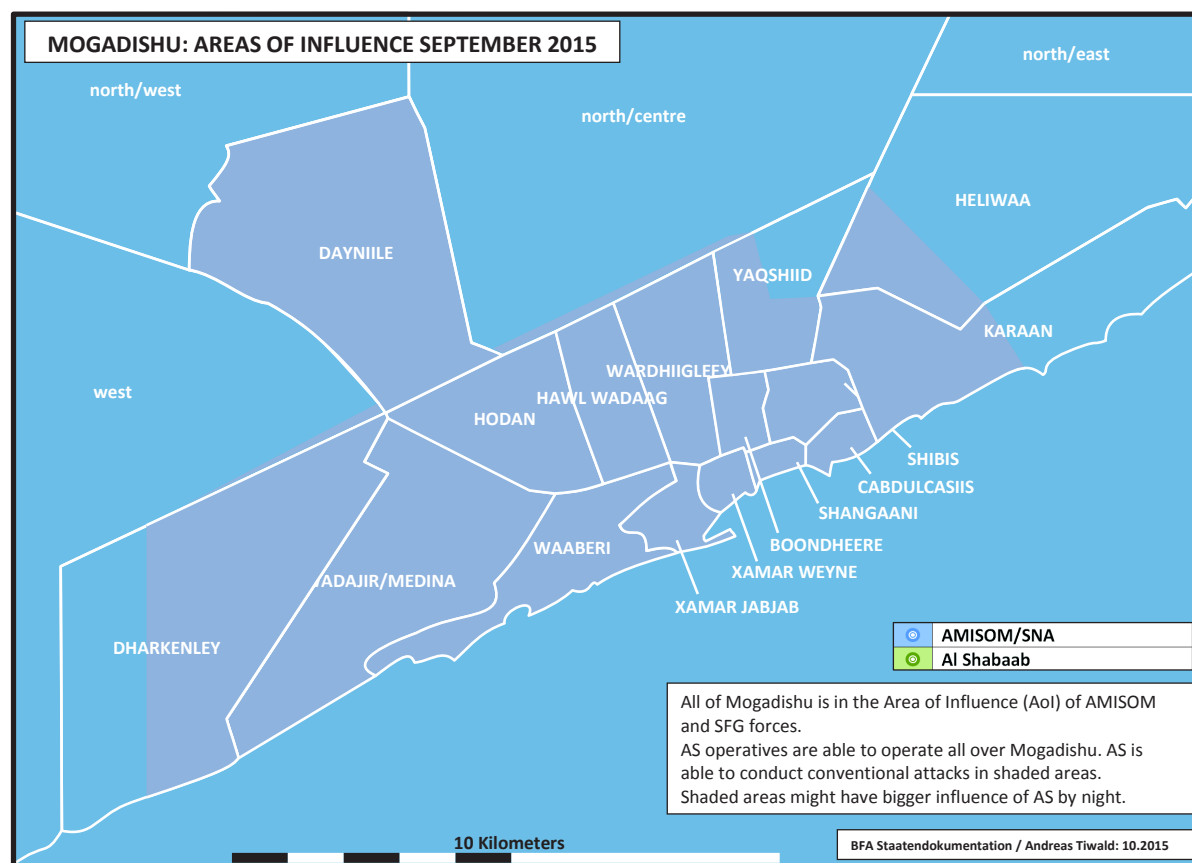
2.7.3. Actors in the conflict

According to an international organisation, interviewed by DIS (May 2015), in Mogadishu AMISOM, SNAF, the police and NISA are present. The city is generally secure, although AlShabaab poses a constant threat ⁽⁴³⁷⁾ (see also [section 1.5.1](#)).

Within AMISOM, Ugandan troops ⁽⁴³⁸⁾ are deployed to secure Mogadishu. Burundi ⁽⁴³⁹⁾ also maintains troops.

According to an expert on Somalia, interviewed in Stockholm by Lifos on 2 December 2015, about 40 % of the inhabitants in Mogadishu are said to support Al-Shabaab. The support is clan-based, although it is important to remember that not every individual clan member supports Al-Shabaab. An example is the difference between the Abgal and the Murusade clans in Mogadishu. The Hawiye-Abgal clan has power in Mogadishu. The Murusade feel marginalised and as a consequence support Al-Shabaab. However, some strong individuals in the Ayr clan are influential in the government and have nothing to gain by supporting Al-Shabaab in Mogadishu ⁽⁴⁴⁰⁾.

2.7.4. Areas of control/influence



A report of the Austrian BFA Staatendokumentation (October 2015) indicates that, while the whole of Mogadishu is under the influence of AMISOM and SFG forces, Al-Shabaab is still able to conduct asymmetric attacks in suburbs

⁽⁴³⁶⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process [source: International organization working in S/C Somalia (B)], September 2015, p. 48

⁽⁴³⁷⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process [source: International organization working in S/C Somalia (C)], September 2015, p. 49.

⁽⁴³⁸⁾ AMISOM, Military Component, n.d.

⁽⁴³⁹⁾ AMISOM, Burundi, n.d.

⁽⁴⁴⁰⁾ Expert on Somalia, interview, Lifos, Stockholm 2 December 2015.

of Mogadishu. This concerns the districts Dayniile, Heliwaa, as well as parts of Karaan, Yaqshiid and Dharkenley, as is shown in the map above. In these districts the influence of Al-Shabaab can be bigger during the night ⁽⁴⁴¹⁾. The remaining parts of Mogadishu are accessible for Al-Shabaab in two ways: firstly, in the form of ‘hidden actors’, fighters hidden among the inhabitants; and secondly in the form of large-scale operations of special units, so-called complex attacks (which include suicide bombers and remotely ignited explosives as well as a larger number of fighters). It should be noted that Al-Shabaab lacks permanent presence in the blue marked parts (on the map above) of Mogadishu and visible combat units have only little influence. However, the presence of hidden insurgents and the employment of terrorist activities highly affect the lives of residents ⁽⁴⁴²⁾.

2.7.5. Impact of the violence

UNHCR in Somalia, interviewed by DIS in May 2015, noted on the impact of the violence on the population:

‘In Mogadishu the SFG continues to face significant challenges in providing basic security to its populations. Thus the reality on the ground, as reported by observers, remains that civilians are injured and killed every week in targeted attacks by gunmen, or attacks involving IEDs and grenades. The continued high number of security incidents, including targeted killings of journalists, judiciary, government officials and others, and fighting between government forces and affiliated militias still dominant in parts of the city illustrate these challenges. For Somalis in Mogadishu, it is very difficult to survive without a support network, and newcomers to the city, particularly when they do not belong to the clans or nuclear families established in the district in question, or when they originate from an area formerly or presently controlled by an insurgent group, face a precarious existence in the capital. Often, they are forced to settle in IDP settlements where living conditions are deplorable and human rights violations commonly reported – with no durable solutions in sight’ ⁽⁴⁴³⁾.

An International organisation working in South-Central Somalia, interviewed by DIS in May 2015 remarked:

‘Mogadishu was officially cleared of Al-Shabaab a long time ago but still attacks occur on a regular basis. Al-Shabaab maintains a clandestine presence in Mogadishu and all towns in S/C Somalia. Al-Shabaab is able to demand taxes in the areas it controls but also in all other areas, including towns with AMISOM/SNAF presence. Even in Mogadishu Al-Shabaab taxes markets and traders. This is particularly the case for businesses that require goods and services from other parts of Somalia, so that a relationship with Al-Shabaab is necessary for the business to be conducted’ ⁽⁴⁴⁴⁾.

IDPs

Forced evictions of internally displaced persons in Mogadishu are of concern, as the use of force, violence and harassment is reported. Data from UNHCR indicate that between January and October 2015, 77,314 displaced persons were forcibly evicted from public and private land and buildings in Mogadishu ⁽⁴⁴⁵⁾. The independent expert Bahame Tom Nyanduga, reporting to the UN Security Council (September 2015), noted: ‘Many of the evicted displaced persons are forced to relocate and settle themselves in areas where they continue to suffer a myriad of human rights violations and where living conditions are deplorable and services limited or non-existent’ ⁽⁴⁴⁶⁾.

A report by Human Rights Watch (September 2014) documented the involvement of AMISOM personnel in sexual and gender-based violence against Somali women and girls ⁽⁴⁴⁷⁾.

Transport system and food security

The Benadir region was hit by heavy rains in November 2015, affecting mainly internally displaced people’s settlements ⁽⁴⁴⁸⁾.

⁽⁴⁴¹⁾ BFA Staatendokumentation/Andreas Tiwald, Analyse zu Somalia – Lagekarten zur Sicherheitslage, 12 October 2015, p. 31.

⁽⁴⁴²⁾ BFA Staatendokumentation/Andreas Tiwald, Analyse zu Somalia – Lagekarten zur Sicherheitslage, 12 October 2015, p. 31.

⁽⁴⁴³⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process [source: UNHCR Somalia] September 2015, p. 26.

⁽⁴⁴⁴⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process [source: International organization working in S/C Somalia (B)] September 2015, p. 45.

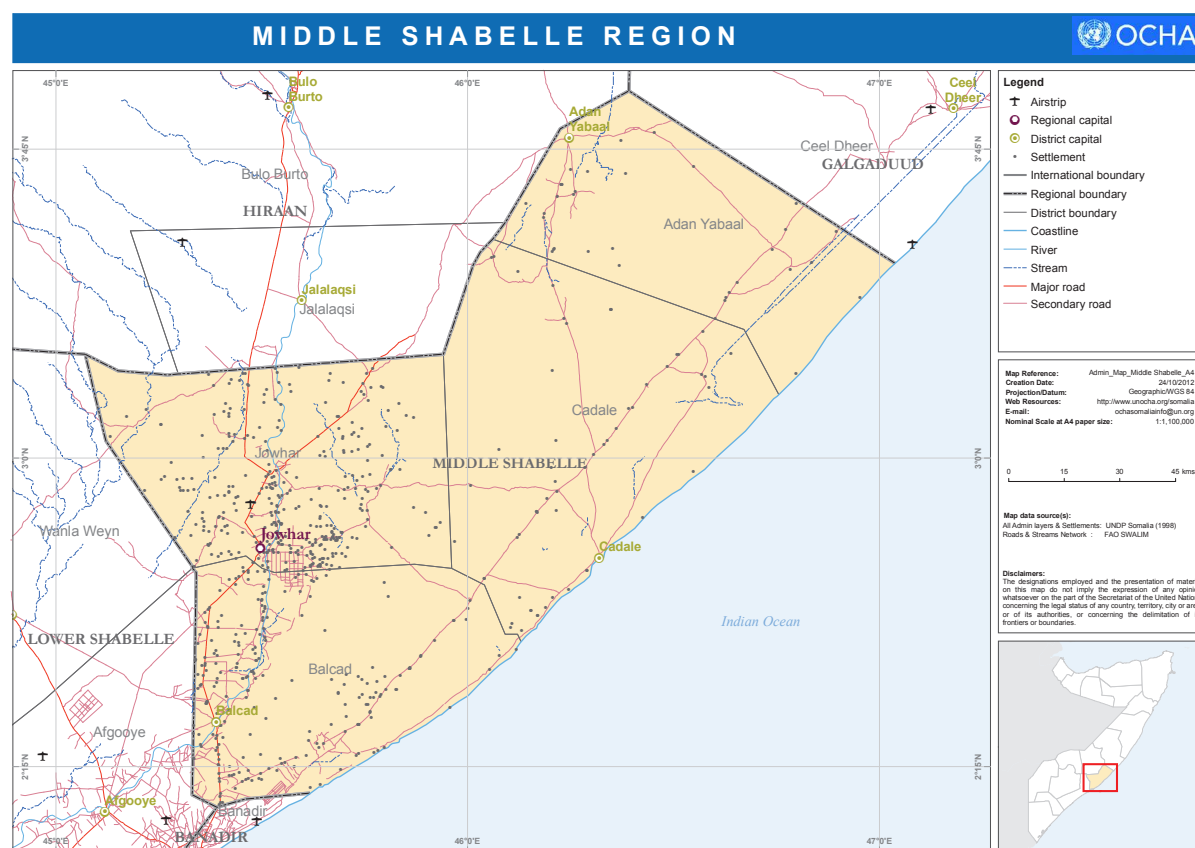
⁽⁴⁴⁵⁾ UNHCR, Somalia Factsheet, October 2015.

⁽⁴⁴⁶⁾ UN Human Rights Council, Report of the Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Somalia, 28 October 2015, p. 14.

⁽⁴⁴⁷⁾ HRW, ‘The Power These Men Have Over Us’: Sexual exploitation and Abuse by African Union Forces in Somalia, 8 September 2014.

⁽⁴⁴⁸⁾ UN OCHA, SOMALIA Flash Update 4, 20 November 2015; UN OCHA, SOMALIA Flash Update 6, 4 December 2015.

2.8. Middle Shabelle



Source map: UN OCHA, *Administrative maps* [regional maps of South and Central Somalia], 2012.

2.8.1. Short description of the region

Middle Shabelle is located in South Somalia along the coast. It borders Lower Shabelle to the west, Hiiraan to the north and Galgaduud to the north-east. It is divided into 4 districts: Cadale, Adan Yabaal, Balcad and Jowhar. Other settlements are Fiidow, Mahadaay, Rage Ceelle, Warsheikh. The regional capital is Jowhar.

The population of the region mainly encompasses, according to both Lewis (1955) and Abikar (1999) ⁽⁴⁴⁹⁾, Hawiye clans: Abgal, Hawadle, Murusade, Galja'el and Baadi Adde, and the ethnic minority Shiidle (Bantu).

According to the Population Survey Estimate undertaken by UNFPA and Somali authorities ⁽⁴⁵⁰⁾, as of 2014 the Middle Shabelle region totalled 516,036 inhabitants divided into 114,348 urban inhabitants, 249,326 rural, 100,402 nomads and 51,960 IDPs.

A process of federal state formation in Hiiraan and Middle Shabelle regions was launched on 8 August 2015, aiming at an interim federal administration on 1 December 2015 ⁽⁴⁵¹⁾.

⁽⁴⁴⁹⁾ EASO, COI report - South and Central Somalia Country Overview [source: Lewis 1955], August 2014, p. 52; EASO, COI report - South and Central Somalia Country Overview [source: Abikar 1999], August 2014, p. 53.

⁽⁴⁵⁰⁾ UNFPA, Population Estimation Survey 2014, Somalia, October 2014, p. 31.

⁽⁴⁵¹⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia (S/2015/702), 11 September 2015, p. 2.

2.8.2. Violence

In the reporting period, clan clashes repeatedly occurred in towns in Middle Shabelle region in Somalia, allegedly mainly due to land grabbing. Clashes of clan militias were reported in Jowhar ⁽⁴⁵²⁾ in August 2014, in Warsheikh ⁽⁴⁵³⁾ and Rage Ceelle ⁽⁴⁵⁴⁾ in June 2015. Renewed clan fighting occurred again in Warsheikh in July 2015 ⁽⁴⁵⁵⁾. Another clan battle broke out in Baaley and Ali-Muumin areas near Balcad town ⁽⁴⁵⁶⁾.

In March 2015 a bomb attack was carried out on government soldiers in Hantiwadag village in Jowhar district, injuring at least four people. Jowhar forces with AMISOM support made several arrests after the onslaught. No group has officially claimed responsibility for the attack, although government officials pointed at Al-Shabaab. The Jowhar administration imposed a night curfew and limited vehicle and people movements ⁽⁴⁵⁷⁾.

On 13 July 2015 heavily armed militants from Al-Shabaab attacked a military base in Rage Ceelle town killing at least four soldiers and two civilians. However, the military chief of the area claimed the attack was repulsed ⁽⁴⁵⁸⁾.

The Jowhar police station was attacked by a grenade bomb blast on 15 October 2015, allegedly by Al-Shabaab ⁽⁴⁵⁹⁾.

SNA forces and AMISOM troops took control of Cadale district in Middle Shabelle region on 1 October 2014, a day after capturing the Rage Ceelle district from Al-Shabaab. The allied forces faced no resistance from Al-Shabaab before taking over the two districts, where they arrested dozens of Al-Shabaab members ⁽⁴⁶⁰⁾.

An operation aiming to improve security in Jowhar was conducted in November 2014 and led to the arrest of several suspected Al-Shabaab militants ⁽⁴⁶¹⁾. Another operation by government troops was launched in September 2015 in order to prevent attacks by Al-Shabaab ⁽⁴⁶²⁾. In addition, government forces conducted operations to restore security, e.g. in Jowhar in May 2015 ⁽⁴⁶³⁾ and August 2015 ⁽⁴⁶⁴⁾ and in Mahadaay town also in August 2015 ⁽⁴⁶⁵⁾.

2.8.3. Actors in the conflict

In Middle Shabelle, Burundi National Defence Forces are deployed within AMISOM along with the Somali National Army. Since 2012, AMISOM/SNA have successfully liberated major towns within the region. Al-Shabaab remains in rural areas outside the cities. On 3 February 2015, Somali authorities announced the capture of a senior Al-Shabaab commander in Middle Shabelle region ⁽⁴⁶⁶⁾.

Besides these actors, clan militias are active. Land-related conflicts in Middle Shabelle region between the dominant Abgaal (Hawiye) clan and minority Shiidle (Bantu) communities appear to have been superseded by intra-Abgaal clashes in 2015 ⁽⁴⁶⁷⁾. Al-Shabaab uses these power struggles between clans in the area to its advantage ⁽⁴⁶⁸⁾.

⁽⁴⁵²⁾ AMISOM Daily Media Monitoring, Middle Shabelle officials to initiate talks between warring clans [Source: Bar-kulan], 27 August 2014.

⁽⁴⁵³⁾ AllAfrica.com/: Somalia Official Calls for Cessation of Renewed Clan Clashes in War-Sheikh [source: Shabelle Media], 1 June 2015.

⁽⁴⁵⁴⁾ AMISOM Daily Media Monitoring, Six Killed As Rival Clans Fight In Southern Somalia [Source: Radio Danan], 4 June 2015.

⁽⁴⁵⁵⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Clan Battle Renews in War-Sheikh Town in Middle Shabelle [source: Shabelle Media], 26 July 2015.

⁽⁴⁵⁶⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Deadly Battle Leaves 10 People Dead in Somalia [source: Shabelle Media], 29 July 2015.

⁽⁴⁵⁷⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Grenade Attack Injures Four in Jowhar [source: Radio Dalsan], 11 March 2015.

⁽⁴⁵⁸⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Deadly Al Shabab Attack On Army Base Kills 6 People [source: Shabelle Media], 13 July 2015; AMISOM Daily Media Monitoring, Somali Militants Attack Base, Kill At Least Four Soldiers [Source: Reuters], 13 July 2015.

⁽⁴⁵⁹⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Grenade Bomb Blast Targets Police Station in Jowhar Town [source: Shabelle Media], 16 October 2015.

⁽⁴⁶⁰⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Allied Forces Capture Adale, Rage Elle Districts From Al-Shabaab [source: Sabahi], 1 October 2014.

⁽⁴⁶¹⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Kismayo, Jowhar Security Sweeps Net Scores of Al-Shabaab Suspects [source: Sabahi], 14 November 2014.

⁽⁴⁶²⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Police Beefs up Security Operation in Jowhar Town [source: Shabelle Media], 25 September 2015.

⁽⁴⁶³⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Police Gives Details On Security Matters in Jowhar [source: Shabelle Media], 21 May 2015.

⁽⁴⁶⁴⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia Soldiers Launch an Operation in Jowhar Town [source: Shabelle Media], 8 August 2015; AllAfrica.com, Somalia Army Detains Dozens in an Operation in Jowhar [source: Shabelle Media], 15 August 2015.

⁽⁴⁶⁵⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Scores Detained in Operations in Mahaday [source: Shabelle Media], 29 August 2015; AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Somali Soldiers Launch Operation in Mahaday [source: Shabelle Media], 17 August 2015.

⁽⁴⁶⁶⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Senior Al-Shabaab Commanders Killed and Captured [source: Government of Ethiopia], 4 February 2015.

⁽⁴⁶⁷⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea pursuant to Security Council resolution 2182 (2014): Somalia, 19 October 2015, p. 15.

⁽⁴⁶⁸⁾ Lifos (Migrationsverket), Säkerhetssituationen i södra och centrala Somalia, 29 April 2015, p. 20.

2.8.4. Areas of control/influence

Al-Shabaab had been driven out of Balcad on 26 June 2012 and from the town of Jowhar on 9 December 2012. AMISOM and SNAF liberated the city of Warsheikh from Al-Shabaab on 16 March 2014. Two days later the insurgents were driven away from Fiidow. During Operation Indian Ocean, Al-Shabaab was removed from Rage Ceelle on 30 September 2014 and from Cadale on 1 October 2014. On 10 March 2015, after a brief battle with Al-Shabaab fighters, Somali troops together with AMISOM captured the area of Masjid Ali Gadud, which is an important transit hub for vehicles near Jowhar ⁽⁴⁶⁹⁾. Al-Shabaab is still present in rural areas outside the cities ⁽⁴⁷⁰⁾.

AMISOM/Burundi maintains garrisons in Jowhar, Balcad, Cadale, Warsheikh and smaller garrisons in Rage Ceelle and Mahadaay. Jowhar is Abgaal heartland and there is no backing for Al-Shabaab from the local population. Balcad and Warsheikh are important garrisons securing the outskirts of Mogadishu ⁽⁴⁷¹⁾.

According to reports of 13 November 2015, the African Union troops in Somalia withdrew from Fiidow, a strategic town in Middle Shabelle region, giving Al-Shabaab militants full access to retake it without force. Government officials in the region have described the withdrawal from Fiidow as ‘military tactics’ and vowed to recapture the city and the remaining Al-Shabaab strongholds in Middle Shabelle region ⁽⁴⁷²⁾.

2.8.5. Impact of the violence

In an Assessment by REACH (June 2015) on insecurity within their communities, 64 % of the assessed households reported sources of insecurity, while 36 % did not. The main sources of insecurity reported were actions by community leaders (20 %), inter-clan conflict (14 %), and local militia (12 %). The most significant safety concerns that women and girls were facing in their community were the risk of attacks when travelling outside the community (42 %), sexual violence and abuse (23 %), and inability to access services and resources (23 %) ⁽⁴⁷³⁾.

Transport and food security

According to a news article (March 2015) people in towns of the Middle Shabelle region have faced acute food shortages ⁽⁴⁷⁴⁾. The federal government, following the liberation of Warsheikh and Adale, provided food aid to families in these towns ⁽⁴⁷⁵⁾.

Middle Shabelle accounts for the highest number of displacements due to floods, with more than 11,000 people displaced, mostly in Jowhar, Mahaday and Balcad districts ⁽⁴⁷⁶⁾.

The below-average *Gu* harvest in August/September 2015 put poor households in these riverine areas in crisis (IPC Phase 3) ⁽⁴⁷⁷⁾.

⁽⁴⁶⁹⁾ AMISOM Daily Media Monitoring, AU, Somali Troops Seize District In Southern Somalia [Source: Hiiraan Online], 10 March 2015.

⁽⁴⁷⁰⁾ Lifos (Migrationsverket), Säkerhetssituationen i södra och centrala Somalia, 29 April 2015, p. 20.

⁽⁴⁷¹⁾ Security analysis expert, Austria, Interview, BFA Staatendokumentation, 12 November 2015.

⁽⁴⁷²⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Al-Shabaab Militants Retake Somali Town From African Union Troops [source: Shabelle Media], 13 November 2015.

⁽⁴⁷³⁾ REACH/OCHA/USAID, Somalia Initial Rapid Needs Assessment (SIRNA): Middle Shabelle, June 2015.

⁽⁴⁷⁴⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Humanitarian Condition Hit in Southern Somalia [source: Shabelle Media], 26 March 2015.

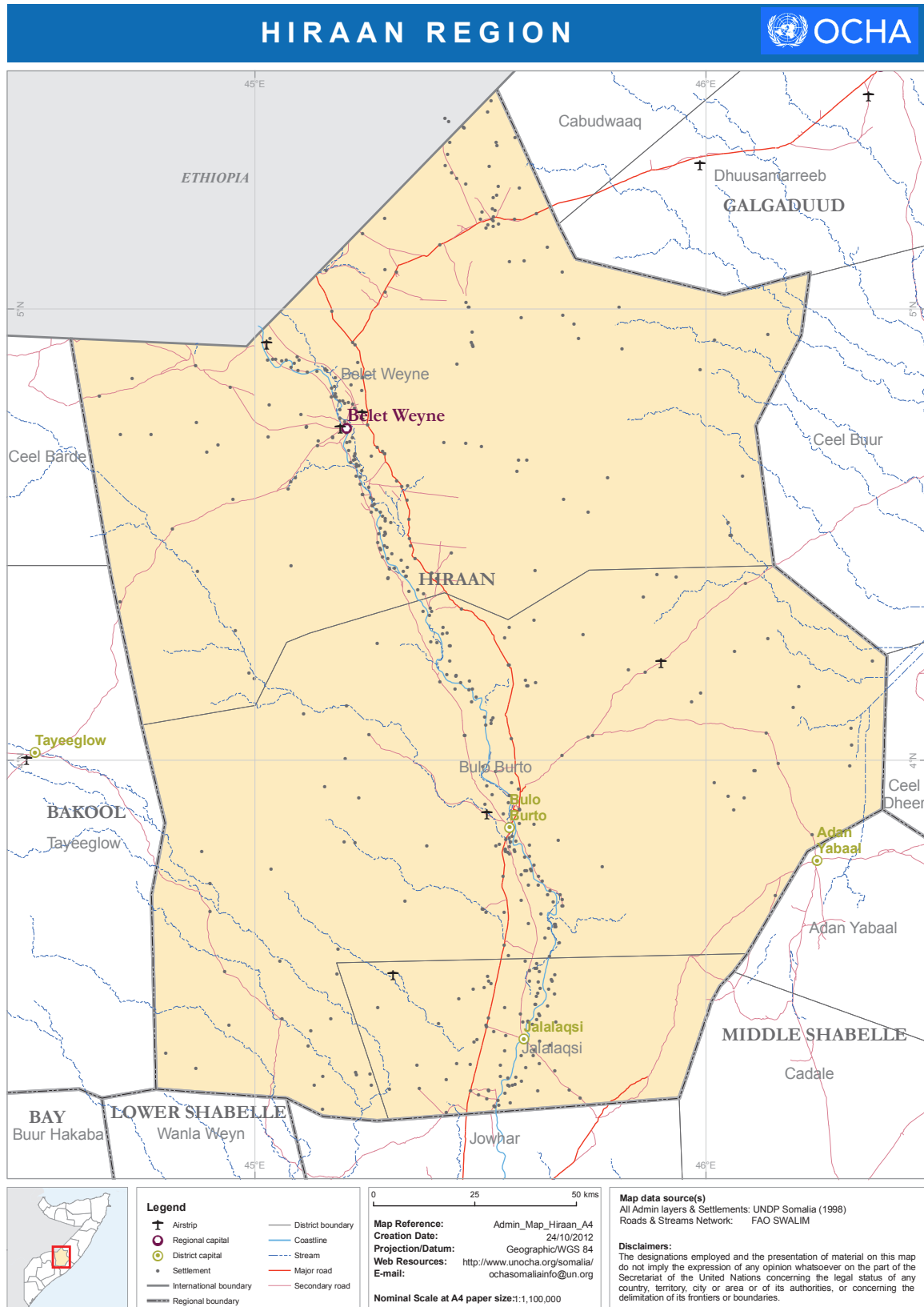
⁽⁴⁷⁵⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Somali Govt Co-Ordinates Aid Distribution in Former Al-Shabaab-Held Areas [source: Sabahil], 30 October 2014.

⁽⁴⁷⁶⁾ AllAfrica.com, Somalia: Recent Floods Damage Supply Routes, Vital Infrastructure in Somalia, UN Relief Wing Warns [source: UN News Service], 23 November 2015.

⁽⁴⁷⁷⁾ FEWS NET, Food Security Outlook Update, September 2015.

Central Somalia

2.9. Hiiraan



Source map: UN OCHA, *Administrative maps* [regional maps of South and Central Somalia], 2012.

2.9.1. Short description of the region

The Hiiraan region is located in Central Somalia, on the border with Ethiopia, and consists of three districts: Belet Weyne, Buulo Barde (or Buxlo Burto) and Jalalaqsi. The regional capital is Belet Weyne. Other towns are Buulo Barde, Halgan, Maxaas and Matabaan. The Shabelle river flows from Ethiopia through Belet Weyne and Buulo Barde into the region Middle Shabelle.

The Hiiraan region is mainly inhabited by Hawiye clans. North of the Shabelle river is dominated by the Hawadle clan, while the Jajele, Galja'el and Baadi Adde clans live mainly south of the river. The minority group Makane (Bantu/Jareer) lives along the northern part of the river in the Hiiraan region.⁴⁷⁸

According to the Population Survey Estimate undertaken by UNFPA and Somali authorities (⁴⁷⁹), as of 2014 the Hiiraan region counted 520,685 inhabitants divided into 81,379 urban inhabitants, 135,537 rural, 252,609 nomads and 51,160 IDPs.

2.9.2. Violence

As a result of Operation Indian Ocean, conflict between Al-Shabaab and SNAF/AMISOM was the main source of conflict-related violence in Hiiraan during autumn 2014 (⁴⁸⁰). In areas that Al-Shabaab does not control anymore, they perform hit-and-run attacks and assassinations (⁴⁸¹).

Most violence in 2014 has been in Buulo Barde and in villages in its surroundings, statistically closely followed by Belet Weyne and Jalalaqsi and their surroundings (⁴⁸²). There were fewer reports of this kind of violence during 2015. Most of the attacks in 2015 have been carried out in Belet Weyne, but there are also reported attacks in Jalalaqsi and in villages in the surroundings of Buulo Barde and Belet Weyne (⁴⁸³). There are reports of AMISOM convoys en route being subject to Al-Shabaab ambushes (⁴⁸⁴). Al-Shabaab has a blockade on Buulo Burde, which was heavily enforced (⁴⁸⁵).

In July 2015, AMISOM and Somali security forces and the Ethiopian and Kenyan Defence Forces launched Operation Jubba Corridor aimed at expelling Al-Shabaab from remaining strongholds in South and Central Somalia. During this operation AMISOM also targeted Al-Shabaab positions in Hiiraan (⁴⁸⁶). There are reports of AMISOM troops killing civilians and causing displacement during military operations (⁴⁸⁷).

There are reports of beheadings from areas under the control of Al-Shabaab. In September 2015 three young persons, accused by Al-Shabaab for belonging to SNAF, were beheaded in a village west of Fiidow. The same month it was reported that a civilian in Jalalaqsi was abducted and beheaded (⁴⁸⁸).

There have been reports of tensions and violence along clan lines. A land dispute between the Dir clan and the Hawadle clan has led to clashes between the clans' militias in Deefow village in October 2014 (20 killed, 45 injured), late December 2014 (20 killed, 35 injured), January 2015 (22 killed, 45 injured), March 2015 (2 killed, 10 injured) and June 2015 (10 killed, 15 injured) (⁴⁸⁹).

(⁴⁷⁸) EASO, COI report - South and Central Somalia Country Overview [source: Lewis 1955], August 2014, p. 52; EASO, COI report - South and Central Somalia Country Overview [source: Abikar 1999], August 2014, p. 53.

(⁴⁷⁹) UNFPA, Population Estimation Survey 2014, Somalia, October 2014, p. 31.

(⁴⁸⁰) International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 19 September 2014, 6 October 2014, 17 October 2014, 31 October 2014, 14 November 2014, 28 November 2014, 12 December 2014.

(⁴⁸¹) International organisation with expertise on security matters based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 7 April 2015, 12 May 2015, 16 June 2015, 10 July 2015, 6 August 2015, 11 September 2015, 10 October 2015, 14 November 2015.

(⁴⁸²) International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 19 September 2014, 6 October 2014, 17 October 2014, 31 October 2014, 14 November 2014, 28 November 2014, 12 December 2014.

(⁴⁸³) International organisation with expertise on security matters based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 7 April 2015, 12 May 2015, 16 June 2015, 10 July 2015, 6 August 2015, 11 September 2015, 10 October 2015, 14 November 2015.

(⁴⁸⁴) International organisation with expertise on security matters based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 10 October 2015; UN OCHA, Humanitarian Bulletin Somalia January 2015, 19 February 2015.

(⁴⁸⁵) UN Security Council, Letter dated 9 October 2015 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea addressed to the President of the Security Council, 19 October 2015, p. 206.

(⁴⁸⁶) UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia (S/2015/702), 11 September 2015, p. 2.

(⁴⁸⁷) UN Human Rights Council, Report of the Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Somalia, 29 October 2015, p. 6.

(⁴⁸⁸) International organisation with expertise on security matters based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 12 October 2015.

(⁴⁸⁹) US DoS, Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2014 – Somalia, 25 June 2015; International organisation with expertise on security matters based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 19 September 2014, 6 October 2014, 17 October 2014, 31 October 2014, 14 November 2014, 28 November 2014, 12 December 2014, 7 April 2015, 12 May 2015, 16 June 2015, 10 July 2015.

In April 2015, 40 houses in a village north of Belet Weyne were destroyed in a fire by the Dir ⁽⁴⁹⁰⁾. There have also been reports of a land dispute between the Galaja'el clan and the Jajele clans, which led to clashes in Belet Weyne in October 2015 and 13 December 2015 ⁽⁴⁹¹⁾.

2.9.3. Actors in the conflict

Besides Al-Shabaab, SFG/SNAF, AMISOM, ENDF and Ahlu Sunna wal Jamaa (ASWJ), there are also several disputes between different clans in the region ⁽⁴⁹²⁾. The Djiboutian forces of AMISOM have been in charge of the Hiiraan region since December 2011 ⁽⁴⁹³⁾. AMISOM has Djiboutian and Ethiopian troops in Belet Weyne, and Djiboutian troops in Buulo Barde and Jalalaqsi ⁽⁴⁹⁴⁾.

2.9.4. Areas of control/influence

As of September 2015, Al-Shabaab still influenced or controlled most of the Hiiraan region, although they are being driven from some towns. Al-Shabaab has been driven away from Belet Weyne (31 December 2011 ⁽⁴⁹⁵⁾), Buulo Barde (13 March 2014 ⁽⁴⁹⁶⁾), Maxaas (25 March 2014 ⁽⁴⁹⁷⁾) and Jalalaqsi (3 September 2014 ⁽⁴⁹⁸⁾), and these towns are now under the influence of SFG and AMISOM. Further, Al-Shabaab was driven out of Buur Wayne village, south of Buulo Barde (11 May 2015) ⁽⁴⁹⁹⁾. AMISOM seized Ceel Xoog village, south-west of Belet Weyne (29 July 2015) ⁽⁵⁰⁰⁾, and AMISOM jointly with allied militia took over Ceel Cali, Ceel Dheere and Buq-Goosaar villages located in Belet Weyne district (30 July 2015) ⁽⁵⁰¹⁾.

Al-Shabaab took over Ceel Gaal village, east of Belet Weyne (29 July 2015) ⁽⁵⁰²⁾. Al-Shabaab still has a covert presence, and is able to perform attacks in the towns and villages they are driven out from ⁽⁵⁰³⁾. In areas from which Al-Shabaab has been expelled, there are also clashes between other actors such as local clan militias, but also infighting between AMISOM and SNAF ⁽⁵⁰⁴⁾.

According to the Austrian BFA/Staatendokumentation (October 2015), there is an area in the north, close to the border with Galgaduud region, which is jointly influenced by AMISOM/SNAF and ASWJ. South of that area, but north of Belet Weyne, as well as along the Ethiopian border, there is an area jointly influenced by AMISOM/SNAF and Al-Shabaab. Along the Ethiopian border, there are also militias allied with the SFG operating. The main road from Belet Weyne to Mogadishu, through Buulo Barde and Jalalaqsi, is mainly controlled by Al-Shabaab. However, there is one stretch of the road south of Belet Weyne and another one south of Jalalaqsi, which are jointly influenced by Al-Shabaab and AMISOM/SNAF ⁽⁵⁰⁵⁾.

⁽⁴⁹⁰⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 12 May 2015.

⁽⁴⁹¹⁾ Hiiraan Online, 8 killed as rival clan militias fight in Beled Weyne, 19 October 2015; Hiiraan Online, Seven killed as rival clan militias fight in central Somalia, 13 December 2015.

⁽⁴⁹²⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 6 August 2015.

⁽⁴⁹³⁾ AMISOM, AMISOM Military Component, n.d.; African Defense, Djibouti Deploys More Troops to AMISOM Mission, 11 December 2015.

⁽⁴⁹⁴⁾ BFA Staatendokumentation/Andreas Tiwald, Analyse zu Somalia – Lagekarten zur Sicherheitslage, 12 October 2015.

⁽⁴⁹⁵⁾ BBC News, Ethiopian troops capture Beledweyne from Somalia militants, 31 December 2011.

⁽⁴⁹⁶⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia, 12 May 2014, p. 3.

⁽⁴⁹⁷⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia, 12 May 2014, p. 3.

⁽⁴⁹⁸⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia, 23 January 2015, p. 4.

⁽⁴⁹⁹⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 16 June 2015.

⁽⁵⁰⁰⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 6 August 2015.

⁽⁵⁰¹⁾ International organisation based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 6 August 2015.

⁽⁵⁰²⁾ International organisation based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 6 August 2015.

⁽⁵⁰³⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process, September 2015, p. 6.

⁽⁵⁰⁴⁾ Lifos (Migrationsverket), Säkerhetssituationen i södra och centrala Somalia, 29 April 2015, p. 14 [sources: International organisation (F2), International organisation (C)]; BBC News, Ahmed Abdi Godane: Somalia's killed al-Shabaab leader, 9 September 2014.

⁽⁵⁰⁵⁾ BFA Staatendokumentation/Andreas Tiwald, Areas of Influence in Somalia [map], December 2015.

2.9.5. Impact of the violence

Several sources interviewed by DIS (May 2015) stated that Al-Shabaab performs attacks in towns they do not control, mainly targeting persons or institutions representing the international community including AMISOM and the UN, the Somalia Federal Government (SFG) and those perceived as supporting them ⁽⁵⁰⁶⁾. Hiiraan reports attacks on AMISOM and SNAF positions and individuals such as SNAF-soldiers, clan elders and religious clerics ⁽⁵⁰⁷⁾.

Clashes and fighting affects civilians, resulting in displacement. In August 2015, about 16 000 people were displaced to Belet Weyne from villages in its proximity ⁽⁵⁰⁸⁾. Civilians can be affected by clashes between clans as well, due to violent retaliation actions against clan members ⁽⁵⁰⁹⁾.

Transport and food security

A humanitarian international NGO, interviewed by DIS (May 2015) stated that there are commercial flights in South and Central Somalia. There is a connection between Belet Weyne and Mogadishu, but connections and schedules change sporadically ⁽⁵¹⁰⁾. There is no operational airstrip for planes in Buulo Barde ⁽⁵¹¹⁾. Several sources interviewed by DIS (May 2015) stated that people travelling by road are, among other things, exposed to robbery, extortion, questioning, harassment, physical abuse including sexual violence and detention ⁽⁵¹²⁾. Somalis do travel by road, but the risks are thoroughly balanced against the necessity of the trip ⁽⁵¹³⁾. Civilians' possibilities to move by road from Belet Weyne to Buulo Barde and further to Mogadishu, are curtailed ⁽⁵¹⁴⁾.

Al-Shabaab enforced an economic blockade on Buulo Barde ⁽⁵¹⁵⁾ leading to a food security crisis during the period July 2014-June 2015 ⁽⁵¹⁶⁾. The situation improved in July 2015, as a result of humanitarian assistance ⁽⁵¹⁷⁾.

⁽⁵⁰⁶⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process [sources: International organisation working in S/C Somalia (A), International organisation working in S/C Somalia (B), International organisation working in S/C Somalia (C), Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia], September 2015, p. 11.

⁽⁵⁰⁷⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, Monthly 7 April 2015, 12 May 2015, 16 June 2015, 10 July 2015, 6 August 2015, 11 September 2015, 10 October 2015, 14 November 2015.

⁽⁵⁰⁸⁾ UN OCHA, Humanitarian Bulletin Somalia October 2015, 19 October 2015.

⁽⁵⁰⁹⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, presentation, 4 November 2015.

⁽⁵¹⁰⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process [source: Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia, UNHCR Somalia], September 2015, p. 18; Swedish Embassy in Nairobi, e-mail, Lifos, 9 December 2015.

⁽⁵¹¹⁾ Swedish Embassy in Nairobi, e-mail, Lifos, 9 December 2015.

⁽⁵¹²⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process [sources: UNHCR Somalia, Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia, Representative of an International NGO working in S/C Somalia, International organisation working in S/C Somalia (C), International organisation working in S/C Somalia (D), Humanitarian worker in Somalia] September 2015, p. 18.

⁽⁵¹³⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process [sources: Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia, International organisation working in S/C Somalia (B)], September 2015, p. 18.

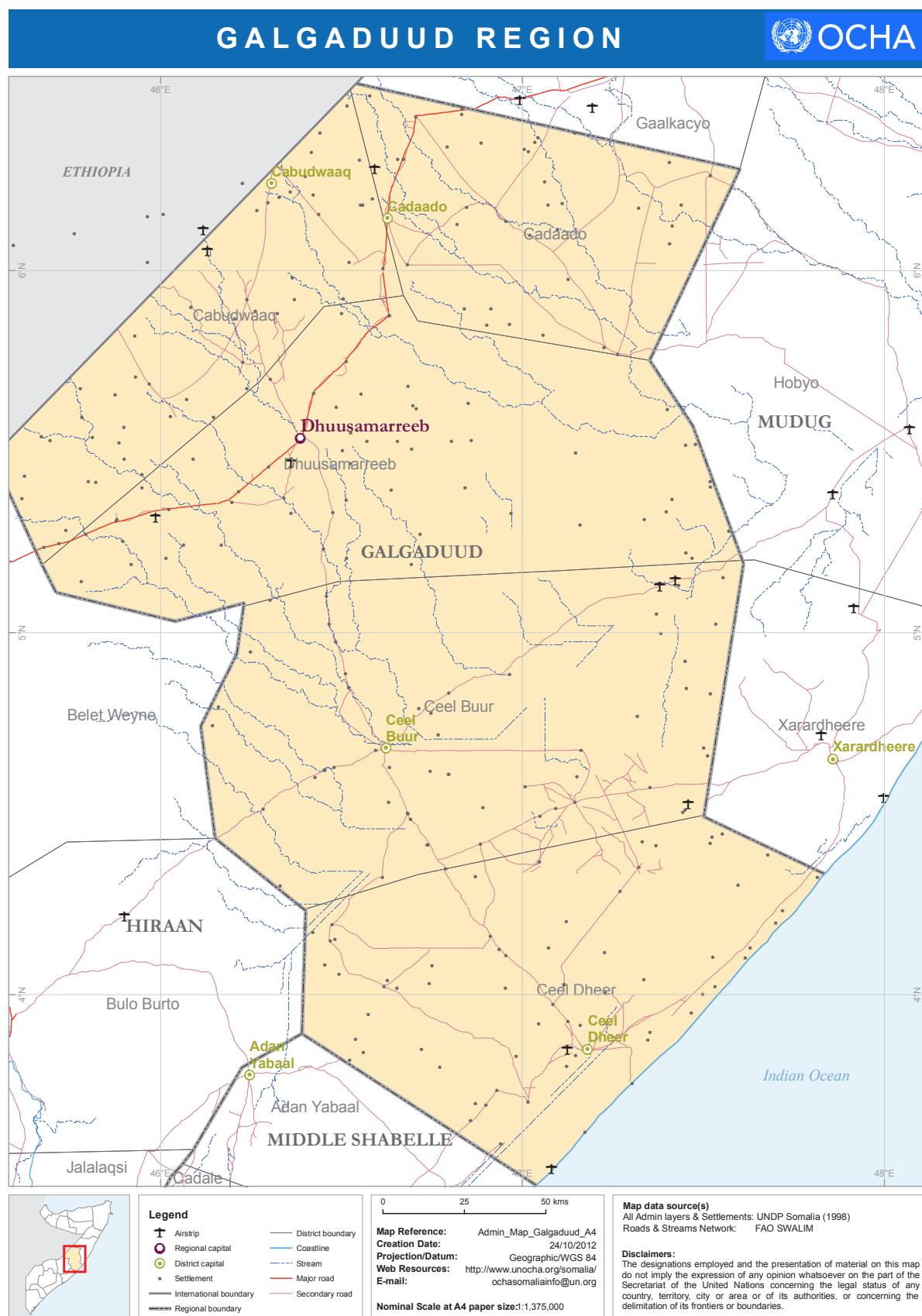
⁽⁵¹⁴⁾ UN OCHA, Humanitarian Bulletin Somalia February 2015, 25 March 2015.

⁽⁵¹⁵⁾ UN Security Council, Letter dated 9 October 2015 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2015/801), 19 October 2015, pp. 206-208.

⁽⁵¹⁶⁾ UN OCHA, Humanitarian Bulletin Somalia January 2015, 19 February 2015; UN OCHA, Humanitarian Bulletin Somalia February 2015, 25 March 2015; UN OCHA, Humanitarian Bulletin Somalia March 2015, 24 April 2015; UN OCHA, Humanitarian Bulletin Somalia April 2015, 25 May 2015; UN OCHA, Humanitarian Bulletin Somalia July 2015, 20 August 2015.

⁽⁵¹⁷⁾ UN Security Council, Letter dated 9 October 2015 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2015/801), 19 October 2015, pp. 206-208.

2.10. Galgaduud



Source map: UN OCHA, *Administrative maps* [regional maps of South and Central Somalia], 2012.

2.10.1. Short description of the region

Galgaduud is located in Central Somalia, and stretches from the border with Ethiopia in the west to the Indian Ocean in the east. In the north it borders the Mudug region and to the south the regions of Hiiraan and Middle Shabelle. The region Galgaduud consists of five districts: Caadado to the north-west, Abudwaaq to the south-west, Dhuusamarreeb in the north central part, Ceel Buur in the south central part and Ceel Dheere along the coast. The regional capital is Dhuusamarreeb. Other towns are Abudwaaq, Caadado, Ceel Buur and Ceel Dheere ⁽⁵¹⁸⁾.

The Galgaduud region is mainly inhabited by the Hawiye-Habr Gedir clans Suleiman, Ayr and Duduble and the Hawiye-Murusade clan. Darod-Marehan clans are also present in the western parts ⁽⁵¹⁹⁾.

According to the Population Survey Estimate undertaken by UNFPA and Somali authorities ⁽⁵²⁰⁾, as of 2014 the Galgaduud region totalled 569,434 inhabitants of which 183,553 were urban inhabitants, 52,089 rural, 214,024 nomads and 119,768 IDPs.

The Galmudug Interim Administration (GIA) was established in June 2015 in a state formation process in Caadado ⁽⁵²¹⁾ and on 4 July 2015 Abdikarim Hussein Guled was elected president ⁽⁵²²⁾. The Ahlu Sunna wal Jamaa (ASWJ) boycotted the process, but in August 2015 factions of ASWJ joined the GIA state ⁽⁵²³⁾. The ASWJ Sufa group opposes the formation of GIA ⁽⁵²⁴⁾. The presidents of the [former] State of Galmudug and the Ximan and Xeeb administration have accepted the formation of GIA ⁽⁵²⁵⁾, and the transfer of weapons to GIA from their militias is reportedly going 'quite smooth' ⁽⁵²⁶⁾, although there is information stating that the Sa'ad clan of the former Himan and Heeb still have their own capacity ⁽⁵²⁷⁾.

As Puntland initially denounced GIA, partly because of its claims of territory, GIA revised its constitution on 29 July 2015 removing any claim of northern Mudug ⁽⁵²⁸⁾.

2.10.2. Violence

Although there have been reports of attacks by Al-Shabaab on AMISOM, ENDF and SNAF, the main source of violence in Galgaduud have been armed clashes related to the above mentioned Central state formation process. ASWJ fought SNAF and/or GIA forces, but there was also fighting between factions of ASWJ, and between different clan militias ⁽⁵²⁹⁾.

In November 2014, armed clashes occurred between pro-Galgaduud and ASWJ forces ⁽⁵³⁰⁾. There was also infighting within ASWJ on 12-13 December 2014 in Guriceel and Dhuusamarreeb ⁽⁵³¹⁾. There have been reports of fighting on 19 July 2015 between ASWJ and SNAF troops on the road between Dhuusamarreeb and Caadado ⁽⁵³²⁾. The political tensions between the ASWJ factions and the ASWJ Sufa group and GIA were demonstrated on 10 August 2015 in Dhuusamarreeb when ASWJ arrested 11 SNAF soldiers, as well as in Caadado on 20 August 2015. ASWJ's vice

⁽⁵¹⁸⁾ FSNAU – Somalia, Administrative Maps [website], n.d.; Somalia; UN OCHA, Somalia Administrative Map, 8 May 2012.

⁽⁵¹⁹⁾ EASO, COI report - South and Central Somalia Country Overview [source: Lewis 1955], August 2014, p. 52; EASO, COI report - South and Central Somalia Country Overview [source: Abikar 1999], August 2014, p. 53.

⁽⁵²⁰⁾ UNFPA, Population Estimation Survey 2014, Somalia, October 2014, p. 31.

⁽⁵²¹⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 6 August 2015.

⁽⁵²²⁾ UNSOM, Press statement 28/2015, 23 July 2015; UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia (S/2015/702), 11 September 2015, p. 2.

⁽⁵²³⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia (S/2015/702), 11 September 2015, p. 2.

⁽⁵²⁴⁾ UN Security Council, Letter dated 9 October 2015 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2015/801), 19 October 2015, p. 54.

⁽⁵²⁵⁾ UN Security Council, Letter dated 9 October 2015 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2015/801), 19 October 2015, p. 52.

⁽⁵²⁶⁾ Expert on Somalia, interview, Lifos, Stockholm 2 December 2015.

⁽⁵²⁷⁾ Security analysis expert, Austria, Interview, BFA Staatendokumentation, 12 November 2015.

⁽⁵²⁸⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia, 11 September 2015, p. 2.

⁽⁵²⁹⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 5 September 2014, 19 September 2014, 6 October 2014, 17 October 2014, 31 October 2014, 14 November 2014, 28 November 2014, 12 December 2014, 4 February 2015, 7 April 2015, 12 May 2015, 16 June 2015, 10 July 2015, 6 August 2015, 11 September 2015, 10 October 2015, 14 November 2015.

⁽⁵³⁰⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 14 November 2014.

⁽⁵³¹⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 26 December 2014.

⁽⁵³²⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 6 August 2015.

president was arrested by GIA forces, which led to clashes between Hawiye-Habr Gedir-Suleiman militia forces and GIA affiliated police forces⁽⁵³³⁾. On 8-9 September 2015 in Abudwaaq, a faction of ASWJ clashed with security guards of the GIA which received reinforcement from the Darod-Marehan clan militias⁽⁵³⁴⁾.

On 3 December 2014 armed clashes were reported between Al-Shabaab and Habr Gedir clan militia in the Ceel Buur district, as Al-Shabaab was attempting to extort *zakat* from pastoralists⁽⁵³⁵⁾. Al-Shabaab has also launched an attack on ENDF troops in Wabxo, west of Ceel Buur, on 17 October 2014 and on AMISOM and SNAF positions in Ceel Garas, south-east of Dhuusamarreeb, on 29 October 2014⁽⁵³⁶⁾.

Clashes between pastoralists have been reported as well, such as between the Hawiye-Habr Gedir subclans Suleiman and Duduble in Ceel Buur district 28 October 2015⁽⁵³⁷⁾.

2.10.3. Actors in the conflict

Different factions of ASWJ, the Galmudug Interim Administration (GIA), AMISOM, SFG and ENDF are actors of violence in the region. Djiboutian forces had been in charge of AMISOM troops in Galgaduud⁽⁵³⁸⁾. As of 30 September 2015, Ethiopian forces have set up new AMISOM bases in Galgaduud Eel-lahelay, between Dhusamareb and Ceel Buur⁽⁵³⁹⁾. There are also different clan militias involved in local conflicts.

2.10.4. Areas of control/influence

As mentioned before, the state formation process of the GIA did not go smoothly. On request of Puntland, GIA renounced its claim on northern Mudug. This leaves, in addition to the Galgaduud region, de facto the south of Galkacyo District, most of Hobyo District and all of Xarardheere District in the Mudug region within the GIA territory⁽⁵⁴⁰⁾.

As of September 2015, most of the Abudwaaq district is jointly influenced by ASWJ and AMISOM/SNAF, as well as the western part of Dhuusamarreeb district. The north part of Dhuusamarreeb district, a small part in the north-east Abudwaaq district and Caadado district are controlled by the GIA. The central and southern parts of the Dhuusamarreeb district are jointly influenced by Al-Shabaab and the GIA. The south part of Dhuusamarreeb district, Ceel Buur and Ceel Dheere districts are controlled by Al-Shabaab⁽⁵⁴¹⁾.

The town of Dhuusamarreeb has been contested by SNAF and ASWJ. The latter seized control of the town on 7 June 2015⁽⁵⁴²⁾. By 19 October 2015 the town was still under control of an ASWJ faction, as is northern Galgaduud⁽⁵⁴³⁾.

⁽⁵³³⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 11 September 2015.

⁽⁵³⁴⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 10 October 2015.

⁽⁵³⁵⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 12 December 2014. Zakat constitutes one of the five pillars of Islam to distribute money to the poor, but is used by Al-Shabaab as mere, quite harsh, taxation, according to an official with the UN, interviewed by Lifos in Mogadishu 30 October 2014.

⁽⁵³⁶⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 31 October 2014.

⁽⁵³⁷⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 12 November 2015.

⁽⁵³⁸⁾ AMISOM, AMISOM Military Component, n.d.

⁽⁵³⁹⁾ SIN, AMISOM Troops Establish New Military Bases In Galgaduud Central Somalia, 30 September 2015.

⁽⁵⁴⁰⁾ UN Security Council, Letter dated 9 October 2015 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2015/801), 19 October 2015, p. 55.

⁽⁵⁴¹⁾ BFA Staatendokumentation/Andreas Tiwald, Analyse zu Somalia – Lagekarten zur Sicherheitslage, 12 October 2015.

⁽⁵⁴²⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 10 July 2015.

⁽⁵⁴³⁾ UN Security Council, Letter dated 9 October 2015 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea addressed to the President of the Security Council, 19 October 2015, p. 52.

2.10.5. Impact of the violence

There are few reports of attacks by Al-Shabaab in Galgaduud, and those are mainly about attacks on AMISOM and SNAF positions ⁽⁵⁴⁴⁾.

Clashes involving clans, ASWJ and GIA mainly result in casualties among militiamen and soldiers ⁽⁵⁴⁵⁾. Clan clashes affect civilians as well due to revenge attacks on clan members, which cause casualties ⁽⁵⁴⁶⁾. Fighting also results in civilian displacement, e.g. in Guriceel in February 2015, when fighting between local clans triggered 90 percent of the estimated population to flee to neighbouring villages. Most of them had returned home a month later ⁽⁵⁴⁷⁾.

Transport and food security

The airport in Dhuusamarreeb is frequented by commercial passenger flights ⁽⁵⁴⁸⁾. There have been reports on incidents on roads. In October 2014, Darod-Marehan militia ambushed a UN contracted convoy on the road from South Galkacyo to Abudwaaq ⁽⁵⁴⁹⁾. In August 2015 three women were reportedly assaulted at an illegal checkpoint manned by Sa'ad clan militia on the road between South Galkacyo and Guriceel ⁽⁵⁵⁰⁾.

In November and December 2014, there were reports of serious malnutrition levels among displaced people in Dhuusamarreeb ⁽⁵⁵¹⁾.

⁽⁵⁴⁴⁾ International organisation based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 17 October 2014, 3 November 2014, 6 August 2015.

⁽⁵⁴⁵⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail to Lifos 28 November 2014, 26 December 2014, 6 August 2015.

⁽⁵⁴⁶⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, presentation 4 November 2015.

⁽⁵⁴⁷⁾ UN OCHA, Humanitarian Bulletin Somalia February 2015, 25 March 2015.

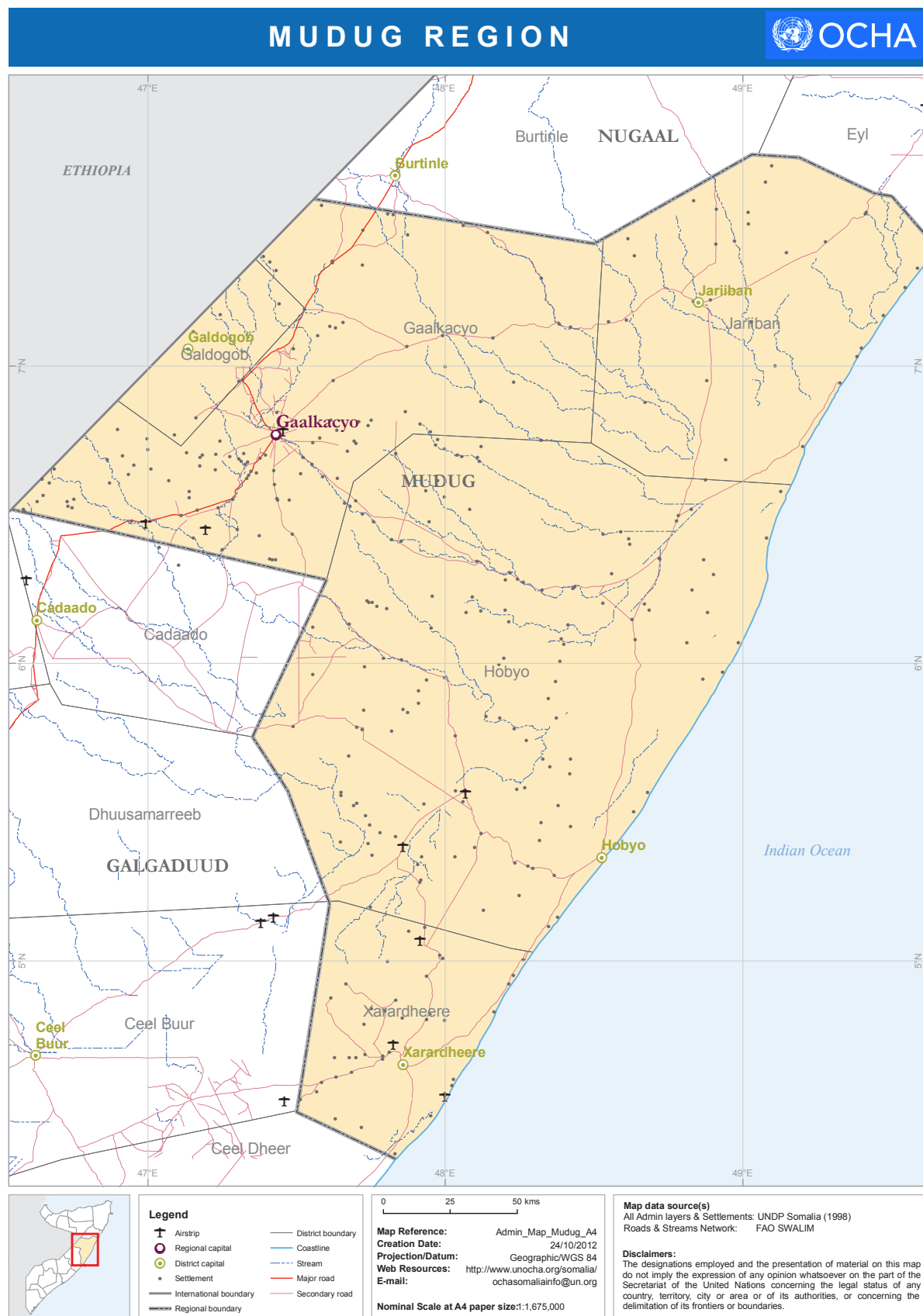
⁽⁵⁴⁸⁾ Swedish Embassy in Nairobi, e-mail, Lifos, 8 December 2015.

⁽⁵⁴⁹⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 3 November 2014.

⁽⁵⁵⁰⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 11 September 2015.

⁽⁵⁵¹⁾ UN OCHA, Humanitarian Bulletin Somalia November/December 2014, 20 January 2015.

2.11. Mudug



Source map: UN OCHA, *Administrative maps* [regional maps of South and Central Somalia], 2012.

2.11.1. Short description of the region

Mudug is located in Central Somalia. It borders Ethiopia to the west, the Indian Ocean to the east, the Galgaduud region in the south and the Nugaal region in the north (Puntland). There are five districts. Galkacyo is located to the west, with the small district of Galdogob as a small enclave alongside a part of the Ethiopian border. The biggest district, Hobyo, is in the east, between Xarardheere in the south-east and Jariiban in the north-east. The regional capital is Galkacyo. Other towns are Galdogob, Xarardheere, Hobyo, Ceel Buur and Jariiban.

Mudug is mainly inhabited by the Hawiye-Habr Gedir subclan Sa'ad in the south and the Darod-Majerteen subclan Omar Mohamoud in the north ⁽⁵⁵²⁾.

According to the Population Survey Estimate undertaken by UNFPA and Somali authorities ⁽⁵⁵³⁾, as of 2014 the Mudug region totalled 717,863 inhabitants divided into 381,493 urban inhabitants, 79,752 rural, 185,736 nomads and 70,882 IDPs.

The Mudug region is divided between Puntland and Central Somalia. The division follows broadly the principles from the 1993 Mudug Peace Agreement. The border is poorly demarcated, with the exception of the town of Galkacyo which has a clear dividing line separating the Darod-Majerteen dominated north and the Hawiye-Habr Gedir dominated southern part. The initial inclusion of the whole of Mudug region in the Galmudug Interim Administration (GIA) constitution had created tensions between Puntland and the GIA and the SFG ⁽⁵⁵⁴⁾. GIA revised its constitution on 29 July 2015 removing any claim on northern Mudug ⁽⁵⁵⁵⁾.

According to recent reports, the dispute over geographic and political boundaries between Puntland and the GIA is ongoing. Puntland claims full control over Mudug region, whereas the GIA claims control over Hobyo, Harardhere and South Galkayo. This led to deadly clashes in November and December 2015. A cease-fire was signed on 2 December 2015, which was, however, violated the next day ⁽⁵⁵⁶⁾.

In this report the northern part of Mudug is described as part of Puntland. The southern part of Mudug, and events concerning all of Galkacyo, are described in this chapter.

2.11.2. Violence

In the reporting period, Al-Shabaab performed attacks by different kinds of IEDs and assassinations, mainly in Galkacyo. For example a well-known Puntland lawmaker and his bodyguard were assassinated when leaving a mosque on 8 May 2015 ⁽⁵⁵⁷⁾. In November and December 2014 and in January 2015 there were attacks on journalists. A journalist was killed, and two journalists at Radio Galkacyo were injured. Al-Shabaab is suspected to be behind at least two of the attacks ⁽⁵⁵⁸⁾.

There have been reports of fighting between pastoralists from different clans. On 28 and 29 November 2014, 17 militiamen were killed and 12 injured in fighting between the Hawiye clans Suleiman and Ayr ⁽⁵⁵⁹⁾. There have also been land conflicts escalating between Darod-Marehan and Hawiye-Habr Gedir clans late in 2014 around Saaxo, close to the Ethiopian border ⁽⁵⁶⁰⁾. On 13 July 2015 fighting between the Hawiye clans Suleiman and Ayr in the Xarardheere district was reported. In the south of Galkacyo district on 14 July 2015, and again at the end of August 2015, Hawiye-Sa'ad pastoralists were shot dead by Darod-Marehan-Wagardha pastoralists.

⁽⁵⁵²⁾ EASO, COI report - South and Central Somalia Country Overview [source: Lewis 1955], August 2014, p. 52; EASO, COI report - South and Central Somalia Country Overview [source: Abikar 1999], August 2014, p. 53.

⁽⁵⁵³⁾ UNFPA, Population Estimation Survey 2014, Somalia, October 2014, p. 31.

⁽⁵⁵⁴⁾ UN Security Council, Letter dated 9 October 2015 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea addressed to the President of the Security Council, 19 October 2015, pp. 53-56.

⁽⁵⁵⁵⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia (S/2015/702), 11 September 2015, p. 2.

⁽⁵⁵⁶⁾ Horseed Media, Somalia: Seven dead in clashes between Puntland & Galmudug forces in Galkayo City, 29 November 2015; Garowe Online, Somalia: Puntland, Galmudug ink deal over Galkayo hostility, 2 December 2015; ICG, Galkayo and Somalia's Dangerous Faultlines, 10 December 2015.

⁽⁵⁵⁷⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 16 June 2015; UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary General on Somalia (S/2015/702), 11 September 2015, p. 3.

⁽⁵⁵⁸⁾ International organisation based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 28 November 2014, 4 February 2015.

⁽⁵⁵⁹⁾ International organisation based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 28 November 2014.

⁽⁵⁶⁰⁾ UN Security Council, Letter dated 9 October 2015 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea addressed to the President of the Security Council, 19 October 2015, p. 15.

Puntland's and GIA's forces fought for control over Galkacyo for about two weeks at the end of November and the very beginning of December 2015, which left approximately 20 dead and 120 injured. There were reports of 90,000 people displaced by the fighting. After a ceasefire deal was signed, both sides withdrew from the battlegrounds on 6 December 2015 ⁽⁵⁶¹⁾.

2.11.3. Actors in the conflict

Al-Shabaab, Puntland forces, SFG, the GIA and various clans are actors in the conflict.

Piracy and hijacking of vessels have been occurring occasionally again from the coast of Xarardheere. After the peak in 2011 the activity had dropped off thanks to the posting of armed guards on boats and increased patrolling of Somali waters ⁽⁵⁶²⁾.

2.11.4. Areas of control/influence

The southern part of the town and the district of Galkacyo, a small part of Galdogob district, and Hobyo and Xarardheere districts belong to the part of Mudug which is included in Central Somalia ⁽⁵⁶³⁾. Except for the Xarardheere district and the southern-most part of the Hobyo district, this territory is controlled by the GIA. The extreme south of the Hobyo district and the north of Xarardheere district are jointly influenced by the GIA and Al-Shabaab. The south of the Xarardheere district is controlled by Al-Shabaab ⁽⁵⁶⁴⁾. Pirates or former pirates (and the related clan militias) control various parts of Mudug region, particularly in the Xarardheere and Hobyo districts ⁽⁵⁶⁵⁾.

2.11.5. Impact of the violence

Several sources interviewed by DIS (May 2015) stated that Al-Shabaab performs attacks in towns they do not control, mainly on persons or institutions representing the international community including the UN and Puntland authorities and those perceived as supporting the SFG ⁽⁵⁶⁶⁾. The targets of attacks by Al-Shabaab in Mudug are mainly people perceived to be affiliated with Puntland authorities, international organisations and journalists ⁽⁵⁶⁷⁾. Clan fighting does not discriminate between militiamen and civilians. There are retaliations against clan members, which may result in civilian casualties ⁽⁵⁶⁸⁾.

Transport and food security

Commercial flights are operating from Galkacyo Airport ⁽⁵⁶⁹⁾. In general, it should be noted that connections and schedules in South/Central Somalia change sporadically ⁽⁵⁷⁰⁾. Travelling by road makes one exposed to violence. From the Mudug region there have been reports of extortions at illegal checkpoints in the outskirts of Galkacyo, but also of trucks that have been ambushed on roads in other areas of the region ⁽⁵⁷¹⁾.

High malnutrition levels in settlements of IDPs in Galkacyo were reported in October 2015, as well as in 2014 ⁽⁵⁷²⁾.

⁽⁵⁶¹⁾ Hiiraan Online, After deadly fighting, two rival regional leaders share flight for Mogadishu trip, 8 December 2015; UN OCHA, Somalia: Flash Update Humanitarian impact of fighting in Gaalkacyo 8 December 2015, 8 December 2015.

⁽⁵⁶²⁾ Horseed Media, Somalia: Crew of Iranian Boat hijacked by Somali pirates have been freed, 29 November 2015.

⁽⁵⁶³⁾ UN Security Council, Letter dated 9 October 2015 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea addressed to the President of the Security Council, 19 October 2015, p. 55.

⁽⁵⁶⁴⁾ BFA Staatendokumentation/ /Andreas Tiwald, Areas of Influence in Somalia [map], December 2015.

⁽⁵⁶⁵⁾ UNDSS Security analyst, e-mail, 26 January 2016.

⁽⁵⁶⁶⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process [sources: International organisation working in S/C Somalia (A), International organisation working in S/C Somalia (B), International organisation working in S/C Somalia (C), Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia], September 2015, p. 11; International organisation with expertise on security matters based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 17 October 2014, 10 July 2015.

⁽⁵⁶⁷⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 17 October 2014, 10 July 2015.

⁽⁵⁶⁸⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters based in Mogadishu, presentation 4 November 2015; e-mail, Lifos, 28 November 2014, 6 August 2015, 11 September 2015.

⁽⁵⁶⁹⁾ Jubba Airways Flight destinations, Galkayo, n.d.; Swedish Embassy in Nairobi, e-mail, Lifos, 10 December 2015.

⁽⁵⁷⁰⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process [sources: UNHCR Somalia, Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia, International organisation working in S/C Somalia (C)], September 2015, p. 18.

⁽⁵⁷¹⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 28 November 2014, 4 February 2015, 14 November 2015.

⁽⁵⁷²⁾ ACAPS, Global Emergency Overview – Somalia [source: FSNAU, 16 October 2015], last updated 24 January 2016; OCHA, Humanitarian Bulletin Somalia November/December 2014, 20 January 2015.

Northern Somalia



Source map: University of Texas at Austin, Somaliland and Puntland, 2012. There are no UN OCHA maps available on the northern regions like the ones in the chapters on South and Central Somalia.

Northern Somalia consists of Somaliland, Puntland, and the disputed areas between them: Sool and Sanaag.

The bordering regions are described separately from Somaliland and Puntland (see chapters 2.13 Sanaag and 2.14 Sool).

2.12. Puntland

2.12.1. Short description of the region (terrain, urban areas, population)

The Puntland state of Somalia was established in 1998 by Darod-Harti clans ⁽⁵⁷³⁾. Puntland is an autonomous regional state, not claiming independence from Somalia ⁽⁵⁷⁴⁾. Puntland is located to the north-east of Somalia. It borders the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean to the north and the east, and Ethiopia and Somaliland to the west ⁽⁵⁷⁵⁾. Puntland's border with Somaliland is contested ⁽⁵⁷⁶⁾.

The border with Central Somalia divides the Mudug region, of which the northern part belongs to the Puntland territory. The southern part of Mudug region, and of the town Gaalkacyo, are claimed by the GIA in Central Somalia ⁽⁵⁷⁷⁾.

The capital of Puntland is Garowe in Mudug region, but the economic hub is the seaport Bossaso in the Bari region ⁽⁵⁷⁸⁾.

⁽⁵⁷³⁾ Interpeace/PDRC, The search for peace The Puntland Experience: A Bottom-up Approach to Peace and State Building Peace Initiatives in Puntland 1001-2007, 1 January 2015, p. 25.

⁽⁵⁷⁴⁾ Hoehne, Markus Vigil, Between Somaliland and Puntland Marginalization, militarization and conflicting political visions, 2015, p. 15.

⁽⁵⁷⁵⁾ FSNAU – Somalia, Administrative Maps [website], n.d.; UN OCHA, Somalia Administrative Map, 8 May 2012.

⁽⁵⁷⁶⁾ Hoehne, Markus Vigil, Between Somaliland and Puntland Marginalization, militarization and conflicting political visions, 2015, pp 21, 39.

⁽⁵⁷⁷⁾ UN Security Council, Letter dated 9 October 2015 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea addressed to the President of the Security Council, 19 October 2015, pp 53-56.

⁽⁵⁷⁸⁾ Hoehne, Markus Vigil, Between Somaliland and Puntland Marginalization, militarization and conflicting political visions, 2015, p. 18.

Galkacyo, in the middle of the Mudug region, is a town bordering Central Somalia. The town is divided by a line which separates the Darod-Majerteen dominated northern part belonging to Puntland, and the Hawiye-Habr Gedir dominated southern part belonging to the GIA in Central Somalia⁽⁵⁷⁹⁾. Other towns are Qardho, Iskhusuban, Bandarbeyla and Eyl⁽⁵⁸⁰⁾.

The northern parts belonging to Puntland are described in the present section, while the southern parts of Mudug will be described in the section on Mudug.

In this report, the contested regions of Sool and Sanaag will be described separately from Puntland and Somaliland.

Puntland is mainly inhabited by Darod-Harti-Majerteen clans. The largest subclans are Omar Mohamoud, Isse Mohamoud and Osman Mohamoud⁽⁵⁸¹⁾.

According to the Population Survey Estimate undertaken by UNFPA and Somali authorities, as of 2014 the Bari and Nugaal regions of Puntland counted 1,112,210 inhabitants divided into 610,714 urban, 96,530 rural, 346,461 nomad and 58,505 IDPs⁽⁵⁸²⁾.

2.12.2. Violence

Although Puntland continues to be relatively peaceful and stable, Al-Shabaab is pushing up north from South and Central Somalia, exposing Puntland to increased threats⁽⁵⁸³⁾.

Puntland security forces carry out security operations across Puntland to prevent Al-Shabaab attacks. These security operations are mainly performed in Bossaso and the surroundings towards the Galgala mountains, and in Garowe, and have resulted in arrests of tens or even hundreds of Al-Shabaab suspects. There is also some violence in North Galkacyo, as mentioned in the chapter on Mudug, par. 2.11.2. On 22 September 2014, over one hundred Al-Shabaab suspects were arrested in Nugaal. Two of them confessed their affiliation to Al-Shabaab, but the others were released the following morning⁽⁵⁸⁴⁾.

Puntland's forces also launch attacks against Al-Shabaab's stronghold in the Galgala mountains. There was one attack in October 2014⁽⁵⁸⁵⁾, and another started in mid-December 2014 and continued until mid-January 2015. There was occasionally fierce fighting which led to casualties on both sides⁽⁵⁸⁶⁾. In September 2015 Puntland continued the military offensive against Al-Shabaab in the Galgala mountains. There were reports that 15 Al-Shabaab militants were killed in a drone strike in September 2015⁽⁵⁸⁷⁾.

Al-Shabaab has carried out several terrorist attacks in Puntland. The most extensive was the suicide attack targeting Unicef in Garowe 20 April 2015, when seven people were killed and ten people injured⁽⁵⁸⁸⁾.

Other Al-Shabaab activities have mainly been in Bossaso and the area around the Galgala mountains. On 4 November 2014, a gunman believed to be from Al-Shabaab shot a businessman dead in Bossaso⁽⁵⁸⁹⁾. Police stations have been attacked on 10 January 2015 and 3 February 2015 in Bossaso, injuring three police officers⁽⁵⁹⁰⁾. Further, Al-Shabaab launched three attacks in Bossaso on 5 April 2015 targeting the Al-Dacwa Mosque, the residence of the Mayor and a security check-point leaving eight people injured⁽⁵⁹¹⁾. Although no casualties were reported, Al-Shabaab targeted Puntland's security forces position in the Galgala mountains on 25-26 November 2015⁽⁵⁹²⁾.

⁽⁵⁷⁹⁾ UN Security Council, Letter dated 9 October 2015 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea addressed to the President of the Security Council, 19 October 2015, p. 55.

⁽⁵⁸⁰⁾ FSNAU – Somalia, Administrative Maps [website], n.d.; UN OCHA, Somalia Administrative Map, 8 May 2012.

⁽⁵⁸¹⁾ Interpeace/PDRC, The search for peace The Puntland Experience: A Bottom-up Approach to Peace and State Building Peace Initiatives in Puntland 1001-2007, 1 January 2015, p. 8.

⁽⁵⁸²⁾ UNFPA, Population Estimation Survey 2014, Somalia, October 2014, p. 31.

⁽⁵⁸³⁾ UN Human Rights Council, Report of the Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Somalia, 29 October 2015, p. 6.

⁽⁵⁸⁴⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 6 October 2014.

⁽⁵⁸⁵⁾ US DoS, Country Reports on Terrorism 2014 – Somalia, 19 June 2015.

⁽⁵⁸⁶⁾ eNCA, More than 50 Al-Shabaab members killed, 7 January 2015; International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 4 February 2015.

⁽⁵⁸⁷⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 10 October 2015.

⁽⁵⁸⁸⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia (S/2015/331), 12 May 2015.

⁽⁵⁸⁹⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 14 November 2014.

⁽⁵⁹⁰⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia, (S/2015/331), 12 May 2015, p. 3.

⁽⁵⁹¹⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 12 May 2015.

⁽⁵⁹²⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 12 December 2015.

Al-Shabaab has also performed several terrorist attacks in Galkacyo, as mentioned in the chapter on Mudug.

It has been reported that Puntland's troops are not regularly paid, which have led to protests by soldiers. According to reports, this caused the soldiers in April 2015 to abandon their positions at the frontline in the Galgala mountains and in June 2015 to lock down the Mayor's office in Garowe, but also to man illegal check points to extort money ⁽⁵⁹³⁾. There are reports of shootouts in this context, for example one person was injured and one died at a check point close to Bossaso in September 2015 ⁽⁵⁹⁴⁾.

In Puntland land conflicts have resulted in clashes between clans, as has been frequently reported since autumn 2014. In October and December 2014 clashes occurred outside Garowe between Reer Shirwa and Reer Farah, two subclans of Darod-Isse Mohamoud ⁽⁵⁹⁵⁾. In the Iskushuban district in the Bari region, there have been clashes between Ali Suleiman and Osman Mohamoud. Clashes between Ali Saleeban and Ugaar Saleeban, due to a long-standing land dispute, led to losses on both sides. The conflict was solved by an agreement between the clans, and compensations were paid ⁽⁵⁹⁶⁾. In November 2014 in Qardho, a man from Araab Saalax was shot dead by an Osman Mohamoud member in a land dispute ⁽⁵⁹⁷⁾. The Hawiye clan Sa'ad and the Darod-Majerteen clan Omar Mohamoud reportedly clashed in Xelo Jaare and Landheere in the end of August 2015 ⁽⁵⁹⁸⁾.

The death penalty is still applied, and in March 2015 Puntland authorities in Bossaso executed three convicted Al-Shabaab members ⁽⁵⁹⁹⁾.

2.12.3. Actors in the conflict

Al-Shabaab, Puntland's forces and local clans are the main actors in Puntland. In addition, a small faction of about 20 former Al-Shabaab fighters is active, who in October 2015 pledged allegiance to IS ⁽⁶⁰⁰⁾. Pirates, although not particularly active over the past year, remain a latent threat as well (see the section on actors in Mudug, 2.11.3) ⁽⁶⁰¹⁾.

2.12.4. Areas of control/influence

Puntland controls the northern part of the town Galkacyo and *de facto* also the northern part of Galkacyo district. *De facto* it also controls Jariiban District and most of Galdogob District in the Mudug region as well as the Nugal and Bari regions ⁽⁶⁰²⁾.

The border with Somaliland is not clearly demarcated. Nevertheless, Puntland *de facto* controls the very eastern parts of the regions Sool and Sanaag, according to the BFA security analysis (October 2015). Al-Shabaab controls parts of the Galgala mountains in the north-west of Bari region and north-east of Sanaag region. Al-Shabaab has limited influence over a slightly bigger area around the Galgala mountains ⁽⁶⁰³⁾.

⁽⁵⁹³⁾ Hiiraan Online, Security tightened in Puntland as rebellious soldiers defect, 26 June 2015; Garowe Online, Somalia: Puntland leader weighs firing Army Chief, 3 October 2015; International organisation in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 12 May 2015, 10 July 2015.

⁽⁵⁹⁴⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 10 October 2015.

⁽⁵⁹⁵⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 17 October 2014, 26 December 2014.

⁽⁵⁹⁶⁾ Radio Dalsan, Clan-based clashes in Puntland solved, 31 March 2015; International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 26 December 2014.

⁽⁵⁹⁷⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 28 November 2014.

⁽⁵⁹⁸⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 6 August 2015, 11 September 2015.

⁽⁵⁹⁹⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 7 April 2015; UN Human Rights Council, Report of the Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Somalia, 29 October 2015, p. 9.

⁽⁶⁰⁰⁾ Reuters, Small group of Somali Al-Shabaab swear allegiance to Islamic State, 23 October 2015.

⁽⁶⁰¹⁾ UNDSS Security analyst, e-mail, 26 January 2016.

⁽⁶⁰²⁾ UN Security Council, Letter dated 9 October 2015 from the Chair of the Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea addressed to the President of the Security Council, 19 October 2015, p. 55.

⁽⁶⁰³⁾ BFA Staatendokumentation/Andreas Tiwald, Analyse zu Somalia - Lagekarten zur Sicherheitslage, 12 October 2015, p. 8.

2.12.5. Impact of the violence

Al-Shabaab performs attacks in towns they do not control, mainly on persons or institutions representing the international community including the UN and Puntland authorities and those perceived as supporting them ⁽⁶⁰⁴⁾. The victims of the clan clashes are, in addition to militiamen, also civilians. Clan clashes may lead to revenge actions against clan members, which can cause civilian casualties ⁽⁶⁰⁵⁾.

Transport and food security

There has been increased criminal activity by Al-Shabaab and clan militias along the Bossaso-Garowe road, which affects movement by land ⁽⁶⁰⁶⁾, including illegal check points where road users are extorted ⁽⁶⁰⁷⁾. Civilians reportedly died from stray bullets from Puntland's soldiers at a checkpoint along the road ⁽⁶⁰⁸⁾.

The borderlands of Puntland and Somaliland

The territories of Sanaag and Sool regions have been contested for decades. While Somaliland defines its eastern border territorially as demarcated in colonial treaties, Puntland defines its western border genealogically according to where the Darod clans live. The border is in neither case demarcated precisely on the ground. This has created an ongoing conflict between Puntland and Somaliland over the borderlands, the regions Sool and Sanaag, part of which recently united into Khatumo state. As explained in the first chapter, the self-declared state of Khatumo is a follow-up of the Sool, Sanaag and Cayn (SSC) area. Although Khatumo State's territorial claims include portions of Sanaag region, it controls little of this territory. The coastal zones of Sanaag are inhabited by the Warsengali clan which has not expressed interest in joining Khatumo State ⁽⁶⁰⁹⁾.

The regions of Sool and Sanaag are in this report described separately from Puntland and Somaliland.

2.13. Sanaag

2.13.1. Short description of the region

The Sanaag region stretches from the Gulf of Aden in the north to the region Sool in the south. To the west it borders the Woqooyi Galbeed region in Somaliland and to the east the Bari region in Puntland. There are three districts: Ceel Afweyn in the west, Ceerigaabo in the centre and Laasqoray in the east. The regional capital is Ceerigaabo. Other towns are Laasqoray, Maydh and Xiis, which all are located by the Gulf of Aden. Garadag is located close to the border to the Sool region ⁽⁶¹⁰⁾.

The Darod subclan Warsangeli lives in the east of Sanaag, mainly in the district of Laasqoray, but also to the south-east of the Ceerigaabo district. The Ceerigaabo district is mainly inhabited by the Isaaq subclan Habar Yonis to the north and the the Darod subclan Dulbahante to the south. The Ceel Afweyn district is mainly inhabited by the Isaaq subclan Habar Jeelo ⁽⁶¹¹⁾.

According to the Population Survey Estimate undertaken by UNFPA and Somali authorities, as of 2014 the Sanaag region totalled 544,123 inhabitants of which 159,717 were urban inhabitants, 30,804 rural, 352,692 nomads and 910 IDPs ⁽⁶¹²⁾.

⁽⁶⁰⁴⁾ DIS, South Central Somalia: Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process [sources: International organisation working in S/C Somalia (A), International organisation working in S/C Somalia (B), International organisation working in S/C Somalia (C), Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia], September 2015, p. 11; BBC News, Somalia attack: Bomb kills UN workers in Garowe, 20 April 2015; International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 14 November 2014, 4 February 2015, 7 April 2015, 12 May 2015, 10 July 2015.

⁽⁶⁰⁵⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, presentation, 4 November 2015 and e-mail, Lifos, 5 September 2014, 26 December 2014.

⁽⁶⁰⁶⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia January 2015 (S/2015/51), 23 January 2015, p. 4.

⁽⁶⁰⁷⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 5 September 2014, 4 February 2015, 16 June 2015.

⁽⁶⁰⁸⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 16 June 2015.

⁽⁶⁰⁹⁾ Hoehne, Markus Vigil, Between Somaliland and Puntland Marginalization, militarization and conflicting political visions, 2015, pp. 21, 39.

⁽⁶¹⁰⁾ FSNAU – Somalia, Administrative Maps [website], n.d.; UN OCHA, Somalia Administrative Map, 8 May 2012; CIA, Somaliland and Puntland, [map], 2012.

⁽⁶¹¹⁾ EASO, COI report - South and Central Somalia Country Overview [source: Lewis 1955], August 2014, p. 52; EASO, COI report - South and Central Somalia Country Overview [source: Abikar 1999], August 2014, p. 53.

⁽⁶¹²⁾ UNFPA, Population Estimation Survey 2014, Somalia, October 2014, p. 31.

2.13.2. Violence

There are tensions between Puntland and Somaliland in the Sanaag region ⁽⁶¹³⁾. However, there are not many reports of violence directly connected to that conflict. The main cause of violence in this region are clan disputes. In December 2014 there was fierce fighting between the Habar Yonis and Dulbahante gunmen south of Ceerigaabo, leaving three dead and five wounded. East of Ceerigaabo, there were clashes between Habar Yonis and Dulbahante ⁽⁶¹⁴⁾. In August and October 2015 there were clashes between Habar Yonis and Habar Jeelo over water resources. The clashes took place in Dogoble, Ceel Afweyn and Darad Weyne. One person was injured and several persons arrested in the clashes in Ceel Afweyn ⁽⁶¹⁵⁾.

In January 2015, 12 Al-Shabaab suspects were arrested in Ceerigaabo. The ineffective government presence in the Sanaag region could provide a safe haven for Al-Shabaab members based in the nearby Galgala mountains ⁽⁶¹⁶⁾. Reports regarding Sanaag indicate that Al-Shabaab's activities in the area are limited.

2.13.3. Actors in the conflict

Puntland's government, Somaliland's government, local clans and to a lesser extent Al-Shabaab are actors in the conflict.

2.13.4. Areas of control/influence

Somaliland's government controls the Ceel Afweyn district and most of the Ceerigaabo district. Both Somaliland and Puntland have influence in the very east of the Ceerigaabo district and the very west of the Laasqoray district. The central and eastern parts of Laasqoray are controlled by Puntland. Darood-Warsengeli clan militias operate in most of the Laasqoray district and the eastern part of the Ceerigaabo district. In the very north-east of the Laasqoray district, in the Galgala mountains, Al-Shabaab are in control and they operate in a slightly wider area ⁽⁶¹⁷⁾.

Clan militias from the Warsangeli clan have some limited influence in the eastern part of the Sanaag region. There are also areas in the border land in the Sool and Sanaag regions where both Puntland and Somaliland have influence ⁽⁶¹⁸⁾.

2.13.5. Impact of the violence

In addition to militiamen, civilians are also victims of clan clashes. Clan fighting often leads to retaliation against clan members, which results in civilian casualties ⁽⁶¹⁹⁾.

Transport and food security

There are no specific reports regarding security for travelling on roads.

2.14. Sool

2.14.1. Short description of the region

The Sool region borders the Bari and Nugaal regions to the east, the Togdheer region to the west, the Sanaag region to the north and Ethiopia to the south. There are four districts; Caynabo to the north-west, Laascaanood in the south, Taleex in the north-east and Xudun in between Caynabo and Taleex. The regional capital is Laascaanood. Other towns are Taleex and Xudun ⁽⁶²⁰⁾.

⁽⁶¹³⁾ UN Human Rights Council, Report of the Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Somalia, 28 October 2015, p. 4.

⁽⁶¹⁴⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 26 December 2014.

⁽⁶¹⁵⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 11 September 2015, 14 November 2015.

⁽⁶¹⁶⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 4 February 2015.

⁽⁶¹⁷⁾ BFA Staatendokumentation/ /Andreas Tiwald, Areas of Influence in Somalia [map], December 2015.

⁽⁶¹⁸⁾ BFA Staatendokumentation/ Andreas Tiwald, Analyse zu Somalia - Lagekarten zur Sicherheitslage, 12 October 2015, p. 8.

⁽⁶¹⁹⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, presentation, 4 November 2015, e-mail, Lifos 26 December 2014.

⁽⁶²⁰⁾ FSNAU – Somalia, Administrative Maps [website], n.d.; UN OCHA, Somalia Administrative Map, 8 May 2012; CIA, Somaliland and Puntland, [map], 2012.

The Darod-Dulbahante clan lives in the Taleex district, most of the Xudun district and most of the Laascaanood district. The Isaaq subclan Habar Yonis lives in the eastern part of the Xudun district and the very western part of the Laascaanood district, while the Isaaq subclan Habar Jeelo lives in the Caynabo district ⁽⁶²¹⁾.

According to the Population Survey Estimate undertaken by UNFPA and Somali authorities ⁽⁶²²⁾, as of 2014 the Sool region totalled 327,428 inhabitants of which 120,993 urban and 13,983 rural inhabitants, 187,632 nomads and 4,820 IDPs.

2.14.2. Violence

Most reported conflicts in Sool region are related to the dispute between Puntland, Somaliland and the Khatumo state. In August 2014, the Somaliland forces reportedly attacked the self-declared Khatumo state in Saxdheer and succeeded in taking over Saxdheer. The attack resulted in several casualties ⁽⁶²³⁾. The following week, the Khatumo/SSC militias launched repeated night-time hit-and-run attacks against Somaliland positions ⁽⁶²⁴⁾. On 2-3 October 2014 pro-Khatumo militias attacked Somaliland bases in Saxdheer ⁽⁶²⁵⁾. The Somaliland army carried out security operations along the border with Ethiopia in November and December 2014 ⁽⁶²⁶⁾. In September 2014 the Khatumo militias carried out a hit-and-run attack on Somaliland security base in Laascaanood. There was heavy fighting with casualties on both sides ⁽⁶²⁷⁾. Armed clashes occurred in May and June 2015 between the Somaliland forces and militia affiliated with Khatumo state ⁽⁶²⁸⁾. On 18 September 2015 Khatumo forces carried out a hit-and-run attack against the Somaliland forces based in Xudun ⁽⁶²⁹⁾.

There were reports of violent fighting between the Dulbahante subclans Samokaab Ali and Farah Ali at Taleex on 10 December 2014 ⁽⁶³⁰⁾. The Majerteen and Dulbahante clan militias clashed on 22 September 2015 in Qoriley, leaving 13 Dulbahante dead ⁽⁶³¹⁾.

Two men, suspected of having ties with Al-Shabaab, were arrested in April 2015 ⁽⁶³²⁾. The lack of reports of Al-Shabaab activities in the Sool region seems to indicate that Al-Shabaab does not have a strong presence in the area.

2.14.3. Actors in the conflict

The main actors in the conflict in Sool are Somaliland's government, Puntland's government, the Khatumo state through the Dulbahante dominated SSC militia and local clans.

2.14.4. Areas of control/influence

Somaliland's government has control over the Caynabo and Xudun districts, the very west of Taleex district and the Laascaanood district, except for the eastern part. The central part of Taleex district is jointly influenced by Somaliland and Puntland, and the eastern part is controlled by Puntland. The north-eastern part of Laascaanood district is controlled by Puntland, while the south-eastern part is jointly influenced by Puntland and the Dulbahante clan through the Khatumo State/SSC militia. The SSC militia operates with limited influence in the whole of Sool region, except Caynabo district. There are also areas in the border land in the Sool and Sanaag regions where both Puntland and Somaliland have influence ⁽⁶³³⁾.

⁽⁶²¹⁾ EASO, COI report - South and Central Somalia Country Overview [source: Lewis 1955], August 2014, p. 52; EASO, COI report - South and Central Somalia Country Overview [source: Abikar 1999], August 2014, p. 53.

⁽⁶²²⁾ UNFPA, Population Estimation Survey 2014, Somalia, October 2014, p. 31.

⁽⁶²³⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 5 September 2014; UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia January 2015, 23 January 2015, pp. 3-4.

⁽⁶²⁴⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 5 September 2014.

⁽⁶²⁵⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 6 October 2014.

⁽⁶²⁶⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 12 December 2014.

⁽⁶²⁷⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 6 October 2014.

⁽⁶²⁸⁾ UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia (S/2015/702), 11 September 2015, p. 3.

⁽⁶²⁹⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 10 October 2015.

⁽⁶³⁰⁾ International organisation in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 12 December 2014.

⁽⁶³¹⁾ International organisation in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 10 October 2015.

⁽⁶³²⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 12 May 2015.

⁽⁶³³⁾ BFA Staatendokumentation/ Andreas Tiwald, Analyse zu Somalia - Lagekarten zur Sicherheitslage, 12 October 2015, p. 8.

2.14.5. Impact of the violence

In addition to militiamen, civilians are also victims of clan clashes. Clan fighting often leads to retaliation against clan members, which results in civilian casualties ⁽⁶³⁴⁾.

Transport and food security

No reports were found regarding security for travelling on roads.

2.15. Somaliland

2.15.1. Short description of the region

Somaliland is located in the north-west of Somalia. The Republic of Somaliland declared independence from Somalia in 1991 ⁽⁶³⁵⁾. Although Somaliland de facto functions as an independent state, it has not yet been recognised by any state ⁽⁶³⁶⁾. It borders the Gulf of Aden to the north, Djibouti to the west and Ethiopia to the south. The border with Puntland in the east is disputed. Somaliland has defined its borders as demarcated in the colonial treaties, whereas Puntland defines its eastern border to Somaliland genealogically according to where the Darod clan stays. The border is not demarcated precisely on the ground ⁽⁶³⁷⁾.

Other regions belonging to Somaliland are Togdheer, Woqooyi Galbeed and Awdal. Togdheer region counts four districts: Buuhoodle to the south-east, Burao in the centre, Oodweyne in the west and Sheikh to the north. Burao is the regional capital. Other towns are Buuhoodle, Odweyne, Sheikh and Kiridh. The region Woqooyi Galbeed includes the districts of Berbera to the north, Hargeysa to the south-east and Gebiley to the south-west. Hargeysa is the regional capital, as well as the capital of Somaliland. Other towns in the Hargeysa district are Karin, Berbera, Bullaxaar and Gebiley. The Awdal region is located in the very west of Somaliland. In Awdal are four districts: Baki in the east, Lughaye in the north, Zeylac to the west to the Djiboutian border and Borama to the south. The regional capital is Borama. Other towns are Baki, Saylac and Lughaye ⁽⁶³⁸⁾.

The Togdheer and Woqooyi Galbeed regions are mainly inhabited by the Isaaq subclans Habar Jeelo, Habar Yonis, Idagala and Habar Awal. The Awdal region is mainly inhabited by the Dir subclans Gadabursi and Issa ⁽⁶³⁹⁾.

According to the Population Survey Estimate undertaken by UNFPA and Somali authorities ⁽⁶⁴⁰⁾, as of 2014 Somaliland (the three regions Awdal, Togdheer and Woqooyi Galbeed) totalled 2,636,629 inhabitants of which 1,574,285 were urban, 340,011 rural, 643,993 nomads and 78,340 IDPs.

2.15.2. Violence

The conflict between the Somaliland government and the Khatumo state presently has a low intensity, in the south-east of the Togdheer region. In April 2015, armed clashes were reported between the Somaliland army and militias loyal to a former minister of Puntland in Caroweyn in Togdheer. These clashes occurred as Somaliland attempted to stop illegal mineral activities and resulted in four deaths ⁽⁶⁴¹⁾.

There have also been reports of clan disputes in Togdheer region. The Habar Jeelo clan had a dispute with the Abdala Arab clan, which on 18 October 2014 led to shootouts north of Burao with no casualties reported ⁽⁶⁴²⁾. During the period April-June 2015 there were high tensions between the Habar Jeelo and the Dulbahante clans in the Togdheer

⁽⁶³⁴⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mails, Lifos 19 September 2014, 6 October 2014, 17 October 2014, 31 October 2014, 14 November 2014, 28 November 2014, 12 December 2014, 4 February 2015, 7 April 2015, 12 May 2015, 16 June 2015, 10 July 2015, 6 August 2015, 11 September 2015, 10 October 2015, 14 November 2015.

⁽⁶³⁵⁾ UK Home Office, Somalia Country of Origin Information (COI) Report, 17 January 2012, p. 287.

⁽⁶³⁶⁾ The Economist, Why Somaliland is not a recognised state, 1 November 2015.

⁽⁶³⁷⁾ Hoehne, Markus Vigil, Between Somaliland and Puntland Marginalization, militarization and conflicting political visions, 2015, pp. 21, 39.

⁽⁶³⁸⁾ FSNAU – Somalia, Administrative Maps [website], n.d.; UN OCHA, Somalia Administrative Map, 8 May 2012; CIA, Somaliland and Puntland, [map], 2012.

⁽⁶³⁹⁾ EASO, COI report - South and Central Somalia Country Overview [source: Lewis 1955], August 2014, p. 52; EASO, COI report - South and Central Somalia Country Overview [source: Abikar 1999], August 2014, p. 53.

⁽⁶⁴⁰⁾ UNFPA, Population Estimation Survey 2014, Somalia, October 2014, p. 31.

⁽⁶⁴¹⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 12 May 2015.

⁽⁶⁴²⁾ International organisation, e-mail, Lifos, 31 October 2014.

region, after a Dulbahante man was killed by Habar Jeelo militia in the beginning of April. Clashes between these two clans were reported on 16, 20 and 24 May 2015 with an unknown number of casualties on both sides. In spite of a peace agreement on 8 June, there were reports of a clash on 20 June 2015 ⁽⁶⁴³⁾.

During the last months of 2014 and the first part of 2015, there were tensions in the Awdal region after the local opposition leader Sultan Abibakar Elmi Wabar declared his support for an autonomous Awdal state ⁽⁶⁴⁴⁾. In January 2015, a militia loyal to Sultan Wabar attacked the central police station in Borama. There were brief clashes on 27 March 2015 between the Somaliland army and the Awdal state militia ⁽⁶⁴⁵⁾. In the middle of November 2015, mediation talks between the Somaliland government and Sultan Wabar followed. Sultan Wabar's militia surrendered and is planned to be integrated into the Somaliland government security forces ⁽⁶⁴⁶⁾.

Somaliland's government applies capital punishment; six persons were executed the first 6 months of 2015 ⁽⁶⁴⁷⁾. There were no reports of terrorist attacks during September 2014 – October 2015 ⁽⁶⁴⁸⁾.

2.15.3. Actors in the conflict

The main actors in the conflict in Somaliland are Somaliland's government, Khatumo state, Sultan Wabar's militia and local clans.

2.15.4. Areas of control/influence

The Somaliland government controls the Awdal, Woqooyi Galbeed and Togdheer regions. However, the Dulbahante-dominated SSC militia operates in the southern part of the Buuhoodle district and the very south-eastern part of the Burao district in the Togdheer region ⁽⁶⁴⁹⁾. The Khatumo state is not a major player, and often stays in Ethiopia where they are not targeted by the Somaliland government ⁽⁶⁵⁰⁾. However, the SSC and the Somaliland government jointly influence the very south of the Buhodle district ⁽⁶⁵¹⁾.

2.15.5. Impact of the violence

The intensity of conflicts in Somaliland is low. In addition to militiamen, clan clashes also affect civilians. Clan fighting may lead to revenge actions against clan members, which affects civilians ⁽⁶⁵²⁾.

Transport and food security

There were no specific reports of security incidents along the roads in Somaliland.

⁽⁶⁴³⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 12 May 2015, 16 June 2015, 10 July 2015.

⁽⁶⁴⁴⁾ USAID Somalia, USAID Somalia Partnership for Economic Growth Project Quarterly Progress Report October – December 2014, January 2015; International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 4 February 2015.

⁽⁶⁴⁵⁾ International organisation, e-mail, Lifos, 4 February 2015, 7 April 2015, 12 May 2015.

⁽⁶⁴⁶⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mail, Lifos, 12 December 2015.

⁽⁶⁴⁷⁾ UN Human Rights Council, Report of the Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Somalia, 28 October 2015, p. 9.

⁽⁶⁴⁸⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, e-mails, Lifos, 19 September 2014, 6 October 2014, 17 October 2014, 31 October 2014, 14 November 2014, 28 November 2014, 12 December 2014, 4 February 2015, 7 April 2015, 12 May 2015, 16 June 2015, 10 July 2015, 6 August 2015, 11 September 2015, 10 October 2015, 14 November 2015.

⁽⁶⁴⁹⁾ BFA Staatendokumentation/ Andreas Tiwald, Analyse zu Somalia - Lagekarten zur Sicherheitslage, 12 October 2015, p. 8.

⁽⁶⁵⁰⁾ Expert on Somalia, interview, Lifos, Stockholm 2 December 2015.

⁽⁶⁵¹⁾ BFA Staatendokumentation/ Andreas Tiwald, Analyse zu Somalia - Lagekarten zur Sicherheitslage, 12 October 2015, p. 8.

⁽⁶⁵²⁾ International organisation with expertise on security matters, based in Mogadishu, presentation, 4 November 2015, e-mail, Lifos 12 May 2015, 16 June 2015, 10 July 2015.

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Terms of Reference

1. General description of the security situation
 - 1.1. General description of the conflict
 - 1.1.1. Short history of the conflict
 - 1.2. Parties to the conflict
 - 1.2.1. State's armed forces (army, police, intelligence...)
 - Structure of troops
 - Visual identification
 - Enlisting, defecting
 - 1.2.2. International forces (AMISOM)
 - Command Structure
 - Visual identification
 - 1.2.3. Armed groups (Al-Shabaab, ASWJ, clan militias, others...)
 - Command Structure
 - Organisation
 - Visual identification
 - Recruiting, defecting/deserting
 - Popular support/means of income
 - 1.2.4. Life under Al-Shabaab
 - 1.3. Armed confrontations
 - Fighting tactics, attacks, military operations, guerilla
 - Use of weapons, drones
 - 1.4. Impact of the conflicts on State, Law & Order, possibilities for protection
 - 1.5. Geographical overview of the security situation
 - Areas of influence
 - Areas of violence
 - Newly liberated areas
2. Description of the security situation per region:
Lower Jubba, Gedo, Bay-Bakool, Middle Jubba, Lower Shabelle, Benadir-Mogadishu, Middle Shabelle, Hiiraan-Gagaduud, Ximan-Xeeb, Galmudug, Puntland, Somaliland, Sool/Sanaag.
 - 2.1. Short description of the region (terrain, urban areas, population)
 - 2.2. Violence
 - Number/kind of incidents
 - Number of victims (death and injured) Civilians/Military staff/fighters
 - Population displacements
 - 2.3. Actors in the conflict
 - 2.4. Areas of control/influence
 - 2.5. Impact of the violence (residential areas, security of transport system, food security)

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