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Briefing Notes Summary

Group 62 – Information Centre for Asylum and Migration

Somalia – January to June 2024

30 June 2024

15 January 2024

Abduction of a helicopter crew

According to reports, six passengers were abducted by al-Shabaab members after a helicopter made an emergency landing in Galmudug on 10.01.24. Of the total crew of nine, who were travelling on behalf of the UN, one person died under as yet unexplained circumstances, while two people managed to escape. The crew was reportedly on a medical mission and was made up not of UN personnel but of mostly international medical staff. Further UN flights in the region have therefore been suspended until further notice.¹

Attack on airport in Mogadishu

On 11.01.24, an attack was reportedly carried out on Aden Adde International Airport in Mogadishu, in which a Ugandan member of the UN Guard Unit was killed. Al-Shabaab has claimed responsibility for the attack.²

22 January 2024

Attack in Mogadishu

Several people have reportedly been killed and others injured in a suicide attack. Reports on the exact number of people killed vary between three and five. The attack took place in front of a restaurant in the Hamar Weyne district of Mogadishu on 16.01.24. The terrorist militia al-Shabaab has claimed responsibility for the attack.³

29 January 2024

Clan clashes in Galmudug and attack in Mogadishu

According to local reports, at least seven people died in retaliatory attacks carried out by clans in Balanbale and Faragoy (Galmudug) on 22.01.24. It is not known which clan members were involved and what triggered the clashes. According to reports, at least two civilians were killed and others injured in a suicide attack. The attack occurred near the stadium in Mogadishu on 24.01.24. Al-Shabaab has already claimed responsibility for the attack.⁴

Attacks on military bases

On 24.01.24, five military bases located in Caad district in northern Mudug province (Galmudug) are reported to have been attacked by al-Shabaab. Unconfirmed reports stated that over 190 Somali military personnel and allied militias were killed. Numerous weapons and military vehicles were stolen by the terrorist militia during the attack.⁵

12 February 2024

Attacks in Mogadishu

On 10.02.24, at least five people, including Somali military personnel and soldiers from the UAE and Bahrain, were reportedly killed at a military base. Military representatives from the UAE and Bahrain are in Somalia for training purposes. The attacker is said to have been a Somali soldier who had previously been a member of the al-Shabaab terrorist militia. The militia has already claimed responsibility for the attack.

At least 10 people were killed in several explosions that occurred on 06.02.24. The attack took place at one of Mogadishu's largest markets, the Bakara market. Al-Shabaab is suspected of being behind the attack but has not yet officially claimed responsibility.⁶

Attack in southern Somalia

On 05.02.24, at least seven people, including six Ethiopian nationals, were reportedly killed in Gedo (Jubaland). The attack occurred in Beled Hawo, a town situated on the Somali-Kenyan-Ethiopian border, which is also inhabited by Kenyan and Ethiopian nationals. Authorities suspect al-Shabaab of being behind the attack.⁷

Gender-based violence

Media report three femicides and one attempted femicide within a few days in January/February 2024. The attacks took place in the regions of Mogadishu and Lower Shabelle (including in Qoryooley and Afgooye). The suspected spouses are in custody, but no charges have yet been brought. Gender-based violence is still widespread in Somalia. Due to the inadequate legal framework, protection against assault is not guaranteed across the whole country.⁸

04 March 2024

Puntland: imposition of the death penalty

On 29.02.24, a military court in Bosaso sentenced six Moroccan nationals to death, while an Ethiopian and a Somali national were each given a 10-year prison sentence. They are accused of being members of the terrorist group Islamic State in Somalia (ISS). The convicts stated that they were "induced" to join the group. ISS is particularly active in the Golis Mountains, and the training centre is reportedly located in the Cal-Miskaat Mountains.⁹

18 March 2024

Attack on hotel

On 14.03.24, an attack was carried out on the Syl Hotel, which is located near the presidential residence in Mogadishu and is mainly frequented by government officials. The attack was accompanied by various explosions and exchanges of fire. Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for the attack. According to official sources, three Somali soldiers were killed and 27 people were injured. Government troops reportedly repelled the attack after several hours.¹⁰

Journalist shot and killed by security forces

On 13.03.24, the Somali journalist Abdikarin Ahmed Bulhan died of a gunshot wound that had earlier been inflicted by security forces. The journalist, who worked for the state-run Somali National TV and Somali National News Agency, was shot by a security guard while working in Abudwak (Galgaduud) for reasons that have not yet been clarified. National and international journalists' organisations have condemned the killing and are calling for a government investigation.¹¹

25 March 2024

Drone attack

In the early hours of 19.03.24, government and foreign troops reportedly carried out a drone attack north of Mogadishu in Baqdaad (Lower Shabelle region). According to official sources, the attack was part of an operation

against al-Shabaab, and 40 members of the terrorist group were killed. Affected villagers reported at least 20 other civilian casualties. It has not yet been possible to officially confirm this information.¹²

Attack on military base

On 23.03.24, at least seven Somali soldiers were killed by al-Shabaab fighters in an attack on the Busley military base (Lower Shabelle region). Al-Shabaab is reported to have briefly captured the military base before government troops drove the attackers away. The Islamist group claimed responsibility for the attack and stated that the number of casualties among the Somali soldiers was significantly higher. The information has not yet been confirmed.¹³

08 April 2024

Several attacks

On 04.04.24, two staff members of an aid organisation, one Somali and one Turkish national, were reportedly killed in a bomb attack when several members of staff were on their way to distribute relief supplies to a camp for internally displaced people in Mogadishu. Al-Shabaab has claimed responsibility for the attack.

On 29.03.24, six Kenyan nationals were reportedly killed in the town of Dhobley on the border with Kenya. The background is still unclear; al-Shabaab is suspected to be behind the attack.¹⁴

Expulsion of the Ethiopian ambassador

The Somali government has ordered the expulsion of Ethiopian ambassador Mukhtar Mohamed Warre and the closure of the Ethiopian consulates in Somaliland and Puntland along with the diplomatic staff. The Somali ambassador to Ethiopia was also summoned to Somalia for talks. The decision was made three months after Ethiopia had signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Somaliland, which was intended to give Ethiopia access to the sea via Somaliland in return for Ethiopia recognising Somaliland as an independent country. The Somali government sees this as a violation of its sovereignty and territorial integrity. At the beginning of April 2024, the Ethiopian foreign minister also held trade talks with a delegation from the semi-autonomous Puntland without prior consultation with the Somali government. Somaliland and Puntland have rejected the expulsion orders.¹⁵

Puntland

In a public statement, the Puntland government announced that it no longer recognises Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud as the legitimate head of government. This was in response to efforts by the Somali government to amend the country's federal constitution, which Puntland considers illegitimate. The changes affect the power-sharing system and give more control to the president. Puntland insists on the 2012 version of the constitution.¹⁶

06 May 2024

Journalist suspended

In March 2024, Sugaal Moalim Mohamud, who worked for the government-run media outlets Radio Mogadishu and Somali National TV, was initially suspended for one month. The reason given was that he had made anti-government comments on social media, including criticism of military operations and corruption in the defence ministry. According to Mohamud, the suspension has continued even after the one-month ban. His salary has also been stopped, he added. The Somali Journalists Syndicate expressed concern about his situation. In Somalia, media professionals face restrictions and threats both from armed groups such as al-Shabaab and the government. Between 2020 and 2024, five journalists died in the course of their work.¹⁷

Bomb attack

On 28.04.24, six Hormuud Telecom employees were reportedly killed in an explosion. The bombing took place on a roadside in Garasbaley district on the outskirts of Mogadishu. No one has yet claimed responsibility for the attack.¹⁸

13 May 2024

Government requests termination of UN political mission

In early May 2024, the Somali foreign ministry requested the termination of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), whose mandate expires in October 2024. The political mission, which currently has 360 members, has been deployed there since 2013 to advise the government on security reforms and democracy building, among other things. In addition to UNSOM, the UN-mandated peacekeeping mission of the African Union (African Union Transition Mission in Somalia - ATMIS), with around 10,000 troops, will remain in Somalia until the end of 2024, when it will withdraw and hand over security to the Somali state.¹⁹

03 June 2024

Increase in executions

According to the annual report by Amnesty International (AI), the number of executions in Somalia more than tripled between 2022 and 2023. While eleven executions were carried out in 2022, the number rose to 38 in 2023. In addition to Somalia, the death penalty continues to be imposed in 13 other countries but is de facto not carried out in most of them. Somalia was therefore the only sub-Saharan country to carry out executions in 2023.²⁰

10 June 2024

Violent clash between rival clans in Galmudug

Local sources report that on 08.06.24, fighting broke out between the militias of the rival Marehan and Dir clans over territorial control and water access in Landhere, Galgaduud (Galmudug region). At least 50 people were reportedly killed and at least 60 others injured. Local authorities said they had sent government officials, clan elders and religious leaders to the conflict region to mediate between the rival groups.²¹

Attacks by al-Shabaab

On 08.06.24, five Somali government soldiers were reportedly killed in fighting with al-Shabaab in Ceeldheer (also named El-Dheer, Galmudug region).

Also on 08.06.24, four Kenyan construction workers were reportedly killed by al-Shabaab members. The incident took place near the Dadaab camp on the Somali-Kenyan border.²²

17 June 2024

Attack and road blockades by al-Shabaab

On 15.06.24, at least six Somali soldiers were reportedly killed by a landmine. The incident occurred near Baidoa (Bay Region) and was claimed by al-Shabaab.

According to local reports, Al-Shabaab has set up at least four new roadblocks between Mogadishu and Afgooye, Wanla Weyn and Leego (Lower Shabelle Region). This is an important trade route between Mogadishu and South West State. Members of al-Shabaab reportedly search vehicles and people and extort money so that the travellers can continue their journey.²³

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