

**Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale**

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| <b>Title</b>            | The Worst of the Worst 2010 - Somalia                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
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| <b>Country</b>          | Somalia                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
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## The Worst of the Worst 2010 - Somalia

**Population:** 9,133,000

**Capital:** Mogadishu

**Political Rights:** 7

**Civil Liberties:** 7

**Status:** Not Free

| Ten-Year Ratings Timeline for Year under Review<br>(Political Rights, Civil Liberties, Status) |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Year Under Review                                                                              | 2000   | 2001   | 2002   | 2003   | 2004   | 2005   | 2006   | 2007   | 2008   | 2009   |
| Rating                                                                                         | 6,7,NF | 6,7,NF | 6,7,NF | 6,7,NF | 6,7,NF | 6,7,NF | 7,7,NF | 7,7,NF | 7,7,NF | 7,7,NF |

**2009 Key Developments:** As Ethiopian forces completed their withdrawal from the country in January 2009, Somalia's transitional parliament was expanded to include opposition factions, and the new body elected moderate Islamist leader Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed as president. He formed a broader government that enjoyed international support and a moderate amount of domestic goodwill, but it struggled to impose its authority over more than a small portion of the country during the year. Meanwhile, its radical Islamist opponents, the Shabaab and Hizbul Islam, fought among themselves and alienated most Somalis with their brutal interpretation of Islamic law. A suicide bombing at a university graduation ceremony in December killed four cabinet ministers and several other officials, raising new doubts about the government's ability to defend itself.

**Political Rights:** Somalia is not an electoral democracy. The Somali state has in many respects ceased to exist, and there is no governing authority with the ability to protect political rights and civil liberties. Technically, the country is governed by the internationally recognized Transitional Federal Government (TFG), but its actual control is minimal. There are no effective political parties, and the political process is driven largely by clan loyalty. Due to mounting civil unrest and the breakdown of the state, corruption in Somalia is rampant. Since May 1991, the northwestern region of Somaliland has functioned with considerable stability as a de facto independent state, though it has not received international recognition. The region of Puntland, in the northeastern corner of the country, has been relatively autonomous since 1998; unlike Somaliland, it has not yet sought full independence, declaring only a temporary secession until Somalia is stabilized. However, sentiment in the region seems to be leaning in favor of independence.

**Civil Liberties:** Although Somalia's Transitional Federal Charter calls for freedom of speech and the press, these rights are quite limited in practice. Journalists continued to face dangerous conditions in 2009, with nine journalists killed in addition to multiple

arrests and two abductions. Militants closed down a number of media organizations in 2009 and stopped reporters from going about their duties. Many of the remaining outlets serve as mouthpieces for the factions they support in the fighting. Owing to poverty and low literacy levels, radio remains the primary news medium, although there is no national broadcaster. Islam is recognized as the official religion, and nearly all Somalis are Sunni Muslims, but there is a very small Christian community. Freedom of assembly is not respected amid the ongoing violence, and the largely informal economy is inhospitable to organized labor. The conflict has forced the nongovernmental organizations and UN agencies operating in Somalia to either reduce or suspend their activities. There is no judicial system functioning effectively at the national level. In many regions, local authorities administer a mix of Sharia (Islamic law) and traditional Somali forms of justice and reconciliation. The human rights situation in Somalia remained grim in 2009, with civilians caught up in fighting between the Islamist militias, the TFG, and African Union peacekeepers. There was no effective process in place to investigate allegations of human rights abuses by any of the warring parties. The office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees estimated that there were 1.5 million internally displaced people by year's end, most of them living in appalling conditions. An estimated 500,000 were taking refuge in neighboring countries. Women in Somalia face a great deal of discrimination. Female genital mutilation is still practiced in some form on nearly all Somali girls, and sexual violence is rampant.

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