



## Press Release: Somalia security situation

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### EASO publishes a Country of Origin Information (COI) report on security situation in Somalia

*Today, the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) published a [Country of Origin Information \(COI\) Report entitled 'Somalia security situation'](#). The report is an update of the security chapter of the EASO [COI report on South and Central Somalia](#), published in August 2014, and has been extended to Somaliland, Puntland, and the disputed areas between these administrations (Sool, Sanaag, Khatumo). The report provides a comprehensive overview of the security situation in Somalia, information relevant for the protection status determination of Somali asylum seekers. Amongst other things, the report reveals that armed insurgent groups, in particular Al-Shabaab, have increasingly conducted large-scale and complex attacks in South and Central Somalia against the Somali National Army (SNA) and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).*

In 2015, Somalia ranked 9<sup>th</sup> in the top countries of origin in the EU+ countries<sup>1</sup>, with a total number of almost 22,000 applicants. This report is the second COI report on Somalia published by EASO. In August 2014, EASO published its Country Overview report on South and Central Somalia.<sup>2</sup>

The EASO COI Report 'Somalia security situation' provides a general description of the security situation in Somalia, covering the following topics: a brief historic overview; actors in the conflict (state's armed forces, international forces and armed groups); a brief description of the major attacks by Al-Shabaab and military operations by AMISOM and Somali National Armed Forces (SNAF); the impact of the violence on the state ability to secure law and order, with descriptions of the Judiciary, detention conditions and death penalty; the impact of the violence on the civilian population; and a geographical overview of the security situation.

In the second part, the report provides a description of the security situation in different regions in Somalia, including the capital Mogadishu. In these chapters, a general overview of the region is given, followed by the major violent incidents. Information on the actors in the region and the areas of control or influence by each of these actors is described. Finally, a brief overview of the impact of the violence on the population is given, including displacements, transport and food security. The reference period for the security report runs from August 2014 until 31 December 2015.

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<sup>1</sup> EU Member States plus Norway and Switzerland.

<sup>2</sup> All reports are available via EASO's website: (<http://easo.europa.eu/asylum-documentation/easo-publication-and-documentation/>).

## **Main Findings**

Information provided in the report shows a new trend in the Somali security situation in 2015. Al-Shabaab has conducted increasingly large-scale and complex attacks on the AMISOM/SNAF forces and in some cases briefly took over control of military bases. At the same time, Al-Shabaab has lost control over an increasing number of towns in South and Central Somalia, although it remains active in the countryside around these towns. Al-Shabaab has furthermore conducted large-scale attacks in neighbouring countries active in AMISOM, in particular Kenya, Uganda.

Although overall the number of attacks is decreasing, the report notices that 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, often disguised in AMISOM uniforms.

The report further notes that besides insurgency and counter-insurgency operations, clan conflicts have an important impact on the security situation in Somalia as well

A new development is the growing influence of the Islamic State (IS) to which a group of Al-Shabaab fighters in the Galgala mountains (Puntland) pledged allegiance. Apart from this potential security threat, the main security issue in northern Somalia is the ongoing border conflict between Somaliland and Puntland and the newly formed Khatumo State (covering parts of Sool and Sanaag).

Researchers from The Netherlands, Slovak Republic and Sweden participated in the joint drafting process of this report. The report was written in accordance with the EASO [COI Report Methodology](#). It was reviewed by experts from Belgium, Denmark, Finland, and a security information analyst from UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS), Somalia, in order to ensure the highest quality.

It is EASO's intention to continue to produce such reports on important countries of origin and to update them on a regular basis in order to raise and harmonise COI standards in the EU and to further support the practical implementation of the Common European Asylum System.

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