



This update provides information on the protection environment in Somalia, including apparent violations of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law as reported during the last two weeks through the IASC Somalia Protection Cluster monitoring systems. Incidents mentioned in this report are not exhaustive. They are intended to highlight credible reports to inform and prompt programming and advocacy initiatives by the humanitarian community and national authorities.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

On 14 March a suicide attack was carried out by Al Shabaab insurgents targeting the Presidential Palace in Mogadishu killing at least four people and wounding at least 25 others, including civilians.¹

During the reporting period, fighting intensified in Gedo region when Al Shabaab fighters attacked Ethiopian forces in Yurkud village in Luuq district. The fighting resulted in an unconfirmed number of civilian casualties, and residents fled mainly to the border town of Dollow.²

The AMISOM/TFG offensive in Afgooye district of Lower Shabelle region continued, resulting in over 4,000 displacements to Mogadishu. Fear of a new AMISOM offensive in Middle Shabelle resulted in over 1,000 displacements mainly from Balcad district to Mogadishu over the first two weeks of March. AMISOM/TFG forces also reached Darmooley village, around 5km away from ex-control Balcad.

Tensions remain high in parts of Baydhaba district of Bay region, despite the town now being under the control of a self-appointed Governor and the Ethiopian National Defence Forces (ENDF), following the Al Shabaab retreat from the district. The tensions resulted in approximately 1,300 residents fleeing mainly to Banadir and within Bay region. Reports indicate that pro-TFG forces have imposed long curfew hours in Baidoa due to increased fear of retaliation by Al Shabaab and have arrested suspected Al Shabaab sympathizers. Intensive recruitment by Al Shabaab of men and boys, particularly in Afgooye district, Bay and Lower Juba regions remains a major protection concern.

In Somaliland several people gathered in Laas Canood district of Sool region to demonstrate in support of the self-declared “Kaatumo State”. In response to the demonstration the Somaliland military fired to disperse the gathering, resulting in the killing of one civilian and the wounding of four others. At least 50 people were arrested following the demonstration. Reports indicate that the detainees were being held at Mandheera prison, between Berbera and Hargeisa.³

MOGADISHU (BANADIR)

Over the past two weeks, sporadic fighting between Al Shabaab and AMISOM troops persisted in Mogadishu, including in the Dayniile, Heliwa, and Yaqshiid districts. IDPs continued arriving in Mogadishu from Afgooye corridor of Lower Shabelle and Balcad districts of Middle Shabelle region. The majority of IDPs fleeing Afgooye have reportedly settled in Zona K IDP camp in Hodan, the Ex-US Embassy compound located in Wadajir and Odweyne IDP camp in the Dayniile district of Mogadishu.

A reputable judge was shot and seriously injured in Wadajir district. This is the third apparently politically-motivated assassination carried out in Mogadishu since the beginning of the year. A Person-Borne Improvised Explosive Device (PBIED) attack took place inside the Villa Somalia compound in Wardhiigleey district resulting in at least four civilian casualties and an unconfirmed number of injuries.



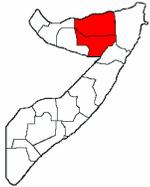
- Four people, including civilians were killed and scores injured after a suicide bomber believed to be a member of Al Shabaab detonated himself inside the Presidential Palace compound in Wardhiigleey district.⁴ (14 March)
- A prominent business man was shot and killed by two unidentified gunmen outside his shop in Wardhiigleey district. The motive for the attack remains unknown.⁵ (8 March)
- A local judge was shot and seriously injured by two suspected Al Shabaab militants while he was walking to Wadajir police station.⁶ (7 March)
- A man was shot dead and his son wounded after the TFG security forces conducted a security operation in Darmooley village of Heliwa district.⁷ (6 March)
- A man was shot and injured in Waaberi district when an unidentified TFG gunman missed his intended target during crossfire between TFG forces.⁸ Since the beginning of the year seven similar cases of civilians getting caught in TFG-on-TFG crossfire have been reported. (4 March)
- A nine-year old IDP girl living in Arwada IDP settlement in Hodan district was raped by two drug addicts. The perpetrators were arrested and the girl was referred to Medina hospital.⁹ (7 March)
- A newly arrived IDP woman in Heliwa district was raped by an unidentified perpetrator.¹⁰ (12 March)

NORTH-WEST (AWDAL, WOQOYI GALBEED & TOGDHEER)

The Somaliland Government carried out clean up operations in Hargeisa city centre in Woqooyi Galbeed region. Some Ethiopian asylum-seekers apparently refused to cooperate and a police unit was called in. Several asylum-seekers were also injured as a result of what appeared to be excessive use of force during a clean-up operation in Sha'abka area of Hargeisa.¹¹

SOOL & SANAG

The tense situation in Laas Canood district of Sool region escalated when on 7 March people gathered to show their support for the recognition of “Kaatumo State”. The demonstration turned violent as the Somaliland security forces tried to disperse the crowd, and a curfew was subsequently imposed by the Somaliland authorities.



- The Somaliland authorities imposed a dusk-to-dawn curfew and arrested 19 people following demonstrations that took place by supporters of Kaatumo State in Laas Canood district of Sool region.¹² (7 March)
- A man was shot and killed by clan militias at Qorileey village of Laas Canood district of Sool region. The killing is believed to be a revenge killing. The perpetrators fled. (9 March)

NORTH-EAST (MUDUG, NUGAAL & BARI)

During the reporting period a journalist was killed by an unidentified man in Gaalkacyo town of Mudug region. He is the third journalist to be killed in Somalia since the beginning of the year.

Al Shabaab with the support of Galgala insurgents conducted an assault against Puntland forces in Bossasso, Bari region. The assault resulted in at least four casualties.¹³

Four humanitarian agencies, including World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF), Relief International (RI) and Somaliland Family Health Association (SOFHA) who had been banned from operating on 11 March 2012, resumed their activities three days later in Galmudug following permission given to them by the Galmudug administration.¹⁴



- A journalist was shot and killed in Gaalkacyo town of Mudug region by two unidentified men. The motive for the attack remains unknown.¹⁵ (4 March).
- A journalist of Radio Voice of Peace in Bosasso was arrested by Puntland police forces after he had broadcast a statement made by an Al Shabaab spokesperson.¹⁶ (3 March)

HIRAAAN & GALGADUUD

Following two months of negotiation over the disagreement concerning the territorial administration of Belet Weyne district, the TFG finally declared Abdifatah Hassan Afrah, the President of the Shabelle Valley Administration (SVA) as the new chairman in Hiraan.¹⁷

In a statement issued on 13 March, the Al Shabaab Office for Supervising the Affairs of Foreign Agencies (OSFA) revoked the permission of an international NGO from operating in the Jalalaqsi and Bulo Burto districts of Hiraan region, and the keys to their offices in Jalalaqsi and Bulo Burto were reportedly confiscated by the Al Shabaab administration.



- A truck belonging to the UN World Food Program (WFP) was reportedly seized by unidentified gunmen in Galinsor area of Galgaduud region.¹⁸ (11 March)
- A businessman allegedly affiliated with the TFG was shot and killed by an unidentified gunman in the Belet Weyne district of Hiraa region.¹⁹ (3 March)
- One civilian was killed and another injured following an exchange of fire between Ahlul Sunna Wal Jamee'a (ASWJ) and SVS forces in Belet Weyne over the collection of taxes from commercial vehicles in the area.²⁰ (3 March)

LOWER & MIDDLE SHABELLE (SHABELLE HOOSE & DHEXE)

PMT reports indicate that over 1,300 IDPs from Middle Shabelle arrived in Mogadishu from Balcad district of Middle Shabelle region fearing an offensive against Al Shabaab by AMISOM/TFG. Continued fighting in Afgooye also resulted in approximately 4,300 IDPs arriving in Mogadishu during the reporting period.

The Al Shabaab administration in Afgooye and Middle Shabelle continued its appeal to the public to join the “holy war” against the TFG allied forces, resulting in men and boys fleeing mainly to Mogadishu.



- Seven IDPs were reportedly wounded and 200 more displaced after Al Shabaab attacked an IDP camp in the Afgooye Corridor with mortars. The mortar shelling also left two women and two children dead.²¹ (11 March)

BAY, BAKOOL & GEDO

After the expulsion of Al Shabaab from Baidoa tension remains high in parts of Bay and Bakool regions. PMT data indicates that over 950 residents fled Baidoa and arrived mainly in Banadir and in other districts of Bay region, such as Qansax Dheere, Diinsor and Buur Hakaba. Reports indicate that young men in particular continue to flee Baidoa for fear of being arrested as suspected Al Shabaab sympathizers. Baidoa is now under the control of a self-appointed Governor and his deputies.

A report indicates that tensions between Al Shabaab and pro-TFG forces intensified particularly in the Garbahaarey and Luuq districts of Gedo region, causing fear among the civilian population, and prompting the closure of medical centers and schools in the area. The report also indicates that in the Al Shabaab-administered areas schools were closed down and children were forcibly recruited to take up arms.²²



- A man was executed by Al Shabaab in Wajiid district of Bakool region on suspicion of spying for the Ethiopian National Defence Forces in Aleemow area.²³ (12 March)
- At least 10 people have been killed after clashes erupted between TFG allied forces and Al Shabaab in Baardheere district of Gedo region.²⁴ (12 March)

- The brother of the former TFG speaker Sheikh Adam Madobe was assassinated by an unidentified gunman. The deceased had publicly criticized Al Shabaab.²⁵ (11 March)
- A mini bus carrying 15 IDPs from Baadhedee town to Kismaayo was prevented from continuing its journey by TFG check point guards in Baadhedee district of Gedo region. The soldiers ordered the bus driver to return the IDPs.²⁶ (6 March)

LOWER & MIDDLE JUBA (JUBA HOOSE & DHEXE)

The trend of Somali refugees returning from Kenya to border towns of Lower and Middle Juba regions decreased slightly over the past two weeks with 740 people arriving in the border town of Dholey compared to 810 during the first two weeks of February.

Armed clashes between Al Shabaab militias and anti-Al Shabaab forces continued in Diif displacing an unconfirmed number of residents. A significant number of these IDPs in Diif corridors are 'pastoral dropouts' whose livelihood support system had been lost during the recent clashes between TFG allied forces and against Al Shabaab. The majority of residents moved to Dholey, while some crossed the border to Kenya.



- Four IDP women were injured and a 17 year old girl was killed by two Al Shabaab militias when they were attending a party in Lafole IDP camp in Farjano village in Kismaayo town, Lower Juba region. The women were attacked by two Al Shabaab militias who tried to stop the party.²⁷ (13 March)
- The brother of a member of the Transitional Federal Parliament was assassinated by an Al Shabaab militiaman in front of Hormud Telecommunication Centre in Baidoa district of Bay region.²⁸ (11 March)
- An IDP man was physically assaulted by Al Shabaab militants patrolling in the Komon IDP settlement in Kismaayo, Lower Juba region.²⁹(11 March)
- Three boys were reportedly shot and killed after Al Shabaab militia opened fire on a group of teenagers who had been spotted playing football in Jilib district of Middle Juba region.³⁰ (6 March)
- Four civilians, including a 16-year old boy were killed and another injured after their boat was targeted by unidentified aircraft while they were sailing off the coast of Kudhaa village. The report indicates that the passengers were targeted for failing to identify themselves.³¹ (6 March)
- Two women were reportedly gang raped by unidentified bandits in the outskirts of Abodiley settlements, located 20 km from Diif town.³² (5 March)

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- ¹ Reuters, Suicide bomber kills 4 at Somali presidential palace, 14 March, available at <http://af.reuters.com/article/somaliaNews/idAFL5E8EE1QK20120314?sp=true>
- ² AFP, *Many dead in Somalia Islamist attacks on Ethiopian troops*, 10 March, available at <http://www.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/03/10/199773.html>
- ³ Report by IASC protection cluster partner received on 7 March 2012
- ⁴ Reuters, *Suicide bomber kills 4 at Somali presidential palace*, 7 wounded ,14 March , available at <http://af.reuters.com/article/somaliaNews/idAFL5E8EE1QK20120314?sp=true>
- ⁵ Report received from IASC Protection Cluster Partner, 10 March 2012
- ⁶ Report received from IASC Protection Cluster Partner, 10 March 2012
- ⁷ Report recorded by organization conducting monitoring in Somalia. Source name with-held.
- ⁸ Report received from IASC Protection Cluster Partner, 6 March 2012
- ⁹ Report by IASC protection cluster partner received on 14 March 2012
- Report recorded by organization conducting security analysis in Somalia. Source name withheld
- ¹⁰ Report by IASC protection cluster partner received on 14 March 2012
- ¹¹ Report received from IASC Protection Cluster Partner, 6 March 2012
- ¹² Report by IASC protection cluster partner received on 8 March 2012
- ¹³ Reuters, *Rebel, army clashes kill nine in Somalia's Puntland*, 3 March available at <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/03/03/somalia-conflict-idUSL5E8E308T201203>
- ¹⁴ Somaliareport, *Galmudug Administration Lifts Ban on Agencies*, 14 March, available at http://somalireport.com/index.php/post/3068/Galmudug_Administration_Lifts_Ban_on_Agencies
- ¹⁵ Report received from IASC Protection Cluster Partner, 6 March 2012
- ¹⁶ Report received from IASC Protection Cluster Partner, 5 March 2012
- Puntland Police Shutdown Radio station, Seize Equipments and Detain Somaliweyne, Radio Director in the town of Bossasso, 4 March, available at http://www.somaliweyn.org/pages/news/March_12/4March5.html
- ¹⁷ Somali report, *TFG Forms New Administration in Hiiraan* ,11 March , available at http://somalireport.com/index.php/post/3054/TFG_Forms_New_Administration_in_Hiiraan
- ¹⁸ All Africa, *Somalia: Gunmen Seize WFP Aid Truck in Central Somalia* ,11 March , available at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201203110196.html>
- ¹⁹ Report recorded by organization conducting monitoring in Somalia. Source name with-held.
- ²⁰ ibid
- ²¹ Raxanreeb, *Al Shabab shells IDPs camp, 7 wounded* , 11 March , available at <http://www.raxanreeb.com/2012/03/somalia-al-shabab-shells-idps-camp-7-wounded/>
- ²² IRIN, *Somalia, Thousands displaced by fighting in Gedo*, 15 March, available at <http://reliefweb.int/node/483172>
- ²³ Report by IASC protection cluster partner received on 14 March 2012
- ²⁴ All Africa, *The Fight for Gedo Region Continues*, 12 March, available at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201203130157.html>
- ²⁵ Report by IASC protection cluster partner received on 12 March 2012
- ²⁶ Report by IASC protection cluster partner received on 7 March 2012
- ²⁷ Report by IASC protection cluster partner received on 14 March 2012
- ²⁸ Report by IASC protection cluster partner received on 14 March 2012
- ²⁹ Report by IASC protection cluster partner received on 11 March 2012
- ³⁰ Report by IASC protection cluster partner received on 7 March 2012
- ³¹ Report by IASC protection cluster partner received on 7 March 2012
- ³² Report by IASC protection cluster partner received on 6 March 2012