Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute (PKSOI) Peace Operations Estimate – AMISOM/UNSOM/UNSOS

**African Union Mission in Somalia
United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia
United Nations Support Office in Somalia
(updated 25 April 2018)**

Link to CIA World Fact Book (Somalia)
Link to AMISOM Website
Link to UNSOM Website
Link to UNSOS Website

Executive Summary

Despite the February 2017 election of a new president, Somalia remains one of the most fragile states in the world. It remains vulnerable to terrorism and criminal entities and activities, as well as crippling food insecurity and significant population displacement. **Major considerations include:**

• Most analysts—and many of the AMISOM contingent commanders—do not believe the Somali National Army (SNA) capable of providing adequate national security by 2020 (which is the date of the UN-mandated AMISOM withdrawal). They express concern that *al-Shabaab* will regain ground in a premature AMISOM drawdown. Where troop and police contributing countries (T/PCCs) have already commenced reductions, such as in those areas formerly controlled by Ethiopian forces, the fear of *al-Shabaab* re-emergence appear legitimate. Therefore, while the professional performance of some AMISOM troops is problematic, "they remain the only realistic option" for Somali security in the near-term.

• While the European Union (EU) and the African Union (AU) 2016's financial dispute (chiefly over the payment process for Burundi-specific AMISOM participants) appears to have been resolved, there remain challenges of adequate and timely payment of AMISOM troops in general, as well as other AMISOM expenses. Lack of payment—and a perceived lack of appreciation for AMISOM's efforts and losses—contribute to some expressed dissatisfaction among the various contingents. Additionally, the UN's overall peace operations budget reductions for 2018 created more demand on the AU to fund AMISOM and its operations.

- While piracy off the Somali coast—and worldwide—appears to be generally in decline, there was a small increase in piracy incidents in 2017. Therefore, piracy remains an obstacle to trade as well as humanitarian aid delivery. A UN mandate remains in effect that reiterates the obligation for the Somali government to address piracy. However, some observers suggest the relationship between the government and pirates is more complex, in that local authorities are often engaged with or supported by pirates.

- There are increasing tensions among the Somali clans and political parties as Somalia prepares to change its electoral process from a representative (clan-based) system to "one person, one vote" model by 2020. The recent "standoff" between the Somali Prime Minister and House Speaker negatively impacted the population's confidence in the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS), while some government leaders accused UNSOM personnel of "sensationalising *[sic]* political trends" to the detriment of the Somali political progress. However, in a positive move towards electoral change, Somalia's National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC) announced the success of its electoral boundaries workshop in April 2018.

- Other nations' engagement and intervention in Somalia—especially in a military context—has significant ramifications for global economic trade routes as well as larger strategic concerns for Africa. As an example, the recent Turkey-United Arab Emirates (UAE) "diplomatic spat" highlighted both countries' investments in Somalia that include, but are not limited to, Turkey's multi-year humanitarian efforts (and large military base) and the UAE's four-years old security cooperation initiatives with the FGS.

> *The UAE contributed training, salary, and equipment to the SNA as part of an AU program (and, perhaps, unilaterally). It ended the program in mid-April 2018, after Mogadishu's airport security forces seized a UAE airplane carrying several million dollars. The UAE claimed the money was for SNA salaries; the FGS claimed it was to bribe Somali authorities. In March 2018, Somalia referred the UAE to the UN for a "clear violation of international law" in that the UAE was continuing its construction of a military-capable port in Somaliland, a northern Somalia state that seeks secession.*

Mission Overview

1. Background. The UN—and the United States (U.S.) by extension—has an inconsistent history in Somalia. Somalia collapsed into anarchy after the overthrow of Mohammed Siad Barre's regime in 1991. By 1992, the UN formed **United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM)** [UNSCR 751(1992)] to provide humanitarian assistance. When the feuding clans compromised the delivery of the food, the U.S. authorized *Operation Restore Hope*, with U.S. forces dispatched to assist with the famine relief as part of the UN's **United Task Force (UNITAF)**. UNITAF transitioned to UNOSOM II in March of 1993. After the tragic events of 3 October 1993 (the deaths of 18 U.S. soldiers and hundreds of Somalis), the U.S. removed its troops. The UN withdrew all forces from Somalia by March 1995.

For the next 15 years, Somalia endured frequent humanitarian crises, a short-lived Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) mission (IGADSOM), an invasion by Ethiopia, and the eventual ascendancy of the Islamist group *al-Shabaab*, which seized Mogadishu in 2006. **AMISOM** was created by the AU Peace and Security Council in January 2007 and approved by the UN Security Council a month later. In 2010, AMISOM assumed the offensive against *al-Shabaab*. The FGS was established in 2012. In 2013, the UN established **UNSOM** [UNSCR 2102(2013)], a Department of Political Affairs (DPA) field mission.

2. Mandate(s). In August 2017, UNSCR 2372 (2017) renewed the AMISOM mandate until **31 May 2018**. This renewal included "the first ever" reduction in forces for AMISOM while transitioning security responsibilities to Somali authorities. A reduction to 20,626 uniformed personnel is to occur by 30 October 2018.

The current mandate highlights AMISOM's three strategic objectives:

- Enable the gradual handing over of security responsibilities from AMISOM to the Somali security forces contingent on the abilities of the Somali security forces and political and security progress in Somalia;
- Reduce the threat posed by Al-Shabaab and other armed opposition groups; (and)
- Assist the Somali security forces to provide security for the political process at all levels as well as stabilization, reconciliation and peacebuilding in Somalia.

It further elucidates AMISOM's eight priority tasks:

- Maintain a presence in the sectors set out in the AMISOM Concept of Operations, prioritizing the main population centres *[sic]*;
- To assist, as appropriate, the Somali security forces to protect the Somali authorities to help them carry out their functions of government, their efforts towards reconciliation and peacebuilding, and security for key infrastructure;
- To protect, as appropriate, its personnel, facilities, installations, equipment and mission, and to ensure the security and freedom of movement of its personnel, as well as of United Nations personnel carrying out functions mandated by the Security Council;
- To secure key supply routes including to areas recovered from Al-Shabaab, in particular those essential to improving the humanitarian situation, and those critical for logistical support to AMISOM, underscoring that the delivery of logistics remains a joint responsibility between the United Nations and AU;
- To conduct targeted offensive operations against Al-Shabaab and other armed opposition groups, including jointly with the Somali Security Forces;
- To mentor and assist Somali security forces, both military and police, in close collaboration with UNSOM and in line with the National Security Architecture;
- To reconfigure AMISOM, as security conditions allow, in favour *[sic]* of police personnel within the authorized AMISOM personnel ceiling, and provide updates on the reconfiguration through the Secretary-General; (and)
- To receive on a transitory basis, defectors, as appropriate, and in coordination with the United Nations and the Federal Government of Somalia.

> *AMISOM has no Protection of Civilians (PoC) task. However, the mandate does remind the FGS of its "…primary responsibility to **protect its citizens**..." and also "Urges the full implementation of the Force Commander's directive, in particular on the **protection** of children's rights…" (paragraph 29) and "Calls on the Federal Government of Somalia, the Federal Member States, AMISOM and UNSOM to work to ensure that women and girls **are protected** from sexual violence…" (paragraph 43). (emphasis added)*

In late March 2018, The UN Security Council renewed the UNSOM mandate with UNSCR 2408(2018) until 31 March 2019. The decision to extend "underscored the importance of the Mission's support to the Somali Government-led political process as well as the importance of its support to the federal Government of Somalia on preparations for the delivery of inclusive, credible and transparent elections" and "requested continued support for the Government's efforts to implement the country's National Strategy and Action Plan for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism in order to strengthen Somalia's capacity to prevent and counter terrorism." UNSOM is responsible for the implementation of the UN Strategic Framework Somalia (2017-2020) as well as a specific policing mission.

Among other UN mandates with respect to Somalia are UNSCR 2383(2017) and UNSCR 2385(2017). In early November 2017, UNSCR 2383(2017) renewed authorization for international naval forces to combat piracy off Somali coast for another year. In summary, the UN Security Council:

> …affirmed the primary responsibility of Somali authorities in the effort to combat piracy…(and)…renewed the call upon States and regional organizations that were able to do so to cooperate with those authorities and each other…(and)…commended the contributions of the European Union's Naval Force (EUNAVFOR) Operation ATALANTA, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) Operation Ocean Shield, the Combined Maritime Forces' Combined Task Force 151, the African Union and the Southern Africa Development Community, as well as individual States for naval counter-piracy missions and protecting ships transiting through the region…(and)…reaffirmed that the authorizations renewed in the resolution applied only with respect to the situation in Somalia and did not affect rights, obligations and responsibilities of Member States under international law, including the Convention on the Law of the Sea.

In mid-November 2017, UNSCR 2385(2017) extended the arms embargoes on Somalia and Eritrea until 15 November 2018, as well as providing: "authorization for maritime interdiction of illicit arms imports and charcoal exports, and the humanitarian exemption." It also extended the mandate of the Somalia and Eritrea Monitoring Group (SMEG) until 15 December 2018.

Another UN mission operating in Somalia is the UN Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS). UNSOS was established by UNSCR 2245(2015) to replace the UN Support Office for AMISOM (UNSOA). UNSOS is: "…responsible for support to AMISOM, UNSOM, the Somali National Army (SNA) and the Somali Police Force (SPF) on joint operations with AMISOM." UNSOS' most recent mandate renewal was UNSCR 2372(2017) (30 August 2017). Its period of existence is characterized as "open."

3. Deployment. AMISOM has four components: the military, the police, a civilian section, and a small maritime group. The AMISOM website reports a uniformed personnel strength at 22,126 (both troops and police), but that number does not appear to reflect the expectations of the most recent mandate. The website further reports: the largest of the uniformed components includes Uganda (6,223) and Burundi (5,432); Ethiopia (4,395) and Kenya (3,664) are the next largest components; and Sierra Leone (850) and Djibouti (1,000) the smallest density; with the Force Headquarters staff at 81. However, the numbers reported on the website have remained unchanged for the past year, and may no longer be accurate.

In contrast, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)'s 2017 report on Somalia indicated:

> …AMISOM's total troop strength is at 21,435 (Ugandan People's Defence *[sic]* Force 6,022, Burundi National Defence *[sic]* Force 5,073, Kenya Defence *[sic]* Force 4,046, Ethiopian National Defence *[sic]* Force 4,323, Djibouti National Defence *[sic]* Force 1,872 and FHQ 119)…

AMISOM's military component is tasked "to conduct peace support operations in Somalia and seeks to

AMISOM Deployment Status
(as of July 2015; no other deployment map publically available)
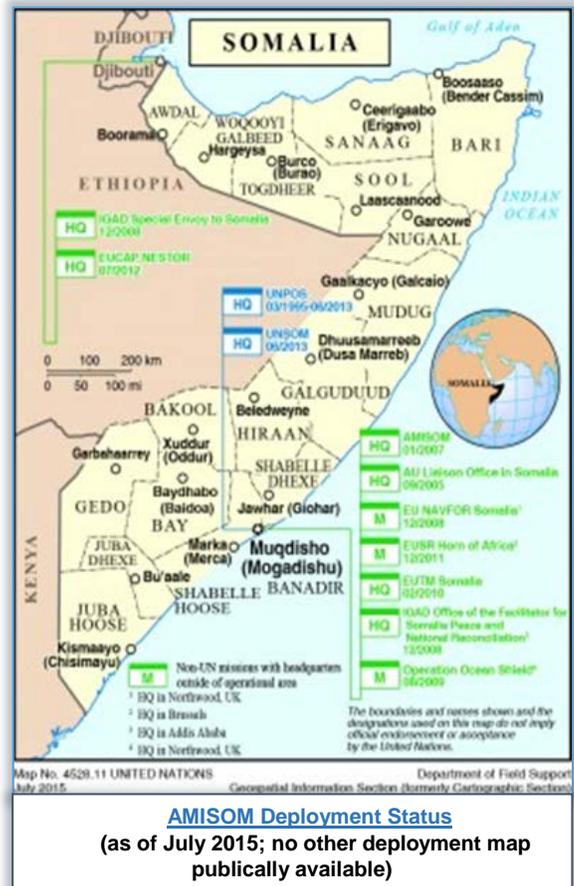
stabilize the situation in the country, create the necessary conditions for the conduct of humanitarian activities and an eventual handover of the Mission to a United Nations Peacekeeping Operation."

The TCCs include: Burundi Djibouti Ethiopia Kenya Uganda

The police component is tasked "to train, mentor, monitor and advice the Somali Police Force (SPF) with the aim of transforming it into a credible and effective organisation *[sic]* adhering to strict international standards."

The PCCs include: Ghana Kenya Nigeria Sierra Leone Uganda Zambia

There were varying rationales for each country to contribute to the AMISOM mission. One study suggested:

> *…there is no single or uniform explanation for why these six states joined AMISOM. Nevertheless, the most common official justifications based on assertions that events in Somalia posed a direct security risk to the TCCs and normative commitments to African solidarity were often less important than other unacknowledged or downplayed factors. Specifically, a combination of institutional benefits (related to the armed forces), political advantages (concerning prestige and partnerships with key external actors), and economic support (for individual peacekeepers and the domestic security sector) was generally more important in understanding why these six states became AMISOM TCCs. Joining AMISOM did help alleviate some regional security concerns but more important were the tangible benefits the decision brought at home to both the troop-contributing governments and their militaries.*

As directed by recent mandates, AMISOM T/PCCs began a force reduction in 2017, with complete withdrawal expected by 2020. Ethiopian forces, however, began to leave Somalia as early as 2016, with a corresponding decrement in Somali security. Yet, beginning in November 2016, and again in January 2017, the TCC contingent commanders requested international support of 4,000 additional troops for six months to conduct offensive operations. In February 2017, the AMISOM commander also requested a surge in troops, indicating the SNA was not yet capable to secure areas wrested from *al-Shabaab*. The TCC contingent commanders expressed similar concerns in their April 2018 commanders' conference in Mogadishu, suggesting "withdrawal of their troops would be premature" due to the increasing number of *al-Shabaab* attacks, "and a fragile political environment in Mogadishu." However, regardless of the contingent commanders' concerns, AMISOM is continuing its force reduction plans as part of its exit strategy from Somalia.

According to one report: "the US, which is a major financial and logistic supporter of [AMISOM], opposes further withdrawal beyond the 1,040 withdrawn last December, citing increased security threats in Somalia." Since 2007, the U.S. has provided more than half a billion dollars to train and equip AMISOM troops battling al-Shabaab.

The March 2017 U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM)-sponsored Justified Accord (JA) 2017 "focused on Somalia's troubled transition from reliance on African Union troops to a leadership role for local forces." In addition, AMISOM and SNA personnel both received training in recent months for "gender focal" positions, in order to ensure those forces understand and adhere to the UN standards on human rights and gender equality. In June 2018, JA18 will conduct a command post exercise "that brings the military partners of East Africa, along with participants from the United States, United Kingdom, and the Netherlands, together to exercise peacekeeping operations that

Justified Accord was initiated by the U.S. and Kenya in 1998. It is a multinational exercise of U.S., African and other international organizations to promote collaboration for peacekeeping operations in East Africa.

would be accomplished by a headquarters staff" and will be hosted by the Uganda Peoples' Defence *[sic]* Force (UPDF). It will use AMISOM and East Africa Standby Force (EASF) doctrine and procedures to execute their staff tasks, further enhancing their ability to work together during joint and combined

> *The EASF "is a regional organization whose mandate is to enhance peace and security in the Eastern Africa region" as "one of the five regional multidimensional Forces of the African Standby Force (ASF)." It consists of military, police, and civilian components. The ASF, itself, is "a standby force composed of forces from member states, prepared and readied for deployment" by the AU's sub-regional security structures known as the Regional Economic Communities/Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs).*

operations.

AMISOM personnel stand accused of poor performance and allegations of misconduct similar to those in UN missions. In some limited cases, those allegations may be exaggerated due to historical conflict between the Somali people and the national contingents that comprise AMISOM. A 2016 population survey and subsequent report (May 2017) described:

> … (population) concerns with several national contingents, in particular Ethiopia and Kenya. Both countries have a history of unilateral intervention and difficult civil-military relations in Somalia. Other contingents, such as those from Djibouti, were much better regarded, mainly because of their efforts to build community relations and provide services to nearby communities.

While the UN does not account on its database for AMISOM's allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) or any other misconduct, there are independent reports of AMISOM troops treating Somali women and girls as "spoils of war." The OHCHR report for January 2016 to October 2017 (in concert with UNSOM) indicated:

> From January 2016 to 14 October 2017, 178 civilian casualties (95 killed and 83 injured) were attributed to AMISOM. The Ugandan contingent, representing the largest contingent in AMISOM with 28 per cent of the troops, was reportedly responsible for 34.81 per cent of the casualties (38 killed and 25 injured), followed by the Ethiopian contingent (25 killed, 15 injured, two rapes, and one attempted rape), the Burundian contingent (14 killed and 11 injured), the Kenyan contingent (four killed and five injured) and the Djiboutian contingent (one killed and 10 injured). Thirty other casualties were attributed to AMISOM with no specific contingent identified as responsible (13 killed and 17 injured). The majority of the civilian casualties resulted from indiscriminate fire from AMISOM troops when their convoys were attacked by IEDs *[improvised explosive devices]*, landmines, or grenades. Other violations include extrajudicial killings, ill-treatment during detention, and sexual assault. Two gang rapes, one attempted rape, and six cases of severe beatings were attributed to AMISOM Ethiopian forces, and five cases of ill-treatment, including one death in custody, were attributed to AMISOM Djiboutian forces…AMISOM's slow response to allegations remains a concern. Furthermore, responses seldom include information on the concrete actions taken to investigate, including whether interviews with victims, witnesses or local authorities have been conducted.

Compounding the challenges of misconduct allegation accounting, the OHCHR reported:

> Due to security constraints and the complex operating environment, such as blurring identities between AMISOM and non-AMISOM forces when troops of the same country operate under different umbrellas, to the inability of sources to clearly identify or distinguish between actors, or to the absence of claim of responsibility, it is not always possible for UNSOM to attribute responsibility…Separately, Ethiopia and Kenya have troops operating in Somalia outside the AMISOM command. One of the main challenges to documenting and attributing responsibility for allegations of violations allegedly committed by AMISOM is the blurring of identities between AMISOM and non-AMISOM forces, when troops of the same country operate under two different umbrellas. AMISOM and non-AMISOM troops are often located in the same camps and conduct joint military operations.

UNSOM has no SEA allegation publicly recorded to date, though did face five "other misconduct" allegations between 2015 and 2016. UNSOS tallied only one SEA allegation (2017) but 14 "other misconduct" reports from 2015 to 2018 (thus far). Almost half of the 14 UNSOS misconduct allegations were category 1 (most severe).

> *"Other misconduct" may range in behaviors from traffic violations to extortion, embezzlement, and other abuses of authority. They are also categorized by levels (1 or 2), "depending on the risk such incidents would present to the organization."*

4. Casualties. AMISOM may have suffered over 3,000 fatalities since 2007, while another observer suggested "the death toll to date is estimated at well over 4,000." Either of these figures would make AMISOM "not just one of the most complex missions in the history of international peacekeeping, but also the deadliest."

It is difficult to determine AMISOM losses because, unlike most UN-managed missions, AMISOM does not publicly acknowledge casualties (purportedly for "domestic, political and national security reasons"). In addition, its record-keeping is inexact and family compensation is irregular. Therefore, most AMISOM casualty figures estimates are determined by extrapolation from media reports. However, even those reports are sometimes described as "completely false," such as a January 2017 report of 57 Kenyan AMISOM deaths that was derided by Kenyan authorities.

AMISOM suffered casualties from its commencement. According to one report:

> Daily casualties were incurred from snipers and ground assaults, with the majority of deaths caused by improvised explosive devices. Amisom *[sic]* was vulnerable, as it did not have any significant medical or communications equipment, nor accommodation and mine detectors. Not all troops had their own body armour *[sic]*. **Some died of malnutrition**…At least 80 Burundians were killed in lower Shabelle in September 2015; at least 140 Kenyans were killed at an AU military base outside el-Ade in January 2016…(emphasis added)

In July 2017, 12 AMISOM soldiers were killed and seven were injured in an attack. The most recent accounts of AMISOM fatalities were in March 2018, when three Burundian soldiers were killed in an *al-Shabaab* attack on their convoy, and in April 2018, in another *al-Shabaab* attack against AMISOM's Ugandan contingent, which initially claimed 59 peacekeeper deaths, but only eight were confirmed.

Fatalities from other UN missions in Somalia include the deaths of two Ugandan personnel with UNSOM and the 160 deaths of UN peacekeepers serving with UNOSOM (including 30 U.S. and 40 Pakistani peacekeeper deaths for the mission duration). Other-than-AMISOM casualties may also include those personnel who died during Kenya's unilateral *Operation Linda Nchi* (2011-12), during the unilateral operations conducted by the Ethiopian armed forces and Liyu police inside Somalia between late 2011 and January 2014, or during any of the current unilateral or bilateral operations conducted inside Somalia's borders.

Situation

5. Drivers of Conflict. The country's colonial legacy (specifically the artificial boundaries), the access need for resources and economic viability, and competition for power and state representation of clan families are all issues that must be taken into consideration in order to clearly address the agenda of peace-building in Somalia. Continued political discord within FGS institutions is impeding progress in political, security, economic, and humanitarian spheres. Debilitated governance structures and lack of security and services are encumbering stabilization efforts in areas wrested from *al-Shabaab*, allowing

the group to remain active. Further, Somaliland's secession and its territorial dispute with Puntland detracts from regional stability. In summary:

> Little suggests that al-Shabaab will be contained in the near future. The recent bombing in Mogadishu, the ongoing clan disputes, the weakness of the national security forces and the looming withdrawal of the African Union Mission (AMISOM) indicate that Somalia will continue to face significant challenges. Further, while Somalia managed to avert famine last year, food security needs are nearly double the five-year average with an estimated 5.4 million people in need of humanitarian assistance. The risk of famine continues to loom after four consecutive failed rainy seasons.

6. Significant Events.

a. Recent Events.

- **27 March 2018**. The UN Security Council renewed the UNSOM mandate with UNSCR 2408(2018) until 31 March 2019.
- **23 February 2018**. Mogadishu experienced two terrorist attacks.
- **25 January 2018**. The UN made a press statement to express appreciation for "Somalia's political commitment to security sector, economic and political reforms and the progress made to date."
- **24 January 2018**. Special Representative of the Secretary-General Michael Keating and Special Representative of the Chairperson of the AU Commission Francisco Madeira briefed the Council on the situation in Somalia and the Secretary-General's 26 December 2017 report.
- **26 December 2017**. The UN Secretary-General provided a report on Somalia.
- **4-5 December 2017**. The Somalia Security Conference and the inaugural Somalia Partnership Forum met in Mogadishu, Somalia.
- **14 November 2017**. The UN Security Council adopted UNSCR 2385(2017), on Somalia and Eritrea sanctions with 11 affirmative votes and four abstentions (Bolivia, China, Egypt and Russia).
- **7 November 2017**. The UN Security Council adopted unanimously adopted UNSCR 2383(2017), which renewed authorization for international naval forces to fight piracy off the coast of Somalia, for the period of one year.
- **2 November 2017**. The Somalia of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea submitted its report.
- **14 October 2017**. Over 500 civilians were killed due to a truck bomb attack in Mogadishu, attributed to *al-Shabaab*. According to one report: "Some investigators believe that the trucks did not reach their intended target—the heavily defended compound where the UN, embassies and AU forces are based."
- **12-13 October 2017**. The UN Secretary-General provided a report on piracy and armed robbery in Somalia; and the UN Security Council received the final reports of the Somalia and Eritrea Monitoring Group (SEMG).
- **13 September 2017**. Special Representative of the Secretary-General Michael Keating and Special Representative of the Chairperson of the AU Commission Francisco Madeira conducted a briefing on the Secretary-General's 5 September report on Somalia.
- **30 August 2017**. The UN Security Council adopted UNSCR 2372(2017), which renewed AMISOM with a personnel reduction of 500 uniformed personnel by 31 December 2017 (to a maximum of 21,626 persons).
- **9 August 2017**. The UN Security Council provided a presidential statement to express "grave concern about the threat of famine presently facing more than 20 million people in Yemen, Somalia, South Sudan, and north-east Nigeria."
- **13 July 2017**. The Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict on children and armed conflict in Somalia concluded its report.
- **22 June 2017**. The UN Security Council held a meeting on "preventing terrorism and violent extremism in the Horn of Africa: Enhancing partnership for regional efforts."
- **16 June 2017**. The UN Security Council held a meeting on the risk of famine in the conflict-affected areas of north-east Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan and Yemen.
- **15 June 2017**. The UN Security Council issued a press statement condemning the terrorist attack that targeted civilians in Mogadishu.
- **14 June 2017**. The UN Security Council adopted UNSCR 2358(2017) to renew the UNSOM mandate until 31 March 2018.

- **26 May 2017**. The UN Security Council adopted UNSCR 2355(2017), which rolled over the mandate of AMISOM until 31 August in order to review recommendations of the joint AU-UN review of the mission.
- **11 May 2017**. The London Conference on the future of Somalia resolves to support Somalia's implementation of its National Security Architecture (agreed to on 16 April 2017 and endorsed 8 May 2017).

b. Upcoming Events.

- **31 May 2018.** AMISOM may maintain the deployment of personnel until this date, as described in UNSCR 2372 (2017) and other mandates.
- **30 October 2018**. AMISOM expected to experience "a further reduction to 20,626 uniformed personnel" by this date.
- **15 November 2018**. Somalia and Eritrea UN sanctions (arms embargo) are due for renewal or expiration.
- **7 November 2018**. The UN mandates regarding piracy are due for renewal or expiration.
- **15 December 2018**. The SEMG mandate is due for renewal or expiration.
- **31 March 2019**. The UNSOM mandate [UNSCR 2408(2018)] expires.

Operational Environment (GPMESII)
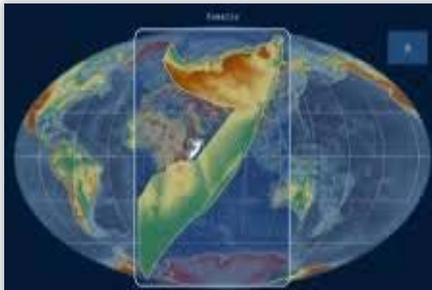
7. Geographic. Somalia is almost five times the size of Alabama, is slightly smaller than Texas, and is situated in a strategic location along the Gulf of Aden. This connection to the Red Sea, which leads to the Suez Canal, is the route for most commercial shipping to and from Africa. Moreover, having the second longest coastline on the African continent (and exceeding that of the U.S. east coast), Somalia is bordered to the east by the Indian Ocean, Ethiopia to the west, the Gulf of Aden to the north, Kenya to the southwest, and Djibouti to the northwest.

Somalia has a climate ranging from arid to semiarid, with a maritime semi-desert plain to the north which slopes up to the high cliffs of the KarKaar Mountain range. The south contains two prominent rivers – the Juba and the Shebelle – and some woodlands and plateaus. The northeast monsoon season is December to February, and the southwest monsoon is from May to October. The hot and humid periods (*tangambili*) is between monsoons. Heavy *deyr* rains across parts of northern and south-central Somalia can cause flash flooding.

8. Political. Somalia is a federal parliamentary republic. It gained its independence on July 1, 1960, when the British Somaliland joined the Italian Somaliland. Suffrage is universal at 18 years or older. There is no birthright nor dual-citizenship recognized; citizenship is conveyed by descent from the father only or after seven years of residency. Citizenship determination compounds the electoral process problems in that many of the population are without documentation, either due to displacement or lack of local government institutions.

In August 2012, after decades of civil war and other violence, Somalia adopted an interim Constitution and inaugurated the Federal Parliament with Hassan Sheikh Mohamud as President of the Federal Republic of Somalia. The vast web of clans and kinship resisted a centralized system and continued to challenge the FGS' political legitimacy and effectiveness. The September 2013's Brussels New Deal Conference launched the Somalia Compact, which provided an essential framework for the reconstruction of Somalia. It allowed for international coordinated support to Somali authorities for the promotion of an inclusive political process, security, the rule of law and socio-economic development.

Elections in Somalia are a unique process. It has not had a "one-person, one-vote" democratic election since 1969. The most recent electoral process began in October 2016 with elections for the 54-member Upper House of the federal parliament. Rather than direct elections (one person, one vote), each of the

six clan-based state presidents designated each of the 54-member seats of the Upper House to a sub-clan with two to four individuals elected as alternates. For the Lower House (or 'House of the People'), each of 135 traditional leaders nominated 51 clan members to elect each parliamentarian of the first chamber of 275 seats. The combined

In 2016, Somali political leaders agreed to abandon the clan-based electoral system for the "one person, one vote" system. Somalia's National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC) will make this change for the 2020 elections.

members of the two chambers (329 altogether) elected the new president in February 2017 in two rounds of voting.

Due in large part to AMISOM forces supporting local Somali police, the February 2017 polling (for the presidential election) was generally peaceful, despite attacks by *al-Shabaab*. Still, Somalia's Independent Electoral Disputes Resolution Mechanism (IEDRM) reported over one thousand complaints against the electoral process, including accounts of intimidation of voters and candidates and "vote buying". In the end, **Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed** (called "Farmajo," which means "cheese" because of a childhood affinity) was elected President.

Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed was considered both the "most popular" and "the least corrupt" of the presidential candidates. He was born in Mogadishu in 1962 to activist- parents affiliated with the Somali Youth League (SYL), Somalia's first political party. During the 1970s, his father worked as a civil servant in the national government. After his primary and secondary schooling in Somalia, he worked at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Somalia until 1991 and the ensuing civil war.

Arriving in the United States, he completed a Bachelor's degree in History from the State University of New York at Buffalo in Buffalo, New York in the early 1990s, then worked in the local government of Buffalo, New York, the State of New York at Buffalo, and Erie County. He also taught leadership skills and conflict resolution at Erie Community College during this same period. In 2009, he earned his Master's degree in Political Science (American Studies) from the University at Buffalo. (His thesis was titled: "U.S. Strategic Interest in Somalia: From the Cold War Era to the War on Terror.")

Returning to Somalia, he was appointed Prime Minister in November 2010 as part of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) Charter. He served until June 2011, resigning as part of the Kampala Accord, a controversial measure that was enacted to resolve political disputes within the TFG. His resignation was marked by civil protest, but he did not encourage further response on his behalf. Instead, he returned to Buffalo and his New York state employment.

In 2012, he founded the Tayo ("Quality") Political Party and returned to Somalia to announce his candidacy for president. He was eliminated in the first round of elections that year. He campaigned again in 2016 for the 2017 elections, where he was the "surprise" victor.

In March 2017, Somalia's 275-member parliament passed the proposed list of cabinet ministers. The ministers were sworn in immediately by the Supreme Court. The prime minister's own appointment by the president was controversial, because UN sanctions experts had previously accused him of paying Somalia's oil ministry nearly $600,000 to protect a 2013 exploration contract. By the end of 2017, the National Independent Electoral Commission began to register political parties as part of its transition to the "one person, one vote" model for the 2020 elections.

Meanwhile, regional and local governing bodies continue to exist and control various areas of the country, including the self-declared Republic of Somaliland in northwestern Somalia and the semi-autonomous states of Puntland and Galmudug in northeastern Somalia. These last two areas have a history of clashes, which causes population displacement. The "negotiated federalism" of the Somalia states (known as Federal Member States, or FMS) may also have created power centers that may resist the federal—and central—government.

9. Military/Security. Despite some achievements, the security situation in Somalia remains tenuous, due largely to the limited capability of Somalia's National Army and Police Force and the resulting inability to provide liberated areas with reliable security. As expressed in April 2018 by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia and Head of the UNSOM, "managing the politics of security is a prerequisite for success in building security institutions." He further stated:

Source as of August 2017

Obstacles to be overcome include domestic Somali opposition particularly from those groups whose patronage and power will be negatively affected; an ongoing fractious political landscape with competition between the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and emerging and existing FMS whereby the FGS insists that partners (both troop contributing countries as well as security donors) align their support to nationally agreed priorities and plans; urgent security timelines that deny real space and time for Somali politico-security negotiations; the dilemma emanating from restructuring security forces while actively fighting a war; and international approaches to security driven by domestic/homeland (rather than Somali) security priorities or by imperatives relating to other agendas and rivalries in the region.

a. State Armed Groups.

Somalia National Security Forces (SNSF), Somalia National Army (SNA), and Somalia Police Force (SPF). 18 is the minimum age for military service. While the armed forces also contain a small navy and air force, the bulk of the personnel serve in the army.

The SNA operates in concert with AMISOM forces to dislodge *al-Shabaab* from safe havens. It is infantry-heavy but support- and logistics-light. Currently it is still clan-based within units and lightly armed. In April 2018, one official highlighted:

> …the SNA is much less combat-ready, despite the continued efforts of AMISOM, the US *[sic]*, and other Western partners…It remains undermanned, poorly equipped, and ineffective. Officials tell stories of SNA forces training without firearms. SNA forces sometimes flee their positions at the first rumors of approaching al Shabaab forces.

The exact numbers of either the SNA (or the SNSF) are unclear. The 2017 World Bank/United Nations Somalia Security and Justice Public Expenditure Review suggested there are 40-45,000 total Somali armed personnel, with 17,000 of them serving in the SNA. The U.S. State Department reported only 11,000 to 14,000 soldiers, based on other international organizations' estimates. It appears that senior commanders enlarge the numbers in order to ensure proper payment and equipping for the active members. Many soldiers allegedly sell their equipment and/or defect to clan-based armed groups or even to *al-Shabaab*. Some have turned to crime (e.g., extortion at illegal checkpoints, armed robberies). The long-term goal is to grow the SNA to 28,000-strong national army and the police force to 12,000.
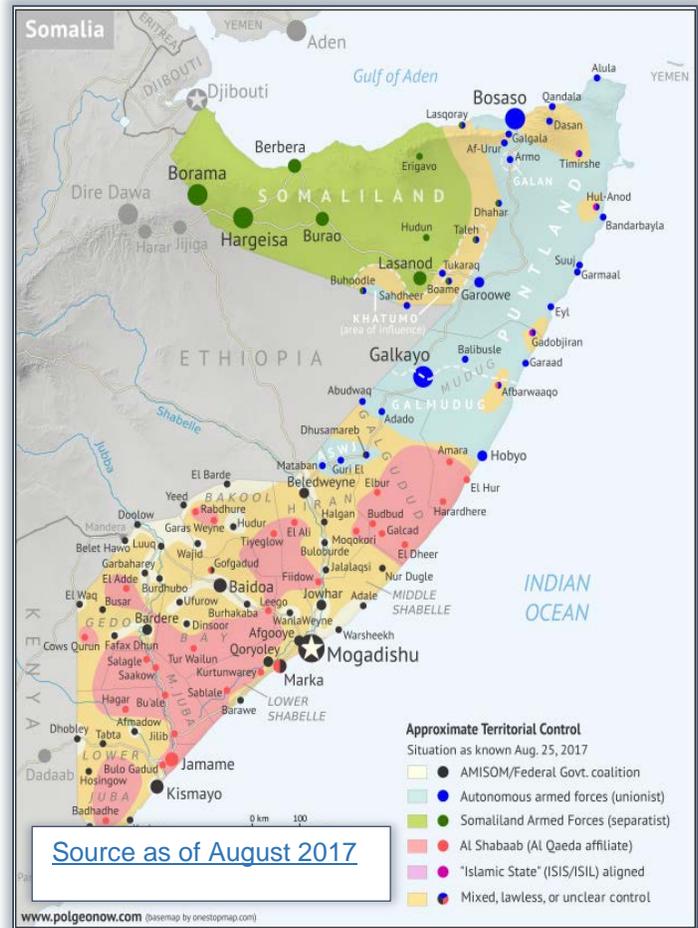
There are apparently still hostile divisions within the SNA, which were displayed during the fighting at the UAE Mogadishu training facility in April 2018. When the UAE and Somalia suddenly terminated their security cooperation agreement, the UAE personnel left the facility in the hands of some Somali forces in the midst of their training. Soon afterwards, other SNA forces attacked the base, possibly to loot the equipment. The two groups exchanged gunfire until the presidential guard secured the area.

The European Union Training Mission (EUTM) conducts training for the SNA, with ambiguous results. The U.S. has also provided tens of millions of dollars towards equipment, training, and education of Somali military and police.

The **National Intelligence and Security Agency (NISA)** leads the counter-terrorism efforts in Somalia, albeit with troubling issues with human rights. The Alpha Group (*Gaashaan*, or "lightning"), is another force of 600 security personnel based in Mogadishu. It was allegedly trained and equipped by the U.S.' Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), or the U.S. special forces, depending on source.

Other government-funded forces include the following: Somaliland's forces; Puntland's forces; Galmudug Interim Administration (GIA); and Jubbaland forces. They are aligned with the specific states or semi-autonomous regions in Somalia and are not available for operations within other Somalia regions— except when arrayed against each other, such as in the recurrent violence between Galmudug and Puntland.

b. Non-State Armed Groups. The distinction between state and non-state armed groups remains problematic:

> Non-state armed groups — especially clan paramilitaries — have successfully adapted to the re-establishment of the formal security sector by colonizing it. The multiple hatting of armed men in Mogadishu, as soldiers or police, private security guards, and members of clan paramilitaries is a good business model as long as external actors are willing to underwrite the formal security sector. But it makes for a weak and unreliable security sector that is not autonomous from more powerful communal groups.

While there are many small armed groups, generally for local or clan self-defense, the major non-state armed groups are:

Al-Shabaab. According to some sources, *al-Shabaab* controls about a fifth of Somalia and is considered by many as "the principal threat to peace and security in Somalia." The group emerged as the youth wing of Somalia's previous Union of Islamic Courts. Considered affiliated with **al-Qaeda**, the U.S. declared it as a terrorist group with between 7,000 and 9,000 members. *Al-Shabaab* has had reverses, but remains capable of targeting AMISOM, Somali security forces, and government officials with ambushes, IEDs, and small-level attacks throughout much of the country, including Mogadishu.

Al-Shabaab also conducts terrorist attacks in neighboring Kenya. According to the UN, the group recruited—or abducted—over 5,000 child soldiers. Many of them have voluntarily joined *al-Shabaab* for their own physical security and welfare.

Perhaps the most significant distinction of *al-Shabaab* compared to the Federal government is this:

> Al-Shabaab remains a viable local actor for the provision of basic services and, in particular, security and justice. To date, national security forces have focused on force alone and have neglected building political consensus and legitimacy within communities they serve. They are thus yet to demonstrate their comparative value to al-Shabaab in many areas. At present, al-Shabaab presents itself as providing Somalia's only effective justice system.

Daesh. Heavily-armed Somali Islamic State (IS) fighters operate in Somalia's Puntland overlooking the Gulf of Aden. Their leader, Sheikh Abdulqadir Mu'min, defected from *al-Shabaab*. In 2015, Mu'min video-taped a pledge of allegiance (*bay'a*) to *Daesh*. While the defection failed to split *al-Shabaab*, it did challenge its ideological cohesion and allegiances within the Somali clans. It is alleged that Mu'min recruits through kidnapping of children. In early 2017, *Daesh* elements moved away from the urban areas of Puntland and into the mountains, but continued its attacks in the urban areas. In November 2017, U.S. airstrikes targeted the area where Mu'min was allegedly located, but did not find him there.

> *Mu'min, a British citizen, fled the UK for Somalia, his native country, when he was sought for questioning regarding his role in radicalizing local Muslim youth. He is from the Ali Salebaan sub-clan of the Darod/Marjeteen, whose members inhabit the Bari region. In August 2016, the U.S. State Department declared Mu'min a "specially designated global terrorist" and placed him under financial sanctions.*

Clan Militias: Perhaps the most complicated challenge for the Somalia National Security Forces (SNSF) is Somalia's multitude of militias, many of which are "clan-based self-protection forces," who put clan loyalty above federal government loyalty.

Organized Criminal Elements (Domestic and Transnational): Pervasive and violent crime is an extension of the general state of insecurity in Somalia. Crimes are often brutal—sometimes fatal—and include kidnapping. Organized crime in Somalia exists at all levels of society and in many forms, the most prevalent being piracy. *Al-Shabaab* is allegedly financed through a diverse portfolio of criminal racketeering, illicit trafficking, extortion, and corruption as part of a larger transnational criminal enterprise.

c. Other International Actors. In the past decade, Somalia began reintegrating into the international community by establishing and developing ties with the United States and European Union among others.

Regional Neighbors. The political turmoil in **Burundi** is dangerous to Somalia for at least two reasons: the "spill over" of instability (due to refugees and other related discord) continues to have significant regional impact in general, and the Burundi government may choose to withdraw its forces from AMISOM earlier than currently planned.

Ethiopia has generations of influence and conflict with Somalia. In the more recent decades, Ethiopia's military presence in Somalia has been "invited" by Somali authorities or as a participant in AMISOM. However, many in Somalia regard the Ethiopian involvement in Somalia's security affairs with great suspicion as a strategic ploy to annex more Somali land. Ethiopia recently began the withdrawal of their troops from AMISOM early, allowing the militant groups to claim significant areas without opposition. While many experts believe the force reduction is due to unrest in Ethiopia, the government cited the "financial burden" and "lack of support" as the influential factors.

> *The Ethiopian government essentially consists of Tigrayan ethnic minority members. Protests in 2016-17 revolved around perceptions of partiality in the job market and public policy. The government allegedly detained some 25,000 people and killed several hundred others.*

Kenya has a significant number of Somalia minority in its population. It also has a long history of intervening or sending its security forces in Somalia. In more recent years, Kenya launched an offensive operation against *al-Shabaab* in Somalia codenamed "*Operation Linda Nchi*" (Operation Protect the Nation) in October 2011. While it was given as a reaction to a series of kidnappings, the scale of the operation indicates that plans for such an offensive had been underway for some time. In more recent years, Kenya's security agents in the northeastern country of Mandera began working with the Somalia

administration in Bula Hawo to help curb cross-border incursions by the Islamist militants. In October 2016, the Kenyan government commenced the building of a 30-kilometer security wall "to ward off infiltration by *al-Shabaab* militants," but suspended construction in March 2018 due to protests on the Somali side of the border.

Other Countries. **Turkey** is the second largest donor of humanitarian aid in Somalia. Sometimes referred to as the "Turkish model," Turkey provided Somalia almost USD$122 for infrastructure and water projects, hospitals, schools, and mosques, as well as its largest overseas military training camp. Turkey appears to be "explicitly competing" against the **UAE**, with the UAE providing security training and equipment to Somalia (the program has since ended), as well as a base in Somaliland and a presence in Puntland.

> *In March 2018, Somalia urged the UNSC to address the UAE's base construction in Somaliland as a "clear violation of international law "since the agreement between the UAW and Somaliland does not have Somali federal approval. The Somaliland base is "strategically located close to Yemen, where UAE troops have been fighting as part of a Saudi-led military coalition against Houthi rebels since 2015." The UAE also has military and security assets in Puntland, another semi-autonomous Somali state.*

> *While the U.S. and European countries provided Somalia more money—if not direct aid—than Turkey has to date, "Turkey has cemented its place in the hearts of the Somali people." One observer explained this fidelity:*
>
>> *Muslim organizations…operate on trust. They are based in-country. They focus on development and switch to emergency when necessary. They buy food-aid locally. They are pragmatic, quick to respond. They deal with people directly. And with much money flowing in direct from the faithful – obligatory charitable giving is one of the five pillars of Islam – they don't waste time and resources on paperwork.*
>
>> *In contrast…Western NGOs focus on ticking boxes. They operate out of Nairobi. They compete for funding for specific projects, which is not necessarily what people need. They usually import food. They do less on development. They are slow to respond to emergency situations. They concentrate most on proposal writing to capture more market share.*

China spends a great deal of money in Somalia between AMISOM contributions and business agreements (notably, a separate agreement with Puntland to conduct oil and gas exploration, both inland and off-coast). **Russia** may also have new interests in Somalia as part of its "Pivot to Africa." For example, according to unconfirmed reports, Russia is building a military base in Somaliland in exchange for "international recognition as a sovereign state" and military training for Somaliland's own "army." **North Korea** has a history of several decades of Somali military engagement, from the 1970s technical assistance to Somali against Ethiopia, continuing to 2017's alleged sale of arms to all parties of the Somali conflict.

> *Currently, Russia has bases in only nine countries: Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Syria, Tajikistan and Vietnam.*

10. Economic. Somalia is essentially an agrarian economy. The World Bank's 2018 report indicated:

> …over the past three decades, Somalia's livestock and crop subsectors have been buffeted by an increasingly fragile and degraded natural environment and more frequent and severe cycles of drought and floods. These factors, combined with insecurity, weak government institutions and a deterioration of flood control, irrigation, and transport infrastructure in the south-central regions, have led to a severe decrease in crop yields…Livestock and crops remain the main sources of economic activity, employment, and exports in Somalia. Agriculture's share of gross domestic product (GDP) is approximately 75%, and represents 93% of total exports, mostly linked to robust livestock exports in the recent pre-drought years. Sesame is

now the largest export among crops, followed by dried lemon, in the wake of the total collapse of banana exports. Despite Somalia's rich fish stocks, coastal fishing has remained small-scale and artisanal while foreign commercial vessels have enjoyed both legal and illegal harvesting offshore.

Somalia, despite the lack of a functional central government since 1991, has been able to maintain a robust informal economy where private sector enterprises, albeit small, have had notable successes. Recent studies on the Somali economy have demonstrated that remittances from overseas-based Somalis (Somali Diaspora) account for a significant source of revenue for Somalia, with perhaps as much as 40% of the population relying on them for income. However, the lack of consistent and secure banking structures force the population to use other banking methods, such as "*hawalas*," which are not recognized internationally.

> *Hawalas* "are informal nationwide arrangements known as money service businesses (MSBs). In 2013, UK's Barclays Bank cut ties with Somalia's MSBs in reaction to (accusations of funding terrorism)…Most other Western banks did the same either before or right after Barclays. These actions have made it very difficult for Somalians to receive funds, especially in a legal way."

11. Social. Somalia is a clan-based society. Some of the most common clans include Darood, Dir, and Hawiye. Over 60 percent of the population is under 25. Somali and Arabic are the main languages. Ten million people live in Somalia, 2 million of whom reside in Mogadishu. Due to the high conflict in the region, at least 10% of the population are internally displaced persons (IDPs). An estimated 1 million Somali refugees live in camps in neighboring countries, mainly Kenya, Ethiopia, Yemen, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Tanzania and Uganda. Somalia also ranks worst in the world in under-five mortality and approximately 1.7 million school-age children are still out of school.

a. Rule of Law. Respect for the Rule of Law at a national level in Somalia remains tenuous at best. While there are many codified ramifications for illegal behaviors, the FGS does not have the wherewithal—in either intent or practical reality—to enforce the laws. As reported by the U.S. State Department:

> Impunity generally remained the norm. Government authorities took minimal steps to prosecute and punish officials who committed violations, particularly military and police officials accused of committing rape, killings, clan violence, and extortion.

Despite several U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)-facilitated peace forums, the judicial and detention systems remain broken and corrupt, with justice still served at local institutional levels only. However, a landmark ruling in Somalia's Puntland state saw five men sentenced to prison terms for gang raping a teenage girl and badly beating up another. It is precedent-setting in a country where sexual violence is rarely documented.

b. Human Rights. According to the U.S. State Department's report: "In August 2016 the FGS president signed the human rights commission bill into law, but commissioners were not appointed at year's end. No action on the proposed truth and reconciliation commission was taken by year's end." Additionally:

> The most significant human rights issues included killings of civilians by security forces, clan militias, and unknown assailants, but the terrorist group al-Shabaab committed the majority of severe human rights abuses, particularly terrorist attacks on civilians and targeted assassinations. Other major human rights abuses included disappearances; torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment; arbitrary and politically motivated arrest and detentions, including of journalists; use of child soldiers; restrictions on freedoms of speech and press, assembly and movement; forced eviction, relocation and sexual abuse of internally displaced persons (IDPs); disruption, diversion, and seizure of humanitarian assistance; civilians lack of ability to change their government through free and fair elections; trafficking in persons; widespread violence against women and girls with little government action for accountability,

including rape and female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C); criminalization of same-sex sexual conduct; and forced labor, including by children.

Children are often the victims of violence and recruitment. In the Annual Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict (October 2017), AMISOM was identified as responsible for killing or maiming 42 children in one reporting period. The co-located Kenyan Defence *[sic]* Forces killed or injured another 11

> *Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C) is still widely practiced in Somalia and is not limited to any party, platform, or group. A 2011 survey indicated that "98 per cent of women and girls in Somalia have undergone some form of FGM."*

children; one additional child casualty was due to a U.S. air attack; and the SNA was considered responsible for another 146 children dead or injured. The report further determined that *al-Shabaab*, clan groups, and "unknown armed elements" accounted for a combined total of 625 child casualties. At the same time, the number of children recruited into armed groups doubled, with *al-Shabaab* listed as "primarily responsible." According to one report: "Al-Shabab *[sic]* has a large number of old fighters, so they want to recruit children to bolster its ranks. They have started abducting children from local schools, and those who do not want to join them have decided to flee to the government-controlled areas."

c. Humanitarian Assistance. The humanitarian assistance space in Somali is extremely dense, with much unmet need. According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA):

> The humanitarian crisis in Somalia is among the most complex and longstanding emergencies in the world. In 2018, an estimated 5.4 million people require assistance. Of these, some 2.7 million need urgent life-saving assistance. Over 1.2 million children are projected to be malnourished in 2018. More than 1.2 million people, mostly in the rural areas, were driven from their homes last year by drought and conflict. This brings the total number of the internally displaced persons to nearly 2. 2 million and constitute 40 per cent of those in need. Disease outbreaks such as Acute Watery Diarrhea (AWD)/cholera and measles continue to lead to preventable deaths across the country… The 2018 Humanitarian Response Plan for Somalia (HRP) calls for US$1.5 billion to reach 4.7 million Somalis with life-saving and protection assistance.
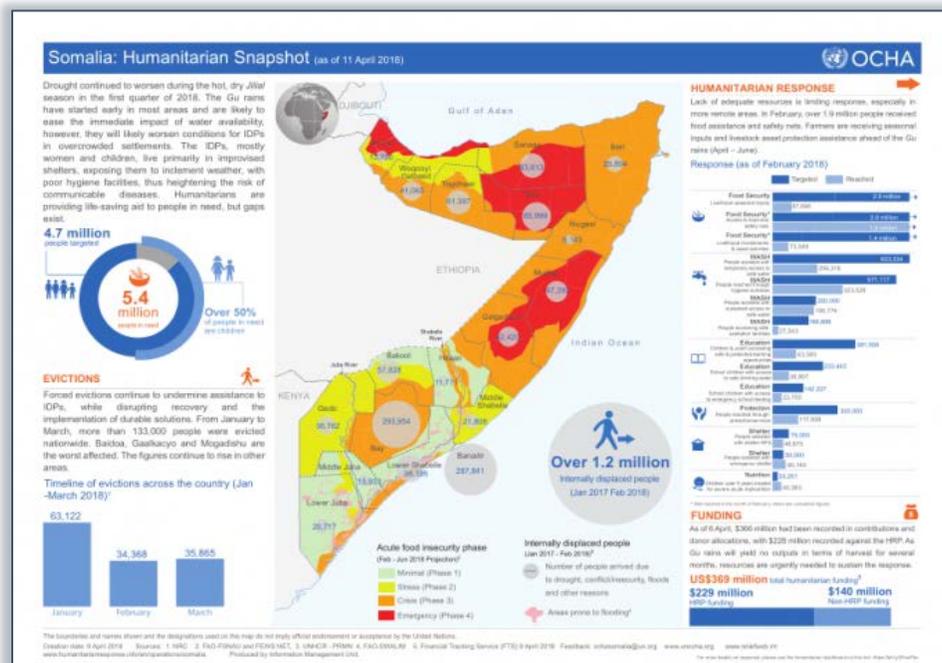
In order to assist the food insecurity in Somalia, in April 2018 the African Development Bank launched the "Say No to Famine", a Short-Term Regional Emergency Response Project, or STRERP. The program provides approximately $34 million "to provide emergency food assistance, fodder for pastoralists and medical supplies to about 800,000 Somalians, who are most vulnerable to the impact of the drought."

12. Information: [The public telecommunications system was almost completely destroyed or dismantled during the civil war](#) and few private companies offer limited local fixed-line service. However, private wireless companies offer service in most major cities, while charging the lowest international rates on the continent. Approximately 50% of the population has cell phones. There are only two private TV stations. Radio stations are the most effective means to reach large segments of the population, although the country has less than ten radio stations with one (Radio Mogadishu) controlled by the government. Internet use is low (less than 2% of the population).

The international Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) [Reporters without Borders](#), ranked Somalia as 168th in the world in the category of "freedom of information" and suggested:

> …Somalia is undermined by corruption, political violence, the central government's extreme weakness, and the fact that non-state entities control much of the country. Both the government and the rebel Islamist Al-Shabaab movement persecute journalists. Those who refuse to censor themselves are the targets of bombings or shootings by Al-Shabaab militants, or they are exposed to arbitrary detention and torture. The authorities often close down the media outlets of journalists who do not comply. At least four journalists were killed in connection with their work in 2017, and several others were injured in terrorist attacks.

However, the April 2018 [International Conference on Safety of Somali Journalists](#), held in Mogadishu, suggested the FGS is intent on improving its reputation regarding press freedom. The conference resulted in the establishment of a National Coordinating Committee of "government, the Civil Society and the Independent Media."

13. Infrastructure: Somalia's infrastructure remains in shambles after years of war, hindering AMISOM and other NGOs—as well as FGS—operations and humanitarian efforts. There are [6 airports with paved runways, two main seaports, and only 2500km of paved roads](#). In 2016, the European Union Delegation to Somalia and the [United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) donated](#) an assortment of equipment to the Somalia Police Force to help them in areas of bomb disposal and maritime and inland security. In 2017, the Government of Japan [donated USD$906,000](#) to the UN's Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action, in order to fund UNMAS work in Somalia, to include technical and awareness training to Somalia security forces and local communities.

> *[Since 2015](#), UNMAS has conducted or supervised the destruction of at least 19,000 Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) items and over 200 IEDs. In the past three years, [at least 3,000 civilians](#) have been either killed or injured by IEDs, in which "children accounted for three-quarters of all casualties caused by unexploded ordnance last year."*

In 2016, the African Development Bank approved the [Somalia Infrastructure Fund (SIF)](#) as one of the financing windows under the Somalia Development and Reconstruction Facility (SDRF) of the [Somali Compact, 2014-2016](#) (often referred to as Somalia's "New Deal"). Always underfunded, it was intended to focus on rehabilitation and development of infrastructure with related skills development and institutional capacity building. The [New Partnership for Somalia](#) (from the 2017 London Conference) and the [UN Strategic Framework Somalia (2017-2020)](#) includes infrastructure development goals.

Peace Operations Functions

14. Command and Control. AMISOM leadership is as follows:

- **Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission**: Ambassador [Francisco Caetano Jose Madeira](#) (Mozambique)
- **Deputy Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission**: [Honorable Lydia Wanyoto Mutende](#) (Uganda)

- **Force Commander**: Lieutenant General Jim Beesigye Owoyesigire (Uganda)
- **Police Commissioner:** Brigadier General Anand Pillay (South Africa)

UNSOM leadership includes the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General (SRSG), Michael Keating (United Kingdom, UK) and supported by two Deputy Special Representatives: Raisedon Zenenga and Peter de Clerq (who is also the UN Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia). **UNSOS** is led by Lisa Filipetto (Australia).

15. Intelligence. A secure tactical radio network, signal intelligence and reconnaissance Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) have enabled AMISOM to prevail over *al-Shabaab* in many—but not all—areas. In many cases, bilateral partners have provided such capabilities, together with necessary training.

AMISOM has relied on Somali Army forces for local, human intelligence, although the reliability and quality of this intelligence is poor. AMISOM has also benefited from an UN-supported information campaign that has contributed to reversing a defeatist international and regional media narrative about Somalia.

In 2016, there were reports of a U.S. intelligence apparatus deployed in Somalia in support of AMISOM. In 2017, the U.S. committed to providing a contractor-owned and -operated UAV surveillance system to AMISOM.

16. Operations. Within the operational direction of the Force Commander, contingent and battalion commanders have a high degree of autonomy to pursue tactical objectives in their respective areas of operation. In addition, AMISOM operations on the ground have minimal management from AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa.

AMISOM and government forces have limited capacity to conduct stability operations which threatens the security gains in areas recovered from *al-Shabaab*. According to a recent report:

> Both the AMISOM and Somali National Army (SNA) forces also suffer from operating dispersed bases over a wide area. They have struggled to hold the positions and lines of communications needed to sustain this posture. They often occupy key positions to secure major populated areas, such as Kismayo, Beledweyne, Baidoa, and Dhusamareb, but do not hold the territory between these positions, allowing al Shabaab to operate and disrupt their communications. Moreover, they periodically withdraw from newly seized populated centers when pressured, allowing al Shabaab militants to return without resistance.

In April 2018, the Ugandan Chief of Defence *[sic]* Forces (UPDF) said of the AMISOM mission: "we cannot defend what we already have and neither can we effectively offend the enemy to degrade [its] capacity."

17. Protection.

a. Mission Protection. UN agencies and other aid groups are under constant risk of attack, as are AMISOM or other forces that attempt to provide them protection. It is difficult to ascertain how much of the AMISOM forces are dedicated to mission protection.

b. Protection of Civilians (PoC). While AMISOM has no specific PoC task, many tenets regarding "protection" of the population are included in the mandate, as well as in Force Commander Directives (reportedly). An OHCHR report recalled:

> In resolution 2010 (2011), the Security Council made its first specific reference to AMISOM's obligation to prevent civilian casualties during its operations, and called for the establishment of the Civilian Casualty Tracking, Analysis and Response Cell (CCTARC) to record and analyse *[sic]* the information gathered on

civilian casualties. Subsequent resolutions encouraged AMISOM to ensure CCTARC operationalization with the support of the international community…CCTARC was established in 2015 and has been operational, albeit with capacity challenges, particularly staffing shortages.

A 2016 survey and subsequent report (May 2017) described the population's perspectives regarding any AMISOM protection task:

> The majority of interviewees expressed their discontent with the results achieved by AMISOM, especially its failure to protect civilians against attacks by Al-Shabaab and other armed groups. Its limited results were contrasted with its decade-long presence in the country…Other citizens acknowledged the positive achievements by the mission and the difficult context in which it has to carry out its mandate… (and)…general distrust of the foreign presence that AMISOM represents… Finally, many interviewees testified about abuses committed by AMISOM forces, including sexual violence, arbitrary detention, incidents leading to the deaths of civilians and the discrimination against Somalis working for the mission.

There are no formal PoC encampments because there is no formal AMISOM PoC task. However, "IDP camps" flourish in many areas, particularly around AMISOM and other NGO operations and bases. Without real authority, some individuals have become "gatekeepers" to the encampments, often called "Informal Settlement Managers (ISM)." According to a report:

> …the ISMs now largely control access to the IDP camps as they have managed to position themselves as unavoidable intermediaries between the IDPs and external actors, including the local government and the humanitarian community. The system is described as 'arbitrary' and 'unregulated', and the ISMs are perceived to treat the IDPs in an erratic and unaccountable way, and some, even going to the extent of abusing the human rights of the IDPs. However…the fact that the system is not formalised *[sic]* or regulated by official, bureaucratic norms, does not mean that the ISMs operate completely arbitrarily. In-depth studies from eight settlements show that the system is deeply permeated by routines and work procedures, which build on broadly shared values and norms.

In December 2017, Somali authorities "destroyed 23 camps...displacing 4,000 households" and costing "over $200,000 of UN-funded shelters, sanitation systems and schools."

18. Sustainment. In general, AMISOM is funded through a combination of donations, voluntary contributions (to the UN-managed Trust Fund in Support of AMISOM) and the UN logistical support package managed by UNSOS. The EU essentially pays all troop and police allowances (and related expenses) within the framework of its African Peace Facility (APF), and unilateral country donations, such as those from the U.S. and the UK. However, AMISOM source and level of funding beyond 2018 is uncertain. In the first place, there is an increasing sense of "donor fatigue" among funding contributors, including:

> …diverging opinions over AMISOM's performance. Some agree with the AU that AMISOM has achieved its principal strategic goals, notably protecting the successive Somali authorities, securing two election processes and weakening al-Shabaab. Others, however, are more sceptical *[sic]* about AMISOM's added value and fault the mission for not taking stronger action against al-Shabaab, especially since mid-2015. At the same time, AMISOM TCCs see the stalled offensives in Somalia as being a result of the inadequate resources the overstretched mission has received. Apart from both sides playing the blame game, there is also a new policy stance among donors. They believe that providing direct support to the Somali security forces rather than AMISOM should be the ultimate objective, following the elections and the restoration of various governance institutions in Somalia.

According to one observer: "Post-Brexit, the UK will have less impact on the direction of EU funding, with other countries taking on a more prominent role that may have fewer vested interests in Somalia."

Secondly, the EU funding to AMISOM is arguably "disproportionate" compared to that provided to other African security concerns. Thirdly, EU member countries' "disparate interests" in the African continent is changing the EU focus, such a possible funding realignment to the G5 Sahel rather than to AMISOM. Finally, the ongoing U.S. interest in reducing its peace operations funding may also impact AMISOM resources.

Meanwhile, logistical operations are critical to sustain AMISOM units in remote locations and to support humanitarian assistance. In 2016, with UN support, AMISOM acquired access to a small (yet still insufficient) number of outsourced helicopters for medical evacuation and transport functions, an increasingly important feature as troops are dispersed over a wide area. Kenya deployed three helicopters for AMISOM in 2017.

UNSCR 2372 (2017) recalled "its request that the AU generate the specialized units set out in the annex of resolution 2297 (2016), in particular the Mission Enabling Units," and further stressed "the critical need to source fully functioning

and mission appropriate contingent-owned equipment including force enablers and multipliers as provided for in paragraph 6 of resolution 2036 (2012) either from existing AMISOM troop-contributing countries or other Member States…"
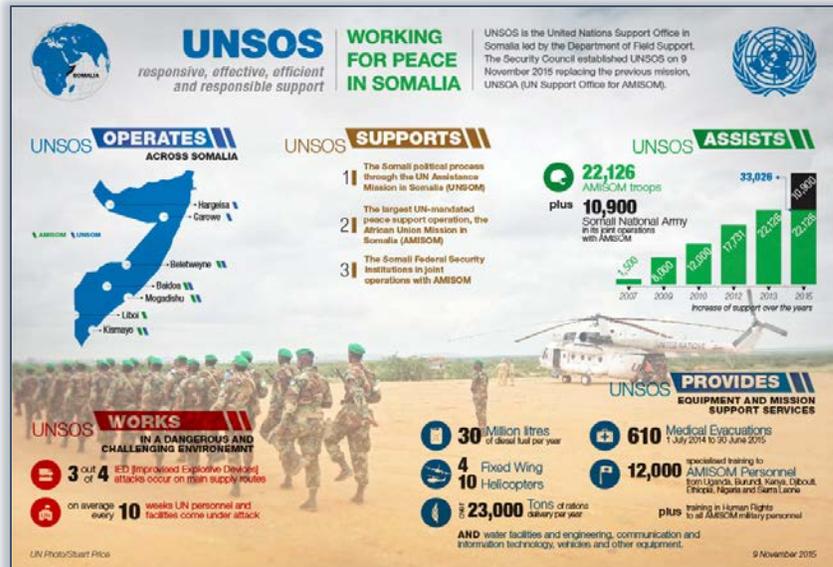
Issues and Considerations

19. Issues. The major issues confronting AMISOM in Somalia are summarized as follows:

- A conundrum exists for African leaders in that they do not want their population to believe themselves dependent on the West (former colonizers) for security support, yet they are—especially given the need for funding and technical equipment, such as intelligence and airlift capabilities.
- AMISOM's exit strategy depends on capabilities of Somali Army and government ability to cover ungoverned spaces.
- The Somali population is antagonistic toward AMISOM, in part due to historic enmities with the neighboring countries that contribute troops to AMISOM and in part to the perception that AMISOM is strictly an arm of the Somali government (although a popular president may mitigate that resentment).
- AMISOM's internal organization, which allows for sector autonomy amongst contributing troops, challenges operational coordination and discipline. In addition, the lack of an AMISOM rapid-response force and military air assets under the force commander's control limits the effectiveness of defense or counter-attack.

20. Considerations.

a. U.S. While the most recent presidential election offered some "hope" for Somalia, there is still significant opportunity for "back sliding" into greater chaos due to food insecurity and the still-viable *al-*

Shabaab network. Therefore, the U.S. government is maintaining some level of funding for Somalia— especially through its USAID programs. (USAID Fiscal Year 2017 Somalia Total was $348.9 million.) Meanwhile, the Somalia narrative regarding the new "air strike" targeting policy and procedures in country is problematic, in that it appears the U.S. cares little regarding civilian casualties. This perception was unfortunately reinforced after the August 2017 U.S. airstrike in which several Somali farmers were killed after an attack that was expected to only target *al-Shabaab* forces.

The substantial U.S. military support for Somalia—directly or indirectly—has been credited for *al-Shabaab*'s reduction in capability. However, it also has its detractors. In particular, some observers suggest that "a very narrow (US) counterterrorism policy…caused much damage in Somalia over many years and often contributed to deeper and lasting instability in the country."

b. UN, AU, and AMISOM. The UN and its international and multinational organizational partners must reinforce the successes of AMISOM and the other developmental efforts in Somalia while reviewing and reenergizing as appropriate those efforts with less success. Recommendations specific to AMISOM include the following:

- Reinforce troops training on counterinsurgency, stability operations, cordon and search operations, route security, the protection of civilians (despite its absence from the mandate), civilian casualty mitigation, support for humanitarian assistance, battalion and higher operations, civil-military operations, security sector reform, standards of conduct, human rights, law of war, force protection, and counter-IEDs.
- Ensure the policies and activities of Somalia's neighbors, particularly Kenya and Ethiopia, align with AMISOM's mandate in order to reduce the negative perceptions which fuel insurgency.
- Swiftly and accurately report AMISOM casualties to counter *al-Shabaab* propaganda and to meet the moral contract with AMISOM troops.

A more general recommendation for the UN and its international/multinational partners in Somalia include initiating the transition from emergency relief to development funding for sustainment. However, such transition depends on absence of any emergencies. Perhaps the most urgent task may be to keep Somalia in the world's view and to not consider Somalia "mission complete" too early. The UN must also consider the full implications—positive and negative—of putting its "imprimatur" on future peace missions that are manned and programmed by other-than-UN agencies.

c. Somalia. The foremost task facing Somali authorities is to provide for the delivery of basic services and governance mechanisms in towns recovered from *al-Shabaab,* and to develop an agreed national security strategy in order to establish an inclusive and professional set of national security forces. More generally, authorities should take more concrete steps to fight corruption, build competent institutions and promote reconciliation. Doing otherwise provides fuel for *al-Shabaab*'s propaganda. One means to address legitimate solutions may be to adopt people-to-people and leader-to-leader regional reconciliation as a process and mandate regional institutions, such as IGAD and the EAC, to function as the infrastructure or mechanisms for regional reconciliation.

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