

1/2017

## South and Central Somalia

### *Security Situation, al-Shabaab Presence, and Target Groups*

Report based on interviews in Nairobi, Kenya, 3 to 10 December 2016

*Copenhagen, March 2017*

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## Disclaimer

This report was written according to the EASO COI Report Methodology.<sup>1</sup> The report is based on approved notes from meetings with carefully selected sources. Statements from all sources are used in the report and all statements are referenced.<sup>2</sup>

This report is not, and does not purport to be; a detailed or comprehensive survey of all aspects of the issues addressed in the report and should be weighed against other available country of origin information on the security situation in South Central Somalia, including the extent of al-Shabaab control and presence, al-Shabaab target groups in areas with AMISOM presence, recruitment to al-Shabaab, and possible al-Shabaab target groups in areas under al-Shabaab control.

The report at hand does not include any policy recommendations or analysis. The information in the report does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Danish Immigration Service or the Danish Refugee Council.

Furthermore, this report is not conclusive as to the determination or merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Terminology used should not be regarded as indicative of a particular legal position.

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<sup>1</sup> European Union: European Asylum Support Office (EASO), EASO Country of Origin Information report methodology, 10 July 2012. <http://www.refworld.org/docid/4ffc33d32.html>

<sup>2</sup> One source found that the information provided was for background only and not for quotation. For this reason the source is not referenced.

## Introduction and methodology

The report at hand focuses on the security situation in South Central Somalia, including the extent of al-Shabaab control and presence, al-Shabaab target groups in areas with AMISOM presence, recruitment to al-Shabaab, and possible al-Shabaab target groups in areas under al-Shabaab control. Previously, in September 2015, DIS published the report “*South Central Somalia Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process*”<sup>3</sup>.

The report is the product of a joint mission conducted by the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) and the Country of Origin Information Division, Danish Immigration Service (DIS) to Nairobi, Kenya from 3 December to 10 December 2016. The purpose of the mission was to collect updated information on issues recurring in cases regarding Somali asylum seekers in Denmark. The terms of reference for the mission were drawn up jointly by DIS and DRC, in consultation with the Danish Refugee Appeals Board as well as an advisory group on COI (“Referencegruppen”).<sup>4</sup> The terms of reference are included at the end of the report. (Annex B)

Many of the organisations working in Somalia have their administrative headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya. In the planning phase of the mission, contacts were established with relevant sources who confirmed their availability in Nairobi during the tentative time period for the mission. On this background and due to security considerations it was agreed to limit the mission to Nairobi. In the scope of compiling this report, the delegation consulted 12 interlocutors in Nairobi, Kenya, during the mission, comprising representatives from UN and other international organisations, international and local NGO’s, and western embassies.

All the sources represent organisations or diplomatic representations actively engaged in S/C Somalia. All organisations are present in one or several locations inside S/C Somalia and travels regularly between Nairobi and Mogadishu or other parts of S/C Somalia. The interlocutors are in regular contact with staff on the ground in various locations in S/C Somalia. Only a few of the interlocutors had direct access to the areas under al-Shabaab control, and information from these areas is to some extent second-hand or anecdotal. During two of the meetings in Nairobi, a video link to staff in Somalia was provided by the sources.

Detailed descriptions of the situation in Somaliland and Puntland are excluded from the scope of this report. Both regions are mentioned where it is deemed appropriate. This report exclusively contains the information obtained during the delegation’s mission to Nairobi from 3-10 December 2016.

The sources interviewed were selected by the delegation based on the expertise, merit and role of each source relevant to the mission. In total 12 sources were consulted.

The sources were asked how reference might be made to them in the report and all sources are referred to according to their own request. The sources requested varying degrees of anonymity for the sake of discretion and upholding tolerable working conditions, as well as for personal safety.

One diplomatic source found that the information provided was for background only and not for quotation. For this reason the meeting note from this meeting is not included in the report.

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<sup>3</sup> Danish Immigration Service, *South Central Somalia - Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process, Report from the Danish Immigration Service’s fact finding mission to Nairobi, Kenya and Mogadishu, Somalia, 2-12 May 2015*. [https://www.nyidanmark.dk/NR/rdonlyres/E7BE9811-3CA0-4F86-BD27-749FB153B73A/0/Somalia\\_FFM\\_report\\_2015.pdf](https://www.nyidanmark.dk/NR/rdonlyres/E7BE9811-3CA0-4F86-BD27-749FB153B73A/0/Somalia_FFM_report_2015.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> The group consists of Danish Refugee Council, Amnesty International in Denmark, Danish Institute for Human Rights, Dignity, representatives of two Christian organizations (“Europamissionen” and “Åbne Døre”), the National Commissioner of Police and the Danish Bar and Law Society (representing asylum lawyers).

The sources consulted were informed about the purpose of the mission and that their statements would be included in a public report. The notes from the meetings with the sources were forwarded to them for approval, giving the source a chance to amend, comment or correct his/her statements.

11 sources have approved their statements. The report is a synthesis of these statements, and does thus not include all details and nuances of each statement. In the report, care has been taken to present the views of the sources as accurately and transparently as possible. Due to the reader-friendliness of the report the paragraphs in the meeting notes in Annex A have been given consecutive numbers, which are referred in the footnotes. The intention hereby is to make it easier to find the exact place in each note that is referred in the report. Furthermore, in some cases the report mentions a single source, whilst the attached footnote refers to several sources. In these cases the sources referred in the footnote have provided information that is similar or close to the information of the source, that is mentioned in the report, however, not entirely the same. All sources' statements are found in their full extent in Annex A of this report.

Attention should be called to the dynamic and volatile situation in S/C Somalia and the fact that the information provided may quickly become outdated<sup>5</sup>. Therefore, the issues addressed in this report should be monitored periodically and be brought up to date accordingly.

The Danish Embassy in Nairobi provided valuable assistance in the planning and execution phases of the mission.

The research and editing of this report was finalised by mid-February 2017.

The report is available on the websites of DIS, <https://www.nyidanmark.dk/en-US/> and DRC, <https://drc.dk/about-drc/publications> and thus available to all stakeholders in the refugee status determination process as well as to the general public.

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<sup>5</sup> For instance, the control of the city of Badhadhe has shifted hands twice since information were gathered for this report in December 2016, <http://www.shabellenews.com/2017/01/al-shabaab-recaptures-badhadhe-after-allied-forces-pull-out/>

## Abbreviations

Al-Shabaab	Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujahideen
AMISOM	African Union Mission to Somalia
ASW/ASWJ	Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama
COI	Country of Origin Information
DIS	Danish Immigration Service
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
EASO	European Asylum Support Office
ENDF	Ethiopian National Defense Forces
GIA	Galmudug Interim Administration
IDP	Internally displaced person
IED	Improvised explosive device
ISWA	Interim South-West Administration
KDF	Kenyan Defence Force
NGO	Nongovernmental organization
NISA	National Intelligence and Security Agency, Somalia
S/C Somalia	South and Central Somalia
FGS	Federal Government of Somalia
SNA	Somali National Army
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations

## 1. Security situation

### 1.1. The overall security situation

Several sources agreed that AMISOM/SNA has some degree of military control of most urban centres, and al-Shabaab is in control of, or at least has influence over, most rural areas in S/C Somalia and has a hidden presence in most urban centres.<sup>6</sup> Two sources mentioned that due to al-Shabaab's military gains during the second half of 2016, AMISOM had restructured its presence by abandoning smaller bases in order to consolidate at larger bases.<sup>7</sup> When assessing the resilience and capacity of SNA, four sources agreed that at the moment it is unrealistic for SNA to take over from AMISOM.<sup>8</sup>

It is difficult to make a clear demarcation of what areas are under the control of what group, and there exists grey areas of mixed or unknown control.<sup>9</sup> A UN source added that it does not make much sense to talk about AMISOM/SNA being in 'effective control' of a given city. The control situation is more nuanced and according to a Somalia Country Director of a humanitarian agency, al-Shabaab can infiltrate and move around in cities at night, which during the day are controlled by AMISOM/SNA.<sup>10</sup>

It was explained that S/C Somalia has been a highly insecure context for many years. The current security situation is characterised by armed conflict between AMISOM/SNA and allied forces, and al-Shabaab.<sup>11</sup> This includes airstrikes in rural areas targeting al-Shabaab, but also causing displacement; and a considerable number of terror attacks in urban areas with AMISOM/SNA presence.<sup>12</sup> In general, four sources highlighted that the security situation and conflicts of S/C Somalia should not be simplified to a black and white conflict between AMISOM/SNA and al-Shabaab as the situation and the role of the various actors are more complex and ambiguous.<sup>13</sup> The security situation is also affected by flood, drought, land disputes, and clan violence, all of which cause displacement.<sup>14</sup> Two sources mentioned that there are currently 1.1 million IDP's throughout Somalia.<sup>15</sup> According to a Somalia Country Director of a humanitarian agency, the security situation has seen little change the last three years and mentioned that it seems as if all actors are comfortable with status quo.<sup>16</sup> A Western source assessed that, as of December 2016, the security situation is significantly better compared to five years ago when al-Shabaab was dislodged from Mogadishu but that the picture over the last 12 month is more blurred.<sup>17</sup> In relation to this, a UN source found that the security situation has not improved compared to 2015 and deemed that in certain areas the situation has worsened.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>6</sup> UN Source (A):1, 2; UN Source (B):7, 8; Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:17; Somali NGO:29, 30; Independent Organisation:45; Anonymous Source:52; Western Source:58

<sup>7</sup> UN Source (A):1; Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:18

<sup>8</sup> UN Source (B):7; Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:17; Independent Organisation:45; Western Source:57

<sup>9</sup> UN Source (A):1; Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:17; Anonymous Source:51

<sup>10</sup> UN Source (A):1; Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:17

<sup>11</sup> UN Source (A):1; Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:17; Anonymous Source:51

<sup>12</sup> UN Source (A):1 (terror attacks); Independent Organisation:45 (drone strikes); Anonymous Source:51 (air strikes)

<sup>13</sup> UN Source (A): 1; Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:17; Somali NGO:29; Anonymous Source: 51

<sup>14</sup> UN Source (B):7; UN Source (C):13; Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:17; NGO working in Somalia:23; Somali NGO:29; Anonymous Source:51; Western Source:57

<sup>15</sup> UN Source (B):7; Western Source:57 (over a million)

<sup>16</sup> Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:17

<sup>17</sup> Western Source:57

<sup>18</sup> UN Source (B):7

As of December 2016, AMISOM is preoccupied with the ongoing elections.<sup>19</sup> The elections have contributed to the insecurity as they are seen as a breeding ground for grievances and extremism. According to a UN source, the combination of insufficient inclusion of some clans in the political process and a general lack of confidence in the deeply corrupt system, delegitimise the elections and make al-Shabaab the only benefitting party.<sup>20</sup> According to a Western source, the elections to Upper- and Lower House of Parliament are making an assessment of the security situation more difficult than usual.<sup>21</sup>

### *Retaliation*

During the second half of 2016 Ethiopian bilateral troops (ENDF) withdrew from the following locations: Tayeeglow, Garas Weyne, Rab Duuure, and Buur Dhuxunle (Bakool); Ceel Cali, Halgan, and Moqokori (Hiraan); and Galcad and Bulbud (Galgaduud). In all cases, al-Shabaab has immediately moved in and taken control.<sup>22</sup> According to a UN source, civilians in these areas have reportedly been subjected to retribution attacks, including torture, forced recruitment, and killings.<sup>23</sup> A Somali NGO concurred that the retaliation has been against persons accused of collaborating with the Ethiopian troops.<sup>24</sup> The pattern of retaliation is not restricted to these cases of ENDF withdrawals.<sup>25</sup> An independent organisation and a Somali NGO explained that it also applies whenever AMISOM/SNA withdraws and whenever AMISOM/SNA/ENDF takes over an area from al-Shabaab.<sup>26</sup> The attitude of the government and the human rights abuses committed by AMISOM/SNA e.g. when clearing an area is explained as a key factor in understanding the level of popular support for al-Shabaab.<sup>27</sup>

According to a number of sources, human rights violations are not exclusively related to al-Shabaab.<sup>28</sup> A UN source mentioned that e.g. extrajudicial killings and forced displacement are also taking place in government controlled areas. The same UN source added that family members of al-Shabaab fighters are perceived to pose a threat and therefore consequently forced to leave government controlled areas.<sup>29</sup> As an example, the source mentioned that a mother to an al-Shabaab fighter was executed in the summer of 2015 allegedly for this reason only. The source mentioned five other episodes regarding sanctions against al-Shabaab family members by the government/AMISOM,<sup>30</sup> and underlined that these examples should not be considered exhaustive.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>19</sup> UN Source (A):1; UN Source (B):7; Independent Organisation:45; Anonymous Source:51; Western Source:57

<sup>20</sup> UN Source (B):7

<sup>21</sup> Western Source:57

<sup>22</sup> UN Source (B):7; UN Source (C):13; Anonymous Source:51 (According to UN Source (B) Budbud is in Hiraan); Western Source:58

<sup>23</sup> UN Source (B):7; Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:17; NGO working in Somalia:23; Somali NGO:29;

International Organisation (A):36; Independent Organisation:45; Anonymous Source:51

<sup>24</sup> Somali NGO:29

<sup>25</sup> Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:17; Anonymous Source:51

<sup>26</sup> Somali NGO:29 (AMISOM/SNA/ENDF take over); Independent Organisation:45 (AMISOM/SNA withdrawals)

<sup>27</sup> Somali NGO:29; International Organisation (A):35

<sup>28</sup> UN Source (A):1; UN Source (B):7; International Organisation (A):35

<sup>29</sup> UN Source (A):1

<sup>30</sup> In December 2014, five wives of suspected al-Shabaab members were executed by the SNA in Bakool region, and on 21 December 2015, two civilians including one woman were executed by South West Special Police Force in Bay region, allegedly for being the mother of a suspected al-Shabaab member. On 14 September 2016, the Jubbaland Intelligence and Security Agency ordered al-Shabaab wives to leave all areas controlled by the Interim Jubbaland Administration and warned that a security operation would be launched to remove them if they failed to leave voluntarily. On 14 October 2016, the Baardheere Administration ordered al-Shabaab wives to leave within seven days and threatened to forcibly remove them if they fail to do so voluntarily. The District Commissioner accused the wives of providing information to their husbands and of being a security threat.

### *Clan violence*

The security situation is dynamic and displacement and casualties in S/C Somalia do not necessarily relate to al-Shabaab.<sup>32</sup> Businessmen with their own militias and other clan militias are also involved in the assassinations and many of these are erroneously ascribed to al-Shabaab and al-Shabaab may claim responsibility for attacks it has not been involved in.<sup>33</sup> Clan violence due to e.g. disputes over land, blood revenge or political control is widespread.<sup>34</sup> Intra and inter-clan armed clashes continue with limited success of reconciliation efforts.<sup>35</sup>

According to a Somalia Country Director of a humanitarian agency, clan violence is regarded as a higher risk for civilians than violence carried out by al-Shabaab. The same source highlighted that Somalia, in general, is an extremely violent society, and that the population is used to resort to violence as a response to disputes within both the private and public sphere. Disputes easily escalate into violence, and it is not unusual that business agreements or recruitment of employees escalate into violence and/or death threats. This high level of social violence affects the civilian population throughout S/C Somalia, where social violence has worsened due to the lack of rule of law.<sup>36</sup> According to an anonymous source, the security situation is particularly dire for single women without a clan network and women who are internally displaced. The existence of a clan network can offer an individual including a single woman, a level of protection. However, the same source found that due to both the current security and humanitarian situation it is becoming more difficult for the clans to protect their members.<sup>37</sup>

### *Road safety*

In general, travelling by road in S/C Somalia is not easy and is regarded as risky and expensive.<sup>38</sup> Main roads in S/C Somalia are only partly controlled by AMISOM/SNA and in some areas al-Shabaab is in full control of the roads.<sup>39</sup> According to a UN source, al-Shabaab controls most of the main supply routes in S/C Somalia.<sup>40</sup> Al-Shabaab, and in certain areas also other armed actors, have checkpoints throughout S/C Somalia and public transportation vehicles will be stopped and passengers questioned and/or taxed.<sup>41</sup> Day-to-day activities and business life for civilians, however, continue underneath the conflicts and travelling for locals is considered less problematic compared to profiled persons.<sup>42</sup> Travelling between AMISOM/SNA and al-Shabaab areas entails the risk of falling under suspicion from both sides of being affiliated with the

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On 29 July 2016, al-Shabaab abducted two women and a man in Ceel Garas village in Bakool. The victims were accused of supporting the government, as they are relatives of members of the SNA and South-West Special Police Force. The following day the SNA and South-West Special Police Force attacked the village and kidnaped seven women, who were wives and sisters of suspected al-Shabaab members. Negotiations between the local authorities and al-Shabaab resulted in the exchange of the seven al-Shabaab wives for the three SNA relatives.

<sup>31</sup> UN Source (A):1

<sup>32</sup> UN Source (A):1; Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:17; NGO working in Somalia:23; Somali NGO:29

<sup>33</sup> UN Source (A):1; Anonymous Source:51

<sup>34</sup> Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:17 (land disputes); Anonymous Source: 51 (land disputes, blood revenge, and political control)

<sup>35</sup> UN Source (A):1

<sup>36</sup> Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:17

<sup>37</sup> Anonymous Source:51

<sup>38</sup> Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:17; UN Source (C):13; Anonymous Source:51

<sup>39</sup> Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:17; Somali NGO:30

<sup>40</sup> UN Source (A):2

<sup>41</sup> UN Source (B): 8; UN Source (C):13; Independent Organisation:45; Anonymous Source:51

<sup>42</sup> Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:17; Independent Organisation:45

enemy.<sup>43</sup> Such suspicion can lead to punishment, kidnapping and interrogation, or killing.<sup>44</sup> For AMISOM/SNA, the lack of security on roads restricts the movement of goods on main supply routes. Therefore, AMISOM/SNA continues to airlift troops and some of the key life sustenance items. Especially the main supply routes from Mogadishu to Baidoa and Belet Weyne, respectively, are affected by al-Shabaab attacks.<sup>45</sup> According to a Somalia Country Director of a humanitarian agency, the roads from Mogadishu to Beled Weyne, Baidoa, and Kismayo, respectively, are partly controlled by AMISOM.<sup>46</sup>

## 1.2. The extent of al-Shabaab control and presence

Al-Shabaab is in control of most rural areas in S/C Somalia.<sup>47</sup> Al-Shabaab is not militarily present everywhere under its control and is described to rule by remote control through fear and intimidation.<sup>48</sup> According to a UN source, al-Shabaab has set up blockades around most towns where AMISOM/SNA is in military control.<sup>49</sup> At night al-Shabaab is able to move around in urban centres that during the day is controlled by AMISOM/SNA while AMISOM/SNA stay in their barracks.<sup>50</sup> Al-Shabaab can carry out hit-and-run attacks and assassinations everywhere, including inside Mogadishu.<sup>51</sup> According to an international organisation al-Shabaab's strategy is usually not to engage in direct military confrontation with AMISOM/SNA but instead engage in asymmetric warfare.<sup>52</sup>

Al-Shabaab is estimated to consist of 5,000-9,000 armed fighters, who are able to move across regions to engage in combat, but in order to grasp the strength and capacity of al-Shabaab as an organisation it is important to understand how al-Shabaab operates and that the organisation is more than its fighters.<sup>53</sup>

Al-Shabaab has an extensive network of sympathisers, informants/spies, and other collaborators throughout Somalia and several sources considered al-Shabaab to be everywhere in S/C Somalia.<sup>54</sup> The presence of al-Shabaab can be felt throughout society and al-Shabaab is assumed to have infiltrated Somali government institutions, the police force, and SNA, and according to a UN source even the international airport in Mogadishu is regarded as infiltrated.<sup>55</sup> Al-Shabaab has a rather sophisticated intelligence wing (*Amniyat*).<sup>56</sup>

Several sources also stressed that it is difficult to make a clear distinction of who is and who is not al-Shabaab. Members of al-Shabaab disguise themselves and cannot be distinguished from other locals.<sup>57</sup> In

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<sup>43</sup> Independent Organisation:45; Anonymous Source:51

<sup>44</sup> Independent Organisation:45

<sup>45</sup> UN Source (A):1

<sup>46</sup> Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:19

<sup>47</sup> UN Source (A):1, 2; UN Source (B):7, 8; Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:17; Somali NGO:29, 30; Independent Organisation:45; Anonymous Source:52

<sup>48</sup> UN Source (B):7; Somali NGO:30; Independent Organisation:45, 49, 50; Anonymous Source:51, 52

<sup>49</sup> UN Source (B):8

<sup>50</sup> UN Source (A):2; Somali NGO:30

<sup>51</sup> UN Source (A):2; International Organisation (A):36; Anonymous Source:52

<sup>52</sup> International Organisation (A):36

<sup>53</sup> UN Source (A):2; Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:21

<sup>54</sup> UN Source (A):2; Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:21; Independent Organisation:45, 46

<sup>55</sup> UN Source (A):2; NGO working in Somalia:24; Independent Organisation:46; Somali NGO:30; Anonymous Source:52

<sup>56</sup> UN Source (B):8; International Organisation (A):36

<sup>57</sup> Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:21; NGO working in Somalia:24; International Organisation (A):36; Independent Organisation:45

addition, elders in a local community under al-Shabaab control might also be regarded as members as al-Shabaab will use them, willingly or not, to rule the area.<sup>58</sup>

#### **Administration: taxation and court system**

Al-Shabaab is regarded to have a relatively well-functioning administration in areas under its control.<sup>59</sup> Al-Shabaab systematically collects taxes (*zakat*) throughout S/C Somalia, including in Mogadishu. Tax collectors from al-Shabaab are known, but are regarded as untouchable.<sup>60</sup> According to two sources, the taxation system of al-Shabaab is considered fairer than the government's but if a businessman would refuse to pay tax he will be threatened to do so.<sup>61</sup> Al-Shabaab also administers an unknown number of Sharia courts and their de facto jurisdiction is, according to a UN source and an international organisation, not restricted to areas under its control. As an example, a UN source mentioned that even in Mogadishu certain people go to al-Shabaab courts in Lower Shabelle, when the federal government's courts do not deliver fair verdicts, and added that rulings of al-Shabaab are respected in Mogadishu and those who oppose fear for their lives. According to the same UN source, the government has no effective legal system and a Somalia Country Director of a humanitarian agency characterised the official court system of Somalia a *non-functioning*.<sup>62</sup> Al-Shabaab's courts are according to four sources regarded as less corrupt, cheaper, and efficient.<sup>63</sup>

### **1.3. Information on the security situation in selected cities/regions**

In the following, the general pattern of military presence and control described above, applies in the understanding that, al-Shabaab has a hidden presence in urban centres ascribed to AMISOM/SNA control as well as the fact, that the security situation during night time in urban centres with AMISOM/SNA presence is unclear. Two sources mentioned that al-Shabaab can move around during night time.<sup>64</sup>

#### **Mogadishu**

Mogadishu is to some extent under the control of AMISOM/SNA and al-Shabaab has no military camps in Mogadishu.<sup>65</sup> The city is, however, under constant threat as al-Shabaab has reach inside Mogadishu, and the city is by several sources considered as infiltrated by al-Shabaab, including Mogadishu International Airport and Villa Somalia<sup>66</sup>.<sup>67</sup> A Somalia Country Director of a humanitarian agency deemed the security situation in Mogadishu significantly improved compared to the 1990's but added that in the last five years the picture is more blurred. There was a peak in security incidents in 2013, and the number has been falling since. The source assessed that the decline in the number of incidents is linked to a shift in tactics by al-Shabaab from quantity to quality. Previously, a lot of smaller attacks took place, for instance detonating hand grenades. Now, larger explosions are carried out, and the city has seen a rise in large scale attacks and complex attacks, for instance at market places or hotels. The same source considered the improvements in

<sup>58</sup> Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:21

<sup>59</sup> UN Source (B):8; Somali NGO:30; Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:22

<sup>60</sup> UN Source (A):2; Somali NGO:30

<sup>61</sup> Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:18; International Organisation (A):36

<sup>62</sup> UN Source (A):2; Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:17

<sup>63</sup> UN Source (A):2; UN Source (B):8; Somali NGO:30; International Organisation (A):36

<sup>64</sup> Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:17; Somali NGO:30

<sup>65</sup> UN Source (A):3; International Organisation (A):37

<sup>66</sup> Presidential palace and seat of government

<sup>67</sup> UN Source (A):3; UN Source (B):9; Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:19; NGO working in Somalia:25

the security situation as fragile.<sup>68</sup> An NGO working in Somalia similarly underlined a change of tactics in the attacks observed, as Mogadishu has been more affected by IED's the last year compared to previous years and more complex attacks are taking place.<sup>69</sup> A UN source mentioned that inside Mogadishu the number of attacks in the second half of 2016 has doubled compared to the first half of 2016.<sup>70</sup>

According to a UN source there are certain neighbourhoods where the government has little or no presence and during the night half of Mogadishu is not controlled by the government. It is not specified which armed actor there is in control of what neighbourhood during the night but the outskirts of Mogadishu are regarded as being controlled by al-Shabaab.<sup>71</sup> Several sources mentioned that despite al-Shabaab not having military presence in Mogadishu, al-Shabaab is still collecting tax and delivering verdicts in some legal disputes.<sup>72</sup>

As the capital Mogadishu is characterised by the presence of many high value targets, most assassinations and attacks (IED's, shootings, and car bombs) in Somalia, take place in Mogadishu.<sup>73</sup> For the civilian population the highest risk is being in the wrong place at the wrong time and become collateral damage.<sup>74</sup> Mogadishu has been the scene of several attacks with a number of civilian casualties but terror attacks against e.g. market places with no presence of high value targets are deemed unusual.<sup>75</sup> A UN source added that civilians perceived to be associated with the government and the international community are seen by al-Shabaab as legitimate targets.<sup>76</sup>

Several sources mentioned that politically motivated clan violence and criminal violence are other factors contributing to the violence in Mogadishu.<sup>77</sup>

According to a Somalia Country Director of a humanitarian agency, Mogadishu is dominated by the Hawiye clan but there are neighbourhoods in Mogadishu, which is dominated by other major clans, for instance Darood. The same source explained that if a Darood member should leave his/her neighbourhood, he/she would be in a fragile position.<sup>78</sup> According to an anonymous source and a Western source, Mogadishu has many different clans and the Western source added that it was not unusual to see Somalis of westernised appearance in Mogadishu.<sup>79</sup>

The high level of violence is especially difficult for persons from minority clans and IDP's as they are regarded extremely vulnerable due to the lack of effective clan protection.<sup>80</sup> According to an anonymous source, single women without a network in Mogadishu are particularly exposed.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:19

<sup>69</sup> NGO working in Somalia:25

<sup>70</sup> UN Source (A):1

<sup>71</sup> UN Source (B):9

<sup>72</sup> UN Source (A):2; UN Source (B):8, Somali NGO:30; International Organisation (A):36

<sup>73</sup> UN Source (B):9; Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:19; Independent Organisation:47

<sup>74</sup> UN Source (B):9; Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:19; Anonymous Source:53

<sup>75</sup> UN Source (B):9; Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:19

<sup>76</sup> UN Source (B):9

<sup>77</sup> Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:19; Anonymous Source:53

<sup>78</sup> Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:19

<sup>79</sup> Anonymous Source:53 (mix of all clans); Western Source:59

<sup>80</sup> Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:19; Anonymous Source:53

<sup>81</sup> Anonymous Source:53

A Somalia Country Director of a humanitarian agency added that an important businessman has his own militia and that many attacks in Mogadishu are business related, hence not carried out by al-Shabaab, even if claimed so.<sup>82</sup>

According to one anonymous source, Mogadishu is characterised by generalised violence, and civilians, even if not targeted, are at risk of being affected by generalised violence.<sup>83</sup> The anonymous source explained that civilians are normally not a target, but the violence can hit anyone who is in the wrong place at the wrong time.

A UN source deemed Mogadishu more developed than other regions.<sup>84</sup> At the same time a Somalia Country Director of a humanitarian agency assessed that Mogadishu would fall within days if AMISOM left the city.

### *Lower and Middle Shabelle, including Marka*

According to three sources, Lower Shabelle is characterised by clan conflicts and resource based conflicts and according to an anonymous source, there is a diverse array of actors in Lower Shabelle including al-Shabaab, SNA, clan militias, and AMISOM.<sup>85</sup>

According to two sources<sup>86</sup> the areas of Marka, Qoryooley, and Afgoye, have been particularly hard hit by violent incidents, which one of the sources regarded as being more linked to inter-clan land disputes than to al-Shabaab. An NGO working in Somalia stated that al-Shabaab has few activities in Lower Shabelle. Lower Shabelle has seen an increase in armed clashes with 35,000 displaced as a result.<sup>87</sup> According to an anonymous source al-Shabaab military operations have displaced 6,000 from Marka and Afgoye districts.

According to a Somalia Country Director of a humanitarian agency, Sablaale and Kurtunwarey are under al-Shabaab control and the urban centres of Afgoye and Qoryooley are under AMISOM control.

According to an independent organisation, it is regarded as difficult to travel by road in Lower Shabelle without acceptance from al-Shabaab.<sup>88</sup>

The control of Marka is disputed and uncertain.<sup>89</sup> According to a Somalia Country Director of a humanitarian agency the control of Marka has shifted hands a number of times in recent years. In 2013 AMISOM took over control, but al-Shabaab had an extensive presence in the surrounding rural areas. Since 2013 frequent take-overs by respectively al-Shabaab and AMISOM/SNA have taken place. In the autumn of 2016 AMISOM/SNA forces left positions due to lack of payment and clan tensions within military ranks. AMISOM later returned to a base at the outskirts of the city, but only to parade the urban centre during daytime and is not assessed to be in any effective control. As of December 2016, al-Shabaab has a permanent presence in the city, but does not have a strong control and has not set up a local

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<sup>82</sup> Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:19

<sup>83</sup> Anonymous Source:53

<sup>84</sup> UN Source (B):9

<sup>85</sup> Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:19; NGO working in Somalia:25; Anonymous Source:53

<sup>86</sup> The Anonymous Source also mentioned Awdheegle, which is located on the main road between Qoryooley and Afgoye. The Anonymous Source did not mention Qoryooley.

<sup>87</sup> UN Source (B):9

<sup>88</sup> Independent Organisation:47

<sup>89</sup> International Organisation (B):42; Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:19; NGO working in Somalia:25; Anonymous Source:53

administration. The current control of Marka is a mix between al-Shabaab control and a vacuum of power.<sup>90</sup>

The urban centres of Jowhar, Balcad, and other larger urban centres in Middle Shabelle are under AMISOM control but the control is unstable and al-Shabaab controls the rural areas.<sup>91</sup>

### *Lower and Middle Juba, including Kismayo*

In Lower Juba the control can be regarded as shared between the Jubaland administration and al-Shabaab, with al-Shabaab in full control of all rural areas and the Jubaland administration in control of some urban centres.<sup>92</sup> An independent organisation noted that the clan conflicts in Lower Juba, in general, have calmed down but that the security situation is still regarded as fragile. According to an NGO working in Somalia, it is not safe to travel by road in some areas in Lower Juba.<sup>93</sup>

Kismayo urban centre is regarded as AMISOM/SNA controlled and an international organisation and an anonymous source considered the city of Kismayo a relatively safe place. The international organisation added that as of December 2016 there have been no attacks in Kismayo for some time.<sup>94</sup> One of the sources stressed that the security situation is, however, fragile, especially for persons not from Kismayo. The same source stated that local civilians can move freely and carry out their day-to-day activities.<sup>95</sup> Two sources explained that the local administration and AMISOM in Kismayo is seen as being successful in controlling the urban centre.<sup>96</sup> According to an anonymous source, al-Shabaab is present in the outskirts of Kismayo urban centre and is in full control outside the city. The road to and from the airport, which is located outside the city centre is therefore exposed.<sup>97</sup>

In Kismayo the local authorities have carried out a large number of random arrests of persons under suspicion of being supporters of al-Shabaab. Persons, who travel from an al-Shabaab area into Kismayo are under risk of such accusations and arrest and are likely to face problems.<sup>98</sup> A UN source mentioned that Jubaland authorities regard family members of al-Shabaab as collaborating with al-Shabaab just by the fact that they are related.<sup>99</sup> An anonymous source assessed that a main reason why the Jubaland authorities have been able to keep Kismayo relatively safe is a rather strict control of new arrivals in the city through an extended network of informants. Newcomers, including returnees, are perceived as a potential threat.<sup>100</sup>

According to a Western source, people from Dadaab are able to return to Kismayo but it would be more complicated for Somalis who had been living in Europe to return to Kismayo.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:19

<sup>91</sup> Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:19; NGO working in Somalia:25

<sup>92</sup> Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:19

<sup>93</sup> NGO working in Somalia:25

<sup>94</sup> Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:19; NGO working in Somalia:25; International Organisation (B):42; Independent Organisation:47

<sup>95</sup> Independent Organisation:47

<sup>96</sup> International Organisation (B):42

<sup>97</sup> International Organisation (B):42

<sup>98</sup> Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:19; Anonymous Source:53

<sup>99</sup> UN Source (A):3

<sup>100</sup> Anonymous Source: 53; UN Source (B):7

<sup>101</sup> Western Source:59

For average Somalis road transport from Mogadishu to Kismayo happens, but it is difficult.<sup>102</sup>

An NGO working in Somalia mentioned that there have been conflicts over resources in Kismayo and an UN source concurred that 35,000 refugees returning from Kenya has put additional pressure on resources.<sup>103</sup>

An anonymous source mentioned that absorptions problems related to the return programme of refugees from Kenya are affecting the local government's ability to provide security.

The return program was temporarily suspended from 29 August 2016 to 16 October 2016 due to limited capacity of the Jubaland authorities to absorb the returnees, but as of December 2016 the process had been restarted.<sup>104</sup>

According to two sources, the city of Badhaadhe is under al-Shabaab control and according to an anonymous source Jamaame is also under al-Shabaab control. Afmadow urban centre is under AMISOM/SNA control and is relatively safe, but the outskirts are dominated by al-Shabaab, and five kilometres out of town al-Shabaab is in full control.<sup>105</sup>

Middle Juba is regarded as fully controlled by al-Shabaab.<sup>106</sup>

### *Hiraan*

According to an NGO working in Somalia, al-Shabaab is less active now than before in Hiraan but the region has been affected by fighting between sub-clans. Al-Shabaab has activities within the cities and restricts travel between cities.<sup>107</sup>

The control of Belet Weyne city is divided by the Shabelle River with the western part affected significantly by clan fights between the Hawiye sub-clans Jajeleh and Galje'el and the eastern part predominantly controlled by a Hawadle sub-clan. AMISOM is present in both parts but al-Shabaab has significant freedom of movement in the western part of the city, exploiting the abovementioned clan conflict. On the eastern side of the river, al-Shabaab activities are limited.<sup>108</sup>

According to a Somalia Country Director of a humanitarian agency Cell Cali, Halgan, Muqakoor, and Adan Yabaal are under al-Shabaab control and the urban centres of Bulo Burte, Jalalaqsi, and Beled Weyne are under AMISOM control.<sup>109</sup>

### *Gedo*

Several actors, including AMISOM, SNA, al-Shabaab, and local militias, are influencing the security situation in Gedo and according to a Somali NGO all of these actors have had a negative impact on the situation for the civilian population. The urban centres of Garbahaarey, Baardheere, and Luuq are under AMISOM control.<sup>110</sup> An NGO working in Somalia mentioned Doolow, Luuq, and Belet Xaawo as AMISOM/SNA

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<sup>102</sup> International Organisation (B):41

<sup>103</sup> NGO working in Somalia:25

<sup>104</sup> UN Source (B):11; Anonymous Source:53

<sup>105</sup> Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:19; Anonymous Source:53

<sup>106</sup> UN Source (A):3; UN Source (B):9; NGO working in Somalia:25; International Organisation (A):37; Anonymous Source:53

<sup>107</sup> NGO working in Somalia:25

<sup>108</sup> UN Source (A):3; Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:19

<sup>109</sup> Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:19

<sup>110</sup> Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:19; Somali NGO:31 (confirms Garbahaarey and Baardheere)

controlled but added that the outskirts are partly controlled by al-Shabaab. According to a Somali NGO al-Shabaab controls no big towns but all rural areas and roads in the region.<sup>111</sup>

According to an international organisation it is safe to travel by road between Garbahaarey and Doolow, but travelling south from Garbahaarey is more difficult and dangerous.<sup>112</sup>

### *Bay*

Most urban centres, including Dinsoor and Baidoa, are controlled by AMISOM/SNA/ISWA<sup>113</sup> and an independent organisation compared the situation in Baidoa to Kismayo, however more insecure. An anonymous source deemed the urban centre of Baidoa relatively safe. Rural areas, including Dinsoor district and the outskirts and hinterlands of Baidoa, are controlled by al-Shabaab.<sup>114</sup>

According to a Somali NGO, AMISOM is officially in control of Dinsoor but the NGO regarded al-Shabaab as being in de facto control of the elders of the community. The NGO did not regard Dinsoor as safe.<sup>115</sup>

### *Bakool*

Tayeeglow, Raadbhuure, and Ceel Cali are under al-Shabaab control. The urban centres of Xudur, Ceel Barde, and Waajid are under ENDF control. According to an international organisation, Waajid is, however, under al-Shabaab control.<sup>116</sup> The withdrawal of ENDF in the second half of 2016 has made further room for al-Shabaab taking control in the region.<sup>117</sup>

### *Galgaduud*

The security situation in Galgaduud is very blurred with several actors involved: Galmudug regional forces (GIA), al-Shabaab, and Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama (ASWJ). According to a Somalia Country Director of a humanitarian agency GIA has weak links to the federal government in Mogadishu and according to an NGO working in Somalia, ASWJ is a government allied militia but the loyalty is not without reservations. According to a Somalia Country Director of a humanitarian agency Ceel Dheer and Galcad are under al-Shabaab control and Dhuusamarreeb is under the control of ASWJ supported by ENDF.<sup>118</sup>

### *Mudug*

Mudug is marked by fighting between al-Shabaab and local forces. Galkacyo has been the scene of armed clashes between Puntland and GIA, which have led to massive displacements, including displacement of IDP camps (secondary displacement). However, as of December 2016, fragile peace exists.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> NGO working in Somalia:25; Somali NGO: 31

<sup>112</sup> International Organisation (B):42

<sup>113</sup> Interim South-West Administration

<sup>114</sup> Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:19; NGO working in Somalia:25; International Organisation (B):42;

Anonymous Source:53

<sup>115</sup> Somali NGO:31

<sup>116</sup> International Organisation (B):42

<sup>117</sup> Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:19; NGO working in Somalia:25 (confirmed Ceel Barde)

<sup>118</sup> Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:19; NGO working in Somalia:25

<sup>119</sup> UN Source (B):9

## 2. Possible al-Shabaab targets in areas with AMISOM/SNA presence

### 2.1. Targets within FGS, AMISOM/SNA, and international organisations

Most sources agreed that the main al-Shabaab targets are federal state officials, high-ranking politicians, clan leaders supporting the federal government, AMISOM, and SNA.<sup>120</sup> A UN source mentioned that al-Shabaab may also target cleaning staff and other low-ranking staff at government and AMISOM facilities.<sup>121</sup>

UN staff and staff of international organisations at all levels are also a target.<sup>122</sup> A UN source elaborated that anybody identified to be under a contract with the UN i.e. travelling regularly by the road to the airport of Mogadishu – and therefore assumed to be working there – can be a target.<sup>123</sup> The same source mentioned that dayworkers at government and UN facilities are not considered a target. It was further added that Somalis working for international NGO's, UN agencies, or the government are also at risk from other armed actors in society. As an example the source explained that a job at the international airport in Mogadishu is lucrative to an extent which makes you at risk of being killed by people who want your job. The source also knew of cases where national staff has been exposed to extortion.<sup>124</sup>

Three sources mentioned non-Somalis and officials from foreign states as a target group.<sup>125</sup>

### 2.2. Al-Shabaab defectors

Al-Shabaab defectors are also considered a prime target for al-Shabaab, as they are regarded as having sensitive information about al-Shabaab.<sup>126</sup> One source added that even a cook might have sensitive information, and the source did not distinguish between high and low profile members of al-Shabaab.<sup>127</sup> When asked if a defector could relocate safely to urban centres with AMISOM presence, for instance to Mogadishu, several sources pointed out that al-Shabaab has informants everywhere, including in Mogadishu, and would be able to find a defector.<sup>128</sup>

Sources explained that when al-Shabaab tries to track down a defector they use clan networks and bio-data collected by al-Shabaab on each individual member. Bio-data in this context is the father's name, grandfather's name, great grandfather's name, mother's name, name of village etc.<sup>129</sup>

A defector who is tracked down will likely be killed.<sup>130</sup> A Somali NGO assessed that no genuine safety for al-Shabaab defectors could be found in Somalia, and a defector would only be safe if able to raise enough money to flee abroad, e.g. to Kenya. High profiled al-Shabaab members might successfully turn themselves

<sup>120</sup> UN Source (A):4; UN Source (B):10; UN Source (C):15; Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:20; NGO working in Somalia:26; Somali NGO:32; Independent Organisation:48; Anonymous Source:54; Western Source:60

<sup>121</sup> UN Source (B):10

<sup>122</sup> UN Source (A):4; UN Source (C):15; Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:20; NGO working in Somalia:26; Independent Organisation:48; Anonymous Source:54

<sup>123</sup> UN Source (A):4

<sup>124</sup> UN Source (A):4

<sup>125</sup> UN Source (A):4; Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:20; Western Source:60 (westerners)

<sup>126</sup> UN Source (B):12; Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:20; NGO working in Somalia:26; Somali NGO:32; Anonymous Source:54

<sup>127</sup> NGO working in Somalia:26

<sup>128</sup> Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:20; Anonymous Source:55

<sup>129</sup> UN Source (B):12; Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:20

<sup>130</sup> UN Source (B):12; NGO working in Somalia:26; Somali NGO:32

over to the government in exchange for information, but such defection would have to be well arranged. The average al-Shabaab defector will risk being killed by government forces.<sup>131</sup>

### **Rehabilitation centres**

According to a UN source, there are a total of four rehabilitation centres for al-Shabaab defectors in S/C Somalia in Mogadishu, Kismayo, Baidoa, and Belet Weyne, respectively. These centres only accept low-profile defectors such as foot soldiers and tax collectors. Before being accepted to the program the defector has to undergo a security screening, which is conducted by NISA. This screening method is according to the same UN source not uniform and is undertaken in accordance with unclear criteria. According to a Somali NGO this screening entails a risk of ill-treatment.<sup>132</sup> As of December 2016, approximately 100 former members of al-Shabaab have been reintegrated into Mogadishu and Baidoa. The reintegrated defectors are monitored by NISA for two years and none of these have gone back to al-Shabaab. Some defectors have however, been contacted by al-Shabaab by phone and have been told to either return to al-Shabaab or become an informant.<sup>133</sup>

According to a Somali NGO, the youth residing in the rehabilitation centres are not actual al-Shabaab defectors, but young members of local gangs and militias as any al-Shabaab defector would be detained by NISA.<sup>134</sup>

### **Family members**

Family members to al-Shabaab defectors are in general not considered a target for al-Shabaab. A Somalia Country Director of a humanitarian agency regarded it unusual that family members of defectors would become targeted, but knew of a few cases within recent years, e.g. an incident in Lower Juba in 2014, where the wife of a defector, who had managed to flee, was injured in a shootout between the attackers and the defector.<sup>135</sup>

*Reference is made to Chapter 1 (Retaliation) for further information regarding retaliation against family members to al-Shabaab members carried out by AMISOM/Somali authorities.*

## **2.3. Journalists, human rights activists and NGO's**

Journalists, human rights activists and employees of NGO's might also be targeted depending on their activities and how distinct they criticise al-Shabaab.<sup>136</sup> A Somali NGO elaborated that it would depend on the context of each case. Al-Shabaab can potentially target everyone in these categories, but that does not mean that any person with such profile automatically is a target. It will depend on the circumstances. The source made reference to the fact that, in general, aid workers from NGO's are a target to al-Shabaab, but if an approval from al-Shabaab is obtained, the staff members of an approved NGO will not be targeted. However, the source stressed that NGO's affiliated with the US are a general target.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> Somali NGO:33

<sup>132</sup> UN Source (A):5; Somali NGO:33

<sup>133</sup> UN Source (A):5

<sup>134</sup> Somali NGO:33

<sup>135</sup> Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:20; Anonymous Source:56

<sup>136</sup> UN Source (A):4; Somali NGO:26; Independent Organisation:48; Anonymous Source:54

<sup>137</sup> Somali NGO:32

## 2.4. Business people

Some sources mentioned that small business owners, for instance persons selling tea outside government buildings, are not seen or targeted as government collaborators. However, the sources added that due to the fact that AMISOM/SNA frequents the area, such persons risk becoming collateral damage.<sup>138</sup> Another source mentioned that al-Shabaab has declared that anyone in proximity to government and AMISOM buildings are legitimate targets, and al-Shabaab has advised civilians to stay away from government and AMISOM buildings.<sup>139</sup> Two sources pointed out that businessmen perceived to be collaborating with or supporting the federal government are targets, but businessmen who do not work with the government and pay their taxes to al-Shabaab are not considered a target.<sup>140</sup>

## 2.5. Women

Women as a generic category are not considered al-Shabaab targets.<sup>141</sup> One source found that there is not a big distinction between men and women when it comes to risk of being targeted by al-Shabaab. It depends on their profile. An independent organisation assessed that, in general, women are less likely than men to be targeted by al-Shabaab in areas with AMISOM/SNA presence.<sup>142</sup>

### *Forced marriages in areas with AMISOM/SNA presence*

Information on the prevalence of forced marriage to al-Shabaab fighters differed among the sources. One source found that forced marriages, in general, are customary in Somalia.<sup>143</sup> Another source explained that most marriages in Somalia are agreed by consent; including marriages to al-Shabaab members. The source was not aware of forced marriages to al-Shabaab members.<sup>144</sup>

An independent organisation knew of reports of forced marriages, but the information had not been verified, and the source was not aware of any recent incidents of forced marriage.<sup>145</sup> Similarly, an anonymous source was not aware of any incidents of forced marriage to al-Shabaab fighters in urban centres. The source, however, would not exclude the possibility.<sup>146</sup>

## 2.6. Civilians

Al-Shabaab is regarded by an independent organisation to mainly attack high profile targets and according to a UN source, civilians, who do not belong to any of the abovementioned categories, are not considered targets.<sup>147</sup> A Western source concurred that it was not aware of any evidence whereby al-Shabaab is routinely and directly targeting ordinary civilians or returnees from the diaspora in areas with AMISOM/SNA presence.<sup>148</sup> However, as mentioned above, civilians who are “in the wrong place at the wrong time” could become “collateral damage”.

*Reference is made to the description of the general security for civilians in Chapter 1.*

<sup>138</sup> Independent Organisation: 48; Anonymous Source:54

<sup>139</sup> UN Source (B):10

<sup>140</sup> UN Source (A):4; NGO working in Somalia:26

<sup>141</sup> UN Source (A):4; Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:22

<sup>142</sup> Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:22; Independent Organisation:48

<sup>143</sup> Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:22

<sup>144</sup> Somali NGO:34

<sup>145</sup> Independent Organisation:49

<sup>146</sup> Anonymous Source:56

<sup>147</sup> UN Source (A):4; Independent Organisation:45

<sup>148</sup> Western Source:60

### 3. Recruitment to al-Shabaab

#### 3.1. The recruitment process

There is limited available data on the recruitment process to al-Shabaab, and the process is complex and should be regarded as a continuum of voluntary and forced, with combinations of incentives and propaganda in-between.<sup>149</sup> Three sources mentioned that the youth in Somalia have few possibilities regarding education and employment, which is an important factor when trying to understand recruitment to al-Shabaab.<sup>150</sup>

Al-Shabaab mostly recruits new members through incentives such as salary, social status, and even the promise of a wife in areas under its control.<sup>151</sup> A UN source estimated that 50% of the low profile defectors, who has been through the rehabilitation centres, joined al-Shabaab due to economic reasons.<sup>152</sup> Other reasons for joining al-Shabaab are peer-pressure, ideology, and indoctrination.<sup>153</sup> On peer-pressure a UN source gave the example that a person who has become a commander in al-Shabaab might have a pull-power on his friends.<sup>154</sup>

With regards to indoctrination, several sources mentioned that schools in S/C Somalia are religious and privately funded, which is exploited by al-Shabaab. Al-Shabaab visits schools, displays video material, and presents the pupils to al-Shabaab's interpretation of jihad and Islam. Furthermore, al-Shabaab imposes its curriculum upon teachers who have not sworn allegiance to al-Shabaab.<sup>155</sup> A UN source added that even in Mogadishu the government does not control the curriculum. A Somali NGO specifically mentioned that the presence of non-Muslim AMISOM troops is being used as a motive for recruitment as AMISOM is presented as infidels. Al-Shabaab also recruits through mosques.<sup>156</sup>

Al-Shabaab is in principle against clannism and a UN source indicated that al-Shabaab deliberately recruits from minority clans and appoints people from minority clans to administrative posts. Furthermore, people from minority clans might join al-Shabaab due to a wish for revenge over majority clans.<sup>157</sup> This might be a reason why, according to a UN source, al-Shabaab recruits new members following inter-clan fighting.<sup>158</sup>

Recruitment in urban centres not controlled by al-Shabaab does take place according to a UN source, but will take a different form compared to rural areas.<sup>159</sup> According to another UN source, however, forced recruitment does not take place in areas not under the full control of al-Shabaab. This UN source underlined that in these areas, al-Shabaab will influence potential recruits through preaching, incentives,

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<sup>149</sup> UN Source (A):5; UN Source (B):11; Independent Organisation:49; Anonymous Source:55

<sup>150</sup> Somali NGO:33; Independent Organisation: 49; International Organisation (A):39; Anonymous Source:55

<sup>151</sup> UN Source (A):5; UN Source (B): 11; Somali NGO:33; Independent Organisation:49; International Organisation (A):39

<sup>152</sup> UN Source (A):5

<sup>153</sup> UN Source (A):5; UN Source (B):11; Somali NGO:33; Independent Organisation:49

<sup>154</sup> UN Source (B):11

<sup>155</sup> UN Source (A):5; UN Source (B):11; Somali NGO:33; International Organisation (A):39

<sup>156</sup> UN Source (B):11

<sup>157</sup> UN Source (A):5; International Organisation (A):36; Independent Organisation:46, 49; Anonymous Source:55

<sup>158</sup> UN Source (A):5

<sup>159</sup> UN Source (A):5

and peer-pressure.<sup>160</sup> According to a Somali NGO recruitment is all about network which means that al-Shabaab not necessarily has to be in full control of an area in order to recruit as long as its network is there.

As a generic example of a likely recruitment process one source explained that al-Shabaab will inform the elders of a given area that a specific number of youth must join al-Shabaab, e.g. in defending the town, concurrent with preaching its interpretation of jihad. If the elders refuse to supply the demanded recruits, al-Shabaab will use force.<sup>161</sup>

A UN source and a Somalia Country Director of a humanitarian agency provided similar examples.<sup>162</sup>

According to three sources forced recruitment does take place in areas fully controlled by al-Shabaab but it will most often be in relation to big operations or during and after attacks when al-Shabaab is in need of people for logistics or to replace lost fighters.<sup>163</sup> According to a Somali NGO recruitment will, however, normally not be forced but the possibility cannot be ruled out.<sup>164</sup>

A Somalia Country Director of a humanitarian agency explained that the consequence of refusing recruitment will fall upon the clan. If a person refuses to be recruited – or a local community refuses to bring the demanded number of boys and men – it can lead to violent confrontations between al-Shabaab and the clan in question.<sup>165</sup> A UN source mentioned that if al-Shabaab is to accept that a person refuses to be recruited, some kind of compensation is required. If a person refuses to compensate al-Shabaab, he will have to flee otherwise al-Shabaab will locate him and execute him.<sup>166</sup> An independent organisation and an anonymous source concurred that refusing to join al-Shabaab can have serious consequences. Persons, who refuse, can be killed, and the killing can take place as a public execution.<sup>167</sup> The independent organisation considered it to be a part of an overall al-Shabaab strategy in order to install fear in the population and to state examples for future recruits.<sup>168</sup>

### 3.2. Child soldiers

The use of child soldiers in the ranks of al-Shabaab is taking place.<sup>169</sup> According to a UN source the UN Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting documented the recruitment and use of 437 children in 2014 and 555 in 2015. According to the same UN source, the UN has received credible reports that up to 450 children were forcibly recruited from madrasas and villages in South West State (Bakool, Bay, and Lower Shabelle).<sup>170</sup> According to another UN source the numbers of cases of child soldiers in 2015 were 903 and in the first nine months of 2016 the number reported was 1.560 cases.<sup>171</sup> Several sources, including the abovementioned UN sources, mentioned the same two examples from 2016 where child soldiers had been

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<sup>160</sup> UN Source (B):11

<sup>161</sup> Independent Organisation:49

<sup>162</sup> UN Source (B):11

<sup>163</sup> UN Source (A):5; UN Source (B):11; Anonymous Source:55

<sup>164</sup> Somali NGO:33

<sup>165</sup> Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:21

<sup>166</sup> UN Source (B):11

<sup>167</sup> Independent Organisation:49; Anonymous Source:55 (this source did not mention the killing to be public)

<sup>168</sup> Independent Organisation:49

<sup>169</sup> UN Source (A):5; UN Source (B):11; UN Source (C):16

<sup>170</sup> UN Source (A):5

<sup>171</sup> UN Source (B):11

used in military offensives.<sup>172</sup> A UN source explained in detail that in a clash in Galkacyo over 100 al-Shabaab fighters were captured out of which 44 were under the age of 18. All 44 were accordingly later released. In Puntland, al-Shabaab fighters arrived by boat and engaged in a five-day battle with Puntland forces resulting in 200-300 casualties and the capture of 106 al-Shabaab fighters where 64 were under the age of 15 and one as young as 12 years old. In the latter case 10 of the detainees in the age group 15-17 years were sentenced to death and the rest were convicted 10-20 years of imprisonment. Many of these children had only been part of al-Shabaab for a few months, before they were taken to the front line. A UN source noted that the age of majority in Puntland is 15.<sup>173</sup>

There are different estimates on the average age for an al-Shabaab recruit. A Somali NGO estimated most recruits were boys/men in the age of 14-25. Two other sources agreed that the lower limit is around 11 years old.<sup>174</sup>

According to an anonymous source, some parents are given promises for their children such as education, employment, and travels abroad, but the children end up as soldiers for al-Shabaab.<sup>175</sup> A UN source added that the main incentive to join al-Shabaab is salaries and that this is also the case for some parents who volunteer their children to al-Shabaab.<sup>176</sup>

According to a UN source the use of child soldiers is also an issue within SNA and ASWJ.<sup>177</sup>

### 3.3. Women in al-Shabaab

According to several sources, al-Shabaab does recruit women. Women are mostly recruited to al-Shabaab for logistical tasks, housekeeping, sexual exploitation, as mobilisers of other women, and as wives to al-Shabaab fighters.<sup>178</sup> In some cases, women are also recruited in order to collect information as women travel more easily disguised than men.<sup>179</sup> An anonymous source mentioned that recruitment of women to al-Shabaab is a matter of inducement and/or force; a Somalia Country Director of a humanitarian agency did not have any information on whether or not girls and women are forcefully recruited.<sup>180</sup>

None of the sources knew of female al-Shabaab fighters and according to a UN source al-Shabaab simply does not use female fighters.<sup>181</sup> However, several sources mentioned incidents where al-Shabaab has used female suicide bombers and an NGO working in Somalia added that this tactic has become increasingly advantageous for al-Shabaab because female suicide bombers attract less attention compared to male suicide bombers.<sup>182</sup> A UN source specified that they knew of two such cases.<sup>183</sup>

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<sup>172</sup> UN Source (A):5; UN Source (B):11; Anonymous Source:55; Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency only made reference to the Puntland incident.

<sup>173</sup> UN Source (B):11

<sup>174</sup> UN Source (B):11; Anonymous Source:55

<sup>175</sup> Anonymous Source:55

<sup>176</sup> UN Source (B):11

<sup>177</sup> UN Source (B):11

<sup>178</sup> UN Source (B):11; Somali NGO:33; Independent Organisation:49; Anonymous Source:55

<sup>179</sup> Somali NGO:33; Independent Organisation:49

<sup>180</sup> Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:21; Anonymous Source:55

<sup>181</sup> UN Source (B):11

<sup>182</sup> UN Source (B):11; Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:21; NGO working in Somalia: 27; Independent Organisation: 49

<sup>183</sup> UN Source (B):11

## 4. Possible al-Shabaab targets in areas under the control of al-Shabaab

### 4.1. Target profiles in areas under the control of al-Shabaab

Some of the sources pointed out that access to information from al-Shabaab controlled areas are very limited either because of lack of direct access or because sources dry up when an area is taken over by al-Shabaab.<sup>184</sup>

With regard to who can become a target profile in areas under the full control of al-Shabaab sources referred particularly to three factors: The background of a person, i.e. the links the person has, his/her behaviour in relation to conformity with al-Shabaab's interpretation of Sharia law, and finally acts and attitudes that can raise suspicion of spying.<sup>185</sup>

Anyone linked to AMISOM/SNA/ENDF/KDF, FGS, and international organisations would also become a target in al-Shabaab controlled areas.<sup>186</sup>

In general, people under al-Shabaab rule must follow the al-Shabaab way of life ("play by the rules of al-Shabaab"), otherwise they would be at risk.<sup>187</sup> Severe sanctions can be carried out against civilians who do not obey to the rules and ideology of al-Shabaab. For instance, not dressing or behaving in accordance with al-Shabaab rules can lead to arrest and corporal punishment.<sup>188</sup> Two sources explained that so-called un-Islamic conduct could include soccer, basketball, listening to music, and smoking cigarettes.<sup>189</sup> An anonymous source found that living under the strict Sharia regime of al-Shabaab cannot be seen as a safe way to live for civilians, who do not want that kind of regime.<sup>190</sup> A Somali NGO found that in the rural areas, there is little difference between al-Shabaab's rules, and the already existing traditional norms, and exemplified that the dress code for women is the same under al-Shabaab as under other actors. The source added, however, that al-Shabaab is more brutal and ideological.<sup>191</sup> A Western source concurred that even though al-Shabaab's interpretation of Islam is strict it is not completely foreign to Somalis.<sup>192</sup>

A UN source (B) assessed that it is a broad perception that people are better off under al-Shabaab, among other reasons because al-Shabaab does not discriminate on the basis of clan affiliation and, according to another UN source (A), because al-Shabaab establishes some kind of justice. According to an independent organisation, the relative popular support of al-Shabaab must, however, be seen as a lack of alternatives as many deem it too uncertain to support AMISOM/SNA.<sup>193</sup>

<sup>184</sup> UN Source (A):6; NGO working in Somalia:28; Anonymous Source:56

<sup>185</sup> UN Source (B):12; Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:22 (spying); Independent Organisation:50; Western Source:61

<sup>186</sup> UN Source (B):12; Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:22; Independent Organisation:50; Western Source:61

<sup>187</sup> UN Source (A):6; Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:22; International Organisation (A):40; International Organisation (B):44; Western Source:61

<sup>188</sup> UN Source (A): 6; Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:22

<sup>189</sup> International Organisation (B):44; Anonymous Source:56

<sup>190</sup> Anonymous Source:56

<sup>191</sup> Somali NGO:34

<sup>192</sup> Western Source:61

<sup>193</sup> UN Source (A):1; UN Source (B):7; International Organisation (A):35

## 4.2. Airstrikes

Two sources mentioned that civilians in areas under full control of al-Shabaab are affected by air strikes that are aimed at al-Shabaab, but at the same time having a catastrophic humanitarian impact on the civilian population.<sup>194</sup> One of the sources added that drone attacks increase the paranoia of al-Shabaab, as drone strikes are carried out based on intelligence information on the current positions of al-Shabaab troops and leaders. Providing such intelligence, AMISOM is known to have given locals a phone in order for them to send a signal from the location of al-Shabaab leaders. The source further added that accusations of spying can lead to execution.<sup>195</sup> A UN source concurred that civilians suspected of affiliations with AMISOM, or suspected of spying, for instance by being observed making a phone call, risk public executions.<sup>196</sup>

## 4.3. Returnees

Whether returnees from abroad are targeted or not by al-Shabaab will depend on how they behave and dress and who they are affiliated with.<sup>197</sup> Several sources mentioned that persons returning will be under close monitoring, as al-Shabaab in general will be aware of newcomers, and a new face will be reason enough for background checks and questioning.<sup>198</sup> An NGO working in Somalia concurred that an outsider risks being stopped and questioned at checkpoints, as a new face will raise suspicion of spying. The questioning will often be about the determination of the person's identity. According to the source it is rather easy for al-Shabaab to identify a Somali person by the person's name, his/her mother's name, grandmother's name, and home village.<sup>199</sup>

According to an international organisation the fact that a person has been abroad, including in the West, is not in itself important when returning to an al-Shabaab area. What is important is his/her clan, and the returnee will need relatives who are not in bad standing with al-Shabaab and who can vouch for them. If returnees are related to clans or individuals that are well regarded in al-Shabaab, they are likely to be safe. If not, he/she might face at least some initial scrutiny.<sup>200</sup>

A Somalia Country Director of a humanitarian agency mentioned that any western touch can profile a person, and referred to an incident in Lower Juba in 2015 where a passenger travelling on a minibus which was stopped by al-Shabaab had said he had come from New Zealand. He had been taken off the bus and killed. However, the source added that the reason for this killing is currently unknown.<sup>201</sup>

## 4.4. Women

Women in general are not considered a target group in al-Shabaab areas.<sup>202</sup> According to one of the sources, there is not a big distinction between men and women when it comes to risk of being targeted by al-Shabaab. Just as men, women need to play by the rules of al-Shabaab. For example, the source mentioned that women and men who do not dress in accordance with al-Shabaab instructions or are caught smoking a cigarette will be exposed to some sort of corporal punishment. A woman accused of

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<sup>194</sup> Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:22; Anonymous Source:56

<sup>195</sup> Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:22

<sup>196</sup> UN Source (B):12

<sup>197</sup> International Organisation (A):40; Anonymous Source: 56; Independent Organisation:50; NGO working in Somalia:28

<sup>198</sup> International Organisation (A):40; Independent Organisation:50; Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:22; NGO working in Somalia:28; Somali NGO:34

<sup>199</sup> NGO working in Somalia:28

<sup>200</sup> International Organisation (A):40

<sup>201</sup> Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:22

<sup>202</sup> UN Source (A):6; Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:22

spying will, just as a man, be executed. However, an anonymous source especially mentioned the lack of rights for women and a Western source added that especially women would have to conform to al-Shabaab norms.<sup>203</sup> If a person plays by the rules of al-Shabaab and is not profiled, he/she can avoid sanctions.<sup>204</sup> An independent organisation concurred that a person can survive if he/she does not talk against al-Shabaab.<sup>205</sup>

A UN source mentioned that women are subjected to forced marriage in areas controlled by al-Shabaab but it is unknown to what extent.<sup>206</sup> Another UN source concurred that forced marriage to al-Shabaab fighters is occurring, and that it can happen through intimidation of the parents.<sup>207</sup>

*Reference is made to Chapter 2 for further information on forced marriage.*

#### **4.5. Public executions**

With regards to mandatory participation in public executions and similar events, two sources pointed out that within al-Shabaab territory, persons will have to follow the will of al-Shabaab. Persons can be forced to attend public executions, but that does not mean that they condone the act.<sup>208</sup> One of the sources added that by not attending, a person can fall under suspicion of opposing al-Shabaab.<sup>209</sup> Another source explained that public executions are probably mandatory to some extent, but whether or not an absence will be noted, depends on the size of the community.<sup>210</sup> A Somali NGO found that in general, public executions are not regarded to take place frequently.<sup>211</sup>

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<sup>203</sup> Anonymous Source:56; Western Source:61

<sup>204</sup> Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:22

<sup>205</sup> Independent Organisation:50

<sup>206</sup> UN Source (A):6

<sup>207</sup> UN Source (B):11

<sup>208</sup> Somali NGO:34; Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:22;

<sup>209</sup> Independent Organisation:50

<sup>210</sup> Somalia Country Director of a Humanitarian Agency:22

<sup>211</sup> Somali NGO:34

## Annex A – Meeting notes

### UN source (A)

Nairobi, 8 December 2016

#### 1. Overall security situation in South and Central Somalia

The security situation in S/C Somalia is characterised by armed conflict and a high risk of terrorism. It is difficult to make a clear distinction of what areas are under the control of what group, and there exists grey areas of mixed or unknown control. Few locations are under the control of AMISOM/SNA and the term ‘effective control’ does not make much sense in S/C Somalia. Al-Shabaab is in control of, or at least has influence over, most rural areas in S/C Somalia and has a hidden presence in all urban centres.

As of December 2016, the security situation is further affected by the ongoing election and the upcoming rotation of the AMISOM contingents. The source added that al-Shabaab most likely will attack AMISOM when the new contingents are in place as have been seen before.

Due to lack of security on roads, AMISOM have restrictions on movements of goods on main supply routes. Therefore, AMISOM continues to airlift some of the key life sustenance items including troops. Especially the main supply routes from Mogadishu to Baidoa and Belet Weyne, respectively, are affected by al-Shabaab attacks. Due to the rise in al-Shabaab take overs, AMISOM has restructured its presence by consolidating at larger bases. Outside Mogadishu there has been an increase in attacks in the second half of 2016 compared to the first half of 2016. Inside Mogadishu the number of attacks in the second half of 2016 has doubled compared to the first half of 2016.

To understand the security dynamics of S/C Somalia, it is stressed that displacements and casualties not necessarily relate to al-Shabaab. Businessmen with their own militias and other clan militias are also involved in the assassinations and many of these are erroneously ascribed to al-Shabaab and al-Shabaab may claim the responsibility for attacks they have not been involved in. Intra and inter-clan armed clashes continue with limited success in reconciliation efforts. The government has no effective legal system or any mechanisms in place to reconcile conflicting clans, which is exploited by al-Shabaab. However, the source explained that when al-Shabaab takes over an area, they establish justice and acts as a peace maker, which gives al-Shabaab legitimacy.

Furthermore, human rights violations such as extrajudicial killings and forced displacements are also taking place in government controlled areas. The source mentioned that family members of al-Shabaab fighters are perceived to pose a threat and therefore consequently forced to leave government controlled areas. As an example, the source mentioned that a mother to an al-Shabaab fighter was executed in the summer of 2015 allegedly for this reason only. When asked about other examples of sanctions against al-Shabaab family members by the government/AMISOM, the source mentioned five episodes<sup>212</sup> and underlined that it should not be considered exhaustive.

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<sup>212</sup> In December 2014, five wives of suspected al-Shabaab members were executed by the SNA in Bakool region, and on 21 December 2015, two civilians including one woman were executed by South West Special Police Force in Bay region, allegedly for being the mother of a suspected al-Shabaab member. On 14 September 2016, the Jubbaland Intelligence and Security Agency ordered al-Shabaab wives to leave all areas controlled by the Interim Jubbaland Administration and warned that a security

The source explained that from 1991-2006 the main actors in S/C Somalia were warlords and from 2006-2016 it has been al-Shabaab. And even though the players and motives have changed the threat assessment is roughly the same.

The source did not see any change in the above mentioned security situation in the coming year.

## **2. The extent of al-Shabaab control and presence, including the hinterlands**

Al-Shabaab is estimated to consist of 7,000-9,000 armed fighters but due to many sympathisers, informants, and other collaborators the source considered al-Shabaab to be everywhere in S/C Somalia. According to the source, al-Shabaab has even infiltrated the international airport in Mogadishu, which should be the most secure place for international staff and other government employees in S/C Somalia.

In urban centres where AMISOM/SNA is in military control al-Shabaab has a hidden presence and is able to move around during the night, whereas AMISOM/SNA stay in their barracks. Al-Shabaab controls most of the main supply routes. Al-Shabaab maintains freedom of movement throughout S/C Somalia, and while assessing the reach of al-Shabaab, the source mentioned that al-Shabaab could attack a target in Mogadishu within an hour, if they wanted to.

Al-Shabaab collects taxes throughout S/C Somalia systematically, including in Mogadishu. In many urban centres this results in double taxation. Tax collectors from al-Shabaab are known, but regarded as untouchable. According to the source, al-Shabaab's justice system is not restricted to the places they control or capture and even in Mogadishu certain people go to al-Shabaab courts in Lower Shabelle region when the federal government's courts do not deliver fair decisions. The source added that rulings of al-Shabaab are respected in Mogadishu and those who oppose fear for their lives.

It has been a general pattern that in the towns from where Ethiopian troops have withdrawn in the second half of 2016, al-Shabaab has moved in and taken control. The withdrawals are according to the source announced in advance by the Ethiopians, which enables al-Shabaab to reach those destinations in short time. According to the source retribution against civilians accused of collaboration with the federal government in these towns has been a big issue.

## **3. Information on the security situation in cities/villages in the following regions:**

Mogadishu is to some extent under the effective control of AMISOM/SNA but the city is under constant threat. According to the source there are no al-Shabaab-camps in Mogadishu. Even Villa Somalia is regarded as infiltrated by al-Shabaab. The outskirts of Mogadishu are regarded as being controlled by al-Shabaab.

Belet Weyne city in Hiraaan region is divided by the Shabelle River. Although AMISOM is present on both sides, al-Shabaab has significant freedom of movement on the western side of the city, exploiting clan

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operation would be launched to remove them if they failed to leave voluntarily. On 14 October 2016, the Baardheere Administration ordered Al-Shabaab wives to leave within seven days and threatened to forcibly remove them if they fail to do so voluntarily. The District Commissioner accused the wives of providing information to their husbands and of being a security threat. On 29 July 2016, al-Shabaab abducted two women and a man in Ceel Garas village in Bakool. The victims were accused of supporting the government, as they are relatives of members of the SNA and South-West Special Police Force. The following day the SNA and South-West Special Police Force attacked the village and kidnaped seven women, who were wives and sisters of suspected al-Shabaab members. Negotiations between the local authorities and al-Shabaab resulted in the exchange of the seven al-Shabaab wives for the three SNA relatives.

conflict between Jajeleh and Galje'el. The eastern side is predominantly controlled by a single Hawadle sub-clan and al-Shabaab activities in this part are limited.

In Lower Juba, the authorities regard family members of al-Shabaab as collaborating with al-Shabaab just by the fact that they are related.

Middle Juba is under full control of al-Shabaab.

#### **4. Possible al-Shabaab targets in areas under the effective control of AMISOM/SNA**

The main al-Shabaab targets are federal member state officials and high-ranking politicians, AMISOM, and SNA. Clan elders and others e.g. businessmen perceived to be collaborating with or supporting the federal government are also targets. UN staff at all levels, i.e. anybody identified to be under a contract with the UN, is also a target, but is less exposed than federal member state officials and high-ranking politicians, AMISOM, and SNA. The source mentioned that anyone who is seen travelling regularly by the road to the airport of Mogadishu – and therefor assumed to be working there – can be a target. Some staff members move their residence and family very often in attempt to keep a low profile. The source also mentioned non-Somalis as a target group.

Journalists and human rights activists might also be targeted depending on their activities and how distinct they criticise al-Shabaab. Small business owners and the community in general are also at risk if they reject to cooperate with al-Shabaab and pay taxes.

If a businessman wants to travel from an al-Shabaab controlled area to government territory he needs to acquire permission from al-Shabaab and indicate a return date. If the person does not return he is considered a traitor and might be killed – even in Mogadishu. According to the source, certain businessmen that are supporters of al-Shabaab are allowed to cross or do business in the government controlled areas, and mostly these businessmen also serve al-Shabaab so their movement does not need return dates from al-Shabaab.

According to the source, a person not belonging to any of these categories is not a target as long as that person pays his tax to al-Shabaab. The source clarifies that dayworkers at government and UN facilities, businessmen who do not work with the government and pay their taxes, as well as women as a generic category are not considered al-Shabaab targets.

It is added that Somalis working for international NGO's, UN agencies, or the government are also at risk from other armed actors in society. As an example the source explained that a job at the international airport in Mogadishu is lucrative to an extent which makes you at risk of being killed by people who want your job. The source also knew of cases where national staff has been exposed to extortion.

#### **5. Forced recruitment to al-Shabaab in cities/villages under the effective control of AMISOM/SNA**

According to the source, there are many factors involved when trying to understand recruitment to al-Shabaab. Recruitment to al-Shabaab is mostly a matter of incentives and media propaganda. Al-Shabaab visits schools, displays video material, and presents the pupils to al-Shabaab's interpretation of jihad and Islam. Furthermore, al-Shabaab imposes its curriculum upon the teachers.

Recruitment is also happening through direct and indirect peer-pressure. The source gave the example of an al-Shabaab fighter returning to his village with a different social status, as he now has money and power.

According to the available data collected from the rehabilitation centres for low profile defectors, approximately 50% of the young men and boys join al-Shabaab for economic reasons. The source mentioned that the collected data are limited and not fully representative. However, the unemployment rate is high and al-Shabaab offers regular payment. The source indicated that al-Shabaab offers monthly salaries of in-between 50-200 US\$. In continuation hereof, returnees from abroad are mentioned as a group that could be vulnerable to recruitment because they have no job and a weak local network. Al-Shabaab considers returnees from abroad as special opportunities due to their foreign language skills and networks and recruits them through its media and outreach sections.

There is a difference between the recruits from Somalia and Kenya. Opposite to the recruits from Somalia the Kenyan Somalis who join al-Shabaab are much more driven by ideology and are often better educated.

Belonging to a minority clan is also seen as an incentive to join al-Shabaab because al-Shabaab to a lesser extent than the rest of the Somali society judge people by their clan affiliation. The source also mentioned that people from minority clans might join al-Shabaab due a wish of revenge over majority clans and al-Shabaab recruits new members following inter-clan fighting. Al-Shabaab gives more command and administrative posts to minority clans in order to show that clannism is not good.

According to the source, downright forced recruitment does exist but is most often done in relation to big operations where al-Shabaab is in need of people for logistical tasks e.g. transportation of equipment and provision. Direct forced recruitment can also take place during and after attacks in order to replace lost fighters. Information on the locations of recruitment is very limited. Forced recruitment is more likely to be used in rural areas. In urban centers, even though al-Shabaab does not have strong control, it still manages to actively engage in recruitment. Al-Shabaab recruitment is linked to the job it wants a person to perform, and in urban areas a person can serve al-Shabaab once al-Shabaab tasks him/her a job. The source added that the format of recruitment in urban areas compared to rural areas might be different.

The source added that forced recruitment/use of children as soldiers by al-Shabaab should be considered. In March 2016, Puntland authorities captured 106 al-Shabaab fighters, 50% of whom were children. In April 2016, the Galmudug Interim Administration (GIA) announced that its forces captured 110 al-Shabaab members, 38 of whom were children. The UN also has received credible reports that up to 450 children were forcibly recruited from madrasas and villages in South West<sup>213</sup>. The UN Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting documented the recruitment and use of 555 children in 2015 and 437 in 2014.

On al-Shabaab defectors the source mentioned four rehabilitation centres in Mogadishu, Baidoa, Kismayo, and Belet Weyne. These centres only accept low risk profiles such as foot soldiers and tax collectors, and prior to being accepted to the centres all defectors must undergo a screening by NISA. According to the source, this screening method is not uniform and is undertaken in accordance with unclear criteria. Other al-Shabaab defectors are held in custody by NISA. As of December 2016, approximately 100 former members of al-Shabaab have been reintegrated into Mogadishu and Baidoa. According to the source NISA follows the reintegrated defectors for two years and none of these 100 have gone back to al-Shabaab. Some defectors have, however, been contacted by al-Shabaab by phone and been told to either return to al-Shabaab or become an informant to them. Baidoa also had a safe house for female defectors where

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<sup>213</sup> Bakool, Bay, and Lower Shabelle.

most of the defectors were reintegrated with relatives or back into their respective communities. The safe house is no longer operational.

#### **6. Possible al-Shabaab targets in areas under the control of al-Shabaab**

When asked about possible targets in al-Shabaab controlled areas the source stated that access to information from these areas are very limited and that sources dry up when an area is taken over by al-Shabaab. In general, people under al-Shabaab rule must follow the al-Shabaab way of life; otherwise they would be at risk. The source mentioned a woman who was arrested for wearing a brassiere but women in general are not a target group in al-Shabaab areas. The source highlighted that human rights violations, including executions, against civilians could be underreported.

Women are subjected to forced marriage in areas controlled by al-Shabaab but it is unknown to what extent.

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### **UN source (B)**

Nairobi, 6 December 2016

#### **7. Overall security situation in South and Central Somalia**

The security situation has not improved compared to 2015, and in some areas the source actually sees a worsening of the situation. Human right violations by al-Shabaab, SNA, and Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama (ASWJ) have been documented and AMISOM have been accused of sexual abuse against women, though not a larger scale like other armed groups. In 2016 new dimensions have been added to the conflict. In 2015 Puntland experienced only one major attack, but this has changed in 2016.

AMISOM/SNA is in military control of major cities but al-Shabaab is present i.a. through infiltration. Al-Shabaab is in control of most other areas in S/C Somalia.

As of December 2016, AMISOM is preoccupied with the ongoing elections. According to the source, it can be expected that the number of armed clashes will increase after the elections, because AMISOM will try to take back towns lost to al-Shabaab, resulting in further displacements.

The elections have contributed to the insecurity as the elections are a breeding ground for grievances/extremism, as some clans are left out. It is a broad perception that people are better off under al-Shabaab, among others because al-Shabaab does not discriminate on the basis of clan affiliation. According to the source, al-Shabaab is the most inclusive group in Somalia, and a way for minority clans to achieve protection.

According to the source, the political figures, e.g. clan elders, who participate in the elections are not the true representatives of the local communities, there is widespread corruption, and some seats are obtained by bribe. These factors delegitimise the elections and make al-Shabaab the only party to the conflict benefitting from it.

The source explained that the civilian population has a lack of confidence in the deeply corrupt system. The source stated that this creates a perception of al-Shabaab being the provider of justice, and people tend to travel to al-Shabaab areas in order to seek and settle justice within the al-Shabaab judiciary.

It is expected that AMISOM will reduce its presence significantly the next years, and the source did not deem it realistic that the SNA can take over from AMISOM. It is a widespread belief among the civilian population that one cannot rely on AMISOM or ENDF, as they may leave any day. This is in contrast to al-Shabaab who is believed to never disappear. According to the source, this will incline people to cooperate more with al-Shabaab partly out of fear of what will happen to collaborators of AMISOM/SNA/ENDF should the area be taken over by al-Shabaab.

In the eight areas [*sic*] Tayeeglow/Tiyeglow (Bakool), Garas Weyne (Bakool), Buur Dhuxunle (Bakool), Ceel Cali/El Ali (Hiraan), Halgan (Hiraan) Bulbud (Hiraan), and Muqakoor/Moqokori (Hiraan), Galcad (Galgaduud) and Rab Duuure (Bakool) from where Ethiopian troops have withdrawn during the second half of 2016, al-Shabaab has moved in immediately and taken control, though in some areas AMISOM/SNA has tried to regain control from al-Shabaab with limited success. According to the source, the troops have been withdrawn without prior notice to the local communities and elders in these areas who have assisted the Ethiopian troops have been taken by al-Shabaab and some even killed, because of their collaboration with the ENDF. Civilians who supported the local administrations in these areas have also been targeted after Ethiopian withdrawal. Some women and children tried to leave with ENDF convoys but these were attacked causing civilian casualties. The source furthermore mentioned that these withdrawals have resulted in displacements, and in a lack of access for international humanitarian aid, as supply routes have been cut off.

The source further highlighted the existence of a climate of suspicion in areas with government presence, where persons accused of affiliations with al-Shabaab risk detention on security related charges.

As other key factors affecting the overall security situation, the source mentioned that 35,000 people from Dadaab have returned to S/C Somalia primarily to Kismayo, Lower Juba, which is putting additional pressure on resources; that there currently are 1.1 million IDP's throughout Somalia; that malnutrition and drought are common problems; that the humanitarian situation has significantly deteriorated; and that the city of Belet Weyne has seen an outbreak of cholera in 2016.

In the coastal town Qandala, Puntland, a pro-Islamic State cell has engaged in fighting with Puntland forces.

When asked about the returnees from Yemen and how they affect the security situation the source said that the number of returnees so far has not been huge but as of the last quarter of 2015, it was increasing.

#### **8. The extent of al-Shabaab control and presence, including the hinterlands**

Al-Shabaab sets up blockades of towns which are controlled by AMISOM/SNA and has a presence in the urban centres controlled by AMISOM through suicide attacks, infiltration of police force, army, and civil services, and a general high level of intelligence. According to the source, al-Shabaab territory begins 30km outside an AMISOM/SNA area. The source underlined that AMISOM areas are mainly major towns and settlements.

In areas controlled by al-Shabaab, al-Shabaab is actively controlling the main routes; collecting tax (*zakat*); and promoting its Wahhabi Islamic ideology. It is added that an unknown number of courts and training camps are established in these areas. The source described al-Shabaab's presence in areas under its control as significant and referred to the existence of an administration in al-Shabaab areas which should not be underestimated.

### **9. Information on the security situation in cities/villages in the following regions**

Mogadishu is more developed than other regions but the source stressed that there are areas in Mogadishu where the government has little or no presence. The source estimated that half of Mogadishu is not controlled by the government at night and added that the level of infiltration of al-Shabaab into the government structure including both SNA and civil services should not be underestimated. Most assassinations and attacks take place in Mogadishu due to the presence of many high value targets. Mogadishu has also been the scene of several attacks with a number of civilian casualties. The source, however, mentioned that civilians are collateral damage and civilian perceived to be associated with the government and international community are seen by al-Shabaab as legitimate targets.

Lower Shabelle has seen an increase in armed clashes with 35,000 displaced as a result.

Mudug is marked by fighting between al-Shabaab and local forces.

Galkacyo has been the scene of armed clashes between Puntland and GIA, which have led to massive displacements, including displacement of IDP camps (secondary displacement). However, as of December 2016, fragile peace exists.

Middle Juba is fully controlled by al-Shabaab.

The return program of refugees from Kenya was temporarily suspended due to limited capacity of the Jubaland authorities to absorb the returnees but the process has been restarted. The source mentioned that returns can take place out of fear of forced deportations from Kenya and/or in order to obtain the offered return package from UNHCR.

### **10. Possible al-Shabaab targets in areas under the effective control of AMISOM/SNA**

Al-Shabaab's main targets are AMISOM, SNA, and anyone affiliated with the Federal Government, including low-ranking staff.

According to the source, al-Shabaab has declared that anyone in proximity to government and AMISOM buildings are legitimate targets, and al-Shabaab has advised civilians to stay away from government and AMISOM buildings.

NGO's and humanitarian agencies are targeted as well as businesspeople refusing to pay tax to al-Shabaab. Al-Shabaab may also target cleaning staff at government and AMISOM facilities and people selling tea to government employees.

### **11. Forced recruitment to al-Shabaab**

Forced recruitment to al-Shabaab takes place in areas fully controlled by the group. Al-Shabaab recruits through mosques and schools (madrassas). Schools in S/C Somalia are religious and privately funded, which is exploited by al-Shabaab. According to the source, al-Shabaab's ideology is taught in most schools as many teachers have sworn allegiance to al-Shabaab. Even in Mogadishu the government does not control the curriculum.

The main incentive to join al-Shabaab is salaries. According to the source, this is also the case for some parents who volunteer their children. Other reasons mentioned are ideology and the promise of the possibility to establish a family, as brides are used as a recruiting tool.

Al-Shabaab also influences potential recruits through peer-pressure. The source mentioned that a person who has become a commander in al-Shabaab might have a pull-power on his friends.

When al-Shabaab takes control of an area they start to recruit new members, sometimes by ordering the local elders to provide a number of recruits. Recruits will otherwise be taken by force. Al-Shabaab recruits boys in the age of 11-17. The source mentioned that also young men above 18 are recruited, but the data collected by the source, solely related to minors.

According to the source, recruitment by al-Shabaab sees an increase every time AMISOM/SNA launches a new military campaign.

The source has seen cases where girls are recruited for sexual exploitation, housekeeping, cooking, and as mobilisers of other women who could become wives of al-Shabaab fighters. Women are not used as fighters but there have been two cases where young girls were used as suicide bombers.

If al-Shabaab is to accept that a person refuses to be recruited, some kind of compensation is required. The source knew of parents in Galgaduud who chose to take their children's place. Economic compensation is also possible. If a person refuses to compensate al-Shabaab, he will have to flee otherwise al-Shabaab will locate and execute him.

According to the source, recruitment to clan militias is not forced. There is a perception that you need to help your clan. This is voluntary and has always been like this. When a boy is 15 he is potentially part of the clan militia.

The use of child soldiers is widespread in the ranks of al-Shabaab but is also an issue within SNA and ASWJ. In 2015 903 cases of child soldiers in al-Shabaab have been reported. In the first nine months of 2016 1.560 cases of child soldiers have been reported, which represents a significant increase. The source made further reference to monitoring data of increased violations against recruited minors.

The source mentioned two cases from 2016 where al-Shabaab had used child soldiers in military offensives. In a clash in Galkacyo over 100 al-Shabaab fighters were captured out of which 44 were under the age of 18. All 44 were according to the source later released. In Puntland, al-Shabaab fighters arrived by boat and engaged in a five-day battle with Puntland forces resulting in 200-300 casualties and the capture of 106 al-Shabaab fighters where 64 were under the age of 15 and one as young 12 years old. In the latter case 10 of the detainees in the age group 15-17 years were sentenced to death and the rest were convicted 10-20 years imprisonment. The source noted that the age of majority in Puntland is 15. Many of these children had only been part of al-Shabaab for a few months, before they were taken to the front line and had not been properly trained.

Forced marriage to al-Shabaab fighters is occurring. According to the source, it can happen through intimidation of the parents.

In areas not under full control of al-Shabaab the source noted that direct recruitment does not take place. In these areas, however, al-Shabaab influences potential recruits through preaching, incentives, and peer-pressure.

### **12. Possible al-Shabaab targets in areas under the control of al-Shabaab**

Al-Shabaab fears defectors because they might take sensitive information with them, which can be used by the government. For this reason al-Shabaab target defectors and the source knew of cases where defectors have been publicly executed. This tactic is used to send a message.

When al-Shabaab tries to track down a defector they use the clan networks to put pressure on the defector. According to the source, al-Shabaab collects bio-data on each individual member to ensure that they can be tracked down if necessary. Bio-data in this context is the father's name, grandfather's name, great grandfather's name, mother's name, name of village etc.

According to the source, defectors usually cannot go back to their parents because this area most often would be al-Shabaab controlled.

Anyone linked to AMISOM/SNA/ENDF or the government can also become a target. The referred monitoring data included incidents of public executions of civilians, including minors, suspected of affiliation with AMISOM or suspected of spying for instance by being observed making a phone call.

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### **UN source (C)**

Nairobi, 8 December 2016

### **13. Overall security in South and Central Somalia**

In spite of the optimism that has grown from the political development; (the establishment of the federal states and the election process), the humanitarian situation in S/C Somalia continues to be of serious concern. The security situation continues to be volatile and the humanitarian situation with regards to access to health services, water, and schools has not improved. Drought is deepening and 40% of the population is in need of humanitarian assistance. A National Development Plan has been agreed upon for the first time in 34 years but this is yet to translate into results on the ground.

Humanitarian access continues to be a challenge, in particular in southern and central Somalia. Towns taken over by AMISOM continue to be isolated with limited road access. From July to October 2016, non-state armed actors took control of eight locations [*sic*] in Bakool, Galgaduug and Hiraaan regions of Somalia following the departure of international troops. The takeover by non-state armed groups exposed civilians to significant protection risks and further reduced humanitarian access in areas that were already hard to reach. The locations include Rab Dhuure, Bur Dhuxelne, Garas Weyne and Tayeeglow in Bakool region; Budbud and Galcad in Galgaduud region; Moqokori, Ceel Cali and Halgan in Hiraaan region. The takeover by non-state armed actors triggered displacements of thousands of people, including some who were already displaced. Civilians remaining in these locations were reportedly subjected to retribution attacks, including apprehension, torture, killings, and forced recruitments.

Travelling by road means crossing several checkpoints. Checkpoints can be set up and manned by various actors. Travelling by road is regarded as risky, expensive, and difficult.

In general, civilians are always at risk of being in the wrong place at the wrong time.

**14. Information on the security situation in cities/villages in the following regions**

**Bandadir**

400,000 IDP's are residing in Mogadishu in urban slum areas with lack of access to the most basic services. Some returnees settle among the IDP's upon return.

**15. Possible al-Shabaab targets in areas under the effective control of AMISOM/SNA**

Prime targets to al-Shabaab are persons affiliated with the federal and regional governments. Second are international organisations.

**16. Forced recruitment to al-Shabaab**

Forced recruitment of children is taking place and is regarded to be rising in numbers. The source knew of incidents of forced recruitment where boys and young men were forcefully recruited and taken to the frontline in, for instance, Puntland.

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**Somalia Country Director of a humanitarian agency**

Nairobi, 7 December 2016

*The source is a Somalia Country Director of a humanitarian agency. The agency has been working with the development of the security situation within Somalia for more than 10 years. The agency is present throughout S/C Somalia. The agency is funded by various European funds.*

**17. Overall security in South and Central Somalia**

S/C Somalia has been a highly insecure context for many years, and in this regard al-Shabaab is a relatively new phenomenon. As Somalia is one of the most dangerous places for aid-workers, international organisations have become most careful in their deployment of international staff. Accordingly, the risks can be said to have moved on to Somalis.

Al-Shabaab is regarded to be in control of most of S/C Somalia and the federal government is regarded to be in control of 5% of Somalia, including Somaliland and Puntland.

In urban centres with AMISOM/SNA presence, the government supported by AMISOM, is in control during daylight, but at night time al-Shabaab can infiltrate and move around. Al-Shabaab is in control of most rural areas. This situation has seen little change the last three years. The source mentioned that it seems as if all actors are comfortable with status quo, and nobody is pushing for victory over al-Shabaab. The source linked this to the fact that for some countries, contributing troops to the AMISOM contingent has become a source of revenue and for other countries with national interests in Somalia, the AMISOM contingent is a legitimate excuse for having a military presence in Somalia.

The source further highlighted that the number of AMISOM troops as well as the size of the AMISOM budget, is very small compared to the task as well as to other similar international military operations. The source noted that with such limited troops and funds AMISOM cannot be expected to defeat al-Shabaab, but at best contain al-Shabaab within the present territorial presence.

The source added that local stakeholders also have an interest in upholding status quo. Should al-Shabaab be defeated, AMISOM will leave Somalia, which will mean that the federal government will fall, as SNA does not have the capacity to hold territory without the support of AMISOM. In this perspective, the federal government needs the presence of al-Shabaab as it entails the continued presence of AMISOM.

The newly established regional state administrations are to some degree autonomous from the federal government. The regional states have their own regional armies, but these armies are not in effective control of their respective territories.

The link between the new regional states and the federal government is regarded as fragile. None of the regional armed forces report to the federal government in Mogadishu. The regional forces are fragmented and consist of various clan-militias. It is questionable to what extent, if any, the regional governments are in actual control of the regional armies. For instance, south of Baidoa the troops left their positions due to disappointment with the elections of members of parliament.

Ethiopia has deployed 4,000 soldiers as part of the AMISOM contingent and 12,000 troops within the framework of an imposed intervention. The security in, for instance, Bakool region is supported by Ethiopian troops.

The withdrawal of Ethiopian bilateral troops is assessed to have been partly triggered by the domestic situation in Ethiopia with a declared state of emergency, and partly the fact that the Ethiopian government is frustrated with the development in the state building process in Somalia. Accordingly, the withdrawals can be seen as a show of force as well as a message to the international community, indicating the need for a more shared responsibility, as EU has cut down AMISOM funding by 20%. For now, the withdrawals have been slowed down due to high-level negotiations.

Withdrawals, fighting over territory, and shifts in power affect the security situation for civilians. Local communities risk retaliation from both sides (al-Shabaab versus AMISOM/SNA/regional forces) if accused of loyalty to one of the parties. In general, the source stressed that many actors affect the security situation for civilian Somalis, not just al-Shabaab.

The source made a specific reference to clan conflicts and land disputes as a source of violence. Unlike Puntland and Somaliland, S/C Somalia is characterised by a great diversity of clans.

Furthermore, criminal violence is affecting the security situation. The official court system of Somalia is non-functioning and in events of criminal violence, the affected families will expect compensation. Compensation is the cornerstone of Somali customary law (*xeer*). If not received, revenge is likely to be carried out. The principle of compensation and revenge has a preventive effect as criminal acts could entail involving the whole family or clan in clan disputes. In such clan conflicts large areas might be a no go area to a person just because of his/her clan origin. Members of minority clans are in a particular vulnerable position as minority clans typically do not have their own militias.

Clan violence is to a great extent regarded as a higher risk for civilians than violence carried out by al-Shabaab and should be regarded as a major factor in assessing the general security situation. The source highlighted that, in general, Somalia is an extremely violent society, and that the population is used to resort to violence as a response to disputes within both the private and public sphere (family, workplaces, authorities etc.) Disputes easily escalate into violence, and it is not unusual that business agreements or recruitment of employees escalate into violence and/or death threats. This high level of social violence affects the civilian population throughout S/C Somalia, where social violence has exacerbated due to the lack of rule of law. In this situation the most vulnerable groups are women and minority clans and accordingly, women from minority clans are in a particularly vulnerable position.

Sexual violence in IDP camps is regarded a widespread phenomenon, as many women in IDP camps do not have anyone to protect them.

Roads are only partly controlled by AMISOM/SNA and in some areas al-Shabaab is in full control of the roads. In general, it is not easy to travel by road in Somalia, and the source made reference to the fact that national staff members were scared to travel by road in their own local regions in Somalia. However, travelling for locals is considered less problematic, if the person is not profiled.

In general, al-Shabaab is known to have a more consistent system of road taxation than the federal administration. If a person has paid road taxes at one al-Shabaab checkpoint, he/ she will receive a receipt and will not face further taxation from al-Shabaab along the road. By contrast, the government and AMISOM as well as affiliated militias have many informal checkpoints where persons can be demanded to pay “tax” at each checkpoint.

#### **18. The extent of al-Shabaab control and presence**

Al-Shabaab is regarded as being in control of most of S/C Somalia especially rural areas. In Middle Juba and the southern part of Lower Juba al-Shabaab is in full control.

Al-Shabaab has achieved some military gains recently, attacking five AMISOM bases in S/C Somalia. This strategy has pushed AMISOM to abandon smaller bases in order to consolidate at larger bases. This situation has allowed al-Shabaab to take control of small towns and villages in Gedo, Lower Shabelle, and southern Bakool.

#### **19. Information on the security situation in cities/villages in the following regions**

##### **Lower Juba**

In Jubaland, the control can be regarded as shared between the Jubaland administration and al-Shabaab, with al-Shabaab in full control of all rural areas and the Jubaland administration in control of some urban centres. The South West and Jubaland administrations remain in place with the assistance of AMISOM and bilateral Ethiopian troops (ENDF).

Badhaadhe town is under al-Shabaab control. The urban centres of Kismayo and Afmadow are under control of the Jubaland administration supported by AMISOM.

In Kismayo the local authorities have carried out a large number of random arrests of persons under suspicion of being supporters of al-Shabaab. Persons, who are traveling from/originating from al-Shabaab areas and coming into Kismayo, are under risk of such accusations and arrest.

##### **Bay**

The urban centres of Dinsoor and Baidoa are controlled by AMISOM/ISWA. Rural areas are controlled by al-Shabaab.

##### **Bakool**

Tayeeglow, Raadbhuure, and Ceel Cali are under al-Shabaab control. The urban centres of Xuddur, Ceel Barde, and Waajid are under ENDF control. The withdrawal of Ethiopian troops in the second half of 2016 has made further room for al-Shabaab taking control in the region.

### **Gedo**

Baardheere is under AMISOM control. The urban centres of Garbahaarey and Luuq are under AMISOM control.

### **Hiraan**

Cell Cali, Halgan, Muqakoor, and Adan Yabaal are under al-Shabaab control. The urban centres of Bullo Burte, Jalalaqsi, and Beled Weyne are under AMISOM control. The western part of Beled Weyne is according to the source hardly affected by clan fights between Jajele and Galjeel. The eastern part is Hawadle territory, and is not affected by clan fighting.

### **Lower Shabelle**

Lower Shabelle, especially in the areas of Marka, Qoryooley, and Afgoye, has seen the highest number of violent incidents, and this is regarded as being more linked to inter-clan land disputes than to al-Shabaab. Sablaale and Kurtunwarey are under al-Shabaab control. The urban centres of Afgoye and Qoryooley are under AMISOM control.

The control of Marka has shifted hands a number of times in recent years. In 2013 AMISOM took over control, but al-Shabaab was dominantly present in the surrounding rural areas. Since 2013 frequent take-overs by, respectively, al-Shabaab and AMISOM/SNA has taken place. In the last few months AMISOM/SNA forces have left positions due to lack of payment and clan tensions within military ranks. As of December 2016, Marka is at the hands of al-Shabaab. AMISOM has returned to a base at the outskirts of the city, but only to parade the urban centre during daytime and is not assessed to be in any effective control. Al-Shabaab has a permanent presence in the city, but does not have a strong control and has not set up a local administration. The source assessed that the current control of Marka is a mix between al-Shabaab control and a vacuum of power.

### **Middle Shabelle**

The urban centre of Jowhar and other major urban centres are under AMISOM control. Al-Shabaab controls the rural areas.

### **Banadir**

The security situation in Mogadishu is regarded significantly improved compared to the 1990's. Compared to the last five years the picture is more blurred. There was a peak in security incidents in 2013, and the number has been falling since. However, Mogadishu still sees the highest number of armed clashes, IED's, and assassinations in Somalia. The source assessed that the decline in the number of incidents is linked to a shift in tactics by al-Shabaab from quantity to quality. Previously, a lot of smaller attacks took place, for instance detonating hand grenades. Now, larger explosions are carried out, and the city has seen a rise in large scale attacks and complex attacks, for instance at market places or hotels. The source considered the improvements in security as fragile. In addition, the source stressed that if AMISOM leaves, the city would fall within days.

Al-Shabaab has reach within Mogadishu and can carry out large scale attacks and targeted assassinations.

For the civilian population of Mogadishu the highest risk is being in the wrong place at the wrong time and become casualties of collateral damage from politically motivated violence. Terror attacks against market places (with no presence of profiled targets) are deemed unusual. However, Mogadishu experiences a high

level of violence in all three categories of political, social, and criminal violence carried out by various actors. The source stressed that many attacks are not carried out by al-Shabaab even if claimed so, but are clan related or business related. Competition for market shares can easily become violent and an important businessman has his own militia (between 25-100 armed men and beyond).

The high level of violence is especially difficult for persons from minority clans and IDP's as they are regarded extremely vulnerable due to the lack of effective clan protection.

With regards to clan protection in Mogadishu, the source explained that Mogadishu is dominated by the Hawiye clan. According to the source, all other clans should be regarded as a minority in relation to Hawiye in Mogadishu. There are neighbourhoods within Mogadishu dominated by other major clans, for instance Darood, but if a member of the Darood clan should leave such neighbourhood, he/she would be in a fragile position.

According to the source, the roads from Mogadishu to Beled Weyne, Baidoa, and Kismayo, respectively, are partly controlled by AMISOM.

### **Galguduud**

The security situation in Galguduud is very blurred with several actors involved: Galmudug regional forces (GIA), al-Shabaab, and Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama (ASWJ). The source added that GIA has weak links to the federal government in Mogadishu. Ceel Dheer and Galcad are under al-Shabaab control. Dhuusamarreeb is under the control of ASWJ supported by ENDF.

#### **20. Possible al-Shabaab targets in areas under the effective control of AMISOM/SNA**

Prime targets for al-Shabaab are AMISOM, regional forces, SNA, government officials, district commissioners, UN staff, officials from foreign states, and al-Shabaab defectors.

When asked if a defector could relocate safely into urban centres with AMISOM presence, for instance Mogadishu, the source replied, that any relocating person can be traced by al-Shabaab. The whereabouts of a defector will become known by tracing a person by clan, sub-clan and family; a man's clan lineage is his history. The source did not know the number of defectors being killed, but assessed that on an average the source was informed of such incidents 6-10 times a year.

The source highlighted that al-Shabaab has reach everywhere in Somalia, including Mogadishu, also in order to target defectors. Furthermore, the source mentioned that there seems to be some kind of non-aggression deal between Somaliland and al-Shabaab as al-Shabaab is not carrying out attacks in Somaliland. However, al-Shabaab still target defectors in Somaliland.

The source regarded it not usual that family members of defectors would become targeted, but knew of a few cases within recent years, e.g. an incident in Lower Juba in 2014, where the wife of a defector, who had managed to flee, was injured in a shootout between the attackers and the defector. Furthermore, a young girl was killed at the incident and a man injured. In general, al-Shabaab does not retaliate against family members of targeted individuals. But if al-Shabaab is at conflict with a clan or sub-clan, any member of the clan can be targeted.

## **21. Forced recruitment to al-Shabaab**

The source stressed that in order to understand the recruitment to al-Shabaab, one would have to understand or specify what is understood when referring to al-Shabaab as an organisation. Al-Shabaab is estimated to have 5,000-8,000 soldiers, in the meaning of troops able to go from one region to another to engage in combat. Furthermore, al-Shabaab has a large number of unarmed persons working in the local administration. In addition, elders in the local communities in areas that al-Shabaab takes over can also be regarded as members of al-Shabaab as al-Shabaab will use them, more or less willingly, to rule the area.

When al-Shabaab recruits they can request the elders of a local community to bring a number of boys and young men to protect the village. Al-Shabaab can also bring boys and young men to military camps in order to use them in combat elsewhere. The source assessed the latter case as potential forced recruitment. There has been an increased pressure from al-Shabaab on local communities for recruits. The source made reference to the incident in Puntland, where a defeated al-Shabaab unit was captured. The unit consisted mainly of very young boys from Bakool and Bay. The source stressed that the incident in Puntland was hard to understand in many ways with regard to the motive and strategy of al-Shabaab.

The source did not know whether or not girls and women are forcefully recruited. However, the source mentioned recent cases of female suicide bombers in attacks, where female staff at hotels in Mogadishu detonated suicide bombs followed by shooting attacks by al-Shabaab fighters. The source was not aware of any child suicide attackers. Al-Shabaab has also made use of persons with disabilities or terminal diseases for suicide attacks, promising them to take care of their families. The source stressed that al-Shabaab in fact does take care of such families and in this perspective the decision to become a suicide attacker should be regarded as a rather rational choice.

The consequence of refusing recruitment will fall upon the clan. If a person refuses to be recruited - or a local community refuses to bring the demanded number of boys and men – it can lead to violent confrontations between al-Shabaab and the clan in question.

## **22. Possible al-Shabaab targets in areas under the control of al-Shabaab**

Civilians in areas under full control of al-Shabaab are affected by drone strikes aimed at al-Shabaab.

Furthermore, the drone attacks increase the paranoia of al-Shabaab, as drone strikes are carried out based on intelligence information on the current presence of al-Shabaab troops and leaders. Providing such intelligence, AMISOM is known to have given locals a phone in order for them to send a signal from the location of al-Shabaab leaders.

Al-Shabaab often kills locals suspected of spying. On an average, the source heard of two to three killings a month. Suspicion will be particularly high if a person is known to have lived in Western countries or has links to the government or an international organisation. In general, al-Shabaab is suspicious of strangers, including nonlocal Somalis.

This suspicion against strangers also creates problems for persons returning from Dadaab, Kenya. In order to return from Kenya all returnees most travel through al-Shabaab territory and persons travelling to and from AMISOM areas are likely to fall under suspicion for loyalty/spying for AMISOM. The consequence of being suspected of collaborating with AMISOM can fall within a range of options: No sanctions, a fine, being arrested or executed.

Severe sanctions can be carried out against civilians who do not obey to the rules and ideology of al-Shabaab. For instance, not dressing or behaving in accordance with al-Shabaab rules can lead to physical punishment. Accusations of spying can lead to execution. The source stressed that whether or not a person risk being profiled within areas of al-Shabaab control, depends on whether or not the person obeys to the rules of al-Shabaab and on the background of the person. Any western touch can profile a person. The source made reference to an incident in Lower Juba in 2015, where al-Shabaab stopped a minibus traveling from Mogadishu to Kismayo. During interrogation of the passengers, a man said that he had come from New Zealand. He was subsequently taken off the bus and reportedly beheaded. The reason for this killing is currently unknown.

When asked to what degree events such as public executions can be seen as mandatory, the source replied that he would assume that it would depend on the size of the village/community. Public executions are probably mandatory to some extent, but whether or not an absence will be noted depends on the size of the community.

Women do not constitute an al-Shabaab target group and according to the source there is not a big distinction between men and women when it comes to risk of being targeted by al-Shabaab. It depends on their profile. Just as men, women need to play by the rules of al-Shabaab. For example, the source mentioned that women and men who do not dress in accordance with al-Shabaab instructions or are caught smoking a cigarette will be exposed to some sort of corporal punishment. A woman accused of spying will, just as a man, be executed. If a person plays by the rules of al-Shabaab and is not profiled he/she can avoid sanctions.

According to the source, forced marriages are, in general, customary in Somalia and the source assumed that this is not different in al-Shabaab areas.

The source stressed that al-Shabaab has a rather effective administration in areas under its control, and that, in general, the administration of al-Shabaab is regarded more effective and less corrupted than the administration of the regional and federal governments.

Refusing to pay tax (*zakat*) can lead to violent confrontations between al-Shabaab and clans/local communities. Al-Shabaab has lost important sources of income (e.g. charcoal) and has increased the taxation of pastoralists.

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## NGO working in Somalia

Nairobi, 9 December 2016

*The source is an NGO, which has been working in Somalia for more than 15 years. The organisation is funded by various international funds. The organisation has several offices in S/C Somalia.*

### **23. Overall security situation in South and Central Somalia**

The security situation is dynamic and threats are not only related to al-Shabaab but also clan militias and election violence. Some areas are under full control of al-Shabaab, others partially controlled by a militia and al-Shabaab. Al-Shabaab faces a lot of resistance in Puntland and Somaliland, but they still have limited reach in these regions.

In an overall assessment the source considered the security situation as fragile, as relapse often occurs.

According to the source, there is not much information about what is going on at night in cities under AMISOM/SNA control. It is possible for nationals to move around at night and there is no curfew as such, but most people would not go out after 6 p.m. Non-Somalis working for INGO's are not advised to move around at night.

According to the source, AMISOM forces are expected to plan a military offensive against the al-Shabaab controlled areas, but it is still unknown when and if it will take place.

Drought scenarios have also been part of the conflict as inter-clan conflicts occur over water resources during the drought periods.

In the areas where Ethiopian forces have been withdrawn, al-Shabaab takes over most of the locations the following morning, which has caused displacement due to uncertainties for the residents.

#### **24. The extent of al-Shabaab control and presence, including the hinterlands**

Most al-Shabaab members disguise themselves and cannot be distinguished from other locals. According to the source, al-Shabaab uses various tactics including infiltration of the government structure.

#### **25. Information on the security situation in cities/villages in the following regions**

Mogadishu is more cosmopolitan than other urban centres. According to the source most of the people returning to Mogadishu have relatives in the city. Al-Shabaab has its own informants in Mogadishu. A change of tactics in the attacks has been observed as Mogadishu has been more affected by IED's the last year compared to previous years, more hotels are being attacked and more complex attacks are taking place.

Kismayo, Lower Juba, is AMISOM/SNA controlled. There have been conflicts over resources in Kismayo. According to the source it is not safe to travel by road in some areas in Lower Juba.

Middle Juba is al-Shabaab controlled territory.

Lower Shabelle is characterised by clan conflicts and resource based conflicts. The control of Marka is disputed and the control is shifting on a daily basis between AMISOM and al-Shabaab. Al-Shabaab has few activities in this region.

Balcad and Jowhar, Middle Shabelle, is AMISOM/SNA controlled, but this control is not stable.

Al-Shabaab is less active now than before in Hiraaan, and the region has been affected by fighting between sub-clans. Al-Shabaab has activities within the cities and restricts access between cities.

Ceel Barde, Bakool, is controlled by AMISOM/SNA but the rural areas are controlled by al-Shabaab or other militias.

In Bay AMISOM/SNA controls most of the cities but the routes between these cities are not under control.

Doolow, Luuq, and Belet Xaawo, Gedo, are all AMISOM/SNA controlled, but the outskirts are partly controlled by al-Shabaab and al-Shabaab will often try to control villages neighbouring AMISOM/SNA areas. The movement between these towns is, however, not easy or safe.

In Galgaduud the government allied militia, Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama (ASWJ), controls part of the region. However, the source stressed that the loyalty of ASWJ to the government is not without reservations.

**26. Possible al-Shabaab targets in areas under the effective control of AMISOM/SNA**

Government, AMISOM, and UN are the main targets. Al-Shabaab also targets defectors, people seen as collaborating with the government, journalists, and human rights activists. Small business owners might be seen as government collaborators and if this is the case they are also targeted.

Al-Shabaab uses its network to find defectors, and according to the source a defector who is tracked down will likely be killed. The source did not distinguish between high and low profile members of al-Shabaab. Even a cook might have sensitive information about al-Shabaab.

**27. Forced recruitment to al-Shabaab in cities/villages under the effective control of AMISOM/SNA**

Women have been used in al-Shabaab attacks and the most recent case is an attack in Mombasa, Kenya. According to the source female suicide bombers become a better and better tool for al-Shabaab because they attract less attention compared to male suicide bombers.

The source had no information on forced recruitment in AMISOM/SNA. Returnees from Dadaab may be exposed to recruitment, but the source had not seen any cases so far.

**28. Possible al-Shabaab targets in areas under the control of al-Shabaab**

The source did not have much information on conditions in al-Shabaab controlled areas. People returning might be targeted if they are seen as posing a risk or if they do not dress according to al-Shabaab instructions. The source added that travelling from A to B is possible for locals but might be more challenging for an outsider who risks being stopped and questioned at checkpoints as a new face will rise suspicion of spying. The questioning will often be about the determination of the person's identity. According to the source it is rather easy for al-Shabaab to identify a Somali person. Your name, your mother's name, your grandmother's and your home village are often sufficient.

Forced marriage might happen in al-Shabaab areas but the source had no examples hereof.

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## **Somali NGO**

Nairobi, 9 December 2016

*The source is a Somali NGO that has been working with local livelihood improvement projects within southwestern Somalia for more than 20 years. The organisation has several local offices in southwestern Somalia. The organisation is an implementing partner of various European funds.*

**29. Overall security in South and Central Somalia**

Al-Shabaab is regarded to be in control of most of S/C Somalia and to have reach everywhere in S/C Somalia.

The source highlighted that civilians have adapted to the situation and, in general, al-Shabaab is seen as capable of securing stabilisation in areas under its control. Many civilians stay neutral in the ongoing fights between al-Shabaab and AMISOM/SNA.

In general, the source found that too much focus is given to al-Shabaab. In order to understand the security situation of S/C Somalia, the behaviour of the other parties (government/AMISOM/SNA) will have to be included. The source stressed that a key factor in the mechanisms that drive al-Shabaab into power and attribute some popular support to the organisation is the attitude of the government and AMISOM/SNA. Furthermore, the security situation in S/C Somalia is being misunderstood if perceived as a black and white conflict between AMISOM/SNA and al-Shabaab.

In the areas where Ethiopian troops have withdrawn, al-Shabaab has immediately taken over control. Al-Shabaab has retaliated against persons accused of collaborating with Ethiopian troops. The source mentioned that the accusations might be real, but that executions also could take place in order to set an example. The source further stressed that the situation would be similar in areas where AMISOM/SNA takes over, and civilians will be punished for alleged support of al-Shabaab.

The security situation is also influenced by flood, drought, and conflict.

### **30. The extent of al-Shabaab control and presence**

In general, al-Shabaab has a rather developed administration, including tax collection and Sharia courts. In this regard, the source considered al-Shabaab as a government within a government. This results in business owners and traders in cities/towns under AMISOM/SNA control being taxed by both government and al-Shabaab.

At night time al-Shabaab controls cities that during daytime are controlled by AMISOM/SNA. Three to four kilometres outside most cities under AMISOM control, al-Shabaab is in control. AMISOM/SNA is regarded as being in control of seven to eight major cities. The source mentioned that the cooperation between AMISOM and SNA is not well-functioning. Al-Shabaab is regarded as more uniform than AMISOM/SNA. The source stressed that the presence of al-Shabaab can be felt throughout society, and that al-Shabaab can be said to rule by remote control in many areas.

Al-Shabaab is regarded to be in control of all roads. Most locals can travel by road, but branded cars, e.g. cars with an NGO logo, will not be safe. The source added that if a person deems himself/herself a target, he/she will not travel by road, but if possible by air.

### **31. Information on the security situation in cities/villages in the following regions**

#### **Gedo**

Several actors are contributing to the security situation in Gedo region: AMISOM, SNA, al-Shabaab, local militias. Acts of all actors can be seen as having a negative impact on the security situation of the civilian population. Al-Shabaab controls no big towns but all rural areas and roads in the region.

Garbahaarey is the most secure town in Gedo. The situation in Baardheer is similar to other towns that have been liberated by AMISOM/SNA in late 2015. AMISOM troops from Kenya and Ethiopia are stationed in the town.

The source stressed that Gedo region borders both Kenya and Ethiopia, and that the former is unilaterally building a controversial wall along the Kenya-Somalia border, which may affect the movement of goods and persons.

### **Bay**

When asked about the control of Dinsoor, the source replied that officially Dinsoor is under AMISOM control. However, to illustrate the extent of such control, the source made reference to confirmed information about a recent political meeting in Dinsoor. During the meeting a local elder received a phone call from al-Shabaab informing him, that al-Shabaab knew that he was attending the meeting and if he and other elders did not leave the meeting at once, they would be killed in the afternoon. Dinsoor is not regarded as safe, and al-Shabaab is regarded as being in de facto control of the elders of the community.

### **32. Possible al-Shabaab targets in areas under the effective control of AMISOM/SNA**

The source considered al-Shabaab defectors, government employees, government collaborators, journalists, human rights advocates, and employees of NGO's as targets, but stressed that it would depend on the context of each case. Al-Shabaab can potentially target everyone in these categories, but that does not mean that any person with such profile automatically is a target. It will depend on the circumstances. The source made reference to the fact that in general aid workers from NGO's are a target to al-Shabaab, but if an approval from al-Shabaab is obtained, the staff members of an approved NGO will not be targeted. However, the source stressed that NGO's affiliated with the US are a general target.

### **33. Forced recruitment to al-Shabaab**

Recruitment to al-Shabaab will normally not be forced. Recruits will be given incentives to join al-Shabaab, such as salaries, on religious grounds or social status (carrying a gun, etc.). In the context of the lack of possibilities for youth in S/C Somalia such recruitment is not hard. Recruitment is also supported by the indoctrination of the local youth by al-Shabaab referring to militant religious ideology. The presence of (non-Muslim) AMISOM troops is also being used as a motive for recruitment as AMISOM is presented by al-Shabaab as infidels and as an occupying force. The source would, however, not exclude the possibility of forced recruitment. Recruits for al-Shabaab were regarded mainly to be between 14 and 25 years old.

However, the source stressed that problems will occur if a person wants to leave al-Shabaab, once recruited. Defectors are deemed to have important information about al-Shabaab and are targeted by al-Shabaab as well as government/AMISOM. The source knew of incidents where defectors were killed by the government. The source assessed that a defector would only be safe if able to raise enough money to flee abroad e.g. to Kenya.

When asked about the possibility to surrender to the rehabilitation centres for former al-Shabaab fighters in some cities, the source replied that firstly, before being accepted to such facilities a person would be screened by NISA with the risk of ill-treatment. Secondly, the source did not deem the youth residing in such rehabilitation centres to be actual al-Shabaab defectors, but young members of local gangs and militias (as any al-Shabaab defector would be detained by NISA). The source also mentioned incidents of child abuse in two rehabilitation centres in Mogadishu and Baidoa. Accordingly, the source assessed that no genuine safety for al-Shabaab defectors could be found within Somalia. High profiled al-Shabaab members might successfully turn themselves over to the government in exchange for information, but such defection would have to be well arranged. The average al-Shabaab defector risk being killed by government forces.

Girls and women can also be recruited, mainly for logistics and intelligence as women can travel more easily disguised.

The source added that recruitment is all about network and that al-Shabaab would not necessarily have to be in full control of an area in order to recruit as long as they have a network there.

#### **34. Possible al-Shabaab targets in areas under the control of al-Shabaab**

The source mentioned that in rural areas there is little difference between al-Shabaab's rules and the already existing traditional norms and exemplified that the dress code for women is the same under al-Shabaab as under other actors. The source added, however, that al-Shabaab is more brutal and ideological.

Al-Shabaab affects all parts of society under its rule. For instance, al-Shabaab might not target a government funded school but will control its curriculum. Such attempts of control cannot be refused.

Al-Shabaab will be aware of newcomers and a new face will be reason enough for back ground checks and questioning.

When asked if events such as public killings could be regarded as mandatory, the source replied that many incidents have taken place away from residential areas. However, the source stressed that within al-Shabaab territory, persons will have to follow the will of al-Shabaab. Persons can be forced to attend public executions, but that does not mean that they condone the act. In general, public executions are not regarded to take place frequently. The source mentioned an incident near the border to Kenya, where Kenyan soldiers were killed and al-Shabaab paraded their bodies in uniform through town.

In the border region with Kenya, al-Shabaab has stopped civilians and severe sanctions were carried out against persons who, for instance, could not cite the Koran correctly, did not speak Somali properly or did not dress in accordance with al-Shabaab ideology. The source stressed, that the strategy of al-Shabaab differs domestically and abroad. In Kenya, al-Shabaab will mainly attack non-Muslims, but in Somalia, where almost everybody is a Muslim, al-Shabaab targets Muslims.

The source was not aware of forced marriages to al-Shabaab members. Most marriages in Somalia are agreed by consent, including marriages to al-Shabaab members.

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### **International organisation (A)**

Nairobi, 8 December 2016

*The source is an independent, international organisation working to prevent violent conflict. The organisation works with people affected by conflict to improve their safety and sense of security, and conduct wider research and analysis. The organisation has been working in the region for more than 10 years. The organisation is a non-profit organisation and receives funding from a range of donors including governments, the European Commission, trusts and individuals.*

#### **35. Overall security situation in South and Central Somalia**

The overall judgement is that the political development is going the right way. Over the last year there has been a consolidation around the election process even though the modality of the election has been disputed. The political process has been very complex and contested, and there have been rumours about vote-buying.

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The state building process and the establishing of federal regions are, however, fragile, and the process of building up a national security force has been ineffective, which is worrying in the prospect of AMISOM pulling out in 2018.

The big question is how to engage al-Shabaab in the process and whether or not al-Shabaab can become a political actor. Al-Shabaab will not be defeated militarily, so they have to be included in some way, but it is a difficult discussion.

The difference between a warlord and al-Shabaab is for many civilians difficult to see. Some people do not like al-Shabaab, but do not see an alternative. Furthermore, the human rights abuses committed by AMISOM/SNA (such as the example when AMISOM shelling killed an entire family in Marka, Lower Shabelle), when AMISOM/SNA is clearing an area or when preventing the free movement of people and goods altogether lead people to feel sympathetic to al-Shabaab.

The source saw potential security implications related to the return programme from Dadaab. Returnees, particularly young males are at risk of joining al-Shabaab in a bid to take revenge against Kenya, but so far no cases are known. Furthermore, the source saw potential security implications related to the coming years' political transitions in five regions.

### **36. The extent of al-Shabaab control and presence, including the hinterlands**

According to the source it is difficult to define who a member of al-Shabaab is, e.g. informants and supporters. In case of trouble, an al-Shabaab member can return to his clan for protection, and doing so, he will be viewed as a member of his clan more than a member of al-Shabaab.

Al-Shabaab is not as strong militarily now as before, but still in a position to cause harm. According to the source, al-Shabaab knows that it is under pressure and keeps under the radar. This can be seen in the strategy where al-Shabaab usually does not engage in direct military confrontation with AMISOM/SNA but instead uses asymmetric attacks. Al-Shabaab's aim is to show that it is capable of targeting everyone, everywhere.

When AMISOM/SNA withdraws from a town, al-Shabaab comes in. Al-Shabaab is well aware of who collaborates with the enemy and the source knew of retaliation against these collaborators in towns where Ethiopian forces have withdrawn.

According to the source, al-Shabaab acts as a judicial power also in disputes not related to areas under its control. The source knew of examples where people from Mogadishu travelled outside the city to meet an al-Shabaab leader to submit their case. Then al-Shabaab calls the other party and solves the problem. The courts set up by al-Shabaab are regarded less corrupt, cheaper, and efficient.

Al-Shabaab is collecting tax in S/C Somalia, including Mogadishu, and business owners refusing to pay tax will be threatened to do so. The taxation system of al-Shabaab is considered fairer.

Al-Shabaab started as a group mainly composed of members of the dominant clans. Today, al-Shabaab is increasingly composed of minority clans. According to the source the minority clans felt mistreated during the civil war, and currently they are being marginalised in the political process where political representation is distributed according to clan. Joining al-Shabaab is a way of getting revenge and

counterbalancing their political marginalisation. Support for al-Shabaab is usually not ideological but more often about clan disputes. Al-Shabaab can be used to take revenge.

According to the source, al-Shabaab has a very sophisticated intelligence wing (*Amniyat*), and al-Shabaab has a good number of inactive supporters in both Somaliland and Somalia.

### **37. Information on the security situation in cities/villages in the following regions**

Mogadishu has seen a reduction in attacks in November 2016 which according to the source could have something to do with al-Shabaab waiting to see who will be representing who after the ongoing elections<sup>214</sup>. The source added that al-Shabaab might not be present in Mogadishu militarily, but that it is present ideologically.

Middle Juba is fully al-Shabaab controlled.

In Lower Juba there has been a support for the federal process, which according to the source is related to the expected peace dividend of the establishment of the regional administration.

In Puntland a new militia loyal to Islamic State has claimed territory close to the port village Qandala. This faction is allegedly made up by local clansmen and former al-Shabaab.

### **38. Possible al-Shabaab targets in areas under the effective control of AMISOM/SNA**

Travelling by road between AMISOM and al-Shabaab areas can be risky. A profiled person e.g. a known businessman might be at risk. Al-Shabaab is also targeting businesspeople in Mogadishu.

### **39. Forced recruitment to al-Shabaab in cities/villages under the effective control of AMISOM/SNA**

According to the source recruitment primarily takes place in areas under al-Shabaab control. Al-Shabaab recruits the young generations primarily through a process of incremental indoctrination. As an example: first you get some money, then some training, then responsibility over a small unit, and then al-Shabaab facilitates your marriage.

Marriages are sometimes forced.

The source stressed that recruiting by inducements is not hard in a country where most young people are left without possibilities for education or labour.

Recruiters can be anyone, e.g., schoolteachers.

### **40. Possible al-Shabaab targets in areas under the control of al-Shabaab**

The fact that a person has been abroad including in the West is not in itself important when returning to an al-Shabaab area. What is important is the clan. Al-Shabaab does not care if a person returns from Denmark, but a person cannot simply return to an al-Shabaab area. He/she will need relatives who are not in bad standing with al-Shabaab and who can vouch for him/her. The individual does not mean anything in Somalia. It is all about the clan. However, the source added that travelling e.g. beyond Kismayo into Middle Juba, would still include a risk for returnees. Al-Shabaab does not usually scrutinise everybody unless that person is someone related to a person they were looking for or a prominent person in that community

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<sup>214</sup> The source added that the number of attacks rose again in January 2017.

whom they need to ascertain his/her loyalty. If returnees are related to clans or individuals that are well regarded in al-Shabaab, they are likely to be safe. If not, he/she might face at least some initial scrutiny.

In al-Shabaab areas, a person will have to play by the rules of al-Shabaab. If behaving in nonconformity with al-Shabaab rules a person will face problems.

According to the source al-Shabaab will detain a person whom they suspect of something. Then they investigate the identity of the person, e.g. clan, home area etc. It depends on this profile and not the fact that a person has lived in the West. However, persons returning will be under close monitoring.

At checkpoints controlled by al-Shabaab, the al-Shabaab fighters on guard will normally have full independence to act in accordance with the situation. Al-Shabaab is not a highly hierarchical organisation.

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## International organisation (B)

Nairobi, 7 December 2016

### **41. Overall security situation in South and Central Somalia**

Since July 2016 there has been no big shift in the security situation compared to December 2016.

Al-Shabaab controls less territory than some years ago.

Road transport from Mogadishu to Kismayo happens for average Somalis, but it is difficult.

### **42. Information on the security situation in cities/villages in the following regions**

The source considered the city of Kismayo a safe place and there have been no attacks in Kismayo for some time. The political process in Kismayo is seen as successful and the head of Jubaland is a strong man who is respected. According to the source, al-Shabaab is not in the city and the city is not an active war zone. The long road to and from the airport is, however, exposed.

Dinsoor district centre, Bay, is controlled by the SNA with AMISOM support, but it is totally surrounded by al-Shabaab, which makes it difficult to access.

Marka, Lower Shabelle, is partly controlled by al-Shabaab but conflicting reports are coming out of Marka. AMISOM has a camp outside the city and they come in during the day but according to the source they have no presence during the night.

Waaqid, Bakool, is al-Shabaab controlled.

It is safe to travel by road between Garbahaarey and Doolow, Gedo, but travelling south from Garbahaarey is more difficult and dangerous.

In Gedo and Bay regions the risk associated with travelling by road depends on who you are. A farmer can travel but is subject to taxation, but anyone who deems him/her self a profile will be most cautious. Checkpoints are manned by both SNA and al-Shabaab and accordingly double taxation takes place.

The withdrawal of Ethiopian troops has had a psychological effect on civilians, as people woke up one day and the ENDF troops was gone without any warning and the areas were taken over by al-Shabaab.

**43. Forced recruitment to al-Shabaab in cities/villages under the effective control of AMISOM/SNA**

The source did not have information on this topic but knew of cases where female al-Shabaab members are recruiting young boys through flirtation.

**44. Possible al-Shabaab targets in areas under the control of al-Shabaab**

People who do not follow al-Shabaab's instructions will be at risk. Al-Shabaab prohibits so-called un-Islamic conduct including soccer, basketball, and music including traditional Somali music.

The source did not collect information on human rights violations in al-Shabaab controlled areas.

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## Independent organisation

Nairobi, 6 December 2016

*The source is an independent organisation, which provides food assistance, clean water, shelter, legal aid, and education, and the organisation has been working in Somalia for more than 10 years. The organisation has offices in several locations throughout S/C Somalia. The organisation is funded by the European Union and UN among others.*

**45. Overall security in South and Central Somalia**

S/C Somalia has seen an increase in al-Shabaab attacks. This is partly due to the elections, where a large number of persons, relevant to al-Shabaab, are gathered and can be targeted. But al-Shabaab has also attacked AMISOM troops, when they are on the move from one base to another.

Al-Shabaab is regarded to mainly attack high profile targets. The source, however, stressed that the number of civilian casualties is high as most attacks have civilians as collateral damage.

The withdrawal of non-AMISOM Ethiopian troops (ENDF) has created a power vacuum, which al-Shabaab has taken advantage of. Al-Shabaab has taken over in the areas, where Ethiopian troops have withdrawn. In these areas al-Shabaab has been recruiting young boys and has forcefully been collecting tax (*zakat*), for instance cattle, goats or property. The source added that the pattern of al-Shabaab takeovers does not only apply to the withdrawal of ENDF troops. Whenever AMISOM troops are withdrawing to consolidate at larger bases, al-Shabaab takes over. This pattern has created a state of confusion amongst civilians and has had negative consequences for the trust of the population in AMISOM/ENDF troops. The source added that even though most people do not support al-Shabaab, many consider it too uncertain to support AMISOM/SNA.

The source explained that al-Shabaab has a different operational style than AMISOM/SNA, as al-Shabaab rules by fear and intimidation. Al-Shabaab can and will easily turn to violence in order to gain their goals.

The capability of SNA is insecure, especially as many soldiers have not received salaries. Accordingly, some SNA soldiers have joined al-Shabaab.

In general, it is obvious that al-Shabaab is controlling most of the territory of S/C Somalia. The source highlighted the fact that al-Shabaab members do not necessarily carry uniform or any certain characteristics, so it is not possible to tell, who is an al-Shabaab member. Al-Shabaab is assumed to have a high number of informants and sympathisers collecting information.

Al-Shabaab is being targeted by US drone strikes, which also affect civilians.

In addition, a militia loyal to Islamic State has been fighting Puntland troops in Puntland.

With regards to the general road safety, the source explained that al-Shabaab has checkpoints throughout S/C Somalia. Public transportation vehicles will be stopped; passengers asked questions and maybe further inquired. Tax (*zakat*) will be collected at checkpoints, but al-Shabaab does not use checkpoints for extortion. The source stressed, that the men controlling the checkpoint might not wear an al-Shabaab uniform, but could still be affiliated or loyal to al-Shabaab. The source explained that the day-to-day activities and business life for civilians continue underneath the conflicts, and that busses are plying and locals do travel, but under the risk of being stopped for questions and/or taxed by various actors.

Travelling in between areas of AMISOM/SNA presence and al-Shabaab control can create a risk of falling under suspicion from both sides of being affiliated with the enemy. Such suspicion can lead to punishment, killing or kidnapping in order to obtain information about the other side.

#### **46. The extent of al-Shabaab control and presence**

Al-Shabaab has reach throughout the entire S/C Somalia, meaning that if they have the intention to attack, they can do so. Al-Shabaab has spies all over Somalia and in neighbouring countries.

The source mentioned that the major clans in Puntland are less associated with al-Shabaab than clans in S/C Somalia, even though al-Shabaab is not as such a clan based organisation.

#### **47. Information on the security situation in cities/villages in the following regions**

##### **Banadir**

The security situation in Mogadishu is unpredictable and highly affected by violence, at best a few days pass between attacks. Especially with the presence of many high profile persons for the election process, al-Shabaab is assumed to increase their attacks in the coming period.

##### **Lower Juba**

In Kismayo the local administration and AMISOM are seen as being successful in controlling the urban centre. However, the source stressed that the security situation is fragile, especially for persons coming from outside of Kismayo. Displaced persons have not been attacked within the city centre. Local civilians can move freely and carry out their day-to-day activities.

The ongoing clan conflicts in Lower Juba have calmed down, but this situation is also regarded as fragile. The source stressed that whenever issues or conflicts arise, Somalis will turn to their clans.

##### **Bay**

In Baidoa the security situation can be somewhat compared to Kismayo, however more insecure. Baidoa is regarded to be penetrated by al-Shabaab. Two months ago, an attack was carried out against the government.

##### **Lower Shabelle**

It is regarded as difficult to travel by road in Lower Shabelle without acceptance from al-Shabaab.

#### **48. Possible al-Shabaab targets in areas under the effective control of AMISOM/SNA**

The prime targets of al-Shabaab are persons related to AMISOM/SNA, the national government, and international organisations, including national staff. Also low-ranking staff members such as cleaners or drivers can become targets.

In general, various profiles can become an al-Shabaab target and a key element in defining such profiles is the links of – or subscribed to – a person. For instance, links to AMISOM, government, persons perceived of spying for government, etc. Journalists, who are critical towards al-Shabaab, can also be a target.

When asked if small-scale traders could be a target, the source replied that selling tea outside a government building might not be a problem but the fact that AMISOM/SNA frequents the area such persons risk becoming collateral damage. However, the source also mentioned, that such persons also could fall under suspicion of spying for the government, if linked with the government.

The source also described another risk for low-ranking staff members within government, AMISOM/SNA or international organisations: If identified as staff member, for instance by being observed frequenting certain buildings, al-Shabaab can make contact and ask staff members to become informants or to carry out attacks within the workplace. Should the person refuse, he or she risk being killed. Such dilemmas are often imposed on the lesser fortunate part of the population, where employment with government and other affiliated actors can constitute a most needed livelihood, but at the same time put the person in risk of being targeted/recruited by al-Shabaab.

Recently, al-Shabaab killed two boys suspected of spying for Kenyan troops near Kismayo.

In general, the source assessed that women are less likely than men to be targeted by al-Shabaab.

#### **49. Forced recruitment to al-Shabaab**

Initially, there were enough voluntary recruits for al-Shabaab, but not anymore.

Al-Shabaab is regarded to carry out voluntary, induced, and forced recruitment. For instance, al-Shabaab will inform the elders of an area, that a certain number of youth must be recruited from that area. In the recruiting process al-Shabaab will make use of religious ideology referring to *jihad*. If the elders of a local area refuse to offer the demanded number of youth for recruitment, al-Shabaab will return and force boys and men at gunpoint.

The source stressed that the extreme lack of possibilities for youth in Somalia is a key factor in understanding recruitment to al-Shabaab. For instance, the source referred to young people living in the villages surrounding Baidoa, who does not have anything to do. Al-Shabaab will come to the villages and induce them by preaching militant Islam, telling them that in order to be a good Muslim; they must fight and at the same time offer them minor salaries.

All clans are represented in al-Shabaab and al-Shabaab will target the local clans for recruitment.

Al-Shabaab have successfully made use of unemployed youth, and it is feared that returnees settling in Kismayo and Baidoa will be more prone to recruitment from al-Shabaab, as they consider the return from Kenya involuntary and are faced with the lack of possibilities in Somalia.

Al-Shabaab does also recruit women and girls, mainly for logistics, transport of weapons, and collecting information, as women more easily than men can travel unsuspected. Women have also carried out a number of suicide attacks. The source knew of reports of forced marriages, but the information had not been verified and the source was not aware of any recent incidents of forced marriage.

To refuse to join al-Shabaab can have serious consequences. Persons, who refuse, can be killed. Killing of persons refusing to join al-Shabaab can take place as a public execution. This is seen as a part of an overall al-Shabaab strategy in order to install fear in the population and to state examples for future recruits.

#### **50. Possible al-Shabaab targets in areas under the control of al-Shabaab**

Understanding who can become a target profile in areas under the full control of al-Shabaab, the source again pointed to which links a person has – or can be regarded as having. Any links to government, AMISOM/SNA or international organisations can profile a person. In addition, behaving and dressing in non-conformity with al-Shabaab's interpretation of Sharia law can profile a person. However, a person can survive if he or she does not talk against al-Shabaab.

Whether or not returnees can become a target depends on several aspects of the situation: How they behave and dress, who they are affiliated with, etc. Returnees from western countries are assumed to be under particular attention from al-Shabaab and will most likely be on their radar.

Public executions or punishments will be mandatory in the way that al-Shabaab will drive around announcing the event by megaphone or by mobile phone, and expect everyone to watch. By not attending, a person can fall under suspicion of opposing al-Shabaab. In general, persons not deemed as supporting al-Shabaab, is regarded as opposing.

Clan militias in areas under full al-Shabaab control are regarded as allied to al-Shabaab. Clan militias not in alliance with al-Shabaab will have left the areas. Accordingly, it is difficult to distinguish between al-Shabaab militias and clan militias in these areas.

The source explained that the local acceptance of al-Shabaab should not be regarded as popular support, but must be seen in relation to the insecurity of the continued presence of AMISOM. Civilians will have to consider what happens when AMISOM troops leave the area and al-Shabaab is likely to take over/return. As al-Shabaab partly is ruling by imposing fear, for instance punishing alleged collaborators of AMISOM, such considerations in the population can explain some of the alleged support al-Shabaab is gaining on the ground.

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### **Anonymous source**

Nairobi, 6 December 2016

#### **51. Overall security in South and Central Somalia**

S/C Somalia is an active conflict zone. Airstrikes are taking place on a daily basis targeting al-Shabaab, but at the same time causing displacement of civilians. Since June 2015 until July 2016 there were 49 publically recorded airstrikes in the Jubaland regions alone. Airstrikes focus mainly on rural areas where ground operations do not reach, with a particular emphasis on Gedo and Middle Juba.

Widespread clan violence due to disputes over land, political control, blood revenge, etc. does also have a major impact on the general security situation. As of December 2016 flood and drought are furthermore affecting the humanitarian situation. According to Protection & Return Monitoring Network data, almost 26,000 people were displaced by drought between July and November 2016 alone.

Non-AMISOM troop withdrawals have occurred in three regions and seven towns: Galgaduud region [Budbud and Galcad] Hiraan region [El Ali, Moqol Kori, and Halgan] Bakool region [Garrass Weyn, Rabdhuure, Burduxunle, and Tiye glow since 2014. The withdrawal has come with little warning, and immediately after the withdrawal; al-Shabaab has taken over. There are reports of human rights violations in the areas where al-Shabaab has taken over, including destruction of civilian property, extrajudicial killing of those deemed to support government efforts (or efforts of other occupying troops) and the killing of civilians. The affected areas in Hiraan, Bakool, and Galgaduud, have caused the displacement of thousands of civilians.

In addition, an Islamic State-loyal militia has emerged in Puntland near the port town Qandala and the ongoing fighting in and around Galkayco between Puntland and Galmudug (GIA) has caused displacement of 8,000 civilians.

AMISOM troops are regarded as overstretched and are currently preoccupied with the elections. Furthermore, AMISOM is challenged by long supply lines and a general lack of troops and salaries. A larger AMISOM military operation has been awaited for quite some time, and it is unclear if and when it will take place.

Al-Shabaab is regarded to have taken a wait-and-see attitude for the moment, as clan violence is currently doing the job for al-Shabaab.

In general, a lot of violence is blamed on al-Shabaab, or al-Shabaab takes credit for it, but some is probably carried out by other actors. The security situation in S/C Somalia must be regarded as much more complex than as a conflict solely between AMISOM/SNA and al-Shabaab.

The situation is particularly dire for single women without a clan network and women who are internally displaced. The existence of a clan network can offer an individual including a single woman, a level of protection. However, due to both the current security and humanitarian situation it is becoming more difficult for the clans to protect their members. Persons belonging to minority clans can be subjected to forced labour, forced recruitment, child rights violations, and evictions, including in Mogadishu. When asked if this applies to all members of minority clans or those in a particular fragile situation e.g. IDP's, the source replied that both groups were at risk, but persons in a particular fragile situation are more susceptible to the above mentioned risks.

With regard to road safety, civilians do not travel easily. Al-Shabaab and other actors including clan militias, SNA, regional administrations, etc. have checkpoints all over S/C Somalia, where tax can be collected. No roads are regarded as fully controlled by AMISOM. Checkpoints can appear suddenly and can basically be manned by a few armed persons loyal to various militias or the government.

Persons travelling from al-Shabaab controlled areas into urban centres risk to fall under suspicion of being an al-Shabaab affiliate and vice versa; persons travelling from urban centres into al-Shabaab controlled rural areas risk falling under suspicion of being an AMISOM/government informant.

Al-Shabaab has taken control over towns following the pullback of Ethiopian bilateral troops in the second half of 2016. The source mentioned that al-Shabaab often vacates a newly captured town because al-Shabaab simply does not have enough fighters to be present everywhere under its control. However, these areas are still considered as al-Shabaab territory.

## **52. The extent of al-Shabaab control and presence**

Most international organisations have no access to areas under al-Shabaab control, but some local NGO's do.

In general, al-Shabaab controls most rural areas of S/C Somalia and has a presence in many cities and dominates the outskirts of most towns. This does not necessarily mean that al-Shabaab has a military presence outside the cities every day, but they carry out hit-and-run attacks and are well informed on the situation by local informants.

Al-Shabaab is assumed to have informants everywhere, also within the government.

## **53. Information on the security situation in cities/villages in the following regions**

### **Banadir**

Mogadishu is characterised by generalised violence. The violence can have various reasons: Clan related violence, political motivated violence, criminal violence (including business related violence) as well as attacks carried out by al-Shabaab. Civilians, even if not targeted, are at risk of or affected by generalised violence on an everyday basis: Shootings, car bombs, IED's, etc. Civilians are normally not a target, but the violence can hit anyone who is in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Single women without a network in Mogadishu are especially exposed.

According to the source Mogadishu has a mix of every clan.

In IDP camps the situation for single women makes them particularly vulnerable. Women can be exposed to abuse and incidents of gender-based violence from strangers, family, gatekeepers at the camps, AMISOM troops, and police officers.

Some returnees end up in IDP camps in Mogadishu due to various reasons: Lack of family and/or shelter or in order to obtain basic services.

### **Lower Juba**

Kismayo is regarded as relatively safe. Absorption problems due to the repatriation of refugees from Dadaab are however affecting the local government's ability to provide security. The source assessed that a main reason as to why the local administration has been able to keep Kismayo relatively safe is a rather strict control of new arrivals in the city through an extended network of informants. Newcomers, including returnees, are perceived as a potential threat, as a stranger is often perceived as equalling danger. If a person comes from an al-Shabaab controlled area into Kismayo, he/she is likely to face problems. Al-Shabaab has presence at the outskirts of the city and is in full control outside of the city.

The cities of Badhaadhe and Jamaame are under al-Shabaab control. Afmadow urban centre is under AMISOM/SNA control and is relatively safe, but the outskirts are dominated by al-Shabaab, and five kilometres out of town al-Shabaab is in full control.

The return of more than 35,000 refugees from the Dadaab camps in Kenya has created an issue of absorption problems, especially in the Jubaland regions. The Jubaland administration stopped the acceptance of returnees from 29 August 2016 to 16 October 2016. Returnees find limited basic services (medical, school, basic sanitation services) in Somalia. Some returnees join IDP camps. The absorption problems also affect the social cohesion in society, where conflicts over scarce resources can break out between returnees and host communities. Some refugees return back to Kenya due to various reasons: Violence, drought, and lack of basic services.

The source mentioned that it is unclear whether the returns are voluntary, induced or forced. Some return due to the offered return support package (financial support), whilst some feel pressured to leave under the perceived threat of Dadaab closing and mass deportation taking place. As of December 2016, Kenya has postponed the closure of Dadaab to May 2017.

From convoys returning refugees from Dadaab to Somalia some security incidents were reported: A religious Muslim leader, preaching a version of Islam nonconforming with al-Shabaab ideology, was forcefully taken from a bus by al-Shabaab. An al-Shabaab deserter jumped off a convoy and fled, as the convoy was approaching an al-Shabaab checkpoint.

Some refugees from Dadaab has regarded it more safe for the wife of the family to return alone to the original village of the family, as men more easily can fall under suspicion from al-Shabaab for spying for government/AMISOM. Returnees are advised not to carry smart phones as this can also trigger suspicion.

### **Lower Shabelle**

Lower Shabelle has been particularly affected by clan violence involving among others the Dir sub-clan Biyamaal. In addition, al-Shabaab military operations have displaced 6,000 civilians from Marka and Afgoye districts. In more than 30 villages close to AMISOM military centres, al-Shabaab has ordered civilians to flee. The control of Marka is disputed and as of December 2016 there is ongoing fighting.

There are a diverse array of actors in Lower Shabelle including al-Shabaab, SNA, clan militias, AMISOM and the United States.

In the beginning of 2016, in particular districts of Lower Shabelle – Marka, Afgoye, and Awdheegle, have experienced frequent and substantial armed clashes between ISWA and AMISOM supported clan militia against al-Shabaab.

The current escalation began in the beginning of September 2016 when a coalition of ISWA forces and clan militias carried out security operations in the rural outskirts of KM50 village. In this operation 14 al-Shabaab fighters were reportedly killed and their weapons confiscated. As retaliation, on 16 September 2016, al-Shabaab attacked a SNA base in Muuri village, destroying civilian property, including a local school and looted local shops and restaurants.

In October 2016 alone, over 18,000 people have been displaced in Lower Shabelle.

### **Bay**

The urban centre of Baidoa is relatively safe, but the outskirts are dominated by al-Shabaab and five kilometres out of town al-Shabaab is in full control.

The district of Dinsoor is also under al-Shabaab control.

### **Middle Juba**

Al-Shabaab is in full control of Middle Juba.

#### **54. Possible al-Shabaab targets in areas under the effective control of AMISOM/SNA**

Prime targets of al-Shabaab are clan leaders under suspicion of government loyalty, persons affiliated with the government, AMISOM, the police, NGO's or the UN. Anyone participating in the election process can also be targeted, as well as persons who are seen in one way or the other to engage in the state building process.

Journalists who criticise al-Shabaab are also targeted. Anyone who travels on the road to the airport in Mogadishu can be suspected of collaborating with the government or affiliated actors. Staff queuing up for security check at the entrance to the airport has been targeted by car bombs.

Small business owners, for instance persons selling tea outside government buildings, are not seen or targeted as government collaborators. However, the source stressed that it does not necessarily matter whether you are a target or not. If civilians are anywhere near an AMISOM/government area they can become casualties.

Al-Shabaab does not take defection lightly, and defectors can also be an al-Shabaab target, especially as defectors are regarded as holding information about al-Shabaab.

#### **55. Forced recruitment to al-Shabaab in cities/villages under the effective control of AMISOM/SNA**

The recruitment to al-Shabaab should be regarded as a combination of voluntary, induced, coercive and/or forced. Some parents are given promises for their children such as education, employment, and travels abroad, but the children end up as soldiers for al-Shabaab.

The capture of a number of al-Shabaab child soldiers in Puntland in March 2016 revealed that many of the forcefully recruited children came from minority clans. Minority clans are seen as particularly vulnerable to induced recruitment, for instance they can be given promises of education, salaries, or protection.

Al-Shabaab also recruits by use of direct force, especially before and during military campaigns and when they take over an area.

In general, it is a mixed picture of force and inducement, as inducement is rather easy within a youth population with lack of other alternatives. The age of recruits for al-Shabaab can be as low as 11-12 years.

Girls and women are also recruited, mainly for logistic, chores, and sexual purposes. This sort of recruitment is also assumed to take place by inducement and/or force. The source knows of no cases of female al-Shabaab fighters.

If a person should refuse an attempted recruitment from al-Shabaab and is captured, he/she will be killed. As people know this consequence, people do not tend to refuse. A recent reported incident of manslaughter by al-Shabaab was allegedly due to refused recruitment/defecting from al-Shabaab.

If recruits defect from al-Shabaab, al-Shabaab is likely to come for them. When asked if a defector could relocate safely to urban centres, for instance to Mogadishu, the source replied that it would depend on al-Shabaab, but if al-Shabaab wants to attack, they can. Al-Shabaab has informants everywhere and would be able to find a defector. If they wanted to set an example, defectors could be located and targeted in Mogadishu.

Defectors from al-Shabaab risk being accused by the government of being al-Shabaab loyalists.

The source stressed that it is not only al-Shabaab that are recruiting by inducement, but also the government and local militias.

#### **56. Possible al-Shabaab targets in areas under the control of al-Shabaab**

The source did not have direct access to areas under full control of al-Shabaab.

Women forcefully married to al-Shabaab fighters are regarded as an issue in rural areas. The source was not aware of any incidents of forced marriage to al-Shabaab fighters in urban centres, but would not exclude the possibility. If so, it would be assumed that the woman would be forcefully removed from an urban centre into rural areas under full al-Shabaab control. Women from minority clans are regarded as particularly vulnerable to forced marriage.

Returnees from abroad are not especially targeted by al-Shabaab. It will depend on the individual profile, for instance if the person is regarded as westernised or behaving in nonconformity with al-Shabaab ideology, such as listening to music, holding a smart phone, smoking cigarettes. Furthermore, arriving from areas with an AMISOM/government presence, a returnee might be suspected of affiliation with those.

The source stressed that the ongoing airstrikes against al-Shabaab must be considered, when assessing the security situation for civilians in these areas. Air strikes focus mainly on rural areas and the humanitarian impact of airstrikes is catastrophic for rural communities; death and injury of civilians and destroyed livelihood. The airstrikes are seen as driven by a simplification of local dynamics that results in gross violations against the civilian population.

Furthermore, the source highlighted that living under the strict sharia regime of al-Shabaab cannot be seen as a safe way to live for civilians, who do not want that kind of regime. The source especially mentioned the lack of rights for women.

The source knew of no cases where wives to al-Shabaab defectors have been targeted.

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### **Western source**

Nairobi, 5 December 2016

#### **57. Overall security situation in South and Central Somalia**

The overall security situation in S/C Somalia is significantly better today, December 2016, than five years ago when al-Shabaab was dislodged from Mogadishu and other urban settings. The picture of the security

situation over the last 12 month has, however, been more blurred, as a result of the ongoing elections to the Upper- and Lower House of Parliament. This election is making an assessment of the security situation more difficult than usual, as AMISOM is focusing its resources here.

When asked about a future AMISOM withdrawal from Somalia the source stated that it would be a long time before the SNA were capable of taking over from AMISOM and managing Somali security by itself.

When asked about the reported sexual violence committed by AMISOM troops the source has received no new reports on this issue. The source added that these offenses were more likely to take place in rural areas, than in Mogadishu.

The current drought in Somalia is at least as bad as the drought in 2011, particularly in the regions of Bay, Bakool and northern Somalia.

There are over a million IDP's in Somalia. (NB: Please note this does not include population displacement resulting from the current drought, since the interview was conducted).

#### **58. The extent of al-Shabaab control and presence, including the hinterlands**

According to the source al-Shabaab is not in control of major urban centres. However, few kilometres outside urban centres, al-Shabaab has a dominant presence.

In each of the eight registered cases of withdrawal of Ethiopian troops from towns in Bakool, Hiraan, and Galgaduud al-Shabaab has moved in and filled the vacuum. The Ethiopian withdrawal has only included troops deployed under a bilateral agreement and not Ethiopian troops which are part of AMISOM.

#### **59. Information on the security situation in cities/villages in the following regions**

Mogadishu is different from all other urban centres. Al-Shabaab has reach to carry out attacks in Mogadishu but no overt presence. There have been substantial improvements in the security situation in Mogadishu, and the city is considered as tough but liveable. Furthermore, many different clans are present in Mogadishu and the city is seen as a melting pot of the different Somali clans. According to the source a growing number of the diaspora is returning to Mogadishu and it was not therefore unusual to see Somalis of westernised appearance in and around town.

Kismayo and Baidoa are safe compared to their respective hinterlands but not as safe as Mogadishu.

People from Dadaab are able to return to Kismayo but it would be more complicated for Somalis who had been living in Europe to return to Kismayo.

#### **60. Possible al-Shabaab targets in areas under the effective control of AMISOM/SNA**

The main targets are likely to be people working for the federal government, AMISOM, westerners, and others closely associated with the government. The source said it was not aware of evidence whereby al-Shabaab is routinely and directly targeting "ordinary" civilians or returnees from the diaspora. The source did not recall any women returning without a network but added that it in itself is unusual to find Somali women without network.

#### **61. Possible al-Shabaab targets in areas under the control of al-Shabaab**

Al-Shabaab has some popular support and even though its interpretation of Islam is strict it is not completely foreign to Somalis. Al-Shabaab administration brings resemblance of a functioning state

providing basic services, stability and efficient taxation, and their presence is not necessarily felt with hostility and will often be preferred to the presence of Kenyan and Ethiopian AMISOM troops. The source added that over 70% of the Somali population is under the age of 30, and accordingly, most civilians have only experienced armed conflict and a non-functioning state. Al-Shabaab should therefore not necessarily be regarded as an alternative to government, but rather as offering stability as an alternative to armed conflict and corruption.

According to the source it is only when one rejects, or is perceived to behave nonconforming to, al-Shabaab's way of life that this person becomes exposed. However, the source stressed that especially women would have to conform to al-Shabaab norms. Ethiopian and Kenyan troops are especially targeted by al-Shabaab, but all associated with the federal government are also targeted.

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## Annex B – Terms of reference

### Security situation, al-Shabaab presence, and target groups

1. Security situation
  - 1.1. Overall security situation in South and Central Somalia
  - 1.2. The extent of al-Shabaab control and presence, including the hinterlands
  - 1.3. Information on the security situation in cities/villages in the following regions:
    - Banadir (Mogadishu)
    - Middle Shabelle
    - Lower Juba
    - Hiraan
    - Lower Shabelle
    - Galgaduud
    - Gedo
    - Bay
    - Bakool
2. Possible al-Shabaab targets in areas under the effective control of AMISOM/SNAF
  - Al-Shabaab defectors, government employees, and government collaborators
  - Journalists, human rights advocates, employees of NGO's
  - Small business owners who trade/deal with the government and/or AMISOM/SNAF
  - Women unwilling to marry al-Shabaab fighters and/or women whose husbands have fled attempted forced recruitment
  - Single women
3. Forced recruitment to al-Shabaab in cities/villages under the effective control of AMISOM/SNAF
4. Possible al-Shabaab targets in areas under the control of al-Shabaab
  - Persons returning to an al-Shabaab area
  - Persons whose conduct or appearance are opposed to al-Shabaab
  - Women unwilling to marry al-Shabaab fighters and/or women whose husbands have fled attempted forced recruitment
  - Single women

## Annex C – Map of Somalia

Somalia reference map 2012.<sup>215</sup>



<sup>215</sup> UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). Somalia Administrative Map.

[http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/120805\\_OCHASom\\_Administrative\\_Map\\_Somalia\\_A4\\_0.pdf](http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/120805_OCHASom_Administrative_Map_Somalia_A4_0.pdf)