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Somalia - Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on Thursday 13 June 2019

Information on the current security situation in Somaliland

In June 2019 *BBC News* states that:

> "Somaliland is a breakaway, semi-desert territory on the coast of the Gulf of Aden, which has never been internationally accepted as an independent state. It declared independence after the overthrow of a Somali military dictator in 1991. It has a working political system, government institutions, a police force and its own currency. The region is considered more stable than the rest of Somalia…" (BBC News (3 June 2019) *Maymona Abdi and Karima Watts describe Somaliland detention*, pp.1-2).

In May 2019 the *Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs* states that:

> "There were hardly any attacks by Al-Shabaab in Somaliland. Checks are carried out along all access roads and travellers must show a passport to enter Somaliland. The security apparatus in Somaliland is effective. There have been attempted attacks in recent years, but these have been thwarted. The population composition in Somaliland is much more homogeneous than in other parts of Somalia. There is one dominant clan, with subclans. A confidential source reports that there is strong social control in Somaliland: 'People know exactly what is happening in their neighbourhood'. A community watch system is used…" (Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs (29 May 2019) *Country of Origin Information Report on South and Central Somalia*, p.10).

A report issued in May 2019 by *Voice of America* points out that:

> "Somaliland now has its own police, army and currency, and has held regular elections for parliament and a president. It enjoys relative peace and stability, unlike Somalia, where African troops are helping the government fight al-Shabab and Islamic State militants" (Voice of America (17 May 2019) *Somaliland Celebrates Independence Despite Lack of International Recognition*).

In May 2010 the *United Nations Security Council* states in a report that:

> "On 7 April, fighting between "Somaliland" forces and a local militia, reportedly supported by Puntland, resulted in an unknown number of fatalities. The incident demonstrated the continued volatility in the Tukaraq area. Tensions also increased in the disputed Sanaag region following activities by a group of "Somaliland" troops, which had defected to Puntland" (United Nations Security Council (15 May 2019) *Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia*, p.4).

In May 2019 a report published by the *Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre* points out that:

> "Conflict also escalated in Somaliland and Puntland, particularly in the disputed areas of Sool and Sanaag regions. In May, clashes near Tukaraq in Sool triggered about

10,000 new displacements" (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (May 2019) *Somalia Figure Analysis - Displacement related to conflict and violence*, p.1).

A report published in March 2019 by the *United States Overseas Security Advisory Council* notes that:

"While Somaliland has experienced a level of stability not present in other parts of Somalia, the Department of State continues to warn U.S. citizens against all travel to Somalia, including the self-proclaimed "Independent Republic of Somaliland." Travelers who visit Somaliland despite this warning should check conditions in Somaliland before embarking on their journey. Terrorist attacks have occurred against international relief workers, including Westerners, throughout Somalia, including in Puntland and Somaliland. No area in Somalia is immune from violence; the potential exists throughout the country for hostile acts, either targeted or random, against foreign nationals at any time" (United States Overseas Security Advisory Council (20 March 2019) *Somalia 2019 Crime & Safety Report*, p.2).

Human Rights Watch in February 2019 states that:

"The Somaliland government has increased its clampdown on dissent since the current administration took office in December 2017" (Human Rights Watch (20 February 2019) *Somaliland: Free Poet Detained for Critical Poems*).

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This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

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