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Technical assistance and capacity-building

Assistance to Somalia in the field of human rights

Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights*

Summary

The present report, submitted pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 60/28, covers the period from 9 October 2025 to 30 June 2026. It provides an overview of developments affecting the human rights situation in Somalia, including key security, legislative and policy developments. The report notes the country's engagement with human rights mechanisms and outlines technical assistance provided by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. The report concludes with recommendations addressed to the Federal Government of Somalia, States Members of the United Nations and civil society organizations.

* Agreement was reached to publish the present report after the standard publication date owing to circumstances beyond the submitter's control.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report covers the period from 9 October 2025 to 30 June 2026 and is submitted pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 60/28, in which the Council requested the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to provide technical assistance and capacity-building to Somalia, to assist Somalia in the implementation of its international human rights obligations and commitments and to assess, monitor and report on the situation of human rights in Somalia in consultation with the Independent National Human Rights Commission, civil society and other relevant authorities.

2. The report highlights recent key security, legislative and policy developments affecting the human rights situation in Somalia. It also provides a general overview of the human rights situation and the country's engagement with human rights mechanisms. In addition, the report describes capacity-building and technical assistance provided by OHCHR during the reporting period, including technical support related to the establishment and operationalization of the National Independent Human Rights Commission, as part of the efforts to implement Human Rights Council resolution 60/28. The report concludes with recommendations addressed to the Federal Government of Somalia, States Members of the United Nations and civil society organizations.

3. On 6 May 2026, the Federal Government of Somalia and the United Nations, represented by OHCHR, signed a host country agreement for the establishment of a human rights office in the country. The full establishment of the office is subject to adequate funding. Once established, the OHCHR presence will contribute towards the continuity of United Nations human rights engagement following the scheduled closure of the United Nations Transitional Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNTMIS) on 31 October 2026. Its presence is expected to help strengthen national human rights protection capacities and reinforce the country's commitment to international human rights standards.

II. Methodology

4. The present report is based on information collected by OHCHR through direct engagement with a range of stakeholders, including government officials, the National Independent Human Rights Commission, the African Union Support and Stabilization Mission in Somalia (AUSSOM), United Nations country team entities in Somalia and representatives of civil society organizations.

5. The findings were further substantiated through a review of official government and institutional publications and data provided by relevant stakeholders, and other credible and reliable publicly available sources, including reports, studies, media publications and related documentation. The findings and recommendations in the present report are based on the analysis of the information gathered and corroborated in compliance with OHCHR methodology for human rights monitoring. An unedited draft of the report was shared with the Permanent Mission of Somalia to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva on 3 August 2026. Observations from the Government were sent on 18 August 2026 and were duly considered, to the extent possible, in the finalization of the report, taking into account the limited time available for translation and publication and strict word-limit constraints.

III. International legal framework

6. Somalia is a Party to some of the core international human rights treaties, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. However, Somalia has not yet ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,

the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, and a number of optional protocols, including the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty. Somalia is a Party to the four Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949.[1]

IV. Engagement with human rights mechanisms

7. On 8 May 2026, Somalia underwent its fourth universal periodic review. The outcome report is scheduled for formal adoption in September 2026.

8. At the regional level, the federal Parliament adopted a bill on ratification of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child in October 2025. The Minister of Family and Human Rights Development formally deposited the instrument of ratification with the African Union on 4 April 2026.[2]

V. Recent developments

A. Policy and legislative reforms

9. In the light of the UNTMIS transition, the Federal Government of Somalia adopted, in January 2025, and implemented the Somalia Human Rights Transition Plan (2025–2026), signalling the country's growing commitment to embedding human rights principles within its governance structures and public institutions, with the United Nations continuing to play a critical role in supporting national institutions, monitoring compliance and advancing the protection and promotion of human rights for all.

10. The Plan provides an opportunity for consolidating reforms, strengthening accountability and embedding human rights principles across governance structures. At the same time, sustained attention will be required to address potential gaps in implementation, including with regard to resource mobilization, institutional capacity and ensuring inclusive participation of women and marginalized groups.

11. The Human Rights Transition Plan supports the implementation of the country's National Transformation Plan (NTP) 2025–2029, adopted in March 2025, which places strong emphasis on governance, justice and social equity, underscoring the need for reforms that are consistent with international human rights law and standards and that strengthen accountability mechanisms. While the National Transformation Plan represents a significant step forward, its successful implementation will require an enabling environment, including political will and effective coordination.

12. In line with recommendations of the Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Somalia,[3] the Federal Government completed its review and published the constitution in March 2026. However, some provisions continue to raise serious concerns. For example, the adopted amendments retain the age of legal majority at 18 years but lower the age of "maturity" to 15 years, which creates, among other issues, significant uncertainty regarding child marriage and the age of consent.[4] This could weaken protection and may be incompatible with the State's obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

13. In January 2026, the Federal Government adopted the Somali Juvenile Justice Law (Law No. 48) – an important step towards strengthening the national legal and institutional framework for the protection of children's rights. The law is aimed at enhancing safeguards

[1] See the treaty body database, available at https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/TreatyBodyExternal/treaty.aspx.

[2] The ratifications table is available at https://www.acerwc.africa/en/member-states/ratifications.

[3] See, for example, A/HRC/60/88.

[4] Article 28 of the Constitution, which includes a provision on marriage, refers to the age of "maturity" (15 years).

for children in contact with the justice system by promoting child-sensitive procedures, strengthening legal protections and aligning the administration of juvenile justice with international standards.

14. OHCHR received information that the Federal Government, following Cabinet approval,[5] transmitted the draft Penal Code to Parliament, where it underwent first reading in January 2026. This reflects ongoing efforts to strengthen the country's legal and criminal justice frameworks. Serious concerns remain, however, regarding provisions of the draft Penal Code, whose application may unduly restrict the exercise of fundamental rights and freedoms. These concerns relate to the application of provisions that may infringe the rights to freedom of expression, freedom of peaceful assembly and privacy. In particular, offences related to public incitement, morality, online conduct and the protection of the State and public authorities may be applied in a manner that risks limiting these rights beyond what is permissible under international human rights law. Additionally, some provisions related to the definition of rape, and some proposed modalities of penalties, including the death penalty, may contravene the State's international human rights obligations. Addressing these concerns during the parliamentary review process, with full public consultation and inclusion of national and international experts, would provide an important opportunity to align the draft legislation with the State's international human rights obligations and its own constitutional guarantees.

15. Progress was made towards strengthening national frameworks when the federal Cabinet endorsed the bill on the prohibition of female genital mutilation and the National Strategy on Women, Peace and Security on 20 November 2025;[6] the Strategy includes specific goals on women in the security forces. South-West State enacted comprehensive legislation against the practice of female genital mutilation in December 2025. There are also commendable efforts by Hirshabelle State, which has prepared a draft bill on female genital mutilation that is awaiting legislative review and approval. The offences of rape and indecency bill is also awaiting review and approval at the federal parliamentary level.

16. In April 2026, the Council of Ministers of the Federal Government adopted the Protection of Civilians Policy. Federal Government lead institutions, including the Ministry of Defence, have taken steps towards its operationalization. The policy provides a framework to promote adherence to international humanitarian and human rights law. Its adoption is particularly significant given the ongoing risks faced by the civilian population in the context of the armed conflict.

B. Security situation

17. Al-Shabaab reportedly intensified its activities across the Jubbaland and Shabelle Dhexe regions, particularly in areas affected by the drawdown of the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia, the predecessor of AUSSOM. Al-Shabaab reportedly conducted sustained attacks against government positions and employed suicide attacks and improvised explosive devices, including vehicle-borne explosives. Regions most affected included Banaadir, Bay, Juba Hoose and Shabelle Hoose, with significant incidents reported in locations such as Baidoa, Jannaale, Kismaayo and Qoryooley. In response, the security forces, [7] supported by international partners, reportedly increased counter-terrorism operations, including air strikes.[8]

[5] A/HRC/WG.6/52/SOM/1, para. 17.

[6] Somali Stream, "Somalia approves law prohibiting female genital mutilation and the National Strategy on Women, Peace and Security", 20 November 2025.

[7] For the purposes of the present report, "security forces" refers to the Somali National Army, the National Intelligence and Security Agency, the Danab unit (special forces) and the Somali Police Force.

[8] Security Council Report, "December 2025 monthly forecast". Available at https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2025-12/somalia-42.php.
See also United States Africa Command, "U.S. forces conduct strike targeting ISIS-Somalia", 7 May 2026. Available at https://www.africom.mil/pressrelease/36471/us-forces conduct-strike-targeting-isis-somalia.

18. During the reporting period, military operations were reportedly carried out against the Somali branch of Da'esh in the Puntland region.[9] In March 2026, clashes between security forces and Al-Shabaab around the Mubarak Forward Operating Base in Shabelle Hoose reportedly resulted in the killing of at least 40 Al-Shabaab fighters during attempts to regain control of the area.[10]

19. In Baidoa, escalating tension between the Federal Government and South-West State authorities led federal security forces to assume control of the city on 30 March 2026.[11] The incident reportedly resulted in the deaths and injuries, the displacement of an estimated 8,461 households, predominantly comprising women and children, and disruption of social services and livelihoods.[12]

20. In Mogadishu, on 3 and 4 June 2026, increased tensions linked to the electoral and constitutional reforms reportedly resulted in armed confrontations in populated urban areas between security forces and opposition-affiliated militias, causing deaths and injuries as well as displacement and damage to properties.[13] On 4 June 2026, the Secretary-General expressed alarm at the violence, called on all stakeholders to exercise restraint, resume talks and ensure the protection of civilians and civilian infrastructure, and recalled the risk of repeating the 2021 crisis.[14] Similarly, the international community and UNTMIS issued a joint statement, also in June, urging Somali leaders to resume dialogue, agree on an election road map, avoid escalating tensions and prioritize the country's national interest, while offering support for a Somali-led dialogue.[15] Although the armed confrontation has subsided as a result of concerted efforts by different actors, there is still no clear, agreed road map on how to move forward in addressing the political crisis. As noted by the Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Somalia, prioritizing military response over determined reconciliation has not resulted in the protection of civilians, nor in the advancement of peace and security.[16]

21. Ahl al-Sunna wal-Jama'a, a non-State armed group, was delisted from the annexes to the annual report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict published in June 2026, which identify parties responsible for the recruitment and use of children.[17] The delisting followed a formal review and verification process conducted through the United Nations monitoring and reporting mechanism on children and armed conflict. The Somali National Army and the Somali Police Force were delisted for the violation of recruitment and use of children in 2025.[18] The delisting reflects progress made by Somalia in implementing child protection commitments, including measures aimed at ending and preventing child recruitment, as well as broader efforts to integrate former Ahl al-Sunna wal-Jama'a elements into security forces and strengthen compliance with international child protection standards. Continued monitoring and comprehensive efforts to ensure the full social reintegration of, and mental support for, those concerned remain essential to sustain child protection and prevent the recurrence of grave violations.

[9] Human Rights Watch, "Somalia: events of 2025", in *World Report 2026*.
[10] AUSSOM, "Over 40 Al-Shabaab militants killed as AUSSOM and SNAF defend Mubarak", 26 March 2026.
[11] Omar Mahmood, "Somali Government topples state leader as electoral dispute escalates", International Crisis Group, 31 March 2026.
[12] Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, "Over 50,000 people displaced following political escalation in Baidoa, South-West State", Protection and Solutions Monitoring, Flash Alert No. 12, April 2026.
[13] *Al Jazeera* staff and others, "Fighting in Somalia's capital as anger over election delay erupts", 4 June 2026.
[14] See https://media.un.org/unifeed/en/asset/d358/d3582763.
[15] See https://untmis.unmissions.org/en/news/joint-statement-of-the-international-community-on-the-political-situation-in-somalia.
[16] A/HRC/60/88, para. 88.
[17] A/80/723-S/2026/357, para. 332.
[18] A/79/878-S/2025/247, para. 343.

VI. Human rights situation

A. Right to life

22. The reporting period saw the continued application of the death penalty by State authorities following convictions by civilian and military courts. Documented cases included eight executions reportedly carried out by members of the Somali Police Force, the National Intelligence and Security Agency, the Galmudug police force and the South-West State police force after individuals had been convicted of offences that included murder and terrorism. While some of those executed were reportedly represented by legal counsel and afforded an opportunity to appeal, OHCHR remains concerned about due process guarantees and compliance with international human rights standards, particularly in cases involving military courts.

23. According to information received by OHCHR, 11 incidents suggesting the use of lethal force by security forces resulted in the killing of 13 individuals, including one woman and one boy, and the injury of 22 persons. One incident that may amount to extrajudicial execution was reported in March 2026: a man who had reportedly surrendered to the authorities was executed by Galmudug police personnel following accusations of involvement in a clan-related killing. In addition, OHCHR is concerned about allegations of arbitrary deprivation of life and the use of non-official quasi-judicial proceedings implemented by local clans in circumstances where individuals were under the custody or control of State authorities.

24. More broadly, members of security forces allegedly used unnecessary or disproportionate force resulting in the deaths of and injuries to unarmed individuals during security operations, law enforcement activities and responses to public demonstrations. Reportedly, seven incidents resulted in five killings and 11 persons injured in Jubbaland and South-West State; the justification cited was the individuals' alleged failure to comply with security instructions. Furthermore, four men were reportedly killed and eight others injured when police used force during protests against evictions in the Heliwa and Kaaran districts, Mogadishu, on 21 February 2026. OHCHR notes that these incidents point to a recurring unwarranted use of lethal force in policing contexts, raising concerns of violations of the right to life.

25. The use of force by security forces should comply with international human rights norms and standards, including the principles of legality, necessity, proportionality and precaution.[19] The investigation of alleged violations in a prompt, independent and impartial manner is critical to establishing accountability, including along the chain of command, and to ensuring guarantees of non-recurrence.[20]

B. Arbitrary deprivation of liberty and attacks on freedom of expression

26. Reports indicate the continued occurrence of arbitrary arrest and detention of individuals, as well as undue restrictions on the enjoyment of the right to freedom of expression, allegedly attributable to security forces. Reports also suggests a persistent practice in which individuals perceived to be critical of the authorities, including journalists, media workers, civil society actors and community members, are disproportionately affected. Arrests and detentions have frequently been carried out on the basis of broadly defined accusations relating to threats to public order, criticism of government actions or the reporting of sensitive issues, including forced evictions. In several reported cases, the deprivation of liberty appears to have been linked to the exercise of the rights to freedom of expression and access to information, raising concerns that such arrests and detentions may constitute arbitrary deprivation of liberty under international human rights law. OHCHR is concerned about the shrinking civic space and the use of security measures to deter public scrutiny and

[19] Human Rights Committee, general comment No. 36 (2018) on the right to life, paras. 12, 13, 38 and 64.

[20] Ibid., paras. 13, 27 and 28

dissent, which could have implications for the protection of human rights, public participation and accountability.

27. Reports received by OHCHR indicate that between October 2025 and June 2026, 13 male journalists and media workers were reportedly detained without formal charges and held for prolonged periods before their release.[21] Similar practices were observed in other incidents involving individuals and political actors across different locations. The reported absence of due process safeguards, including the failure to promptly bring detainees before a competent authority or to formally charge them, may amount to a violation of international human rights norms and standards.

28. On 29 November 2025, a journalist was arrested by the Somaliland police force in Hargeysa and was subsequently released without charge.[22] The killing of a journalist by a Jubbaland police force officer in Kismaayo on 2 March 2026,[23] and the abduction of a journalist by unidentified armed men in Mogadishu on 23 February 2026, underscore the persistent security threats and protection concerns faced by media workers. The reported arrest of two individuals, including a woman who was sentenced to three years of imprisonment, in connection with their social media activity further points to growing restrictions on media freedom, extending beyond traditional media to digital platforms and online civic engagement spaces.[24] This illustrates the increasingly challenging operating environment for journalists and other media professionals in Somalia, which risks contributing to a climate of intimidation and self-censorship, with adverse implications for media freedom and access to information.

29. OHCHR continues to record concerns regarding the lack of accountability for violations of freedom of expression, arbitrary deprivation of life, sexual and gender-based violence and arbitrary arrests and detentions that are similar to concerns raised by the Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Somalia.[25]

30. Reports also indicate that the number of arrests and detentions of humanitarian personnel in Somalia, including contractors involved in the transportation of humanitarian supplies, increased during the reporting period. Arrests and detentions are emerging as increasingly significant impediments to the delivery of humanitarian assistance. Most incidents were reportedly attributable to State authorities, including police, military and intelligence actors. The incidents reported were concentrated in South-West State, particularly in the Bay region, including in Baidoa and Buurhakaba. Information received indicates that arrests and detentions were commonly linked to instances in which humanitarian personnel were confronted with administrative and clearance-related requirements, security operations or screenings. Reportedly, some arrests and detentions were based on perceptions of political affiliation or association with reporting and social media activity. OHCHR is concerned that the persistence and geographic concentration of such incidents may adversely impact the operating environment for humanitarian actors and their ability to provide timely and impartial assistance to affected populations.

31. Several incidents of deprivation of liberty through abduction were also recorded during the reporting period. Four persons were reportedly abducted in separate incidents, including two women who were subsequently executed by Al-Shabaab in Juba Hoose, a journalist abducted by unidentified perpetrators in Mogadishu and later released, and a medical professional allegedly abducted by clan militia in Gaalkacyo.[26] While the number of documented cases remained limited, partly due to underreporting owing to a lack of access

21 See also National Union of Somali Journalists, “NUSOJ raises alarm over arrests and harassment of journalists amid rising political tensions in Somalia's capital Mogadishu”, 10 May 2026.

22 Somali Journalist Syndicate, “Somaliland police free journalist Mohamed Andar after withdrawing charges against him”, 4 December 2025.

23 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, “UNESCO Director-General condemns the killing of media worker Abshir Khalif Shide Omar in Somalia”, 31 March 2026.

24 Similar observations have previously been recorded by special procedure mandate holders. See, for example, A/HRC/61/52/Add.2.

25 A/HRC/60/88, para. 66.

26 *WardheerNews*, “Kidnapping of MSF doctor exposes Galkayo’s cycle of violence and impunity”, 22 April 2026.

to certain zones and fear of reporting on the part of some victims, these incidents highlight the continued use of abduction as a means of intimidation, coercion and control. The targeting of certain groups of individuals, including media and health personnel, underscores the persistent protection risks faced by individuals engaged in essential public and professional activities and raises concerns regarding respect for human rights.

C. Rights of women and children

32. Sexual and gender-based violence remained a serious human rights concern. Reports indicate that women and girls continued to be disproportionally affected by and subjected to sexual violence, including rape, gang rape, forced marriage, sexual assault and forced pregnancy. These acts were attributed to unidentified armed actors, followed by Al-Shabaab and members of clan militias.[27] Such violations and abuses have profound and long-lasting physical, psychological, social and economic consequences for survivors and contribute to a climate of fear and insecurity, particularly in conflict-affected and displacement settings. Women and girls living with disabilities and from minority clans in displacement sites are reported to be particularly vulnerable to sexual abuse and harassment as they seek access to economic and food resources. While three cases resulted in the arrest of perpetrators, impunity generally prevailed. This underscores challenges raised in the final report submitted under the mandate of Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Somalia, including with regard to limited access to justice for victims.[28]

33. OHCHR is concerned about the delay in advancing, in federal Parliament, the offences of rape and indecency bill, which is aimed at strengthening protection against sexual violence, harassment and abuse. Ensuring that legislative frameworks are fully aligned with the State's international human rights obligations remains essential for preventing sexual and gender-based violence, ensuring accountability and providing effective remedies and support for survivors. Concerns also remain regarding the absence of legislation explicitly prohibiting child marriage, particularly in the context of recent constitutional amendments relating to the definition of a child. This may weaken protection for girls and increase their exposure to early marriage and other harmful practices.

34. Reductions in humanitarian and development funding, including the closure of one-stop centres for survivors of sexual and gender-based violence, have adversely affected the availability and accessibility of essential services for survivors of sexual violence, including medical care, psychosocial support, legal assistance and transitional safe shelters for survivors fleeing sites of violence. These funding constraints risk undermining prevention efforts and limiting access to survivor-centred assistance.

35. In the context of worsening humanitarian conditions and growing concerns of the risk of famine in some areas, notably Buurhakaba, in the Bay region, the risk of sexual and gender-based violence against women and girls has increased significantly. Food insecurity, displacement, poverty and reliance on negative coping mechanisms heighten exposure to exploitation, intimate partner abuse and sexual violence. Addressing these risks should remain a priority within broader efforts to protect human rights and respond to the humanitarian situation in Somalia.

36. OHCHR remains concerned about continued reports of grave violations against children, particularly killing and maiming and conflict-related sexual violence. During the reporting period, at least 19 children (11 boys, 6 girls and 2 children of unspecified gender) were reportedly killed and at least 28 children (13 boys and 15 girls) injured. Most child casualties were reportedly caused by armed violence, including crossfire between Al-Shabaab and security forces, and the use of indirect fire and improvised explosive devices, highlighting the continued impact of the conflict on children and the persistent risks faced by children living in conflict-affected areas. Additionally, incidents of rape affecting children were documented, including the rape of three girls in October 2025 and February 2026.

[27] S/2026/321, para. 56.
[28] A/HRC/60/88, paras. 42–48 and 97.

37. The absence of references to a policy on a minimum quota of 30 per cent for women's representation in the ongoing discussions on the electoral model and the transition towards direct elections, combined with financial, security and sociocultural barriers, continued to have an impact on women's meaningful participation and representation in political and public life. In addition, women human rights defenders, women journalists and women in public life reported threats, intimidation and online harassment, which further constrained their engagement in civic space and public decision-making.

D. Economic, social and cultural rights

38. Reports indicate that an estimated 6 million people – 31 per cent of the analysed population – faced high levels of acute food insecurity between April and June 2026, including almost 1.9 million persons classified as "in emergency" (Integrated Food Security Phase 4). Nearly 1.88 million children are expected to require treatment for acute malnutrition in 2026 – 42,000 more than previously projected.[29] In the reporting period, Hirshabelle, Jubbaland, Puntland and South-West State experienced prolonged drought that severely impacted livelihoods, particularly for pastoral and agropastoral communities.[30]

39. The situation is compounded by displacement, forced eviction and conflict, and by declining humanitarian aid. As of January 2026, several primary healthcare centres across the Galmudug, Juba Hoose, Puntland and Somaliland regions had reportedly been closed. The loss of these essential services poses a grave threat to the right to health, particularly for women, persons with disabilities, children[31] and older persons. Critical shortages of medical supplies, including therapeutic nutrition commodities, were reported in Afgoye District, Shabelle Hoose region. Spikes in communicable diseases, including suspected measles cases, acute watery diarrhoea/cholera and diphtheria, were reported, further exacerbating public health risks.[32]

40. Internally displaced persons reportedly continued to experience challenges in accessing life-saving services. Newly displaced populations in various locations faced limited access to shelter, safe water, hygiene and sanitation facilities and healthcare. Displacement into overcrowded settlements with limited access to health, water, sanitation and hygiene services and adequate food is exacerbating vulnerabilities, including increased risk of disease outbreaks and malnutrition.[33]

41. The situation risks being exacerbated by the above-mentioned attacks against humanitarian workers, the persistent high levels of insecurity and the funding gap created by the withdrawal of some key donors.[34]

VII. National human rights and reporting framework

42. During the reporting period, OHCHR provided technical support towards the establishment of the National Independent Human Rights Commission in collaboration with the Ministry of Family and Human Rights Development. Efforts included the training of members of the interim selection committee, the preparation and administration of

[29] "Somalia: IPC acute food insecurity and acute malnutrition analysis, April–June 2026", 14 May 2026, available at https://www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/docs/IPC_Somalia_Projection_Update_Acute_Food_Insecurity_Malnutrition_Apr_Jun2026_Report.pdf.

[30] Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Somalia: 2025 drought emergency – situation report No. 1 (as of 27 November 2025). Available at: https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/somalia/somalia-2025-drought-emergency-situation-report-no-1-27-november-2025.

[31] Ibid.

[32] World Health Organization, "Somalia: WHO Health Emergency Appeal 2026", 3 February 2026.

[33] Health Cluster Somalia, "Health Cluster Bulletin: February 2026", March 2026, available at: https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/somalia-health-cluster-bulletin-february-2026.

[34] Abdirahman Hussein and Edwin Okoth, "Somalia malnutrition response hit by more than 80% funding drop as child hunger surges, MSF says", Reuters, 11 August 2026.

examinations and other aspects of the recruitment process for commissioners. Following completion of the vetting process, the commissioners were appointed in December 2025; the Commission's leadership was elected and sworn in on 4 February 2026. As part of an effort to operationalize the Commission, OHCHR continued to provide technical support and advice on the development of governance instruments for the operationalization of the Commission.

43. The establishment of the Commission and the appointment of its commissioners, as well as the efforts made to operationalize the Commission, are important steps taken by the Federal Government to strengthen the national human rights protection framework. As a newly established national human rights institution, the Commission is faced with challenges affecting its effective operationalization. These include delays in establishing key institutional structures, developing internal policies and procedures and operationalizing its presence at the federal and state levels. The Commission also faces significant technical capacity and expertise gaps, particularly in areas such as human rights monitoring and reporting, complaint handling and investigations, data management, treaty reporting and engagement with human rights mechanisms. Limited and unpredictable financial resources constrain the Commission's ability to recruit qualified personnel, establish adequate infrastructure, conduct outreach activities and implement its strategic plan. The Commission requires sustained technical support to ensure compliance with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles) and to advance towards accreditation by the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions. The Commission is fundamental to ensuring progress towards nationally led accountability and protection mechanisms. It is essential that the independence of this mechanism is respected and protected, in line with the Paris Principles.

44. OHCHR developed an activity plan prioritizing the strengthening of the technical capacity of the Ministry of Family and Human Rights Development to effectively fulfil its role as the country's lead institution and national focal point for the national mechanism for implementation, reporting and follow-up. A fully functioning mechanism is critical for promoting a coherent, coordinated and sustainable approach to reporting and implementation while enhancing institutional accountability, intergovernmental cooperation and engagement with international human rights mechanisms.

VIII. Implementation of Human Rights Council resolution 60/28

45. Pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 60/28, OHCHR and the Ministry of Family and Human Rights Development identified priority areas of collaboration and are jointly developing a two-year workplan (July 2026–June 2028), including actions required to support the effective implementation of the workplan.[35]

46. Following the adoption of resolution 60/28, OHCHR, through its multi-country office in East Africa, undertook preparatory actions to operationalize the resolution, including through the deployment of staff. Additionally, the multi-country office maintained regular engagement with the Ministry of Family and Human Rights Development, the National Independent Human Rights Commission, United Nations entities, civil society organizations and Somalia-focused international community actors based in Mogadishu and Nairobi.

47. The general United Nations liquidity crisis adversely affected the ability of OHCHR to implement the planned capacity-building activities for the Federal Government under resolution 60/28. These delays also impeded the timely recruitment and deployment of personnel.

[35] Key priority areas: operationalization and strengthening of the National Independent Human Rights Commission; strengthening the national mechanism for implementation, reporting and follow-up; legal and policy reform support; child protection; survivor-centred referral and community protection systems; civic space; human rights defenders, journalists and rights holder empowerment; federal-state human rights coordination and capacity-building; human rights data; monitoring, reporting and learning; resource mobilization; and sustainability.

48. In the context of the conclusion of the mandate of UNTMIS and its human rights component at the end of October 2026, the host country agreement signed by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Minister of Family and Human Rights Development on 6 May 2026 presents an opportunity for sustained OHCHR support to the Federal Government with regard to fulfilling the State's human rights commitments and serves to avoid creating a gap in human rights monitoring and reporting, civilian protection analysis, capacity-building and advocacy work. However, for the effective operationalization of the agreement and the full establishment of a country office, OHCHR requires adequate human and financial resources and the continuing commitment of the Somali authorities.

A. Capacity-building and technical assistance for federal and regional state institutions

49. In collaboration with the federal Ministry of Health, OHCHR organized a three-day training in Mogadishu in late October 2025 to strengthen the capacity of health workers to integrate human rights-based approaches into service delivery, with a focus on addressing the needs of marginalized groups. A total of 16 health service providers, including five women, were trained.

50. In collaboration with the Somali National Library, a public consultation on the draft national library and archives act was convened in Mogadishu in February 2026. The process brought together 30 participants (11 women and 19 men) and was aimed at strengthening national ownership of legislative reforms relating to promoting cultural rights.

51. At the regional level, advocacy with the South-West State Ministry of Environment and Climate Change culminated in the Cabinet's approval of the South-West environmental management policy in October 2025. The effort was aimed at strengthening frameworks for protecting the right to a clean, safe, and healthy environment, and involved extensive consultations with stakeholders, including representatives of persons with disabilities.

52. OHCHR continued to advocate for the strengthening of legislation to enhance the protection of human rights. In February 2026, in Garoowe, Nugaal region, OHCHR, in collaboration with the Puntland Ministry of Women Development and Family Affairs, advocated for the adoption of the regional bill on female genital mutilation. The advocacy meeting brought together representatives from the Puntland Ministry of Health and Ministry of Justice, civil society organizations, international non-governmental organizations and United Nations entities.

B. Capacity-building for security forces

53. During the reporting period, OHCHR strengthened the capacity of security actors to comply with international human rights law, international humanitarian law and the human rights due diligence policy on United Nations support to non-United Nations security forces. Capacity-building initiatives reached at least 150 security personnel, including 114 federal member state police officers and 36 Somali National Army and civil-military coordination personnel, enhancing their knowledge on human rights, civilian protection and civil-military cooperation.

54. OHCHR supported efforts to strengthen the protection of children affected by armed conflict. Following the adoption by the Government of a road map on strengthening the protection of children affected by armed conflict in December 2025, OHCHR and partners facilitated high-level consultations and technical workshops involving government and security institutions to advance implementation of the road map, update child protection procedures, clarify institutional responsibilities and strengthen accountability for grave violations of the rights of the child.

55. In December 2025 and February 2026, OHCHR supported two high-level consultations convened by the federal Ministry of Defence on preventing and responding to conflict-related sexual violence. These consultations resulted in an agreement to strengthen

victim-centred responses and accountability measures and to develop an action plan to support compliance with international human rights obligations.

56. OHCHR further continued engagement with government coordination mechanisms and sub-working groups on children and armed conflict, bringing together national and subnational stakeholders to strengthen coordination, advocacy and accountability for violations affecting children in situations of armed conflict.

C. Capacity-building for the National Independent Human Rights Commission

57. During the reporting period, OHCHR provided support to the National Independent Human Rights Commission through foundational training, strategic advisory services and the organization of an experience-sharing visit to a peer national human rights institution in the region. OHCHR conducted two induction workshops for commissioners, in April and May 2026, on international human rights law, international humanitarian law and the mandate of the Commission.

58. The experience-sharing visit was to the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights in June 2026. The initiative was aimed at enabling commissioners to acquire practical insights into institutional operationalization, governance, accountability frameworks and safeguards for independence. In addition, OHCHR supported the National Independent Human Rights Commission in strengthening its engagement with key partners and donors based in Nairobi.

59. In June 2026, OHCHR engaged with the commissioners to discuss the operationalization of the Commission. Key strategic and operational priorities were identified, including the development of manuals on human rights investigations, as well as tools and guidelines aimed at strengthening the Commission’s institutional and technical capacity.

D. Capacity-building for civil society organizations

60. OHCHR supported efforts to strengthen civil society engagement with human rights mechanisms, expand civic space and enhance human rights awareness and advocacy across Somalia. Through capacity assessment, stakeholder consultations, training and outreach activities, OHCHR engaged civil society organizations, community leaders, minority groups, students, health professionals and government stakeholders.

61. To strengthen engagement with international and national human rights mechanisms, OHCHR facilitated a national consultation in Mogadishu that brought together representatives of civil society organizations to contribute to the development of a stakeholder submission for the universal periodic review, highlighting key human rights concerns and recommendations. In addition, OHCHR trained 11 representatives of civil society organizations, including three women, on engagement with human rights mechanisms and advocacy for civic space and supported a civil society organization forum with the National Independent Human Rights Commission, attended by 30 participants (including 11 women), which resulted in an agreement to establish a coordination mechanism for information-sharing, direct engagement and joint advocacy.

62. OHCHR also implemented a broad range of human rights capacity-building and advocacy initiatives, reaching approximately 406 participants (178 women and 228 men) in Baidoa, Beledweyne, Guri Ceel, Hargeysa, Kismaayo and Mogadishu. Training sessions and workshops addressed topics such as human rights and public budgeting, economic, social and cultural rights, minority rights and inclusion, disability rights, the right to health, access to justice, protection of civilians, and human rights documentation and advocacy. These interventions were aimed at strengthening capacity among civil society organizations to advocate for human rights, engage with protection mechanisms, promote inclusion and respond to the needs of vulnerable and marginalized communities.

63. OHCHR further promoted community awareness through outreach activities that engaged 165 participants (83 women and 82 men), including young people, students and community representatives. These initiatives promoted the rights of minority and marginalized groups, supported youth participation in human rights advocacy through school-based human rights clubs and strengthened local collaboration with civil-military coordination mechanisms on civilian protection. A radio awareness-raising campaign further amplified messages on minority rights and social inclusion for increased public awareness and stronger community-level advocacy networks.

IX. Conclusions

64. **During the reporting period, the Federal Government of Somalia took steps towards strengthening its institutional and normative human rights framework, including through legal reforms, policy development and engagement with international human rights mechanisms. These efforts reflect an increasing recognition by the federal authorities of the importance of human rights in governance and State-building processes.**

65. **The human rights situation in Somalia remains complex and characterized by protracted armed conflict, insecurity, political and electoral dynamics and reduced humanitarian funding. Persistent attacks by non-State armed groups, as well as security operations by Somali security forces that may amount to contraventions of international law, both during law enforcement operations and during hostilities, continue to result in human rights violations and abuses and violations of international humanitarian law.**

66. **The overall situation in the country remained characterized by recurrent violations affecting the population, including unlawful killings, violations linked to the armed conflict, undue restrictions on fundamental freedoms, and sexual and gender-based violence. The exercise of the right to freedom of expression was constrained, and civic space remains fragile, with recurring restrictions affecting journalists, activists and media workers. Challenges related to respect for international human rights law and standards during law enforcement operations, accountability and access to economic and social rights continued to limit the tangible impact of reforms, particularly in areas affected by insecurity and displacement.**

67. **The humanitarian situation, marked by funding gaps, prolonged drought, food insecurity and displacement, continued to exacerbate existing vulnerabilities and poses significant challenges to the enjoyment of economic and social rights, particularly by internally displaced persons, women, children and marginalized communities. These conditions underscore the obstacles to the progressive realization of economic and social rights, while highlighting the State's obligation, in accordance with the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, to undertake steps to the maximum of its available resources, with a view to achieving the realization of the rights recognized in the Covenant.**

68. **These challenges underscore the need to consolidate progress through strengthened implementation of national human rights commitments and ensure sustained engagement with human rights mechanisms. Given the evolving context in the country, including the upcoming end of the mandate of UNTMIS, coordinated efforts by all national, regional and international stakeholders, including United Nations entities and Somali authorities, to ensure the protection of civilians and to enhance accountability and technical engagement will be essential to achieve durable improvements in the human rights situation.**

X. Recommendations

69. **Based on the findings contained in the present report, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights puts forward the recommendations set out below.**

70. **The Federal Government of Somalia should:**

(a) **Strengthen rule of law institutions and accountability by enhancing judicial independence, ensuring transparency and providing adequate resources for the justice sector;**

(b) **Ensure independent, impartial, transparent and timely investigations into all alleged violations and abuses of international human rights law and violations of international humanitarian law;**

(c) **Consider ratifying or acceding to international human rights treaties to which Somalia is not yet a Party, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty, and align national legislation with international human rights standards;**

(d) **Strengthen the national mechanism for implementation, reporting and follow-up by ensuring clear institutional coordination, adequate technical and financial resources and systematic and coordinated data collection to track progress on the implementation of recommendations issued by international and regional human rights mechanisms and to enhance timely and comprehensive reporting;**

(e) **Ensure the effective functioning and independence of the National Independent Human Rights Commission, including by providing it with adequate financial allocation and supporting resource mobilization efforts;**

(f) **Enhance the accountability, oversight and training of security forces to ensure compliance with international human rights law and international humanitarian law and strengthen the protection of civilians during military operations;**

(g) **Ensure that the use of force in law enforcement operations complies with relevant international human rights norms and standards;**

(h) **Take concrete measures to protect civic space, including by safeguarding freedom of expression and preventing the arbitrary arrest and detention of journalists, media workers and activists, in accordance with international human rights law and standards;**

(i) **Strengthen measures for the prevention of and response to sexual and gender-based violence, including access to justice and comprehensive protection and healthcare services for survivors;**

(j) **Promote inclusive political dialogue and participation by engaging all relevant actors, including civil society, women, young people and marginalized groups, with a view to strengthening national cohesion;**

(k) **Ensure that all legal and policy reforms undertaken by the Federal Government and the federal member state authorities, including the proposal for the amended Penal Code, are fully aligned with international human rights law;**

(l) **Ensure that all policies and frameworks related to the protection of civilians have the necessary financial, operational and political support of national and international actors to ensure their comprehensive implementation.**

71. **States Members of the United Nations should:**

(a) **Ensure continued support to the Federal Government of Somalia in its efforts to strengthen human rights, justice and accountability institutions, and to consider, in consultation with the Federal Government and other relevant stakeholders, appropriate future arrangements and mandates to sustain such support beyond the framework of Human Rights Council resolution 60/28;**

(b) **Support the full operationalization of a future OHCHR country office in Somalia to ensure continuity of engagement on human rights, including by supporting resource mobilization efforts;**

(c) **Provide sustained financial and technical support to the Federal Government of Somalia and the national human rights institution and for reform processes, and expand humanitarian and development assistance to address urgent socioeconomic needs and underlying drivers of vulnerability;**

(d) **Support capacity-building for the justice and security sectors, focusing on enhanced accountability for violations and abuses of international human rights law and violations of international humanitarian law;**

(e) **Strengthen coordinated support to address sexual and gender-based violence, including health, legal, and protection services;**

(f) **Ensure continued political engagement with the Federal Government of Somalia after the UNTMIS drawdown to mitigate risks of protection gaps;**

(g) **Maintain financial and political support to United Nations and international actors that contribute to maintaining the security and stabilization efforts in Somalia.**

72. **Civil society organizations should:**

(a) **Continue to strengthen the documentation and monitoring of the human rights situation, and sustain advocacy efforts, particularly for vulnerable and marginalized groups;**

(b) **Strengthen engagement with international and regional human rights mechanisms and support the implementation of the recommendations addressed to Somalia;**

(c) **Promote community awareness and engagement on human rights, accountability and access to services.**