

## KEY FACTS

**Official name:** Jamhuriyadda ee Soomaaliya (Republic of Somalia)

**Head of State:** President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud (from 10 Sep 2012)

**Head of government:** Prime Minister Abdi Farah Shirdon Saaid (from 6 Oct 2012)

**Ruling party:** None

**Area:** 738,000 square km

**Population:** 51.20 million (2012)\*

**Capital:** Mogadishu

**Official language:** Somali

**Currency:** Somali shilling (SoSh) = 100 centesimi

**Exchange rate:** SoSh1,318.00 per US\$ (Jul 2013)

**GDP per capita:** US\$600 (2009, PPP)\*

**GDP real growth:** 2.60% (2009)\*

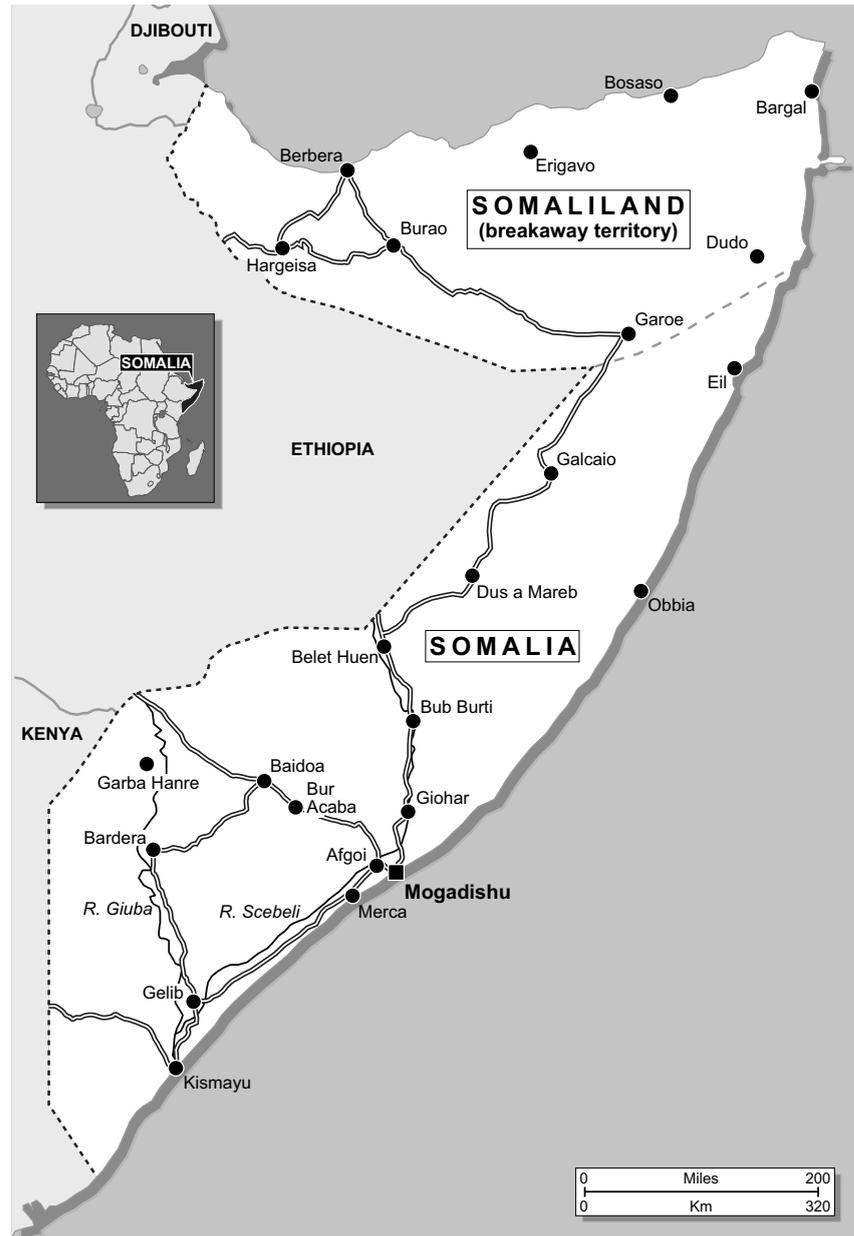
**GDP:** US\$2.73 billion (2009)\*

**Labour force:** 3.45 million (2007)

**Inflation:** 30.00% (2007)

\* estimated figure

# Somalia



Somalia's history as a nation state is, at best, rather chequered. In 1960 the British protectorate of Somaliland and the Italian colony of Somalia, were united under a very weak civilian government. In 1969 General Said Barre took power in a military *coup* and, as is the way with military dictators, ran the country

into the ground until he was deposed in 1991, to be replaced by an anarchic feuding ragtag of clan and tribal allegiances.

In this divided Somalia, the south of the country came under the informal jurisdiction of a body that called itself the Islamic Courts Union (ICU), which introduced Sharia laws and Salafist doctrines.

Western powers, alongside other African regimes, decided that this represented a threat and with the assistance of Ethiopian troops, brought down the ICU. A by-product of the Ethiopian intervention was the arrival of a number of Islamic extremists known as al Shabaab, who made matters in an already lawless country even worse. Thus Somalia, alongside Yemen, became the new fault line, as rival dogmas and forces slowly took control. Al Shabaab had links to al Qaeda and saw Somalia as a foothold on the African continent from which expansion might become possible. In late 2012, with a further round of assistance from African Union forces (this second time round the Ethiopians were reinforced by Kenyans) and US drones operating from Djibouti, al Shabaab were contained – the extent to which they were kept at bay or even routed was not totally clear. Equally uncertain was the whereabouts of al Shabaab’s two leaders, Moktar Ali Zubeyr (aka Godane) and Moktar Robow. As Somalia strengthened and al Shabaab continued to be on the defensive, the prospect of the insurgent group – which in late 2012 still controlled significant areas – entering into negotiations with the government of President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud was remote. But al Shabaab was on the back foot, having lost a lot of support during the 2011 drought, when it not only failed to provide food for the people under its control but prevented humanitarian aid provided by international organisations from being distributed.

What was clear was that Somalia still has a long way to go before it can claim to be a nation state. However, the embryonic state did take a significant step forward in September 2012 when Somali Members of Parliament, meeting in Mogadishu, elected Hassan Sheikh Mohamud as the country’s president. The academic President Sheikh Hassan defeated his rival, former president, Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed in a run-off poll by 190 to 79 votes. In the first round no candidate secured the required two-thirds majority. This was the first time in years that a president has been elected in Somalia.

Mr Mohamud is a relative newcomer to politics – having set up his Peace and Development Party in 2010. This enabled him to distance himself the prevailing violence and corruption. He was seen by many Somalis as a breath of fresh air, not just for the complex world of Somali politics, but for the country as a whole. However, his lack of political experience made it difficult for him to cope successfully

with his most immediate challenge, which is to deal with the cunning and powerful politicians who had lost out in the election.

Despite the combined sense of relief and optimism that accompanied the President’s election, twenty-first century Somalia will probably go down in history as the country which defined, more than any other, the meaning of a ‘failed’ state. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) observed drily that ‘Somalia’s review of overdue financial obligations and co-operation with the Fund continued to be postponed due to the absence of a government recognised by the Fund and the lack of official information on economic and financial developments.’ Somalia is one of the poorest countries in the world. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)’s Human Development Index ranked Somalia 161 out of 163 countries in 2001. The civil conflict, continuing insecurity in many parts of the country and poor access to services and infrastructure have made conditions worse than they were before the civil war.

A May 2013 article in the London *Economist* noted that Somalia was – at least at the end of the colonial era – the most ethnically homogenous country in South Saharan Africa. Or so it might have appeared. Scratch the surface, however and Somalia rapidly reveals itself to be made up of some 500 plus fractious clans, rarely able to rub along with each other peacefully. The *Economist* points out that (as was the case in Libya) under the ‘strong man’ rule of the dictator Siad Barre tribal differences seemed to be set aside. At the May 2013 London conference on Somalia – which pledged Somalia US\$300 million in aid – the government of Hassan Sheikh Mohamud appeared to have come to terms with allowing five of Somalia’s larger clan groupings a degree of autonomy in the hope that they ‘should only gradually be drawn back, if possible, into accepting central authority. The article quoted the foreign minister of the breakaway Somaliland region, Mohamed Omar, as saying that ‘The days when Somalia could be governed from the centre are over. Anyone who brings them back will not bring peace.’

A measure of Somalia’s international significance was the fact that 2013 seemed to be open season for conferences on Somalia. The London conference was followed in September 2013 by the New Deal for Somalia Conference in Brussels. The World Bank hailed the Brussels conference as a ‘key milestone for the country

## Somaliland

**Head of State:** President Ahmed Mohamed Mohamoud (from 10 Jul 2010)

**Area :** 137,600 square kilometres

**Population :** 3.5 million

**Capital:** Hargeisa

**Official languages:** Principally Somali; Arabic and English are also official languages

**Currency:** Somaliland shilling (SISh)

**Main exports:** Livestock

Somaliland announced its unilateral declaration of independence (UDI) in May 1991. Although Somaliland has its own currency and an established and functioning democracy, no foreign government has recognised it as a legitimate entity.

## Puntland

**Head of government:** Abdirahman Muhammad Mahmud Farole (from 8 Jan 2009)

**Area :** 212,510 square kilometres

**Population :** 2.4 million

**Capital:** Garowe (administrative); Bosasso (commercial)

**Official languages:** Somali, Arabic

**Currency:** Somali shilling (SoSh)

**Main exports:** Livestock

Although a self-governing autonomous state since 1998, Puntland has no plans for independence from Somalia.

and for a more sustainable and committed international re-engagement with Somalia.’ The Brussels conference struck a more optimistic note than that of Mr Omar, announcing that ‘Somalia has a full federal government in Mogadishu committed to inclusiveness, reconciliation and peace, based on a provisional constitution.’

## Basic economics

The World Bank’s 2012 Human Development Report estimated Somalia’s gross domestic product (GDP) per capita at US\$284, well below the sub-Saharan Africa average of US\$1,300. According to the Bank, Somalia receives US\$75 per head annually by way of official development assistance, double the figure for so-called ‘fragile’ states, which receive an average of US\$36 per head. Somalia’s other main source of revenue is overseas remittances, estimated at an annual US\$1,000 billion, or US\$110 per capita. Remittances constitute 35 per cent of GDP, the highest proportion in the world. Revenue from *Captain Phillips* style piracy is estimated at between US\$304–317 million since the first hijacking in 2005.

Somalia’s main economic activity is livestock, which probably accounts for as much as 60 per cent of job opportunities and 40 per cent of GDP. The external account is also heavily dependent on livestock, which accounts for as much as 80 per cent of export earnings.

## Risk assessment

|                    |      |
|--------------------|------|
| Politics           | Poor |
| Economy            | Poor |
| Regional stability | Poor |

## Somaliland

|                    |      |
|--------------------|------|
| Economy            | Fair |
| Politics           | Fair |
| Regional stability | Poor |

## COUNTRY PROFILE

### Historical profile

1900 Somalia was controlled by the British in the north (British Somaliland Protectorate), and Italy in the south (Italian Somaliland).

1950–60 Italian Somaliland was a UN Trust Territory, under Italian administration.

1960 The northern and southern regions were united when granted independence from the UK and Italy. Aden Abdullah Osman Daar was elected president.

1967 Abdi Rashid Ali Shermarke won the presidential election.

1969 President Shermarke was assassinated in a *coup d’état* and the military leader, Mohammed Siad Barre, became president. The country was renamed the Somali Democratic Republic, political parties were banned and the National Assembly dissolved.

1970 Barre declared Somalia a socialist and one-party state under the Somali Revolutionary Socialist Party.

1974–75 Major droughts affected thousands and caused widespread starvation.

1977 Ethnic Somalis in the Ogaden rebelled against Ethiopian control and war began when Somali troops invaded the territory.

1978 Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed led a failed military coup against Barre.

1980s There were devastating droughts that caused widespread starvation throughout most of the decade.

1981 The president appointed members of his own Marehan clan to government posts, at the expense of other, Mijertyn and Isaq, clans.

1982 Disaffected clans, with Ethiopian military support, attacked government positions. Although the government repulsed the rebels, clashes continued throughout the 1980s.

1988 A peace agreement with Ethiopia ended the Ogaden war but civil tensions increased.

1989 As the security situation worsened, Barre offered to resign and hold free elections in 1990.

1991 President Barre fled after rebels entered Mogadishu and the state of Somalia collapsed. Numerous international efforts were made to resolve the situation but effective central government was lacking for almost a decade. Warlords controlled territories through violence and clan allegiances as civil society degenerate into fiefdoms of factional fighting. The self-styled Republic of Somaliland (in the north), headed by Mohammed Ibrahim Egal, broke away from war-torn Somalia.

1992 After a period of intense conflict between the numerous clans, the US sent a force to protect the UN humanitarian aid effort and help restore order.

1993 The Addis Ababa Accords were signed. The UN began peace-keeping operations, taking over from US Marines. US Task Force Rangers launched a military offensive (later known as the Battle of Mogadishu) against General Aideed and the Somali National Alliance (SNA). Eighteen US troops, and up to 1,000 Somalis, were killed.

1994 The US withdrew all of its forces from Somalia.

1995 The remainder of the UN peace-keeping force withdrew.

1996 General Aideed died from gunshot wounds. His son, Hussein Aideed,

replaced him as head of the clan-based gang.

1997 Twenty-six of Somalia’s 28 factions signed the Cairo Declaration peace accord.

1998 The leaders of the northeastern region of Puntland, including Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed, declared the region autonomous.

1999 Inter-clan violence continued in central and southern Somalia. President Guelleh of Djibouti announced an international peace plan based on the participation of Islamic and civil groups rather than warlords.

2000 A four-month reconciliation conference in Djibouti ended when the transitional national government (TNG) elected a civilian as the country’s first president since 1990 – Abd al Qasim Salad Hassan. Hussein Aideed, and other warlords, in Somalia, and Abdullahi Yusuf, president of Puntland, opposed the TNG.

2001 Militia loyal to Aideed attacked TNG forces. Jama Ali Jama deposed Abdullahi Yusuf as president of Puntland but was later overthrown by Abdullahi Yusuf who recaptured the presidency, with the help of Ethiopian forces. The president of Somaliland, Muhammad Haji Ibrahim Egal, died and was succeeded by Dahir Riyale Kahin.

2002 A cease-fire was agreed between 21 warring factions and the TNG.

2003 Dahir Riyale Kahin of the ruling United People’s Party (UDUB) (Somaliland), won presidential and parliamentary elections. A peace conference, the Somali National Reconciliation Conference, was set up in Kenya

2004 At peace talks, warlords and politicians signed a deal to set up a new parliament; the Transitional National Assembly (TNA) was inaugurated and for security reasons continued to be held in Kenya. Abdullahi Yusuf, (president of Puntland), won the TNA presidential elections held. Abdullahi appointed Mohammed Ali Ghedi as prime minister. Hundreds of deaths were caused by the south-Asian tsunami that hit the coastline of Puntland.

2005 Authority within the country was maintained by rival warlords who controlled various tribal lands.

2006 Fighting broke out between forces of the Islamic Courts Union (ICU), which had restored some order to parts of the capital through the use of *Sharia* (Islamic law), and warlord militias. The ICU gained full control in the capital and most of central and southern Somalia. Sheikh Hassan Dahir Aweys was appointed head of the ICU, which was renamed Midowga Maxkamadaha Islaamiga (Supreme Islamic Courts Council) (SICC).

Mogadishu’s international airport and

seaport were reopened. Peace talks failed between the transitional government and the SICC and fighting resumed. Ethiopian ground and air forces entered Somalia in support of the transitional government. The SICC was routed and the transitional government took control of Mogadishu. 2007 Fighting in the capital erupted as factions supporting the president and prime minister clashed over interests in oil exploration contracts. The head of the World Food Programme UN humanitarian agency was kidnapped in Mogadishu. The main market in Mogadishu, which provided trade of essential goods for around 85 per cent of residents and traders throughout the country, was destroyed by fire. The UN reported that 400,000 people had fled from Mogadishu. Mohammed Ali Ghedi resigned as prime minister and Nur 'Adde' Hassan Hussein was appointed in his place. The prime minister announced that he would be replacing the 30-member cabinet with a much smaller cabinet.

2008 Twice, the UN Security Council extended the African Union (AU)-led mission to Somalia by six months. Representatives of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and the Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia (The Alliance) signed an agreement, to cease hostilities, the result of several months of talks in Djibouti. By the end of the year Islamist forces not only controlled northern regions, but also took over much of the south. Ethiopia announced its troops would leave and would not be replaced by AU peacekeepers as had been expected. The government of Somalia was left without military support and over 80 per cent of the country's army and police force had deserted, in some cases taking weapons, uniforms and vehicles with them. Prime Minister Hussein and his government were sacked for failing to bring security to the country. However, Hussein rejected presidential power to replace him. The president appointed Muhammad Mahmud Guled Gamadhare as prime minister. In parliament, the required one-third vote to impeach the president was achieved. Charges against him included nepotism, illegally printing money, being autocratic and failing to foster the peace process. The AU agreed to extend its military mission. President Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed lost a vote of confidence in parliament and resigned and Adan Mohamed Nuur (also known as Adan Madobe) became acting president.

2009 Ethiopia withdrew its troops. Islamist insurgents seized the government's capital city of Baidoa, (just hours after Ethiopian troops had withdrawn) and imposed *Sharia* (Islamic law). Sheikh Sharif Ahmed, a moderate Islamist, was elected president by parliament. Omar Abdirashid Ali

Sharmarke, nominated by the president, was approved by parliament and was sworn into office as prime minister. The president, endorsed by the government, announced the introduction of *Sharia* (Islamic law) nationwide, in an agreement with religious leaders and rival political factions. Islamist forces attacked Mogadishu; the president declared a state of emergency following the killing of the security minister and over 20 others in a suicide bombing, as violence intensified. An appeal was made for troops from neighbouring countries to intervene during battles between government and Islamist troops. Ethiopia decided that it would only intervene if the fighting threatened its national security. Hundreds of politicians fled the country, leaving the national assembly membership dangerously close to the 250 needed to make up a quorum.

In Puntland, parliament elected Abdurahman Mohamed Farole as president.

In the secessionist Republic of Somaliland the upper house of parliament extended the term of office for President Dahir Riyale Kahin.

2010 The World Food Programme (WFP) organisation pulled out of southern Somalia after threats from Islamist groups. The UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) reported that some two million Somalis still needed emergency food supplies. This was despite a good harvest of sorghum and maize after better than average rains. Horn Afrik and GBC radio stations were raided by militants from Al Shabab and Hizbul Islam. The US banned all cargo from Somalia. Omar Sharmarke resigned as prime minister. He was criticised for failing to defeat Al Shabab (militant Islamist militia). Once again feuding within the transitional government left the country without a functioning government. Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed was appointed prime minister.

Following a two-year delay due to security worries, a presidential election was held in Somaliland, in which three candidates took part. Ahmed Silanyo won 49.59 per cent of the vote, incumbent Dahir Kahin won 33.23 per cent. Ahmed Mahamoud Silanyo became president.

Somaliland and Puntland, once-warring territories in northern Somalia, rather surprisingly agreed in principle to work together to tackle common security threats.

2011 In February, parliament extended its mandate until 2014, following approval by the AU, despite failing to enact a new constitution or preparations for organising national elections by August 2011. In March, the General Service Union of the Kenyan police force crossed into Somalia at the border town of Liboi, to confront

the militant forces of the Al Shabab. It was the first time that Kenyan forces had directly fought Al Shabab, which was accused of raids into Kenya. On 28 March the government itself extended its mandate by another year, despite criticism from donors and attacks by Islamist extremists. In June, rival leaders within government agreed to postpone parliamentary elections until August 2012; the president and speaker of parliament retain their posts. The aid agency Save the Children reported in June that some 1,300 people, including at least 800 children, were arriving daily at the Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya. They had been driven to make the arduous journey by a combination of severe drought, the on-going conflict and rising food prices. The Dadaab refugee camp had a population of over 350,000 in mid-2011. Prime Minister Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed announced his resignation in June and Abdiweli Mohamed Ali was appointed as his replacement. A crisis in malnutrition that developed over months as a two-year drought caused widespread failure in crop and animal production caused tens of thousands of vulnerable people to seek food in neighbouring Kenya while also fleeing the internal conflict. The UN estimated that 10 million people in the Horn of Africa were affected by drought and food insecurity. The Islamist group Al Shabab announced in July that it had lifted its ban (imposed in 2009) on foreign aid agencies providing relief in the territories under its control. However the UN and US demanded further safety guarantees from armed groups before they allowed their staff to enter the areas in need. On 20 July, the UN officially declared a famine in Bakool and Lower Shabelle in southern Somalia, while other areas were considered at extreme risk. The area experienced the worst drought for over 50 years. It was estimated that US\$300 million was needed to provide aid for 8–10 weeks from the middle of July. Prime Minister Ali announced the creation of a special force to protect convoys delivering famine aid. Al Shabab militants withdrew from Mogadishu in August, as the first shipment of food aid reached the city. The AU called for another 1,000 troops to protect the food aid and to secure and consolidate military gains in Mogadishu. Turkey's Prime Minister Erdogan and his family visited Mogadishu in August. Another state (the Bay region) was declared a famine zone by the UN on 5 September, with around 750,000 people at risk of starvation. In September, Mohamed Ibrahim was appointed as deputy prime minister. Two major telecommunications companies and a major money transfer firm were

temporarily banned at the end of September after Al Shabab demanded the companies pay *zikat*, a form of charity paid by Muslims. Aid agencies said that if Al Shabab persisted in their demands there would be a severe knock-on effect for the poor of Somalia who relied in remittances from abroad during a time of famine in particular. The UN's Secretary General Ban Ki-moon visited Mogadishu in December and met the prime minister. Mr Ban was visiting at a time when UN-backed AU forces were in deadly battle with Al Shabab in and around the city. His agenda included not only the famine in the south of Somalia, but also the UN's impatience at the apparent corruption and divided political leadership. Mr Ban said that unless serious progress towards a new constitution and a reformed parliament was accomplished by August 2012, then funding from the UN would be curtailed.

2012 For several months Al Shabab forces had targeted and kidnapped Western tourists in Kenya and transported them to Somalia for ransom. On 25 January the Kenyan army crossed into Somalia to attack Al Shabab forces, in an effort to deter the criminal activity that was threatening Kenya's tourist industry. The EU began training Somali forces of the transitional government to become defenders of Mogadishu in the battle with Islamist insurgents. The UN announced on 3 February that the famine in Somalia had ended, six months after it had been declared, following a good harvest and international aid, which had alleviated the situation. On 10 February, Al Shabab and Al Qaeda announce that the two groups had merged, at a time when Al Shabab had been under concerted attack from AU, Kenyan and Ethiopian military forces, as well as offshore international forces. AU forces attacked the central city of Baidoa, an Islamic militant stronghold on 15 February. The heavy fighting around Mogadishu, in the Afgoye corridor, caused thousands of internally displaced persons (IDPs) to flee to relative safety in the city. An agreement was reached among Somali leaders on 19 February to reform the political system by reducing the number of members of parliament to 225, of which 30 per cent would be made up of women (proposed by 'respected women') with MPs drawn from traditional regions and reflecting the national clans. A bicameral parliament was to be created with the addition of an upper chamber for 54 'elders'. Also agreed was the establishment of a civil society. The meeting took place in Puntland, but did not include all Somali leaders or factions. On 22 February, the UN Security Council voted to increase the AU force in

Somalia (Amison) by up to 18,000. On 6 March, Turkish Airlines became the first major commercial airline to fly to Mogadishu from outside East Africa since the 1990s. Twice weekly flights from Istanbul, via Khartoum (Sudan) will begin before the end of the year. Al Shabab fighters attacked an Ethiopian base near Yurkut village (central Geddo), close to Baidoa, on 10 March, killing an unverifiable number of fighters from both sides. The attack had quickly followed-on from an announcement that Ethiopian troops were to be withdrawn from the area by the end of April and replaced with AU troops. The national theatre in Mogadishu reopened on 19 March and its first performance since the early 1990s was presented to President Sharif Ahmed and other guests. The programme included traditional music, a play and comedy performances. On 23 March, the EU approved a change to operational tactics against Somali pirates, enabling EU warships to target boats and fuel dumps on land and within Somali national waters. This marked a significant increase in the naval operations that support commercial shipping off the Horn of Africa and in the Indian Ocean. On 5 April, an Al Shabab suicide bomber killed up to six people when blowing up the national theatre. On 11 April President Farole (of Puntland) said that forces of Al Shabab had been pushed out of central Somalia and had moved into the semi-autonomous state of Puntland. Two MPs were killed and several injured in a suicide bombing in Dusa Mareb (central Somalia) on 1 May. Around 20 politicians had travelled to Dusa Mareb to promote reconciliation, but were targeted by Al Shabab, which had been under pressure from opposing forces in the south and west of Somalia. On 31 May Turkey played host to a two-day 'reconciliation conference' of Somali politicians, 135-traditional elders (representing their clans), business leaders and civil society groups, in an attempt to provide a new political framework for when the TSC's UN-backed mandate ended on 20 August. On 25 July, a newly convened National Constituent Assembly (NCA), a body of 825-members drawn from Somali clans, began work to construct a provisional constitution, which would provide the legal framework to govern the workings of the new Somali Federal Institutions – following the dissolution of the TFG. On 1 August, the NCA supported a newly drafted constitution and elections to be held on 20 August. The new constitution included, among other clauses, a bill of rights with everyone declared equal regardless of their clan or religion; a federal system; Islam as the state religion; all to have a right to

basic education, and the establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The gathering of traditional leaders (first established during the Turkey 'reconciliation conference') began to propose nominees (from their respective clans) to become members of parliament. Names of nominees were scrutinised by the Technical Selection Committee (TSC), which weeded out those that had criminal records, were accused of being a war lord and those with too little education. On 9 August, the TSC announced an extension to the deadline (8 August) for receiving lists of proposed candidates, who would ultimately elect a president and ratify the constitutional document before it could be enacted and put to a referendum. Women's groups called on the traditional elders to ensure that they were properly represented in parliament; even so some clans failed to nominate any female representatives. On 20 August the Federal Parliament of Somalia was inaugurated as 225 selected members (out of a total 275 members) were sworn in as MPs; around 15 per cent of the membership was female. The TSC said a 225-membership was sufficient to elect a speaker of parliament and president (both by secret ballot). Around 24 candidates took part in the election. On 10 September, parliament voted for a new president. There were 25 candidates taking part, but in the first round no candidate won the necessary two-thirds majority and a runoff was held between Hassan Sheikh Mohamud (Xisbiga Nabadda Iyo Horumarka (Peace and Development Party) (PDP), a social democratic party, who won 190 votes in the first round and former president Sharif Sheikh Ahmed who had won 79 votes. Hassan Sheikh Mohamud won the runoff vote unopposed. President Mohamud took office on 16 September. Somalia became the 160th member of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention on 4 October. It is the last of the sub-Saharan African countries to commit to the treaty. The president appointed Abdi Farah Shirdon Saaid as prime minister on 6 October. Parliament ratified the appointment of Prime Minister Shirdon on 17 October. 2013 On 7 May British premier, David Cameron, hosted an international conference in London to help Somalia rebuild itself. Also in May Barclays Bank announced it would stop supporting transfers to remittance to companies in Somalia, where up to half the population relies on remittances from the Somali diaspora. Barclays is concerned that it will be accused of money-laundering. Some US\$130 million was pledged by international donors. On 14 August Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) said it would be closing after a number of attacks on its

staff. The agency first set up in Somalia in 1991. At a conference held in Mogadishu in early September on tackling extremism some 160 Islamic scholars issued a fatwa against al Shabab, saying it had no place in Islam. A conference held in Brussels in September pledged €1.8 billion (US\$2.4 billion) as part of a 'New Deal' which focuses on peace and state-building. On 1 October Barclays Bank announced a further short delay until 16 October before closing the account of leading Somali money-transfer operator Dahabshiil after Dahabshiil had launched a court action to prevent Barclays from closing the account. Dahabshiil won an injunction preventing Barclays from halting its money transfer services for the foreseeable future. A ban on slaughtering animals anywhere except at the revamped Mogadishu Slaughterhouse came into force in Mogadishu on 12 November. The move is part of an attempt to improve hygiene.

### Political structure

The self-styled republics of Somaliland and Puntland have their own elected governments (but are unrecognised internationally).

### Constitution

The Somali National Reconciliation Conference, held in Mbagathi, Nairobi, Kenya, began in 2003 and the Leaders Committee agreed that Somalia should adopt a federal system of government, with selection of the MPs being carried out by the signatories (political leaders) to the Declaration of Cessation of Hostilities signed in Eldoret, Kenya, in 2002, and by certain politicians, who were officially invited.

If the government fails to complete the process of federalism throughout Somalia within a period of two-and-a-half years, parliament should withdraw its vote of confidence, necessitating the formation of a new transitional government to complete the process of federalism within one year.

### Form of state

Federal republic

### The executive

The president is elected by parliament. The prime minister is appointed by the president.

### National legislature

In November 2008, in UN-backed reconciliation negotiations, parliament agreed to increase the number of members of parliament from 275 to 550. Apart from the existing arrangement of 61 seats each allocated to four main tribal groupings and 31 seats divided between the remaining small tribal groupings, 200 more seats will be allocated to opposition representatives and 75 reserved for civil society groups. However, Islamist groups that

control much of Somalia were not party to the agreement.

### Legal system

At independence in 1960, Somalia had four legal systems: English common law, Italian law, Islamic Sharia and Somali customary law. In 1973, the Siad Barre regime introduced a unified civil code. There is no national judicial system.

### Last elections

20 August 2012, members of the Federal Parliament of Somalia were appointed and senior political posts were elected by the Transitional Federal Parliament (TFP). 10 September 2012: presidential. Elected by members of the Federal Parliament. 11 January 2009 (Puntland, presidential); 26 June 2009 (Somaliland, presidential)

**Results:** Puntland: parliament elected Abdirahman Mohamed Farole as president.

Somaliland, presidential: Ahmed Mahamoud Silanyo (Kulmiye Nabad, Midnimo iyo horumar iyo (Peace, Unity and Development Party) (PUDP)) won 49.59 per cent of the vote, Dahir Riyale Kahin (Ururka Dimuqraadiga Ummadda Bahawday (United People's Democratic Party) (UPDP)) 33.23 per cent, Faysal Cali Warabe (Ururka Caddaalada iyo Daryeelka (For Justice and Development) (FJD)) 17.18 per cent.

Somali presidential (10 September): 2nd round Hassan Sheikh Mohamud 190 votes, Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed 79 votes.

### Next elections

To be announced (Federal Parliament of Somalia)

### Political parties

There are no formal political parties. Warlords and their supporters wield most of the power. Political organisation largely reflects membership of clans and sub-clans.

### Ruling party

None

### Population

51.20 million (2012)\*

In 2010, 44.8 per cent of the population were aged 0–14 years and 4.6 per cent were aged over 65 years (FAO Yearbook 2012).

**Last census:** February 1987: 7,114,431

**Population density:** 15 inhabitants per square km. Urban population 37 per cent (2010 Unicef).

**Annual growth rate:** 1.7 per cent, 1990–2010 (Unicef).

**Internally Displaced Persons (IDP)** 375,000 (UNHCR 2004)

### Ethnic make-up

Somali (85 per cent), Bantu, Arabs and others (15 per cent).

### Religions

Islam is the state religion (majority Sunni Muslims) (98 per cent), Christian minority (2 per cent).

### Education

The UN Children's Fund (Unicef) supports 352 primary schools in central and southern Somalia, out of 418 that are operational. Additionally, Unicef has rehabilitated 35 schools, trained 2,300 teachers and initiated a school improvement programme. Several non-government organisations have concentrated on adult literacy programmes and civic education. Private education has recently been re-established in Somali, although school fees are proving to be out of reach of the ordinary Somali family.

Somaliland expatriates residing in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) have initiated efforts to raise funds for the Amoud University. The University, established in 1997 in Boroma, is essentially a community project. In June 2003, Somalia opened its first medical college, the Benadir University Medical College (BUMC), since 1991. BUMC will be funded by donations from Somali physicians and by tuition fees.

The education sector received only 12 per cent funding in the Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP), 2003. About 40 per cent of all teachers are unqualified and many have not completed their primary school education.

**Literacy rate:** 17.1 per cent, adult rate: 35 per cent, adult rate for the urban population; 10 per cent for rural and nomadic populations (2003).

Female adult literacy is estimated to be 52 per cent of the male rate.

**Compulsory years:** Six to 14.

**Enrolment rate:** Primary school enrolment increased by 29 per cent in 2002, compared to 2001, and there were 30 per cent more teachers. In 2003, one out of six children received formal primary education. Female primary school enrolment was 53 per cent of the male rate.

### Health

The country's health services collapsed during the war and access to healthcare depends mostly on external assistance.

Unicef remains the key provider of essential medical services and supplies to 123 maternal and child health centres, 174 health posts, and 16 hospitals.

Surveys in areas with high concentrations of displaced families show malnutrition rates as high as 40 per cent. Only 1.5 per cent of one to two years old are vaccinated. In addition, Somalia has the highest incidence of tuberculosis in the world, while cholera is endemic in most areas. In 2004, Somalia was removed from the UN list of countries with endemic polio.

It is estimated that 31 per cent of the population have access to improved water facilities.

**Life expectancy:** 44 years, 2004 (WHO 2006)

**Fertility rate/Maternal mortality rate:** 6.3 births per woman, 2010 (Unicef)

**Birth rate/Death rate:** 46.4 births per 1,000 population; 17.6 deaths per 1,000 population (2003).

**Child (under 5 years) mortality rate (per 1,000):** 133 per 1,000 live births (World Bank)

### Welfare

Insecurity continues to be the greatest threat to the lives and welfare of the population, who are highly dependent on external assistance. International aid is jeopardised by widespread factional fighting, the kidnapping of aid workers and also by the mining of all major roads in Northern Gedo, the area most in need of food aid. An estimated 400,000 Somalis are internally displaced.

Although the World Food Programme (WFP) supports the repatriation of refugees with a nine-month food supply or cash equivalent, more than 10 per cent of the population require emergency food assistance. In May 2003, the WFP distributed 1,355 tonnes of food around Somalia.

### Main cities

Somalia: Mogadishu (capital, estimated population 1.6 million in 2012), Beledweyne (94,157), Kismayu (57,321), Baydhabo (76,839), Baidoa (76,839), Galkayo (76,149).

Somaliland: Hargeisa (478,514), Burao (155,832), Berbera (78,047), Lasanod (42,674), Garowe (32,523), Erigavo (27,007).

Puntland: Bosaso (107,326), Qardho (27,476).

### Languages spoken

Somali is one of the major languages of Africa and belongs to a set of languages called lowland Eastern Cushitic. It did not have a written form until the Latin script was adopted in 1972. Arabic, Italian and English (mainly for business) are also in use.

Arabic and English are to be the second official languages of the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia, as agreed on 5 July 2003 at the Somali National Reconciliation Conference.

### Official language/s

Somali

### Media

#### Press

**Dailies:** In Somalia, newspapers include *Xog-Ogaal Qaran News* ([www.qarannews.com](http://www.qarannews.com)), *Codka xoriyadda* and *Ayaamaha*.

#### Dhambaal News

([www.dhambaalnews.com](http://www.dhambaalnews.com)) and *Jamhuuriya* ([www.jamhuuriya.info](http://www.jamhuuriya.info)) are based in Somaliland. In English, *Somaliland Times* ([www.somalilandtimes.net](http://www.somalilandtimes.net)) and the Awdal New Network ([www.awdalnews.com](http://www.awdalnews.com)) gives online news from Somaliland.

There are a number of internet news outlets aimed at the Somali diaspora including [www.luuliyo.com](http://www.luuliyo.com), [www.waagacusub.com](http://www.waagacusub.com), [www.hiiraan.com](http://www.hiiraan.com), [www.hormoodnews.com](http://www.hormoodnews.com) and [www.banadir.com](http://www.banadir.com) (with articles in English).

**Weeklies:** Publications include *Dadka*, *Panorama*, *Republican* (Hargeisa), *Sanca* and *Xurmo*.

**Periodicals:** Monthly publications include *Ayaamaha* and *Himilo*.

#### Broadcasting

**Radio:** In June 2007 the government ordered the closure of the three main radio stations in the capital (Shabelle Media Network, Horn Afrik and IQK). The order was rescinded four days later, reportedly after pressure from the US ambassador to Kenya.

The governments in the breakaway provinces of Somaliland and Puntland maintain a tight control on broadcasting in their areas. The Transitional Federal Government closed the Shabelle Media Network, Banadir Radio and Radio Simba on 12/13 November 2007, without explanation. The information minister said the stations had been 'carrying false reports and misrepresenting the activities of the security forces'. Critics claimed the government was closing down independent news outlets that did not report pro-government news.

There is no national, domestic broadcaster however the many independent radio stations provide the principal source of news for the population. Radio Mogadishu is government-run with coverage limited to the capital. The FM stations Radio HornAfrik ([www.hornafrik.com](http://www.hornafrik.com)), Radio Shabelle ([www.shabelle.net](http://www.shabelle.net)) and Radio Banaadir ([www.radiobanadir.com](http://www.radiobanadir.com)) all broadcast in the capital. Radio Hargeisa ([www.radiohargeysa.net](http://www.radiohargeysa.net)) is Somaliland government-owned; the privately owned Radio Galkayo ([www.radiogaalkacyo.com](http://www.radiogaalkacyo.com)) and Voice of Peace broadcast in Puntland.

**Television:** Two private TV networks exist, Somali Telemedia Network (STN) and HornAfrik TV ([www.hornafrik.com](http://www.hornafrik.com)), broadcast international produced programmes. Somaliland National TV (SLNTV) is government-owned. Somali Broadcasting Corporation (SBC) is a private station in Puntland.

There is no official agency but APA and Panapress report on Somali matters.

### Economy

The state of Somalia has few natural resources with the greater proportion of the population relying on subsistence farming (although there are commercial banana plantations in the south), and remittances from abroad. On top of this, Somalia has experienced decades of civil war and mis-governance and misfortune.

A famine was officially declared in Bakool and Lower Shabelle, in southern Somalia, on 20 July 2011 in an area experiencing the worst drought for over 50 years. Millions experienced significant food insecurity and hundreds of thousands fled across the borders into neighbouring countries, especially Kenya. In January 2012 there were concerted efforts by forces of the African Union (AU), Kenya and Ethiopia to dislodge the militant Islamist militia, al Shabab, from their strongholds in Mogadishu and around the port of Kismayo. The heavy fighting around Mogadishu, in the Afgoye corridor, caused thousands of internally displaced persons (IDPs) to flee to relative safety in the city. The UN announced on 3 February 2012 that the famine had ended, six months after it had been declared, following a good harvest and international aid, which had alleviated the situation. As al Shabab was forced into defensive positions an agreement was reached among Somali leaders on 19 February to reform the political system and construct a new, provisional constitution. A National Constituent Assembly (NCA) organised elections of nominees, who worked to produce the legal governing framework of the new Somali Federal Institutions, which took office as a new parliament on 1 August 2012, following the dissolution of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG). Around 24 candidates were in competition for the position of president, and Hassan Sheikh Mohamud was voted into post as president on 10 August.

The informal economy has been a mainstay for the population, based mainly on ownership of livestock and land. The traditional trade in exports of livestock to Arab Gulf states has been periodically suspended due to animal health concerns. International economic agencies are reluctant to invest in the country until it can achieve a measure of peace and the rule of law. Even so, a Coca-Cola bottling plant opened in 2004, becoming the largest investment the country had received since 1991.

The UN Human Development Index (HDI) is unable to rank Somalia, given its lack of verifiable ministry statistics for national development in health, education and

income. In 2010, however, based on work by non-governmental agencies, it was able to determine that 63.3 per cent of the population experienced at least one indicator of poverty; the headcount poverty rate was 81.2 per cent of the population (2000–10).

The overall political situation is complicated further by the break-away Republic of Somaliland, which has become an autonomous zone with its own currency and government. Somaliland represents the strongest local economy and has undergone something of a boom since it declared independence in 1991. The autonomous region has undergone a modest transformation with infrastructural improvements and an emergent business elite. Without international recognition, however, Somaliland cannot access funds from the IMF or World Bank or develop trade relations. Around 70 per cent of the population receive help in the form of remittances from family members abroad. Another autonomous region, the Puntland State of Somalia, has its own chaotic economic policy, where many Somalis wish to remain part of Somalia. Puntland faces many of the problems faced by Somalia proper, including factional fighting and almost complete economic collapse. Somali pirates have become the scourge of the Somalia coast and further into the Indian Ocean. Ships are routinely hijacked and held for ransom for millions of dollars, paid by ship owners and insurance companies. In 2008 there were 111 acts of piracy (out of a total 293 worldwide) undertaken by Somali pirates; double the number in 2007. In 2009 214 attacks took place. The piracy has become a business in which wealthy Somalis (including some members of the Diaspora) purchase, finance and outfit skiffs, mother-ships and crews, enabling gangs to select targets and intercept laden cargo ships, oil tankers and private yachts. International maritime protection includes military naval vessels on patrol but the sheer enormity of the area limits their effectiveness. It is estimated that around US\$30 million per year of illegal money is funding the northern port towns of Harardhere, Eyl and Bossaso and their economies.

#### External trade

While Somalia belongs to the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP Group) which has a trade agreement with the European Union, it does not have a central government authority that can provide evidence of conformity of international and official regulations. Nevertheless, less formal trade is undertaken with regional neighbours, while

remittances provide the majority of foreign earnings.

The continuing need for the large-scale import of fuels and food results in an ongoing poor balance of trade. There is a tradition of livestock exports to the Arab Gulf states.

There is an illegal trade in *qat* (called *jaad* in Somalia, an addictive, mild hallucinogen) between Somalia, Ethiopia and Yemen.

#### Imports

Principal imports are manufactures, petroleum products, foodstuffs and construction materials.

**Main sources:** Djibouti (27.8 per cent of total in 2011), India (13.7 per cent), Kenya (7.3 per cent).

#### Exports

Principal exports are livestock, bananas, hides, fish, charcoal and scrap metal.

**Main destinations:** UAE (50.7 per cent of total in 2011), Yemen (19 per cent), Oman (12.8 per cent).

#### Agriculture

Agriculture is the most important sector in the economy. It contributes about 65 per cent to GDP and employs 65 per cent of the working population. It is often badly affected by drought, as well as by the chaos of recent years.

Livestock, particularly camels, is the principal foreign exchange earner, accounting for 40 per cent of GDP. Exports are mainly to Arabian Gulf states and formerly to Saudi Arabia. A Saudi ban on the import of allegedly diseased Somali livestock has damaged the trade.

Much of the land is desert or semi-desert and only 13 per cent is cultivated, making food security a constant concern. Some crops are grown on the fertile land in the Juba and Scebalis valleys, but the farmers have been displaced by nomads.

Subsistence farmers grow maize and sorghum. Wheat and rice are imported.

The most important cash crops are bananas, cotton and frankincense.

In 2006, the Supreme Islamic Courts Council (SICC) issued a directive to halt the production of charcoal. Somalia lost 1.2 million hectares, or 14 per cent of its forest cover between 1990–2005 and has had a serious detrimental effect on the environment. The principal export of charcoal is to Gulf states, where wood from mango trees is highly favoured and a bag of charcoal can cost as much as US\$15 each.

#### Industry and manufacturing

The industrial sector is small, contributing about 5 per cent to GDP and employing 8 per cent of the working population.

The principal industries are meat and fish processing, sugar refining, fruit and vegetable canning, textiles and leather goods.

Many factories are idle, because foreign exchange shortages have cut off foreign inputs.

#### Tourism

There is a general warning for all foreigners not to visit Somalia due to its political instability and lack of security. However there are scheduled flights from Turkey, Ethiopia and Kenya.

It is possible to visit Somaliland, in the north. A visa is obtainable from Liaison Offices in the US, UK and in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia); see: [www.visitsomaliland.org](http://www.visitsomaliland.org) for more information.

#### Mining

There are significant mineral resources, but they have not yet been commercially exploited. The most important regions include an area extending from the Ethiopian border to beyond Berbera in Somaliland and west of the River Scebalis near Mogadishu. The former contains reserves of copper, gold, molybdenum and bismuth, while the latter contains iron, gold and apatite.

The country also contains reserves of uranium, marble, manganese, tin, beryl and columbite. Salt and gypsum were extracted commercially before the civil war began.

#### Hydrocarbons

Although there are no proven oil reserves, although the potential for oil and gas is high. Major Western oil companies ceased exploration after the outbreak of the civil war in 1991. In 2007 a Kuwait and Indonesian consortium was created to undertake further exploration under a preliminary agreement of partnership with a newly formed state company, Somalia Petroleum Corporation. Downstream, Somalia has a single oil refinery with a capacity of 10,000 barrels per day (bpd), although it has not been in use for some years and is in a state of disrepair.

The breakaway region of Somaliland (also called Puntland), in the north, undertook oil exploration under its own offices, sparking clan warfare in March 2009 over ownership of land being investigated. The Nogal and Dharoor basins are considered to have a high probability of oil and gas.

Somalia relies heavily on imports of oil for its fuel needs.

Total proved natural gas reserves are around 5.6 billion cubic metres located in one gas field, although political and economic chaos has prevented exploitation. Currently, there is no production or import of natural gas.

Coal is neither produced nor imported.

Puntland: The Canadian company Africa Oil announced that it would begin drilling for oil in its leased sites in the Nugaal and

Dharoor Valley in Puntland from mid-2010.

### Energy

Total installed generating capacity is 80MW, all of which is provided by diesel-fired generators. The state-owned Ente Nazionale Energia Elettrica (ENEE) has a monopoly of generation, transmission and distribution and supply. Much of the energy infrastructure has been damaged or destroyed and the unstable state of the country hinders re-development.

Somalia has been identified as a prime location for wind farms but until the country has some degree of stability no development is likely.

### Banking and insurance

In July 2013 Barclays Bank of the UK announced it would be withdrawing banking services from over 250 money-transfer companies. NGOs and rights activists and academics said the move risked severing an essential lifeline for millions of people in Somalia who depend on remittances from relatives in the UK. Barclays said it was a matter of compliance with international financial regulations, and the potential risk to the bank in terms of reputation and possible legal penalties from the US and other jurisdictions.

The UN's top humanitarian official in Somalia, Philippe Lazzarini, said that 'It is not an overstatement to say this move will cut a lifeline for essential services in Somalia... since a huge number of Somalis rely on remittances, which are estimated to be as much as US\$1.2 billion every year – more than the entire humanitarian operation in the country.'

### Central bank

Central Bank of Somalia

### Main financial centre

Mogadishu

### Time

GMT plus three hours

### Geography

Somalia lies on the east coast of Africa, with Ethiopia to the north-west and Kenya to the west. There is a short frontier with Djibouti in the north-east. Somalia has a long coastline of 3,200km on the Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Aden, forming the Horn of Africa.

The country is shaped like the number 7 with the northern top stretching west along the coast of the Gulf of Aden. Here the land is a desert plain that rises to the Ogo and Migiurtinia mountains fringing the coastline, – of which the highest peak is Surud Ad at 2,408 metres (m). Southwards, the land becomes more fertile savannah which eventually runs into an arid and extensive region of sand dunes and rugged plateau. There are few rivers, the largest are in the central and southern

regions, the Webi Guiba and Webi Scebeli rise in Ethiopia and flow into the Indian Ocean. The north has no permanently flowing rivers, the Daror and the Nugaaleed are intermittent streams.

### Hemisphere

Northern

### Climate

Tropical. Humid on coast, drier in north. Average temperatures 27–32 degrees Celsius (C) throughout year, but can reach 42 degrees C on coast. Dry seasons from January–February and August–September. Rainy seasons from March–June and October–December.

### Dress codes

Lightweight clothes are required. Women should dress modestly.

### Entry requirements

#### Passports

Required by all.

#### Visa

The civil war has disrupted consular services worldwide. Visas are required by the break-away territories of Somiland and Puntland and can be obtained at the port of entry. Travellers should contact their own ministry of foreign affairs for advice about local conditions and travelling to Somalia and breakaway provinces.

#### Currency advice/regulations

Import/export of only small amounts of local currency is allowed. Import of foreign currency is unlimited, but it must be declared on a form for which a small charge may be made. Currency transactions should be recorded at each exchange. Export of foreign currency is limited to the amount declared on arrival.

The Somali shilling is the unit of currency, except in Somaliland, which uses the Somaliland shilling. US dollars are accepted everywhere.

### Health (for visitors)

#### Mandatory precautions

Yellow fever and cholera certificates if arriving from an infected area.

#### Advisable precautions

Hepatitis A and E are widespread and hepatitis B is hyper-endemic. Vaccinations for meningococcal meningitis, yellow fever, cholera, typhoid and polio vaccinations are advisable. Malaria prophylaxis should be taken as risk exists throughout the country (two types of prophylaxis are recommended); anti-mosquito measures include mosquito repellents, nets and clothing covering the body, these offer protection against hepatitis B. Tap water must be treated as unsafe unless boiled and filtered. Eat only well cooked meals, preferably served hot; vegetables should be cooked and fruit peeled. Dairy products are unpasteurised and should be avoided.

A comprehensive medical pack and all medication is essential for the traveller as there is little to be found in the country. Medical insurance is essential, including emergency evacuation.

### Hotels

Available in principal towns. Service charge of 10 per cent added to bills.

### Credit cards

Credit cards are not accepted in Somalia.

### Public holidays (national)

#### Fixed dates

1 Jan (New Year's Day), 1 May (Labour Day), 26 Jun (Independence Day), 1 Jul (Foundation Day).

#### Variable dates

Eid al Adha, Ashura, Birth of the Prophet, Eid al Fitr (three days).

#### Islamic year 1435 (5 Nov 2013–24

Oct 2014):: The Islamic year contains 354 or 355 days, with the result that Muslim feasts advance by 10–12 days against the Gregorian calendar. Dates of feasts vary according to the sighting of the new moon, so cannot be forecast exactly.

### Working hours

#### Banking

Sat–Thu: 0800–1130.

#### Business

Sat–Thu: 0800–1230, 1630–1900.

#### Government

Sat–Thu: 0800–1400.

#### Shops

Sat–Thu: 0900–1300, 1600–2000.

### Telecommunications

#### Mobile/cell phones

There are several GSM 900 and 900/1800 services available.

### Electricity supply

220V AC, 50 cycles. The electricity system is poor.

### Social customs/useful tips

Islamic customs should be respected. It is the convention to use the right hand when shaking hands and passing or receiving anything. Muslims are not permitted to drink alcohol or eat pork. Do not smoke or drink in public during Ramadan. Refusal of offered refreshment is considered discourteous. Shoes should be removed on entry to mosques.

Khat was banned by the Islamists in November 2006. It is a stimulant and commonly chewed by men, inducing a state of calm and sometimes causing aggressive behavior. It is grown in much of the Horn of Africa, including Kenya, and exported to Yemen.

In January 2011 hand-shaking between men and women who are not related was banned by al Shabab in the town of Jowhar, which they control. They are also barred from chatting or walking together

in public; punishment will be according to Sharia.

### Security

Any visit to Somalia should be undertaken only after a risk assessment has been carefully weighed; terrorism is a constant threat. Armed robbery and kidnapping by numerous bands of militia is endemic. Hargeisa, capital of the self-declared Republic of Somaliland is the only place that may offer a relatively secure environment in the country. Foreign nationals should register their presence with their respective diplomatic representatives.

### Getting there

#### Air

**National airline:** Damal Airlines (based in the UAE) operates scheduled regional flights from eight airports in Somalia. In 2012, Turkish Airlines plans to begin twice weekly flights from Istanbul, via Khartoum (Sudan) into Mogadishu.

**International airport/s:** Mogadishu International (MGQ), 6.4km from city. This airport was re-opened on 15 July 2006.

#### Surface

**Road:** There are road links with Kenya in the south and Djibouti in the north.

Four-wheel drive vehicles are recommended.

**Main port/s:** El Ma'an, Bassasso, Kismayu, Merca, Mogadishu.

Berbera is the economic lifeline for the self-declared Somaliland Republic.

### Getting about

#### National transport

**Air:** Damal Airlines flies to nine towns throughout the country, including Mogadishu.

**Road:** Travel may be restricted and local enquiries should be made. There were good roads from Mogadishu to Kismayu (via Merca) and Baidoa in the southern part of the country, and to Hargeisa and Berbera in the north. However, since the civil strife began conditions have deteriorated. Most other routes are mainly tracks and gravel roads. Driving is on the right.

**Water:** Coastal shipping of both freight and passengers is extensive. The number of incidents of piracy off the Somali coast has increased sharply in the last few years.

#### City transport

**Taxis:** Fares are by negotiation and tipping is not usual. Taxis can be hired on a time basis.

#### Car hire

Car hire is available in Mogadishu although foreign visitor should avoid driving alone until the political situation in Somalia improves.

There are no traffic lights in the country except in Hargeisa in Somaliland. The condition of the roads makes driving difficult and night driving is dangerous due to the absence of lighting.

## BUSINESS DIRECTORY

The addresses listed below are a selection only. While World of Information makes every endeavour to check these addresses, we cannot guarantee that changes have not been made, especially to telephone numbers and area codes. We would welcome any corrections.

### Telephone area codes

It is unlikely that all landlines quoted are working.

The international direct dialling (IDD) code for Somalia is +252, followed by area code and subscriber's number: Mogadishu 1 Hargeisa 2

### Chambers of Commerce

Somalia Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture, PO Box 27, Via Asha, Mogadishu (tel: 281-866).

Somaliland Chamber of Commerce, Hargeisa (tel: 523-143; email: hargcham@yahoo.com; internet: www.somalilandchamberofcommerce.com).

### Banking

Commercial and Savings Bank of Somalia, PO Box 203, Juley Street 1st, Mogadishu (tel: 22-861, 22-959).

### Central bank

Central Bank of Somalia, PO Box 11, Corso Somalia 55, Mogadishu, Somalia (tel: 215-241).

### Travel information

Daallo Airlines, # 30 Street, Baraka Market, Mogadishu (tel: 215-301; fax: 216-248; email: daallo@globalsom.com; internet: www.daallo.com).

Damalair, PO Box 27449, Dubai UAE (tel: + (+971-4) 271-5005; fax: (+971-4) 272-0890; email: airdamal@emirates.net.ae; internet: www.damalair.co.ae).

Somali Airlines (operations suspended), PO Box 726, Via Medina, Mogadishu.

### Other useful addresses

Agricultural Development Corporation, PO Box 930, Mogadishu.

Livestock Development Agency of Somalia, PO Box 1759, Mogadishu.

National Petroleum Agency of Somalia, PO Box 573, Mogadishu.

Somali Broadcasting Service, Ministry of Information and National Guidance, Private Bag, Mogadishu (tel: 2455).

Statistical Department, PO Box 1742, Mogadishu (tel: 80-385).

### Internet sites

Africa Business Network: [www.ifc.org/abn](http://www.ifc.org/abn)

African Development Bank: [www.afdb.org](http://www.afdb.org)

Africa Online: [www.africaonline.com](http://www.africaonline.com)

AllAfrica.com: <http://allafrica.com>

Puntland State of Somalia: <http://members.tripod.com/~Puntland/>

Somalia News: [www.somalianews.com](http://www.somalianews.com)

Somaliland official website: [www.somalilandgov.com](http://www.somalilandgov.com)

United Nations Somalia: [www.unsomalia.org](http://www.unsomalia.org)

Wakiil Business Centre: [www.wakiil.com](http://www.wakiil.com)