

A Fact-Finding Report by NOAS

Persecution and Protection in Somalia



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Foreword

In October and November 2013, the Norwegian Organisation for Asylum Seekers (NOAS) undertook a fact-finding mission to Nairobi (Kenya), Hargeisa (Somaliland) and Garowe (Puntland). The purpose was to collect updated country-of-origin information about issues relevant for the processing of asylum claims in Norway, such as the security situation in southern and central Somalia and the risk that al-Shabaab will take action against particular groups or individuals.

The delegation from NOAS consulted various national non-governmental organisations (NGOs), international NGOs (INGOs), United Nations (UN) agencies, government officials, diplomats and other individuals. The report is based on interviews with our sources, and it does not include any policy recommendations or analysis from NOAS.

The report concerns issues often raised in asylum cases. The delegation has been particularly interested in information about persons who may face reactions upon return to Somalia, rather than information about the most exposed groups. Information about the most exposed groups, including government officials, politicians and journalists, is well covered by other country-of-origin information sources. Such information also has less practical relevance for the legal aid provided to asylum seekers since these groups to a large extent are granted refugee status in Norway.

It should be noted that this report does not intend to cover all security and protection issues in southern and central Somalia. Rather, it should be read as a supplement to other reports covering the situation in this area.

Al-Shabaab issues are highly sensitive, and several sources therefore requested anonymity. However, they did permit NOAS to communicate information from the meetings to Landinfo, the Norwegian Country of Origin Information Centre.¹ The list of organisations, agencies and individuals consulted is included in the report.

During visits to Somaliland and Puntland, the delegation from NOAS was kindly assisted by the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC). NRC provided essential security and logistical assistance throughout NOAS' stay and movements in the cities. NOAS would like to thank NRC for its helpful and competent assistance and facilitation of our travels and meetings. The delegation would also like to thank all interlocutors for their kind support.

The NOAS delegation to Kenya and Somalia included Andreas Furuseth, Abdulwahab Said and Mari Seilskjær. The report is written by Mari Seilskjær, legal advisor at NOAS, in close collaboration with Siril Henriksen Berglund, a NOAS volunteer.

The report is available at www.noas.org.

Oslo, April 2014

¹ Landinfo is an independent body within the Norwegian immigration authorities.

Summary

The government

In September 2012, a Somali government was established after decades of conflict and lack of a central authority. Optimism and high expectations abounded at the time of the election, but sources stated that Somalis have become disappointed with the results. The government was characterised as weak and unpopular. Sources stated that the government has been strongly criticised for bad leadership and corruption. Sources pointed out that most people are dissatisfied with the lack of development on the ground, such as the lack of health services and provision of security. Several sources stressed that it will take time to establish a stable and well-functioning central government.

Several sources stated that the government employs excessive violence against its population. Sources claimed that professed al-Shabaab defectors risk government abuse in cases where the defection is thought to be feigned. There have been both suspicions and reported cases of torture by the government.

Al-Shabaab

Al-Shabaab is a militant and dogmatic Islamist group that controls large parts of southern and central Somalia. In recent years, the group has lost control of several major cities, including the capital Mogadishu. Sources stated that al-Shabaab has a very strong system of intelligence and information gathering. The majority of our sources believed that al-Shabaab has become more radicalised in the last few years.

Our sources differed in opinion about al-Shabaab's current strength and future development. Most sources described al-Shabaab as a strong movement and argued that it has become increasingly professionalised, well organised and hard-core. Several claimed that there is a gap between reality on the ground and media coverage, and that the portrayal of al-Shabaab as nearly defeated is fallacious. In contrast, some sources believed that al-Shabaab's strength has weakened and will continue to wane. Several sources emphasised that taxation of local populations, businesses and NGOs is an important source of income for al-Shabaab.

The majority of our sources believed that al-Shabaab has lost respect from the population, and that the group has less support today than some years ago. Ideologically and religiously, the movement is more extreme than Somalis in general, although parts of the population genuinely support al-Shabaab's views. The provision of stability and security in areas under the movement's control was cited as a key reason for popular support. Its brutal nature and heavy taxation regime were highlighted as factors explaining al-Shabaab's declining support.

The sources pointed out material incentives, ideology, religion, indoctrination, hardship and force as factors affecting recruitment to al-Shabaab. However, sources differed in opinion over which are the key explanatory factors, and noted that confirmed information about recruitment is limited. Some people join al-Shabaab on the basis of ideological or religious views. It was claimed that indoctrina-

tion and brainwashing were elements in the recruitment strategy, especially when recruiting young people. Material incentives are said to be a key factor as well. Sources claimed that some youths choose to join al-Shabaab because of hardship and a lack of other opportunities. Minorities and vulnerable persons are often easier to recruit due to their difficult situations. Sources claimed that al-Shabaab also recruits by force, often using relatively direct means. There were different opinions as to how often recruitment strategies involve the use of force. Several sources pointed out that recruitment methods are likely to vary within al-Shabaab's areas.

Security situation

In August 2011, al-Shabaab forces withdrew from Mogadishu and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) took control of the capital. Since then, there have been no front lines within the city and confrontations between military units have more or less ended. Instead, al-Shabaab carries out terrorist acts. Al-Shabaab continues to infiltrate the areas it does not control and wages an asymmetric war in order to create instability.

The security situation varies across southern and central Somalia. Sources described the security situation as vulnerable, unstable and generally bad. Several sources described the situation in Mogadishu as particularly bad. Sources insisted that the media coverage of security developments in Somalia, and particularly in Mogadishu, has been inadequate and misleading. The media have portrayed the situation as more stable than it actually is. Several sources highlighted the lack of access to information about al-Shabaab.

Al-Shabaab still controls large parts of the country, and it has a major impact on the security situation. Several sources stressed that the term «control», when applied to Somalia, must not be understood too literally. It is rare for any one actor to fully control an area.

The government-friendly forces do not provide true security in areas under their control, and their control is often weak. The situation is complex, and many different actors are involved. Our sources stated that the government's control of Mogadishu is limited. Al-Shabaab has infiltrated the whole city, and has a strong position in several districts, especially in the outskirts and during the night. Sources stated that the frequency of attacks in Mogadishu is high. Sources claimed that al-Shabaab performs different types of attacks, including targeted attacks on individuals and large, spectacular attacks. Sources stated that generalised violence in the capital still represents a considerable threat. According to several sources, it is particularly difficult for non-locals and those without contacts to navigate Mogadishu.

Al-Shabaab is brutal and suppresses the population in areas under its control. However, the sources had different opinions on whether the situation there was better or worse than in areas controlled by government-friendly forces. Many sources emphasised the brutality of al-Shabaab and the fact that many people and organisations flee its areas. Other sources stressed that areas under al-Shabaab control experience less regular crime and low levels of indiscriminate violence.

Persecution by al-Shabaab

Sources stated that al-Shabaab will generally target defectors even if they settle in government-controlled areas. The main purpose of targeting detectors is to punish betrayers and send a clear message that leaving the movement is not a viable option. Additionally, sources claimed that al-Shabaab fears information leakages by defectors.

Sources stated that even low-level defectors, including those who flee shortly after being recruited, face a risk of persecution by al-Shabaab. The sources had different perceptions of the degree of risk. In comparison to high-level defectors, low-level defectors were considered to be less protected and consequently easier to target in most cases. Several sources stated that they do not think al-Shabaab would spend significant resources tracking low-level defectors, but most sources believed that returned defectors would eventually be discovered. Several sources stressed that information spreads quickly due to Somalia's highly communicative culture and al-Shabaab's strong intelligence work. Al-Shabaab defectors who are returned to Somalia would be at risk even several years after their defection, sources believed.

Many sources claimed that al-Shabaab has a low threshold for accusing someone of espionage. Sources described the movement as suspicious by nature, and especially towards people with connections to western countries. Accusations of spying may have very serious consequences. Sources stated that businesspersons and persons selling goods to the government risk reactions from al-Shabaab.

Clan support

Several sources stated that the clan system is important in Somalia. However, many of the sources held the opinion that the clan system has weakened in recent years. Several sources stated that the clan is now mainly relied upon in conflict situations, and is less important when it comes to providing humanitarian support to disadvantaged clan members. Sources believed that returnees cannot count on support from clan members and distant relatives; if available, such support would last a very short period. Close family members may in some cases be able to provide support, but that too is limited by general hardship and lack of resources, sources said. Sources claimed that a person's absence over several years, with little family or clan contact, can weaken access to support. Sources stated that there is very limited clan protection available to minorities.

Vulnerable groups

Several sources maintained that women's rights are not respected in Somalia. To illustrate this, many sources cited the widespread incidence of rape and other forms of sexual abuse. Some sources stated that forced marriage is a common practice. Other sources claimed that they do not know how extensive the practice is. The situation for internally displaced people (IDPs) in Somalia was described as terrible. Living conditions are poor and ill treatment, including sexual violence, is widespread. Minority groups in Somalia are marginalised and face a difficult humanitarian situation, according to sources.

Sources

International NGOs (INGOs):

Amnesty International: Gemma Davies, researcher on Somalia and armed conflict and Justus Nyang'aya, Country Director Kenya.

Human Rights Watch (HRW): Laetitia Bader, researcher on Somalia based in Nairobi, Kenya.

INGO (A): Source at the regional level of a humanitarian organisation.

INGO (B): Source at the regional level of a humanitarian organisation.

INGO (C): Local staff member in a humanitarian organisation.

INGO (D): Local staff member in a humanitarian organisation.

INGO (E): Staff member at an organisation working with security.

INGO (F): Source at the regional level of a humanitarian organisation.

INGO (G): Source at the regional level of a humanitarian organisation.

INGO (H): Local staff member in an organisation working with migration.

The United Nations (UN):

UN source (A): A UN source in Somalia.

UN source (B): A UN source in Nairobi, Kenya.

Diplomatic sources:

Knut Holm: Immigration Attaché at the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Nairobi, Kenya.

Jan-Petter Holtedahl: Counsellor on Somalia at the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Nairobi, Kenya.

Government sources in Puntland:

A government source.

The Minister of Education: Abdi Farah Said Juxa.

Local sources in Somalia:

A clan leader.

IDPs: three male and one female from the IDP camp in Garowe.

NGO (A): An NGO working with gender issues.

NGO (B): An NGO working with development.

Research centre (A).

Research centre (B).

Sadia Ahmed: Activist and development worker.

Social Life and Agricultural Development Organisation (SADO): Abdullahi Abdi, Director.

Voices of Somaliland Minority Women Organisation (VOSOMWO) in Hargeisa, Somaliland:

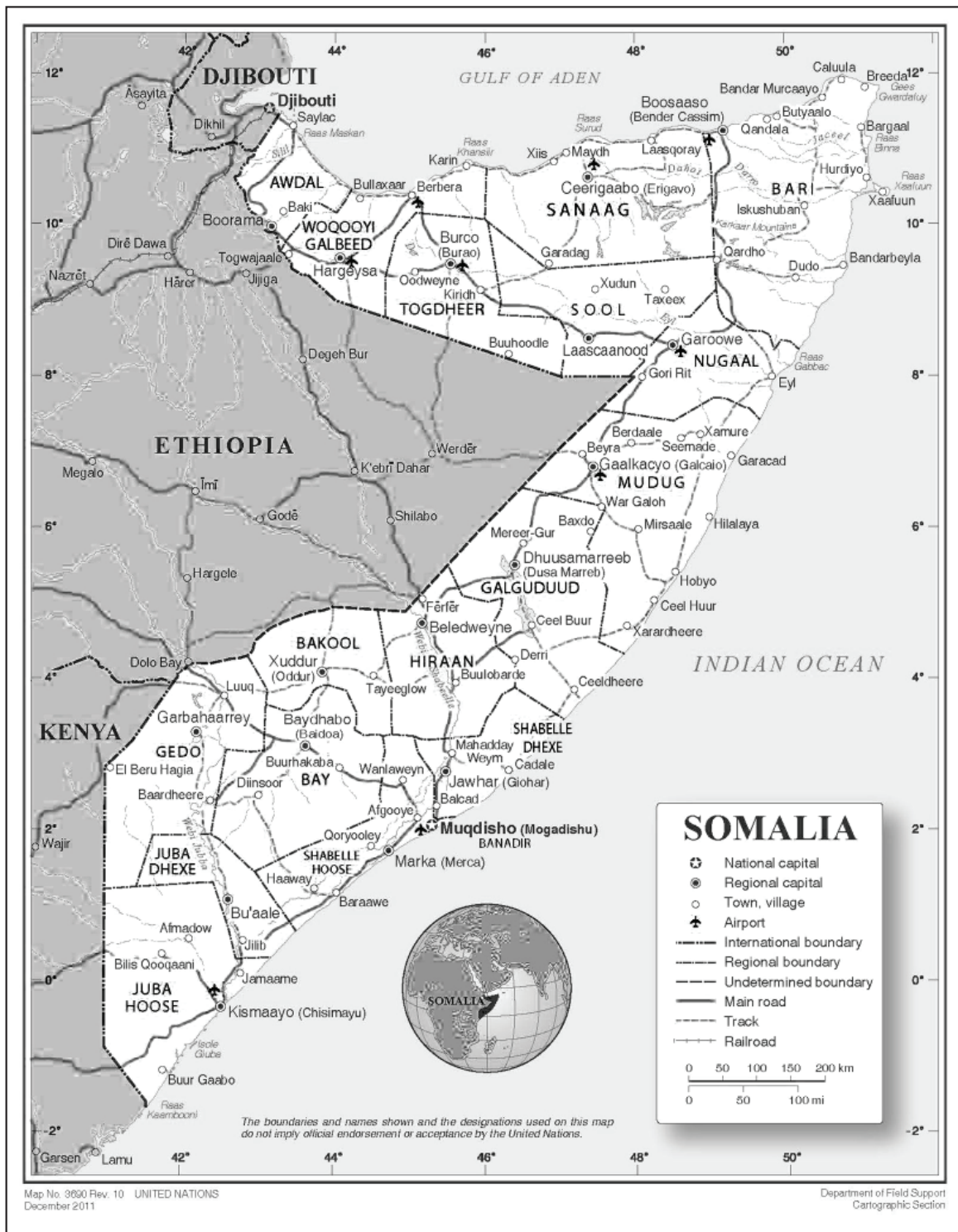
Nimao Lid Salan, Chairperson and two members of staff.

Yusuf Gabobe: The editor of Somaliland Post.

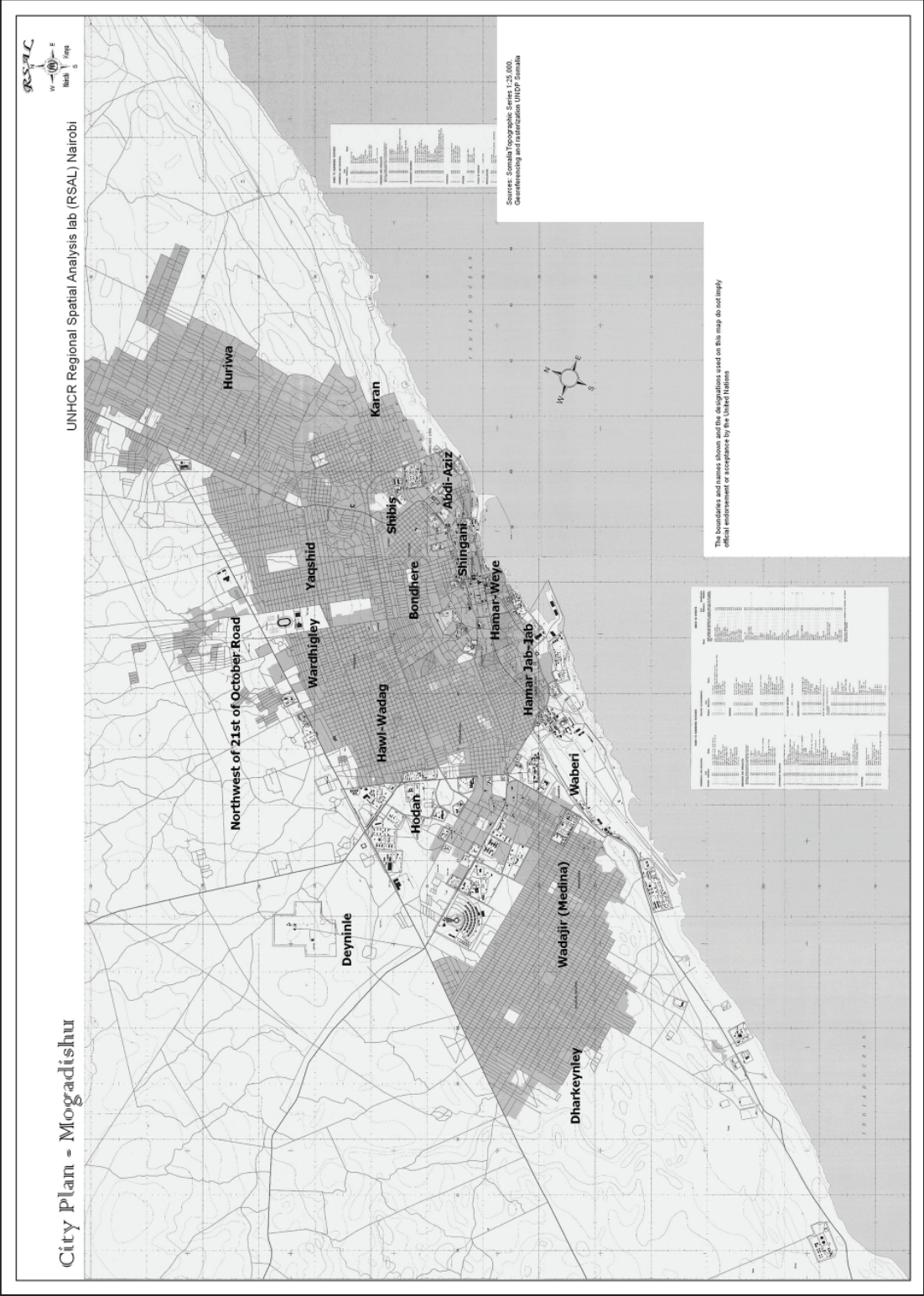
Abbreviations

AMISOM	African Union Mission in Somalia
FGS	Federal Government of Somalia
HRW	Human Rights Watch
IDP	Internally Displaced People
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NOAS	Norwegian Organisation for Asylum Seekers
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
SADO	Social Life and Agricultural Development Organisation
SNA	Somali National Army
SNAF	Somali National Armed Forces
UN	United Nations
VOSOMWO	Voices of Somaliland Minority Women Organisation

Map of Somalia



Map of Mogadishu



PART I: ACTORS

I The Somali Government

I.1 Overview of the political structure

Since the state of Somalia collapsed after the civil war in 1991, in which Siad Barre's regime was overthrown, Somalia has struggled to establish a functioning central government. Since 2000, there have been several transitional governments in place. In September 2012, the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) was inaugurated, and the parliament elected Hassan Sheikh Mohamud as president. The political structure includes a cabinet of 25 ministries, a central bank and several diplomatic missions. The majority of ministers were previously members of the Somali diaspora.

The members of parliament in Somalia were appointed by clan elders according to the 4.5 formula, a power sharing mechanism that is designed to ensure that the parliament reflects the Somali clan structure. The formula prescribes that the four major Somali clans Darood, Hawiye, Dir and Digil-Mirifle each receives 61 seats, while a coalition of minority clans together receives 31 seats. The 4.5 formula is considered undemocratic, especially because minority clans are unequally and insufficiently represented and because the clan system structures the parliament. President Mohamud has been described as an academic with a background in reconciling feuding clans, and media have reported that his choice not to get involved in clan politics and conflicts led to his election.

The Somali National Armed Forces (SNAF) and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) provide essential military support to the government. SNAF is comprised of the Somali National Army (SNA), the Somali Air Force, the Somali Navy and the Somali Police. AMISOM is an active, regional peacekeeping mission operated by the African Union with the approval of the United Nations. The AMISOM forces are supported with troops from Burundi, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Sierra Leone and Uganda, and police forces from Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Uganda. These forces are also referred to as government-friendly forces.

After the civil war, Somalia fragmented into the self-declared Republic of Somaliland in the northwest and the semiautonomous region of Puntland in the northeast, in addition to the southern and central areas now administered by the Federal Republic of Somalia.

Somalia is characterised by a severe lack of basic economic statistics. Despite the lack of effective national governance, Somalia maintains an informal economy largely based on livestock, remittance/money transfer companies and telecommunications. The international community gives large amounts of aid to promote humanitarian, political and security development. The Somali diaspora has played a major role through its transfer of significant amounts of remittances.

Freedom of information is severely limited in Somalia, and its fragmented and partisan media reflects a disintegrating Somalia. The country is described as the deadliest country for journalists, and at least 15 journalists were killed in 2012.

1.2 Popular support and provision of security

Sources stated that the Somali government has very limited popular support. Puntland's Minister of Education stated that the optimism at the time of the election in 2012 resulted in a nostalgic feeling and the return of many hopeful diaspora members. The source observed that this hope now has faded and that fatigue has taken over. People have become more critical and the government's rating is not high. HRW and a government source confirmed that the optimism linked to the new government has turned into disappointment.

The government's declining support is linked to dissatisfaction with its priorities and use of resources, claimed sources. The Minister of Education remarked that resources are not evenly distributed, and that the conflict regarding the autonomous region Jubaland in southern Somalia is resource-intensive. HRW stated that, to date, the government has proven unable to provide security, including in Mogadishu. The government was described as focusing on internal political matters and not sufficiently on issues of governance, security and development. INGO (F) claimed that the government is not building trust and promoting reconciliation. The source also referred to allegations of corruption. INGO (A) drew attention to personal conflicts within the government.

A government source believed that the Somali government does not have many sympathisers amongst its population because development on the ground has been limited. It was noted that achieving recognition by the international community appears to be the key focus of the government, as evident by government member's constant travel. INGO (A) confirmed that the government has prioritised external issues, such as gaining support from the international society. Although the government is gaining support internationally, the source pointed out that neighbouring countries are being more distant. The source stated that the government's relations with other countries in the region are tense, and particularly mentioned its poor relationship with Kenya. According to INGO (E), the government is completely dependent on external money and military forces. It was further remarked that AMISOM will not stay forever.

Research centre (A) described political processes in Somalia as top-down processes that do not involve the people and that lack legitimacy. The source also believed that the federal government is incompatible with the system of clans, which was identified as an obstacle to the establishment of a stable and legitimate federal government. UN source (A) found it difficult to assess the level of popular support for the government. It pointed out that it takes time to become popular and that it is too soon to tell.

1.3 Human rights violations

Several sources stated that government employs excessive violence against the population. INGO (C) stated that al-Shabaab defectors are targeted by the government. Defectors might be kept for a long time in detention and some are tortured. It was remarked that the government forces are suspicious of defectors as they question whether the defection is genuine. INGO (C) stated that there were at least four reported cases of defectors being tortured by the government in 2013. This information came from local partner organisations that monitor the situation in southern and central Somalia and that report on human rights violations, evictions and movements.

Amnesty stated that the government is suspicious of people with al-Shabaab-affiliation. The government is not known to kill people because of suspected affiliation, but people are being arrested. Amnesty also stated that the authorities represent more of a risk than protection to the population. As an illustration, Amnesty referred to high levels of sexual violence that reportedly had been carried out by men in government uniforms.

INGO (G) referred to illegal check-points organised by members of the government forces. In order for buses to pass, the soldiers demand payments. It was stated that the government is struggling to discipline its forces.

Forced eviction by government forces and private actors is a big problem in Mogadishu, according to Amnesty. The number of evictions has fluctuated. HRW stated that the government reportedly has evicted people from public buildings where they had been living for decades.

2 The al-Shabaab movement

2.1 Structure

Al-Shabaab is a militant and dogmatic Islamist group that controls large parts of southern and central Somalia. The movement is led by Ahmed Godane and has links to al-Qaeda. A few years ago, it was the dominating power in Somalia. It has later lost control of several major cities, including the capital Mogadishu.

The diplomatic source Knut Holm stated that al-Shabaab's structure is comprised of a political and a military section. While al-Shabaab's political wing has visible, administrative units, a lack of transparency characterises the military structure. Due to lacking information, it is difficult to gain a solid understanding of the military structure. It is also unclear what consequences defectors potentially face, stated Holm.

Knut Holm described the intelligence branch Amniyat as a strong al-Shabaab unit with extensive presence throughout Somalia. Holm estimated that there are between 20 and 30 members within each Amniyat cell. Amniyat was described by INGO (G) as the most ideologically indoctrinated unit, running al-Shabaab's intelligence and special operations. INGO (G) claimed that there are internal tensions within the movement and that critics accuse Godane of using Amniyat to consolidate his personal power rather than to benefit the movement as a whole. This source attributed the attacks on the UN office in Mogadishu in June 2013 to Amniyat. INGO (D) stated that Amniyat agents in Garowe do not conform to al-Shabaab's standards in terms of cultural and social practices. They do not grow a beard or wear traditional clothes, but smoke and take drugs. This information led our source to speculate whether money rather than religious interests motivates the Amniyat agents.

INGO (D) claimed that al-Shabaab's intelligence system by far outperforms both that of the government and AMISOM. It was said that al-Shabaab has «eyes and ears» in many places, even inside the presidential palace. The group is present everywhere and is able to attack the most protected targets, including UN buildings, stated INGO (D). NGO (A) described al-Shabaab's intelligence as very strong and stated that it is able to collect information also in government-controlled areas. In Mogadishu, people say that one must not mention the name al-Shabaab because intelligence agents are everywhere. INGO (C) remarked that it has become a norm in Mogadishu not to talk to anyone about society, al-Shabaab, the government or AMISOM. Amnesty claimed that there is a high probability that SNAF is infiltrated by al-Shabaab. INGO (C) claimed that al-Shabaab is infiltrating international NGOs.

The majority of our sources believed that al-Shabaab has become more radicalised. Several sources claimed that the moderate forces within al-Shabaab are losing power to those supporting the leader Ahmed Godane. INGO (A), a clan leader and NGO (B) referred to moderate individuals within al-Shabaab being killed, and the rise of more radical forces in leading positions. A clan leader

described Godane as having become the supreme, extremist dictator of al-Shabaab. Yusuf Gabobe stated that the radical fraction promoting international jihad has won over the nationalistic fraction in an internal conflict. This has led to leadership changes and conservative forces friendly with Godane have replaced moderate individuals. One source, INGO (E), claimed that the movement has not become more radical. Rather, it has changed the way in which it operates.

Knut Holm claimed that there is an element of clan representation within al-Shabaab, and pointed out Bantu, Rahaweyn and Murursade as some of the dominating clans. However, Holm underlined that clan was not a key determinant in the allocation of higher positions in al-Shabaab, such as commanders. Commanders may come from weaker clans, claimed Holm.

2.2 Income

Several sources explained that the taxation of the population, businesses and NGOs is an important source of income for al-Shabaab. INGO (B) stated that al-Shabaab also collects protection taxes from humanitarian organisations and demands huge parts of their project budgets. INGO (B) stated that NGOs operating in al-Shabaab-controlled areas have to contribute a general tax. The movement may demand between 30 and 50 percent of NGOs' project budgets. INGO (E) stated that al-Shabaab demands at least 20 percent of project budgets. Although 20 percent is the official rate, there have been reports of demands for up to 60 percent of the budget.

INGO (C) stated that al-Shabaab collects taxes from the population and that it taxes businesses according to their size. It was believed that al-Shabaab has round-ups and roadblocks to collect money, in addition to heavy taxation of local actors such as businessmen and NGOs operating in the areas under its control. However, the source stated that al-Shabaab now receives less income from taxation than before, due to business people and organisations moving out of al-Shabaab-controlled areas. Furthermore, the population in their areas is mainly nomadic people with limited resources. INGO (H) pointed out that al-Shabaab's taxes have become heavier over the last few years. INGO (G) stated that al-Shabaab's heavy taxation of the population is unpopular.

Several sources commented on the economic consequences of al-Shabaab's loss of Kismayo, an important port city in the south with large charcoal export. Yusuf Gabobe stated that al-Shabaab's income from charcoal business became reduced when it lost Kismayo in September 2012. According to INGO (H), Kismayo used to be al-Shabaab's main source of income. INGO (G) stated that the taxation of the population has increased after al-Shabaab lost the city. In contrast, INGO (E) believed that al-Shabaab basically makes more money after it lost Kismayo. The movement now collects taxes at each stage of the charcoal production, and supply chains appear to be intact despite the change in management of the port. In addition, al-Shabaab collects checkpoint taxes from trucks that transport the charcoal through the areas it controls, stated INGO (E). Since it used to be difficult to export and profit from the charcoal trade due to UN sanctions, INGO (E) thought that al-Shabaab might be in a better financial situation than when they controlled the city.

The sources had different opinions regarding the overall income composition and al-Shabaab's financial situation in general. They noted that it is difficult to find reliable information about the movement's financial situation. INGO (E) maintained that al-Shabaab has less income now, but that it also has fewer expenses because of smaller military forces and not having the burden of controlling large areas. INGO (E) assumed that al-Shabaab's resource situation is good. INGO (E) believed that al-Shabaab does not receive a lot of funding from abroad. INGO (B), on the other hand, assumed that al-Shabaab does not get a lot of money out of actors locally. The source believed that the largest part of al-Shabaab's income is financial aid from abroad, and pointed to the Arab world.

2.3 Strength

The al-Shabaab withdrawal from Mogadishu in August 2011 has given the impression that the movement is losing grounds. Several sources claimed that there is a gap between reality on the ground and media coverage of the development. These sources stated that the international understanding of al-Shabaab is incomplete. Yusuf Gabobe stated that portraying al-Shabaab as nearly defeated is fallacious. INGO (F) claimed that the story of al-Shabaab losing territory is not correct. In the south, huge areas are under al-Shabaab's control, and government-friendly forces only control urban areas – and not even all urban areas.

The majority of sources described al-Shabaab as a strong and well-organised movement. INGO (B) claimed that al-Shabaab has strengthened its position by targeting and thus weakening political and religious leaders. Although it has lost respect on the ground for being «unislamic», INGO (B) believed that it has gained a lot of power by becoming a more structured organisation and by setting clearer objectives and goals. INGO (B) described al-Shabaab as a large, organised movement that is capable of sophisticated, planned attacks, such as the Westgate attack in Nairobi in September 2013.

Puntland's Minister of Education described al-Shabaab as brutal, forceful and unpredictable. He pointed out that after periods of inactivity, al-Shabaab suddenly strikes back. A clan leader described the movement as being well organised and as having very strong intelligence. UN source (B) described al-Shabaab as having become very mobile. In that sense, it was believed to be more dangerous now than when it had large troops that were less flexible and slower to move. INGO (A) maintained that it is not clear whether al-Shabaab has in fact lost power, or how much. The source did not believe that al-Shabaab has lost any of its weaponry.

INGO (E) stated that al-Shabaab still has a very strong system and actually has more control than before, albeit in a different form. It spends fewer resources on controlling areas and large-scale military actions; instead it has re-organised to perform more efficient and spectacular attacks on high profile targets, such as UN buildings. The number of unsuccessful attacks has gone down, stated this source. It was also claimed that al-Shabaab is not under pressure. In terms of al-Shabaab's future strength, INGO (E) argued that the movement is not weakening or fragmenting, nor will it collapse. Rather than having become more radical, INGO (E) claimed that the movement has only changed the way it operates.

In contrast, other sources believed that al-Shabaab's strength has weakened and will continue to wane. The movement was described as being in a state of disintegration and fragmentation. Knut Holm believed that the internal split over leadership has weakened the movement's political and military power. INGO (D) also referred to al-Shabaab's fragmenting and weakened organisation. INGO (C), INGO (D) and INGO (H) claimed that al-Shabaab will become weaker due to internal conflict and poor economy. INGO (H) stated that al-Shabaab's power will decline due to reduced support and lacking income, and pointed to the loss of Kismayo and Mogadishu. Research centre (B) predicted that al-Shabaab will not represent the same threat to security in the future as it does now, and that it will fade away and lose territorial control. The source did not believe that al-Shabaab would disappear, but thought that the group would end up operating underground.

2.4 Popular support

The majority of our sources believed that al-Shabaab has lost respect from the population, and that the group has less support today than some years ago.

2.4.1 Ideology and religion

Sources cited ideology and religion as important reasons why people support al-Shabaab. INGO (C) stated that al-Shabaab enjoys genuine support from some Somalis, although the movement is more radical than the majority of the population. Those who have lived in al-Shabaab-controlled areas for many years were claimed to be indoctrinated by al-Shabaab's information. Due to the movement's control of information flows, many have little access to information about the world outside Somalia. This especially applies to many young people, according to INGO (C). The source claimed that older generations often disagree with al-Shabaab's interpretation of Islam. INGO (C) claimed that some supports the movement for ideological reasons, while others do it for safety. Knut Holm confirmed that a portion of the Somali population supports al-Shabaab's ideological and religious views, and that this could be because of indoctrination and lack of access to information from other sources. Also research centre (B) believed that al-Shabaab benefits from the widespread illiteracy and the lack of education and resources.

Yusuf Gabobe stated al-Shabaab still has popular support, but that it has diminished because of the strict interpretation of Islam and restrictions on movement. INGO (B) claimed that the «unislamic» and extreme nature of the movement has resulted in loss of respect on the ground. Knut Holm believed that al-Shabaab's religious authority has weakened, especially in areas controlled by government-friendly forces. Holm stated that many religious authorities in Somalia have been critical of al-Shabaab. INGO (C) pointed out the fact that other religious groups are fighting against al-Shabaab, such as the al-Sunna militia who thinks that al-Shabaab misinterprets Islam. Research centre (A) stated that the movement is losing popular support since it is believed to hamper the political and economic development of the country and because of its links with al-Qaeda.

Knut Holm stated that al-Shabaab previously enjoyed stronger support, and referred to when al-Shabaab fought the Ethiopian invasion between 2006 and 2009. This struggle provided legitimacy and increased drive for the movement. INGO (A) confirmed that the movement's struggle against Ethiopia gathered ideological support since it represented a common cause based on national identity.

2.4.2 Stability and security

Several sources claimed that the stability and security provided locally by al-Shabaab is a key reason for popular support. INGO (C) stated that some people support the movement solely for the safety that it provides. Yusuf Gabobe stated that some segments of the population would feel insecure if al-Shabaab disappeared. For example, some minority clans now enjoy protection that they previously did not. INGO (E) highlighted that many people prefer the harsh punishment, strict rules and repression that come with stability and safety to freedom and civil rights. In this regard, al-Shabaab capitalises from the weakly functioning state and its wrongdoings.²

2.4.3 The impact of brutality and restrictions on popular support

Several sources focused on al-Shabaab's brutality and restrictions when explaining the declining support for the movement. Research centre (B) stated that al-Shabaab is losing support and influence throughout Somalia due to its brutality and repression of the population. Yusuf Gabobe pointed out that the population wants to be free from restrictions, especially the hugely unpopular restriction on movement.³

² For more information see chapter 6 «Areas under the control of al-Shabaab».

³ Ibid.

INGO (E) stated that after al-Shabaab got a bad reputation from killing civilians and consequently lost support, the movement has changed its tactics and has started to compensate for collateral damage in connection with its targeted attacks. For example, al-Shabaab paid compensation to affected Somali families after an attack on the Turkish Red Crescent. Also Knut Holm speculated whether the movement might reduce its use of force in order to regain popular support.

2.4.4 The impact of taxation on popular support

Sources pointed out the negative impact of al-Shabaab's taxation regime on popular support. HRW referred to talks they had with people who left al-Shabaab-controlled areas in 2011, and reported that these locals expressed anger and despair over the taxes levied by the movement. HRW specified that taxes can also be collected in the form of livestock or crops. Many Somalis found the taxation to be more problematic than human rights abuses committed by al-Shabaab. INGO (G) stated that protection taxes (zaka) create tensions, and have caused some rebellion. The source believed that there is a limit to how heavy the taxations can be. Unlike the sources above, Yusuf Gabobe stated that the movement does not impose very heavy taxes and that people accept the taxes because of the related security benefit. In this regard, the movement provides a better system than the government, according to Gabobe.

2.5 Recruitment

The sources pointed out material incentives, ideology, religion, indoctrination, hardship and force as factors affecting recruitment to al-Shabaab. However, sources differed in opinion over which are the key explanatory factors, and noted that confirmed information about recruitment is limited. There were different opinions as to how often recruitment strategies involve the use of force. Several sources pointed out that recruitment methods are likely to vary within al-Shabaab's areas.

Yusuf Gabobe claimed that it is uncertain whether there have been any developments or changes to the methods employed in recruitment processes. INGO (G) did not think that the loss of control over important cities has affected al-Shabaab's recruitment strategies. Knut Holm and Amnesty both referred to the UN Somalia and Eritrea Monitoring Group report as an authoritative source on al-Shabaab and recruitment.⁴

2.5.1 Material incentives

Many sources pointed out material incentives as being a key factor in al-Shabaab's recruitment strategy. Research centre (A) and a clan leader stated that al-Shabaab tempts potential recruits with money and phones. INGO (G) believed that the appeal of joining al-Shabaab lies less in its ideological attraction, but more often in the potential economic benefits. According to INGO (E), SNA soldiers have been known to defect to join al-Shabaab, and a key factor explaining this was al-Shabaab's more advantageous financial terms. Yusuf Gabobe believed that recruitment used to be more related to ideological or religious reasons, while material incentives now play a more important role. Gabobe claimed that al-Shabaab will need more resources in order to attract people in the future. According to Gabobe, al-Shabaab may be forced to rely more on forced recruitment in the future, if their income continues to drop. In comparison, INGO (C) did not think that the use of incentives is a very common recruitment strategy.

2.5.2 Ideology and religion

Some people join al-Shabaab on the basis of ideological or religious views, according to sources. It

4 «Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea pursuant to Security Council resolution 2060 (2012): Somalia.» Available at http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_2013_413.pdf

was claimed that indoctrination and brainwashing are elements in the recruitment strategy, especially when recruiting young people. Research centre (A) claimed that ideology is al-Shabaab's most efficient recruitment tool, and pointed out that soldiers bought with material incentives may be less reliable. According to research centre (B), al-Shabaab mainly recruits youths and trains them to execute operations. Quranic schools provide a meeting place. Here the movement recruits young people through indoctrination, which convinces young people to join. It was believed that al-Shabaab wants to shape people as young as possible. Knut Holm claimed that al-Shabaab's role in the struggle with Ethiopia during the invasion between 2006 and 2009 motivated recruits to join the movement.

INGO (D) stated that young people returning from the diaspora are vulnerable to al-Shabaab's indoctrination. The source claimed that diaspora youths in Europe and the US who lack language and working skills more often are prone to unemployment and criminal behaviour. This could isolate young Somalis and render them unpopular in their host communities. The isolation leads to a growing hatred among the diaspora youths and it might spur return migration with intentions of joining al-Shabaab. Al-Shabaab takes advantage of this situation by using indoctrination, manipulation and incentives to lure potential recruits into joining. INGO (D) claimed that these young people might be convinced by the artificial world created by al-Shabaab's discourse. Research centre (A) confirmed that al-Shabaab recruits amongst vulnerable groups in the diaspora through indoctrination and by taking advantage of people being unhappy with their situation.

2.5.3 Hardship

Sources claimed that some youths choose to join al-Shabaab because of hardship and a lack of other opportunities. INGO (B) claimed that hardship in the form of poverty, hopelessness and lacking employment opportunities forces people to join the movement. Many people are not paid in their regular jobs, such as police officers, and this causes a lot of frustration. Research centre (A) claimed that for some Somalis, joining al-Shabaab is a question of survival.

The movement's strategy of capitalising on people in need includes approaching people who are considered easier to recruit, such as people in refugee camps or other vulnerable situations. INGO (B), INGO (G), research centre (A) and Yusuf Gabobe all pointed out that minority clans are marginalised and treated as second-class citizens, and therefore easier to recruit. By joining al-Shabaab, they gain a higher social status and an opportunity to take revenge on oppressors. Research centre (A) claimed that marginalised groups are more likely to join the movement since they have less to lose. Many members of marginalised groups see al-Shabaab as a possibility to restore their lost pride.

2.5.4 Forced recruitment

Sources claimed that al-Shabaab also recruits by force, often using relatively direct means. There were different opinions concerning how extensively force is actually used when recruiting. Several sources stated that they know forced recruitment occurs, but they were unaware of the extent and intensity of the force being used.

Amnesty stated that al-Shabaab uses forced recruitment. This can take the form of a contract that provides mutual benefits. For example, a minority group could get help from al-Shabaab in land conflicts, and would have to provide soldiers in return. Amnesty claimed that al-Shabaab forcibly recruits by abducting people from schools and from within villages. This is ongoing and Amnesty referred to a source that had reported increasing rates of abductions. A clan leader and INGO (A) confirmed that al-Shabaab abducts children from Quranic schools and subjects them to brainwash over a period of time.

INGO (C) claimed that al-Shabaab does recruit child soldiers, but most recruits are youths between the ages of 16 and 20. It was believed that al-Shabaab gathers people in towns and demands that all families bring one person to join the movement. Al-Shabaab also enters mosques during praying time and puts pressure on people to join. Yusuf Gabobe believed that al-Shabaab recruits children down to the age of 12, by applying pressure or forcing parents to hand over their children. The children may be used as suicide bombers and for information gathering. However, only a small percentage of al-Shabaab soldiers were forcibly recruited, claimed Gabobe.

INGO (E) found it difficult to estimate the number of forced recruits, but stated that it does happen. INGO (A), INGO (C), INGO (E) and a clan leader claimed that al-Shabaab asks clan leaders to recruit from clan members and that they risk sanctions if they do not oblige. Normally, forced recruitment takes place where clans are not so supportive of al-Shabaab, stated INGO (E). If a clan is supportive, al-Shabaab will avoid forced recruitment as it does not want to alienate the clan. It was claimed that those who are requested to join al-Shabaab only have the options of fighting for them, paying them or fleeing.

Knut Holm stated that there is uncertainty regarding the actual use of forced recruitment, and that different sources provide different information. Holm believed that forced recruitment likely happens in different ways and in more or less direct manners. The extent of forced recruitment was unknown to Holm. According to Holm, several people believe that al-Shabaab's shift towards asymmetrical warfare has resulted in an increased use of forced recruitment. There are different opinions regarding the use of forced recruitment amongst al-Shabaab leaders. Because of local resistance to forced recruitment, al-Shabaab might restrict their use of force in order to avoid conflicts with the population and loss of popular support.

INGO (G) believed that some forced recruitment takes place, but was not under the impression that it occurs everywhere. Rather, the extent of forced recruitment probably depends on the movement's need, and is not used as a general recruitment strategy. The pressure applied by Kenya and Ethiopia on al-Shabaab could lead to increased use of forced recruitment, stated INGO (G).

Research centre (B) stated that al-Shabaab sometimes intimidates potential recruits, and thus forcing them to join. People who realise that they are targeted for recruitment may flee the country. The movement also uses intimidation to get favours or practical support, according to research centre (B). The Minister of Education and a government source confirmed that al-Shabaab uses threats to ensure the supply of new recruits. Research centre (A) claimed that both indirect and direct forced recruitment occurs, but was unable to confirm the extent of forced recruitment. Research centre (A) believed that some people join to avoid reactions. It was claimed that joining al-Shabaab might provide safety for the soldier and his family. Research centre (A) believed that forced recruitment is the most common recruitment method, but did not know specific details.

PART II: SECURITY SITUATION

3 Overview of security developments

Al-Shabaab controls large parts of the country, and it has a major impact on the security situation in Somalia. According to several sources, al-Shabaab controls 70 percent of southern and central Somalia. Several sources highlighted that movement in Somalia is difficult since travelling by road is very dangerous.

In August 2011, al-Shabaab forces withdrew from Mogadishu and AMISOM took control of the capital. Since then, there have not been any frontlines within the city and confrontations between military units have more or less ended. Instead, al-Shabaab carries out terrorist attacks such as suicide attacks, bomb attacks and attacks with improvised explosive devices (IEDs) or grenades. Additionally, the movement carries out targeted assassinations. Al-Shabaab continues to infiltrate the areas it does not control and wages an asymmetrical war in order to create instability.

The security situation in different areas of southern and central Somalia varies. Sources stated that the security situation is vulnerable, unstable and generally bad. The diplomatic source Knut Holm characterised today's security situation as fluctuating. Several sources pointed out the situation in Mogadishu as being particularly bad.

Many sources stressed that the term «control» must not be understood too literally. It is rare for any one actor to fully control an area. Few areas are fully controlled by one specific actor, claimed INGO (G). For example, Mogadishu is formally under government control, but actors such as al-Shabaab infiltrate it. This source stated that there are areas that no one really controls, and that the situation is generally quite fluid. UN source (B) stated that the government-friendly forces control many places in name only.

INGO (E) believed that the security situation in Baidoa is the worst in Somalia. Merka was described as one of the worst places, Beledweyne as bad and the general situation as bad. The security situation in Jowhar was described as the best in southern and central Somalia, with approximately five incidents per month. The area is controlled by the Abgaal clan and al-Shabaab has problems infiltrating it. Otherwise, there are very few safe roads. INGO (C) described the situation around the border to Kenya and Ethiopia as improving, while the situation in Lower Juba and Lower Shabelle was described as worsening. According to INGO (A), the situation in Galkayo is very tense. The source stated that the locals are used to threats and tension and bring weapons even when going to cafés.

Several sources pointed out that the conflict is no longer just an internal issue confined to Somalia. This is demonstrated by the foreign stabilisation forces at work in the country, al-Shabaab's al-Qaeda connections, increased international presence in the form of organisations and businesses and more foreign investments in Mogadishu. Jan-Petter Holtedahl informed that some diaspora members now return to Somalia – many to explore the situation, and a few of them to stay.

Several sources underlined that the media coverage of the security developments in Somalia, and particularly in Mogadishu, has been inadequate and misleading. Research centre (A) and INGO (E)

stated that the description of an improved situation in Mogadishu does not reflect the situation on the ground. INGO (E) pointed out that the diaspora is subjected to propaganda about improvements in Mogadishu and the situation becoming more stable. INGO (F) stated that the story of al-Shabaab losing territory is not correct. According to HRW, the government has shot themselves in the foot by portraying Mogadishu as a safe place and this will backfire on them. Since other countries have been led to believe the situation is ok, they now want to return Somalis.

There is great uncertainty related to future development in Somalia. The diplomatic source Jan-Petter Holtedahl stated that if there is a long period without spectacular attacks by al-Shabaab, one could say that the security situation has improved. At present, the situation is too unstable to draw that conclusion, according to Holtedahl. INGO (B) pointed out that investments and stabilisation in Somalia is only a start, and that the situation could go very bad very quickly. UN source (B) stated that things are shifting very fast in Somalia, and that the level of stability today is not a guarantee of stability tomorrow. INGO (F) expressed that he is not too optimistic about the future.

4 The security situation in Mogadishu

4.1 Security developments

All our sources described Mogadishu as an unsafe place. The majority of our sources described the situation as being worse today than a year or two ago. Jan-Petter Holtedahl remarked that the security situation in Mogadishu is unstable and vulnerable. Holtedahl stated that some form of stabilisation has been achieved after al-Shabaab withdrew its forces, but that AMISOM is still far from having full control of the city. According to Jan-Petter Holtedahl, the situation in Mogadishu gradually improved until April 2013 when a wave of attacks occurred. Sadia Ahmed stated that the situation in Somalia is generally bad, but Mogadishu is the worst place. She pointed out al-Shabaab's presence and their targeted killings. According to UN source (A), the security situation in Mogadishu is not improving and has worsened in some districts.

INGO (E) believed that the situation in Mogadishu is getting worse. On the one hand, there are improvements in the sense that there are no longer any frontlines within the city and people are not being shelled in their houses. On the other hand, assassinations, IED attacks etc. have increased in numbers. INGO (E) had detailed statistics showing that armed clashes are not a big issue anymore, but hand grenade attacks, IEDs and assassinations have increased significantly compared to 2012. The number of assassinations peaked around Ramadan in 2013, but it was high also before and after this peak. Knut Holm stated that the security situation in Mogadishu fluctuates, and that the number of incidents varies in wave-like movements. For example, there were many attacks by al-Shabaab during Ramadan in 2013, followed by a calmer period with fewer attacks.

Amnesty stated that the security situation in Mogadishu is still highly volatile. Amnesty claimed that there might have been some improvements before spring 2013. They also referred to the increase in targeted killings and generalised violence since March/April 2013. Besides smaller attacks and hand grenade attacks, targeted attacks have also been on the rise. There have also been several larger and complex targeted attacks, such as the attack on the UN office in Mogadishu in June 2013. Such high-impact attacks are illustrative of the unstable situation, according to Amnesty.

According to INGO (A), recent developments in Mogadishu have been spiralling downward. Al-Shabaab wants to send the message that no place is safe and it has managed to access places considered as safe. The group has succeeded in spreading fear and it targets high profile goals. HRW

observed that the situation in Mogadishu has deteriorated. According to HRW, there was a period of hope in late 2012 with a decrease in IED attacks. Clans that did not support the government before were willing to give it a chance. However, the government has not been able to provide security and services. Today, many are dissatisfied because they have not seen much improvement.

According to a government source, people in Mogadishu are killed on a daily basis. The source stated that anyone leaving their house wonders if they will come back alive. It is only those in possession of weapons, such as the government and warlords, who are protected. Those who flee Mogadishu today have a good reason to do so, stated this source. It was claimed that the situation is only getting worse. According to the source, there have been no improvements since the government took over. INGO (F) stated that attacks happen everywhere in Mogadishu and many people are killed every day. NGO (A) described Mogadishu as explosive and as lacking sustainable safety. Puntland's Minister of Education stated that al-Shabaab kills and intimidates people and is very visible. Mogadishu was referred to as a dangerous place with many attacks and explosions.

Several sources reported that the poor security situation makes strict security measures necessary. The Minister of Education stated that Mogadishu has become a city of security fences, and the security costs indicate how insecure the situation is. One night at a hotel costs 500 USD; 200 USD for the room and 300 USD for security measures. If someone wants to move around, they have to pay even more. Jan-Petter Holtedahl explained that four criteria must be satisfied in order for him to move around in Mogadishu; an armoured vehicle, armed escorts, unpredictable routes and timing. He also remarked that most Somalis are not able to access these kinds of security measures.

Several sources claimed that generalised violence still presents a considerable threat. There is still a significant risk that civilians get caught up in crossfire and become targets, claimed Jan-Petter Holtedahl. HRW remarked that the generalised violence in Mogadishu has changed and there is no longer a frontline within the city. The situation has, however, become very unpredictable. For certain groups, the situation is more dangerous now. Several of HRW's sources in Mogadishu are now afraid to leave the house. Yusuf Gabobe stated that al-Shabaab targets and attacks restaurants frequented by Somali government officials or their affiliates. This results in many civilians being indiscriminately killed or injured.

Several sources stated that the unstable security situation is caused by several actors, and not just al-Shabaab. Knut Holm described Mogadishu as a patchwork of influential actors. The total picture is complex and includes 16 district commissioners, the mayor and his administration, the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Interior, the national forces, the police and the intelligence service. Holm stated that al-Shabaab is not the only destabilising actor. Other violent actors are motivated by factors including clan-based conflicts and conflicts over business and real estate, according to Holm. Also HRW believed that al-Shabaab is not the only actor; many different actors may threaten security. HRW pointed out that clan lines divide the military. Soldiers are not being paid and may respond to persons outside the command lines, claimed HRW. Additionally, disagreements over property may lead to potentially dangerous conflicts, according to HRW.

HRW stated that it is difficult for returnees to establish themselves in the city centre and it costs a lot to be able to live relatively safely. In many areas, the access to services is bad, and many returnees face a difficult humanitarian situation. INGO (A) stated that just being in Mogadishu entails a certain risk because of the generalised violence. The source observed that when al-Shabaab controlled several districts in Mogadishu, it represented the only threat. Those who adapted to its regulations could enjoy relative safety. In that sense, the situation is worse today because it is now more unpredictable and incidents are more difficult to avoid.

Several sources stated that non-locals are more at risk in Mogadishu than local people. INGO (B) stated that persons who are not from the capital will be vulnerable if returned to Mogadishu, even if they settled in districts where their clan is present. This source believed that al-Shabaab is present everywhere, and remarked that the level of protection depends on the accessible information. Anyone without a network will be more at risk because they do not get as much information about dangerous situations, threats etc. INGO (D) stated that if a person returns to an area where he or she does not have strong connections, protection will not be the same and this can increase the risk of persecution. According to HRW, it is difficult to navigate Mogadishu for people from the city, and especially for non-locals. HRW stated that persons who have never lived in Mogadishu and who lack knowledge about its dynamics might be at risk. Research centre (B) claimed that a person from another area would be at great risk if sent to Mogadishu.

4.2 Influence of al-Shabaab

4.2.1 Al-Shabaab presence

Our sources stated that al-Shabaab carries out daily attacks in Mogadishu and that al-Shabaab is present everywhere in the capital, even though it has pulled its forces out. INGO (A) explained that al-Shabaab and government-friendly forces previously engaged in conventional warfare. After al-Shabaab withdrew its forces from Mogadishu, it has infiltrated large parts of the city. Although it is unclear how much power they have lost, it was thought unlikely that it has lost any weapons.

According to INGO (E), Mogadishu is formally under government control. Despite this formal control, al-Shabaab is everywhere. Amniyat is omnipresent and can organise assassinations anywhere, and these occur daily. Research centre (A) confirmed that although al-Shabaab has pulled out their military forces, it is still present in Mogadishu. HRW claimed that al-Shabaab has a big influence in parts of Mogadishu. Jan-Petter Holtedahl remarked that al-Shabaab's influence in Mogadishu is greater during the night than at daytime. This was confirmed by UN source (B).

Yusuf Gabobe stated that even inside Mogadishu, al-Shabaab can do whatever it wants and it does carry out operations. Gabobe claimed that al-Shabaab controls the outskirts of Mogadishu. The group avoids direct military confrontations, stated Gabobe. INGO (G) also stated that al-Shabaab is especially present in the outskirts, but it does not fully control the city. The closer one is located to the city centre the safer one is, claimed INGO (G). It is easier for al-Shabaab to infiltrate the outskirts, and consequently, some areas in Mogadishu have become sparsely populated, according to INGO (G).

4.2.2 Al-Shabaab attacks

Our sources stated that attacks by al-Shabaab are frequent in Mogadishu. Jan-Petter Holtedahl distinguished between two types of al-Shabaab attacks: Under the radar-attacks and big, visible attacks. The former type occurs across different districts due to the group's constant presence. Such attacks include attacks on individuals, and may be intended to scare people. The latter type is attacks aimed at public targets. Examples included the attack on the Ministry of Justice (14th April 2013) when around 30 people died; the attack on the Minister of Interior in the VK4-roundabout (5th May 2013) where approximately ten people died, and the attack on the UN office (19th June 2013) where around 20 people were killed. Holtedahl stated that al-Shabaab attacks both attractive, high profile targets and smaller and more accessible targets. Attacks on low-profile targets are more likely to succeed since attractive goals are more protected, claimed Holtedahl.

The number of assassinations and IED attacks was high in 2013 compared to 2012, stated INGO (E). The source maintained that al-Shabaab has become more efficient; IED attacks are more successful and their targets are more often killed. According to HRW, targeted assassinations of journalists were particularly high in 2012, with fifteen journalists killed in one year. In 2013, there were attacks on a wider variety of civilians. A government source stated that someone is killed every day in Mogadishu. The government uses armoured cars since attacks could happen throughout the capital. The source also referred to several spectacular attacks in the capital in 2013 and the large, coordinated explosions in different parts of Mogadishu during Ramadan the same year.

INGO (G) stated that al-Shabaab wants to demonstrate that the government will not be able to establish full control in Somalia. Its agenda is to destabilise and it targets people near the government and carries out attacks with symbolic value. It would be a defeat for al-Shabaab if the situation in Mogadishu became calmer and more stable with for example more businesses and people going out to restaurants. For example, al-Shabaab destroys street lamps since these are signs of the normalisation that it wants to prevent.

4.2.3 Influence in different districts in Mogadishu

Several sources stated that al-Shabaab is present everywhere in the capital. Sources agreed that al-Shabaab is more in control in the outskirts of Mogadishu. Daynile, Yaqshid and Karan were highlighted as districts where al-Shabaab has great influence. INGO (A) also mentioned Huriwa, and INGO (C) added Bakara market. According to INGO (C), the government cannot enter these areas at night, and business owners have to close early. Yusuf Gabobe pointed out that al-Shabaab is active also in the central areas, but not openly. INGO (C) said that there are different opinions regarding al-Shabaab's presence in the outskirts of Mogadishu. Our source had spoken to several locals who are able to move freely around. However, they are afraid of attacks as they happen all the time. UN source (A) stated that there are different opinions about which areas are safe.

UN source (B) believed that the government only controls the most central areas in the middle of the day. Our source had been told by locals that only four or five out of the 16 districts in Mogadishu are under government control: Hamar Weyne, Hodan, Wardigley, Hawlwadaag and possibly Waberi. Sources stated that al-Shabaab also targets people in these areas and that al-Shabaab takes over when night falls. NGO (B) stated that the airport, Medina, Hamar Weyne, Km 4 and Wardigley are the safer areas in Mogadishu.

5 Areas under control of government-friendly forces

The government-friendly forces do not provide true security in areas under their control, and their control is often weak, stated sources. The situation is complex, and many different actors are involved.

Several sources agreed that Beledweyne, parts of Mogadishu, Middle Shabelle, Merka, Afgoye, Kismayo and Afmadow city are the main areas controlled by government-friendly forces. UN source (B) added Jowhar, Buloburde and Dolow to the list, and Knut Holm added Luq and Beled Hawo. The Minister of Education mentioned that also Bai and Bakool and the far south are controlled by different government-friendly forces, and stated that the rest of southern and central Somalia is under the control of al-Shabaab. The Minister characterised the situation in southern and central Somalia as shaky. Jan-Petter Holtedahl remarked that AMISOM controls the area towards Afgoye and larger towns outside Mogadishu. Knut Holm and INGO (G) pointed out that the corridors between Mogadishu and Merka, Mogadishu and Jowhar and Mogadishu and Luq are controlled by government-friendly forces.

Several sources held the opinion that the Somali government is having difficulties in gaining more territory. Because of resource limitations, it might not be able to expand areas under its control. INGO (G) remarked that the current situation is quite comfortable for AMISOM, since significant resources have been invested and it is simply maintaining status quo. Several sources also remarked that it is not clear how long the African Union (AU) commitment in Somalia will last, and stated that this will be a question of resources.

The unresolved implementation of the proposed federalism plan has led to open conflict and abuses in other places, and HRW pointed to the example of the fighting in the Lower Shabelle and Middle Shabelle in late 2013.

Regarding Kismayo, INGO (G) explained that there have been fights over the control of the port for several decades. Different clans have claimed control and there have been clashes and tensions between different actors. An incident occurred in June 2013, when there was a fight between the Ogaden and Marehan clans. According to HRW, militias have disregarded the rights of individuals in Kismayo, including during fights in June 2013. The situation remains very unstable and is likely to explode again.

INGO (C) explained that there are tensions between local people and AMISOM forces. It was pointed out that AMISOM suspects «everyone» of being members of al-Shabaab, and that AMISOM therefore evicts families to create buffer zones around their bases. Evictions have also been carried out by SNA. According to Sadia Ahmed, SNA is marginalised by AMISOM and it is not very content with AMISOM. While AMISOM soldiers are well paid and taken care of, the SNA soldiers are poorly paid.

According to Amnesty, there is no state protection in Somalia. There are no government services available and the level of violence is high. In the absence of state protection, the level of safety depends on the protection mechanisms available in people's immediate surroundings. Amnesty pointed out that there is still a lot of gender-based violence in Somalia.

Several sources pointed out that there is a variety of actors operating in areas controlled by government-friendly forces, and problems are not only related to al-Shabaab. UN source (A) claimed that even though al-Shabaab does not control an area, it does not mean that the area is safe. There are many actors involved, and the situation is complex. In most places, the population is mixed in terms of clans, stated INGO (G), and tension is higher in such heterogeneous areas. Depending on the clan affiliation, a person may be safe in one area, but not in another.

Sadia Ahmed stated that other groups than al-Shabaab also create security problems. If al-Shabaab would disappear, this would not automatically imply that all security problems were solved. There are other security issues on the ground, such as clan-related conflicts and confiscation of land. It was pointed out that young Somalis have never experienced anything other than war and conflict, and many people are traumatised. These problems will remain regardless of al-Shabaab. However, there would be less terror attacks without al-Shabaab. Ahmed remarked that there is still a long way to go. She pointed out that stability is not the same as security, and that creating stability is more difficult and takes longer than building security.

According to Jan-Petter Høltedahl, targeted attacks on civilians are not necessarily perpetrated by al-Shabaab. These may be conducted by other actors, who are motivated by business conflicts, fights over market shares, land disputes or clan conflicts. Being in the wrong place at the wrong time can have fatal consequences, stated Høltedahl. It often happens that people without protection, such as

armoured vehicles, get killed. Høltedahl emphasised that there is still a significant risk that civilians get caught up in crossfire.

According to INGO (G), the SNA has established a certain degree of control in several areas. Currently under construction, SNA is mainly composed of militias and different forces allied with the government. INGO (G) stated that soldiers' loyalty is mainly clan-based, and that the government still has a job to do regarding discipline, chain of command etc. Jan-Petter Høltedahl remarked that the expansion of areas under AMISOM's control means that border-areas have become less controlled and potentially easier for al-Shabaab to infiltrate.⁵

INGO (G) remarked that disciplining SNAF is a big issue for the government. It was claimed that illegal checkpoints are organised by government forces, and buses and others must pay to pass. Robberies and sexual violence happens quite regularly in public transport, but these crimes are not necessarily perpetrated by al-Shabaab. Declared enemies of al-Shabaab may be at risk if they travel in government-controlled areas. The source had heard of people being taken off buses and executed.

6 Areas under control of al-Shabaab

Several sources stated that government-friendly forces control the major urban centres in southern and central Somalia. However, they are confined to the main cities, and the surrounding areas are still under al-Shabaab's control, claimed Yusuf Gabobe. He pointed out that al-Shabaab controls the rural areas, and even some cities, such as Jilib and Bardera. INGO (A) remarked that while government-friendly forces control some of the main roads, al-Shabaab may be in control only a few kilometres away. UN source (B) stated that al-Shabaab and other militias are also present in areas that, according to the official maps, are under government control, and this makes travelling by road very dangerous.

According to Knut Holm, most of central Juba is controlled by al-Shabaab. The town Hudur in the Bakool-region was previously controlled by Ethiopian forces, but al-Shabaab quickly took control of the town when they withdrew in 2013. According to INGO (H), pockets in Jubaland are controlled by al-Shabaab. Control over the cities of Afmadow and Jowhar have shifted between al-Shabaab and AMISOM. The Minister of Education stated that al-Shabaab is very active in Himan and Heeb.

Sources agreed that al-Shabaab employs brutal methods and suppresses the population in areas under its control. However, the sources had different opinions on whether the security situation was better or worse than in areas controlled by government-friendly forces.

Several sources highlighted the lack of access to information about al-Shabaab. HRW remarked that there is generally little information about al-Shabaab-controlled areas. Because of the lack of information, it is necessary to be careful when it comes to announcing the situation as safe. INGO (E) explained that no one external really knows the situation in al-Shabaab-controlled areas due to very limited access. INGO (G) pointed out that al-Shabaab is paranoid of satellites, drones and people who can identify al-Shabaab leaders, and they are wary of all new faces. The source stated that they do not hear much from al-Shabaab-controlled areas. People in these areas were described as being afraid. According to INGO (A), little information circulates about people within al-Shabaab. Members are sceptical towards each other, and keep information to themselves. In this sense, al-Shabaab members are quite untypical as they depart from the traditional oral culture in Somalia.

5 The activities of al-Shabaab in government-controlled areas are discussed more in details in chapter 4.2 «Influence of al-Shabaab».

According to a government source, al-Shabaab is relentless; one is either with them or one gets killed. Al-Shabaab has banned sports, television, music, smoking, khat etc. and reacts very harshly if bans are ignored. Their soldiers examine mobile phones, and stored pictures of the opposite sex may lead to harsh punishment. They also control how people are dressed. A suspicion that someone may be working for the government is enough to get them killed. In areas controlled by al-Shabaab, there is no formal court of justice and people are given harsh punishments based on mere suspicion. The source remarked that the brutality is new and far from Somali traditions, and that people are really afraid of al-Shabaab.

INGO (C) stated that there are restrictions on freedom of movement and freedom of expression in al-Shabaab-controlled areas. Women are being repressed, and children are being recruited as child soldiers. INGO (C) described the situation in areas controlled by al-Shabaab as very bad. Many people move away from these areas and this migration creates tensions in neighbouring regions.

According to NGO (A) and NGO (B), sexual relations outside of marriage may lead to a death sentence. NGO (B) claimed that such killings often happen. NGO (A) stated that they hear of it regularly, and claimed that stoning had been carried out in al-Shabaab-controlled areas, with reports coming in from Kismayo, Gedo and Bardera. Sentences are often passed on the basis of rumours because it is hard to find actual witnesses, according to NGO (A). The source stated that unmarried persons who have sexual relations outside of marriage will be given 100 lashings. NGO (B) claimed that al-Shabaab chops thieves' hands off and forces people to watch. Al-Shabaab has detention centres with very small, overcrowded and dirty cells. The source informed that al-Shabaab is brutal towards population and that a lot of people are being killed.

UN source (B) gave an example to illustrate the brutality: A man called Yahye was killed by al-Shabaab in Bosaso 2-3 years ago. He had written in a report about IDPs that the government was afraid that al-Shabaab would infiltrate the IDP camps. The information was not particularly sensitive, but it was enough to get him killed.

According to INGO (E), al-Shabaab does not often hold public executions. People are being killed on the grounds of theft, suspicion of spying for the government or if they have set up unauthorised roadblocks. This was estimated to happen less frequently than on a weekly basis and mostly in tense areas. In more stable areas with fewer challenges for al-Shabaab, they do not go looking for people or punish the locals.

According to several sources, there are restrictions on movement in al-Shabaab-controlled areas, especially for women. NGO (B) informed that people must ask for permission to travel in al-Shabaab-controlled areas. It was noted that there are no hospitals in al-Shabaab-controlled areas, and people in need of treatment often die due to restrictions on movement. Yusuf Gabobe stated the restrictions

on movement are very unpopular. According to NGO (A), al-Shabaab does not only exercise physical control, but also intelligence acts to restrict and control the movement of people.

Some sources highlighted that there is less regular crime, a more predictable situation and lower levels of indiscriminate violence in areas controlled by al-Shabaab. According to Knut Holm, people claim that there are fewer crimes in al-Shabaab-controlled areas than in areas controlled by the government. Holm believed that people are pleased about the provision of stability. Additionally, al-Shabaab has managed to reduce the consumption of khat, which is by many considered as positive. Yusuf Gabobe confirmed that al-Shabaab has reduced the crime rates in areas under its control.

NGO (A) claimed that the security is better and more stable in al-Shabaab-controlled areas. Al-Shabaab does not allow anyone else to have checkpoints in their areas and will punish the ones who try by cutting off their hands. Al-Shabaab sets up checkpoints for security reasons and do not take money, stated this source. It was pointed out that there are more checkpoints outside al-Shabaab-controlled areas. According to UN source (A), there are different opinions on whether al-Shabaab-controlled areas are the worst in terms of security.

INGO (E) pointed out that all international NGOs have pulled out of areas controlled by al-Shabaab. Also local NGOs experience difficulties and face demands of high taxes in these areas. NGO (B) claimed that al-Shabaab ransacked one of their offices and used it as a base. Since most NGOs pull out, al-Shabaab is more or less the only actor operating in these areas.

According to INGO (G), many people in al-Shabaab controlled areas emigrate to avoid their sons being recruited to al-Shabaab. NGO (B) remarked that the Somali population is young, and that al-Shabaab puts pressure on families in order to recruit their sons to the movement. This source stated that you either sacrifice your son or your life, and this results in many people choosing to flee. According to INGO (G), heavy taxation is another reason for people to migrate.

PART III: PERSECUTION BY AL-SHABAAB

7 General comments on the risk of persecution by al-Shabaab⁶

Sources claimed that persons who oppose al-Shabaab in different ways risk persecution. INGO (F) stated that al-Shabaab kills people on a daily basis, especially in southern Somalia. This source claimed that the movement can do whatever it wants in Somalia and many groups are therefore at risk. Research centre (A) stated that it is difficult to establish whether a person is safe or not. However, any connections to al-Shabaab were believed to potentially put a person at risk. Anyone who does not support al-Shabaab's ideology are at risk of persecution, according to research centre (A).

Individuals who represent something that al-Shabaab opposes become targets, stated INGO (A). This source believed that al-Shabaab has a low threshold for considering someone as a threat. Those who are considered a threat to the movement would be approached and exposed to serious reactions by al-Shabaab, claimed INGO (A). Persons with connections to the West were thought to be at risk of reactions by al-Shabaab. Al-Shabaab threatens and kills its opponents and spends significant resources on locating its targets, according to the source. INGO (H) claimed that al-Shabaab will severely harm those previously warned. Persons, who do not pay al-Shabaab when ordered to, would be at risk of persecution, according to research centre (A). According to INGO (D), al-Shabaab will always go after people who have information about them or who have offended them.

Al-Shabaab targets persons who do not lend their support, stated research centre (B). INGO (C) claimed that those who protest or do not support al-Shabaab ideologically become targets of suspicion. Those who resist would have to flee, since it is impossible to refuse to cooperate with al-Shabaab and then continue to stay in the area. By staying, INGO (C) believed that they become targets for killings. Our sources stated that individuals with some sort of connections to the government or the international community might be at risk of persecution by al-Shabaab. INGO (E) ranked government forces as being most at risk of persecution by al-Shabaab, followed by defectors and then government officials. NGO (B) believed that those who appointed the members of parliament are targets.

INGO (F) believed that people who speak publicly against al-Shabaab are targets of persecution. INGO (C), Amnesty and NGO (B) confirmed that individuals who speak up, for example through the media, might be at risk. NGO (B) gave the example of Ahmed Diriye, a self-proclaimed spokesperson of the Hawiye clan, who stopped appearing in the public media because they threatened to kill him after he had spoken against al-Shabaab.

Research centre (A) claimed that al-Shabaab has committed widespread abuses to instil fear amongst the population. Individuals may be attacked even if they did not actively resist al-Shabaab, stated

6 As stated in the foreword, this report covers the persons who possibly face reactions upon return to Somalia, rather than the most exposed groups.

research centre (A). For example, al-Shabaab considered civilians in Hudur, a town in the Bakool region, to be traitors for not fighting against the Somali and Ethiopian troops during the occupation. After the Somali and Ethiopian troops withdrew in March 2013, al-Shabaab were responsible of widespread violent abuses against the locals and this caused thousands of people to flee.

The diplomatic source Jan-Petter Holtedahl pointed out that al-Shabaab attacks both attractive, high profile targets and smaller and more accessible targets. Attacks on low-profile targets are more likely to succeed since attractive goals are better protected. Holtedahl believed that al-Shabaab considers government targets to be the most attractive. Ministers are the primary targets, but these al-Shabaab attacks have so far not been very successful. Other targets included AMISOM, the UN, diplomats, NGO workers and journalists. INGO (C) confirmed that well-known figures, such as government officials, are more protected than low-profile targets.

According to INGO (D), al-Shabaab often kills people without taking responsibility, so that they seem to have died in mysterious ways. Especially if attacks are unlikely to garner popular support, the movement chooses not to publicly claim responsibility. This strategy was believed to cause conflict and anarchy because no one knows who is behind the attacks. The source further claimed that al-Shabaab actively seeks to cause suspicion and create tension between different groups in the communities.

Several sources stated that the risk will remain, even if a person returns several years later. INGO (H) claimed that Somalis have a strong memory. If someone has direct contact with al-Shabaab, they will be registered. INGO (C) claimed that an individual who fled because of al-Shabaab will definitely be a target, even if return to Mogadishu happens several years later. Amnesty stated that individuals who fled to avoid persecution by al-Shabaab will still be at risk upon return. Individuals who were declared targets will remain targets upon return even years later, and risk might have heightened. Such individuals will also be at risk in government-controlled areas because of al-Shabaab's ability to infiltrate these areas, claimed Amnesty. This also applies to cases where people return from government-controlled areas to al-Shabaab-controlled areas.

8 Defectors

8.1 General comments on the persecution of defectors

Sources stated that defectors will be targeted by al-Shabaab, even if they settle in government-controlled areas. Yusuf Gabobe stated that people who have been part of al-Shabaab will be at great risk since the movement will seek to eliminate defectors for security reasons. Gabobe claimed that anybody who has been with al-Shabaab live in constant fear, even if they relocate to so-called safe areas. This was confirmed by Sadia Ahmed and a government source. INGO (E) claimed that defectors are more prioritised targets than individuals in the government. INGO (G) believed that defectors are used by the government's intelligence unit to identify al-Shabaab's members, rendering defectors a threat to al-Shabaab and at risk of persecution. INGO (G) found it difficult to estimate the level of risk for defectors.

Research centre (B) stated that al-Shabaab soldiers cannot defect and then expect to live a normal life. This source referred to defectors in Mogadishu who are under heavy protection. INGO (G) referred to camps for disengaged fighters and internal resettlement outside clan protection. However, these were found to be unrealistic alternatives for most defectors. Sadia Ahmed claimed that there are currently many defectors. They face a very difficult and serious situation in which their only options are either

to flee or hide. The diplomatic source Knut Holm claimed that defectors clearly fear reactions by al-Shabaab and many are scared of what might happen to them. He also stated that some defectors might find some safety, and referred to the fact that there are defectors living in Mogadishu, Nairobi and liberated areas.

Jan-Petter Holtedahl stated that defectors are at risk of persecution by al-Shabaab. Holtedahl claimed that the primary reason for persecuting defectors is that they have betrayed the movement and are thus considered legitimate targets. Holtedahl pointed out that targeting defectors sends the message that defecting is absolutely not tolerated. If a person who betrayed al-Shabaab is detected, this person will be targeted. A potential leakage of sensitive information is another reason for al-Shabaab to target defectors, stated Holtedahl. UN source (B) also believed that the primary objective of targeting defectors is to warn others against defection. This source found it difficult to distinguish real defectors from the fake ones, and pointed out that so-called «defectors» have carried out attacks in Mogadishu. INGO (D) claimed that al-Shabaab would be particularly interested in defectors knowledgeable of al-Shabaab camp locations or other strategic information.

8.2 High-level defectors

Sources described high-level defectors as attractive targets for al-Shabaab. Knut Holm believed that defectors who previously held leading positions are exposed to a higher risk of persecution than low-level defectors. The reactions' form and intensity and under which circumstances reactions will take place is uncertain. Holm pointed out that some defectors are recruited into the government forces, but this is no guarantee that al-Shabaab will not execute them. Holm believed that there is a positive correlation between the position held by a defector and the level of risk; the higher the position, the higher the risk of persecution.

NGO (B) claimed that defectors are at risk when al-Shabaab have invested in them through training, such as so called «headbreakers» who have been through six months of training. These «headbreakers» would be at risk if they go back. NGO (B) believed that trained soldiers who defect will be at risk throughout Somalia and can never be safe, not even in the US. INGO (G) claimed that so called «big fishes» will definitely be targeted by al-Shabaab and resources will be allocated to find such defectors.

8.3 Low-level defectors

Sources stated that low-level defectors would be at risk of persecution by al-Shabaab. Sources had different opinions regarding how significant the risk is for this group. The sources believed that defectors will still be at risk even if they return after several years.

INGO (H) claimed that defectors, including those who were with al-Shabaab for a short time only, will always be known for their affiliation to al-Shabaab. According to INGO (H), defectors are seen as traitors by al-Shabaab. A clan leader stated that al-Shabaab does not forget about defectors. He claimed that if someone joins them even for one day, they will have two options: To remain loyal to them and follow their orders or risk being killed. Al-Shabaab can track defectors down anywhere, stated the clan leader.

In the opinion of Sadia Ahmed, defectors will always remain targets to al-Shabaab. This includes individuals who were in al-Shabaab camps for a short period or who had just been recruited and then escaped. A few years ago, there was a brutal killing by al-Shabaab in Burao, Somaliland of a schoolboy who had changed his mind after having been recruited. According to Ahmed, this boy

was killed because al-Shabaab wanted to make a statement to potential defectors. Ahmed claimed that al-Shabaab does not hesitate to kill unaffiliated people, and that they would rather kill one too many than one too few.

Yusuf Gabobe, a government source and UN source (B) stated that low-profile targets, such as those who joined al-Shabaab only for a short time, face a big risk if they are returned to Somalia. UN source (B) claimed that if someone has been exposed, they would easily be killed. If returned to Mogadishu, no one could guarantee that previously al-Shabaab-affiliated individuals would be safe. According to the source, there are many examples of serious reactions.

Research centre (A) and INGO (F) expressed that persons who flee shortly after joining al-Shabaab will definitely be at risk of persecution. Beyond this, INGO (F) found it difficult to predict who is at risk. Research centre (A) stated that also persons who were told to join but who defected before reaching the training camp will be at risk, but believed that the risk is lower than for those who defected shortly after arriving at the training camp. If al-Shabaab finds defectors returned from Europe, there is a big risk that they will be killed. Amnesty claimed that young people affiliated with al-Shabaab are definitely in danger if they return, even if they escape after a short time. The level of risk depends on where defectors take refuge, but Amnesty stated that they can never be safe.

Puntland's Minister of Education, INGO (C), research centre (B) and NGO (B) stated that persons who refuse to go through al-Shabaab-training and leave before the training has properly started, will face a security risk if they return to their home area. The Minister remarked that al-Shabaab's reactions are highly unpredictable, and can be very serious. The Minister argued that the movement is capable of anything, and any threat from al-Shabaab should therefore be taken seriously. NGO (B) claimed that the risk may be lowered if the defector resettles far away from his home area. Research centre (B) referred to al-Shabaab's logic; members are either with them or against them. This source believed that both «small fishes» and bosses are likely to be eliminated, if they defect. This source illustrated al-Shabaab's low threshold for harsh reactions with the following example: A young boy was picked up in an al-Shabaab camp by his uncle and brought back to his home town. Al-Shabaab's reaction was to kill both of them.

INGO (A) claimed that al-Shabaab considers those who joined the movement for a short period as a threat. INGO (A) specified that the amount of information possessed by the defector could affect the degree of al-Shabaab's interest. The source further claimed that there is always a risk if you have had anything to do with the movement. Prior affiliation with al-Shabaab, even involuntary, was believed to incur a risk of reactions. According to INGO (A), the bottom line is that anyone affiliated with al-Shabaab, even low-level defectors, will always be at risk for serious punishment. INGO (D) claimed that the level of risk would depend on the defector's position and possession of information. According to research centre (A), it is difficult to know exactly the risk of persecution faced by those who defected shortly after they had joined.

Knut Holm believed that even recruits who defected before seriously taking part in any activities for al-Shabaab might be at risk; the possibility that they will be exposed to serious reactions cannot be excluded. Holm believed that the risk is greater in areas where government-control is weak and the clan has a strong position within al-Shabaab. Holm was not aware whether the level of risk vary between the different government-controlled areas.

Jan-Petter Holtedahl claimed that foot soldiers are less important targets than high-level defectors. On the other hand, low-level defectors are easier targets because they are more accessible and less pro-

tected than high-level defectors. This may entail that low-level defectors are not necessarily exposed to a lower level of risk of persecution than high-level defectors. INGO (E) also considered that the risk for low-level defectors is at least as big as for high-level defectors. Even low-level defectors who only joined for a short time risk serious reactions for defecting, including being killed, according to the source. INGO (G) claimed that the risk for low-level defectors might be at least as big as for high-level defectors. The source claimed that the majority of those killed are low-level defectors.

Defectors returning from abroad are at risk even upon return after several years, stated Amnesty, UN source (B), Yusuf Gabobe, Sadia Ahmed, INGO (E), INGO (F) and INGO (C). Returned defectors would be at risk even if they go to government-controlled areas, claimed Amnesty, Gabobe and INGO (C). UN source (B) stated that al-Shabaab would never stop hunting people with this profile. A clan leader claimed that defectors returning from Norway could expect that the local society no longer trusts them and that al-Shabaab will be there waiting for them. INGO (E) stated that al-Shabaab would remember a person, even if he had been affiliated for only a short time.

Those who return from abroad to resettle in a new place a few years later will still be at risk, claimed Yusuf Gabobe. Gabobe believed that risk might be lower when some time has passed. Returns to the same area, where the threat first arose, will imply a slightly bigger risk. UN source (B) stated that although the risk might decrease slightly, the threat would not be eliminated.

In contrast, Amnesty claimed that the risk of persecution might have heightened after departure. UN source (B) stated that for those who left Somalia for Norway in order to apply for asylum, the risk upon return might be greater as al-Shabaab might suspect that the returnee is linked to foreign countries' intelligence.

8.4 Risk of being detected

Several sources stated that they do not think al-Shabaab would spend significant resources tracking low-level defectors, but most sources believed that defectors would eventually be discovered. Research centre (A), INGO (C) and INGO (D) claimed that defectors are at risk of being detected as al-Shabaab has strong intelligence, an all-covering network of spies and a high ability to infiltrate. INGO (D) believed that al-Shabaab, through its omnipresent intelligence network, will find out if a defector returns to Somalia. Research centre (A) estimated that there is a 75 percent chance that al-Shabaab will detect a low-level defector.

Somalia's highly communicative culture and al-Shabaab's capacity to identify and track people were highlighted by Amnesty, Yusuf Gabobe, INGO (A), INGO (B), INGO (G) and INGO (H). Several sources stated that information spreads quickly in Somalia. Due to the fast circulation of information, there is a great risk that al-Shabaab will find out about returnees, even years after they defected and fled, stated INGO (A). INGO (H) pointed out the great possibility that al-Shabaab will get information about a person's background. The source claimed that al-Shabaab is able to find out whether a person was previously affiliated with the movement.

INGO (G) stated that the return of a defector would not be kept a secret because everyone knows everyone. This results in a constant risk of possibly being detected. Unless a defector stays inside his home constantly, this source believed that people would recognise the defector. Yusuf Gabobe claimed that information spreads from mouth to mouth so fast in Somalia that al-Shabaab does not even have to seek the information in order to get it. This means that al-Shabaab will quickly find out the location of a defector, according to Gabobe.

INGO (A) stated that the risk of persecution for a foot soldier returning to Mogadishu after several years abroad depends on whether the person is detected. It is not possible to know in advance whether a returnee will meet people who remember him. This source believed that individuals in Mogadishu posing as defectors may in fact be informers collecting information about defectors. This source claimed that low-level defectors might also get lucky and avoid repercussions.

Sadia Ahmed claimed that if defectors return to their hometowns, al-Shabaab will definitively find them. Ahmed found it difficult to estimate the level of risk if a defector returns to settle in a new town, but she assumed that the risk will increase with time, as the chance of being detected is greater the longer one stays in one place. According to Ahmed, al-Shabaab will eventually find defectors. At a minimum, there are realistic chances that defectors will get caught.

Knut Holm stated that Amniyat has a relatively good overview of al-Shabaab members, but was uncertain whether it kept track of new recruits as well. Regarding defectors who settle in new towns, Holm stated that he could only speculate whether al-Shabaab's internal communications lead to defectors being identified by al-Shabaab members in other areas. He assumed that it might be possible for defectors to remain safe by assuming a new identity, but stressed the difficulty in estimating risk of persecution when a defector relocates. Holm pointed out that a lot of information spreads orally in Somalia and that arrivals can attract attention. However, many people return to Mogadishu and no one has a complete overview of the population. Holm claimed that defectors may avoid detection, but the risk exists and is difficult to predict; the anecdotal nature of this information makes it difficult to assess risk properly.

INGO (D) stated that the risk of persecution is greater if a defector returns to an area where he does not have strong family connections. If a defector returned to a government-controlled area, INGO (D) considered it not unlikely that al-Shabaab would discover the defector. However, defectors could be safe as it is uncertain whether al-Shabaab will in fact come after him. This does not mean the risk can be eliminated as al-Shabaab's omnipresence enables it to target defectors even located in areas out of their control.

INGO (D), INGO (G) and Amnesty claimed that al-Shabaab might not choose to spend many resources on tracking low-level defectors, but emphasised that such defectors are at risk if recognised by al-Shabaab. As examples of such defectors, Amnesty pointed out individuals with limited affiliation to al-Shabaab and individuals in low-scale conflicts. Amnesty stressed that these defectors would be at risk if al-Shabaab became aware of them and their location.

8.5 Family members

Sources claimed that affiliation with al-Shabaab might have implications for family members. According to INGO (C), al-Shabaab may target family members of a defector and not necessarily the defector himself. It was believed that the movement also targets clan members and friends. INGO (D) claimed that the logic of revenge is strong in al-Shabaab's culture and mentality, and this logic may in turn affect family members. INGO (D) stated that a father could be detained until he gives up his son for recruitment or his daughter for marriage with an al-Shabaab fighter. If a person recruited by al-Shabaab escapes, his brother will in turn be at potential risk by association. This brother might not face serious reactions, but al-Shabaab will be interested in him.

Sadia Ahmed confirmed that defectors' family members might be at risk, especially in areas controlled by al-Shabaab. Family members might be killed or tortured in order to give information about the defector. Also persons located in government-controlled areas in southern and central Somalia may be at risk. Ahmed did not think that al-Shabaab would go after family members located in

Somaliland and other northern areas. Research centre (A) stated that it is difficult to estimate the risk of persecution for family members. The family may not be a target in government-controlled cities, but the source claimed that the risk will be bigger in al-Shabaab-controlled areas.

According to research centre (B), the risk for family members of people who flee from al-Shabaab depends on the level of affiliation. The risk for family members of defectors with weak affiliations was unknown. If someone leaves al-Shabaab, whether as a «small fish» or a «big fish», they are in danger. This danger can affect the people around the person including family, friends and colleagues, claimed research centre (B). INGO (E) claimed that relatives of persons in the government or who are actively supporting the government would be at risk of being killed.

9 Persons associated with the government or international community

9.1 Suspicion of spying

Many sources claimed that al-Shabaab has a low threshold for accusing persons of espionage. INGO (C) claimed that al-Shabaab targets anyone suspected of having links to the government, foreign countries, AMISOM, Somaliland or Puntland. If al-Shabaab suspects an individual of being a spy, this person will be killed immediately, stated INGO (C). INGO (A) described al-Shabaab as generally being suspicious and distrusting of people. This source stated that al-Shabaab threatens and kills opponents, and that it has a low threshold for targeting persons. It was believed that any connections to the West are very unpopular and might lead to reactions. Al-Shabaab demands loyalty and it will not accept the defection and departure of their own soldiers to the West.

NGO (B) claimed that al-Shabaab's threshold for accusing people of being spies is low. The movement was described as being very suspicious. This source pointed out English speakers, foreign educated persons and those connected to NGOs as being at risk of being considered as spies by al-Shabaab. Yusuf Gabobe confirmed that al-Shabaab has a low threshold of suspecting people of spying. He pointed out that after drone attacks, al-Shabaab might carry out arrests and accuse people of spying for the government. People who work for foreign intelligence agencies are highly targeted. Gabobe claimed that it is very dangerous to be suspected of espionage.

UN source (B) claimed that false accusations that a person is involved with the government or foreign intelligence could be presented to al-Shabaab. These false accusations can be made in order to harm the other side of an unrelated conflict or to demonstrate loyalty towards al-Shabaab.

9.2 Returnees

Returning to Somalia from western countries may in itself be a risk factor, according to sources. Al-Shabaab is suspicious of those returning from western countries after a long time, and accuses returnees of espionage, according to Yusuf Gabobe, NGO (A), INGO (C) and HRW. Gabobe added that al-Shabaab often suspects returnees of cooperating with the Somali government. Gabobe believed that al-Shabaab would be less suspicious if they knew that the person intends to return to Europe. If the person chooses to stay, they will investigate the person's background.

HRW pointed out diaspora members returning to Somalia as a new target for al-Shabaab. HRW claimed that sticking out in any way invites a risk of being targeted. HRW claimed that in areas with more al-Shabaab presence, there is more suspicion of espionage. Especially people who have been away for a long time face risk.

NGO (A) stated that actual or perceived connections to the Somali government make returnees a target. NGO (A) stated that it is dangerous to return to al-Shabaab-controlled areas from abroad, even if returnees have not had conflicts with the movement previously. INGO (E) stated that sending people to Somalia entails subjecting them to risk. The source found it difficult to provide information about what happens to returnees in Mogadishu, but had the impression that arrests, harassments and beatings were more frequent reactions than killings. INGO (C) stated that al-Shabaab is always suspicious of migrating people. Thus, relocation to Mogadishu can in itself lead to suspicion. However, having been abroad is probably not enough to become an al-Shabaab target, claimed this source.

9.3 Sellers and businesspersons

Sources stated that businesspersons and persons selling goods to the government risk reactions from al-Shabaab. INGO (G) stated that al-Shabaab considers anyone cooperating with the government as enemies. This source believed that people contributing actively to stabilisation can be seen as a target, including low-threshold targets such as sellers. INGO (H) stated that local businessmen are easily targeted and that many are killed. However, they are not necessarily killed by al-Shabaab. If someone selling goods to AMISOM etc. flees after being threatened by al-Shabaab, this person will be targeted by al-Shabaab upon return. Al-Shabaab was described as a vindictive organisation that will severely harm those previously warned. Research centre (A) confirmed that tea sellers who leave after threats and intimidations from al-Shabaab might be targeted upon return to Mogadishu even after several years. It was concluded that it is not possible to rule out that such people will be at risk of persecution.

Yusuf Gabobe claimed that al-Shabaab targets anyone related to the government's or the international society's activities, even in the government-controlled areas. According to Gabobe, selling goods entails a low risk, but a risk of serious attacks still exists. In comparison, those who provide logistical materials to government forces are exposed to higher levels of risk. Al-Shabaab targets businesspeople who ignored warnings to stop their business, and returnees who ignored al-Shabaab's warnings are at risk even years after fleeing. According to Gabobe, tea sellers or others who sell goods to the government might avoid reactions if they heed the warnings from al-Shabaab. Gabobe stated that al-Shabaab gives public announcements about shops that locals are to avoid.

According to INGO (E), persons who start businesses that are seen as signs of normalisation, such as restaurants, may be targeted by al-Shabaab. INGO (E) maintained that not all tea or khat sellers are at risk. This source stated that al-Shabaab does not often issue warnings in southern and central Somalia, but warnings are given more often in Puntland. INGO (C) remarked that shops where government officials go shopping might be targets for bombs or suicide attacks. Amnesty claimed that individuals who have had problems with al-Shabaab for selling goods to AMISOM or government-affiliated persons will be at risk of serious reactions from al-Shabaab upon return. This included persons accused of such business transactions and who consequently had fled. Individuals who have fled because of threats from al-Shabaab will be at risk upon return, stated Amnesty.

INGO (C) had not heard about people selling goods to the Somali government, SNAF or AMISOM being contacted by al-Shabaab and asked to close. However, this might occur since anything could happen in Somalia, claimed the source.

PART IV: CLAN SUPPORT

10 The clan system

The clan system is a vertically-oriented lineage system. The clan is an important social organisation in the Somali social structure, and it affects politics, economics and social status. There are originally six main family clans: Isaaq, Dir, Hawiye, Darood, Digil-Mirifle and Rahaweyn. Each of these is further divided into subclans and lineages or family tied together by blood and loose alliances. Clan-members derive their identity from their common descent rather than territorial belonging.

Several sources stated that the clan system is important in Somalia. However, many of the sources held the opinion that the clan system has weakened in recent years. VOSOMWO claimed that clan identity is important throughout Somalia and that all persons will be familiar with his or her clan since childhood. INGO (C) pointed out that clan is important in Somalia, especially for nomadic people.

A clan leader stated that clan members have two things in common: solidarity-fundraising (qaran-wadaag) and burden-sharing (mag-wadaag). Solidarity-fundraising entails helping persons who are sick, poor, victims to natural catastrophes etc. Burden-sharing entails collective payments when someone is killed, injured etc.

INGO (B) stated that Somalia has a collective-oriented culture in which people support each other and where the sense of belonging is strong. This culture also applies to returnees from abroad, claimed the source. It was believed that Somalis migrate according to clan lines; no one moves to a place where their clan is not present. The source stated that al-Shabaab is a factor that has weakened the clan system. INGO (B) remarked that the clan system is still strong, even though it is fragmenting.

HRW claimed that the clan issue is complicated. Long-term conflict has weakened the clan structure in Somalia, according to HRW. However, this varies between the clans and areas, and clan remains a fundamental factor in everyday life of individuals, including for protection. The Minister of Education and Amnesty both confirmed that clan dynamics still exist although the clan system has weakened throughout the conflict.

40-50 years ago, clan leaders represented the clan and enjoyed full legitimacy, stated INGO (A). In later years, clan leaders have lost respect as they have become warlords or have worked for warlords. This source stated that clans are still important, but their mandate has weakened. For example, a clan leader can no longer prevent their clan members from seeking governmental power. Clans have largely become a means to gain power, claimed INGO (A).

INGO (F) stated that more or less the same clans are represented throughout Somalia. Almost all clans are represented in Mogadishu today, since many Somalis have moved to the capital over the past few years. Currently, there are fewer clan-related issues, such as serious clan feuds and killings based on clan affiliation. Such issues have especially been reduced in al-Shabaab-controlled areas, claimed INGO (F).

Sadia Ahmed stated that the situation is changing; family relations are less important than 20 years ago, and clans are providing less support. It was remarked that, nowadays, clan support is mainly important in connection with revenge and other exceptional circumstances, like serious illness. Research centre (B), UN source (B) and the Minister of Education confirmed that the clan's role is mainly important in blood feuds and clan conflicts. People can no longer rely on clan members for food and shelter. UN source (B) remarked that clan support is about blood protection; the clan will be involved in solving the conflict and providing protection when someone has been killed. The source stated that clan support is not about providing food and shelter; that type of support depends on the wealth of one's family. Research centre (B) stated that ties within clans have weakened.

Contrary to the other sources, INGO (G) believed that the clan system has grown stronger over the last decades. The absence of formal structures and legal systems during the conflict was believed to have made Somalis turn to more traditional mechanisms for solving disputes, like those found in religion and clan structures. INGO (G) believed that clan identity stands even stronger today than 20 years ago.

II Clan protection

Sources stated that clans provide limited protection to members. According to one clan leader, the clan cannot offer protection from al-Shabaab in areas under the movement's control. Targeted persons would also be at risk in government-controlled areas. INGO (D) stated that returning to an area where one's clan is based would improve the chances of protection. The clan may be able to give advice on what to do and information about al-Shabaab's activities. A person might feel safer, but clan-based protection is no guarantee of safety. INGO (D) stated that if a person returned to an area where he does not have strong connections, protection would not be the same and this would increase the risk of persecution. INGO (D) believed that if someone defected from al-Shabaab, other family members within the movement might alert the defector if they come after him. The source stated that al-Shabaab members were equally likely to turn against defectors out of loyalty to the movement.

Knut Holm stated that although clan-affiliation to a certain degree positively affects access to protection, clans are unable to protect someone from being punished by al-Shabaab. Holm believed that there is a higher risk for persons who return to areas where the government is weak and where their clan is strongly connected to al-Shabaab. NGO (B) stated it could be difficult to get clan protection in Mogadishu. It was remarked that the capital is very expensive and many districts are deemed unsafe.

Amnesty claimed that a certain level of clan protection is available for some people in some of the clans. It was pointed out that protection is not available to all and that it is difficult to draw a clear line. In terms of protection, potential factors at play included the position of the clan, whether the clan knows the person and whether this person had been in touch whilst being away. According to Amnesty, persons who have lost contact with their family after years abroad are not likely to get protection; returnees must know someone or have someone to introduce them to the clan.

Amnesty believed that those who fulfil the following three criteria could access clan protection in Mogadishu: being a member of a dominant clan, being from Mogadishu and having close family connections. The source did not find it possible to say exactly who will get clan protection and whether all who fulfil the criteria would get protection. The source added that men have a much greater chance of accessing protection than women.

Amnesty stated that there is very limited clan protection available for minorities. INGO (G) and INGO (A) confirmed that members of minority clans enjoy weaker protection than members of strong clans. INGO (G) drew parallels to the cast system in India. NGO (A) and INGO (D) believed that it would be difficult for minorities in Mogadishu to get lost property back.

Several sources highlighted that a person's prior affiliation to al-Shabaab could affect opportunities for clan support and protection upon return. The Minister of Education believed that families of returnees who used to be affiliated with al-Shabaab would want to keep their distance and not to be associated with the returnee. Family members might be afraid of helping these returnees, claimed the source. Research centre (B), INGO (D) and a government source confirmed that a returnee's prior affiliation with al-Shabaab might lead to the community being reluctant to providing help. If al-Shabaab should decide to take revenge, also people around the returnee would be at risk, stated these sources. INGO (D) added that if a returnee was briefly affiliated to al-Shabaab, their clan members would not necessarily know about it and the person might receive support.

12 Humanitarian support from the clan

Sources stated that returnees in Somalia have very limited access to support from clan and family members. General hardship and lack of resources make it difficult for ordinary Somalis to offer support to relatives, and even close family members. According to the Minister of Education, there are no basic services available for returnees from the government, institutions or community. INGO (D) believed that it is difficult for a person who returns from abroad to access necessary support. It was pointed out that there are few job opportunities and no public system to help people to survive. SADO stated that Somalis in general are in a very difficult situation. Government-controlled areas are overcrowded and often expensive. Research centre (B) stated that since everyone is now fighting to survive in Mogadishu, people have a limited ability to support others. INGO (E) highlighted the giving and sharing culture in Somalia, but remarked that it requires that people have something to share.

Returnees cannot rely on support from clan members or distant family members, according to INGO (C), INGO (E), research centre (B) and the Minister of Education. INGO (D) stated that if a person does not manage to get sufficient support in Mogadishu, he or she might be forced to move to al-Shabaab-controlled areas, if the person has family there. Unsupported males might have to join al-Shabaab, stated INGO (D). INGO (E), INGO (G) and Amnesty claimed that persons who return to Mogadishu without a support network are likely to end up in IDP camps.

Several sources stated that distant relatives or clan members will not be able to provide continuous support, but they may be able to give food and shelter for a short time. Sadia Ahmed, INGO (D) and INGO (E) stated that support was assumed to only be available for a short time, and would probably not include support or housing on a permanent basis. INGO (D) added that clans constitute a type of safety net, but it cannot be relied on as a long-term solution. Ahmed, research centre (A) and research centre (B) predicted that the support would last only for a day or two, while a government source suggested around a week. INGO (E) believed that clan members might support returnees with money to travel to their hometown.

In comparison, other sources believed that prospects to access clan support could exist for returnees. INGO (F) stated that family support is important in Somalia. This source believed that returnees without close relatives in the capital sometimes would get clan support. As almost all clans are present in Mogadishu, it was believed that people could get support from clan members living there.

According to INGO (G), most returnees will receive support from the clan. It was believed that members of powerful clans with relatives in Mogadishu were the most likely get support. However, a long absence could create difficulties. INGO (G) stated that returned diaspora members are not necessarily well received.

According to INGO (E), it will vary from individual to individual whether or not people returning to Mogadishu are able to get support. INGO (B) stated that if a person has not been in contact with the clan nor or contributed while abroad, ties might have been severed. However, it is possible to make amends and repair relations by apologising. Knut Holm confirmed that keeping in contact with and giving financial support to the clan whilst in Norway may affect the clan's willingness to support a returnee. Holm stated that some returnees may consider re-establishing contact with their clan in order to repair the relations. According to Knut Holm, it is difficult to predict who can expect support from clan members and how close relations must be for being effective in this sense. For example, simply being of the Hawiye clan is not enough to receive protection from any random Hawiye member in Mogadishu.

Sources stated that it is somewhat easier for returnees to receive support from close family members. Research centre (A) stated that only close family members would provide support; they are the only ones who may be relied on. Sadia Ahmed believed that close family will support returnees, but not for a long period. The Minister of Education, a government source, INGO (D), INGO (E) and research centre (A) stated that access to support depends on the resource situation of the family. Furthermore, the access to support was presumed to depend on the returnees' background, their family, the position of the clan, the general situation in the area they return to and how long they have been absent.

Sadia Ahmed remarked that persons who have lived in western countries for several years often have adopted a new lifestyle and might not easily adjust to the situation in Somalia when they come back. The source stressed that this new lifestyle might lead to a returnee being less welcome to stay with family members.

Research centre (B) emphasised that successful reintegration of a returnee depends largely on the individual. Somalis are good business people and the source believed that returnees might be able to establish a business if they came back with economic support from Norway. On the other hand, some are mentally ill after having been asylum seekers or because of previous experiences, which could impede reintegration. According to the Minister of Education, if a person returns from Norway, the family expects that this person will support them, and not the other way around. This source stated that if a person has been deported, the family will not be sympathetic, but would rather assume that the returnee have mental problems or have caused a problem since he or she was sent back.

For those without family members, it is difficult to find housing and work in Mogadishu, according to INGO (G). Real estate prices in the capital are driven sky-high by inflation and this makes it difficult for the population to find central accommodation. The source stated that it is very tough to find accommodation for those who do not work or have other means of support. According to INGO (G), a wealthy person can rent a room in the city centre, but it is very expensive at \$ 500, which a normal salary does not cover. The source stated that it is difficult even to get accepted into IDP camps. INGO (G) stated that returnees with special skills, such as technical training, could get a job or start a business. This source stated that returnees without a network in Mogadishu might be forced back to unsafe areas.

PART V: VULNERABLE GROUPS

13 Women

Several sources maintained that women's rights are not respected in Somalia. INGO (A) defined Somalia as a male-dominated society where women's rights have a weak standing and are not being exercised in practice. It was claimed that women are subject to human rights violations by government agents and are victims of sexual-based violence, illegal arrests and suppression. Although women contribute significantly to the Somali society, they have little influence. INGO (B) claimed that Somalia is one of the worst countries in terms of women's rights. This source highlighted issues such as harassment, insecurity and a lack of rape statistics.

According to Amnesty, state protection is absent in Somalia. This source claimed that the authorities create more risk than protection, and pointed to ongoing, numerous reports of men in government uniforms who perpetrate sexual violence. Amnesty stated that there is still a lot of gender-based violence in Somalia. Jan-Petter Holtedahl claimed that although sexual violence is widespread, there is little focus on it. Perpetrators include uniformed personnel from the police, army, security forces and AMISOM. Sexual violence is perpetrated also in «controlled» areas such as IDP camps, claimed Holtedahl. There is a significant level of impunity linked to sexual violence. Human rights workers are at great risk and UN personnel working on this issue had to be evacuated due to threats, stated Holtedahl. He claimed that this is a very sensitive field of work.

According to IDPs from Garowe, sexual assaults often take place in IDP camps. The perpetrators are often intoxicated people who come to the camps at night to assault women. However, the IDPs found it unlikely that sexual violence occurs more frequently inside IDP camps than outside the camps. Also SADO reported that many people go to IDP camps in order to rape. SADO further stated that women in IDP camps experience extensive harassment from gatekeepers, camp owners and others.

NGO (A) claimed that women's rights are not respected and referred to regular reports about violations. Rape was described as being the most serious problem, especially group rapes. This source claimed that rape is common in government-controlled areas. In southern and central Somalia, it was claimed that al-Shabaab rapes women and uses stoning as a punishment. NGO (A) identified Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) as another problem affecting the lives of Somali women.

Robbery and sexual violence happen regularly to women using public transport, claimed INGO (G). Al-Shabaab is not necessarily the perpetrator behind such acts and this source believed that the group does not rape women. The protection of women who are in their own clan's area depends largely on the clan and its social status. The source named the Rahaweyn clan as a vulnerable group in Mogadishu, and stated that women from the Hawiye clan will normally not be sexually harassed. Women from weak clans based in IDP camps are very vulnerable and many are subjected to rape, according to INGO (G).

According to INGO (E), forced marriage is a key problem in al-Shabaab-controlled areas, and the practice is very unpopular amongst the population. The practice of forced marriage was said to be

used strategically. The movement targets people it disapproves of, often prominent people, and take their daughters. INGO (C) stated that forced marriage involving girls down to 12 years of age is common in al-Shabaab-controlled areas. Fathers can be faced with the dilemma of either marrying off a daughter or fleeing with the entire family. INGO (G) confirmed that many people in al-Shabaab controlled areas emigrate to avoid their daughters being forcibly married to al-Shabaab officers.

NGO (B) claimed that forced marriage is very common and takes place on a daily basis. Girls are often forced to marry al-Shabaab leaders. Nowadays, the normal procedure is that a girl must agree before her parents give their permission. In contrast, a girl's consent is not needed when marrying al-Shabaab members. If the girl refuses, she may be killed or evicted with her family.

Knut Holm was aware that forced marriages arranged by al-Shabaab do take place, but he was unsure to what extent it occurs. Holm suggested that the negative impact on popular support might lead to a reduction of forced marriages arranged by al-Shabaab.

Several sources stated that women's freedom of movement in Somalia is restricted. INGO (G) claimed that women in Mogadishu can move freely in most areas. However, there are restrictions on movement in al-Shabaab-controlled areas. NGO (B) confirmed that women are not able to move freely in areas controlled by al-Shabaab. While many men flee, women have the burden of children and may be unable to leave. Al-Shabaab comes to local households and demands services and supplies. If someone does not cooperate, they will be harassed or worse, stated NGO (B). It was claimed that women disloyal to al-Shabaab will be forced out of their home town by eviction or through exile. These women often end up in IDP camps since they must go to an area not controlled by al-Shabaab, claimed NGO (B). NGO (A) claimed that it is difficult for women to escape since movement in al-Shabaab-controlled areas is restricted. In order to escape, the source stated that women must have connections with sub-clan leaders and ask for their protection.

Several sources stated that women who return to Somalia will face great difficulties. INGO (G) found it difficult to answer what it will take for female returnees to establish a relatively normal life in Somalia. This source pointed out that women from prominent families and good positions might be able to find a job and become independent. On the other hand, it is difficult for women without male support from a father or husband. The further women are away from immediate male family members, the less protection can be expected. For a woman without education and family backing, return was in general believed to be difficult, and return to al-Shabaab-controlled areas was believed to be impossible. Women who return on their own without husbands will possibly get support from male family members, stated VOSOMWO. If women return to places where they have no close relatives, they could get support from more distant family members or clan members. It was pointed out that women have two clans: her own clan and her husband's clan. Men, on the other hand, rely mainly on their own clan. It was believed that the clan might support her children, regardless of whether they are supporting the mother.

14 Internally Displaced People

Sources presented a grim picture of the situation for internally displaced people (IDPs) in Somalia. Amnesty claimed that the situation for IDPs is terrible. At present, there are approximately 369.000 IDPs in Mogadishu and 1.36 million IDPs in Somalia, mostly located in southern and central areas.

The IDPs who we met in Garowe stated that the vast majority of IDPs in Somalia are women and children. The living conditions in IDP-camps were described as bad; houses are very small and not waterproof. The IDPs also pointed out the lack of food. Some people only get one meal a day and some do not even have daily access to food. People in IDP camps were described as poor and living from hand to mouth. While support from family members may be available for a couple of days, IDPs are unable to rely on members of their clan for survival. The IDPs claimed that most IDPs do not work.

The IDPs stated that people who are in need of medical assistance can go to a health organisation in the camp. Although people can be referred to hospitals, they are often unable to access healthcare since they cannot pay for it. According to IDPs, many children die from diseases that could easily be treated or avoided, such as malaria and diarrhoea. One IDP told us that he had lost one child in birth because his wife did not receive assistance when going into labour.

IDPs stated that sexual violence often occurs in their camp, and pointed out that men come there specifically to attack female IDPs. However, the IDPs believed it unlikely that sexual violence and crimes occur more often in the IDP camp than in Somalia generally. INGO (G) stated that female IDPs from weak clans are very vulnerable and many are subjected to rape. This source stressed that women's protection depends largely on clan belonging and social status, but this depends again on being located in your clan's area. INGO (A) claimed that IDPs in southern and central Somalia face an even harder situation compared to earlier years.

SADO described the situation for IDPs as deteriorating and referred to harassment by gatekeepers and camp owners. This source described IDP camps as a kind of modern slavery and likened the situation to being kept hostage, since people cannot go back to their homes. Persons from marginalised clans were claimed to be more at risk of hostility by gatekeepers. Consequently, these people are even more vulnerable and suffer more than IDPs in general. IDP camps were described as big business, which is illustrated by big advertising boards in Mogadishu. SADO stated that huge amounts of money have been spent on IDP camps, but there is poor spending control and the most visible result has been the enrichment of the camp owners.

The IDPs stated that some IDPs had tried to return to their homes, but they had faced even tougher conditions in their home areas, and ended up returning to the camp. Although they have freedom of movement and are allowed to leave at will, the IDPs claimed that it is not possible to relocate without financial support. IDPs believed that if someone goes back to Mogadishu without support, they will face a very difficult situation.

IDPs stated that the failed asylum seekers who return to Somalia often are in a bad psychological condition and under a lot of stress. Returnees are vulnerable because locals believe that they have come back with a lot of money, stated IDPs. It might happen that returnees have to go to IDP-camps for safety reasons or in order to seek help.

HRW claimed that returnees may end up as IDPs. The source stated that IDPs live in a very difficult situation and argued that the government is not doing anything for IDPs. According to Amnesty, the situation in Mogadishu is still very bad, but many people still go there because it is a «best of the bad-option». This is especially the case for those who end up as IDPs. Amnesty stated that plans exist in order to relocate IDPs out of the city centre. There is no protection for IDPs in Mogadishu, stated Amnesty. INGO (H) claimed that those returned to an area where they do not have close family members will end up as IDPs. The source claimed that minorities will often end up in IDP camps. INGO (G) stated that people who return to Mogadishu without a support network are likely to end

up in IDP camps. INGO (G) claimed that a high price level makes it difficult to get housing. INGO (G) stated that it is difficult even to become accepted into IDP camps.

15 Minorities

Minority groups in Somalia are marginalised and face a difficult humanitarian situation, according to sources. The minority groups lie outside the clan system, and the clan structures pose particular difficulties for them. They have no political power, and have been especially exposed during upsurges of conflict.

Several sources stated that particularly vulnerable minorities in Somalia include Midgan/Gaboye, Bantu, Tumul, Reer Hama, Ashraf and Yibir. VOSOMWO added Bajuni, Eyle, and Tunni, and INGO (G) also included Madhiban.

SADO emphasised that minorities find themselves in a difficult and marginalised humanitarian situation. INGO (A) stated that there exists a lot of racism and discrimination against minorities. VOSOMWO stated that minorities, especially women, do not have access to basic rights such as education and health care, and intermarriage is not allowed, according to this source. VOSOMWO pointed out that minorities often are deprived of their property. Minorities have specific jobs such as shoemakers, hairdressers and craftsmen. VOSOMWO stressed that minorities also face protection issues because their clans are weak and can only provide limited protection. The IDPs stated that minorities have a low social status and face many problems, and that persons from minority groups cannot live for long in IDP camps.

HRW stated that minorities have poor access to legal rights and justice. Those from weaker clans receive death sentences more often than other groups, according to HRW. INGO (A) emphasised that persons are better protected if they belong to a strong clan compared to more weakly positioned clans. This source stated that the rights of minorities are less protected. As an example, this source pointed out that it is more difficult for a member of a minority clan to get back a lost house in Mogadishu. NGO (A) maintained that minority individuals are free targets and may be killed for any small conflict of interest. If a minority person is killed, there is no risk of revenge or punishment. Furthermore, NGO (A) stated that minorities who return to Mogadishu must choose between getting killed and joining al-Shabaab. Minority groups have a higher status in al-Shabaab than in the Somali society in general.

INGO (G) stated that minority individuals may have poor knowledge about their clan because they are ashamed of it. Parents may choose not to teach their children much about their clan for the same reasons. VOSOMWO claimed that all persons will be familiar with his or her clan since their childhood and that clan identity is important for all clans throughout Somalia. However, persons from minority clans might be ashamed of their clan identity and they may try to hide it or move away from an area in order to avoid humiliation. Regarding minorities with special Somali dialects, such as the Midgan/Gaboye clan and outcast groups, VOSOMWO claimed that their language is still Somali, but other persons might not always recognise it as they cannot understand it well. Young people tend to have less knowledge of their clan's dialects than earlier generations. While not everyone from outcast clans knows the dialect well, everyone will know a bit and will often understand more than they speak, according to VOSOMWO.

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