



Somalia: Conflict Diagnostic

February 2021

INAF5203

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Executive Summary

In many ways, the state of Somalia has become synonymous with ceaseless conflict, militia groups, and insecurity. This plague of insecurity has been brought on by many exacerbating factors in the latter part of 2020 and the beginning of 2021. The COVID-19 pandemic, uptick in insurgencies, and environmental adversities serve to highlight Somalia's fragility. This report bases its conflict risk assessment on the Country Indicators for Foreign Policy (CIFP) methodology to evaluate Somalia's performance. Using the nine clusters of indicators from the CIFP evaluative framework to examine Somalia's level of stability, this report analyzes internal and external stakeholders and demonstrates findings that contribute to the state's three case scenarios. This report concludes that the most likely scenario to arise within the first quarter of 2021 is a significant increase in armed conflict in Somalia, particularly in the area of Mogadishu, while the best case remains largely contingent on the success of an upcoming federal election, and the worst concerns the continued undermining of the authority, legitimacy and capacity framework.

History/Background

Somalia's history is one marked by colonialism, civil wars, and decades of instability. These decades of civil hostilities have devastated the Somali people and much of its state-building capacities. Moreover, the colonial and Cold War legacies of European and American powers respectively left Somalia an intensely militarily-charged state. Border conflicts coupled with leftover Cold War armaments by Americans and the Soviet Union in Somalia contributed to its internal conflicts. This internal strife was primarily forced by the competition for resources and power. Wrested between hundreds of Somali clans, this constant conflict became the impediment to Somalia's development. The crescendo of a failed democratic government in the 1960s with Siad Barre's over 20-year repressive military regime led to the 1991 Somali Civil War and a subsequent collapse of the Somali Democratic Republic (SDR). The first central government since the SDR's collapse, the Federal Government of Somalia, was established in 2012. Despite this new federation, Somalia's federal agenda remains contentious and arduous in its vision to see a stable and secure Somalia.

Stakeholder Analysis

Stakeholder	Internal/External	Objective	Impact
Federal Government of Somalia	Internal	Functioning statehood, stabilization and Development	There is opposition to the legitimacy of the FGS more so domestically than internationally. Currently the FGS is under scrutiny due to president Farmaajo's inability to hold the originally scheduled February 8th election. ¹ The FGS main priority here should be to increase Authority, Capacity and Legitimacy.
Government of Somaliland	Internal	Autonomous statehood	Not supportive of Somali affairs as they have claimed independence and exercise partial autonomy. They have historically been more stable than Somalia and don't want the Somali conflict to spill over their mutual border.
Al-Shabaab	Internal	Terrorism in region; increasing fragility of Somalia	Causes the majority of conflict in the country. Has executed two attacks in the last two weeks alone in Mogadishu and elsewhere. They have also targeted AMISOM bases.
Clans (Darod, Hawiye, Isaaq and Dir)	Internal	Clan based benefit	Clan conflicts regularly occur with militia groups operating mostly in southern Somalia. The representation framework which is being used currently is the 4.5 scale implemented by the Federal government with 4 representing the noble tribes and .5 representing the minority groups. This has been cause for scrutiny as it seems to "other" minority groups which are an important piece to the ethnic makeup of Somalia. ²
Regions (Jubaland, Puntland, Hirshabelle, Galmudug, South West)	Internal	Achieve regional goals	Conflict between them and the Federal Government (mostly political), aggravated with stalled 2021 election. An alliance of opposition party members have suggested creating a new transitional government to lead the country in its 2021 elections. Puntland has also declared itself an autonomous region since 1998.
The African Union Mission in Somalia	External	Peacekeeping	Mostly positive, although Ethiopia has been recalling forces to deal with domestic issues, the US has pulled out all supporting forces, and AMISOM's mandate comes under review in February 2021.
Kenya	External	Ensuring continued regional stability, stopping terrorism, repatriating refugees back to Somalia	Kenya is a stakeholder in regional stability, with a particular interest in stopping Al-Shabaab. In 2019, Kenya reported having repatriated 80,000 Somali refugees back to Somalia since 2014, citing an improvement in Somalia's political stability. ³ Additionally, in December 2020, Somalia cut diplomatic ties with Kenya. The federal government accused Kenya of interfering with its internal affairs. ⁴
Eritrea	External	Regional stability	As of January 2021, there are speculations of Somali National Army (SNA) soldiers being trained in Eritrea ⁵ . Eritrea is also a stakeholder in regional stability. Improving relations with Eritrea has concerned Djibouti, given the tense relationship and history between the two countries. ⁶
Ethiopia	External	Regional security; continued control over Ogaden.	With over 5 million ethnic Somalis in the Ogaden region, the Ogaden National Liberation Front was originally formed to advocate for Somali self-determination in Ethiopia but has become a banned opposition group. Ethiopian treatment of Somalis in this region has been severely oppressive. ⁷ Furthermore, Ethiopia has pulled out troops from AMISOM to deal with the Tigray crisis.
Djibouti	External	Regional security, ethnic solidarity	Djibouti is where IGAD is based (see below). The two countries have close economic and political ties, and Djibouti has been a participant in AMISOM since 2011. According to the CIA factbook, 60% of Djiboutians are ethnically Somali.
IGAD	External	Continued regional stability, promoting governance in East Africa	IGAD ensures regional stability in East Africa. Most December 2020, a complaint was lodged by Somalia to the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), accusing Kenya of interfering in Somalia's affairs. IGAD's January 2021 investigation headed by Djibouti found no Kenyan interference in Somalia's political affairs.

United States	External	Anti-terrorism	On Dec. 4 2020, President Trump ordered the removal of US soldiers from Somalia. It is uncertain what the new Biden administration has planned for foreign policy in Somalia. It is also uncertain whether the amount of drone strikes conducted in Somalia will reduce. ⁸
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Human Development → High Risk (Rising)

Indicator	Indicator Definition	Source	1998	2008	2018
Life Expectancy	Life expectancy at birth, total (years) ⁹	World Development Indicators	49.8	53.3	57.1
Infant Mortality	Mortality rate, infant (per 1,000 live births) ¹⁰	World Development Indicators	103.6	100.3	75.9

Stabilizing Factors: Education, increasing life expectancy, decreased Infant Mortality rate

Destabilizing Factors: Sanitization, Health, COVID-19

Despite long-term fragility, Somalia demonstrates some improvements concerning human development over the past 20 years. From 2000 to 2017, Somalia saw a 33% increase in the proportion of population using at least basic drinking water services, though there is a significant gap between access in urban versus rural areas.¹¹ More so, sanitation is still an ongoing problem, where 56% of the population had no hand washing facility in their home in 2017.¹² The Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) has cited that since 2011, roughly 2.6 million children and adolescents have enrolled in primary education across Somalia.¹³ However, in 2018 the Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) of children in primary and secondary education was only 30% and 26.5%, respectively.¹⁴ UNICEF reports that while GER has improved nation-wide, rates of enrollment vary considerably across regions. In 2018, while the GER in Puntland and Somaliland increased by 22% and 21%, the GER in the South Central Somalia region only increased by 13%.¹⁵ Data on health in Somalia is difficult to access, though there was a documented 2017 cholera outbreak in Puntland which the WHO said was caused by flooding in Somalia.¹⁶ In between December 2017 and January 2020, there were over 10,000 suspected cases of Cholera. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, an estimate of only 27,000 COVID tests have been completed.¹⁷ Poverty remains a fundamental barrier to Somalia's development.

Environmental Stress → High Risk (Rising)

Indicator	Indicator Definition	Source	1996	2006	2016	2017
Forest Area (%)	Forest area (% of land area) ¹⁸	World Development Indicators	12.5	11.2	10	---
CPIA policy and institutions for environmental sustainability rating (1=low to 6=high)	Policy and institutions for environmental sustainability assess the extent to which environmental policies foster the protection and sustainable use of natural resources and the management of pollution. ¹⁹	World Development Indicators	---	----	-----	2.0

Stabilizing Factors: N/A

Destabilizing Factors: Rising sea level, increasing drought

Somalia continues to be vulnerable to negative environmental shocks. Somalia has experienced significant droughts in the past 30 years, most recently in 2011-12 and 2016-17. The 2016-17 drought was assessed by the World Bank as having an impact of at least USD \$3.25 billion on Somalia, broken down as damages of USD 1.02 billion and losses estimated at USD 2.23 billion.²⁰ The desertification of Somalia is also a negative trend, with the UNDP having reported in 2015 that 23% of Somalia's land was degraded, resulting in the reduction or loss of biological or economic productivity.²¹ The World Bank predicts that by 2049, the mean annual temperature in Somalia will rise by 1.60°C while annual precipitation will rise by 60.90mm in 2040-2059.²² Furthermore, the World Bank has predicted that Somalia is likely to experience extreme precipitation events on an increasing basis, while the probability of droughts will also be increasing by 2100.²³ This is especially alarming considering the recent numbers from 2015 indicate that there is only 0.8 hectares of Arable land per person in Somalia, and ongoing environmental shocks have the potential to damage existing arable land.²⁴ The vulnerability of Somalia to environmental shocks is furthered because of the rising sea levels off the coast of Somalia. According to the World Bank, Somalia's sea level anomaly was 15.63 millimeters in 1995, 24.51 millimeters in 2005 and 89.20 millimeters in 2015.²⁵ One result of this drastic increase in sea level is the potential for flooding.²⁶ Somalia has been hit with significant flooding in 2019 and 2020, displacing thousands and requiring humanitarian assistance. In 2019, flooding in parts of Somalia impacted more than 547,000 people, of whom 370,000 were displaced.²⁷ In late April of 2020, flooding in Puntland impacted another 546,103, displacing 216,895 from their homes.²⁸

History of Armed Conflict → High Risk (Rising)

Indicator	Indicator Measurement	Trends (Years)		
		1989-1992	1993-2006	2007-2019
Conflict Intensity Level ²⁹	Intermediate Armed Conflict: At least 25 battle-related deaths per year and an accumulated total of at least 1,000 deaths, but fewer than 1,000 per year. War: At least 1 000 battle-related deaths per year.	War	Intermediate Armed Conflict	War
		1975-1992	1996-2018	2020
Refugees Produced ³⁰	Refugee Numbers	110 – 812,196	636,984 – 949,637	910,654

Internally Displaced Persons [IDPs] Numbers	0	200,000 – 2,648,001	2,648,000
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Stabilizing Factors: AMISOM, international intervention, Clan Elders, Somali diaspora

Destabilizing Factors: Intrastate conflict, Al-Shabaab, Somali National Army

Somalia's history of armed conflict is marred with violence in competition for power and resources. Despite peace initiatives (Djibouti Peace Process Accord) and international intervention (EU, US, UN) in the past three decades, the conflict in Somalia remains at the highest conflict intensity level. The greatest threat to Somalia's peace and security today is the insurgent group Al-Shabaab. Since the group's rise in 2006, Somalia has been in a state of war. In February 2021 alone, Al-Shabaab have killed multiple Somali security forces by roadside bombings and suicide bombers and are now targeting AMISOM troops' bases in Somalia.³¹ Moreover, the EU and US have cited concerns for the Somalia security transition plan (handover of AMISOM responsibilities to Somali security forces established in 2012) in 2021³². Concerns stem from financial constraints and worries that the Somali National Army remains ill-equipped and disorganized to succeed the transition. Somalia also faces security concerns from its neighbouring states, Ethiopia and Kenya. Historically, these states have had unstable and poor relations. Silver linings in Somalia's conflict derive from negotiations facilitated between Somali clan elders, Al-Shabaab and the Somali government. Additionally, following the mass Somali exodus in the early 1990s, the Somali diaspora is returning to Mogadishu in attempts to rebuild and treat the violence in Somalia.³³ However, with Somalia's refugee numbers in 2020 comparable to those during the state's collapse in 1991, this suggests a cyclical violence in which the conflict perpetuates, resulting in the displacement of more Somalis. In the last three years alone, Somalia has seen a drastic spike in IDPs, correlating with Al-Shabaab attacks. Overall, Somalia is at high risk for the armed conflict worsening.

Militarization → Moderate Risk (Rising)						
Indicator	Indicator Measurement	Trends (Years)				
		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Military Expenditure ³⁴	Military expenditure in billions of \$US per year. Accounts for all current and capital expenditures on the armed forces, including peacekeeping forces and defence operations	\$0.05	\$0.05	\$0.06	\$0.08	\$0.08
Military Expenditure ³⁵	Military expenditure in yearly percentage (%) change from previous year	-22.64%	2.34%	29.57%	25.22%	1.94%
		2015/2016		2017	2018	2020
Total Armed Forces ³⁶	Total Armed Forces Numbers	19,800		20,000	19,800	20,000

Stabilizing Factors: AMISOM troops, foreign forces, Somali government security forces

Destabilizing Factors: Armed/insurgent groups (Al-Shabaab), regional forces (clan militias), international contribution fatigue, US troops withdrawal from Somalia

In the past five years, Somalia has seen an increase in military expenditure with the largest increases in 2017 matching the deadly attacks by Al-Shabaab against Somali civilians and security forces alike. Since 2018, Al-Shabaab has gained momentum in its attacks. In large, the international community has financed assistance and training for the Somali National Army (SNA).³⁷ Major concerns draw on the self-sufficiency of SNA soldiers, as their strength and adequacy is continuously hindered by internal conflict. Broadly, federal and regional conflict (Al-Shabaab), clan conflict, and intercommunal violence³⁸ emphasize the need for an efficient army. states militarily invested in Somalia are beginning to express contribution fatigue – with the US, under former President Trump, pulling all US troops from Somalia by the end of 2020.³⁹ While Somalia's armed forces numbers have remained stagnant in the past five years, there remains concerns over their ability to counter Al-Shabaab and secure Mogadishu. AMISOM troops continue their support while guided by the 2012 transition plan, however, the countdown to their departure from Somalia signals major concerns for Somali security forces. In part, Somalia's history has become defined by militia groups vying for power. In 2016 alone, there were a recorded 150 unique armed active groups in Somalia, largely due to the state's clan system that characterizes Somali society. Overall, Somali forces and AMISOM are heavily engaged in operations against Al-Shabaab. Somalia's path towards militarization is naturally paved; with the UNSC AMISOM mandate slated for renewal at the end of February 2021, it remains to be seen how both Somali security forces and foreign forces will combat Al-Shabaab.

Governance and Political Stability → High Risk (Rising)					
Indicator	Indicator Definition	Source	2009	2014	2019
Regulatory Quality (-2.50=low to 2.50=high)	Ability to form policies promoting private sector government	World Bank Governance Indicators ⁴⁰	-2.56	-2.12	-2.20
Control of Corruption (-2.50=low to 2.50=high)	Perceived extent to which public power is used for private gain	World Bank Governance Indicators ⁴¹	-1.72	-1.66	-1.71

Stabilizing Factors: Greater AMISOM activity across Somalia for 2021 election⁴²

Destabilizing Factors: Stalled 2021 election,⁴³ disharmony between federal and regional leaders,⁴⁴ uncertain future of AMISOM⁴⁵

Freedom House scores Somalia with a 1 out of 40 for political rights and a 6 out of 60 for civil liberties, resulting in a total freedom score of 7/100 and a classification of "Not Free".⁴⁶ The World Bank identifies Somalia as ranking in the 3rd percentile or worse for all of its governance and political stability indicators; this has been the case for the past 10 years.⁴⁷ While some indicators have shown positive trends over the past 5 years (Voice and Accountability, Political Stability, and Government Effectiveness), others have remained the same or indeed deteriorated. As of February 8, 2021, President Mohamed's official term has come to an end without elections being able to proceed amidst disputes regarding its logistics, and opposition leaders have declared they no longer recognize Mohamed as president. This political tension, combined with fresh attacks by Al-Shabaab on January 31 and February 7, 2021,⁴⁸ as well as other factors mentioned in this report, indicate a grave risk of conflict in the immediate future despite increased AMISOM excursions throughout Somalia.⁴⁹

International Linkages → Moderate Risk (Stable)

Indicator	Indicator Definition	Source	2009	2014	2019
International Organization Participation (Number)	Number of international organizations of which Somalia is a member, signatory, or candidate	CIA World Factbook ⁵⁰	39	38	41
			2019	2020	2021 (Projected)
International Grants (Millions, USD)	Grants from international actors to the state of Somalia	IMF Report ⁵¹	108.6	423.7	277.4

Stabilizing Factors: Increasing annual international participation,⁵² increased grants for 2020 and 2021⁵³

Destabilizing Factors: Kenyan disagreements⁵⁴ and Ethiopian troop withdrawals⁵⁵

Somalia is a participant in 41 international organizations, including the UN, the AU, and IGAD.⁵⁶ The EU-led Operation Atalanta has served to significantly decrease piracy off the coast of Somalia,⁵⁷ and foreign aid has reached Somalia through channels such as the IMF as recently as November of 2020 despite the COVID-19 pandemic.⁵⁸ The African Union Mission in Somalia currently has roughly 19,000 military troops and 1,000 police personnel (down from 22,000 in 2019) from six African countries deployed in Somalia to attempt to support the Somali government to regain control over the whole of Somalia and to counter Al-Shabaab terrorists.⁵⁹ This mission's mandate will either be extended or terminated in February 2021, and has been in place since 2007, with disagreement as to precisely how effective the mission has been in promoting peace in Somalia.⁶⁰ In December of 2020, however, Somalia cut off diplomatic ties with Kenya, its neighbour that has long worked to minimize clan and militia fighting in Somalia due to their mutual border.⁶¹ While armed conflict between the two states is unlikely to occur in the near future, the Somali government is facing significant pressures on the domestic front which make a political and economic conflict with Kenya both untimely and more difficult to resolve. In addition to this, Ethiopia continues to face instability at home and has not been able to maintain the supporting troop numbers within Somalia that it has for years.⁶²

Demographic Stress → High Risk (Rising)

Indicator	Description	Source	1999	2009	2019
Total Population	All residents regardless of legal status or citizenship.	Worldbank	8,553,601	11,717,692	15,442,905
Population Growth Rate	The exponential rate of growth of midyear population from year t-1 to t, expressed as a percentage.	Worldbank	2.85%	2.77%	3.80%
Population Density	Population density is midyear population divided by land area in square kilometers	Worldbank	13.64	18.68	23.92
Urban Population	People living in urban areas as defined by national statistical offices.	Worldbank	32.87%	37.65%	45.56%
Youth Bulge	Population between the ages 0 to 14 as a percentage of the total population. Population is based on the de facto definition of population.	Worldbank	46.94%	48.30%	46.38%

Stabilizing Factors: N/A

Destabilizing Factors: Large urbanization rate, weak public infrastructure in urban areas, increase in population

Somalia's total population is on the rise and the growth rate has been trending in an upward direction over the last few decades. This trend seems like it will continue over the next decade and it poses a serious risk for the population. There is also a high urban population growth rate which puts even further strain on a public infrastructure system that is already unstable. This urbanization process has grave implications when looking at development and ultimately stability. It also means that agricultural economies turn into mass industry economies fairly rapidly. Somalia is at a high risk in regard to demographic stress, however this is not due to the demographic transition as a social period. This level of risk is related to the subsequent actions that must be taken based on this transition.⁶³ Population growth and urbanization can sometimes be beneficial to certain countries especially in areas of economic growth, however this is only true for countries that have the ability to support this rise and urbanization in population. This change must be met with strong institutions that can efficiently integrate civil society into this socio-economic transition. If these institutions do not stand strong enough to support this trend then it will be detrimental to society. Unfortunately the current political environment in Somalia does not have the capability to handle this type of an influx either in depth or breadth. There is also a worry regarding the large youth bulge that exists in Somalia. Although the last decade shows a decline in this youth bulge it is still almost half of Somalia's population. Unfortunately it is estimated that over 50% of Al-Shabaab's recruitment comes from youth populations.⁶⁴ These factors leave Somalia at a high risk in regards to its demographic stresses.

Population Heterogeneity → Moderate Risk (Stable)

Indicator	Source	Result
Ethnic Diversity Division	Worldbank	Somali 85%, Bantu 14%, Arab 1%
Religious Diversity Division	Worldbank	Somalia is homogenously Sunni Muslim.
Clan Division	ACCORD ⁶⁵	4 noble tribes (Isaaq, Darood, Hawiye, Dir)

Stabilizing Factors: Religious Homogeneity, Common enemy of Al-Shabaab

Destabilizing Factors: Potential for increased Clan Conflicts

In regard to population heterogeneity in Somalia we actually see a lot of homogeneity. In terms of ethnic diversity, 85% of the population is Somali. The largest minority group in Somalia is the Bantu people at 14%. The remaining 1% consists of Arab populations hailing mostly from Yemen. Somalia is homogeneously Sunni Muslim, so it doesn't see any apparent religious tension. However, there does seem to be quite a diverse group of theological opinions within the Sunni sect. That said, these religiously opinionated groups have lived in the same community for decades and don't seem to pose a conflict threat in the country. Somalia has 4 main noble clans which are known as the Darod, Hawiye, Isaaq and Dir.⁶⁶ Based on this make up, the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) implemented the "4.5 formula".⁶⁷ The 4 refers to the 4 noble tribes and the .5 refers to the ethnic minorities of Somalia. This framework was to be used as a model for the representation dispersion which the government is to uphold, and it has received serious criticism for its general lack of effectiveness. There has been a declining trend of clan conflict within Somalia over the past few decades with the emergence of Al-Shabaab as a formal insurgency group. Although clan conflicts seem to have been reduced because of the common enemy of Al-Shabaab, there don't seem to be any restricting factors to ensure that they do not flare up again.

Economic Performance → Moderate Risk (Stable)						
Indicator	Indicator Description	Trends (Years)				
		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
GDP Annual Growth Rate ⁶⁸	GDP Annual Growth Rate in percentage change from the previous year	2.7%	3.7%	2.4%	2.8%	2.9%
Trade to GDP Ratio ⁶⁹	Measured in percentage change from the previous year	124.11%	125.32%	124.61%	132.26%	133.99%
Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs) ⁷⁰	FDIs measured in US billions of dollars per year	\$0.30	\$0.33	\$0.37	\$0.41	\$0.45

Stabilizing Factors: Remittances (Somali diaspora), agricultural production, investments in telecoms

Destabilizing Factors: Clan-based conflict, COVID-19, environmental stress (drought), Al-Shabaab conflict, poverty rate

Despite the ongoing conflicts in Somalia, the state has seen a steady growth in its annual GDP rate. Particular to 2019, this annual growth rate can be attributed to the recovery of livestock exports and a slowed import growth.⁷¹ Remittances from the Somali diaspora and international aid have also helped to counter deficits, while FDIs have also seen a slight increase on an annual basis. Somalia's agricultural sector contributes the greatest percentage to the state's GDP, with over 40%, and gaining more than 50% of export earnings.⁷² As the main driver of economic growth, the factors which contribute to a successful agricultural sector require stability as well. The ceaseless clan-based conflict and Al-Shabaab conflict remain a threat to the stability of Somalia's economy. Notably, Al-Shabaab has been able to operate primarily from taxing businesses and local communities, undermining the Federal Government. Moreover, COVID-19 has severely impacted remittances by the Somali diaspora in which the economic pressures of the pandemic have caused a substantial drop in remittance revenue.⁷³ This presents a major issue as remittances are seen as a lifeline for nearly half of all Somali households.⁷⁴ Another issue draws on the reality of Somalia's economy's susceptibility to market shocks and environmental shocks. In large, Somalia's agricultural sector is characterized by its overdependence on rain-fed agriculture and lack of economic infrastructure. While the projection of Somalia's economic performance remains in an upward trend, this is dependent on an improved security situation, the development of economic infrastructures, and action towards building institutional capacity. Considering the recent Al-Shabaab attacks, the global economic slowdown, and consequent pull-back in remittances, it remains to be seen how Somalia's vulnerable economy will fare.

Scenarios

ALC Framework: The CIPF fragility index uses a framework based on three dimensions for state stability: its Authority, Legitimacy, and Capacity. Authority refers to its legislative effectiveness, Legitimacy its domestic support, and Capacity its ability to "mobilize public resources for productive uses."⁷⁵ For our analysis, this report assumes that deteriorations in any of these dimensions increase the risk of armed conflict for the state of Somalia.

Most Likely

Somalia is most likely to experience a heightened state of instability and violence in the very near future (Q1 2021), particularly in Mogadishu and South-Central Somalia. Due to a combination of political and economic factors, including persistent attacks by Al-Shabaab, an uncertain future for AMISOM, stalled federal elections, economic harm brought by environmental degradation and the devastation of the COVID-19 pandemic. To reference the CIPF's Authority, Legitimacy, and Competence framework, the Authority and Legitimacy of the government have taken severe blows in recent weeks as Al-Shabaab has carried out two fatal attacks which the federal government failed to prevent, while at the same time the President of the Somali government has been accused of attempting to maintain his power after refusing to uphold a deal regarding the structure of the 2021 election. As of February 8th, President Farmajo's term is officially over but no election has yet taken place. While its Competence has been bolstered by significant increases in international aid compared to 2019, the COVID-19 pandemic and Somalia's general economic woes, including a locust invasion and frayed relations with its trading partners Kenya and Ethiopia, indicate a government that will have too many crises and not enough resources to peaceably govern in the coming weeks and months.

Best Case

The best case for Somalia rests on its president immediately agreeing to and organizing a free and fair (or free and fair enough) federal election whilst the AMISOM mandate gets extended after its February review without significant loss of support from its partners. This will contribute highly to the president's Authority by displaying his capability of using legislative efforts for positive outcomes. It will also provide an opportunity for the population to recognize the Legitimacy of the president based on his ability to support the country's most crucial democratic institution. With fewer grounds for opposition against the federal government and more peacekeeping support, then, the federal government will have the breathing room to continue rooting out Al-Shabaab from within its borders and patch up relations with Kenya and Ethiopia, even as Somalia and the rest of the world attempt to move out of the shadow of the COVID-19 pandemic. A priority for the government and international stakeholders will be to improve the nation's infrastructure in order to better manage increased droughts and flooding that are becoming the norm for Somalia. This is especially important to increase Capacity within Somalia and demonstrate their resource mobilization capabilities.

Worst Case

Coordinated (or merely simultaneous) opposition to the Authority and Legitimacy of the current federal government of Somalia through the violence of Al-Shabaab terrorists and hostile rhetoric of regional leaders in Somalia could prove too much for the government to withstand, causing it to crumble and stakeholders from Somaliland, Puntland, and the rest of Somalia to enter a new civil war. International support would be somewhat hampered by most states' focus on the COVID-19 pandemic and the international vaccination campaign, as well as a US president that has been in office for less than a month as of the writing of this report. Even with a swift international response, finding an obvious and unifying candidate for leadership of the Somali state will be a very difficult task, and the impact of continual droughts and flooding brought on by climate change will exceed the Capacity of the already beleaguered territory to provide basic necessities to its population.

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