



Africa :: Somalia

Introduction :: Somalia

Background:

Britain withdrew from British Somaliland in 1960 to allow its protectorate to join with Italian Somaliland and form the new nation of Somalia. In 1969, a coup headed by Mohamed SIAD Barre ushered in an authoritarian socialist rule characterized by the persecution, jailing, and torture of political opponents and dissidents. After the regime's collapse early in 1991, Somalia descended into turmoil, factional fighting, and anarchy. In May 1991, northern clans declared an independent Republic of Somaliland that now includes the administrative regions of Awdal, Woqooyi Galbeed, Togdheer, Sanaag, and Sool. Although not recognized by any government, this entity has maintained a stable existence and continues efforts to establish a constitutional democracy, including holding municipal, parliamentary, and presidential elections. The regions of Bari, Nugaal, and northern Mudug comprise a neighboring semi-autonomous state of Puntland, which has been self-governing since 1998 but does not aim at independence; it has also made strides toward reconstructing a legitimate, representative government but has suffered some civil strife. Puntland disputes its border with Somaliland as it also claims portions of eastern Sool and Sanaag. Beginning in 1993, a two-year UN humanitarian effort (primarily in the south) was able to alleviate famine conditions, but when the UN withdrew in 1995, having suffered significant casualties, order still had not been restored. In 2000, the Somalia National Peace Conference (SNPC) held in Djibouti resulted in the formation of an interim government, known as the Transitional National Government (TNG). When the TNG failed to establish adequate security or governing institutions, the Government of Kenya, under the auspices of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), led a subsequent peace process that concluded in October 2004 with the election of Abdullahi YUSUF Ahmed as President of a second interim government, known as the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) of the Somali Republic. The TFG included a 275-member parliamentary body, known as the Transitional Federal Parliament (TFP). President YUSUF resigned late in 2008 while United Nations-sponsored talks between the TFG and the opposition Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia (ARS) were underway in Djibouti. In January 2009, following the creation of a TFG-ARS unity government, Ethiopian military forces, which had entered Somalia in December 2006 to support the TFG in the face of advances by the opposition Islamic Courts Union (ICU), withdrew from the country. The TFP was doubled in size to 550 seats with the addition of 200 ARS and 75 civil society members of parliament. The expanded parliament elected Sheikh SHARIF Sheikh Ahmed, the former ICU and ARS chairman as president in January 2009. The creation of the TFG was based on the Transitional Federal Charter (TFC), which outlined a five-year mandate leading to the establishment of a new Somali constitution and a transition to a representative government following national elections. In 2009, the TFP amended the TFC to extend TFG's mandate until 2011 and in 2011 Somali principals agreed to institute political transition by August 2012. The transition process ended in September 2012 when clan elders appointed 275 members to a new parliament replacing the TFP and the subsequent election, by parliament, of a new president.

Geography :: Somalia

Location:

Eastern Africa, bordering the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean, east of Ethiopia

Geographic coordinates:

10 00 N, 49 00 E

Map references:

Africa

Area:

total: 637,657 sq km
country comparison to the world: 44
land: 627,337 sq km
water: 10,320 sq km

Area - comparative:

slightly smaller than Texas

Land boundaries:

total: 2,340 km
border countries: Djibouti 58 km, Ethiopia 1,600 km, Kenya 682 km

Coastline:

3,025 km

Maritime claims:

territorial sea: 200 nm

Climate:

principally desert; northeast monsoon (December to February), moderate temperatures in north and hot in south; southwest monsoon (May to October), torrid in the north and hot in the south, irregular rainfall, hot and humid periods (tangambili) between monsoons

Terrain:

mostly flat to undulating plateau rising to hills in north

Elevation extremes:

lowest point: Indian Ocean 0 m

highest point: Shimbiris 2,416 m

Natural resources:

uranium and largely unexploited reserves of iron ore, tin, gypsum, bauxite, copper, salt, natural gas, likely oil reserves

Land use:

arable land: 1.73%

permanent crops: 0.05%

other: 98.23% (2011)

Irrigated land:

2,000 sq km (2003)

Total renewable water resources:

14.7 cu km (2011)

Freshwater withdrawal (domestic/industrial/agricultural):

total: 3.3 cu km/yr (0%/0%/99%)

per capita: 377.6 cu m/yr (2003)

Natural hazards:

recurring droughts; frequent dust storms over eastern plains in summer; floods during rainy season

Environment - current issues:

famine; use of contaminated water contributes to human health problems; deforestation; overgrazing; soil erosion; desertification

Environment - international agreements:

party to: Biodiversity, Desertification, Endangered Species, Law of the Sea, Ozone Layer Protection

signed, but not ratified: none of the selected agreements

Geography - note:

strategic location on Horn of Africa along southern approaches to Bab el Mandeb and route through Red Sea and Suez Canal

People and Society :: Somalia

Nationality:

noun: Somali(s)

adjective: Somali

Ethnic groups:

Somali 85%, Bantu and other non-Somali 15% (including 30,000 Arabs)

Languages:

Somali (official), Arabic (official, according to the Transitional Federal Charter), Italian, English

Religions:

Sunni Muslim (Islam) (official, according to the Transitional Federal Charter)

Population:

10,251,568 (July 2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 85

note: this estimate was derived from an official census taken in 1975 by the Somali Government; population counting in Somalia is complicated by the large number of nomads and by refugee movements in response to famine and clan warfare

Age structure:

0-14 years: 44.3% (male 2,270,282/female 2,273,506)

15-24 years: 18.9% (male 978,197/female 955,253)

25-54 years: 31% (male 1,643,803/female 1,538,723)

55-64 years: 3.5% (male 165,408/female 188,992)

65 years and over: 2.3% (male 93,434/female 143,970) (2013 est.)

Dependency ratios:

total dependency ratio: 100.1 %
youth dependency ratio: 94.4 %
elderly dependency ratio: 5.7 %
potential support ratio: 17.7 (2013)

Median age:

total: 17.7 years
male: 17.8 years
female: 17.6 years (2013 est.)

Population growth rate:

1.67% (2013 est.)
country comparison to the world: 73

Birth rate:

41.45 births/1,000 population (2013 est.)
country comparison to the world: 6

Death rate:

14.22 deaths/1,000 population (2013 est.)
country comparison to the world: 9

Net migration rate:

-10.55 migrant(s)/1,000 population (2013 est.)
country comparison to the world: 213

Urbanization:

urban population: 37.7% of total population (2011)
rate of urbanization: 3.79% annual rate of change (2010-15 est.)

Major urban areas - population:

MOGADISHU (capital) 1.353 million (2009)

Sex ratio:

at birth: 1.03 male(s)/female
0-14 years: 1 male(s)/female
15-24 years: 1.02 male(s)/female
25-54 years: 1.07 male(s)/female
55-64 years: 0.84 male(s)/female
65 years and over: 0.66 male(s)/female
total population: 1.01 male(s)/female (2013 est.)

Maternal mortality rate:

1,000 deaths/100,000 live births (2010)
country comparison to the world: 3

Infant mortality rate:

total: 101.91 deaths/1,000 live births
country comparison to the world: 3
male: 110.74 deaths/1,000 live births
female: 92.82 deaths/1,000 live births (2013 est.)

Life expectancy at birth:

total population: 51.19 years
country comparison to the world: 217
male: 49.22 years
female: 53.23 years (2013 est.)

Total fertility rate:

6.17 children born/woman (2013 est.)
country comparison to the world: 3

Contraceptive prevalence rate:

14.6% (2006)

Physicians density:

0.04 physicians/1,000 population (2006)

Drinking water source:

improved:
urban: 66% of population
rural: 7% of population
total: 29% of population
unimproved:
urban: 34% of population

rural: 93% of population
total: 71% of population (2010 est.)

Sanitation facility access:

improved:

urban: 52% of population
rural: 6% of population
total: 23% of population

unimproved:

urban: 48% of population
rural: 94% of population
total: 77% of population (2010 est.)

HIV/AIDS - adult prevalence rate:

0.7% (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 61

HIV/AIDS - people living with HIV/AIDS:

34,000 (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 67

HIV/AIDS - deaths:

1,600 (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 58

Major infectious diseases:

degree of risk: very high
food or waterborne diseases: bacterial and protozoal diarrhea, hepatitis A and E, and typhoid fever
vectorborne diseases: dengue fever, malaria, and Rift Valley fever
water contact disease: schistosomiasis
animal contact disease: rabies (2013)

Obesity - adult prevalence rate:

4.8% (2008)

country comparison to the world: 162

Children under the age of 5 years underweight:

32.8% (2006)

country comparison to the world: 11

Education expenditures:

NA

Literacy:

definition: age 15 and over can read and write
total population: 37.8%
male: 49.7%
female: 25.8% (2001 est.)

School life expectancy (primary to tertiary education):

total: 3 years
male: 3 years
female: 2 years (2007)

Child labor - children ages 5-14:

total number: 1,148,265
percentage: 49 % (2006 est.)

Government :: Somalia

Country name:

conventional long form: Federal Republic of Somalia
conventional short form: Somalia
local long form: Jamhuuriyadda Federaalkaa Soomaaliya
local short form: Soomaaliya
former: Somali Republic, Somali Democratic Republic

Government type:

in the process of building a federated parliamentary republic

Capital:

name: Mogadishu
geographic coordinates: 2 04 N, 45 20 E
time difference: UTC+3 (8 hours ahead of Washington, DC during Standard Time)

Administrative divisions:

18 regions (plural - NA, singular - gobolka); Awdal, Bakool, Banaadir, Bari, Bay, Galguduud, Gedo, Hiiraan, Jubbada Dhexe (Middle Jubba), Jubbada Hoose (Lower Jubba), Mudug, Nugaal, Sanaag, Shabeellaha Dhexe (Middle Shabeelle), Shabeellaha Hoose (Lower Shabeelle), Sool, Togdheer, Woqooyi Galbeed

Independence:

1 July 1960 (from a merger of British Somaliland that became independent from the UK on 26 June 1960 and Italian Somaliland that became independent from the Italian-administered UN trusteeship on 1 July 1960 to form the Somali Republic)

National holiday:

Foundation of the Somali Republic, 1 July (1960); note - 26 June (1960) in Somaliland

Constitution:

Provisional Constitution for the Federal Republic of Somalia, approved by a constitutional assembly 1 August 2012

note: the Constitution will become permanent after a referendum before the end of Parliament's first term (date to be determined)

Legal system:

mixed legal system of civil law, Islamic law, and customary law (referred to as Xeer)

International law organization participation:

accepts compulsory ICJ jurisdiction with reservations; non-party state to the ICCt

Suffrage:

18 years of age; universal

Executive branch:

chief of state: President HASSAN SHEIKH Mahamud (since 10 September 2012)

head of government: Prime Minister Abdi Farrah SHIRDON Said (since 6 October 2012)

cabinet: Cabinet appointed by the president approved by the National Parliament

(For more information visit the **World Leaders website** [🌐](#))

elections: president elected by the National Parliament; election last held 10 September 2012

election results: HASSAN SHEIKH Mahamud elected president; National Parliament vote - HASSAN SHEIKH Mahamud 190, Sheikh SHARIF Sheikh Ahmed 79; president chooses the prime minister, who is then elected by National Parliament

Legislative branch:

bicameral National Parliament consisting of the House of the People of the Federal Parliament (275 seats, elected by Somali citizens) and the Upper House of the Federal Parliament (54 seats, elected by people of the federal member states)

note: the inaugural House of the People in September 2012 was appointed by clan elders; as of January 2013, the Upper House has not been formed

Judicial branch:

highest court(s): Transitional Supreme Court (consists of the chief justice and 3 judges)

note - under the terms of the 2004 Transitional National Charter (TNC), a Supreme Court based in Mogadishu and an Appeal Court were established; yet most regions have reverted to local forms of conflict resolution, either secular, traditional Somali customary law, or sharia Islamic law

judge selection and term of office: judges appointed by the president upon proposal of the Judicial Service Council, a 9-member judicial and administrative body; judge tenure NA

subordinate courts: Transitional Appeal Court; regional and district courts; sharia (Islamic courts)

Political parties and leaders:

none

Political pressure groups and leaders:

other: numerous clan and sub-clan factions exist both in support and in opposition to the transitional government

International organization participation:

ACP, AfDB, AFESD, AMF, AU, CAEU (candidate), FAO, G-77, IBRD, ICAO, ICRM, IDA, IDB, IFAD, IFC, IFRCs, IGAD, ILO, IMF, IMO, Interpol, IOC, IOM, ITSO, ITU, LAS, NAM, OIC, UN, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNHCR, UNIDO, UPU, WFTU (NGOs), WHO, WIPO, WMO

Diplomatic representation in the US:

Somalia does not have an embassy in the US (ceased operations on 8 May 1991); note - the Transitional Federal Government is represented in the US through its Permanent Mission to the UN

Diplomatic representation from the US:

the US does not have an embassy in Somalia; US interests are represented by the US Special Representative for Somalia, James C. Swan operating out of the US Embassy in Nairobi, Kenya at United Nations Avenue, Nairobi; mailing address: Unit 64100, Nairobi; APO AE 09831; telephone: [254] (20) 363-6000; FAX [254] (20) 363-6157

Flag description:

light blue with a large white five-pointed star in the center; the blue field was originally influenced by the flag of the UN, but today is said to denote the sky and the neighboring Indian Ocean; the five points of the star represent the five regions in the horn of Africa that are inhabited by Somali people: the former British Somaliland and Italian Somaliland (which together make up Somalia), Djibouti, Ogaden (Ethiopia), and the North East Province (Kenya)

National symbol(s):

leopard

National anthem:

name: "Soomaaliyeey toosoo" (Somalia Wake Up)
lyrics/music: Ali Mire AWALE and Yuusuf Xaaji Aadan Cilmi QABILLE
note: adopted 2000; written in 1947, the lyrics speak of creating unity and an end to fighting

Government - note:
regional and local governing bodies continue to exist and control various areas of the country, including the self-declared Republic of Somaliland in northwestern Somalia and the semi-autonomous State of Puntland in northeastern Somalia

Economy :: Somalia

Economy - overview:
Despite the lack of effective national governance, Somalia has maintained a healthy informal economy, largely based on livestock, remittance/money transfer companies, and telecommunications. Agriculture is the most important sector with livestock normally accounting for about 40% of GDP and more than 50% of export earnings. Nomads and semi-pastoralists, who are dependent upon livestock for their livelihood, make up a large portion of the population. Livestock, hides, fish, charcoal, and bananas are Somalia's principal exports, while sugar, sorghum, corn, qat, and machined goods are the principal imports. Somalia's small industrial sector, based on the processing of agricultural products, has largely been looted and the machinery sold as scrap metal. Somalia's service sector has grown. Telecommunication firms provide wireless services in most major cities and offer the lowest international call rates on the continent. In the absence of a formal banking sector, money transfer/remittance services have sprouted throughout the country, handling up to \$1.6 billion in remittances annually. Mogadishu's main market offers a variety of goods from food to the newest electronic gadgets. Hotels continue to operate and are supported with private-security militias. Somalia's arrears to the IMF have continued to grow. Somalia's capital city - Mogadishu - has enjoyed a rebirth following the departure of al-Shabaab in August 2011. Mogadishu has witnessed the development of the city's first gas stations, supermarkets, and flights between Europe (Istanbul-Mogadishu) since the collapse of central authority in 1991. This economic growth has yet to expand outside of Mogadishu.

GDP (purchasing power parity):
\$5.896 billion (2010 est.)
country comparison to the world: 165
\$5.75 billion (2009 est.)
\$5.607 billion (2008 est.)
note: data are in 2010 US dollars

GDP (official exchange rate):
\$2.372 billion (2010 est.)

GDP - real growth rate:
2.6% (2010 est.)
country comparison to the world: 118
2.6% (2009 est.)
2.6% (2008 est.)

GDP - per capita (PPP):
\$600 (2010 est.)
country comparison to the world: 225
\$600 (2009 est.)
\$600 (2008 est.)
note: data are in 2012 US dollars

GDP - composition, by sector of origin:
agriculture: 59.3%
industry: 7.2%
services: 33.5% (2012 est.)

Agriculture - products:
bananas, sorghum, corn, coconuts, rice, sugarcane, mangoes, sesame seeds, beans; cattle, sheep, goats; fish

Industries:
a few light industries, including sugar refining, textiles, wireless communication

Industrial production growth rate:
NA%

Labor force:
3.447 million (2007)
country comparison to the world: 99

Labor force - by occupation:
agriculture: 71%
industry and services: 29% (1975)

Unemployment rate:
NA%

Population below poverty line:
NA%

Household income or consumption by percentage share:
lowest 10%: NA%
highest 10%: NA%
Budget:
revenues: \$NA
expenditures: \$NA
Fiscal year:
NA
Inflation rate (consumer prices):
NA%
<i>note:</i> businesses print their own money, so inflation rates cannot be easily determined
Central bank discount rate:
NA%
Commercial bank prime lending rate:
NA%
Exports:
\$515.8 million (2012 est.)
country comparison to the world: 171
\$594.3 million (2011 est.)
Exports - commodities:
livestock, bananas, hides, fish, charcoal, scrap metal
Exports - partners:
UAE 50.8%, Yemen 19%, Oman 12.8% (2012)
Imports:
\$1.263 billion (2010 est.)
country comparison to the world: 176
\$798 million (2006 est.)
Imports - commodities:
manufactures, petroleum products, foodstuffs, construction materials, qat
Imports - partners:
Djibouti 27.4%, India 12%, Kenya 7.2%, Pakistan 6.5%, China 6.1%, Egypt 5%, Oman 4.6%, UAE 4.5%, Yemen 4.4% (2012)
Debt - external:
\$3.05 billion (31 December 2011 est.)
country comparison to the world: 137
\$2.942 billion (31 December 2010 est.)
Exchange rates:
Somali shillings (SOS) per US dollar -
1,600 (2012 est.)

Energy:: Somalia

Electricity - production:
315 million kWh (2009 est.)
country comparison to the world: 168
Electricity - consumption:
293 million kWh (2009 est.)
country comparison to the world: 174
Electricity - exports:
0 kWh (2010 est.)
country comparison to the world: 130
Electricity - imports:
0 kWh (2010 est.)
country comparison to the world: 133
Electricity - installed generating capacity:
80,000 kW (2009 est.)
country comparison to the world: 172
Electricity - from fossil fuels:

93.8% of total installed capacity (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 70

Electricity - from nuclear fuels:

0% of total installed capacity (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 177

Electricity - from hydroelectric plants:

6.3% of total installed capacity (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 122

Electricity - from other renewable sources:

0% of total installed capacity (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 186

Crude oil - production:

0 bbl/day (2011 est.)

country comparison to the world: 188

Crude oil - exports:

0 bbl/day (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 184

Crude oil - imports:

1,000 bbl/day (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 83

Crude oil - proved reserves:

0 bbl (1 January 2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 187

Refined petroleum products - production:

3,666 bbl/day (2008 est.)

country comparison to the world: 110

Refined petroleum products - consumption:

5,659 bbl/day (2011 est.)

country comparison to the world: 164

Refined petroleum products - exports:

1,109 bbl/day (2008 est.)

country comparison to the world: 106

Refined petroleum products - imports:

2,905 bbl/day (2008 est.)

country comparison to the world: 169

Natural gas - production:

0 cu m (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 190

Natural gas - consumption:

0 cu m (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 193

Natural gas - exports:

0 cu m (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 180

Natural gas - imports:

0 cu m (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 129

Natural gas - proved reserves:

5.663 billion cu m (1 January 2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 88

Carbon dioxide emissions from consumption of energy:

897,500 Mt (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 167

Communications:: Somalia

Telephones - main lines in use:

100,000 (2010)

country comparison to the world: 146

Telephones - mobile cellular:

655,000 (2011)

country comparison to the world: 161

Telephone system:

general assessment: the public telecommunications system was almost completely destroyed or dismantled during the civil war; private companies offer limited local fixed-line service and private wireless companies offer service in most major cities while charging the lowest international rates on the continent

domestic: local cellular telephone systems have been established in Mogadishu and in several other population centers with one company beginning to provide 3G services in late 2012

international: country code - 252; Mogadishu is a landing point for the EASSy fiber-optic submarine cable system linking East Africa with Europe and North America (2010)

Broadcast media:

2 private TV stations rebroadcast Al-Jazeera and CNN; Somaliland has 1 government-operated TV station and Puntland has 1 private TV station; the transitional government operates Radio Mogadishu; 1 SW and roughly 10 private FM radio stations broadcast in Mogadishu; several radio stations operate in central and southern regions; Somaliland has 1 government-operated radio station; Puntland has roughly a half dozen private radio stations; transmissions of at least 2 international broadcasters are available (2007)

Internet country code:

.so

Internet hosts:

186 (2012)

country comparison to the world: 202

Internet users:

106,000 (2009)

country comparison to the world: 159

Transportation:: Somalia**Airports:**

61 (2013)

country comparison to the world: 80

Airports - with paved runways:

total: 6

over 3,047 m: 4

2,438 to 3,047 m: 1

1,524 to 2,437 m: 1 (2013)

Airports - with unpaved runways:

total: 55

over 3,047 m: 1

2,438 to 3,047 m: 5

1,524 to 2,437 m: 20

914 to 1,523 m: 23

under 914 m:

6 (2013)

Roadways:

total: 22,100 km

country comparison to the world: 104

paved: 2,608 km

unpaved: 19,492 km (2000)

Merchant marine:

total: 1

country comparison to the world: 148

by type: cargo 1 (2008)

Ports and terminals:

Berbera, Kismaayo

Transportation - note:

despite a dramatic drop in the number of attacks in 2012, the International Maritime Bureau continues to report the territorial and offshore waters in the Gulf of Aden and Indian Ocean as a region of significant risk for piracy and armed robbery against ships accounting for 25% of all attacks in 2012; 75 vessels, including commercial shipping and pleasure craft, were attacked or hijacked both at anchor and while underway compared with 237 in 2011; the number of hijackings off the coast of Somalia was reduced to 14 in 2012, down from 28 in 2011; as of April 2013, 77 vessels and 7 hostages were being held for ransom by Somali pirates; the presence of several naval task forces in the Gulf of Aden and additional anti-piracy measures on the part of ship operators, including the use of on-board armed security teams, have reduced piracy incidents in that body of water; in response Somali-based pirates, using hijacked fishing trawlers as "mother ships" to extend their range, shifted operations as far south as the Mozambique Channel, eastward to the vicinity of the Maldives, and northeastward to the Strait of Hormuz

Military branches:
National Security Force (NSF): Somali Army (2011)
Military service age and obligation:
18 is the legal minimum age for compulsory and voluntary military service (2012)
Manpower available for military service:
males age 16-49: 2,260,175
females age 16-49: 2,159,293 (2010 est.)
Manpower fit for military service:
males age 16-49: 1,331,894
females age 16-49: 1,357,051 (2010 est.)
Manpower reaching militarily significant age annually:
male: 101,634
female: 101,072 (2010 est.)
Military expenditures:
0.9% of GDP (2005 est.)
country comparison to the world: 133

Disputes - international:
Ethiopian forces invaded southern Somalia and routed Islamist Courts from Mogadishu in January 2007; "Somaliland" secessionists provide port facilities in Berbera to landlocked Ethiopia and have established commercial ties with other regional states; "Puntland" and "Somaliland" "governments" seek international support in their secessionist aspirations and overlapping border claims; the undemarcated former British administrative line has little meaning as a political separation to rival clans within Ethiopia's Ogaden and southern Somalia's Oromo region; Kenya works hard to prevent the clan and militia fighting in Somalia from spreading south across the border, which has long been open to nomadic pastoralists
Refugees and internally displaced persons:
IDPs: 1.1 million (civil war since 1988, clan-based competition for resources; 2011 famine; insecurity because of fighting between al-Shabaab and TFG allied forces) (2012)