

FAST Update

Somalia

Semi-annual Risk Assessment
February to July 2006

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Contents

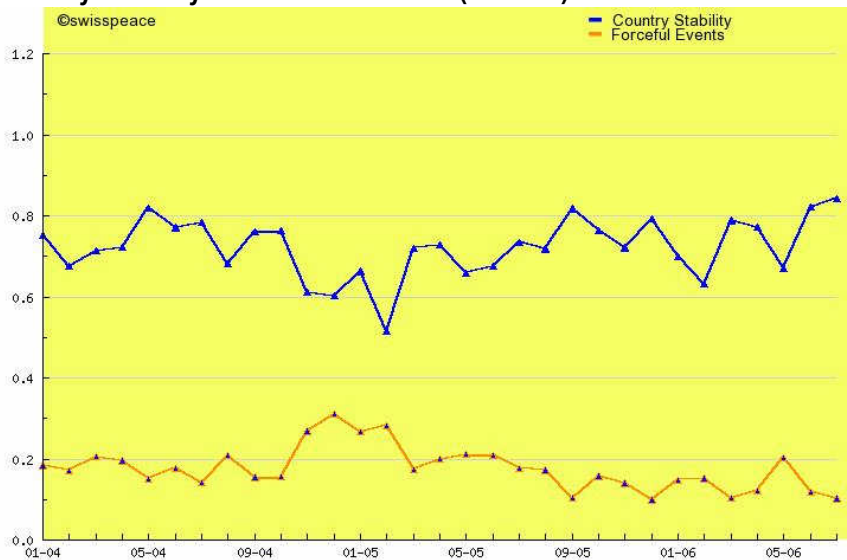
Country Stability and Forceful Events (relative)	3
Cooperative and Conflictive International Events (relative)	6
Conflictive and Forceful Domestic Events (relative)	8
Appendix: Description of indicators used	10
The FAST International Early Warning Program	11

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Country Stability and Forceful Events (relative)



Average number of reported Events per month: 126.5

Risk Assessment

- Somalia has seen seismic shifts since the beginning of the year and continues a downward spiral, increasing the likelihood of a new war. The Transitional Federal Government (TFG), which has gone through many ups and downs during this time, is now in an increasingly precarious position, and there is a very significant risk that the conflict could become even more internationalized (see graph on Cooperative and Conflictive Events). Reflecting the landslide change that has gripped Somalia's political and military arena during the reporting period, the graph for country stability shows significant dips in February and May. These coincide with the relocation of the TFG leadership from Jowhar to Baidoa and the eruption of serious fighting between Islamic Court militias and the warlords in Mogadishu. The latter is also visible in the peak of the graph for forceful events in May. On balance, the persistence of the Aden Agreement (between the Speaker of Parliament and the President), which allowed for the convening of parliament in Baidoa, and the clearing of the warlords from Mogadishu must be viewed as positive developments. However, these are outweighed by the very real threat of large scale fighting between the TFG in Baidoa and the Supreme Islamic Courts Council (SICC) (previously Islamic Courts Union, ICU) now in control of Mogadishu. Furthermore, there is a serious danger that this war could drag in Ethiopian and other foreign troops, leading to a wider escalation with repercussions for the entire Horn of Africa region.
- While the situation in the capital began to deteriorate at the end of 2005, the dynamics fundamentally picked up steam in February after the Mogadishu group of warlords (who were also dissenting Ministers of the TFG) and a number of allies (see below) announced the "Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counter-Terrorism" (ARPCT). Though never officially admitted, this loose alliance received significant assistance from various US military and intelligence agencies with intent to crush the Islamic Courts in Northern Mogadishu. The Courts have been gaining influence in recent years, and the US linked some of their leading figures with international terrorist acts in Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania and Somaliland. But the strategy to back the warlords as a proxy against the Courts was miscalculated and instead contributed to the Courts moving quickly to increase their control of Mogadishu. Recurrent fighting (see graph on Conflictive and Forceful Domestic Events) during the following four months led to an all out takeover by the Courts, who with a lot of public support forced the warlords to flee and to give up most of their heavy weapons. In the words of the International Crisis Group report of 10 August 2006, "US counter-terrorism efforts...have created the largest *potential* safe haven for terrorists in Africa" (own emphasis).
- Somalis have greeted the Courts' rule of Mogadishu with mixed emotions. The fact that the capital and most of its surroundings are in the hands of a single authority for the first time in fifteen years undoubtedly comes with a lot of immediate benefits. Inter-factional fighting ended, roadblocks were cleared, there is freedom of movement, and business is being revitalized following the opening of Mogadishu airport and port. However, public acceptance of some of the Courts' enforcement of strict Islamic rule - banning photo studios and cinemas,

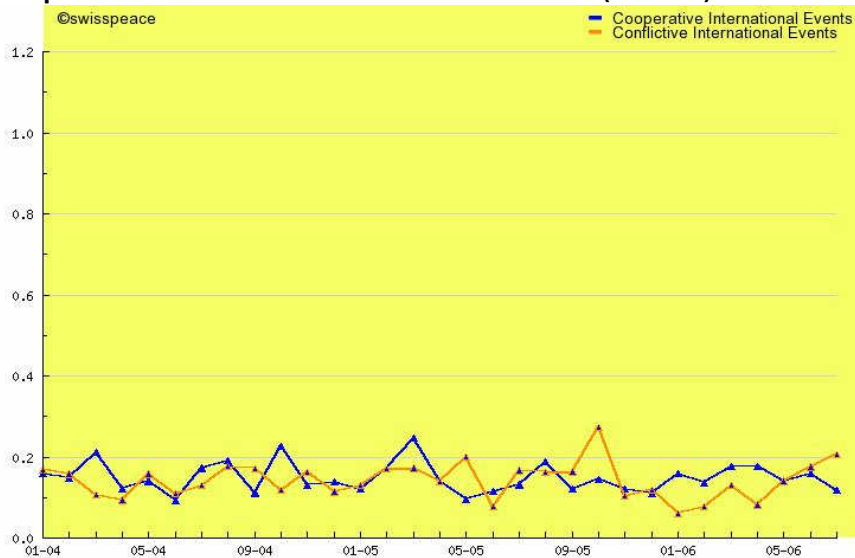
publicly lashing Marihuana dealers, and cracking down on a meeting of the more moderate Al-Islah recently - is unknown. The choice between the arbitrary rule of the hated, US-supported warlords and (probably too) radical Courts was easy, but it is unclear how far the Courts' bonus with the public is going to carry, especially if serious restrictions on personal freedoms prevail.

- Internally, the Islamic Courts represent anything but a monolithic block, either in terms of religious and political direction or sub-clan composition. And yet - to the surprise of many - they have so far maintained considerable cohesion. The alliance was initially led by the more moderate Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed (Hawiye-Abgal), a former leader of a Northern Mogadishu Court. On 24 June, a newly created council of the Courts (renamed the SICC) elected Sheikh Hassan Aweys as its leader, who is officially designated by the US as an individual with links to terrorism. Hassan Aweys is one of several radical leaders who primarily come from the Ayr subclan (Hawiye-Habr Gidir) and seem to control the military backbone of the Courts. His election was widely perceived as a blow to the initial goodwill that the Courts received across Somali society and internationally.
- While the Courts are making efforts to incorporate prominent members of other Hawiye subclans, it is known that the strength of the Ayr has antagonized parts of the Abgal as well as the Saad subclan (further north, particularly important in Galkayo). Connected with these tensions are competing claims to supremacy between the Hawiye subclans in the capital. The Courts' assembly (shura) has now grown to 94, but it is mainly Sheikh Aweys who has issued statements since the end of June. A 15-member executive committee has been assigned to manage the day to day affairs under the leadership of Sheikh Sharif, with the self-declared governor of Lower Shabelle, warlord Indha Adde, as one of his deputies. The latter is believed to act with considerable autonomy within the alliance.
- Among other factors, the Courts' public identification with the Hawiye hinders their expansion into other clan territories. As a movement, whose claims to legitimacy are based on the supposed provision of public security and alleged "popular uprising" against the warlords, the Courts can ill afford at this point to rule primarily by force (e.g. of one (sub-) clan over the other), or to witness larger scale bloodshed behind their lines. Even within the Hawiye, this forces the alliance to move in step with local clan authorities (mostly elders), a balance which they seem to have managed quite well so far. However, the more autonomy the local authorities retain by setting up "their own Courts", the more difficult it will be for the Mogadishu leadership to keep their ranks closed. On balance, the Courts face the challenge of maintaining internal cohesion, geographically and over time, while they are restrained in their external advances as a coherent movement.
- The optimism that surrounded the persistence of the Aden Agreement (between the Speaker of Parliament and the TFG President) and the convening of parliament in Baidoa has vanished. While the original rift between the TFG leadership and the dissenting ministers in Mogadishu resulted in the latter's loss of power (and sacking from the cabinet), the underlying lack of meaningful Hawiye involvement in the TFG has worsened. The TFG's complete relocation to Baidoa, Abdullahi Yussuf's military leadership in the town, the unification of most Hawiye under the opposing Courts, and the resignation of dozens of dissenting Ministers have rendered the TFG a largely Darod-driven exercise on Rahanweyn territory.
- The remaining political process within the TFG currently centers around the pending removal of Prime Minister Ali Gedi, who narrowly survived a no-confidence vote on 30 July. While demands for his sacking are commonly blamed on the government's failures and the PM's resistance to resume talks with the Courts, the key issue is the occupation of the Hawiye's top job in the TFG by a technocrat with Ethiopian loyalties and who has zero influence within his clan. Gedi is all too aware that his is the position to be reshuffled in any potential attempt to appease or co-opt the Hawiye, with or without the Courts. The agreement between the PM, the president and the speaker of parliament, hammered together by an Ethiopian delegation in early August, gave Gedi a last reprieve. Following the deal, the TFG leadership sacked the remaining members of cabinet. The PM nominated a new cabinet on 21 August, largely composed of previous ministers. Despite calls from some legislators, neither representatives of the Courts, nor former Mogadishu warlords (except Hussein Aideed) were appointed. He is now expected to present a work plan that will be the basis of his performance evaluation after three months. Should he then be seen to fail, this will grant parliament the right to another vote of no-confidence. Agreement was also made to continue the Khartoum dialogue with the Islamic Courts as soon as possible (see next graph).
- Parliamentary endorsement of the new cabinet is a tough challenge for the PM. The fact that Gedi's political fate is closely connected with his ability to form a new cabinet gives added impetus to efforts by his opponents wishing to spoil the process. The media are cautiously optimistic that he will succeed, as the announcement followed intensive consultations with the Speaker and the President. However, the TFG's moves are primarily an exercise to appease the parliament, to mobilize international assistance (especially military force) and to buy time in an effort to avoid outright disintegration. However, removal of the PM ultimately remains inevitable; the

benchmarks for the PM set in the Baidoa deal appear to signal that Ethiopia will, in principle, be ready to accept such a move. The choice of the next prime minister will reveal whether the TFG will seek reconciliation with the Courts, or gamble on dividing Hawiye loyalties and stick with a military strategy of supremacy.

- The military situation is largely characterized by the Courts' continuing advances, especially northwards into central Somalia over the past month, and regular Ethiopian incursions. On 19 July, when the Courts temporarily entered Bur Haqaba, at least several hundred Ethiopian troops, dozens of battle vehicles and a few helicopters crossed into Baidoa (at only 60 km distance from Bur Haqaba) and Wajid. They later withdrew to the border areas, where the BBC reported Ethiopia to have assembled a total of six divisions (5,000 men) including tanks. Since the Courts' militias took full control of Beledweyne/Hiran Region on 9 August, they are at most 20 km from the Ethiopian military camp in Ferfer that sits just across the border. Several hundred Ethiopian soldiers and around 40 vehicles were also said to be in Balambale as of 13 August, 50 km north of Sheikh Aweys' stronghold in Dusa Mareeb. The Courts further advanced in Galguduud by mid-August, in parallel with Ethiopian troops that went to Gudgod, 35 km east of Galkayo. On 21 August new Ethiopian incursions were reported from Baidoa and its hinterland.
- The Courts and the TFG/Ethiopia differ widely on their "need" for military advances. The Courts maintain the upper hand and have already secured their main strategic military interests: they have taken control of the capital, its port and airport, and most - if not yet, soon - all of the main northern trade route. They do not have a strategic need for further military advances, but gladly incorporate what territory they can access. They have the liberty to ignore the fragile and deeply entrenched TFG in Baidoa so long as there is no military buildup in preparation of an attack on Mogadishu.
- On the contrary, the TFG leadership's options are fairly limited, while its need to act is overwhelming. Subjected to the Courts' political pull factors, the TFG is faced with almost daily political and military defections. Meanwhile, it remains under siege both by the Courts' open and covert operations, as well as Baidoa's roaming militias. The recent killing of a cabinet minister heightened the volatility of the situation. The TFG's best hopes rest with Ethiopian military protection, and the vague speculation of a broader international force, but these come with considerable risks and ambivalences (see next graph). Depending on the kind and extent of foreign assistance, the TFG leaders may seek to force their way into the South by way of an alliance with some of the ousted warlords, many of whom have sought to mend ties with the TFG and maintained friendly relations with the Ethiopian government throughout.

Cooperative and Conflictive International Events (relative)



Average number of reported Events per month: 126.5

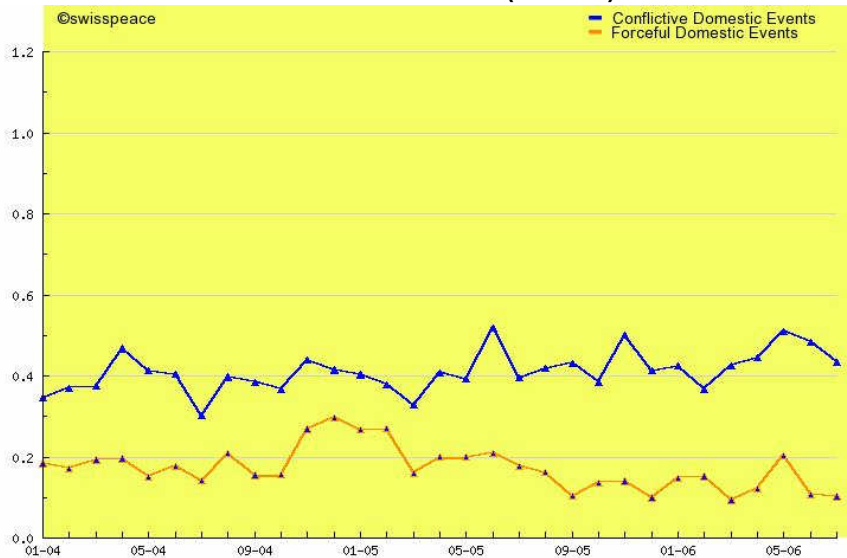
Risk Assessment

- Conflictive International Events have increased significantly since May, while Cooperative Events have simultaneously declined. Dynamics between Somalia and the rest of the world deteriorated prior to and after the rise of the Islamic Courts in May/June. Especially in the west and in Ethiopia, the strengthening of the Courts' has fuelled fears of a new Taliban regime, the creation of terrorist hideouts, and a possible collapse of the internationally sponsored TFG. Conflictive activities included significant financial support, weapons supplies and other assistance to both sides, as well as reciprocal threats. These were followed by actual military intervention from Ethiopia. Prospects of international mediation between the TFG and the Islamic Courts look grim, and the on-going foreign meddling points to the significant risk of internationalization and spill over into neighboring countries.
- As far as international peacekeeping troops are concerned, the reporting period was marked by two significant policy shifts. In direct response to the Courts' takeover of the capital, the Transitional Federal Parliament approved the deployment of foreign peacekeepers with 125 against 73 votes on 14 June. Abdullahi Yussuf had been pushing for this since the beginning of his presidency in October 2004, but prior to the Courts' successes the assembly had been too divided on the matter. A month later, on 13 July, the UN Security Council for the first time ever stated its willingness to "consider" the African Union's request for a peace support mission (to be implemented under IGAD) and to adapt the arms embargo to allow for the development of a security sector (i.e. military assistance) under the TFG. While this was seen as a breakthrough for the TFG leadership, the Security Council set a number of conditions, including its judgment on the basis of a detailed mission plan that the mission would contribute to peace.
- While the legal door to the deployment of international forces has opened a little, conditions on the ground and the political environment remain unfavorable. The AU and IGAD keep pushing the issue - a reconnaissance mission was sent to Somalia in June, and a recent meeting in Kenya revised an operational deployment mission plan. The current proposal is to initially deploy 3,500 Ugandan and Sudanese troops to Bay and Bakool, essentially securing Baidoa and its surroundings for the TFG. However, there is no apparent source of funding, and in contrast to the UN Security Council's readiness to consider the force and a partial lifting of the arms embargo, the UN Special Representative for Somalia recently advised strongly against such changes. Foreign troops seen to assist the TFG could become embroiled in the conflict with the Islamic Courts, who have threatened to initiate a holy war against any kind of external intervention, and have, under the banner of this rallying call, initiated a massive drive to recruit militia and secure funding. The official deployment of Ethiopian soldiers (as envisaged for the second stage) would be particularly provocative, and the Courts are unlikely to sit and watch a Baidoa protectorate that would serve as the staging ground for an offensive against Mogadishu.
- And yet, on the matters of foreign troops, international decision-makers increasingly present the option of continued unilateral interventions by Ethiopia or the reluctant deployment of a multilateral force under

international norms. Avoiding an international war (see below), especially between Ethiopia and the Courts, could at some point tip the balance in favour of a more pragmatic, albeit dangerous, response to the situation.

- The involvement of Ethiopian troops on the side of the TFG and Eritrean arms supplies to the Courts present an internationalization of the conflict on Somali soil. Diplomats are deeply worried that the scenario could widen into a regional proxy war, spilling over to neighboring territories, especially Ethiopia. Eritrea is known to have supported Ethiopian armed opposition groups, oftentimes through Somalia, for a long time. The synergies of Eritrean-supported operations of the Courts, the OLF, ONLF and Ethiopian Al-Ittihad, in addition to the political challenge that the Ethiopian government faces from its legal as well as imprisoned parliamentary opposition, must look tempting to the Eritrean regime. A similar scenario, though under significantly less favorable conditions, also existed between 1998 and 2002. In a rather transparent tit-for-tat, the TFG recently declared support for the Eritrean rebel group ELF. Ethiopia is meanwhile said to look into quick, sharp and powerful military options to smash the Courts' military capacity. Under the given circumstances, this approach risks inflaming the Somali region of Ethiopia and triggering a wider and uncontrolled war.
- A further risk emanating from the internationalization of tensions is that of the conflict being linked to the US' global war on terror. Libya, Iran, and Egypt are suspected to be the origin of Eritrean arms shipments, and one source mentions the recent delivery of sophisticated surface-to-air missiles. On the political level, the US responded to the defeat of the warlords and the emergence of the Courts by assembling a so-called "International Contact Group" for Somalia in mid-June. Initially composed of the US, UK, Italy, Norway, Tanzania and the UN, it has meanwhile been broadened to include IGAD and the Arab League. Despite the US' trauma of the 1993 Mogadishu battle, it can certainly no longer be ruled out that Ethiopia's difficult position and the Courts' perceived resemblance of the Taliban regime could ultimately lead to the stepping-up of American military activity in the Horn of Africa. Initially, US military intervention may take the form of covert special operations, although overt military strikes become increasingly imaginable.
- Although the UN, IGAD and others portray the proposed peace talks in Khartoum - facilitated under the Arab League - as the only possible way to resolve Somalia's deadlock, they actually have very little prospect of producing tangible results, if they continue at all. The first meeting between a Courts' delegation, mostly composed of intellectuals, and the TFG took place on 22 June, shortly after the takeover of the capital. The agreement made then entailed mutual recognition of the parties, a cessation of hostilities and unconditional continuation of the dialogue, which was originally scheduled for 15 July. Since then, the meeting has been postponed several times: It was first rejected by the Courts after Ethiopian troops entered the country, then by PM Ali Gedi, and then again by the Courts. Since advances by the Courts and incursions by Ethiopian military are used to justify the other party's absence, both have an effective veto on whether the meeting, currently scheduled for 31 August, will happen. The composition of the Courts' delegation could become another highly contested issue. The talks would be the first meeting since Sheikh Aweys became the chairman of the Courts' assembly. Given the history of their relationship and Aweys' "pariah" status in international spheres, it is highly unlikely that Abdullahi Yussuf would be willing to meet him.
- However, even if the meeting is realized, it is highly questionable that any real results can be achieved. Practically, the recent nomination of a new TFG cabinet and the continuation of the current PM do not give promise to what would be the key option for compromise - the formation of a government of unity. The exclusion of the former warlords was interpreted as a conciliatory gesture to the Courts, but the more direct inclusion of representatives of the Courts is very hard to imagine, especially under Abdullahi Yussuf. More generally, the different legal principles (Charter vs. Sharia), sources of legitimacy (questionable Mbagathi process vs. popular support of factual achievements), and competing claims to national leadership present many areas of incompatibility. Moreover, the asymmetry in their military strength and the Courts' control of the capital does not provide much incentive for finding common terms of reference. Whether one likes it or not, for the time being, the Courts have *de facto* created an alternative, and in many ways more home-grown mechanism, which is interested in and potentially capable of uniting former Italian Somalia - with unquestionable radical tendencies and implications for international relations. In particular, the Courts' recent announcement of a national reconciliation conference seriously challenges the TFG's claim to legitimate leadership, which is on the verge of being irrelevant.
- So far, Somaliland remains largely unaffected by the recent developments in the South, although it has been a scene of militant Islamist activity in the past. The self-declared republic's membership bid with the African Union remains unanswered, and despite the favorable assessment of an AU Fact Finding Mission, Somaliland's representatives were not even heard at the AU Summit in Banjul/The Gambia early July.

Conflictive and Forceful Domestic Events (relative)



Average number of reported Events per month: 126.5

Risk Assessment

- Both graphs peaked significantly in May, at the height of fighting in Mogadishu between the Islamic Courts and the warlords. The fighting in the capital killed at least 300-400 people and was the key battlefield during the reporting period. Most of the victims were civilians as mortar grenades and artillery shells were used indiscriminately in densely populated urban areas. The UN estimates that a total of 17,000 people fled the fighting in Mogadishu, many of them to Kenya.
- In a continuation of the January fighting, the battles in Mogadishu resumed at the end of March between Abubakar Umar Adani (one of the main supporters of the Islamic Courts) and Bashir Raghe (member of the Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counter-Terrorism) in the North of the capital. This was largely portrayed as a conflict within the Abgal subclan of the Hawiye, and it left at least 60 people dead. It continued in April. Several days of fighting in early May ultimately took the conflict to a higher level, when forces of the Union of the Islamic Courts and another ARPCT member engaged each other in the North of the capital. Again, the fighting was primarily intra-Abgal, but with wider participation and indiscriminate use of heavy weaponry in civilian settlements. The fighting that resumed at the end of May after a temporary truce resulted in significant gains for the Islamic Courts. These led to the takeover of Balad on 4 June, and Jowhar on 12 June. During this period the Courts also took control of the entire capital. Beledweyne joined the courts on 9 August, followed by several former pirate strongholds on the coast of the Somali central region.
- Assuming that the political process (Khartoum talks, see previous graph) will not lead anywhere, there are mainly three possible military scenarios: i) Fighting between the Courts and TFG-allied remnants of the Mogadishu warlords, plus Puntland troops, in the Northern part of central region, possibly including Galkayo. This is very likely to happen, and may trigger the second and third dynamic. In particular, this could affect Dusa Mareb, the preferred position of Sheikh Aweys; ii) Limited fighting between Abdullahi Yussuf's forces and advancing units of the Courts in the area between Baidoa and Mogadishu (especially Bur Hakaba). With on-going and mutual provocations the potential appears high, but because of the TFG's current military weakness, is unlikely. The Courts are unlikely to enter into such a fight, unless to provoke and bring Ethiopia out into the open; and iii) Outright military confrontation between the TFG, backed by Ethiopia, and the Courts. For the Somali parties to the conflict the possibility of this as an imminent scenario seems to be unlikely but could be raised should there be an escalation of tensions arising from either of the above scenarios or should there be direct confrontations between the Courts' militias and Ethiopian soldiers. Only Ethiopia is believed to consider a full-scale offensive as a deliberate option at this point (see next graph). The resurrection of the Jowhar sphere of influence would be one of the likely results of this scenario.
- Internal tensions between the President and the sacked Minister of Planning in Puntland continued until April, but seem to have been resolved subsequently. The semi-autonomous region struggles to position itself in

response to the Islamic Courts' advances towards Galkayo. Adde Muse, leader of Puntland has vowed to repel any advance.

- Somaliland witnessed a significant local land conflict in Hargeisa at the beginning of the year, but order was quickly restored. The country remains at a political stalemate after the Guurti (National House of Elders) extended its mandate in May by four years. The parliamentary opposition strongly opposes the move, which was backed by President Riyale and a recommendation from part of the judiciary. A long-awaited cabinet reshuffle finally took place early in August.
- Somaliland and Puntland remain in a dispute over exploration rights for petroleum resources on the Puntland-controlled side of Eastern Sanaag. Since the affected territory is outside Somaliland military control, the issue is not of practical significance for relations between Somaliland and Puntland at this point.

Appendix : Description of indicators used | Page 10

Country Stability	The Country Stability index reflects three independent factors: (i) challenges by non-government actors to the state's monopoly of force; (ii) state repression; and (iii) violence entailing physical force against persons or property. The index is scaled between 0 and 1, where 1 means high and 0 low stability
Forceful Events (Relative)	Number of Events (i) that entail the use of physical force against persons or property divided by the number of all reported events. The Indicator has a range between 0 and 1.
Cooperative International Events (Relative)	Number of Events (i) that have a positive value on the IDEA conflict-cooperation scale* and (ii) where at least one actor comes from outside the country divided by the number of all reported events. The Indicator has a range between 0 and 1.
Conflictive International Events (Relative)	Number of Events (i) that have a negative value on the IDEA conflict-cooperation scale* and (ii) where at least one actor comes from outside the country divided by the number of all reported events. The Indicator has a range between 0 and 1.
Conflictive Domestic Events (Relative)	Number of Events (i) that have a negative value on the IDEA conflict-cooperation scale* and (ii) where all actors come from inside the country divided by the number of all reported events. The Indicator has a range between 0 and 1.
Forceful Domestic Events (Relative)	Number of Events (i) that entail the use of physical force against persons or property and (ii) where all actors come from inside the country divided by the number of all reported events. The Indicator has a range between 0 and 1.

Who are we?

FAST International is the early warning program of swisspeace, based in Berne, Switzerland. The program is funded and utilized by an international consortium of development agencies consisting of the Austrian Development Agency (ADA), Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

What do we want to achieve?

FAST International aims at enhancing political decision makers' and their offices' ability to identify critical developments in a timely manner so that coherent political strategies can be formulated to either prevent or limit destructive effects of violent conflict or identify windows of opportunity for peacebuilding.

How do we work?

FAST International uses both qualitative and quantitative methods, with the combination of methods being determined in each case by customer needs. The centerpiece of FAST International is the collection of single cooperative and conflictive events by means of a web-based software, applied by local staff using a coding scheme called IDEA (Integrated Data for Event Analysis), which is based on the WEIS (World Interaction Survey) coding scheme. The monitoring by FAST International is done independently from Western media coverage, thus providing for a constant influx of information. This information is collected by FAST International's own Local Information Networks (LINS). The quantitative empirical analysis is based on composed indicators developed within the IDEA framework. Since even the most profound quantitative analysis requires interpretation, FAST International cooperates with renowned country/area experts.

What are our products?

FAST International offers different early warning products tailored to customer needs. The only standard product available to the general public is the FAST Update, which provides the reader with an overview of developments on a semi-annual basis. It consists of three to five tension barometers (graphs), displaying cooperative and conflictive developments, which are analyzed by FAST's country/area experts on the basis of specific indicators. Whenever major changes occur in one of the countries or regions under scrutiny, FAST releases Special Updates, which follow the structure of the regular FAST Updates. FAST Updates are available in either hard copy, in electronic form on the respective country page or by subscription.

Which countries do we currently monitor?

Africa: Angola, Burundi, DRC/Kivu region, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Mozambique, Rwanda, Somalia
Asia: Afghanistan, India/Kashmir, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan
Europe: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Georgia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Russian Federation/North Caucasus region, Serbia-Montenegro