



# SOMALIA

## WHAT HAPPENED IN NOVEMBER?

The federal government maintained its **offensive against Al-Shabaab**, but the militants demonstrated resilience in some rural areas and launched attacks in government-held urban centres, including the capital, Mogadishu. The humanitarian situation remained dire as the *deyr* rainy season provided little relief.

## WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Local challenges slowed the government's advance and demonstrated some of the complexities involved in taking back territory from Al-Shabaab control. The group's assault in a fortified area of Mogadishu raised questions regarding **security in the capital**.

## OCTOBER TRENDS

The **government offensive** against Al-Shabaab continued in Hiraa, Middle Shabelle and Galgaduud regions, as the group conducted a **wave of suicide attacks**, including its most deadly in five years. The federal government and member state leaders pledged better coordination.

### 1 ➡ Military offensive slowed down in central regions

In Middle Shabelle, the military captured El Harereri town on 3 November and Cad Caddey village on 17 November. Government forces on 27 November also took control of Ceel Baraf village, despite **clashes between two sub-clans** slowing the offensive.

In Galgaduud, Al-Shabaab mounted **heavy attacks** around Wabxo and Qayib towns, taking back the former after government forces withdrew. In Hiraa, troops focused on shoring up gains south of Beledweyne city and foiled an assault in Burdaar area on 11 November.

### 2 ➡ Al-Shabaab militants hit back in Mogadishu

On 27 November, Al-Shabaab militants **laid siege to the Villa Rays hotel** near the presidential complex in Mogadishu. The attack began with a suicide explosion, followed by five gunmen entering the building. It took responding security forces approximately 24 hours to clear the area.

The incident, which left at least **fifteen people dead**, is the third major Al-Shabaab attack in Mogadishu since the offensive against the group picked up pace in August.

### 3 ➡ Humanitarian outlook remained dire

Addressing parliament on 15 November, President Mohamud said the record drought facing the country had devastated the economy and acknowledged the prospect of looming famine. UN agencies continued to warn that **6.7 million Somalis face severe food insecurity**, with rainfall remaining well below average since the start of the *deyr* rainy season in October.

On 14 November, the UN human rights office said Al-Shabaab has exacerbated humanitarian hardship by deliberately targeting civilians, and destroying wells and other essential infrastructure.

## WHAT TO WATCH

The government is expected to continue operations to uproot Al-Shabaab, notably pushing toward Adan Yabal district in Middle Shabelle and initiating **a new front in Jubaland state**. Mohamud will likely seek to secure **further external support** as he travels to the U.S. in mid-December to attend the U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit.

The *deyr* rainy season is coming to an end, with forecasts predicting little lasting relief to alleviate humanitarian hardship. This means a **fifth consecutive failed rainy season**.



## TRENDS TIMELINE

