Please cite as: EUAA, '2.8.3. Togdheer ' in *COI Report – Somalia: Security Situation* , May 2025.

2.8.3. Togdheer

(a) Background

According to a UNOCHA Administrative Reference Map, Togdheer region shares an international border with Ethiopia. Internally, it borders the regions of Wogoyi Galbeed, Sool, and Sanaag. It consists of four districts: Sheikh, Owdweyne, Burco (or Burao) and Buhodle (or Buuhoodle). The region's capital is Burco (or Burao).1367 Information related to Buhodle district is covered in section 2.7.1 Sool.

As of September 2024, sources variously estimated the population of Togdheer region at 860 684 (IPC),1368 and 363 403 (IOM).1369 Togdheer region is mainly inhabited by Habar Yunis and Habar Je'lo (also known as Habar Jeclo) clans. Along with other minority sub-clans considered to be a part of the Habar Yunis clan, members of the Idagalle are living in the region west of Burco.1370 All three1371 political parties in Somaliland, Kulmiye, Waddani and Kaah, 'are headed by leaders from the Habar Jeclo' clan.1372 In the November 2024 Somaliland presidential elections, elders of the Habar Je'lo clan 'declared their endorsement of Waddani party's opposition candidate, Abdirahman Abdillahi Cirro',1373 claiming that former president Muse Bihi Abdi supported his Habar Awal clan while in power. Prominent Habar Je'lo clan members also said they had been the ones most affected by the fighting in Sool (see section 2.7.1 Sool) that broke out under Bihi's presidency.1374 Abdirahman Mohamed Abdullahi ('Cirro') is a member of the Habar Yunis clan1375 and won the 13 November 2024 elections with 63.92 % of the vote.1376

(b) Actors' presence and conflict dynamics

Al-Shabaab control areas, presence and influence, along with other actors

According to **Map 3** Somalia – Approximate Territorial Control as of 31 March 2025 and **Map 2** Somalia – Approximate Territorial Control as of 1 April 2023, Al-Shabaab did not control any territory in Togdheer region. The entire region, including the cities of Owdweyne and Burco, was reported to be under the control of the 'Somaliland administration (separatist)'.1377 For information regarding control areas in Buhodle district please see section 2.7.1 Sool.

The Gacaan Libaah militia is associated with the Habar Yunis clan (Garhajis, Isaaq), 1378 and 'launched its insurgency' in July 2023. The group was based in based in the Ga'an Libaah mountain range.1379 Another group, the 'so-called Jeegaan alliance' (also known as 'Baha Iidoor' clan alliance or Jeegaanta Somaliland)1380 is a coalition of Habar Je'lo and Habar Awal1381 (including members of the Isse Muse sub-clan of the Habar Awal) clans.1382 As of early September 2023, 'Go'da-Weyn, Libi Sagaalo, Haji Salah (Xaaji Saalax), Duruqsi, Hahi (Xaaxi), Biyo Fadhiisinka, Raydab Khaatumo, Go'da Yar, Warabeye (Waraabeeye), Dabagorayaale, Salahley (Sallaxley), Qalo'ato (Qaloocato), and other small settlements' were reportedly controlled by the Gacaan Libaah.1383 In September 2023, Somaliland President Muse Bihi agreed to a settlement in a long-running election-related dispute and offered to pardon the Gacaan Libaah militia in exchange for disbanding. The group accepted the offer and demobilised.1384 However, in June 2024, Bihi declared that members of the Gacaan Libaah movement who rebelled against the government in August 2023 would be placed on trial, contradicting the agreement.1385

Conflict dynamics

In May 2023, the Somaliland Army responded to inter-clan clashes that erupted in villages near Burco, involving two Isaaq sub-clans,1386 resulting in two deaths.1387 In July 2023, Somaliland forces clashed with the newly created Gacaan Libaah militia1388 in Togdheer's Gacaan Libaah mountains.1389

In August 2023, Somaliland security forces were ambushed in Godayar district, Togdheer region, by a 'newly-formed militia composed of members of Haber Yonis clan', resulting in the killing of nine Somaliland security force members1390 and the wounding of seventeen others.1391 Please also see section 2.8.2 Wogoyi Galbeed as this incident may have been mistakenly attributed to Togdheer region.

Between late September and early October 2023 clan tensions in Togdheer's capital, Burco, and Sanaag's capital, Erigabo, were reported, leading to minor skirmishes.1392 For example, on 19 September 2023, Habar Yunis clan members clashed with members of the Isse Muse clan, a sub-clan of Habar Awal, the clan former Somaliland President Muse Bihi belongs to.1393

No more recent information on conflict dynamics in Togdheer could be found.

☐ (c) Recent security trends

Security incidents, estimated civilian fatalities and casualties

Between 1 April 2023 and 21 March 2025, ACLED reported 21 security incidents in Togdheer region (without Buhodle district), including battles and violence against civilians, causing 17 fatalities. **Figure 25** below shows their evolution per type across the reference period.1394 At district level, Burco recorded the most security incidents (13 incidents), followed by Owdweyne district (8 incidents).1395

1396_ACLED_somalia_security_2025

Figure 25. Evolution of ACLED security events coded ‘battles’, ‘explosions/remote violence’ and ‘violence against civilians’ between 1 April 2023 and 21 March 2025 in Togdheer.1396

Conflict-related displacement

Between 1 April 2023 and 16 March 2025, 7 712 individuals were newly displaced from Togdheer (without Buhodle district) due to conflict or insecurity, according to the UNHCR PRMN. Of this group, 7 518 individuals were displaced within the same administrative region (without Buhodle), and of these 7 008 individuals were displaced within Burco. 194 individuals were displaced to other regions, including Sanaag and Wogoyi Galbeed. At district level, Burco recorded the highest number of individuals leaving for other regions (180). All 2 160 individuals arriving from other regions (including Buhodle) arrived in Burco district. 919 arrived from Caynabo district, with 840 of these arriving in September 2023.1397 For information on conflict-related displacement in Togdheer region prior to April 2023, please see section 2.8.3 of the EUAA COI Report Somalia: Security Situation (February 2023).

Other impacts on civilian life

UNOCHA recorded six humanitarian access incidents in Togdheer region (including Buhodle district) in the period from April to December 2023,1398 and another six in 2024.1399 In the period between October and December 2024, for example, the region ‘experienced significant food aid looting, leading to the suspension of a UN-led operation in SSC-Khaatumo administered areas.’1400

- 1367

  UNOCHA, Somalia Administrative Reference Map, as of 20 July 2023, url

- 1368

IPC, Somalia Acute food insecurity and acute malnutrition analysis July – December 2024, 23 September 2024, url, p. 3

- 1369

  IOM, DTM Somalia – Baseline Assessment Dataset – Round 3 (February 2024 – September 2024), 3 December 2024, url. IOM notes that 'Regarding the regions in Somaliland state, DTM teams reached a low coverage of the settlements to be assessed. Therefore, the population figures displayed in this report are underestimated and should be interpreted with caution'.

- 1370

  EASO, Somalia – Security Situation, September 2021, url, p. 150

- 1371

  Somaliland National Electoral Commission, 5. Political Party Elections, n.d., url

- 1372

  International Crisis Group, Somaliland's Peaceful Handover Withstands Neighbourhood Strains, 11 December 2024, url

- 1373

  Kaab TV, Habar Jeclo Clan Elders Endorse Waddani Candidate Ahead of Somaliland Election, 10 October 2024, url

- 1374

  International Crisis Group, Somaliland's Peaceful Handover Withstands Neighbourhood Strains, 11 December 2024, url

- 1375

  Global Studies, Somaliland's presidential elections, between quest for international legitimacy and internal stability, 14 November 2024, url

- 1376

  Agenzia Fides, AFRICA/SOMALIA - Somaliland: The Opposition Wins the Presidential Elections amid Changes and Regional Challenges, 20 November 2024, url

- 1377

  PolGeoNow, Somalia Approximate Territorial Control, as of 31 March 2025, n.a.; PolGeoNow, Somalia Approximate Territorial Control, as of 1 April 2023, n.a.

- 1378

Somali Digest (The), Ethnic clashes in Somaliland escalate, threaten civil war, 19 September 2023, url

- 1379

  Somali Digest (The), 100 Ga’an Libaah recruits attempt defection amid amnesty offer, 19 September 2023, url

- 1380

  Daljir, Latest Garxajis clan militia defeat of Somaliland army puts Muse Bihi between a rock and hard place, 11 August 2023, url

- 1381

  Former Somaliland President Muse Bihi is a member of the Habar Awal clan. Somali Digest (The), Ethnic clashes in Somaliland escalate, threaten civil war, 19 September 2023, url

- 1382

  Somali Digest (The), Ethnic clashes in Somaliland escalate, threaten civil war, 19 September 2023, url

- 1383

  Somali Digest (The), Ga’an Libaah Movement increases territorial gains, 8 September 2023, url

- 1384

  International Crisis Group, CrisisWatch – Somaliland: April 2023 – March 2025, n.d., url

- 1385

  International Crisis Group, CrisisWatch – Somaliland: April 2023 – March 2025, n.d., url

- 1386

  Halqabsi, Samakaab Clashes Between Somaliland and SSC Result in High Casualties, 16 May 2023, url

- 1387

  International Crisis Group, CrisisWatch – Somaliland: April 2023 – March 2025, n.d., url

- 1388

  Somali Digest (The), New insurgency inside Somaliland? Unidentified militia clashed with Somaliland forces in Golis Mountains, 30 July 2023, url

- 1389

International Crisis Group, CrisisWatch – Somaliland: April 2023 – March 2025, n.d., url

- 1390

  Radio Dalsan, 9 killed in deadly attack by Gaal-Libah rebels in Somaliland's Sahil Region, 12 August 2023, url; SMN, Nine Somaliland police officers killed in rebel ambush attack, 12 August 2023, url

- 1391

  International Crisis Group, CrisisWatch – Somaliland: April 2023 – March 2025, n.d., url

- 1392

  International Crisis Group, CrisisWatch – Somaliland: April 2023 – March 2025, n.d., url

- 1393

  Somali Digest (The), Ethnic clashes in Somaliland escalate, threaten civil war, 19 September 2023, url

- 1394

  EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Somalia, data covering 1 April 2023 to 21 March 2025, as of 26 March 2025, url

- 1395

  EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Somalia, data covering 1 April 2023 to 21 March 2025, as of 26 March 2025, url

- 1396

  EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Somalia, data covering 1 April 2023 to 21 March 2025, as of 26 March 2025, url. Please note that data covering the entire month of March 2025 was not yet available during the drafting of this report.

- 1397

  UNHCR, PRMN Datafile – Somalia, as of 21 March 2025, url

- 1398

  UNOCHA, Somalia: Humanitarian Access Snapshot: October – December 2023, 1 January 2024, url, p. 1; UNOCHA, Somalia: Humanitarian Access Snapshot: July to September 2023, 2 November 2023, url, p. 1; UNOCHA, Somalia: Humanitarian Access Snapshot: April – June 2023, 25 July 2023, url, p. 1

- 1399

UNOCHA, Somalia: Humanitarian Access Snapshot: January – December 2024, 22 January 2025, url, p. 2

- 1400

  UNOCHA, Somalia: Humanitarian Access Snapshot: 1 October to 31 December 2024, 2 January 2025, url, p. 2

© European Union Agency for Asylum 2026 | Email: info@euaa.europa.eu