

FAST Update

Somalia

Quarterly Risk Assessment
October to December 2004

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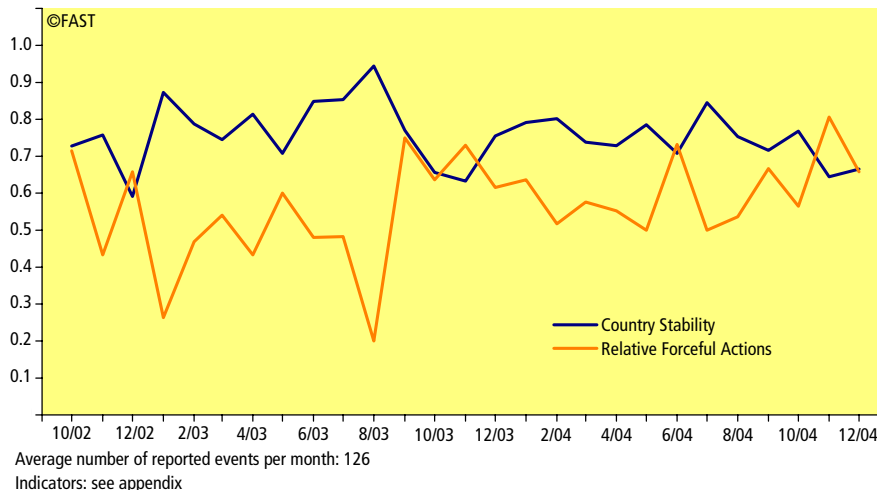
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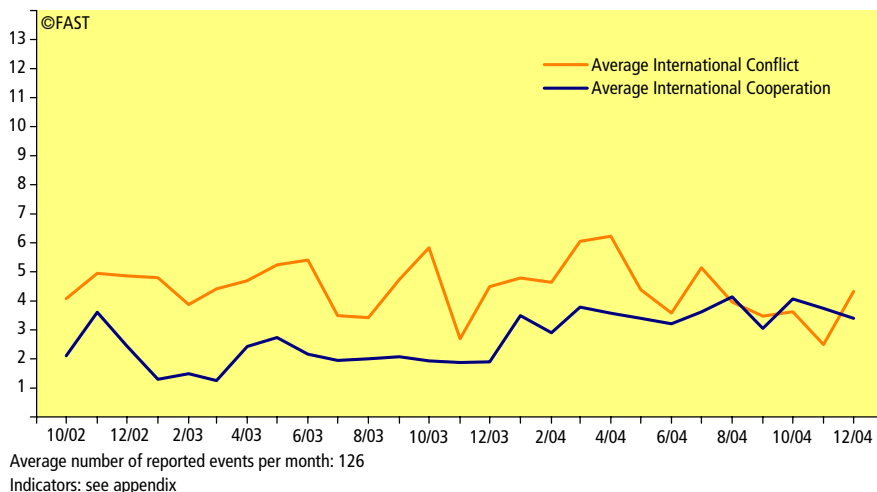
Country Stability and Relative Forceful Actions



Risk Assessment:

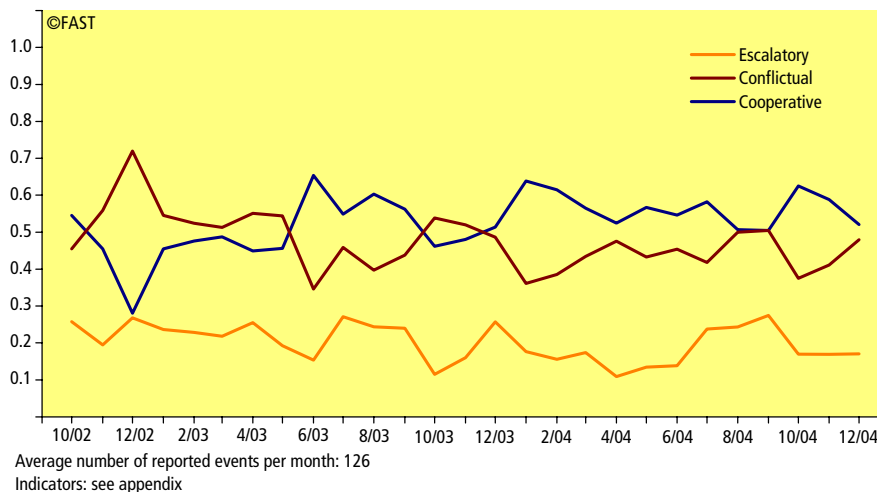
- The course of the graphs since Abdullahi Yussuf's election for President of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) by the Transitional Parliament (TFP) on October 10, 2004 illustrates that the creation of a new government was not accompanied by vastly increased stability on the ground. In fact, it decreased sharply before the recent slight increase. Relative Forceful Actions increased accordingly and the trend only reversed lately. In short, the appointment of a prime minister and a cabinet marked progress in the political process and in setting up political institutions, but violence as a means of conflict remained as important or even increased (see p.5 for details).
- The election of a personality like Puntland-leader Abdullahi Yussuf for President hardly represents a "new beginning" for Somalia. Rather, it is considered by many as the victory of one faction leader over the others, combined with enormous misgivings over the strong Ethiopian support he enjoyed. The failure of a third of the TFP, including some key warlords, to attend the inauguration of the President provides a first indication of the coming division between "winners" and "losers". Given his lack of acceptance outside his own clan, his authoritarian leadership style, his track record of obtaining and maintaining power by military force, and the flaws in his election, the prospects of real, sustainable progress in Somalia's stability remain undetermined, if not grim.
- Prime Minister Ali M. Geedi, a political new-comer appointed by Abdullahi Yussuf, announced his cabinet early December. The list is seen to be reflective of the president's priorities and thus a first test of his approach. While it has members from most of Somalia's political and military groups, it was criticized as unbalanced. Many of President Yussuf's allies of the SRRC were given the most powerful posts, and members of his Darod clan received many key ministries, especially those likely to handle external resources. The cabinet was widely perceived as oversized, lacking competence as well as a clear definition of responsibilities. It was dismissed when the TFP sacked Geedi on December 11, and international observers have called on the president to form a broad-based government of national unity following Geedi's recent re-appointment by the TFP.
- In the South, outright opposition to the Ethiopian-backed president came from Al-Ittihad, other Islamist groups, and some of the Sharia courts, whose militias control a good share of Mogadishu. While political Islamists find fairly limited resonance among the Somali people, they are likely to try to benefit from the dissent and opposition that will inevitably arise if and when the government establishes itself inside Somalia, and they might act as dangerous spoilers. The attempted assassination of President Yussuf by unknown gunmen in Nairobi in mid-November is just one example of the form that such efforts can take.
- The creation of the TFG resulted in a fierce escalation of the linked conflicts over the political affiliation of Sool and Sanaag Region (in the North) and over the status of the unrecognized Republic of Somaliland (see Cooperative, Conflictual, and Escalatory Actions for details).
- Puntland is going through a serious power struggle following Abdullahi Yussuf's vacation of the regional presidency. His vice-president, who took over for the interim, is unlikely to emerge from a popular vote, should such be held. An on-going elders' conference in Garowe is to decide on the mechanism to replace him. Abdullahi Yussuf, who appears determined to maintain his influence in Puntland, is promoting a candidate from his own clan against several contestants. He is unlikely to tolerate any other president for the region.
- Somalia is not at the end of its search for peace, reconciliation, and a stable political system, it is merely beginning the journey on the basis of a narrow, underdeveloped, fragile and in many ways formal compromise achieved in the course of the Somali National Reconciliation Conference (SNRC). Very much depends on Abdullahi Yussuf's ability and willingness to govern in the interest of the nation, to earn legitimacy on the ground through his actual performance, and to continue consensus building and reconciliation beyond his own clientele and the TFG. Establishment of the TFG inside Somalia, for which IGAD has set 31 January as the deadline, and measurably improved security, particularly in Mogadishu, will be the next key indicators of success or failure.

IDEA Average International Conflict and Cooperation

**Risk Assessment:**

- Overall, the creation of the TFG was welcome by the UN, the AU and IGAD, as well as neighboring states, the US and the EU. Thus the basis of relations between Somalia and the world seems to have improved considerably. Yet the formation of a new government involves both opportunities and challenges, as the initial decrease and recent increase in conflict illustrates. It does not automatically translate into better cooperation.
- The international community has failed to develop a clear and agreed approach to Somaliland's status (see p.5).
- Within IGAD, the alliance of interests that led to Yussuf's election seems to hold, and a "Monitoring and Follow-Up Team" was formed recently. Kenya, Ethiopia and Uganda appear very supportive, if not over-enthusiastic, while Djibouti signaled a less warm welcome. Yet the serious burdens of the TFG's continued presence in Nairobi leads to friction and raises concern as to whether the TFG can make a difference on the ground.
- Neither is Abdullahi Yussuf interested to be portrayed as too much of an Ethiopian ally, nor is the Ethiopian government keen to take on too much responsibility, by which it would risk blame or accountability for inevitable future setbacks in the Somali peace process. Both sides seek to maintain their special relationship yet deny it in public. Unless the TFG succeeds in generating its own revenue in the future, Abdullahi Yussuf can be assumed to be rather more dependent on external support from within the region than he used to be as the Puntland leader.
- The top challenge for the international community is to relate to the TFG and support its establishment without repeating mistakes of the past. This concerns financial and material assistance as much as the accordance of international recognition. In contrast to the TNG of 2000, there does not (yet) seem to be a rush to action on either front. UN Security Council and US statements in November highlighted concern over how the TFG can actually be made to improve the situation on the ground, including its relocation from Nairobi, and called for a strategy and a timetable outlining its functional priorities. Contrary to the IGAD states, Rwanda and Burundi, the UN has not yet recognized the TFG. There might be greater willingness to focus on measurable outcomes this time. In doing so, it will be crucial to bear in mind that Yussuf's election involved massive gerrymandering and that future external legitimization must be accorded in step with authentic internal acceptance if it is to promote stability.
- The new president's early demand for 20,000 African Union (AU) forces with a robust disarmament mandate was rejected in- and outside Somalia. Given that a) the AU's nascent peacekeeping capabilities are stretched to the limit, b) no government is keen to commit forces to Somalia since the UNOSOM II debacle, and c) no effective cease-fire and monitoring mechanism is in place, the eventual size and mandate of international forces is likely to be very limited. The UN Secretary-General suggested that the first security steps be made by the Somalis themselves, and the Security Council passed the ball on to the AU (and IGAD). Contrary to Yussuf's, Kenya's, Ethiopia's and Uganda's wishes, the AU focuses on planning a lean observer force, perhaps complemented by a protection unit for the TFG leadership. Training Somali security forces might become another important task later on. Uganda has pledged to contribute a battalion. Ethiopia offered forces if requested by the AU, but these would meet enormous opposition within Somalia. The International Crisis Group demanded that special efforts be made to secure Somali acceptance of foreign troops, inter alia by conditioning them to parliamentary approval.
- While awareness of the dangers embedded in assistance in the resource-scarce environment of Somalia seems to have increased, consensus building among the donors and the establishment of an effective coordination mechanism remain key to a successful international response. The UN were accorded the "lead facilitating role" in the reconstruction process. Differences between the more enthusiastic supporters of the TFG (Italy) and more cautious donors (Scandinavian states, UK) marked a Stockholm donor meeting late October. Agreement was reached on a Declaration of Principles and a Joint Coordination and Monitoring Committee, yet it remains to be seen whether these prove meaningful when assistance sets in on a larger scale (likely after the TFG moves into Somalia) and donor agencies are under pressure to disburse funds. In the longer run, aid agencies are likely to face new difficulties in seeking approval from the TFG and/or local/regional authorities respectively.

Cooperative, Conflictual and Escalatory Actions

**Risk Assessment:**

- Conflictual and escalatory actions remained dominant throughout Somalia. However, both cases of major fighting occurred somewhat unexpectedly. At least in the case of Sool/Sanaag, it was not part of the usual inter-factional fighting known from the South of Somalia.
- Mogadishu remained a centre of violence, with residents reporting that warlords vied for position before the arrival of the TFG. Several clashes occurred in Shibis district, killing at least eight people. In Mid-December, Mohamed Abdi Bebe's faction reportedly fired artillery shells at the seaport of Mogadishu, trying to scare away foreign vessels preparing to dock. He cited continuing disagreement over how revenue from the port should be shared, giving the TFG a first impression of the challenges it faces in asserting control over the infrastructure.
- By early December, serious fighting began between the Saad and Suleiman subclans of the Habr Gidir in Gelinsor. It spread across Galgudud and Mudug regions (central Somalia) over the following weeks. More than a hundred people are believed to have died in the fighting, which involved heavy weaponry (incl. tanks) and extended even to Hobyo at the coast. Little is known about the triggers and the background of the conflict, but it is said to involve a land dispute.
- It was reported that more than 100 people, including a high number of non-combatants, were killed in fighting between forces loyal to Somaliland and Puntland at the end of October. Information about casualty figures and the course of the events, which occurred around the village of Adi-Addeye near Las Anod (regional capital of Sool), differs widely.
- Sool and Sanaag region are the focal point of several overlapping conflicts. They are primarily inhabited by Dhulbahante and Warsengeli, which form part of the Harti clan family that occupies Puntland, yet at the same time, both regions belong to the colonial territory of the former British Somaliland. So beyond the immediate control over the area, their status has wider repercussions for Somalia's and Somaliland's claims to territorial sovereignty. The TFG lays principle claim to the entire former Somalia, and is therefore seen to be interested in Puntland's military control over Las Anod, which was established under Yussuf's rule in 2003. Somaliland perceives the latter as a violation of its territorial integrity and as a threat to its chances of recognition.
- Yet the recent fierce escalation was likely unintended by the political leaderships, none of which commands the forces to sustain a military campaign which could lead to victory. Furthermore, neither Somaliland nor the TFG want an image as war-mongers while they are eagerly seeking international recognition. Only President Yussuf's successor in Puntland, who is personally from Las Anod, might have an interest in exploiting the issue in his election bid over the coming months. While by-and-large the situation seems to have calmed down for the time being, it resulted in an even more determined military mobilization. Given the lack of safeguards, fighting will sooner or later resume and could rapidly lead to further violence on a wider scale. (Another local clash, killing two, was reported in mid-November). Furthermore, the potentially destabilizing repercussions of the conflict for the internal politics of Somaliland and Puntland should not be overlooked.
- Unconfirmed reports of a potential influx of other (non-Harti) Darod fighters as well as Yemeni military supplies to Puntland should raise concern among the international community, which has so far failed to develop a common position to address the conflict. The issue has been neglected entirely. Foreign interpretations of the TFG range from radically unitary views to the notion that the SNRC was confined to the peace process in the South. Such discrepancies particularly exist within the EU. Achievements in North and South can only be secured by developing options for a political solution and supporting dialogue between Somaliland and the TFG/Puntland.
- Prospects with regard to Cooperative, Conflictual and Escalatory Actions are not much better than they were before the TFG, and have vastly deteriorated with regard to Sool and Sanaag. The cessation of hostilities already declared at the SRNC in October 2002 continues to be meaningless, and has no monitoring or enforcement mechanism. Relocation of the TFG into Somalia is likely to trigger new violence as control over the seat of the government offers access to new resources. Chances of demobilization are grim as the TFG cannot offer incentives for the factions to give up their military capabilities. If demobilization was to set in, control over heavy weapons – which constitute the backbone of any offensive warfare in Somalia – should be made the top priority.

Appendix : Description of indicators used | Page 6

Variable Name	Description / Definition
All Events	IDEA categories: a count of all coded events with WEIS cue categories ranging from 1 to 22 (all WEIS cue categories) plus an additional 11 IDEA event cue categories (Event type: 'other').
All Actions	WEIS categories: a count of all coded events with cue categories ranging from 1 to 22 (all WEIS cue categories).
Forceful Actions	The indicator Forceful Actions depicts all reported uses of physical force by any actor. This includes non-injury destructive acts, non-military injury-destruction, and military engagement.
Relative Forceful Actions	Proportion of Forceful Action events compared to All Direct Actions. The indicator Forceful Actions depicts all reported uses of physical force by any actor. This includes non-injury destructive acts, non-military injury-destruction, and military engagement.
Conflict Carrying Capacity	The Conflict Carrying Capacity (or CCC) is a composed index that depicts the overall stability of the country or region of interest. The CCC is operationalized in terms of the multiplicative interaction among three Proportional measures: (1) civil contentiousness or the Proportion of civil actions that are reported as contentious or "direct" and thus challenge (at least implicitly) the state's monopoly on conflict regulation; (2) state repression or the Proportion of state actions that are reported as extra-institutional or "direct" both in response to direct challenges from the civil sector and those initiated by the state to repress and control opposition; and (3) violent contention or the Proportion of actions entailing physical damage to persons or property. the index is scaled between 0 and 1, where 1 means high and 0 low stability.
Country Stability	The country stability index is another version of the CCC measure with minor changes in order to improve the responsiveness of the index to events that influence the stability of a country.
Cooperative	Proportion of all actions belonging to all cooperative categories yield, comment consult, approve, promise, grant, reward, agree, request, and propose to all actions (all Events belonging to the 22 WEIS cue categories).
Conflictual	Proportion of all actions belonging to all conflictive categories reject, accuse, protest, deny, demand, warn, threaten, demonstrate, reduce relationships, expel, seize, and force to all actions (all Events belonging to the 22 WEIS cue categories).
Escalatory	Proportion of all actions belonging to the conflictive categories reject, accuse, protest, deny, demand, warn, and threaten to all actions (all Events belonging to the 22 WEIS cue categories).
IDEA Scale	
IDEA	IDEA indicators are used to display Proportions of conflict and cooperation events in time. Each event category is assigned a IDEA rating (value), ranging from -7 (extreme conflict) to 13 (extreme cooperation). Zero value events are excluded from these calculations.
IDEA Average	The Average indicator is a cumulative average of all events that are classified with a positive or negative value by IDEA's conflict/cooperation scale. The indicator displays the mean of the conflict/cooperation event values, excluding all zero value events.
IDEA Average International Conflict	The Average International Conflict indicator displays the cumulative average of the negative (IDEA) values of all conflictive interstate or international events in a specific time period (means the sum of the negative IDEA values divided by the total number of conflictive international events). For interpretation purposes we take the absolute values (means positive values).
IDEA Average International Cooperation	The Average International Cooperation indicator displays the cumulative average of the positive (IDEA) values of all cooperative interstate or international events in a specific time period (means the sum of the positive IDEA values divided by the total number of cooperative international events).

Who are we?

FAST (German acronym for “Early Analysis of Tensions and Fact-finding”) is the early warning project of swisspeace, based in Berne, Switzerland. In 1998 the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) assigned swisspeace to set up a political early warning system for early identification of impending armed conflict and political crisis situations.

What do we want?

FAST aims to enhance political decision makers’ ability to identify critical developments in a timely manner, so that coherent political strategies can be formulated either to prevent or limit destructive effects of violent conflict or to identify opportunities for peacebuilding.

How do we work?

FAST uses both quantitative and qualitative methods for its analysis. The centerpiece in the quantitative analysis is based on event data analysis and the respective tools developed in the framework of the Program on Nonviolent Sanctions and Cultural Survival (PONSACS) at Harvard University. The logic of event data analysis is fairly simple: all events considered relevant to conflict escalation and de-escalation are assigned a certain numeric value according to a distinct conflict scale. These values can then be added up for specific time intervals and graphically displayed in a curve over time. The quality and quantity of data input is crucial for the success of such a method. In order to gather the quality and quantity of data required to suit early warning purposes, FAST sets up its own local information networks (LINS) and thus overcomes shortcomings of existing information sources (e.g., international news wires). A unique set of data is collected for each country completely independently from Western news-media coverage. For qualitative data analysis, FAST contracts internationally renowned country experts.

What are our products?

FAST products are risk assessments tailored to individual customers’ needs. The standard product (“FAST Update”) consists of three to five charts depicting the latest conflict related trends and a concise expert interpretation. As the time-series of collected data grow, FAST analysts will apply statistical methods to go beyond retrospective description and forecast future developments. FAST Updates are available in either hard copy or electronic form, covering time intervals as chosen by the customer.

Which countries do we monitor?

Africa: Angola, Burundi, DRC/Kivu region, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Mozambique, Rwanda, Somalia

Asia: Afghanistan, India/Kashmir, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal, North Caucasus region, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan

Europe: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro

Middle East: Palestine