

SUMMARY

A total of 242 civilian casualties were recorded this month, with 74 killed and 168 injured. The large number of civilian casualties was as a result of a single incident caused by an Al Shabaab attack in the vicinity of Maka Almurkama Hotel. AMISOM is responsible for five civilian casualties: four civilians were killed in South West State (SWS) (including two children and a woman) and one in Jubaland. An airstrike conducted by an unidentified aircraft reportedly injured a civilian in Lower Juba. The regional office of Wadajir political party in Garowe was closed by the Nugal Governor because Puntland has yet to accept the establishment of political party offices. One media outlet was suspended in Hargeisa and three journalists were arrested in Somaliland, Puntland and Jubaland respectively, with two of them being released shortly after. Two journalists were reportedly harassed, handcuffed and beaten by the Somalia National Army (SNA) in Mogadishu and the Puntland authorities banned a forum organized by a nongovernmental organization (NGO) in Garowe, reportedly for lacking prior permission from the Puntland Government.

KEY FIGURES

## CIVILIAN CASUALTIES AND OTHER PROTECTION CONCERNS<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Casualty figures are subject to change due to late reporting and additional information received by HRPg after the publication of the brief.

HIGHLIGHTS

**AMISOM: 5 civilian casualties**

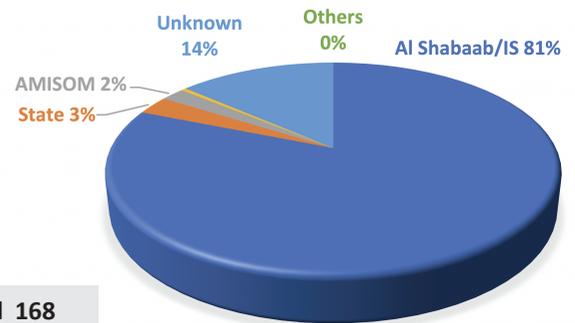
**Abductions: 20% decrease from the 2018 monthly average**

**State Actors: 50% decrease compared January**

**Arbitrary arrests and/or prolonged detention: 42 incidents, compared to 8 in January**

**AS:** February saw a dramatic spike in civilian casualties with **74 killed** and **168 injured**, which is the highest number of civilian casualties in a month since October 2017. This increase in the number of civilian casualties was as a result of a coordinated attack carried out in the vicinity of Maka Almurkama Hotel on 28 February in Mogadishu where 31 civilians were killed and 112 were injured.

PERCENTAGE OF CIVILIAN CASUALTIES BY MAIN PERPETRATOR - FEBRUARY 2019



CONCERNS

### DEATH PENALTY



**Five death sentences** were pronounced:

- **four men** aged between 18 and 22 were sentenced to death by the Bossaso District Court in Puntland.
- **one SNA soldier** was sentenced to death by the First Instance Military Court in Middle Shabelle.

### FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION



- One media outlet was suspended in Hargeisa for one year.
- Three journalists were arrested in Somaliland, Puntland and Jubaland respectively, with two of them being released shortly after.
- Two journalists were reportedly harassed, handcuffed and beaten by the Somalia National Army (SNA) in Mogadishu.
- The Puntland authorities banned a forum on the relations between Kenya and Somalia organized by a non-governmental organization (NGO) in Garowe, reportedly for lacking prior permission from the Puntland Government.
- The Hargeisa Regional Court ordered the release of a young poet detained in January after composing poems that criticized police behavior and the leadership of the Somaliland President.

## STRENGTHENING NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

**HUMAN RIGHTS DUE DILIGENCE POLICY (HRDDP)**

The UN continued to engage with AMISOM through joint technical fora on the measures to prevent and respond to civilian casualties caused by airstrikes. In February, AMISOM formally communicated to the UN the measures they have taken to prevent and respond to civilian casualties arising from its air operations in line with the HRDDP requirements. AMISOM's communication updates on the implementation of HRDDP mitigation measures including application of its Rules of Engagement to air operations, training on human rights and international humanitarian law and establishment of procedures for incident reporting in case of civilian casualties. The UN and AMISOM have agreed to joint action to strengthen compliance including in the support to Somali security forces.

**CHILD PROTECTION**

In February, the Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting (CTFMR) verified 236 grave violations affecting 229 children (195 boys and 34 girls). The children were victims of recruitment and use (93), abduction (73), killing and maiming (41) and rape and other sexual violence (22). In addition, six schools and one hospital were subjected to attacks. The violations were attributed to AS (65 per cent), Somali Police and unknown armed elements each (9 per cent), while the remaining violations were committed by SNA, AMISOM, regional forces and clan militias. During the same period, the CTFMR documented 16 incidents of detention affecting 32 boys by Somali Police (27), SNA (3) and Jubaland forces (2).

**ELECTORAL PROCESS**

On 18 February, the Governor of Nugaal region ordered the closure of the Wadajir National Political Party office in Garowe, Nugaal region. According to the Governor, the party has not obtained permission to operate in Puntland, as Puntland has not opened the registration for local political parties, nor is it ready to accommodate national political parties. Wadajir's representatives in Garowe stated that they had the Puntland President's verbal permission to operate throughout the region.

**CONSULTATIONS**

In Baidoa, HRPg had a meeting with the Chairperson of People with Disabilities an NGO that work covers the whole of SWS. The meeting focused on the general situation of the people with disabilities in SWS.

A second consultation workshop on the draft Media Bill for Jubaland was concluded in Kismayo; the consultation brought together 40 representatives (including seven female) from all stakeholders including journalists, civil society organizations, government officials from relevant ministries as well as parliamentary committees. The Ministry of Information, Communications and Technology (MoICT) agreed to consolidate and integrate stakeholders' inputs to the Bill.

## STRENGTHENING NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS



### HUMAN RIGHTS TRAINING

HRPG conducted two sessions on human rights standards applicable to people deprived of their liberty in a training organized by UNODC to 20 (18 men and 2 women) Puntland Custodial Corps officers in Garowe, Nugaal region.

Child Protection, jointly with AMISOM, conducted training on child protection for 30 staff (11 women and 19 men) of various government line ministries.

In Baidoa, HRPG conducted two trainings for SNA on human rights, one training of trainers for 10 SNA officers and another an introduction to human rights for 40 SNA officers, jointly with United Kingdom Somalia National Army Support Team. HRPG presented in a training on conflict related sexual violence organized by AMISOM for 30 participants (including 10 women) representing SNA, Police and Ministers.

## IN FOCUS

The International Day Against the Use of Child Soldiers is celebrated on 12 February, the date when the Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict entered into force. This date has become an annual commemoration to raise awareness on the growing threats against children, and particularly the recruitment and use of children in armed conflict.

On 12 February, UNSOM HRPG together with AMISOM and Child Protection Unit from the Ministry of Defense participated in a televised talk show, focusing on child protection concerns in Somalia and the efforts to address them. The participants discussed how UNSOM together with government and parties to the conflict can prevent child recruitment and how to develop a comprehensive strategy for addressing the recruitment of child soldiers.

