

**OFFICIAL NAME:** Somalia

**CAPITAL:** Mogadishu

**SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT:** Republic with Interim UN Envoy

**AREA:** 637,140 Sq Km (246,000 Sq Mi)

**ESTIMATED 2000 POPULATION:** 9,656,500

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**LOCATION & GEOGRAPHY:** Somalia is located on the Horn of Africa in East Africa. It is bound by Djibouti to the northwest, Ethiopia to the west, Kenya to the southwest, the Indian Ocean to the east and the Gulf of Aden to the north. The country is divided into four geographical regions. (1.) The northern coastal plain or Guban, which has a semiarid terrain. (2.) The northern highlands which are rugged mountain ranges that rise from the Guban region and contain the country's highest point Surud Ad. (3.) The Oga region which descends to the south from the highlands and consists of shallow plateau valleys, wadis and broken mountains. This region continues to the Mudug Plain in central Somalia. (4.) The Somali Plateau which is mostly agricultural or pastoral land and contains lesser plateaux such as the Haud. The country's only permanent rivers are the Juba and Shebeli. Major Cities (pop. est.); Mogadishu 570,000, Hargeysa 90,000, Kismaayo 86,000, Berbera 83,000 (1984). Land Use; forested 26%, pastures 68%, agricultural-cultivated 2%, other 4% (1993).

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**CLIMATE:** Somalia has an arid and tropical climate influenced by the NE and SW Monsoons, and Tangambilis which are transitional periods. There are two wet seasons from March to May and October to November, alternating with two dry seasons, one from December to March that is influenced by hot dry and dust laden winds and the other from June to August which is the hottest season. Most of the country has an average annual precipitation of less than 500 mm (20 inches) with severe droughts quite common. Average temperature ranges in Mogadishu are from 23 degrees Celsius (73 degrees Fahrenheit) to 33 degrees Celsius (90 degrees Fahrenheit) all year.

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**PEOPLE:** The population of Somalia is divided into two main ethnic groups. (1.) Hamitic stock and associated clans who constitute 85% of the population and (2.) the Bantu who account for 14%. Other minorities include Arabs, Europeans, Indians and Pakistanis.

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**DEMOGRAPHIC/VITAL STATISTICS:** Density; 12 persons per sq km (31 persons per sq mi) (1991). Urban-Rural; 36.4% urban, 63.6% rural (1990). Sex Distribution; 47.7% male, 52.3% female (1990). Life Expectancy at Birth; 43.4 years male, 46.6 years female (1990). Age Breakdown; 47% under 15, 23% 15 to 29, 16% 30 to 44, 9% 45 to 59, 4% 60 to 74, 1% 75 and over (1990). Birth Rate; 50.1 per 1,000 (1990). Death Rate; 20.2 per 1,000 (1990). Increase Rate; 29.9 per 1,000 (1990). Infant Mortality Rate; 122.0 per 1,000 live births (1990).

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**RELIGIONS:** The official religion is Islam with 99.8% of the population Sunni Muslims.

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**LANGUAGES:** The official language is Somali which has various dialects that follow clan divisions. Arabic is also spoken as a minority language.

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**EDUCATION:** Aged 25 or over and having attained: N/A. Literacy; literate population aged 15 or over 24.1% (1990).

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**MODERN HISTORY - WWII TO 1993:** In 1950 the UN ruled that the southern Italian Somaliland should be administered by Italy under a UN trusteeship for 10 years after which it would be granted independence. In Feb. 1960 the Somali National League (SNL) won elections in northern British Somaliland and announced their plans to reunite Somali at independence. On July 1, 1960 Britain and Italy granted their Somali territories independence and the two territories united to form the Independent State of Somalia. In 1964 Somalia and Ethiopia fought over the Ogaden region of Ethiopia. In early Oct. 1969 Pres. Shermakhe was assassinated and on Oct. 21, 1969 Maj.Gen. Muhammad Siyad Barre seized control of the government. Maj.Gen. Barre established a Revolutionary Council and developed close relations with the Soviet Union which helped build up Somalia's armed forces. During the mid 1970's severe droughts occurred causing widespread famine. In 1977 fierce fighting broke out between Somalia and Ethiopia as Somali forces took over the Ogaden region. During the conflict, Cuban troops assisted the Ethiopian forces to repel the Somali forces in Nov. 1978. In Mar. 1978 Maj.-Gen. Barre abandoned his communist allies and aligned himself with the US, which sold military equipment to his government to combat the growing insurgence of rebels such as the Somalia Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF) formed in 1979 as well as the separatist Issaq clans' Somali National Movement (SNM) which was formed in 1981. During the 1980's the civil war worsened with the establishment of the Somali Patriotic Movement (SPM), a rebel group of the Ogadeni clan. In Apr. 1988 Ethiopia and Somalia signed an agreement to put an end to their fighting over the Ogaden region while the civil war continued to claim tens of thousands of lives. In Aug. 1990 the SPM and SNM formed an alliance with another clan rebel group the United Somali Congress (USC) and on Jan. 26, 1991 the alliance had forced Barre into exile in Kenya. The USC appointed Ali Mahdi Muhammad as President of an interim government. Pres. Mahdi promised a referendum to determine a future government, however, on May 18, 1991 the SNM declared an independent "Somaliland Republic" with Adb ar-Rahman Ahmad Ali Tur as President. In July 1991 Djibouti's Pres. Hassan Gouled Aptidon organized a conference in which all factions but the SNM and Barrah's new Somali National Front (SNF) attended while the USC chairman Gen. Muhammad Farah Aydid boycotted it. The conference resolved a cease-fire amongst the groups and to recognize the interim government pending elections while they also declared an "all-out-war" on Barrah's SNF. In Sept. 1991 fighting erupted in

the capital between supporters of Pres. Mahdi and Gen. Aydid. In Oct. 1991 the USC appointed a new Cabinet that Gen. Aydid declared "null and void" and on Nov. 17, 1991 violence again flared. On Dec. 30 1991 another cease-fire was declared. Also in 1991 drought and widespread famine continued to claim thousands of lives a month while by the years end fighting in Mogadishu had killed an estimated 4,000 people and destroyed the city. In 1992 Somalia had been effectively divided amongst the warring clans with the northwest controlled by the Issaq clan-based SNM, the northeast by the Majerteen clan-based SSDF while in Mogadishu and the south the USC had split into two with the Abgal clan of Pres. Mahdi and the Habar Gadir clan of Gen. Aydid and continued to fight for control. In Jan. 1992 the UN implemented an arms embargo on Somalia. On Feb. 14, 1992 a UN-sponsored cease-fire was reached that led to the cessation of heavy artillery, although violence continued. In April 1992 former Pres. Barrah's SNF attempted to regain control of Mogadishu before being forced to seek refuge in Nigeria by Gen. Aydid and his forces. In June 1992 the Pres. Mahdi's USC and nine other factions including the SNM, SNF and SSDF agreed to form an alliance while Gen. Aydid's USC formed an alliance, called the Somali National Alliance (SNA) with other southern factions including the SPM. On July 27, 1992 UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali proposed a plan, to send 500 armed peace keepers to protect relief workers as well as international food airlifts, that was accepted by the Security Council. On Aug. 28, 1992 the UN resolved to deploy 750 peace keepers to protect relief food convoys in the 4 main ports. On Dec. 3, 1992 the UN accepted a US offer to send ground troops to protect food shipments. On Dec. 9, 1992 the first of an anticipated 28,000 US troops had arrived in Mogadishu, following which Pres. Mahdi and Gen. Aydid met and agreed to another cease-fire. In Jan. 1993 a Reconciliation Conference was held in Ethiopia with representatives agreed to disarmament of the factions. In Feb. 1993 fighting again broke out between supporters of Pres. Mahdi and Gen. Aydid while other clans clashed throughout the country. In March 1993 another conference was held in Ethiopia and agreed to establish a Transitional National Council. On May 4, 1993 the UN relinquished control to the UN Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II) supervised by US Admiral Jonathan Howe. On June 5, 1993 Gen. Aydid's forces ambushed Pakistani UN soldiers killing 24 of them and on June 17, 1993 the UN ordered the arrest of Gen. Aydid, following which the Somali situation became a conflict between the UNOSOM and Gen. Aydid's militia. On July 12, 1993 four foreign journalists were attacked and killed by pro-Aydid supporters and on Oct. 3, 1993 some 18 US soldiers were killed in a gun battle with Aydid's militia. Also in Oct. 1993, Gen. Aydid proposed a cease-fire while on Nov. 16, 1993 the UN resolved to revoke the order for Gen. Aydid's arrest and appointed a commission to investigate the attacks on UN peace keepers to determine which faction was responsible. In Dec. 1993 Gen. Aydid attended a conference in Ethiopia of clan leaders while several countries had begun withdrawing their troops from UNOSOM.

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**CURRENCY:** The official currency is the Shilling (SoSh) divided into 100 Cents.

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**ECONOMY:** Gross National Product; USD \$946,000,000 (1990). Public Debt; USD \$1,897,000,000 (1993). Imports; USD \$456,000,000 (1991). Exports; USD \$120,000,000 (1991). Tourism Receipts; USD \$8,000,000 (1986). Balance of Trade; USD -\$305,000,000 (1992). Economically Active Population; 3,215,000 or 40.9% of total population (1991). Unemployed; N/A.

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**MAIN TRADING PARTNERS:** Its main trading partners are Italy, the former USSR, China, Kenya, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

**MAIN PRIMARY PRODUCTS:** Bananas, Camels, Cotton, Goats, Maize, Millet, Sheep, Sugar Cane, Tin.

**MAJOR INDUSTRIES:** Flour Milling, Small Scale Textiles, Stock Rearing, Sugar Refining.

**MAIN EXPORTS:** Bananas, Hides and Skins, Livestock, Meat.

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**TRANSPORT:** Railroads; nil. Roads; length 17,215 km (10,697 mi) (1985). Vehicles; cars 19,000 (1989), trucks and buses 11,000 (1989). Merchant Marine; vessels 27 (1990), deadweight tonnage 18,900 (1990). Air Transport; passenger-km 136,138,000 (84,592,000 passenger-mi) (1988), cargo ton-km 1,978,000 (1,355,000 short ton-mi) (1988).

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**COMMUNICATIONS:** Daily Newspapers; total of 2 with a circulation of N/A. (1994). Radio; receivers 300,000 (1994). Television; receivers 3,000 (1987). Telephones; units 15,000 (1993).

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**MILITARY:** nil. (1991) total active duty personnel while military expenditure accounts for 3.2% (1986) of the Gross National Product (GNP).