



Somalia

Joint Stakeholder Report for the United Nations Universal Periodic Review: The Death Penalty

Submitted by The Advocates for Human Rights

a non-governmental organization in special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council since 1996

The Coalition of Somali Human Rights Defenders

a non-governmental organization in special consultative status with ECOSOC since 2023

and

The World Coalition Against the Death Penalty

**for the 52nd Session of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review
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The Advocates for Human Rights (The Advocates) is a volunteer-based non-governmental organization committed to the impartial promotion and protection of international human rights standards and the rule of law. Established in 1983, The Advocates conducts a range of programs to promote human rights in the United States and around the world, including monitoring and fact finding, direct legal representation, education and training, and publications. The Advocates is the primary provider of legal services to low-income asylum seekers in the Upper Midwest region of the United States. In 1991, The Advocates adopted a formal commitment to oppose the death penalty worldwide and organized a death penalty project to provide pro bono assistance on post-conviction appeals, as well as education and advocacy to end capital punishment. The Advocates currently holds a seat on the Steering Committee of the World Coalition against the Death Penalty.

The World Coalition Against the Death Penalty is a membership-based global network committed to strengthening the international dimension of the fight against the death penalty. Established in 2002, its ultimate objective is to obtain the universal abolition of the death penalty. To achieve its goal, the World Coalition advocates for a definitive end to death sentences and executions in those countries where the death penalty is in force. In some countries, it is seeking to obtain a reduction in the use of capital punishment as a first step towards abolition.

The Coalition of Somali Human Rights Defenders (CSHRD) is a non-governmental, non-partisan, human rights organization which is registered under the Non-Governmental Act. CSHRDs is composed of members with notable experience in the field of human rights and has had consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) since August 2023. CSHRD is a member of the Coalition for the International Criminal Court (CICC).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report addresses Somalia's compliance with its international human rights obligations with respect to the death penalty, ratification and accession to international instruments, and acceptance of international norms.
2. Somalia has not abolished the death penalty, implemented a moratorium on executions, or limited the death penalty to instances of intentional homicide. Somali courts continue to sentence people to death; however, official records of the number of people under sentence of death and executed by the Government of Somalia are not complete and represent a substantial undercount of those actually under sentence of death and executed.
3. Beyond official implementation of the death penalty, state and nonstate actors have sponsored extrajudicial killings with impunity.
4. Ongoing armed conflict between Somalia and the non-state actor Al-Shabaab, which holds territory in southern and central Somalia, has led to thousands of combatant and civilian deaths in the last few years alone,¹ and the maintenance of parallel military, executive and judicial authorities in territories controlled by, respectively, the Government of Somalia and Al-Shabaab. Changes to the political and governing structures of the Government of Somalia have also caused uncertainty and continued conflict within the territory it controls. Members of the media continue to face official repression and extra-judicial violence and death throughout Somalia.

I. IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS OBLIGATIONS

5. Somalia has a federal system, using a combination of its existing Penal Code and Shari'ah law.² Somalia continues to experience significant political turmoil and flux. Within the territory under the jurisdiction of the Government of Somalia, separatist movements are active in the northern regions of Somaliland and Puntland.³ Al-Shabaab controls territory in central and southern Somalia.
6. The portions of Somalia under the control of the Government of Somalia have operated under a provisional constitution since 2012.⁴ In 2022, the country's legislative chambers elected President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud,⁵ who has pledged to finalize the constitution.⁶
7. There are currently no directly elected national leaders in the Government of Somalia.⁷ Rather, Somalia uses a clan-based voting system, which allots approximately 89% of the elected positions to the country's four largest clans, marginalizing members of the other clans.⁸ In 2024, Parliament passed a round of amendments that (i) replace the position of prime minister with a vice-president,⁹ (ii) extend the term of office for the president and members of parliament,¹⁰ and (iii) implement direct and universal voting for the president, vice president, and state leaders.¹¹ The country is slated to host its first direct elections for local, regional, and state officials in 2025 and its first direct national elections in 2026.¹² Parliament also amended the Electoral Law in 2024, implementing a 30% quota for women in the federal legislature.¹³
8. Since the third-cycle UPR, the Coalition of Somali Human Rights Defenders (CHSRD) has made substantial efforts to engage and negotiate with state partners to encourage Somalia to implement the 2021 UPR recommendations. Authorities, however, have shown

no genuine interest in fulfilling their international human rights obligations or engaging in constructive dialogue with civil society.

Acceptance of international norms

Status of Implementation: Not Accepted, Not Implemented

9. In its third-cycle UPR in 2021, Somalia noted seven recommendations regarding the ratification of, or accession to, the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty (OP2).¹⁴ Somalia has taken no steps since 2021 to implement these recommendations.
10. In its third-cycle UPR, Somalia also noted seven recommendations to ratify or accede to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.¹⁵ During the review, the delegation from Somalia stated that even though it was considering moving toward ratification of other treaties, and even though it recognized the importance of holding “broad consultations and ensur[ing] that the public was cognizant of the value for Somalia of becoming a State party” to some treaties, “Somalia was not currently in a position to ratify the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.”¹⁶ In its addendum, Somalia justified its decision to note these recommendations by stating that, “[c]onsidering the current post-conflict situation of Somalia and the focus of the Government on building and reviving peace and security, it is not possible for Somalia to accept th[ese] recommendation[s].”¹⁷
11. The Government of Somalia has not taken any meaningful action toward ratification of the Rome Statute. Neither Parliament nor the Council of Ministers has even discussed the issue. In January 2024, several members of Parliamentarians for Global Action in Somalia presented a draft bill to accede to the Rome Statute to the Speaker for its inclusion in the session agenda, but the bill was rejected on procedural grounds. This ongoing inaction demonstrates a persistent lack of political will to align the justice system with international accountability mechanisms and to combat impunity for serious human rights violations.¹⁸
12. Since the third-cycle UPR, CSHRD has joined the Coalition for the International Criminal Court, creating a new avenue for raising issues about accountability and justice at the international level, ensuring that ICC and CICC forums include discussion of Somalia, and potentially paving the way for future cooperation with global justice mechanisms.¹⁹

National Human Rights Institution (NHRI)

Status of Implementation: Accepted, Not Implemented

13. In the third-cycle UPR, Somalia supported all 16 recommendations it received regarding establishing its national human rights commission in line with the Paris Principles.²⁰
14. In 2024, the Federal Government of Somalia announced the establishment of a so-called National Independent Human Rights Commission. The process, however, clearly violated the Paris Principles, excluding civil society organizations from the consultation and nomination stages. The President hand-picked all commissioners, undermining the Commission’s independence, impartiality, and legitimacy. At the same time, the government disbanded the independent National Anti-Corruption Commission, effectively

consolidating executive power and weakening oversight bodies ahead of the 2025 elections.²¹

Death penalty

Status of Implementation: Partially Accepted, Not Implemented

15. In the third-cycle UPR, Somalia noted all but one of the 17 recommendations it received concerning the death penalty.²² In noting these recommendations, Somalia commented that it “is not ready for the societal discussion around the abolition of the death penalty, especially considering the current phase of post-conflict state-building and reconstruction.”²³
16. Somalia retains the use of the death penalty for many crimes.²⁴ Beyond crimes in which the defendant committed an intentional killing, the Penal Code permits the use of the death penalty for bearing arms against the State, war crimes, misuse of State secrets,²⁵ espionage and “attempts against the integrity, independence or unity of the Somali state,” as well as a number of crimes that involve endangering public safety, even if they do not result in death.²⁶ The Military Penal Code authorizes the death penalty for rape.²⁷
17. Somalia’s laws also authorize the death penalty for terrorism-related offenses.²⁸ Both military²⁹ and civil courts³⁰ can impose death sentences on civilians convicted of terrorism (i.e., connections to Al-Shabaab).³¹
18. A draft Penal Code completed in 2017 would reduce the number of capital offenses punishable by death, but would retain the death penalty for at least four crimes, including taking up arms against the State,³² genocide,³³ first degree murder,³⁴ and using a weapon of mass destruction.³⁵
19. Islamic courts throughout the country can impose death sentences for *hadd* crimes, or crimes requiring mandatory punishment under Shari’ah law, including consensual same-sex sexual conduct.³⁶ Authorities are arresting an increasing number of people for same-sex sexual conduct. A 2023 legislative committee report found that authorities in Somaliland were holding 40 people in prison for same-sex sexual conduct, including 36 people awaiting trial and four men who had been convicted and sentenced to eight years in prison.³⁷
20. With the exception of a no vote in 2007 and absences in 2020 and 2022, Somalia has voted in favor of every UN General Assembly resolution calling for a global moratorium on the use of the death penalty, including most recently in December 2024.³⁸ Nonetheless, Somali courts continue to hand down death sentences. Courts handed down at least 10 death sentences in 2022, at least 31 in 2023,³⁹ and at least 17 in 2024.⁴⁰
21. Somali authorities have stepped up the pace of executions in recent years. The number of known executions increased from 6 in 2022⁴¹ to 38 in 2023 and 34 in 2024.⁴² Civil society organizations in Somalia believe that the actual number of executions is significantly higher, estimated at around 1,000-1,700 per year,⁴³ including executions pursuant to convictions by courts in Al-Shabaab-controlled regions, particularly in southern Somalia.⁴⁴
22. Both the Federal Government and several Federal Member States—including Puntland, Jubaland, and South West State—have expanded reliance on the death penalty, often

deploying it as a political weapon. In an effort to silence dissent and sow fear among the population, authorities have targeted journalists and human rights defenders with fabricated terrorism charges eligible for the death penalty.⁴⁵

23. Clans have used executions to consolidate political control.⁴⁶ Clans in the majority use the threat of execution—typically by making accusations of Al-Shabaab affiliation—to displace minority clans or to eliminate competition.⁴⁷ According to one source, “[a]uthorities frequently used allegations of Al-Shabaab affiliation to justify arbitrary arrests.”⁴⁸

Administration of justice and fair trial

Status of Implementation: Partially Accepted, Not Implemented

24. In its third-cycle UPR, Somalia supported Mexico’s recommendation to “[g]uarantee access to justice and due process for persons who have allegedly committed terrorist acts, before applying the death penalty,”⁴⁹ as well as four other recommendations related to strengthening fair trial rights,⁵⁰ but it has not made any significant progress toward implementing these recommendations. Somalia noted the United States of America’s recommendation to “[s]trengthen enforcement of the legal right to a fair and public trial by strengthening protections for an independent judiciary and ending the use of corrupt military court systems for accused civilians.”⁵¹
25. The provisional constitution establishes a judiciary that includes constitutional courts, federal courts, state courts, and military courts, all applying Shari’ah law. Civil and military courts have the authority to impose death sentences.⁵²
26. Somalia’s National Intelligence and Security Agency is alleged to regularly conduct mass security sweeps related to counter-terrorism efforts, holding people in detention for prolonged periods and mistreating people during interrogations.⁵³ The National Intelligence and Security Agency, the Puntland Intelligence Agency, and other government security forces reportedly threaten and beat people in order to extract confessions.⁵⁴
27. The provisional constitution provides for an independent judiciary,⁵⁵ but local courts sometimes have to rely on dominant clans to wield authority or to enforce judgments.⁵⁶ Clans operate a “customary justice” system called “*xeer*.” *Xeer* is an oral set of laws⁵⁷ that clan elders agree to and implement.⁵⁸ The *xeer* justice system settles more than 80% of all civil and criminal cases.⁵⁹
28. The influence of clan politics and corruption often inhibits the fairness of trials.⁶⁰ The Coalition of Somali Human Rights Defenders (CSHRDs) reports widespread collusion between the Somali government and non-governmental groups purporting to administer justice outside formal legal channels.⁶¹
29. CSHRDs reports that the Supreme Court and Constitutional Court often do not provide meaningful legal protections, particularly in capital cases and in cases in which people allege violations of the provisional constitution.⁶² Gaps in jurisdiction between Federal and State courts allow for unregulated and unequal imposition of the death penalty, with some regional governments relying heavily on military courts even for cases that are unrelated to the military.⁶³ Military courts often deny defendants legal representation and the right to appeal.⁶⁴

30. While the federal Government of Somalia has justified its use of the death penalty as necessary for state security and stability, the death penalty has also been systematically used as a money-making scheme. In this context, a court will sentence an individual to death, that individual will pay a sum of money to be released, and authorities will execute someone known to be innocent in their place.⁶⁵
31. Al-Shabaab operates courts within territories it controls, applying Shari'ah law to resolve family matters, land disputes, and business disputes.⁶⁶ Sources report that areas influenced or controlled by Al-Shabaab do not maintain a functioning judicial system.⁶⁷ Al-Shabaab, like the Government of Somalia, relies on *xeer* to resolve disputes. Al-Shabaab's interpretation of Shari'ah law expands the application of the death penalty to include offenses such as homosexuality,⁶⁸ desertion,⁶⁹ and being a government informant.⁷⁰ Al-Shabaab sentences individuals to death for rape and punishes people believed to have committed adultery with lashing or even execution.⁷¹ Al-Shabaab carries out public executions using methods such as stoning, lashing, and shooting.⁷²
32. Al-Shabaab also carries out summary trials and executions.⁷³ In May 2023, Al-Shabaab forces in Bu'aale executed five individuals without trial, including Mohamed Ibrahim Olow, based on accusations that the individuals were spying on behalf of the United States, the federal government of Somalia, or the Jubaland state.⁷⁴ In August 2023, Al-Shabaab executed Ali Abdi Mohamed "Qoriyow," a colonel in Somalia's federal army, and Hasan Mohamed Ibrahim, a Mogadishu police officer.⁷⁵

Conditions of detention

Status of Implementation: Accepted, Not Implemented

33. In its third-cycle UPR, Somalia supported the Russian Federation's recommendation to "[s]tep up efforts to improve the penitentiary system,"⁷⁶ but it has not made progress in implementing this recommendation.
34. Prison conditions across Somalia are "harsh and life threatening," with concerns of overcrowding, poor hygiene, and lack of adequate food, water, and medical care.⁷⁷ Detention facilities have faced disease outbreaks, including 2023 outbreaks of tuberculosis and cholera throughout Somalia, including at the Mogadishu Central Prison.⁷⁸
35. As of 2024, there are fourteen operational prisons with conditions falling below international standards.⁷⁹ For example, in 2023, Garowe Central Prison in Puntland experienced serious water, food, and electricity shortages.⁸⁰ The Commissioner General of the Puntland Custodial Corps has highlighted that the water at Garowe Central Prison is not suitable for drinking and the prison's water purification equipment cannot keep up with the facility's demands.⁸¹ Baidoa prison receives a fixed daily budget for food, regardless of the number of people detained in the prison.⁸²
36. Medical facilities within prisons are rare, and people in detention have limited access to external medical care.⁸³ The person in detention or their family generally bears the cost of healthcare.⁸⁴ People without family or clan support often lack access to sufficient medical services.⁸⁵ Detention facilities do not provide healthcare services for children who reside with their mothers in prison.⁸⁶

37. Prison officials detain people in prison blocks and/or cells without regard to age or gender, resulting in violence, including sexual violence, against women and children in detention.⁸⁷ When women are incarcerated, they typically live in a cell within the male block, increasing the risk of sexual violence and rape.⁸⁸ CSHRDs reports that detained men offer bribes to prison guards to facilitate access to women and children.⁸⁹
38. In 2023, independent monitors, including the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, conducted independent monitoring of prisons in Mogadishu. They did not report any improvements regarding mistreatment or detention conditions.⁹⁰
39. There are reports that clan militias engage in torture and other inhuman or degrading treatment of people whom they have arrested or detained.⁹¹

Children: Juvenile justice

Status of Implementation: Partially Accepted, Not Implemented

40. While Somalia noted nearly every third-cycle recommendation pertaining to the death penalty, it supported recommendations to “[c]ontinue efforts in domesticating the Convention on the Rights of the Child in line with its priorities” and to “[c]ontinue to strengthen efforts to ensure the protection of children and that their rights are guaranteed in accordance with the national laws.”⁹² With respect to the death penalty, it has not implemented these recommendations.
41. The Government of Somalia sentences children to death and executes children, including some as young as 12 years old.⁹³ There is an internal debate in Somalia as to whether the age of majority should be 15—the age at which an individual is obliged to pray and fast under Shari’ah law—or 18, the age of majority under international human rights standards.⁹⁴ Children that are executed are often falsely reported to be adults.⁹⁵ Most executions of children occur in Puntland, where regional authorities accuse children of affiliation with Al-Shabaab. In August 2024, Puntland authorities accused four children—all under 18 years of age—of Al-Shabaab affiliation and executed them.⁹⁶

Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender and intersex persons (LGBTI)

Status of Implementation: Not Accepted, Not Implemented

42. In the third-cycle UPR, Somalia noted three recommendations to decriminalize consensual same-sex conduct between adults.⁹⁷ In noting these recommendations, Somalia stated that “[a]ll legislation in Somalia . . . must be fully in line with the Islamic Shariah. The concept that is advocated for in [these] recommendation[s] goes against the Islamic Shariah.”⁹⁸
43. As discussed in paragraphs 13 and 24 above, both Islamic courts and courts in areas controlled by Al-Shabaab can hand down death sentences for consensual same-sex conduct between adults, and authorities have arrested and sentenced to prison terms some men for such purported criminal offenses.

Human rights defenders

Status of Implementation: Partially Accepted, Not Implemented

44. In the third-cycle UPR, Somalia supported all but one of 25 recommendations to increase protections and safeguards for journalists and human rights defenders.⁹⁹ Somalia noted Canada's recommendation to "[e]nd impunity for attacks against journalists, civil society and human rights defenders, women, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons by conducting timely and impartial investigations, prosecuting perpetrators and ending military trials of journalists."¹⁰⁰ Somalia has not implemented these recommendations.
45. In 2021, the Government of Somalia adopted legislation increasing media regulation and criminalizing disseminating propaganda¹⁰¹ and publishing content that conflicts with Somalia's national interests,¹⁰² includes false information,¹⁰³ or incites violence and clannism.¹⁰⁴ Legislation adopted in 2023 granted the national intelligence agency wide-ranging powers to detain and surveil.¹⁰⁵ Throughout 2023 and 2024, Somali journalists and human rights defenders have faced escalating threats of and actual governmental repression, including arbitrary detention, prosecution, and freezing of their assets, as authorities intensified restrictions on media freedom and reporting on national security issues.¹⁰⁶ This increasingly repressive environment has been accompanied by escalating extrajudicial violence and killing of media professionals.¹⁰⁷

Internally displaced persons, Business & Human Rights

Status of Implementation: Accepted, Not Implemented

46. In the third-cycle UPR, Somalia supported Switzerland's recommendation to "[p]revent all forms of forced eviction, which is one of the greatest obstacles in the search for durable solutions for internally displaced persons."¹⁰⁸
47. Since 2021, the government has continued to engage in systematic forced evictions and unlawful confiscation of land and other properties from civilians, including people with verified title deeds. Authorities have resold or allocated those properties to politically connected business elites, resulting in widespread displacement and deepening socioeconomic inequality.¹⁰⁹

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

48. The coauthors of this stakeholder report suggest the following recommendations for the Government of Somalia:
- Abolish the death penalty and replace it with penalties that are fair, proportionate, and consistent with international human rights standards.
 - Commute all death sentences to lesser judgments, consistent with the severity of the crime committed.
 - Immediately commute the death sentences of any persons whom the prosecution did not prove were at least 18 years of age at the time of the alleged offense.

- Implement the Human Rights Committee’s 2024 recommendations concerning the death penalty.¹¹⁰
- In the interim:
 - Adopt a moratorium on the death penalty, with a view to its abolition.
 - Issue a decree banning all death sentences and executions of persons whom the prosecution has not proven were at least 18 years of age at the time of the offense, regardless of the crime allegedly committed.
 - Direct all courts overseeing capital cases, including state, local, and customary courts, to ensure that prosecutors bear the burden of proving that any defendant who alleges they were under the age of 18 at the time of the offense was in fact at least 18 years of age.
 - Amend the Penal Code and the Military Penal Code to limit the death penalty to offenses in which the person to be sentenced to death both killed and intended to kill, and direct state authorities to follow suit.
 - Ensure that any person charged with a crime that may be eligible for the death penalty receives free and effective legal counsel throughout the investigation, trial, and any appeals.
- Ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty.
- Ratify the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.
- Gather and disseminate to the public, on at least an annual basis, comprehensive data on all people sentenced to death, currently under sentence of death, and executed since the most recent prior report, disaggregated by jurisdiction, sex/gender, age and occupation at the time of the alleged crime, age of any dependent children, crime of conviction, relationship to any codefendants or victims, date of conviction, sentencing authority, date and method of execution (if applicable), current location (if applicable), and status of any appeals or requests for clemency.
- In collaboration with civil society, promote restorative justice and alternative punishments under Shari’ah law, including compensation (*diyya*), while ensuring that offenders from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds do not face barriers to securing such alternative punishments.
- Seek technical assistance to implement the Human Rights Committee’s 2024 recommendations concerning counter-terrorism measures¹¹¹ and align the definition of terrorism in the Penal Code and the Military Penal Code with international standards.
- Prohibit military courts from trying and imposing judgments on civilians.
- Adopt a new penal code at the federal level that eliminates the death penalty.
- Implement the Human Rights Committee’s 2024 recommendations concerning administration of justice.¹¹²

- Suspend operation of the National Independent Human Rights Commission until authorities conduct a transparent, inclusive, and credible selection process with full participation of civil society organizations and human rights defenders.
- Establish an independent monitoring system to ensure that the judiciary and law enforcement are free from improper influences.
- Implement the Human Rights Committee’s 2024 recommendations concerning non-discrimination.¹¹³
- Decriminalize consensual same-sex conduct between adults at the federal and state levels.
- Amend media legislation and defamation laws to ensure they are aligned with international human rights standards.
- Ensure that in all detention facilities people under the age of 18 are segregated from adults, with the exception of children who are housed with a parent, and that women are segregated from the general prison population.
- Authorize domestic and international civil society organizations to conduct unannounced visits and inspections of detention facilities.
- Implement the Human Rights Committee’s 2024 recommendations concerning treatment of persons deprived of their liberty and conditions of detention.¹¹⁴
- Provide comprehensive training to detention facility staff working in facilities housing women and children on best practices for reducing the risk of violence—including sexual violence—against those populations.
- Step up efforts to align detention conditions with the Nelson Mandela Rules and the Bangkok rules, prioritizing in that regard access to suitable food, water, and health care.
- Implement the Human Rights Committee’s 2024 recommendations concerning freedom of expression and the protection of journalists.¹¹⁵
- Request technical assistance from the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights with a view to creating a safe and enabling environment for journalists and human rights defenders.
- Issue a decree barring forced evictions and provide remedies for people who have been displaced by such evictions.

¹ While there is no single definitive death toll for the conflict between Somalia and Al-Shabaab, approximately 1730 deaths caused by Al-Shabaab in 2022 occurred in Somalia. Vision of Humanity, *Deadliest Terrorist Groups in 2023*, accessed Sept. 8, 2025, <https://www.visionofhumanity.org/deadliest-terrorist-groups-in-2023/>.

² Interview conducted by Perkins Coie with the Coalition of Somali Human Rights Defenders on July 23, 2025.

³ BBC, *Somalia Country Profile*, accessed July 20, 2025, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-14094503>.

Somaliland has attempted to obtain international recognition as a separate nation, in part by signing a “Memorandum of Understanding” with Ethiopia in 2024 that grants Ethiopia access to Somaliland’s coast in

exchange for Ethiopia recognizing Somaliland's independence from Somalia. Human Rights Watch, Somalia Events of 2024, accessed July 17, 2025, <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2025/country-chapters/somalia>. Leaders from the semi-autonomous state of Puntland decried a round of amendments that were passed by Parliament in 2024, criticizing the amendments as a deliberate concentration of power in the president. Puntland called for the amendments to instead be subject to a public referendum, withdrawing from Somalia's federal system until such referendum, which has not occurred. Faisal Ali, The Guardian: Somalia Accused of 'Threatening National Unity' with New Constitution, Apr. 5, 2024, <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2024/apr/05/fears-violence-somalia-constitution>.

⁴ Freedom in the World 2025: Somalia, Freedom House, accessed July 20, 2025, <https://freedomhouse.org/country/somalia/freedom-world/2025>.

⁵ Omar Faruk, Somali Lawmakers Elect President Voted Out 5 Years ago, Associated Press, May 15, 2022.

⁶ Faisal Ali, The Guardian: Somalia Accused of 'Threatening National Unity' with New Constitution, Apr. 5, 2024, <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2024/apr/05/fears-violence-somalia-constitution>.

⁷ Freedom in the World 2025: Somalia, Freedom House, accessed July 20, 2025, <https://freedomhouse.org/country/somalia/freedom-world/2025>.

⁸ *Id.*

⁹ Faisal Ali, The Guardian: Somalia Accused of 'Threatening National Unity' with New Constitution, Apr. 5, 2024, <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2024/apr/05/fears-violence-somalia-constitution>.

¹⁰ *Id.*

¹¹ *Id.*

¹² Freedom in the World 2025: Somalia, Freedom House, accessed July 20, 2025, <https://freedomhouse.org/country/somalia/freedom-world/2025>.

¹³ UN Women Africa, Resource Centre for Women Parliamentarians: A Boost for Women's Political Participation in Somalia, Dec. 11, 2024, <https://africa.unwomen.org/en/stories/news/2024/12/resource-centre-for-women-parliamentarians-a-boost-for-womens-political-participation-in-somalia#:~:text=The%20Federal%20Government%20of%20Somalia's,Upper%20House%20Secretary%20General%20Mr.>

¹⁴ Human Rights Council, Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Somalia (June 7, 2021), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/48/11/Add.1, ¶ 132.36 (Finland), .37 (Italy), .38 (Liechtenstein), .39 (Australia), .40 (Austria), .85 (Iceland), .86 (Latvia); Human Rights Council, Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Somalia Addendum (September 10, 2021), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/48/11/Add.1, at 3-4.

¹⁵ Human Rights Council, Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Somalia (June 7, 2021), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/48/11/Add.1, ¶ 132.31-.33, .42; Human Rights Council, Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Somalia Addendum (September 10, 2021), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/48/11/Add.1, at 2-3.

¹⁶ Human Rights Council, Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Somalia (June 7, 2021), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/48/11/Add.1, ¶ 10.

¹⁷ Human Rights Council, Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Somalia Addendum (September 10, 2021), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/48/11/Add.1, at 2-3.

¹⁸ *Somalia and the Rome Statute*, Parliamentarians for Global Action, <https://www.pgaction.org/africa/somalia.html> (last visited 9 Oct. 2025).

¹⁹ *CSHRD Joins the Global Coalition for the International Criminal Court (CICC)*, Coalition of Somalia Human Rights Defenders, 3 Sept. 2025, <https://cshrds.org/cshrd-joins-the-global-coalition-for-the-international-criminal-court-cicc/>.

²⁰ Human Rights Council, Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Somalia (June 7, 2021), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/48/11, ¶ 132.62-.66; Human Rights Council, Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Somalia Addendum (September 10, 2021), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/48/11/Add.1, at 4.

²¹ *Human Rights on Hold: The Politicized Creation of Somalia's Independent Human Rights Commission*, Horn Afrik News Agency for Human Rights, June 6, 2025, <https://hanahr.net/human-rights-on-hold-the-politicized-creation-of-somalias-independent-human-rights-commission/>.

²² Human Rights Council, Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Somalia (June 7, 2021), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/48/11, ¶ 132.36 (“Ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty (Finland)”); .37 (“Introduce a moratorium on capital executions and consider ratifying the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty (Italy)”); .39 (“Abolish the death penalty and accede to the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty (Australia)”); .40 (“Establish a moratorium on the death penalty with a view to its abolishment, and ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty (Austria)”); .81 (“Initiate a moratorium on the death penalty while working towards appropriate legislation to abolish the death penalty” (Croatia)); .82 (“Consider establishing a moratorium on the death penalty, with a view to further consider its complete abolition (Fiji)”); .83 (“Abolish the death penalty for all crimes (France)”); .84 (“Adopt a moratorium on executions with the goal to abolish the death penalty (Germany)”); .85 (“Fully abolish the death penalty and ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty (Iceland)”); .86 (“Establish a moratorium on the death penalty with a view to its eventual abolition, and consider ratifying the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty (Latvia)”); .87 (“Establish a moratorium on the use of the death penalty with a view to abolishing it through legislation (Norway)”); .88 (“Adopt a moratorium on executions, with a view to the abolition of the death penalty (Portugal)”); .89 (“Establish a moratorium on the application of the death penalty, with a view to its abolition as soon as possible (Spain)”); .90 (“Adopt a moratorium on executions, with a view to abolish the death penalty (Ukraine)”); .91 (“Consider establishing an official moratorium on death penalty and related executions (Brazil)”); Human Rights Council, Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Somalia Addendum (September 10, 2021), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/48/11/Add.1, at 3-4.

²³ Human Rights Council, Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Somalia Addendum (September 10, 2021), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/48/11/Add.1, at 3.

²⁴ Amnesty International, *Death Sentences and Executions 2024* (April 8, 2025), p. 43, available online at: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/act50/8976/2025/en/>.

²⁵ United Nations, In Dialogue with Somali, Experts of the Human Rights Committee Welcome the State's Anti-Corruption Measures, Raise Issues Concerning the Death Penalty and Sexual Violence by Armed Forces and Militias, (Mar. 8, 2024), <https://www.ohchr.org/en/meeting-summaries/2024/03/dialogue-somalia-experts-human-rights-committee-welcome-states-anti>.

²⁶ Confidential Source, 2023, at 46, on file with The Advocates for Human Rights.

²⁷ Confidential Source, 2022, on file with The Advocates for Human Rights.

²⁸ Gloria Aradi, “Moroccan IS fighters sentenced to death in Somalia,” BBC (Mar. 1, 2024) available online at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-68444127>.

²⁹ Harun Maruf, Al-Shabab Fears Somalia's Military Court, Judge Says, Jan. 2022, <https://www.voanews.com/a/al-shabab-fears-somalia-s-military-court-judge-says-/6397204.html>.

³⁰ Videoconference interview with Coalition of Somali Human Rights Defenders (July 23, 2025).

³¹ Voice of America, Somali Military Court Executes 13 Militants, 5 Soldiers, Mar. 8, 2023, <https://www.voanews.com/a/somali-military-court-executes-13-militants-5-soldiers-/6995738.html>. For example, in 2022, one governor offered rewards of up to \$25,000 for anyone who killed an Al-Shabab militant and directed that wives and mothers of Al-Shabab militants be killed. Ahmed Mohamed, Regional Governor in Somalia Puts Bounty on al-Shabab Chiefs, Voice of America, Oct. 17, 2022,

<https://www.voanews.com/a/regional-governor-in-somalia-puts-bounty-on-al-shabab-chiefs-/6794267.html>. In March 2023, a Puntland military court executed 13 militants accused of being members of al-Shabab or the Islamic State. Voice of America, *Somali Military Court Executes 13 Militants, 5 Soldiers*, Mar. 8, 2023, <https://www.voanews.com/a/somali-military-court-executes-13-militants-5-soldiers-/6995738.html>.

³² *Draft Report of the Somali Criminal Law Recodification Initiative*, Art. 1101 (March 2017), available online at: <https://www.law.upenn.edu/live/files/6310-vol-1-and-2-somali-recodification>.

³³ *Draft Report of the Somali Criminal Law Recodification Initiative*, Art. 2101 (March 2017), available online at: <https://www.law.upenn.edu/live/files/6310-vol-1-and-2-somali-recodification>.

³⁴ *Draft Report of the Somali Criminal Law Recodification Initiative*, Art. 3101 (March 2017), available online at: <https://www.law.upenn.edu/live/files/6310-vol-1-and-2-somali-recodification>.

³⁵ *Draft Report of the Somali Criminal Law Recodification Initiative*, Art. 7303 (March 2017), available online at: <https://www.law.upenn.edu/live/files/6310-vol-1-and-2-somali-recodification>.

³⁶ European Union Agency for Asylum, *Country Guidance: Somalia* (Aug. 11, 2023), p. 140, available online at: <https://euaa.europa.eu/publications/country-guidance-somalia-1>.

³⁷ Halqabsi News, *40 People Held for Homosexuality in Somaliland, Committee Reports Increase in Arrests* (March 11, 2023), available online at: <https://halqabsi.com/2023/03/40-people-held-for-homosexuality-in-somaliland-committee-reports-increase-in-arrests/>.

³⁸ International Commission against the Death Penalty: UNGA Moratorium Resolution Table, accessed July 11, 2025, <https://icomdp.org/map-unga/>.

³⁹ Amnesty International, *Global Report: Death Sentences and Executions 2023*, at 4-5, 12.

⁴⁰ *Id.*, pp. 4-5, 12.

⁴¹ Amnesty International, *Global Report: Death Sentences and Executions 2023*, p. 9.

⁴² *Id.*, pp. 4-5.

⁴³ Videoconference interview with Coalition of Somali Human Rights Defenders (July 23, 2025).

⁴⁴ Videoconference interview with Coalition of Somali Human Rights Defenders (July 23, 2025).

⁴⁵ *Alarming surge in executions highlights lack of due process in Somalia*, Horn Observer, 31 May 2024, <https://hornobserver.com/articles/2772/Alarming-surge-in-executions-highlights-lack-of-due-process-in-Somalia>; *Somalia: UN Officials Alarmed at Execution of Four Young People for Crimes Committed as Minor, Call for Release, Reintegration of Children in Detention*, Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict (Press Statement), 3 Sept. 2024, <https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/2024/09/somalia-un-officials-alarmed-at-execution-of-four-young-people-for-crimes-committed-as-minor-call-for-release-reintegration-of-children-in-detention/>.

⁴⁶ Videoconference interview with Coalition of Somali Human Rights Defenders (July 23, 2025).

⁴⁷ Videoconference interview with Coalition of Somali Human Rights Defenders (July 23, 2025).

⁴⁸ Confidential source, 2023, at 8, on file with The Advocates for Human Rights.

⁴⁹ Human Rights Council, *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Somalia* (June 7, 2021), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/48/11/Add.1, ¶ 132.92; Human Rights Council, *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Somalia Addendum* (September 10, 2021), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/48/11/Add.1, at 4.

⁵⁰ Human Rights Council, *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Somalia* (June 7, 2021), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/48/11/Add.1, ¶ 132.97, .100, .102, .103; Human Rights Council, *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Somalia Addendum* (September 10, 2021), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/48/11/Add.1, at 5.

⁵¹ Human Rights Council, *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Somalia*, (June 7, 2021), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/48/11/Add.1, ¶ 132.105; Human Rights Council, *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Somalia Addendum* (September 10, 2021), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/48/11/Add.1, at 5.

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- ⁵³ Confidential Source, 2023, at 4, on file with The Advocates for Human Rights.
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- ⁵⁵ The Federal Republic of Somalia: Provisional Constitution, Art. 34, Aug. 1, 2012.
- ⁵⁶ Confidential Source, 2023, on file with The Advocates for Human Rights.
- ⁵⁷ Le Sage A., *Stateless Justice in Somalia - Formal and Informal Rule of Law Initiatives*, July 2005, pp. 32-33.
- ⁵⁸ Expanding Access to Justice Program, *The Shari'ah in Somalia*, March 2020, <https://cnxus.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Shariah-in-Somalia-final.pdf>, p. 2
- ⁵⁹ European Union Agency for Asylum, 5.1.1. The Somali State, accessed July 7, 2021, <https://euaa.europa.eu/country-guidance-somalia-2023/511-somali-state>.
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- ⁶⁴ European Asylum Support Office, *Somalia Actors*, July 2021, pp. 27, 36, https://coi.euaa.europa.eu/administration/easo/PLib/2021_07_EASO_COI_Report_Somalia_Actors.pdf.
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- ⁶⁶ *Id.*
- ⁶⁷ Confidential Source, 2023, at 12, on file with The Advocates for Human Rights.
- ⁶⁸ *Id.* In contrast, Article 409 of Somalia's Penal Code criminalizes homosexuality with a maximum sentence of three years imprisonment. Somalia Penal Code (approved by Legislative Decree No. 5 of December 16, 1962, and entered into force on April 3, 1964), art. 409.
- ⁶⁹ Mary Harper, *Life After Al-Shabab: Driving a School Bus Instead of an Armed Pickup Truck*, BBC, Nov. 22, 2020, <https://www.bbc.com/news/stories-55016792>.
- ⁷⁰ Videoconference interview with Coalition of Somali Human Rights Defenders (July 23, 2025). Al-Shabab most often sentences people to death as informants for the government, but also for crimes such as committing adultery.
- ⁷¹ Confidential Source, 2023, at 37, on file with The Advocates for Human Rights.
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- ⁷⁷ Confidential Source, 2023, at 5, on file with The Advocates for Human Rights.
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- ⁷⁹ United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia, *Prison Conditions in Somalia: A Holistic Assessment* (July 2024), p. 7, available online at: https://unsom.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/prison_conditions_in_somalia-a_holistic_assessment.pdf.
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- ⁹⁰ Confidential Source, 2023, at 6, on file with The Advocates for Human Rights.
- ⁹¹ *Id.* at 4.
- ⁹² Human Rights Council, Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Somalia (June 7, 2021), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/48/11, ¶ 132.68, .247; Human Rights Council, Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Somalia Addendum (September 10, 2021), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/48/11/Add.1, at 4, 9.
- ⁹³ Videoconference interview with Coalition of Somali Human Rights Defenders (July 23, 2025).
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- ⁹⁵ Videoconference interview with Coalition of Somali Human Rights Defenders (July 23, 2025).
- ⁹⁶ International Commission Against the Death Penalty: Four children executed in Somalia, accessed July 14, 2025, <https://icomdp.org/four-children-executed-in-somalia/>.
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- ¹⁰⁰ Human Rights Council, Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Somalia (June 7, 2021), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/48/11/Add.1, ¶ 132.144; Human Rights Council, Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Somalia Addendum (September 10, 2021), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/48/11/Add.1, at 6.
- ¹⁰¹ Somalia Media Law Amendment Bill, Article 4 (x).
- ¹⁰² Somalia Media Law Amendment Bill, Article 3.4.
- ¹⁰³ Somalia Media Law Amendment Bill, Article 4 (t).
- ¹⁰⁴ Somalia Media Law Amendment Bill, Articles 4 (j), 29.
- ¹⁰⁵ Human Rights Watch, Somalia Events of 2023, accessed July 17, 2025: <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2024/country-chapters/somalia>.
- ¹⁰⁶ In 2023, a journalist for was jailed twice after raising issues about government restrictions on the reporting of national security topics. Human Rights Watch, Somalia Events of 2023, accessed July 17, 2025: <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2024/country-chapters/somalia>. Between January and April 2024 alone, at least ten journalists were arbitrarily detained, one journalist was shot and killed, and another was injured in a bombing.

Additionally, five lawyers defending journalists were threatened with prosecution and with having their legal licenses revoked. Somali Journalists Syndicate, World Press Freedom Day 2024: SJS Urges All Stakeholders to Stand United in Protecting Journalists and Ending the Impunity that Threatens Media Freedom, May 3, 2024, <https://sjsyndicate.org/2024/05/03/world-press-freedom-day-2024-sjs-urges-all-stakeholders-to-stand-united-in-protecting-journalists-and-ending-the-impunity-that-threatens-media-freedom/>. An additional two journalists were denied access to the Somali Parliament and one news organization reported that it had had its bank accounts frozen and had criminal charges leveraged against it by the Somali attorney general's office. In March 2024, a journalist was shot in the head while in the newsroom by an armed security guard working in the building. International Federation of Journalists, Somalia: Journalist Shot and Killed by Security in the Newsroom, Mar. 14, 2024, <https://www.ifj.org/media-centre/news/detail/category/africa/article/somalia-journalist-shot-and-killed-by-security-guard-in-the-newsroom>. The man that killed the journalist was executed by firing squad after confessing to the killing. In October 2024, another journalist was killed by two gunmen near the capital of Mogadishu. International Press Institute, Somalia: PIP Demands a thorough Investigation into the Killing of Journalist Amun Abdullahi Mohamed, Nov. 8, 2024, <https://ipi.media/somalia-ipi-demands-a-thorough-investigation-into-the-killing-of-journalist-amun-abdullahi-mohamed/>. After posting to social media that Somalia's security was vulnerable to attacks in July 2024, one journalist was arrested and charged for offenses including "offending the honour or prestige of the head of state" and "distributing obscene publications and performances". Amnesty International, Somalia 2024, accessed July 18, 2025, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/location/africa/east-africa-the-horn-and-great-lakes/somalia/report-somalia/>.

¹⁰⁷ Amnesty International, Somalia 2024, accessed July 18, 2025, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/location/africa/east-africa-the-horn-and-great-lakes/somalia/report-somalia/>.

¹⁰⁸ Human Rights Council, Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Somalia (June 7, 2021), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/48/11, ¶ 132.270; Human Rights Council, Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Somalia Addendum (September 10, 2021), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/48/11/Add.1, at 10.

¹⁰⁹ Mohamed Sheikh Nor, *Somalia: Is President Mohamud selling off public land to tycoons?*, The Africa Report, Aug. 28, 2025, <https://www.theafricareport.com/390992/somalia-is-the-government-selling-off-public-land-to-tycoons-via-massive-land-grabs/>.

¹¹⁰ Human Rights Committee, *Concluding Observations on the initial report of Somalia*, (6 May 2024), UN Doc. No. CCPR/C/SOM/CO/1, ¶ 22 ("Bearing in mind the Committee's general comment No. 36 (2018), the State party should : (a) Take all measures necessary, including legislative action, to ensure that the death penalty is applied only for the most serious crimes involving intentional killing and is never imposed in violation of the Covenant, including in violation of fair trial procedures or on persons under 18 years of age; (b) Take all measures available to prevent executions in the regions controlled by Al-Shabaab; (c) Consider introducing a moratorium on the death penalty and commuting all death sentences to terms of imprisonment; (d) Give due consideration to abolishing the death penalty, to acceding to the Second Optional Protocol to the Covenant, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty, and to implementing awareness-raising measures to increase public support for the abolition of the death penalty.").

¹¹¹ Human Rights Committee, *Concluding Observations on the initial report of Somalia*, (6 May 2024), UN Doc. No. CCPR/C/SOM/CO/1, ¶ 26 ("The State party should take steps to ensure that counter-terrorism legislation and counter-piracy measures are not used to unjustifiably limit any rights enshrined in the Covenant, including the rights to life, liberty and security of person, privacy, freedom of association and freedom of expression. It should further take appropriate measures to investigate human rights violations in counter-terrorism operations, and ensure that perpetrators are prosecuted and, if convicted, punished with appropriate sanctions and that victims have access to effective remedies. It should immediately end the practice of secret detentions.").

¹¹² Human Rights Committee, *Concluding Observations on the initial report of Somalia*, (6 May 2024), UN Doc. No. CCPR/C/SOM/CO/1, ¶ 32 ("The State party should continue its efforts and take all measures necessary to reform the justice system and ensure that all court proceedings are conducted in full observance of the due process

guarantees set forth in article 14 of the Covenant and bearing in mind the Committee ' s general comment No. 32 (2007) on the right to equality before courts and tribunals and to a fair trial. In so doing, it should: (a) Adopt legislation setting out the structure and jurisdiction of the judiciary and a law on the provision of legal aid, and finalize the establishment of the Judicial Service Commission; (b) Ensure the full independence of judges and the autonomy of prosecutors, establish clear rules on their appointment, career and removal, in line with international standards, and ensure that traditional justice systems comply with the standards required by the Covenant; (c) Remove, without further delay, the jurisdiction of military courts over civilians.”).

¹¹³ Human Rights Committee, *Concluding Observations on the initial report of Somalia*, (6 May 2024), UN Doc. No. CCPR/C/SOM/CO/1, ¶ 14 (“The State party should adopt comprehensive legislation prohibiting discrimination, including intersectional, direct and indirect discrimination, in all spheres of life, in both the public and the private sectors and on all grounds prohibited under the Covenant, including age, ethnicity, gender, disability, HIV/AIDS status, sexual orientation and gender identity. It should: (a) Review the relevant legislative framework with a view to guaranteeing that all persons can fully enjoy all the rights enshrined in the Covenant, including through the decriminalization of sexual relations between consenting adults of the same sex; (b) Take effective measures to combat stereotypes and biases towards women, persons with disabilities and persons with HIV/AIDS and to combat negative attitudes towards persons based on sexual orientation in legislation, public policies and programmes; (c) Adopt specific measures to prevent acts of discrimination, including by providing training and awareness-raising programmes for civil servants, law enforcement officials, the judiciary and public prosecutors, as well as for religious and community leaders and the general public; (d) Take active measures to promote the participation of women and other marginalized groups in all spheres of life , including the political and economic spheres, including through the implementation of the national action plan on women, peace and security in response to Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) .”).

¹¹⁴ Human Rights Committee, *Concluding Observations on the initial report of Somalia*, (6 May 2024), UN Doc. No. CCPR/C/SOM/CO/1, ¶ 30 (“The State party should intensify its efforts to ensure that conditions of detention fully comply with relevant international human rights standards, including the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules) and the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the Bangkok Rules). In particular, the State party should: (a) Reduce prison overcrowding, improve detention conditions and ensure adequate access to food, water and health care for prisoners in all places of deprivation of liberty; (b) Ensure the regular and unhindered monitoring of all places of deprivation of liberty by an independent monitoring and oversight mechanism, without prior notice and on an unsupervised basis, in order to prevent torture and ill-treatment.”).

¹¹⁵ Human Rights Committee, *Concluding Observations on the initial report of Somalia*, (6 May 2024), UN Doc. No. CCPR/C/SOM/CO/1, ¶ 38 (“In accordance with article 19 of the Covenant and the Committee’s general comment No. 34 (2011) on the freedoms of opinion and expression, the State party should: (a) Take immediate steps to ensure that everyone can exercise the right to freedom of expression without interference and that any restrictions on the exercise of that right are in conformity with the strict requirements of article 19 (3) of the Covenant; (b) Amend the Media Law to eliminate criminal penalties for journalists exercising their rights under the Covenant; (c) Effectively prevent and combat acts of harassment, intimidation and violence against journalists, media workers and human rights defenders to ensure that they are free to carry out their work without fear of violence or reprisals; (d) Conduct prompt, effective and impartial investigations into allegations of threats or violence against journalists, media workers and human rights defenders, bring the perpetrators to justice and , if they are convicted, punish them with commensurate sanctions , and provide victims with effective remedies.”).