# SOMALIA

#### WHAT HAPPENED IN APRIL?

Somalia's election process made **significant progress**: after most members of parliament were sworn in, both houses selected speakers, paving the way for the **presidential vote**. Meanwhile, Al-Shabaab attacks continued and the AU transition mission got off to a bumpy start.

#### WHY DOES IT MATTER?

The delayed elections sowed divisions and contributed to mounting insecurity. **Al-Shabaab has exploited the stalemate** to launch bold attacks, frequently targeting the election process itself. Finalising it as soon as possible should help **bring stability**.

#### **MARCH TRENDS**

Al-Shabaab launched its **deadliest attack yet** to disrupt elections and also **breached Mogadishu's airport perimeter** for the first time since 2014. Authorities failed to conclude Lower House elections despite progress and the African Union started reconfiguring its peacekeeping mission.

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#### D C Electoral process made major steps forward 290 of 329 members of parliament

were sworn in on 14 April, meeting Prime Minister Mohamed Roble's deadline to inaugurate the new parliament. This came after Roble removed electoral officials opposed to his actions and reached a last-minute agreement on disputed seats with Southwest state President Abdiaziz Laftagareen.

The selection of the parliament's leadership – Abdi Hashi Abdullahi as Upper House speaker and Adan Mohamed Nur (Madobe) as Lower House speaker – went forward in late April despite concerns over the votes' security and location.

### **2** Al-Shabaab attacks on strategic locations

Al-Shabaab conducted several attacks in the capital Mogadishu, notably **firing mortar shells at the parliament complex** during the swearing-in ceremony on 14 April and targeting it again four days later. The group also launched a **suicide attack** at a popular restaurant on 22 April, killing at least six people.

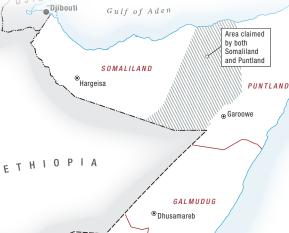
Al-Shabaab continued to demonstrate its presence in Hiraan region (Hirshabelle state), **temporarily seizing the town of Mataban** on 18 and 23 April.

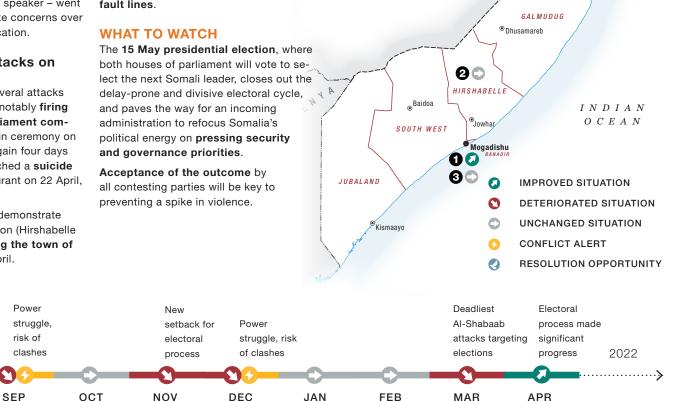
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## **3 C** Bumpy start for African Union transition mission

After the AU Transitional Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) on 1 April took over operations from AMISOM, Roble on 6 April declared the **mission's head, Francisco Madeira** – whom the opposition sees as close to President Farmajo – **persona non grata**, accusing him of "engaging in acts that are incompatible with his status". The move comes amid a longstanding feud between Roble and Farmajo.

The episode highlights the challenges ATMIS will face as it navigates **Somali political** fault lines.





TRENDS TIMELINE

MAY

2021