



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 peace-keeping mission.

1 ➔ 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 Abdiiaziz 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.

3 ➔ **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**.

WHAT TO WATCH The **15 May presidential election**, where both houses of parliament will vote to select the next Somali leader, closes out the delay-prone and divisive electoral cycle, and paves the way for an incoming administration to refocus Somalia's political energy on **pressing security and governance priorities**.

Acceptance of the outcome by all contesting parties will be key to preventing a spike in violence.



TRENDS TIMELINE

