

ISIS-Somalia



SOMAL WILAYAH

OVERVIEW

AS OF FEBRUARY 2025

ISIS-Somalia supports global ISIS activities by raising money, recruiting fighters internationally, and plotting attacks outside Africa. It was formed by defectors from the al-Qa'ida-affiliated group al-Shabaab. ISIS-Somalia pledged allegiance to ISIS in 2015 and gained ISIS's recognition as a branch in 2018. The branch aims to extend ISIS's self-proclaimed caliphate in Africa.

ISIS-Somalia is one of ISIS's most profitable branches, earning millions of dollars each year from extortion. ISIS's al-Karrar office, a cell of senior ISIS members that oversees ISIS operations in central, eastern, and southern Africa, is colocated with ISIS-Somalia. ISIS-Somalia recruits Somalis and fighters from across Africa and the Middle East, including from other ISIS elements. The branch mostly conducts attacks in Somalia but was linked to a plot in Sweden that Swedish authorities disrupted in early 2024.

Operating Area

Primarily in the Golis Mountains of the Bari region in Somalia's semiautonomous Puntland State

Members

700 to 1,500 fighters

Tactics And Targets

ISIS-Somalia uses small arms, IEDs, and weaponized, commercially available UAS to conduct sporadic, small-scale attacks and assassinations against Somali Government officials and security forces, civilians, Puntland security forces, and al-Shabaab. In December 2024, ISIS-Somalia—mostly using foreign operatives—attacked Puntland security forces using suicide bombers, VBIEDs, and small arms in the branch's most complex attack to date.

Terrorist Group Designation

The US State Department designated ISIS-Somalia as a foreign terrorist organization in February 2018 and listed 'Abd al-Qadir Mu'min, the branch's founder, as a specially designated global terrorist in August 2016.



ISIS-Somalia *(continued)*

KEY LEADERS



'Abd al-Qadir Mu'min

Founder; al-Karrar office leader



Abdirahman Fahiye Isse

Leader



Abdiweli Mohamed Yusuf

Senior financier

NOTABLE ATTACKS

31 December 2024

Bari, Somalia

ISIS-Somalia coordinates an attack using VBIEDs, suicide attackers, and small arms against Puntland security forces, killing at least 20 people and injuring dozens.

31 March 2024

Bari, Somalia

ISIS-Somalia attacks an al-Shabaab base in Bari using small arms. The branch claims that it killed more than 50 militants.

8 February 2024

Banaadir, Somalia

ISIS-Somalia claims responsibility for an IED attack against a police vehicle; the attack injures six police officers.

11 December 2023

Bari, Somalia

ISIS-Somalia claims responsibility for a mortar attack against al-Shabaab positions and asserts that it has taken control of the area and has killed at least 20 al-Shabaab fighters.

