



17 July 2014 – The holy month of Ramadan, which began on 29 June, has been marked by terror in [Somalia](#). True to its word, the militant group Al-Shabab has stepped up attacks against government installations and personnel, killing 30 people in less than a month in Mogadishu alone.

Car bombs and armed assaults have targeted the presidential compound, members of parliament and civilians marring the holy month. In response the Somali government has dismissed the police commissioner and the head of the intelligence agency. Yet attacks have continued, the most recent targeting the Ministry of Defence.

Government inability to contain the violence has left many residents, especially in Mogadishu, in a state of constant fear. “If you go looking for bread for your children, you don’t know whether or not you will come back safely,” a Mogadishu resident, who gave only his first name, Abdinasir, [told IRIN](#). “I don’t have any hopes of it getting any better in the foreseeable future.”

Some criticize the government, and the president, for their apparent inability to quell the attacks and protect their people and their employees. “The president is a spectacular failure. He did not keep a word of what he had promised prior to his election,” said Abdirahman Hosh Jibril, an MP and former minister of constitutional affairs, who was one of the people who signed the petition

calling for President Hassan Sheikh's Mohamud's resignation.

Others turn their gaze to the apparent inability of the Somali forces to secure the capital, and the country as a whole. Al-Shabab has successfully attacked all three branches of government - the judiciary, executive and the legislative - and has launched regular attacks in Mogadishu. The armed forces, weakened by clan rivalries, equipment shortages, corruption and indiscipline, appear powerless to keep people safe.

"The Somali government does not have a regular army. The force's loyalty is questionable. They are more accountable to their clans than the federal government of Somalia," Abdisakur Sheikh Hassan, a lecturer and political analyst, told IRIN. Somali police spokesman Qasim Ahmed Roble however stated to IRIN that, "The accusation that we are mixed up with politics is not true. Security is not a political institution".

On the ground, this situation has caused a rapidly deteriorating humanitarian situation. The attacks, combined with poor rains and a disruption to the planting schedule due to hostilities, caused the UN and many international organizations to warn of the possibility of a new famine in the coming months. One third of the population is in need of aid, and NGOs have been warning that communities are just "one shock away from disaster."

The UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia, Philippe Lazzarini, noted: "The elements that could tip Somalia into an acute crisis now stand before us – drought, continued conflict, restricted flow of commercial goods, increasing malnutrition and surging food prices."

Source: [IRIN News](#)