

## Conflict Prevention and Risk Analysis (CPRA) –Pretoria



### CPRA Daily Briefings

**Week 32**

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The **CPRA Daily Briefings** are held weekday mornings in the CPRA Pretoria's Situation Room and the Briefing Notes are the minutes of this meeting during which each regional expert of the Programme reports on the latest human security developments in his/her region, followed by general discussions around the table. An intern then compiles a summary of the meeting, which is reviewed by the respective researchers, and a senior researcher edits the report and provides quality control before returning it to the intern to prepare it for dispatch to the mailing list to which you have subscribed.

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**Today's Briefings  
Compilation**  
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## **Summary of Briefings**

### **East and Horn of Africa**

#### **Somalia: new parliament inaugurated**

A total of 215 parliamentarians were sworn in on Monday, 20 August 2012, at a well-guarded ceremony at the Mogadishu airport, ushering in a new era of reforms in Somalia. The ceremony marked the attainment of one of the key milestones identified by the 2011 consultative meeting on ending the transition in the country. In all, 60 more members are to be added to the new parliament in order to attain the 275 full capacity of the new House, which is supposed to be the Lower House of the post-transition government in Somalia. Despite not being at full capacity, the present number gives the House more than the 185 parliamentarians required to form a quorum.

Apart from marking a reformed parliament as envisaged in the Roadmap, the swearing-in ceremony is significant in the recent history of Somalia in a number of ways. It is the first time in the more than two decades of conflict in the country that such a ceremony has taken place on the soil of Somalia. Previous attempts to put in place institutions, including parliament, took place outside the country. It is also a reflection of the solid resolve and international commitment to deal with the situation in Somalia and to end the transition in 2012. Somalia has seen a number of extensions in the past and stakeholders are bent on making sure this is not one of those.

The international community and a number of stakeholders have praised the inauguration of the parliament and wished the people of Somalia well. Among the numerous comments on the ceremony, United Nations (UN) Secretary General Ban Ki-moon has called it a '... watershed moment on their road to peace, stability and political transformation', while his representative to Somalia, HE Ambassador Augustine Mahiga, who has been key in all the processes in the run-up to the occasion, has described it as a historic moment that '... marks the long-awaited end of the transitional period in Somalia'.

As stated by Mahiga, 20 August 2012 was the actual date scheduled for the end of the transition and therefore Somalia should in fact have had a parliament, speaker and deputies, and a president in place by that date. However, due to delays in meeting a number of the deadlines largely blamed on the politics surrounding the selection and submission of names by the traditional elders, and subsequently the vetting process by the Technical Selection Committee (TSC), the whole process was delayed. As a result, the deadline has passed without Somalia meeting all the important milestones envisaged under the Roadmap.

Among the crucial milestones remaining is the election of a speaker with his deputies and eventually a president, who will in turn appoint a prime minister. Given the hurdles and allegations of vote buying, and meddling by different stakeholders, the next steps represent the most important stages of the process. They therefore require great caution and circumspection in order not to derail the gains made so far. Already, the rejection of about 70 nominations by the TSC is creating tension as some of the clan leaders are refusing any replacements to the names submitted. Questions are also emerging as to why the TSC is not sticking to the criteria for selection and is rejecting some names, since it is not a court of law. This could foment trouble and ignite the age-old clan factor in the security dynamics of the country, which is capable of derailing the process. Such questions have already significantly affected the legitimacy of the process and need to be watched much more closely.

The politics surrounding the election of the speaker and the president are two remaining crucial issues. This is because the two positions cannot go to the same clan and, as such, clans may try to

play their cards to get the optimum result, given the winner-takes-all-nature of the politics surrounding the transition. The situation is still extremely fragile and the country would benefit from maximum support from the international community, while ensuring Somali-centeredness and ownership.

Although Somalia did not meet the deadline for the selection of the speaker and the president, the swearing-in of parliamentarians is a watershed moment for a country that has been riddled with lawlessness for 20 years. The progress made has given new hope to some Somalis and renewed the faith of the international community in the peace process.

**The End**