



By: TA | AP Brief

# Al-Shabab extremists are greatest threat to peace in Somalia and the region



The al-Shabab extremist group remains the greatest immediate **threat to peace** and stability in Somalia and the region, especially Kenya, U.N. experts said in a report.

Despite ongoing efforts by Somali and international forces to curb operations by al-Qaida-linked al-Shabab, "the group's ability to carry out complex, asymmetric attacks in Somalia remains undiminished," the experts said.

They said the threat comes not only from **al-Shabab's** ability to strike — including within the capital, Mogadishu, where it attempted to assassinate the president on March 18 — but from its sophisticated extortion operations, forced recruitment and effective propaganda machine.

The U.N. Security Council on Tuesday voted unanimously to extend authorization for the African Union's "support and stabilization" force in Somalia until Dec. 31, 2026. The force includes 11,826 uniformed personnel, including 680 police.

The extremist group poses a significant threat to neighboring Kenya "by conducting attacks that vary from attacks with improvised explosive devices, which predominantly target security personnel, to attacks on infrastructure, kidnappings, home raids and stealing of livestock," the experts said.

## Al-Shabab's goal remains to remove Somalia's government

This year, al-Shabab averaged around six attacks a month in Kenya, mostly in Mandera and Lamu counties, which border Somalia in the northeast, the panel said.

The experts said al-Shabab's goal remains to remove Somalia's government, "rid the country of foreign forces and establish a Greater Somalia, joining all ethnic Somalis across east Africa under strict Islamic rule."

**The group known as ISIL-Somalia had a fighting force of over 1,000, at least 60% of them foreign fighters**

The panel of experts also investigated the Islamic State's operations in Somalia and reported that fighters were recruited from around the world to join the extremist group, the majority from east Africa.

At the end of 2024, they said the group known as ISIL-Somalia had a fighting force of over 1,000, at least 60% of them foreign fighters.

"Although small in terms of numbers and financial resources compared with al-Shabab, the group's expansion constituted a significant threat to peace and security in Somalia and the broader region," the panel said.