

President Farmaajo's Addis Ababa Interview (Part 2) and a compendium of al-Shabaab atrocities under his watch

by Aweys Omar Mohamoud, PhD

27th April 2020

Welcome to part 2 of an English transcript of President Farmaajo's Addis Ababa interview, with critical commentary. You can read part 1 [here](#). Part 2 has become a compendium of al-Shabaab's ghastly atrocities against the Somali people under President Farmaajo's watch. The table below shows the number of attacks and casualty figures up until the beginning of this year.

AL-SHABAAB ATTACKS AND CASUALTY FIGURES¹		
8 FEBRUARY 2017 – 4 FEBRUARY 2020		
MAJOR ATTACKS	VIOLENT INCIDENTS	CASUALTIES
174	1,073	4,342

The evidence presented in this article shows how the regime of President Farmaajo has completely failed in the primary task of government which is to safeguard the citizens and provide them with safety in every way possible. The reader will have no choice but to conclude that Mr. Farmaajo, like all his predecessors, must not be allowed to go beyond his term, and voters should turn their backs on him if he decides to run again in the anticipated elections.

On why Mr. Farmaajo doesn't communicate with the public or address the nation when there are terrorist outrages in the country?

[President Farmaajo's response: It isn't true that we do not talk to people when there are terrorist outrages. We talk to them and we commiserate with them. But we have different roles in government, and there are new changes that we brought in. These changes pertain to the political culture that existed before. We (determined) that people have

¹ I have only included in this essay incidents that happened after President Farmaajo came into office and, geographically, mainly pertaining to Benaadir, Hirshabeele, and South-West state as these are the areas where the FGS's writ runs. Where I included Puntland or Jubbaland, it's because the incidents are included in the UN report. Casualty figures include death, injury or missing persons from both civilians and soldiers, including 36 al-Shabaab assailants. I must also add that this is definitely not an exhaustive list of al-Shabaab terrorist attacks in the relevant period. See page 14 for a breakdown of these figures.

different roles in government, and that (it is important) to trust the people that you hire so that they can do their jobs. The PM should be able to do his work and you must trust him. The PM must also trust his Security Minister to do his work. Other security agencies must also do their work. But if the President is (interfering) everywhere and the PM is also doing likewise and wouldn't allow the people underneath him to do their work, the institution will not develop. People will squabble over things and, if there is no trust, there will be no cooperation. I have confidence in my government; I have confidence in the PM, and his ministers. There will, of course, be shortcomings in terms of resources and human capacity, but I believe they are doing the work that they were entrusted with, and in the way they were required to do].

COMMENT:

Mr. Farmaajo answers a different set of questions to the one that he was asked. It's difficult to disentangle hard fact from a fable, or truth from lies, but let's try. It's a matter of common knowledge that Mr. Farmaajo, unlike his predecessors, does not address the public after a terrorist outrage in the country. He simply keeps mum on this topic. So why is he not willing to admit responsibility for his actions? Clearly, he's trying to evade the question, which also shows unwillingness on his part to admit that he does make mistakes. But does he accept that it's a mistake not to condemn al-Shabaab's terrorist acts on hapless civilians and soldiers alike?

Al Shabaab has no moral qualms about committing serious evil against the Somali people. As terrorists elsewhere, they believe that they are engaged in a righteous cause, and that their acts are moral and justified. Our leaders must, therefore, not only recognize that this terrorist network are violating a moral principle, which is to say that they are murdering people, but they must also be prepared to speak up publicly against them, and condemn their terrorist acts. If our leaders are not willing and motivated enough to speak up against al-Shabaab atrocities, how can we trust that they will take action to defend the people? As they say, here in the West, the only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing. For our President, not to denounce or condemn the abominable outrages by al-Shabaab violates the most fundamental principle of Somalia's constitution and laws: the right to life.

Mr. Farmaajo declares, in the same breath, that he has trust and confidence in his government, his PM and Ministers, and leaders of security agencies. The problem here is that there's simply no acknowledgement of responsibility for his failures or that of his ministers. He continues with his pious denials of responsibility and gets away scot-free because the reporter is perhaps too deferential to put to him the necessary follow up questions. Mr. Farmaajo should have been taken to task for the claims of trust and confidence in his ministers and officials whose moral blindness and strategic incompetence make it abidingly clear that divorcing power from accountability is an invitation to tragedy.

A few pertinent questions are in order. Mr. President, how do you define trust? Is trust to be earned or is it simply conferred on people in an arbitrary and capricious manner, with no regard for what the individuals concerned have done or not done? Does your government have a Ministerial Code of Conduct that sets out the standards of conduct expected of ministers and how they discharge their duties? In the ministerial code (assuming that you have one), is there a sackable offence for ministers in your government? If so, what would that offence be? Are your ministers required to take public responsibility (i.e., resign) for failures over policy and public administration, disgraceful conduct or incompetence? And who should have taken that public responsibility for the colossal mess of your policies towards al-Shabaab underlined by your government's failure to stop the following long-list of heinous acts of terrorism perpetrated against the Somali people during your time in office:

1. The UN Security Council's 'Report of the Secretary General on Somalia' (para 8) published on 9 May 2017, covering developments between 1 January to 30 April 2017, reported the following incidents attributed to Al Shabaab: 'On 16 February, four mortar rounds landed near Villa Somalia at the time of the presidential handover ceremony. On 19 February, a car bomb in a market area killed at least 34 people and injured 50. On 22 February, three mortar rounds impacted the same area, injuring four civilians. Al-Shabaab senior leaders have expressed hostility towards the new President and vowed to continue waging war on the Federal Government. On 13 March, two explosive-laden vehicles detonated near the former Jazeera Training Centre and in front of the Wehliye Hotel, killing 18 people and injuring others. Another car bombing at a checkpoint near the National Theatre on 21 March resulted in over 10 fatalities and more injured. In both

cases, Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility. On 16 April, a United Nations convoy on its way to a settlement of internally displaced persons in the outskirts of Mogadishu was nearly hit by a roadside bomb. A rear escort vehicle was slightly damaged and two Somali escort guards suffered minor injuries. Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for the bomb, stating that the United Nations was the intended target.' Moreover, Aljazeera reported on 9 April that the new chief of defence forces had survived a suspected suicide car bomb attack close to the defence military compound in Mogadishu. The attack claimed by Al Shabaab killed at least 15 people. Daily Nation reported on 8 May that a car bomb planted by Al Shabaab had exploded close to an Italian café in central Mogadishu killing 6 people.

2. The UN Security Council's 'Report of the Secretary General on Somalia' (para 11) published on 5 September 2017, covering developments between 1 May to 22 August 2017, reported the following incidents attributed to Al Shabaab: Incidents on 8, 15 and 17 May involving explosive-laden vehicles killed at least 11 people and injured many more. On 20 June, an explosive-laden minibus detonated at the entrance gate of the Wadajir District Commission, causing 17 deaths and 30 injuries. Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility. On 22 June, a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device detonated in front of a police station, followed by a secondary explosion targeting first responders, resulting in several deaths and injuries. On 12 June and 4 July, a total of nine mortar shells targeted the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) bases at Mogadishu Stadium and Villa Somalia, killing one soldier and injuring two others. UN news service reported that on 15 June a suicide attack on a pizza restaurant and an adjacent hotel in Mogadishu killed at least 19 people. Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for the attack. Also on June 7, al-Shabaab fighters using VBIEDs, small arms, and mortars attacked and overran an SNA base in Puntland. Security forces reported approximately 70 soldiers and civilians killed.

3. The UN Security Council's 'Report of the Secretary General on Somalia' (paras 8, 9, 10) published 26 December 2017, covering major developments in Somalia during the period from 23 August to 20 December 2017, reported the following incidents attributed to Al Shabaab: In August, there were a number of explosions caused by vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices, mainly in the vicinity of Makka Al-Mukarama Road, an area frequented by Government officials, with some commercial establishments. There

was a steady flow of low-intensity armed clashes, crime and terrorism-related incidents in September, with two large-scale attacks using vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices. Targeted assassinations continued in the city with a record number of 12 assassinations targeting businessmen, security personnel, civil servants and Government officials. Following a brief lull in attacks in September, a suicide attack using VBIED took place on 14 October at a major junction near the Safari Hotel in Mogadishu, followed by a second explosion. The explosion killed an estimated 512 people, with 230 injured and 70 missing, in what is being regarded as the deadliest terrorist attack in Somalia's history. The attack bore the signature of Al-Shabaab although the group has not claimed responsibility. On 28 October, a complex attack targeted the Naasa Hablood 2 Hotel in Mogadishu, in which 23 people were killed. Thirty people sustained injuries in the attack. Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for the attack. Moreover, on December 14, an al-Shabaab suicide bomber attacked the Somali Police Force Academy. Police reported at least 18 officers were killed and 15 injured.

4. The UN Security Council's 'Report of the Secretary General on Somalia' (paras 11 and 12) published 2 May 2018, covering major developments in Somalia during the period from 21 December 2017 to 24 April 2018, reported the following incidents attributed to Al Shabaab: Following a brief lull in January, when mostly small improvised explosive device attacks and targeted assassinations were reported, an estimated 18 people were killed, and 20 were injured on 23 February in twin suicide car bombings in Mogadishu. According to Reuters, the death toll from these twin car bomb blasts has risen to 45, with 36 people injured. Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for the attacks. On 2 March, Al-Shabaab carried out three separate complex attacks on the outskirts of Mogadishu. A Somali national army training camp was targeted in Afgooye, Shabellada Hoose, 25 km north-west of Mogadishu. A second attack occurred in Balcad, 30 km north of Mogadishu in Shabellada Dhexe. The third attack was also carried out near Balcad, targeting a convoy of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). The VOA reported on the 23rd of January that four people have been killed and six others wounded in a remote-controlled improvised explosive device explosion near Mogadishu by Al Shabaab. On March 1, Reuters reported that at least three people were killed and three others wounded when a suicide car bomb blast targeted a security checkpoint in Sinka Dher on the outskirts of Mogadishu. Another three people were killed and two injured in a mortar

attack inside the city itself. On March 28, the VOA reported that a Somali lawmaker was shot dead by Al-Shabaab assassins in her home in Mogadishu.

4.1. During the same period, Somali internet sources reported the following incidents attributed to Al Shabaab: On 5th January, an African Union peacekeeper was killed, and two others were wounded in a landmine explosion by Al Shabaab in Buulaburta district in Hiiraan. On the same day, Al Shabaab assailants shot and killed two civilians in the Koodka neighbourhood in Mogadishu. Also in Afgooye, on the same day, two men including a prominent local traditional elder have been assassinated by gunmen suspected on being Al Shabaab members. On 8 January, at least two Somali soldiers were injured in a grenade attack on an army checkpoint outside Beledweyne, the regional capital of Hiiraan. On 9 January, a bomb explosion in the heart of Mogadishu carried out by Al Shabaab has wounded at least three government soldiers aboard a military vehicle. On 11 January, at least one civilian was killed and several others were wounded after mortar rounds landed near the Presidential Palace in Mogadishu. On 14 January, at least five Somali soldiers were wounded when their military vehicle hit a landmine in Mogadishu. Again on the same day, Al-Shabaab fighters attacked a remote Somali army base north of Mogadishu, killing at least two Somali government soldiers. On January 23, four people have been killed and six others wounded in a remote-controlled improvised explosive device explosion near Mogadishu. On January 27, Al-Shabaab militants have shot and killed an assistant judge in Wanlaweyn district in Lower Shabelle region. On 29 January, an SNA colonel and three soldiers were killed following an attack on a convoy by Al-Shabaab militants in Bay region. On February 1, a roadside bomb explosion killed at least three people and wounded two others in an area outside Mogadishu. On Feb. 4, at least 4 people have been killed and 5 others injured in a bomb explosion inside a house in Mogadishu. On Feb. 5, assailants have shot and killed a former district commissioner in Beledweyne. On the same day, at least three people were killed in separate shootings in Mogadishu by Al-Shabaab assassins. On Feb. 6, at least two people were killed in an attack on a police station by Al-Shabaab militants in Jalalaqsi, Hiiraan region. On Feb. 7, five Somali soldiers were killed and four others wounded in a roadside explosion in Afgooye. On Feb. 10, three civilians were injured in an attack by Al-Shabaab militants in Afgooye. On Feb. 7, a senior Somali military officer was assassinated in Mogadishu. On Feb. 15, one person was injured after an explosive device attached to his vehicle went off in Waaberi district in Mogadishu. On March 2, Al Shabaab suicide car

bomber rammed his explosives-laden minibus into a military camp in Afgooye, a district in Lower Shabelle region, killing at least 5 Somali soldiers and wounding several others. Six other government soldiers died after a remote-controlled landmine targeted a convoy carrying injured soldiers from Afgooye to Mogadishu. On that same day, March 2, at least three AMISOM soldiers were killed in an Al-Shabaab attack near Jowhar. Seven others were injured, four were missing, and one armoured vehicle and four trucks were damaged during the attack. On March 10, at least four members of the Somali security forces were killed and one injured in a remote-controlled improvised explosive device attack on the outskirts of Mogadishu. On March 11, Al-Shabaab assailants have shot and killed at least three people in Mogadishu. On March 12, at least one soldier was killed and several others were wounded in Mogadishu in a shootout between Somali security forces and Al-Shabaab militants. On March 22, a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device (VBIED) detonated in Mogadishu. The bomb exploded across the street from Hotel Weheliye on the main Maka Al-Mukarrama Road. Police said at least 18 people were killed and 22 others were wounded in the explosion. On March 25, at least four people were killed and ten others injured in a suicide car bomb attack near Somalia's parliament headquarters in Mogadishu. On 1 April, Al-Shabaab terrorists attacked an AMISOM camp in Lower Shebelle, killing at least 59 people. 14 militants also died in the attack. On April 6, at least six people, including two soldiers, were killed and three others injured in two suicide car bombings in Mogadishu. On April 12, at least five people were killed and another twelve injured in a bomb attack on a football stadium in the town of Baraawe in Lower Shabelle region. On April 18, at least four Somali soldiers were killed and several others injured in an ambush by Al-Shabaab near Bal'ad.

5. The UN Security Council's 'Report of the Secretary General on Somalia' (paras 12, 13, 14, & 15) published 30 August 2018, covering major developments in Somalia during the period from 25 April to 22 August 2018, reported the following incidents attributed to Al Shabaab: On 1 July, five mortars landed near the Al-Jazeera gate of Mogadishu International Airport. At least 5 civilians were killed and 19 injured. Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility, stating that they had been targeting the airport. On 7 July, two cars laden with explosives drove at intervals into the collocated premises of the Ministry of Internal Security and the Ministry of the Interior, Federal Affairs and Reconciliation, in Mogadishu. Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for the attack, in which 7 civilians were killed, including 3 senior staff of the Ministry of the Interior, Federal Affairs and Reconciliation, and 27

were injured. The attack also destroyed the premises. On 14 July, Al-Shabaab attempted another complex attack close to the Hotel SYL and Mogadishu peace gardens, where the main checkpoint controlling the entry to Villa Somalia was located. Al-Shabaab claimed that the attack had targeted the Villa Somalia. Two vehicles carrying improvised explosive devices and three gunmen were involved, which left at least six people dead. The Hotel SYL, where the Ministry of the Interior, Federal Affairs and Reconciliation was temporary located, was also badly damaged. Pro-ISIL elements also claimed responsibility for three assassinations in Mogadishu in May and six incidents in June, including an attack using a remote - controlled improvised explosive device in which three soldiers were killed in Mogadishu and five in other areas of the country. Meanwhile, on May 9, the VOA reported that a suicide bomber killed at least 14 people and wounded 15 more at a market in the town of Wanlaweyn in the Lower Shabelle region of Somalia. Reuters reported that, on May 10, a bomb targeting a military vehicle in the town of Wanlaweyn exploded, killing seven soldiers, including a commander, and wounding two more. On June 5, Reuters reported that two lawmakers from Hirshabelle state were killed along with several of their bodyguards in an ambush near the Somali capital Mogadishu claimed by militant Islamist group al Shabaab. On August 5, Reuters reported a car bomb explosion in front of a restaurant at the busy street of Maka al Mukaram, killing 3 people and injuring 7 others. The front of the restaurant had been destroyed, blood stained the floor and chairs had been strewn around by the blast.

5.1. Somali internet sources also reported, during the same period, the following incidents attributed to Al Shabaab: On April 28, at least seven people, including three senior military officials, were killed and eight others injured in a suicide bombing in the city of Galkayo in central Somalia. On May 19, a Somali military officer was killed after explosives attached to his car exploded in the Somali capital Mogadishu. On 31st May, a youth activist was shot and killed by Al-Shabaab assassins in Mogadishu. On June 1, Al-Shabaab attacked the town of Moqokori in Hiiraan, claiming that they have killed 72 soldiers in the fighting. On June 2, Al Shabaab Gunmen shot dead two security soldiers in the Somali capital Mogadishu. A civilian passerby was also killed in the shootout. On June 5, two government soldiers and eight militants were killed when Al-Shabaab terrorists attacked a military camp in Baardheere, Gedo. On June 6, gunmen shot and killed a former Somali member of parliament in Mogadishu. On June 15, at least one Somali soldier was killed when an improvised explosive device detonated in the Dayniile

district of Mogadishu. On June 25, two soldiers were killed after the vehicle carrying them ran over an improvised explosive device near the town of Balad in Middle Shabelle region. The explosion was followed by heavy gunfire. On June 27, a member of the Somali National Army was killed by suspected Islamic State assailants in Mogadishu. On June 27, at least three government soldiers were killed and seven others injured in a bomb explosion targeting a military vehicle near the town of Wanlaweyn in Lower Shabelle region. On June 28, at least five people were killed and several others injured after Al-Shabaab militants attacked SNA forces at a village in Qoriyoley district of Lower Shabelle region. On June 29, armed men said to be members of Islamic State shot and killed two Somali soldiers and a civilian in the Mogadishu and Ceelasha Biyaha. On June 30, a bodyguard was killed and six others injured, including the governor of Lower Shabelle region. On July 9, three people, including a former Somali electoral delegate, were shot dead in separate attacks in Mogadishu. On July 13, at least three soldiers were killed and four others injured when a grenade was thrown into a house in Baidoa. On July 25, a roadside bomb exploded in the village of Ceelasha Biyaha, injuring four soldiers. On that same day, July 25, at least six government soldiers were killed, while several others were injured when a roadside bomb explosion targeted a military convoy near the town of Wanlaweyn in Lower Shabelle region. On August 5, a suicide car bomb attack near the gate of a military base in Afgoye killed four people and injured ten others.

6. The UN Security Council's 'Report of the Secretary General on Somalia' (paras 12, 13, 15, & 18) published 21 December 2018, covering major developments in Somalia during the period from 23 August to 13 December 2018, reported the following incidents attributed to Al Shabaab: On 2 September, a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device attack, allegedly targeting the compound of the District Commissioner in Howlwadaag District, killed four people and injured six children. On 1 October, a suicide vehicle -borne improvised explosive device hit an Italian military convoy of the European Union Training Mission in Somalia near the Ministry of Defence: three civilian bystanders were killed and 11 others injured. On 9 November, Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for a complex attack against the Sahafi Hotel. Two vehicles with explosives detonated in front of the main entrance and a third exploded close to an adjacent hotel and a national intelligence and security agency checkpoint. Following the detonations, five attackers attempted to enter the Sahafi Hotel compound, where an event was in progress involving numerous political officials: the attackers were killed before they were able to enter the compound.

Over 50 people, including seven Al-Shabaab militants, were killed in the attack. On 13 October, two suicide bombers targeted a restaurant and a hotel in Baidoa, killing more than 20 people and injuring 50. Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility. On 3 November, eight armed men in civilian attire claiming to be police, including militiamen travelling in a truck, attacked a United Nations convoy on a mission to Dhusamareb. The members of the convoy were not hurt, and no United Nations vehicles were damaged. On 10 September, AlJazeera reported that at least six people were killed and another 16 injured when a car bomb exploded outside a government office in Mogadishu. Al-Shabab claimed responsibility for the attack. On 22 September, the VOA reported that one person was killed and another was injured after two car bombings hit the capital of Somalia, Mogadishu.

6.1. Somali internet sources also reported the following incidents attributed to Al Shabaab: On 31 August, Al-Shabaab militants attacked an army base killing 3 and injuring 7 in Afgooye. On August 27, at least two soldiers were killed in a road blast at Al-Baraka junction in Mogadishu's Hodan district. On 15 September, a magnetic bomb placed under the car of a MP in Mogadishu, Somalia killed his driver and left the MP seriously injured, Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility. On 20 September, a bomb planted by Al-Shabaab militants exploded killing at least 4 Somali soldiers and wounding several more in Lower Shabelle region. On 31 October, a radio journalist was gunned down by suspected Al-Shabaab militants in Mogadishu while undertaking afternoon prayers in a mosque. On 2 November, at least four Somali soldiers were killed in a bomb and shooting attack targeting a military armored vehicle in a Mogadishu neighborhood as they were traveling to the Hiliwaa area. Al Shabaab claimed responsibility. On 3 November, three Somali soldiers and one civilian were killed when a landmine struck a vehicle carrying them in the Weydow Area near Mogadishu. On 8 November, a Somali lawmaker from a regional parliament was killed in Hamar-weyne in Mogadishu when a bomb placed under his car exploded. Al Shabaab claimed responsibility for the attack. On 18 November, two people were killed and two others were wounded when a bomb exploded near a vehicle that a soldier was driving in the Weydo Area near Mogadishu. The soldier and a civilian passerby were killed by the blast. On 18 November, 5 people were killed and 7 others injured when a gun battle broke out near Guriceel between Somali Soldiers and Al-Shabaab. Most of the dead were civilians. On 20 November, a Somali police officer and his bodyguard were shot dead outside a hotel in Mogadishu by Al-Shabaab gunmen. On

22 November, Al-Shabaab attacked a police station in the town of Beled Hawo leaving three people dead. On 24 November, a bomb attack by Al-Shabaab on an armored vehicle carrying soldiers in the Balad killed 10 soldiers and injured several others. On 25 November, three people were injured in a bomb attack on a coffee shop in Baidoa. Al-Shabaab assailants are suspected of carrying out the attack. On 26 November, a suicide car bomber detonated at the gate of a religious center in Galkayo run by a controversial cleric killing 20 people (including the cleric), and 20 others were injured. Afterwards four gunmen stormed the building and began an exchange of fire killing 3 officers and resulting in 3 militants dead and one arrested. The attack was claimed by Al-Shabaab. It said the cleric was killed for mixing music in religious ceremonies. On 26 November, a car bomb blast targeting a crowded marketplace in Mogadishu killed 8 people and injured 15 others. The attack is thought to have been carried out by Al-Shabaab. On 4 December, a Somali journalist in Mogadishu was badly wounded when a bomb concealed in his car blew up. No group has claimed responsibility but Al-Shabaab militants are suspected to be behind the attack. On December 6, a roadside bomb blast struck a military vehicle near Dhanaane on the coastal road linking Mogadishu to the port city of Marka, killing 7 soldiers and two generals, and wounding several others. Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for the attack. On December 9, a bomb blast ripped through a military vehicle in Mogadishu, causing the death of 3 soldiers and injuring 2 others. Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for the attack. On December 12, Al-Shabaab executed three people, including two soldiers in Lower Shabelle.

7. The UN Security Council's 'Report of the Secretary General on Somalia' (paras 12, 13, 15, & 18) published 15 May 2019, covering major developments in Somalia during the period from 14 December 2018 to 4 May 2019, reported the following incidents attributed to Al Shabaab: in March alone, there were 77 attacks using improvised explosive devices across the country. That was the highest number in any single month since 2016. The majority of incidents were reported in Mogadishu and in the Shabelle Hoose, Jubada Hoose and Gedo regions. In Mogadishu, there were 28 incidents involving improvised explosive devices, including two attacks by suicide vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices, two attacks by other vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices and one complex attack. On 15 February, there was a mortar attack at a military base of the United States of America in Baledogle, Shabelle Hoose. On 2 March, Al-Shabaab launched five mortar rounds into Villa Somalia. Al-Shabaab continued to carry out attacks by

suicide vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices. These included a complex attack against a forward operating base of the national security forces at Bar Sunguuni in Kismaayo, Juba Hoose, on 19 January, and the targeting by suicide vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices of the Daljirka Dahsoon monument near Parliament in Mogadishu, on 29 January. Al-Shabaab also continued to conduct complex attacks in Mogadishu, including the attack on 28 February against the Makkah al-Mukaramah hotel and the attack against the ministries of public works and labour in Mogadishu on 23 March, resulting in the killing of the Deputy Minister of Labour, Saqar Ibrahim Abdalla.

7.1. Meanwhile, Somali internet sources reported the following incidents attributed to Al Shabaab: on December 22, about 26 people were killed and at least 40 others were injured in car bomb attacks near the president's residence and a radio station, in Mogadishu. The attacks were perpetrated by Al-Shabaab. On December 25, two people were killed and 13 others were wounded when a bomb exploded in Baidoa, amid youth celebrations. On December 28, two people were killed and two others were injured in a bomb explosion in Beledweyne. On December 29, eight Somali soldiers were killed in an Al-Shabaab terrorist attack on their military base in Bay Region. On December 31, a Somali military official was shot and killed by Al-Shabaab gunmen in Mogadishu. On February 4, a car bombing at a shopping mall in the city of Mogadishu left 11 people killed and 10 others injured. Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for the attack. On 28 February, at least 29 people were killed and 80 others were injured when in two suicide car bomb blasts near a hotel in a busy street Mogadishu. Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for the attack which continued to the next day, March 1. On 23 February, at least 38 are dead in two car bomb blasts, claimed by al-Shabab, reported near presidential palace in Somali capital. Many more were injured in the attack in which 5 attackers participated. On 23 March, at least 18 people were killed and 26 others were injured, following a car bomb attack at the Wehliye hotel in Mogadishu. Most of the victims were civilians. On March 28, 15 people were killed when a car bomb exploded outside a restaurant in Mogadishu. No group claimed responsibility, but the attack bore all the hallmarks of an al-Shabaab attack.

8. The UN Security Council's 'Report of the Secretary General on Somalia' (paras 14, 15, & 16) published 15 August 2019, covering major developments in Somalia during the period from 5 May to 4 August 2019, reported the following incidents attributed to Al

Shabaab: a total of 228 incidents occurred during Ramadan, from 5 May to 3 June; higher than in Ramadan in 2017 and 2018. Some 35 per cent of violent incidents occurred in the Banaadir region, with southern Somalia accounting for 34 per cent, indicating that Al-Shabaab's operational focus did not change during the reporting period. Al-Shabaab perpetrated several attacks by vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices in Mogadishu. On 14 May, in Warta Nabada district, a suicide bomber drove such a device into the district administrative office, as a result of which 4 people were killed and 10 injured. On 22 May, in Boondheere district, a suicide bomber used a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device to target a checkpoint at a National Intelligence and Security Agency jail. At least 17 people were killed in the blast, and 20 others were injured. On 15 June, another incident involving such a device occurred at a checkpoint near the Federal Parliament, with nine people reportedly killed and 20 others injured. Targeting and killing of civilians continued, with at least 11 civilians killed in Mogadishu during the final week of May. On 22 July, at the Km. 4 Junction road neighbourhood, a national staff member of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations was injured in a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device explosion at the checkpoint. On 24 July, 10 people were reported killed in an improvised explosive device attack at the Banaadir Regional Administration in Mogadishu. The casualties included two district commissioners and other senior officials. The Mayor of Mogadishu and Governor of Banaadir succumbed to his injuries on 1 August in Qatar, where he had been taken for medical treatment. Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility.

9. The UN Security Council's 'Report of the Secretary General on Somalia' (paras 15, 16, 17, 18, & 19) published 13 February 2020, covering major developments in Somalia during the period from 5 November 2019 to 4 February 2020, reported the following incidents attributed to Al Shabaab: The security situation in Somalia remained volatile during the reporting period, with security incidents increasing from 239 in November to 266 in December, followed by a slight decline to 235 in January. On 28 December, a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device was detonated at the Ex-control Afgooye Junction checkpoint, in Mogadishu. More than 90 persons, including 2 Turkish engineers, 30 Mogadishu University students and 58 civilian bystanders, were reportedly killed, and 140 were injured. Most of the casualties were university students. On 30 December, Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for the attack. Al-Shabaab carried out a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device attack on a police force in Afgooye district, Shabelle Hoose,

on 18 January. An unverified number of casualties was reported. Al-Shabaab had also carried out a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device attack in Mogadishu on 8 January, targeting a security checkpoint near the presidential palace, which resulted in the death of at least four persons. On 30 January, there were improvised explosive device attacks targeting six closed-circuit television cameras in Howlwaadag, Xamar Jajab and Xamar Weyne districts in Mogadishu. No casualties were reported following the explosions, and no group or individual claimed responsibility for the attack. The table below shows a breakdown of casualty figures from al-Shabaab terrorist attacks and violent security incidents during Mr. Farmaajo's administration.

FIGURES FOR AL-SHABAAB MAJOR TERRORIST ATTACKS² UNDER PRESIDENT FARMAAJO'S WATCH 8 FEBRUARY 2017 - 4 FEBRUARY 2020			
Category	Dead	Wounded	Missing
Mass casualties	935	1,320	75
Civilians	586	870	-
Service personnel (i.e., soldiers, police, security staff)	350	192	14
Attackers	35	1	-
Children	6	-	-
Total	1,871	2,382	89
VIOLENT INCIDENTS/ATTACKS INVOLVING AL-SHABAAB³			
DATE		INCIDENTS/ATTACKS	
March 2019		105	
5 May – 3 June 2019		228	
November 2019		239	
December 2019		266	
January 2020		235	
Total		1,073	

² These figures are not definitive and are certainly not highly reliable. The level of statistical confusion in the figures published by all manner of people, some credible and some less so, and the level of underreporting of Somalia's al-Shabaab terrorist casualties are quite staggering. There's certainly a need for someone with the responsibility to collect, analyse, and disseminate these figures for the purposes of telling the truth about this topic.

³ It's not clear why out of the 36 months that the UN Security Council's 'Report of the Secretary General on Somalia' covers that I looked at mentions total monthly violent incidents involving al-Shabaab for only 5 months and 3 days. Why don't these UNSC reports provide monthly totals for the remaining 31 months? Nor is it clear whether these monthly totals also include all or some of the attacks which have also been reported by news agencies and Somali internet sources. The UN reports also do not define what they mean by 'violent incidents' or 'attacks.' For this report, I have added the monthly totals they provided and called them 'violent incidents' as opposed to 'major attacks.' I'm using the latter phrase for the major bombings and other attacks including assassinations reported in the news media and Somali internet sources.

Mr. Farmaajo came into office three plus years ago, promising to build a credible SNA that can take the fight to al-Shabaab. The President may have been sincere in his moral commitments, but he failed to build the unity of purpose necessary among the FGS and FMSs to create a competent State security service capable of conducting successful military operations against al-Shabaab. His government hasn't come up with any real policies and strategies to deal with a resurgent terror network which, as I write, remains in control of vast segments of Somalia and major roads throughout the country, and is also present in Mogadishu where it regularly conducts attacks as well as collects taxes. According to a recent report,⁴ al-Shabaab is currently estimated to have 5,000–7,000 active combatants, a substantial increase from 2017 when its fighters were estimated at 2,000–3,000. What this means is that, if this report is accurate, al-Shabaab's active fighters have increased by over 133% over the course of President Farmaajo's administration. Further evidence that proves false Mr. Farmaajo's claim that 'his government has been conducting successful offensive operations against al-Shabaab.'

It has been said that when he was prime minister in 2010, Mr. Farmaajo scored kudos with the army for getting its salaries paid on time and reducing the huge corruption in the disbursement. President Farmaajo could not replicate that previous success. His government is mired in corruption, and prioritizes private interests over the establishment of effective institutions. His ministers are afflicted with hubris and arrogance, and have substituted special interest cronyism for public interest. A ministerial job requires not only a commitment and responsibility but also technocratic skills and appropriate educational and experiential qualifications which are necessary for the development of leadership qualities, accomplishments and crisis management skills, and a robust insight into the science of politics. Not all individuals in the cabinet possess those skills and qualities which means, unfortunately, not everyone in cabinet can be on top of their game. Of course, these appointments were a choice made by Mr. Farmaajo and his advisors. I guess, like everyone else, he will have to accept and deal with the consequences of his choice.

A wise man once said that there are no secrets to success. It is the result of preparation, hard work, and learning from failure. As the record above shows, Mr. Farmaajo and his

⁴ Day, Adam (Case study authors: Vanda Felbab-Brown, & Fanar Haddad) (2020) Hybrid Conflict, Hybrid Peace: How militias and Paramilitary groups shape post-conflict transitions. United Nations University, Centre for Policy Research, p. 120.

government clearly have not done 'the preparation, hard work and learning from failure' necessary to develop effective policies and strategies to defend the people from al-Shabaab's ongoing terrorist onslaught. I'd therefore argue that Mr. Farmaajo's declaration of trust and confidence in his PM and ministers ignores the colossal mess and ugly reality of death, destruction and disruption wrought by al-Shabaab on the Somali people that his government failed to address over the course of his administration.

Dr. Aweys Omar Mohamoud (@AweysOMohamoud) has a PhD from the Institute of Education, University College London (UCL). He has recently worked as an advisor to the Ministry of Education, Culture & Higher Education (MoECHE), Federal Government of Somalia in Mogadishu.