

# CDG

Center for Democracy & Governance

"Holding Power Accountable"

## Inside SOMALILAND: Laascaanood FIGHTING:



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Badacas, behind Statehouse,  
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## LASANOD, SOMALILAND



**G**eographically, Laascaanod has mostly calcareous soil and deep red soil, especially in the southern part. The climate is semi-arid, usually hot during the day and cold at night. The region has poor infrastructure and bad roads, except for the main tarmac road that traverses the town to connect Laascaanod to Garowe and Burao. The air and sea infrastructure have collapsed after the war. Laascaanod had an airstrip to the east, but it is not functional. It is

only an open field with no fence; planes that transported Khat used the airstrip during 2012–2022. There is no seaboard, so people rely on Bosaaso and Berbera ports for commercial supplies.

Laascaanod is the regional capital of the Sool region where every Dhulbahante sub-clan and lineage has some presence. The people of Laascaanod engage in business and trade with their neighboring communities and practice pastoralism as a subsistence way of life. According to the survey, the major driver of the conflict is the political conundrum bred by Somaliland and Puntland over control of territory between Laascaanod in Sool and Yocada, 15 km from Garowe, according to the British colonial boundary. The town of Laascaanod has been under the full control of the Somaliland Government since 2007 and provides social services and security to the citizens of the region. The survey fact that 97% of control and influence is taken by Somaliland. Policing and social services are provided by the Somaliland Government.

Laascaanod clans pride themselves on a common ancestry of the major clans of Mohamed Garaad and Baharsame. And the Mohamoud Garaad family tree leads to the Jaamac Siyaad and Ugaadh Yahar Siyaad sub-clans. There are also minority clans of Ugaasyo including sub-clans of Haamud, Hassan and Mohamoud.

There are armed clan militias which fought against each other. For example, in the first half of 2020, around 27 people were killed in different parts of Sool and Buhoodle between neighboring clans. In July 2020, Reer Elmi and Fiqi-shinni fought in Adhicideeye, which is 30 km north of Las Anod, where 3 men died and 2 were wounded.

In August 2020, Jama Siyad and Nalleeye Ahmed fought in Jidbale, which is 73 km northeast of Las Anod, where 6 men died, and 4 others were wounded. Not only clan conflicts, but also organized crimes such as assassinations are regarded as one of the major challenges of Las Anod's security and safety. In March 2020, the regional court chairman was also killed in a bomb blast. Later, a few days after the car blast, the regional intelligence commissioner was also assassinated in an attempt to

eliminate all evidence. This shows the presence of organized networks easily implemented political assassinations and deter both the state officials and the local people from doing their day-to-day work.

## UNDERSTANDING THE FIGHTING,

Somaliland, a self-declared state in the Horn of Africa, has been marred by conflict and fighting in recent years. The conflict in Lasanod is between the Somaliland Government and interested groups led by the local clans, the interested groups may be hidden by the interested groups known as Al-Shabaab or Daacish. This essay will examine the causes of the unrest, the impact it has had on the region, and no possible solutions.

The conflict in Lasanod and East of Sanaag region is rooted in a long-standing territorial dispute between Somaliland government and Puntland. The two administrations have been fighting over control of the city and its surrounding areas, resulting in numerous deaths and displacement of families. The conflict has had a significant impact on the region, with many families forced to flee their homes and seek refuge elsewhere.



The fighting in Puntland is linked to the presence of Al-Shabaab, a militant group that has been active in Somalia for many years. Al-Shabaab has carried out numerous attacks in Somalia, targeting government officials and civilians alike. The group has been able to establish a foothold in Puntland, and has been carrying out attacks on government targets in the region. The fight

ing has had a significant impact on the region, with many people forced to flee their homes and seek refuge elsewhere.

The unrest in Lascaanod has had a significant impact on the region, both socially and economically. The conflict and fighting have disrupted people's lives, causing significant social and economic disruption. Many families have been forced to flee their homes and seek refuge elsewhere, leading to a displacement crisis in the region. The unrest has also had a negative impact on the economy, with many businesses forced to close and people losing their jobs.

Possible solutions to the unrest in Somaliland include working with local community leaders to find a lasting solution to the conflict in Lasanod. This could involve setting up a reconciliation committee that includes representatives from all clans, as well as members of civil

society and the business community. The committee would work towards finding common ground and building trust between the two sides. The government could work with international partners to counter the threat posed by Al-Shabaab. This could involve providing training and resources to security forces in the region, as well as providing economic incentives to communities to discourage them from supporting the group.

In conclusion, the unrest in Laascaanod has had a significant impact on the region, both socially and economically. The conflict in Lasanod and the fighting in Puntland have disrupted people's lives, causing significant social and economic disruption. Possible solutions to the unrest include working with local community leaders to find a lasting solution to the conflict in Lasanod and working with international partners to counter the threat posed by Al-Shabaab in Puntland.

It is important that the Somaliland government and local community leaders work together to find a lasting solution that addresses the underlying causes of the unrest and promotes long-term peace and stability in the region.

## ADMINISTRATIVE/GOVERNANCE PRACTICES IN LAASCAANOOD

Since the pronouncement of the Puntland State of Somalia in August 1998, conflict over the border between Somaliland and Somalia/Puntland has been on the horizon. From the Somaliland perspective, Eastern Sanaag and Sool regions are parts of Somaliland according to the British–Italian treaty in 18942 whereas Puntland claims that the people living in these two regions hail from the main Darood clan of Puntland and their sub-clans Majeerteen and Harti, thus justifying its legitimacy in the areas on the grounds of blood affiliation.

The intricate clan war leaders and centrality of the gun culture demonstrated by administrations and citizens in the disputed areas destabilize the region. According to the intimate discussion with one of the regional governors, the gun is the tool of asserting power, influence, prestige and security of individuals. The gun here can be used to kill any time at the discretion of the owner. Unfortunately, authorities have done nothing to control private ownership of guns and gun circulation in the community.

## CAUSES OF LAASCAANOOD CONFLICT

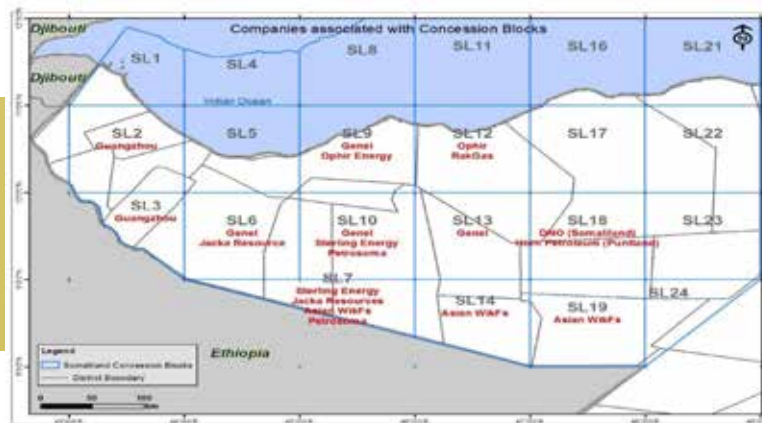




## THE LINK BETWEEN OIL EXPLORATION AND THE CURRENT FIGHTING

The exploitation of mineral resources in Laascaanod is an important trigger of conflicts in the region. For example, mineral Block SL 18 became controversial. Puntland and Somaliland both have contracted companies to drill and extract minerals. This confrontation on economic resources has spurred the conflict. On 8 September 2014, DNO ASA, the Norwegian oil and gas operator, announced that it had been granted a two-year extension of the term on its production-sharing agreement for Block SL18 in Somaliland. The first exploration period was to end on 8 November 2017.

The Government of Somaliland, after conducting Block SL18 field survey and environmental assessment studies over the block, had put in place a planned Oil Protection Unit (OPU) to support the international oil companies operating in Somaliland. The OPU was expected to be operational in 2015. In the midst of these developments, the Puntland Government also contracted Horn Petroleum on its side of Block 18.



## CRIME IN LASCAANOOD

Laascaanod is the largest urban centre in Dhulbahante territory. Every Dhulbahante sub-clan and lineage has some presence in the town. Traditionally, the city was inhabited mainly by Baharasame and Barkad and some Jaamac Siyad groups toward the south (Hawd) and Ugaadhyahaan groups toward the north (Nugaal valley). In the east of the city, groups such Qayaad, Ugaasyo reside. Toward the west Jaamac Siyaad are dominant. The Lasanod community has strong connection with Garowe (Majeerteen) as well as Habarjelo and Habaryonis of Isak. Lasanod community are Muslim-Sunni.

Since the Somaliland Government took control of Las Anod, crime rates have dramatically decreased. Rape, political assassinations and vengeance are three of the most common crimes in Las Anod, but the political assassinations were the biggest crimes and have targeted people working with the Somaliland government and for the believes in Somaliland . Senior intelligence officers, political figures, Army, and other key important people have been assassinated mostly at nightmare between 6pm to 8 pm.



### THE ROLE OF TERRORIST GROUPS

Due to the fierce opposition of the local community towards the Somaliland administration, there are occasionally explosives and hit-and-run incidents in Lasanod. Other groups such as AS take advantage of this

situation and sometimes execute assassination against specific targets. security incidents such as road bomb, direct assassinations and hand grenade offensives was very common and more frequent in Lasanod between 2008 and 2011 although the rate of such incidents decreased starting from 2018.



### **WHY IN PUNTLAND?**

Since the formation of the Puntland state of Somalia in 1998, Lasanod was the center of border dispute between Somaliland and Puntland. There were sporadic armed clashes between Somaliland government and Puntland administration. Puntland claims Sool, Sanaag and Buhoodle are part of its territory as a tribal (Darood) whereas Somaliland claimed these territories are part of Somaliland as colonized boundaries after Somaliland gain their independence in 1960 from the British colony. In 2007, Somaliland army took control of the town and the town has been under the control of Somaliland since then.



### **WHO IS INVOLVED THE FIGHTING**

As Somaliland government made press releases and press conferences several times a force from eastern countries including Puntland administration, Somalia and Ethiopia are involved. As Somaliland government confirmed AS and other terrorists' groups are involved but not official witness presented to the media so far. Parties involved the fighting have different interests and positions for example the Puntland state under federal Somalia government has the interest to take the power on administration a tribal way.



### **CONCERNS**

It should be emphasized the security and safety of citizens will remain very fragile and volatile if the causes and drivers are not addressed properly. Clan conflicts will more likely remain a challenge if the political issues are not addressed. Organized groups, whether active or invisible, if not traced to the base or root of their operations, a crisis state will emerge.

The border conflict between Somaliland and Puntland needs to be addressed to end the conflict in the region that has undermined service delivery and stability. Revenge, land disputes, rape, drugs and kidnapping are challenges that hamper the security and safety of the citizens. These are explainable

by an administrative vacuum in the areas known as a demilitarized zone where criminal elements cause havoc, mobilizing and freely moving from their safe havens in the Galgala Mountain.