



SOUTH WEST STATE OF SOMALIA

Office of the President

Date: 27th August, 2026

PRESS RELEASE

SOUTH WEST STATE REJECTS ALLEGATIONS LINKING ITS DARAWISH FORCES TO AL-SHABAAB AND CALLS ON AUSSOM TO MAINTAIN NEUTRALITY

Baidoa, Somalia, 27 August 2026 - The Office of the President of the South West State of Somalia expresses serious concern regarding the African Union Commission memorandum dated 21 August 2026, reference CPAPS/B3/779.26, concerning a request submitted by the Federal Government of Somalia to the African Union Support and Stabilization Mission in Somalia (AUSSOM) regarding the security situation in South West State.

The South West State Government categorically rejects the unfounded allegations linking its Darawish Forces to the Al-Shabaab terrorist group. The Darawish Forces are lawfully established security forces mandated to protect civilians, public institutions, security and the constitutional order of South West State. Describing these forces as “militias affiliated with Al-Shabaab,” without independently verified evidence, endangers civilians and security personnel and risks undermining public confidence in AUSSOM.

South West State warns against conflating Somalia’s internal political disagreements with the legitimate fight against terrorism. Disputes between the Federal Government and Federal Member States must be resolved through dialogue, constitutional processes and an inclusive political framework. Using military force to pursue political objectives could further intensify violence, displacement and social division.

South West State recognizes and appreciates the sacrifices made by African Union forces and their longstanding contribution to peace and security in Somalia. It also welcomes the clear instruction contained in the African Union memorandum that AUSSOM must maintain political neutrality and impartiality and refrain from involvement in internal political disputes.

We call upon the African Union and AUSSOM to uphold this instruction fully and undertake an independent verification of the facts before supporting or participating in any military action.

The Office of the President specifically warns against any action that could result in violence, bombardment, displacement or harm to civilians in Baidoa and its surrounding areas. All operations must comply fully with international humanitarian law, civilian-protection obligations and AUSSOM's rules of engagement.

South West State calls upon AUSSOM troop-contributing countries, the African Union, the United Nations and international partners not to rely upon unverified information or politically motivated allegations. The South West State Government remains ready to share relevant information and participate in an independent fact-finding process, while prioritizing dialogue, stability and the safety of the Somali people.

#END#

To: African Union Commission / AUSSOM Leadership

CC: UN Somalia / UNSOM
AUSSOM Troop-Contributing Countries
European Union Delegation to Somalia
United States Embassy in Somalia
United Kingdom Embassy in Somalia
Türkiye Embassy in Somalia
IGAD
Relevant UN and humanitarian/civilian-protection partners