

THE SOMALI ECONOMIC MONITOR

The Somali Economic Monitor - Full English Articles + Somali Summaries

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Contact: info@lailmaaa-holding.com | Disclaimer: This bulletin is prepared for informational and constructive development purposes. Views expressed are evidence-based observations intended to encourage economic growth, investment, institutional strengthening, and sustainable development

English:

The Wrong Role Model in Political Leadership

What Are Young Somalis Learning from Today's Leaders?

Somalia's political leadership is not only responsible for making decisions today; it is also teaching the next generation what leadership looks like. Young people working in government offices,



Parliament and public institutions closely observe ministers, politicians, military commanders and other influential figures. What they see today may shape how they lead Somalia tomorrow.

Unfortunately, the example being presented is often not the one the country needs.

A considerable share of Somalia's political class appears preoccupied with obtaining, retaining or negotiating government positions. Political conversations frequently revolve around who will receive which office, who supports the government, who belongs to the opposition and how future positions will be distributed.

This political competition now dominates much of Somalia's public discussion. Radio stations, television programs and social media platforms spend enormous amounts of time discussing individual politicians: who supports whom, who has joined the opposition, who is likely to receive a position and who may lose one.

Meanwhile, the productive issues that directly affect the population receive far less attention.

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Opposition or preservation of the status quo?

A functioning opposition is necessary in any democratic society. Government decisions must be examined, questioned and, where necessary, challenged. Opposition itself is not the problem.

The concern arises when political opposition becomes primarily a vehicle for obtaining positions, protecting established interests or preventing change.

Some government initiatives may be viewed by citizens as positive steps. Yet even potentially useful reforms can face resistance from political actors who benefit from maintaining the old political arrangements. Their objective may not always be to offer a better policy alternative, but to preserve a system through which influential individuals secure positions, privileges and access to resources.

There is also public concern that some political actors may prioritize private networks or external interests over the long-term interests of Somali citizens. Whether these concerns are always justified or not, they reflect a serious lack of public confidence in the country's political culture.

Political disagreement should be based on policies and national priorities—not merely on who receives a position.

The Deeper Danger

The immediate concern is the inefficient use of time and public resources. But the deeper and more lasting danger is what young Somali professionals are learning from this political culture.

Young people working around senior officials are learning how to navigate political relationships, secure positions and protect personal interests rather than how to serve communities and build the productive economy. More concerning is the perception that public systems and assets—including security arrangements, checkpoints, official vehicles, offices and other government resources—can become part of this political navigation, reinforcing the impression that public institutions exist to serve political influence rather than citizens. The lesson for the next generation should be very different: public leadership should create employment, develop agriculture, livestock and fisheries, strengthen productive businesses and cooperatives, mobilize responsible investment, improve public services and transform Somalia's resources into sustainable prosperity.

A young professional who spends several years observing unproductive political behavior may eventually believe that this is the normal meaning of leadership. This creates a leadership problem not only for today, but also for Somalia's future.



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A wealthy country with limited productive leadership

Somalia is not a country without resources. It possesses one of Africa's largest livestock populations, extensive marine resources, a valuable blue economy, fertile agricultural lands and a young, energetic population.

Yet these resources remain largely underdeveloped.

Where are the leaders aggressively pursuing the modernization of 'commercial' agriculture? Who is systematically developing the livestock value chain? Who is building fish-processing capacity, creating markets, supporting productive industries and preparing young people for these sectors?



Political discussions receive enormous attention, while the productive sectors capable of creating employment and national income remain secondary.

Somalia does not need leaders whose principal achievement is political survival. It needs leaders who can turn national resources into jobs, industries, exports and stronger communities.

One person, one vote and political accountability

One of the most important ways to change this political culture is the establishment of a credible one-person, one-vote electoral system.

Under a genuine public electoral system, politicians must seek support directly from citizens. They must explain what they have achieved, what policies they support and how they intend to improve the lives of their constituents.

This would gradually reduce the influence of political bargaining conducted by a limited number of powerful individuals. Positions would become more closely connected to public confidence, demonstrated ability and electoral accountability.

One-person, one-vote will not automatically eliminate corruption, personal interests or political competition. It must be accompanied by sustained public awareness and civic education about what it means to elect a representative and hold that person accountable. Citizens should be encouraged to judge candidates by their integrity, competence, public service and practical contribution to their communities—not simply by clan affiliation, personal relationships or short-term political promises. With an informed electorate, one-person, one-vote can create a stronger mechanism through which citizens reward effective leaders and remove those who consistently fail to serve them.

This may explain why some political actors strongly resist electoral reform. A system based on direct public participation could weaken the influence of those who benefit from closed political arrangements and continuous negotiations over positions.

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Nevertheless, electoral reform must be credible, inclusive, secure and properly administered. It should not be designed to favour the government, the opposition or any particular political group. Its purpose must be to transfer political authority gradually and responsibly to the Somali people.

Leadership must become community-centered

Political leadership should be measured by practical public results—not by the number of meetings attended, political alliances created or foreign trips completed.

Government offices should become places where young professionals learn planning, accountability, research, service delivery and economic development. Senior officials should actively expose them to farms, fishing communities, livestock markets, factories, universities, cooperatives and private businesses.



Young Somalis need role models who demonstrate that public office is a responsibility, not merely a position of influence.

The behaviour of today's leaders is quietly forming tomorrow's leadership culture. If the present example remains dominated by personal interests and political maneuvering, Somalia may reproduce the same problems for another generation.

But if political authority becomes accountable to citizens—and leadership becomes productive, ethical and community-centered—the young people observing today can become the nation-builders Somalia needs tomorrow.

The question, therefore, is not only what today's leaders are accomplishing. It is also:

What kind of leaders are they teaching the next generation to become—and when will Somali citizens be empowered to hold them directly accountable?

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SOO-KOOBIDDA AF-SOOMAALIGA

Tusaalaha Qaldan ee Hoggaanka Siyaasadda

Hoggaanka siyaasadeed ma aha oo keliya cidda maanta go'aamada gaarta; ee waa dugsiga ay jiilka soo socda ka bartaan waxa hoggaanku yahay. Dhallinyarada ka shaqaysa xafiisyada dowladda, Baarlamaanka iyo hay'adaha kale waxay arkaan dhaqanka wasiirrada, xildhibaannada, saraakiisha iyo dadka awoodda leh. Waxa ay maanta arkaan ayaa berri saameyn kara habka ay dalka u hoggaamin doonaan.

Qayb weyn oo tamarta siyaasadda waxaa lagu bixiyaa xil-raadin, xil-haysasho, isbahaysi iyo muran ku saabsan qofka kursi helaya ama luminaya, halka shaqo-abuurka, wax-soo-saarka, adeegyada bulshada iyo horumarinta dhaqaalaha aysan helin mudnaantooda iyo fiiro gaar ah.

Mucaarad wax dhisa waa qayb muhiim ah oo dimuqraadiyadda ka mid ah. Dowladda waa in lala xisaabtamaa, laakiin muxaafad iyo mucaaradba waa inay ku tartantaa qorshe, waxqabad iyo danta qaranka, ee aanay ku koobnaan qaybsiga kuraasta.

Khatarta fog waa casharka ay dhallinyaradu ka qaadanayaan. Waa in lagu barbaariyaa qorshayn, isla-xisaabtan, adeeg bulsho, shaqo-abuur iyo horumarinta kheyraadka dalka (beeraha, kalluumeysiga, xoolaha, warshadaha iyo ganacsiyada wax-soo-saarka leh).

Nidaam qof iyo cod ah oo lagu kalsoonaan karo wuxuu xoojin karaa isla-xisaabtanka, isagoo shacabka siinaya awood ay ku abaalmariyaan hoggaanka waxqabadka leh ama meesha uga saaraan kuwa ku fashilma adeegga.

Fariinta muhiimka ah: Su'aashu ma aha oo keliya waxa hoggaamiyeyaasha maanta qabteen; waxaa kale oo muhiim ah nooca hoggaamiye ee ay jiilka dambe barayaan inuu noqdo.

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Security, Urbanization and Investment

The Emerging Transformation of the Warsheikh Corridor

Warsheikh is undergoing an important transformation. Once widely regarded primarily as a coastal village, it is gradually developing into an organized urban district with growing potential for settlement, tourism, fisheries, commerce and private investment.

This transformation is becoming visible through road development, land registration, urban zoning, stronger local administration and improved security. Together, these developments could establish Warsheikh as an important economic corridor connected to Mogadishu.

From a coastal village to an emerging urban centre

Urbanization is already taking place in Warsheikh. Land records are being reviewed, property titles are being corrected and registration arrangements are becoming more orderly. Roads are being opened and the physical structure of the town is gradually being reorganized.

Some residents and landowners may understandably have concerns about zoning, registration or changes affecting long-established arrangements. Urban transformation is rarely welcomed equally by everyone, particularly when land rights and property boundaries are involved.

For this reason, the process must remain transparent, lawful and consultative. Residents should receive clear information, legitimate property rights must be protected, and disagreements should be resolved fairly.

However, the broader direction appears positive. Many residents are cooperating with the local administration and welcoming the recognition and reorganization of their town. This public participation is one of the strongest signs that Warsheikh's development can succeed.

Security as the foundation of economic life

Security is the foundation upon which settlement, investment and economic activity are built.

During a recent visit by members of our staff and me, we observed a calm and welcoming environment in Warsheikh. People moved around during the evening, gathered in public places and enjoyed tea without visible fear or disturbance.

The District Commissioner was also seen walking through the streets with minimal security, greeting residents and interacting openly with the community. This reflects a level of public confidence and cooperation that is essential for local governance.

No location should be declared completely free from risk based on a single visit. Nevertheless, what we personally observed was encouraging: a community going about its normal life in a peaceful atmosphere.

When residents feel secure, businesses remain open longer, families become more willing to settle, investors can inspect opportunities and visitors are more likely to return.

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Security attracts people—and people create markets

The relationship between security and economic growth is direct. When an area becomes secure, people come. When people come, demand increases for housing, food, transport, shops, hotels, restaurants and other services. This creates employment, encourages production and raises the value of responsible private investment.

Warsheikh has several advantages that could support this growth:

- Proximity and potential road connectivity to Mogadishu.
- An attractive coastline suitable for responsible tourism.
- A historically important fishing economy.
- Land that could accommodate orderly residential and commercial development.
- Opportunities for fish handling, cold storage, processing and distribution.
- Potential for restaurants, hotels, recreation and related services.
- A community increasingly participating in the town's transformation.

These opportunities are interconnected. Improved roads and security can attract visitors and residents. A larger population creates markets. Expanding markets attract investors, while investment generates employment and municipal revenue.

Fisheries and coastal prosperity

Warsheikh is well known for its fishing potential. However, the objective should not be limited to increasing the quantity of fish caught.

The greater opportunity lies in developing the complete value chain: safe landing facilities, ice production, cold storage, hygienic markets, processing, packaging, transportation and access to larger domestic and export markets.

Existing local fishing assets should be assessed for rehabilitation before entirely new facilities are constructed. Restoring what already belongs to the community may sometimes be faster, less expensive and more sustainable than depending exclusively on externally designed projects.

With appropriate investment and technical support, Warsheikh could supply fresh and processed fish to Mogadishu and other markets while creating employment for fishermen, traders, transporters, processors, women and young people.



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Rebuilding and Resettlement

Warsheikh's improved security and urban organization may also encourage Somalis to return, rebuild and establish permanent homes and businesses.

Resettlement should not mean uncontrolled construction. It should be supported by proper zoning, public roads, drainage, water systems, waste management and protection of the coastline.

The town must avoid repeating the unplanned development problems experienced by many rapidly growing urban centres. Planning should begin before population and construction pressures become unmanageable.

The objective should be a secure, productive and environmentally responsible coastal city—not merely the uncontrolled sale and subdivision of land.



The Warsheikh–Mogadishu economic corridor

Warsheikh should not be viewed as an isolated town. Its future is connected to the expansion of Mogadishu, developing transport infrastructure and the broader growth of Somalia's coastal economy.

As transport connections improve, Warsheikh could become:

- A residential extension beyond Mogadishu.
- A weekend and coastal tourism destination.
- A fisheries production and processing centre.
- A location for small industries and logistics.
- A market for local agriculture and livestock products.
- A demonstration of community-supported urban development.

The local administration's current efforts appear to be creating a foundation for this transformation. The next stage will require coordinated planning among residents, landowners, investors, businesses, technical institutions and government authorities.

Warsheikh's experience demonstrates a simple but powerful economic principle:

Security creates confidence. Confidence attracts people. People create markets. Markets attract investment—and responsible investment can build lasting prosperity.

Urbanization is already underway in Warsheikh. The opportunity now is to guide it carefully so that its benefits are shared by the community and preserved for future generations.

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Amniga, Magaalaynta iyo Maalgashiga Warsheekh

Warsheekh waxay ka gudbaysaa muuqaal tuulo xeebeed una gudbaysaa degmo magaaloobaysa oo leh fursado dhinacyada degsiimada, dalxiiska, kalluumeysiga, ganacsiga iyo maalgashiga. Isbeddelka waxaa lagu arkayaa furitaanka waddooyinka, nidaaminta dhulka, saxidda diiwaannada iyo mulkiyadaha, qorshaynta magaalada iyo xoojinta maamulka deegaanka.

Nidaamintu waa inay ahaataa mid sharci ah, daahfuran oo wadatashi leh, xuquuqda saxda ah ee dadkana la ilaaliyo. Booqasho dhowaan la sameeyey waxaa lagu arkay jawi deggan oo dhiirrigelin leh iyo kalsooni bulsho.

Amnigu wuxuu dadka ku dhiirrigeliyaa inay degaan, guryo dhistaan oo ganacsi furtaan. Dadka soo kordhaa waxay abuuraan suuqyo cusub. Xeebta iyo u-dhowaanshaha Muqdisho waxay xoojin karaan dalxiiska iyo isku-xirka ganacsiga.

Fursadda kalluumeysigu kuma koobna kalluun badan oo la soo qabto; waxaa loo baahan yahay xarumo soo dejin, baraf, kaydin qabow, nadaafad, jarjarid, baakadayn, gaadiid iyo suuq-geyn. Hantida hore u jirtana waa in la qiimeeyo si loo ogaado waxa dib loo dayactiri karo.

Warsheekh waa in loo arkaa qayb ka mid ah marinka dhaqaale ee Muqdisho—Warsheekh: degsiimo, dalxiis xeebeed, kalluumeysi, farsamaynta kalluunka, adeegyo iyo warshado yaryar.

Fariinta muhiimka ah: Amnigu wuxuu abuuraa kalsooni; kalsoonidu waxay soo jiidataa dad; dadkuna waxay abuuraan suuq iyo maalgashi.

Stop Abandoning the Somali Banana

The Market Exists—Now Somalia Must Rebuild Production

One of the most frequent questions raised by financial institutions and potential investors is whether a reliable market exists for Somali agricultural products, particularly the Somali banana.

This is a reasonable business question. However, the market for bananas has already been studied extensively. Somalia's immediate challenge is not a complete absence of market information. It is the lack of organized, consistent and export-quality production.

The Middle East represents a market of hundreds of millions of consumers. It includes countries with established banana-consumption habits and a continuing dependence on imported fruit. Earlier FAO projections already identified the Middle East as a major and growing banana-importing region, supplied by countries including the Philippines, Ecuador, Costa Rica, Yemen, Pakistan and India.

Somalia is geographically well positioned to participate in this market.

Three important market advantages

The Somali banana possesses three interconnected advantages.

First, the Middle East is a large consumer market. Countries such as Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Yemen, Iran and Iraq contain millions of potential consumers and established fruit-distribution networks.

Second, Somalia is geographically close to many of these markets. Compared with producers shipping bananas from Latin America or Southeast Asia, Somalia has the potential advantage of shorter maritime routes. If combined with reliable production, professional packaging and an effective cold chain, this proximity could support freshness and competitive transportation.

Third, the Somali banana still benefits from strong historical recognition.



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Many Middle Eastern consumers over the age of 35 or 40 remember seeing and tasting Somali bananas. In discussions and informal market assessments conducted over several years, consumers and traders frequently recalled the Somali banana's size, appearance and flavour.

In some markets, people still informally describe a large, attractive and healthy banana as a "Somali banana," even when it has been imported from another country. This is not, by itself, a scientific measurement of demand, but it represents valuable brand recognition that most new agricultural products would have to spend years and substantial resources building.

Somalia is therefore not introducing an entirely unknown product. It is seeking to restore a respected product to markets where its identity has not been completely forgotten.

The domestic market also matters

Export development should not cause us to overlook Somalia's own growing domestic market.

Mogadishu, Galkayo, Hargeisa and other urban centres already consume bananas and other fruits. Some areas obtain supplies from distant domestic farms or foreign sources. A reliable supply of good-quality Somali bananas could serve these markets while the export chain is being rebuilt.

The domestic market can provide:

- Early sales for participating farmers.
- Practical testing of quality and packaging.
- Experience in transportation and handling.
- Cash flow before full export operations begin.
- A market for produce that does not meet export specifications but remains suitable for local consumption.

This means that farmers do not have to wait for international exports before earning income. Local and regional distribution can develop alongside preparations for Middle Eastern markets.

Market research should not become a reason for delay

Some financial institutions have suggested conducting another market search first and returning to production later.

Market verification and buyer engagement are important. No responsible investor should finance commercial production without understanding the intended customers, quality requirements, prices, logistics and risks.

However, studying the market indefinitely while no export-quality bananas are being produced puts the cart before the horse.

A buyer cannot make a serious long-term commitment if Somalia cannot demonstrate:

- Organized production areas.
- Reliable quantities and harvesting schedules.
- Consistent export quality.
- Proper washing, grading and packaging.

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- Disease and pest management.
- Cold-chain and transportation arrangements.
- Traceability and compliance with importing-country requirements.

Therefore, production development and market engagement must proceed together. Somalia does not need to finish another lengthy study before organizing farmers, rehabilitating farms and developing demonstration production.

The market should be validated while production capacity is being rebuilt—not used as a reason to postpone production.

A practical starting model

A practical revival could begin with five to ten capable farms or cooperatives operating under clear production and quality standards.

These producers could sign memoranda of understanding with an agribusiness development and marketing company such as LAILMAAA. The partnership could define:

- The participating farms and production areas.
- Required banana varieties and planting materials.
- Production and disease-control standards.
- Expected quantities and harvesting schedules.
- Training and technical-support arrangements.
- Quality, grading and packaging requirements.
- Domestic and export marketing responsibilities.
- Repayment arrangements where investment financing is provided.

Financial institutions could then finance a clearly organized value chain rather than providing isolated loans to individual farmers without production, quality or marketing coordination.

The first commercially suitable volumes may become available after approximately 12 months or more, depending on planting materials, farm conditions, irrigation, variety and management. During that period, the marketing partner can engage importers, confirm specifications, prepare logistics and develop conditional purchasing arrangements.

This is more productive than waiting for a complete market guarantee before planting the first export-quality crop.

Somalia has done it before

Somalia is not beginning without experience. The country once operated one of East Africa's most important banana industries. Historical research records approximately 12,000 hectares under banana cultivation and an industry supporting around 120,000 people. Somali bananas were exported to Europe and the Middle East, including during partial post-war recovery in the 1990s.

This history does not guarantee future success. Today's markets require stronger quality control, traceability, logistics and commercial discipline. Nevertheless, it proves that Somalia has the land, agricultural knowledge and geographic position required to participate in international banana trade.

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Bananas and food security can advance together

Some argue that Somalia should focus on staple crops rather than bananas. This presents an unnecessary choice.

Somalia needs sorghum, maize, cowpea, sesame, vegetables and other food-security crops. It also needs commercial crops that generate cash income for farmers, employment for communities, revenue for businesses and foreign exchange for the country.

Food security and commercial agriculture are not opposites.

A farmer with dependable cash income is better able to purchase food, educate children, obtain healthcare and reinvest in production. Banana farms can also be integrated with suitable food crops, livestock activities and other agricultural enterprises where agronomic conditions permit.

The objective is therefore not to abandon other crops in favour of bananas. It is to develop food crops and commercial bananas side by side.

The priority now is organized production

The Somali banana market has not disappeared. Domestic demand exists, Middle Eastern demand exists, geographic proximity remains favourable, and the product retains valuable historical recognition.

Further targeted research will still be needed on current prices, buyer specifications, shipping costs and individual importing countries. But Somalia should not wait for another broad market study before acting.

The immediate priority is to organize suitable farms and cooperatives, establish production and quality standards, secure financing, rebuild handling infrastructure and engage potential buyers while the crop is being developed.

Somalia should continue strengthening its food-security crops. But after decades of decline, it must also stop abandoning one of its most valuable agricultural products.

The market opportunity exists. What is missing is the organized production needed to serve it.

SOO-KOOBIDDA AF-SOOMAALIGA

Jooji Dayaca Mooska Soomaaliyeed

Hay'adaha maaliyadeed iyo maalgashadayaashu waxay marar badan weydiiyaan in suuq loo heli karo mooska Soomaaliyeed. Su'aashu waa sax, laakiin caqabadda ugu weyn maanta ma aha suuq la'aan; waa maqnaanshaha wax-soo-saar abaabulan, joogto ah, lehna tayada dhoofinta.

Bariga Dhexe waa suuq weyn oo si joogto ah u soo dhoofsada moos. Soomaaliya waxay leedahay saddex faa'iido: suuq weyn oo dhow, masaafo gaaban oo dhinaca badda ah, iyo magac taariikhi ah oo mooska Soomaaliyeed weli ku leeyahay xusuusta macaamiisha.

Gudaha dalka laftiisa ayaa sidoo kale ah suuq muhiim ah. Muqdisho, Gaalkacyo, Hargeysa iyo magaalooyin kale waxay siin karaan beeraleyda iib hore, tijaabinta tayada iyo baakadaha, iyo dakhli inta silsiladda dhoofinta la diyaarinayo.

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Suuq-baarista iyo xaqiijinta qiimaha waa lama huraan, laakiin waa inaysan noqon sabab wax-soo-saarka dib loogu dhigo. Wax-soo-saarka iyo suuq-geyntu waa inay isla socdaan.

Mashruuca waxaa lagu bilaabi karaa shan ilaa toban beerood ama iskaashatooyin karti leh, iyadoo la dejinayo nooca mooska, agabka beerista, xakamaynta cudurrada, tayada, baakadaha iyo suuq-geynta. Hay'adaha maaliyadeedna waxay maalgelin karaan silsilad abaabulan halkii ay amaah googo'an siin lahaayeen beeraley aan isku xirnayn.

Soomaaliya waxay u baahan tahay dalagyada sugnaanta cuntada, laakiin sidoo kale waxay u baahan tahay dalag ganacsi oo beeraleyda siiya dakhli, shaqo abuur, dhoofin iyo lacag qalaad. Labadan ujeeddo isma diidayaan.

Fariinta muhiimka ah: Dalagyada cuntada ha la xoojiyo, laakiin waa in la joojiyaa dayaca joogtada ah ee mooska Soomaaliyeed. Suuqu wuu jiraa; waxa maqan waa wax-soo-saarkii abaabulnaa.

From Raw Materials to Finished Products

Small Industries Must Become the Foundation of Somalia's Economic Transformation

The recent Somalia–China Business Networking Forum in Mogadishu brought together government representatives, Somali business leaders and more than 30 Chinese companies and investors. The discussions covered opportunities in agriculture, fisheries, infrastructure, energy, transportation and logistics.

The forum, officially opened by Deputy Prime Minister Salah Ahmed Jama and organized by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, represents a positive development in Somalia's effort to expand international trade and attract productive investment.



China requires food, seafood and agricultural products. Somalia requires machinery, manufactured goods, investment, technical knowledge and access to larger markets. This creates a natural foundation for mutually beneficial cooperation.

However, Somalia must approach this opportunity with a clear national industrial strategy.

The objective should not be limited to exporting raw materials to China and importing finished products in return. Somalia must use these partnerships to build its own processing capacity, develop small industries and create employment for its young population.

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We cannot continue trading like the nineteenth century

For generations, many African countries have exported livestock, hides, fish, crops, minerals and other raw materials. These materials are processed elsewhere and returned as expensive finished products.

A raw animal hide may leave the country at a very low price and later return in the form of shoes, belts, wallets, handbags, jackets or furniture. At every stage of processing, value is added, employment is created and profit increases—but these benefits remain in the country where the manufacturing takes place.

The same problem affects Somalia's other resources.

We export livestock instead of developing enough meat-processing, leather and dairy industries. We land fish but have limited cold storage, packaging and processing. We produce agricultural crops but lack sufficient facilities for cleaning, grading, drying, milling, extracting, packaging and manufacturing finished food products.

This is not the trade model Somalia should carry into the twenty-first century.

Somalia must export more products bearing the label:

Grown, processed and manufactured in Somalia.

Small industries create large opportunities

Industrialization does not always begin with enormous factories requiring hundreds of millions of dollars.

It can begin with small and medium-sized processing centres equipped with appropriate machinery and operated by technically trained young people.

Such industries could include:

- Fish cleaning, filleting, freezing, canning and packaging.
- Meat processing, cold storage and dairy production.
- Tanneries and workshops producing leather goods.
- Sesame cleaning, oil extraction and packaging.
- Maize, sorghum and cassava milling and food processing.
- Banana drying, flour production, puree and other processed products.
- Animal-feed mixing and packaging.
- Organic fertilizer and compost processing.
- Fruit juice, jam and vegetable-processing facilities.
- Packaging materials, cartons, crates and storage containers.
- Repair, fabrication and agricultural-equipment workshops.

Each small industry creates several interconnected jobs. It employs machine operators, electricians, mechanics, food technicians, quality controllers, accountants, drivers, packaging workers, marketers and maintenance staff.

This is where sustainable youth employment can begin.

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Somalia needs machines—and people who can build and maintain them

Purchasing finished machinery is not enough. Somalia also needs technicians capable of installing, operating, repairing and eventually manufacturing industrial equipment.

Machine-tool workshops and fabrication centres are sometimes described as “industries that make industries.” They produce or repair the components required by farms, fishing companies, construction firms and processing plants.

Somalia should therefore invest in:

- Vocational and technical training centers.
- Machine operation and maintenance programs.
- Welding and metal-fabrication workshops.
- Electrical and refrigeration training.
- Food-processing and quality-control skills.
- Partnerships between universities, technical institutes and manufacturers.
- Apprenticeships inside operating factories.
- Training for Somali engineers and technicians in partner countries.



Countries such as Germany and Italy have long histories of specialized machinery and small manufacturing. Türkiye has also developed extensive networks of small and medium-sized producers, while Syria historically maintained active workshops and manufacturing enterprises.

Somalia does not need to copy any one country exactly. It can study these experiences and develop an industrial model appropriate to its resources, population and markets.

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A better partnership with China

Chinese companies can play a major role in Somalia's industrial development. China possesses machinery, technical knowledge, manufacturing experience, capital and access to international markets.

But future agreements should go beyond buying Somali raw materials.

Somalia should encourage partnerships that include:

- Joint investment in local processing facilities.
- Technology and knowledge transfer.
- Training for Somali machine operators and technicians.
- Local employment requirements.
- Maintenance centres and spare-parts availability.
- Gradual local assembly or manufacturing of equipment.
- Quality certification and access to Chinese markets.
- Long-term purchasing arrangements for processed Somali products.

This is not an argument against Chinese investment. It is an argument for a stronger and more balanced partnership.

If Chinese companies purchase Somali fish, they should also be encouraged to invest in cold storage, processing and packaging inside Somalia. If they purchase livestock products, opportunities should include meat processing, leather production and dairy industries. If they purchase agricultural crops, part of the cleaning, grading, milling, extraction and packaging should occur locally.

The principle should be simple:

Wherever economically and technically possible, value should be added in Somalia before the product is exported.

Trade integration must support industrialization

Somalia became a full member of the East African Community in March 2024, giving the country access to a regional bloc of eight partner states.

Somalia is also negotiating accession to the World Trade Organization. The WTO process was formally reactivated in February 2025, but Somalia has not yet completed accession.

These developments could create access to larger markets. However, market access alone will not transform the economy if Somalia has little to sell except unprocessed resources.

Trade agreements become most valuable when a country possesses competitive products, reliable standards, processing capacity and companies capable of supplying regional and international buyers.

Somalia must therefore prepare its industries while it prepares its trade agreements.

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A practical industrial program

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry, financial institutions, universities and private investors should develop a national small-industries program focused initially on agriculture, livestock and fisheries.

The program could:

1. Identify products currently exported or sold without adequate local processing.
2. Select machinery appropriate for small and medium-sized Somali enterprises.
3. Establish pilot processing centers in productive regions.
4. Train young people to operate, repair and manufacture industrial equipment.
5. Provide Sharia-compliant equipment financing to qualified enterprises.
6. Connect processing companies with farmers, fishermen and livestock producers.
7. Establish quality, hygiene, packaging and export standards.
8. Link Somali finished products with EAC, Middle Eastern, Chinese and other international markets.

Industrial financing should prioritize equipment and productive capacity—not only office buildings, vehicles and general trading.

The choice before Somalia

Somalia can continue exporting raw fish, raw hides, live animals and unprocessed crops while importing expensive finished products. Under that model, most industrial employment and added value will continue to be created outside the country.

Or Somalia can use its new international partnerships to acquire machinery, skills, standards and investment that allow Somali resources to be processed at home.

The Somalia–China Business Networking Forum should therefore be viewed as more than a meeting between importers and exporters. It should become the beginning of practical industrial partnerships.

Somalia has the raw materials. It has a young population seeking employment. It is entering larger regional and global markets.

What it now needs are the machines, technical skills, financing and national determination to transform its resources into competitive finished products.

Somalia should not remain merely a supplier of raw materials. It must become a country that produces, processes and manufactures.

THE SOMALI ECONOMIC MONITOR

SOO-KOOBIDDA AF-SOOMAALIGA

Alaab Ceeriin ilaa Wax-soo-saar Dhammeystiran



Madashii dhowaan Muqdisho lagu qabtay ee isku xirtay ganacsatada Soomaaliya iyo Shiinaha waxay soo bandhigtay fursado ku saabsan beeraha, kalluumeysiga, kaabayaasha, tamarta, gaadiidka iyo saadka. Shiinuhu wuxuu u baahan yahay cunto, kalluun iyo wax-soo-saar beeraha ah; Soomaaliya waxay u baahan tahay mashiinno, aqoon farsamo, maalgelin iyo suuqyo waaweyn.

Laakiin Soomaaliya waa inaysan ku ekaan dhoofinta alaabta ceeriin iyo soo dejinta badeecadda dhammeystiran. Qiimaha, shaqada iyo xirfadda waa in qayb weyn oo ka mid ahi dalka ku haro.

Warshadayntu waxay ku bilaaban kartaa xarumo yaryar iyo kuwo dhexdhexaad ah: kalluun farsamayn, hilib iyo caano, harag, sisin iyo saliid, galley/masaggo/kasaafad, moos la farsameeyey, cunto xoolaad, bacrimin dabiici ah, casiir iyo cabitaanka miraha, baakadaha, iyo aqoon-is-weydaarsiyada bir-samaynta iyo dayactirka qalabka.

Mashiin la soo iibsado oo keliya warshad ma dhiso. Dalka wuxuu u baahan yahay dhalinyaro awood u leh rakibidda, hawlgelinta, dayactirka iyo mustaqbalka samaynta qaybo ka mid ah qalabka. Aqoon-is-weydaarsiyada mashiinnada iyo bir-samayntu waa “warshadaha warshadaha dhala.”

Shirkadaha Shiinaha iyo kuwa kale waa in lagu dhiirrigeliyaa iskaashi ay ku jiraan xarumo farsamayn oo gudaha ah, tababar, wareejinta aqoonta, shaqaaleysiinta Soomaalida, dayactir iyo qaybo beddel, isku-ururinta qalabka, shahaadooyin tayo iyo heshiisyo lagu iibsado badeecooyin Soomaaliya lagu farsameeyey.

Soomaaliya waxay xubin buuxda ka tahay Bulshada Bariga Afrika, waxayna ku jirtaa geeddi-socodka ku biirista Ururka Ganacsiga Adduunka. Suuqyadaas waaweyn faa'iido badan ma yeelanayaan haddii dalku uusan lahayn badeecooyin tayo leh oo uu iibiyo.

Fariinta muhiimka ah: Soomaaliya waa inay ka gudubtaa dhoofinta kalluun, harag, xoolo iyo dalag aan la farsamayn. Waa inay noqotaa dal wax soo saara, farsameeya oo badeeco dhammeystiran dhoofiya.



THE SOMALI ECONOMIC MONITOR

Editorial Feature (Eng.)

The Somali Economic Monitor is a platform for informed and constructive discussion on Somalia's economic development, productive sectors, investment and institutional strengthening. The publication seeks to encourage practical dialogue among government institutions, the private sector, universities, financial institutions, communities and development partners in support of sustainable and inclusive economic growth.

Fariinta Tifaftiraha (Som.)

The Somali Economic Monitor waa madal loogu talagalay dood xog-ogaal ah oo wax-ku-ool ah, kuna saabsan horumarinta dhaqaalaha Soomaaliya, qaybaha wax-soo-saarka, maalgashiga iyo xoojinta hay'adaha. Warsiduhu wuxuu dhiirrigelinayaa wada-hadal iyo iskaashi wax-ku-ool ah oo dhex mara hay'adaha dowladda, ganacsiga gaarka loo leeyahay, jaamacadaha, hay'adaha maaliyadda, bulshada iyo saaxiibbada horumarinta, si loo taageero koboc dhaqaale oo waara oo loo dhan yahay.

LOOKING AHEAD

The Somali Economic Monitor will continue to present practical ideas that encourage investment, strengthen institutions, and support sustainable economic transformation in Somalia. The road ahead will be built through knowledge, partnership, innovation, and practical actions that lead to sustainable economic transformation.

TUBTA HORE

The Somali Economic Monitor wuxuu sii wadi doonaa soo bandhigidda fikrado wax-ku-ool ah oo dhiirrigeliya maalgashiga, xoojiya hay'adaha, isla markaana taageera horumarinta dhaqaale ee waara ee Soomaaliya.

Tubta hore waxaa lagu gaari karaa aqoon, iskaashi, hal-abuur iyo tallaabooyin wax-ku-ool ah oo horseeda Soomaaliya isbeddel dhaqaale oo.

Source Links

Article 3 — FAO market assessment: <https://www.fao.org/4/y5143e/y5143e10.htm>

Article 3 — FAO AGRIS Somali banana sector analysis:

<https://agris.fao.org/search/en/providers/122535/records/65dff6a90f3e94b9e5de0f0a>

Article 4 — Somalia–China Business Forum report (SONNA):

<https://sonna.so/en/article/Somalia-China-Business-Forum-Opens-in-Mogadishu-as-Investment-Opportunities-Take-Centre-Stage>

Article 4 — East African Community: <https://www.eac.int/press-releases/3049-somalia-finally-joins-eac-as-the-bloc-s-8th-partner-state>

Article 4 — World Trade Organization:

https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news25_e/acc_17feb25_e.htm