

Subject: NEWS: Somaliland President Arrives in Washington as U.S.-Somaliland Ties Enter New Chapter
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From: Joshua Gross
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President Abdirahman Mohamed Abdullahi Arrives in Washington as U.S.-Somaliland Ties Enter New Chapter

- *Visit to span engagements across the Administration, Congress, and foreign policy community*
- *Washington program reflects Somaliland's growing strategic relevance to U.S. interests in the Red Sea and Horn of Africa*
- *Visit follows Israel's formal recognition of Somaliland and growing Congressional momentum on Capitol Hill*

WASHINGTON, D.C., September 8, 2026 – H.E. Abdirahman (Irro) Mohamed Abdullahi, President of the Republic of Somaliland, is in Washington, D.C., to begin a series of high-level engagements with senior U.S. government officials, members of Congress, and leading figures from Washington's foreign policy and national security community.

The engagements, which will take place from September 8–18, mark President Irro's first visit to the United States since his election in November 2024 and the first visit to Washington by a Somaliland head of state since March 2022.

President Irro's Washington program will open at the Middle East–America Dialogue (MEAD) Summit, which convenes senior policy, defense, intelligence, and business leaders. His visit will also include a major public address to Washington's foreign policy community at the Hudson Institute, along with private roundtables and bilateral meetings across the executive and legislative branches.

"I am coming to Washington with a clear message: Somaliland stands with the United States against the forces of terrorism and coercion, just as we stand with Taiwan and Israel," said President Irro. "A strong U.S.-Somaliland relationship advances our many shared interests not just in East Africa, but also throughout the entire Red Sea region and beyond, especially at a moment when threats are so evident. We have real assets to bring to this partnership—and we are ready to deliver."

Somaliland's value proposition to the United States is grounded in several converging strategic interests: its position on the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, its port infrastructure at Berbera, its track record of democratic governance and stability in a volatile region, its cooperation on counterterrorism, and its alignment with U.S. efforts to counter Chinese influence in the Horn of Africa. In 2020, Somaliland became one of only two countries to establish formal representative offices with Taiwan – aligning with democratic values in the face of sustained pressure from Beijing and Mogadishu. In the six years since, that partnership has delivered across maritime security, digital governance, healthcare, agriculture, and finance. As Beijing has steadily narrowed Taiwan's diplomatic space across Africa, Somaliland has held firm in its relations with Taipei.

President Irro's visit comes during a period of significant momentum for Somaliland in Washington.

Legislative activity on Capitol Hill has intensified, with multiple bills introduced in support of deeper U.S.-Somaliland engagement and growing bipartisan support among members of committees with jurisdiction over foreign affairs, armed services, and appropriations. Recent demonstrations of support include the introduction by Representative Scott Perry (R-PA) of the [Republic of Somaliland Independence Act](#), which would formally authorize the President of the United States to recognize Somaliland as an independent nation. Representative John Rose (R-TN) has introduced the [Somaliland Economic Access and Opportunity Act](#), which would deepen U.S.-Somaliland commercial ties and promote Somaliland's broader inclusion in the international financial community. Senator Ted Cruz (R-TX), Chairman of the Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health Policy, [wrote to President Donald Trump](#) urging the United States to formally recognize the Republic of Somaliland as an independent state.

Israel formally recognized Somaliland as an independent and sovereign state on December 26, 2025—the first nation in the world to do so. President Irro traveled to Jerusalem in June 2026 to inaugurate Somaliland's embassy, where Israeli President Isaac Herzog declared that Israel and Somaliland had "acted with courage and realism." The deepening relationship with Israel also positions Somaliland as a natural candidate for participation in the Abraham Accords and broader regional integration.

For Somaliland, this visit is both a measure of how far the relationship with Washington has advanced and a signal of where it is headed. President Irro arrives with a compelling case that deeper U.S. engagement with Somaliland serves both American and Somaliland interests. He will also carry that message to New York, where his delegation will engage senior officials and diplomats during the 81st session of the United Nations General Assembly.

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