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Somaliland President Concludes Landmark U.S. Visit, Strengthening Strategic Ties

Somaliland advances its case as a vital security partner in the Red Sea region

WASHINGTON, D.C., SEPTEMBER 25, 2026 – The President of the Republic of Somaliland, H.E. Abdirahman Mohamed Abdullahi (“Irro”), has concluded a landmark 18-day visit to Washington and New York, advancing Somaliland’s diplomatic, security and economic partnerships with the United States and engaging international leaders on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly.

Accompanied by a high-level government delegation, President Abdullahi met with key figures in the Trump Administration, members of Congress, representatives of international financial institutions and leading foreign policy organizations and delivered public keynote addresses at the Hudson Institute and the Council on Foreign Relations. The President’s first official visit to the United States since his election followed Israel’s recognition of Somaliland in December 2025 and came amid heightened tensions in the Red Sea and growing awareness of Somaliland’s strategic importance in the region.

President Abdullahi consulted with senior officials at the National Security Council and the Departments of State, War, Treasury and Energy on shared strategic interests, including maritime security, counterterrorism, trade and investment, as well as potential partnerships to assess and develop Somaliland’s infrastructure and critical mineral resources. On the 25th anniversary of the September 11 attacks, President Abdullahi visited the [National 9/11 Pentagon Memorial](#) to honor the victims and reaffirm Somaliland’s solidarity with the United States in confronting terrorism.

“Somaliland can offer the United States a trusted partner near the Bab al-Mandab strait at a time when terrorists and adversarial states are placing American interests under growing pressure,” said President Abdullahi. “We evaluated several practical steps to deepen our diplomatic relationship, establish structured security cooperation, and enable Somaliland to engage more directly with international financial institutions.”

The Somaliland delegation held meetings with several U.S. lawmakers, including [Representative John Moolenaar](#) (R-MI), Chairman of the House Select Committee on the Strategic Competition Between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party; [Representative Brian Mast](#) (R-FL), Chairman of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs; and [Senator Ted Cruz](#) (R-TX), who has consistently called on the Administration to [formally](#)

[recognize Somaliland](#) and [establish a separate and distinct travel advisory](#) for the country. They also met with [Senator Mike Rounds](#) (R-SD), Member of the Senate Committee on Armed Services and co-author of the 2022 [Somaliland Partnership Act](#).

During the delegation's visit, Representative Chris Smith (R-NJ) introduced H.R. 10461, [The Somaliland Travel and Investment Act](#), which calls on the Secretary of State to establish a representative office in Hargeisa and distinguish the travel advisory warnings between Somalia and Somaliland. Somaliland is currently included in the same State Department travel advisory as Somalia despite the markedly different security realities on the ground, which discourages U.S. travel and investment. The bill follows [The Somaliland Economic Access and Opportunity Act](#), introduced earlier this year by Representative [John Rose](#) (R-TN) to help expand Somaliland's access to the international financial system. During the visit, [Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent committed to reviewing the legislation](#) and exploring with Congress ways to address Somaliland's economic isolation.

The delegation's broader Washington program included participation in the Middle East America Dialogue (MEAD) where President Abdullahi met with Trump Administration officials and representatives of other governments. The delegation also met with Israeli Ambassador to the United States Yechiel Leiter, which focused on the growing relationship between Somaliland and Israel; a [reception hosted by Taiwan Representative to the U.S. Alexander Yui](#) at the historic Twin Oaks estate; and a luncheon hosted by the [International Conservation Caucus Foundation](#) (ICCF) focused on shared commitment to biodiversity and environmental protection in the Horn of Africa.

President Abdullahi then traveled to New York, where he engaged during the 81st session of the United Nations General Assembly with international officials, policy leaders and other stakeholders on national security, regional stability, and international cooperation. The President also addressed the Council on Foreign Relations, where he made the strategic case for Somaliland's recognition and highlighted the diplomatic and financial consequences of exclusion from the United Nations and other international institutions.

The delegation also held discussions with representatives from the World Bank, [the Foundation for Defense of Democracies](#), [the Atlantic Council](#), [the American Jewish Committee](#), the Anti-Defamation League, the [Israeli Mission to the UN](#), and [the National Prayer Breakfast Foundation](#).

On the sidelines of the UN General Assembly, delegation members and Somaliland supporters gathered at Dag Hammarskjold Plaza to protest the ongoing injustice of the country's exclusion from UN institutions.

"This visit marks a defining moment for Somaliland and for the broader partnership we are building with the United States," said President Abdullahi. "The depth and seriousness of our engagements reflect a distinct understanding of Somaliland's value as a stable, democratic, and willing partner in one of the world's most strategically vital regions. We leave with renewed confidence that the United States knows what is at stake in the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea, and that Somaliland's role in securing peace, prosperity, and stability in that region will only grow."

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