

## WORLD-FIRST AS SOMALIA MAKES ITS AMMUNITION FULLY TRACEABLE

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### Somalia first adopters of AmTag™ chemical marking technology

12 June 2025

The Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) has become the first country in the world to adopt chemical taggant technology to render its national ammunition stockpile fully traceable.

Activities conducted this year by Conflict Armament Research (CAR), with financial support from the UK Foreign Office (FCDO), have made Somalia the world's first adopter of AmTag™ ammunition traceability technology.

Through the Central Monitoring Department (CMD) of the Office of National Security (ONS), the FGS has redoubled its efforts after the lifting of the arms embargo, to establish greater oversight of its national stockpile while bringing the illicit arms trade under control in an environment complicated by the protracted struggle against terrorist actors in the country – most notably Al Shabaab. In this fragile context, the diversion of state-held weaponry and munitions has the potential to severely undermine the progress towards greater stability to major urban centres, particularly Mogadishu.

CAR has been working in Somalia since 2013 to build the Somali security forces' capacity to securely manage their national weapon and ammunition stockpiles, in support of broader security



**Somalia Police Force operational ammunition tagged with AmTag, Mogadishu, March 2025.**

sector professionalisation and accountability initiatives. Using British FCDO funds, CAR worked with the FGS to implement new ammunition marking technology, called AmTag™.



Some of the 15,000 individual ammunition rounds tagged during the successful pilot.

Developed in partnership by [CAR](#), [Torchlight Technologies](#), and [DeterTech](#), AmTag™ is a novel marking system that uses rare earth elements and fluorescent compounds to create an indelible chemical taggant that can be applied to individual bullets and casings. The taggant, only visible using UV light, is embedded with a unique ‘code’ containing chain of custody information to render each round fully traceable from the point of manufacture to the last legal custodian.

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*The Somalia AmTag Pilot shows that long-held security challenges can be overcome with new technologies. The pioneering use of AmTag allows the Somali Government to take ownership of its security solutions and become a leader in weapon accountability among the international community.*

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**Jonah Leff, Executive Director, Conflict Armament Research**

Thousands of rounds of Somali police and military ammunition was sprayed with AmTag<sup>™</sup> – a first for any national security force – at several armouries across Mogadishu. This now allows investigative branches of the Somali Government to accurately audit chains of custody, identify cases of theft or corruption, and deter would-be criminals.

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*AmTag will not only strengthen ongoing WAM measures that promote accountability but will foster behavioral change in how government ammunition stockpiles are managed and accounted for. We are pleased to lead the way in implementing the most robust WAM governance infrastructure in the region.*

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**Musadaq Ahmed, Director of Central Monitoring Department,  
Office of National Security, Federal Government of Somalia**

This achievement comes as UN Member States meet in New York in June, to discuss ways in which governments can better control State ammunition stocks. The newly adopted *Global Framework on Ammunition* calls on States to apply marks to ammunition to facilitate traceability and reduce diversion and illicit proliferation.

It is CAR's hope that more governments follow Somalia's lead in better securing State munition stockpiles through the use of AmTag.

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**Contact:**

Marcus Wilson

Director of Special Projects and Innovation

Conflict Armament Research

Email: [wilson@conflictarm.com](mailto:wilson@conflictarm.com)

Tel: +44 (0)203 355 6575