



European Union Training Mission Somalia

PRESS SUMMARY

10th May 2018

"In 'Media' stat virtus"



EU's pledge of direct budgetary Support to Somalia is another sign of good governance



May 8, 2018 - Following the Mogadishu Security Conference of 4 December 2017, H.E. Hassan Ali Khaire and EEAS Deputy Secretary General Pedro Serrano co-chaired the Somalia High-Level Security Meeting on 2 May in Brussels.

In a press conference, shortly after the conference, Prime Minister Hassan Ali Kheyre stated that the European Union agreed to contribute 100 million Euros to Somalia's budget. This is an overdue step taken in the right direction.

The international community spends over a billion dollar of humanitarian and developmental aid in Somalia every year. Almost all this money is managed and dispersed by UN agencies and other NGOs. For a long time, the somali government has been requesting some of this money to be channelled through its treasury.

In 2014, donors and Somali government agreed 15% of the Official Development Aid (ODA) being infused into the government budget. The implementation of that agreement was steady but slow. Only 4% and 8% of ODA, for instance, was managed by the treasury in 2015 and 2016 respectively.

This is well below the agreed target of 15%. Somalia is the only country where this kind of full control of aid by donors takes place. Other low-income fragile states such as Afghanistan and Central African Republic (CAR) are allowed to manage and disburse substantial amount of ODA. For example, Afghanistan, which is comparable to Somalia in every aspect of governance, 74% of development-focused aid is channelled through Afghan national budget.

It may be assumed that the strong political interest of donors is the main reason they comply with Afghan government's request. However, other countries such as CAR, Mali and Liberia

which have less geopolitical interests of donor governments are doing far better than Somalia when it comes to control of aid and its management. For example, 28% of development-focused aid is channelled through CAR's national budget while the figure is 44% in Mali. This clearly demonstrates that Somalia has been marginalised and unfairly treated when it comes to using country systems.

Using country system is important for state-building and strengthening government institutions. Although The New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States called for increased use of country systems (UCS) in 2011 and Members of the International Dialogue on Peace-building and State-building emphasised the need for greater use of country system, traditional donor government refused to use.

While some of them did so explicitly as the UK's DFID which ruled out any contribution to Somali national budget in 2015, others increased bureaucratic hurdles when using country system for aid delivery. USAID, for example, is required to notify the Congress if any of its funds are to be channelled through country system. Turkey and Saudi Arabia are the only countries which provide direct budgetary support for Somali government.

The reason why donors were so reluctant to use Somali government system was that widespread corruption and mismanagement were rampant in the country in addition to the weak finance system. However, as the World Bank Report (2018) points out donors' claim was based on outdated figures and guesswork analysis thus, their actions and believe do not reflect the reality on the ground and the progress that the Somali government has made recently.

In fact, Somalia made tangible improvement in the areas of public finance management and met most of IMF's list if not all. According to IMF, "Somalia's public finance management is getting closer to international and regional standards and ready to handle a greater share of development assistance". It further added, "the next set of Staff Monitored Programme structural benchmark, if achieved, will further demonstrate readiness to handle donor funding".

It could be these positive improvements, in addition to the efforts made by Prime Minister's Office, which has been pressing donors to use country systems since 2017 London conference, what changed EU's approach to aid delivery in Somalia.

EU's pledge, if honoured, is another sign of good governance shown by the current administration. It will help the Somali government to deliver tangible results for its citizens. It strengthens its institutions and allows the government to plan its budget effectively and deliver basic public services to its citizens which, in return, enhance its credibility and perceptions held by its citizens.

The EU's decision, moreover, may influence other traditional donors such the UK and the US and open a new way of dealing with Somali government whose sovereignty has been at stake. All in all EU's decision to deal directly with Somali government is welcome news

<http://www.jowhar.com/2018/05/08/eus-pledge-of-direct-budgetary-support-to-somalia-is-another-sign-of-good-governance/>



Finland is committed to promoting bilateral cooperation with Somalia

Ministry of the Interior 8.5.2018

Somalia's progress and the stabilisation of security in the country were high on the agenda when Minister of the Interior Kai Mykkänen and Minister of Internal Security of



Somalia Mohamed Abukar Islow met. Minister Islow visited Helsinki between 7 and 8 May. He was accompanied on his visit by the head of the Somali immigration agency, Mohamed Adam Jimale.

During their visit, the Somali delegation learned about the work of the Finnish Police, the Finnish Border Guard and the Finnish Immigration Service and they were also given a presentation on the voluntary return programme.

"It is important for Finland to promote bilateral cooperation with Somalia. Strengthening the skills of the security authorities of the Federal Republic of Somalia is essential to the normalisation of the country's economy and civil life. To support Somalia's immigration administration, Finland is committed to helping the country in setting up an immigration agency," said Minister Mykkänen.

In addition to bilateral cooperation, Finland supports Somalia through coordinated international efforts. Finland participates in EU and UN civilian crisis management missions, EUCAP Somalia and the UNSOM mission in Somalia.

http://valtioneuvosto.fi/en/article/-/asset_publisher/1410869/suomi-on-sitoutunut-kahtenvälisen-yhteistyön-edistämiseen-somalian-kanssa



Somalia: Suspected mortar attack in Mogadishu May 8

Militants fire several mortar rounds at peacekeepers near Mogadishu Stadium May 8; at least four people wounded

Event

Local media sources reported a suspected mortar attack in Mogadishu on Tuesday, May 8. Several rounds reportedly landed near Mogadishu Stadium at approximately 13:40 (local time), as well as at a location some 2 km (1.2 mi) south of the stadium. The intended target of the attack remains unclear, as the rounds appeared to be aimed toward Villa Somalia but did not reach the area. African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM) forces are also stationed along the line of attack, and may also have been the intended target. According to local media reports, between four and six people were wounded in the incident.

Context

No group has claimed responsibility, but Al-Shabaab is suspected of launching the attack. Al-Shabaab militants have carried out similar attacks in the past, firing mortars from the backs of pick-up trucks and then quickly fleeing the area before security forces can respond.

Al-Shabaab continues to control large zones in the south and center of Somalia and attacks from the group are frequent across the country, including in the capital Mogadishu. The group often targets government officials and military infrastructure in a bid to topple the Western- and UN-backed government and impose its own strict interpretation of Islam in Somalia.

Advice

Individuals in Mogadishu are advised to avoid the area of the blasts, remain vigilant for potential militant activity, and adhere to instructions issued by the local authorities and their home governments.

The security environment in Somalia remains complex. Although travel is possible in some areas with proper security protocols in place, other areas should be considered strictly off-limits. Professional security advice and support should be sought prior to travel.

<https://www.garda.com/crisis24/news-alerts/116626/somalia-suspected-mortar-attack-in-mogadishu-may-8>



I fatti del giorno - Africa sub-sahariana (3)

Roma, 09 mag 12:00 - (Agenzia Nova) - Somalia: chiusa per motivi di sicurezza la sede del Senato - La sede della Camera alta (il Senato) della Somalia è stata chiusa “per motivi di sicurezza”. Lo riferiscono fonti della sicurezza citate dal sito d’informazione “Garowe Online”, secondo cui la decisione è stata presa a causa della situazione di insicurezza nella capitale Mogadiscio, dove ieri sette persone sono rimaste ferite a causa dell’esplosione di colpi di mortaio nei pressi proprio del palazzo del Senato. Secondo le stesse fonti, la decisione è stata presa dopo che non è andata a buon fine la richiesta da parte delle autorità somale di dispiegare le truppe della Missione dell’Unione africana in Somalia (Amisom) in prossimità del Senato. L’attacco di ieri non è stato ancora rivendicato ma è da attribuire al gruppo jihadista al Shabaab che, seppure indebolito dall’offensiva dell’esercito somalo e delle truppe della missione Amisom, continua a controllare vaste zone del paese. Anche per questo motivo lo scorso 31 agosto il Consiglio di sicurezza delle Nazioni Unite ha esteso fino al 31 maggio 2018 il mandato della missione Amisom, prevedendo al contempo una riduzione del personale da 22.126 a 20.626 effettivi. La risoluzione prevede un graduale passaggio di responsabilità alle forze di sicurezza somale al fine di ridurre la minaccia costituita dal gruppo jihadista al Shabaab e agevolare il processo di costruzione della pace nel paese. La missione Amisom è stata autorizzata nel 2007 per assicurare la sicurezza e la pace dopo lo scoppio della guerra in Somalia in atto dal 2006.

<https://www.agenzianova.com/a/0/1915406/2018-05-09/i-fatti-del-giorno-africa-sub-sahariana-3>



Somalia blast kills at least 5 in khat market near Mogadishu

Police Captain Farah Ismail said the death toll might rise. The attack took place at a market in the town of Wanlaweyn in the Lower Shabelle region killing at least 5 people and wounding another 10.



On April 6, 2018, a pair of suicide car bombings left at least three people dead in the capital Mogadishu, according to the police. An explosion killed at least five people and wounded 10 on Wednesday in a market for the stimulant

leaf khat in southern Somalia, police and residents said.

Al Qaeda-linked al Shabaab took responsibility for the attack.

The blast occurred in the busy market in the town of Wanlaweyn in the Lower Shabelle region, about 90 km (55 miles) to the northwest of the coastal capital Mogadishu.

Wounded taken home

Given Wanlaweyn's lack of hospitals, residents said they took many of the wounded to their homes for the time being after the afternoon blast.

Police said they were investigating whether the explosion was caused by a planted bomb or by a suicide bomber.

"The blast at the khat kiosks killed at least five civilians and injured more others including soldiers. We are investigating whether there are more casualties and the cause of the blast," police Captain Farah Ismail said.

"The death toll may rise," he added.

Residents said the kiosks were busy with soldiers buying khat. "I counted five dead people, including two shoe shiners, a mother who sold khat and two customers. There were 10 other injured civilians," shopkeeper Ahmed Mohamud said.

"I could also see several soldiers in uniform being transported from the blast scene but I could not confirm whether they were dead or wounded."

Targeting soldiers

Abdiasis Abu Musab, al Shabaab's military operation spokesman, said the group was behind the attack and that its target was the soldiers.

Al Shabaab is fighting to overthrow Somalia's central government and establish its own rule based on its interpretation of Islamic law.

Since being pushed out of Mogadishu in 2011, the group has lost control of most of Somalia's cities and towns. But it retains a strong presence in regions outside the capital.

<https://www.trtworld.com/mea/somalia-blast-kills-at-least-5-in-khat-market-near-mogadishu-17338>

Newsweek

Suicide Bomber Kills Civilians and Soldier Near Largest U.S. Military Base in Somalia

By Tom O'Connor On 5/9/18

A suicide bomber has reportedly killed over a dozen civilians and at least one soldier in a Somali town located near the largest U.S. military base in the country.

At least one individual wearing a suicide vest detonated himself in the town of Wanlaweyn, located about 56 miles southwest of Mogadishu, killing at least 14 civilians and one soldier, according to the Voice of America (VOA). The town lies next to the Baledogle Airfield, a Somali air force base, where the U.S. has recently expanded its presence as part of the fight against an Islamist insurgency led by Al-Shabab, a militant group linked to Al-Qaeda.

"A suspected Al-Shabab suicide bomber targeted khat kiosks, blew himself up and claimed the lives of at least 14 people and wounded more than 15 others," Lower Shebelle deputy security affairs governor Abdifitah Hajji Abdulle told VOA.



Civilians look on as smoke billows from the scene of an explosion at a security checkpoint in the Hodan district of Mogadishu, Somalia, on April 6. Under President Donald Trump, the U.S. has increased efforts to battle the Al-Qaeda-linked Al-Shabab militant group in Somalia.

Feisal Omar/Reuters

<http://www.newsweek.com/suicide-bomber-kills-civilians-soldier-near-largest-us-military-base-somalia-917849?piano t=1>



Somali militants 'stone woman to death for marrying 11 times'

Members of Al-Shabaab at an undisclosed location in Somalia. The Somalia-based terrorists stoned a woman to death after one of their courts convicted her of marrying 11 times, without divorcing previous husbands.



In Summary

She was buried neck-deep and pelted to death with stones by Al-Shabab fighters in Sablale town in the Lower Shabelle region.

In 2014, Al-Shabab stoned a woman to death after convicting her of secretly marrying four husbands in the southern coastal district of Barawe.

A woman has been stoned death in Somalia after a court run by militant Islamist group Al-Shabab convicted her of polyandry, reports a media outlet affiliated to the militants.

Shukri Abdullahi Warsame was accused of marrying 11 times, without divorcing previous husbands.

She was buried neck-deep and pelted to death with stones by Al-Shabab fighters in Sablale town in the Lower Shabelle region.

In 2014, Al-Shabab stoned a woman to death after convicting her of secretly marrying four husbands in the southern coastal district of Barawe

<https://mobile.nation.co.ke/news/africa/Woman-stoned-to-death-for-marrying-11-husbands/3126394-4552682-8xlc8b/index.html>



Daesh executes 13 attacks in Somalia



Daesh militant holding their flag May 9, 2018 - The Daesh group has executed some 13 attacks in Somalia so far this year, a number which is set to outpace their attacks in both 2016 and 2017, the Long War Journal said in a new report.

In addition to the confirmed Daesh attacks in the country, there were 32 assaults which the group claimed which could not be confirmed but it is “unclear” if they are legitimate, as “few are reported by local media or proven with visual evidence”.

“Of the total 45 claimed operations, 14 have occurred inside Mogadishu and a further three were reported within the city’s outskirts or suburbs. At least 12 were inside Afgooye. Other attacks were reported by the group in Bosaso, Baidoa, Bay, and Qandala. Operations also reportedly took place in lesser known towns, like Jarur in Puntland or Quf Jadud in western Somalia,” the report stated.

“It is unclear exactly how many claims made by the group are legitimate, as few are reported by local media or proven with visual evidence. Some assassination claims, however, are followed up with photo or video proof. That said, the statements still indicate the types of operations and claimed areas of operation of the organization inside Somalia.”

Al-Shabaab versus Daesh

UN moves to curb Al-shabaab cash points

It is estimated that Al-Shabaab obtains \$10 million every year through levies it imposes on the charcoal trade in areas under its control. AFP PHOTO



In Summary

According to the UN, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Kuwait and Oman are major markets for Somali charcoal exports.

The world body says that implementation of the 2012 ban has been poorly enforced.

By Moses Kyeyune

Mogadishu: United Nations agencies operating in Somalia have teamed up to curb what they have called “unsustainable trade, production and use of charcoal in Somalia.”

Charcoal trade is one of the main cash-streams for the Al-shabaab militants. The agencies have opened a two-day conference in Somalia’s capital, Mogadishu, in the wake of a recent resurgence in charcoal trade, which had dropped in 2015 and 2016.

The Al-Shabaab have been partly blamed for facilitating illegal charcoal trade and they export it to some gulf countries via the Jubbaland state. The Conference which is supported by the UN Development Programme, the UN Environment agency and the UN Food and Agricultural Organization also brings together environmentalists, diplomats and academics as well as officials from the Federal Government of Somalia.

They are meeting to discuss ways of curbing the charcoal trade and its impact on Somalia’s fragile environment.

Somalia's Deputy Prime Minister, Mahdi Mohamed Guled, has thanked the international community for helping the country against the vice.

Mr Guled noted that the Somali government had lobbied the United Nations to impose a ban on the charcoal trade in 2012 to preserve the environment and also eliminate a vital source of funding for armed groups.

"The Federal Government of Somalia is committed to reducing the charcoal consumption by identifying sustainable sources of energy to reverse the impending threat against Somalia's fragile eco-systems," Mr. Guled said.

Illegal charcoal trade continues to fund insecurity and conflict.

It is estimated that Al-Shabaab obtains \$10 million every year through levies it imposes on the charcoal trade in areas under its control.

The officials argue that besides fuelling the militants' capacity, the illegal trade contributes to frequent drought cycles, flooding, the loss of livelihoods and an increase in food insecurity.

The Deputy Prime Minister said that there is a need to develop alternative energy systems to strengthen the ban on the charcoal trade in Somalia.

"We have natural, God-given solar energy, we also have lots of wind which can generate energy for cooking and other uses, and also gas which is cheaper to utilize," Mr Guled added. According to the UN, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Kuwait and Oman are major markets for Somali charcoal exports.

The world body says that implementation of the 2012 ban has been poorly enforced.

<http://www.monitor.co.ug/News/National/UN-moves-curb-Al-shabaab-cash-points/688334-4550664-147o3ug/index.html>

Despite an uptick in attacks, Daesh has not had an easy ride in Somalia over competition faced by the Al-Qaeda affiliate Al-Shabaab. Al-Shabaab has ordered a special unit to hunt down and target any of its members that have defected to Daesh. Any form of pro-Daesh sentiments in Al-Shabaab territory leaves people liable for arrest or death.

Yet, Daesh have executed attacks well away from their stronghold in Puntland, showing that competition has not successfully stopped the group from operating near Al-Shabaab. Daesh has set up splinter cells in central and southern Somalia.

A small section of Al-Shabaab broke off and pledged allegiance to Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi, the leader of Daesh, in October 2015. The splinter group operates primarily in Puntland, in the north-east of the country. It is led by Sheikh Abdul Qadir Mumin who commands an estimated 300 foot soldiers. Most of Al-Shabaab's members however remain linked to Al-Qaeda.

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20180509-daesh-executes-13-attacks-in-somalia/>



Qatar condemns attacks in Somalia and Kabul

May 10 2018

Qatar has strongly condemned the bombing of a market in southern Somalia, causing deaths and injuries. Qatar also voiced its strong condemnation of the attacks that targeted two police stations in the Afghan capital of Kabul, leaving a number of people killed and injured. In statements yesterday, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs reiterated Qatar's firm position rejecting violence and terrorism regardless of motives or reasons. The statements expressed Qatar's condolences to the families of the victims, the governments and people of Somalia and Afghanistan, wishing the injured a speedy recovery.

<http://www.gulf-times.com/story/592225/Qatar-condemns-attacks-in-Somalia-and-Kabul>

Somalia e Kenia, Al-Shabaab è una minaccia in espansione

Di Francesco Ippoliti e Matilde Perin

Mogadiscio. In quest'ultimo periodo la formazione jihadista di al-Shabaab si è dimostrata particolarmente attiva in Somalia, evidenziando un' efferata violenza verso la popolazione locale.



Componenti di Al Shabaab

Al-Shabaab è una organizzazione terroristica jihadista, retta dal Generale Ahmad Umar (Abu Ubaidah) che opera in Somalia coinvolgendo anche Kenya e Etiopia.

Le origini del gruppo si devono cercare nell'Unione delle Corti Islamiche(ICU) ovvero un'organizzazione sorta ufficialmente nel 2000 a Mogadiscio che raggruppava molti dei clan formatesi per coprire il vuoto lasciato dalla guerra civile somala. In quel periodo Al-Shabaab era infatti una sua espressione armata.

L'ICU venne ben presto accusata di atrocità contro il popolo somalo e contro le varie istituzioni. Così nel 2004 il Governo Federale di Transizione (GFT) sostenuto dall'Unione Africana che avviò la missione Africa Mission in Somalia (AMISOM, <http://amisom-au.org>) neutralizzò l'ICU.

Al-Shabaab si riorganizzò in un gruppo indipendente e i suoi obiettivi principali divennero: l'imposizione della Sharia in Somalia, la liberazione del Paese dalle truppe estere presenti e la destituzione del Governo somalo.

I jihadisti inizieranno una serie di violente azioni contro il GFT e AMISOM che non hanno risparmiato la popolazione locale.

In Somalia è sempre emergenza umanitaria

A partire dal 2008 al-Shabaab dichiarò la propria alleanza con al-Qaeda, condividendo programmi e obiettivi.

Al-Shabaab risulta presente principalmente nelle zone rurali, aree non controllate dalle forze governative da AMISOM.



Da queste basi, ove trova rifugio ed assistenza, i suoi membri possono pianificare gli attacchi terroristici nei pressi della capitale e di altre grandi aree urbane.

Oltre alla Somalia, il gruppo è anche attivo in Kenya, ove cerca di coinvolgere i giovani musulmani ad impegnarsi nella lotta ideologica della guerra santa. Le attività sono capeggiate da Jaysh al-Ayman con base principalmente nella foresta del Boni.

Nel 2017 al Shabaab ha concluso con successo numerose azioni terroristiche, con un altissimo tasso di letalità (20,9 persone uccise per attacco) e sembrerebbe voler continuare, se non rafforzare, questa politica anche nel 2018.

Uno dei principali obiettivi del gruppo è la capitale somala Mogadiscio, ove non solo convergono le uniche strutture politiche ed economiche del paese, ma anche quelle della cooperazione internazionale avviate per far ripartire il paese.

La città è stata colpita con una media altissima di almeno 4 attacchi al mese, dando una copertura internazionale dell'evento.

Le altre zone sono, invece, state interessate principalmente con lo scopo di mantenere il controllo sulla popolazione locale, le loro risorse ed acquisire il controllo dell'area.

Anche il Kenya ha subito numerosi attacchi terroristici, ma gli obiettivi preposti si sono rivelati maggiormente politici, in particolare sono serviti per spostare l'opinione pubblica verso il ritiro delle forze del Kenia da AMISOM in Somalia e reclutare giovani kenioti nelle file di al-Shabaab. Da rilevare che numerosi di essi erano nelle file dei miliziani che hanno portato l'attacco alla base keniota di Kolbio nel gennaio 2017.

Inoltre, anche una parte della compagine politica di Nairobi ha cominciato a dichiararsi favorevole per il ritiro delle forze dalla Somalia e rafforzare le difese del confine elevando difese passive (per esempio muri o reti).

Ad ogni modo, il presidente keniano Uhuru Kenyatta, pur essendo il Kenya il Paese estero più colpito da al-Shabaab, è intenzionato a far permanere le truppe in territorio somalo almeno fino al 2020.

Analizzando i dati delle azioni terroristiche riportati dai media, citando fonti ufficiali, considerandoli a partire dal 2015, si evidenzia un incremento delle attività criminali, raddoppiandoli in alcuni casi.

Nel 2016 le azioni suicide, rispetto al 2015, sono aumentate del 107%, con una media del 103% mensile, mentre sono ridotte del 15% quelle degli IED (Improvised Explosive Device).



Il Presidente del Kenia, Uhuru Kenyatta.

Nel 2017 il numero delle azioni terroristiche ha avuto una lieve flessione, presumibilmente per l'inizio delle azioni counterinsurgency da parte degli USA.

Nel 2018, invece, il gruppo sembrerebbe avere una grande ripresa. Basti osservare l'ingente numero di 150 eventi conflittuali legati a questo gruppo che si sono avuti solo tra il 31 dicembre 2017 ed il 4 febbraio 2018. Ben 49 di questi eventi sono avvenuti nel basso Scebeli, regione a Sud della Somalia.

La maggior parte delle azioni di al-Shabaab, in Somalia, hanno avuto come obiettivo le strutture governative ed istituzionali.

Ma la riorganizzazione del gruppo jihadista e la sua pericolosità la si può evincere anche dal numero delle azioni che unità degli USA hanno condotto in territorio somalo contro al Shabaab.

In particolare, dal luglio a dicembre 2017 gli Stati Uniti, con unità speciali, droni e velivoli armati, hanno dichiarato di aver ufficialmente condotto 35 attacchi causando circa 400 morti nelle file del gruppo jihadista.

Nel 2018 al momento risulterebbero 10 azioni militari contro al Shabaab.

In sintesi, pur essendoci in atto un'azione nazionale ed internazionale per la ricostruzione della Somalia, con una significativa presenza estera, il gruppo jihadista sembra non cedere nella sua guerra santa.

Le costanti azioni terroristiche nella capitale cercano di minare il potere politico e soprattutto il consenso popolare verso la presenza di stranieri, con particolare riferimento ad AMISOM.

La missione non riesce ad ottenere il controllo del Paese che era uno degli obiettivi prioritari, lasciando quindi vaste aree sotto il controllo di al-Shabaab nelle quali impone il proprio Governo secondo la legge islamica della sharia.

Ma le sue azioni hanno forte impatto anche sui Paesi vicini, in particolare il Kenya, ove si evince un significativo incremento nel consenso giovanile.

Quindi al-Shabaab, oltre a cercar di raggiungere gli obiettivi preposti, sembrerebbe che cominci ad incrementare le mire espansionistiche nell'area. Segno che, nonostante le perdite inflitte dalle missioni USA in netto aumento, il gruppo non sembra stia affatto vivendo un periodo di crisi e difficoltà, ma che, al contrario, sta ampliando i suoi orizzonti.

In base ai dati finora analizzati, la situazione attuale delinea una previsione negativa per la Somalia: in pochi anni l'apparato governativo e di sicurezza di Mogadiscio potrebbe ritrovarsi a dover a che fare con una forza ancor più organizzata ed incontrollabile.

La presenza delle forze governative ma soprattutto una missione ripensata e rafforzata di AMISOM potrebbe essere l'unica soluzione, al momento, per la neutralizzazione di al-Shabaab e la riorganizzazione della Somalia.

<http://www.reportdifesa.it/somalia-e-kenia-al-shabaab-e-una-minaccia-in-espansione/>

FDD's LONG WAR

JOURNAL



Analysis: Islamic State ramps up attack claims in Somalia

By Caleb Weiss | May 9, 2018

Over the last month, the Islamic State has conducted several assassinations inside Somalia, representing an increase in the number of attacks emanating from its fledgling East African affiliate. In four of the five claims since April 15, the assassinations took place in Mogadishu.

On April 15, the Islamic State's news outlet, Amaq News, claimed that militants loyal to the group assassinated a member of the Somali military in the southern town of Afgooye. A little over a week later, a similar Amaq statement claimed a Somali intelligence officer was murdered in the streets of Mogadishu. Just four days later, another intelligence officer was reportedly gunned down in the Somali capital.

Last week, Amaq claimed a Somali policeman was assassinated in Mogadishu. While yesterday, another intelligence officer in Mogadishu was murdered by an Islamic State-loyal gunman.

So far in 2018, the Islamic State has conducted at least 13 attacks inside Somalia. That number is set to outpace both last year and 2016, according to data culled from Amaq News and Islamic State central releases.

It is unclear exactly how many claims made by the group are legitimate, as few are reported by local media or proven with visual evidence. Some assassination claims, however, are followed up with photo or video proof. That said, the statements still indicate the types of operations and claimed areas of operation of the organization inside Somalia.

The claims were broken down into categories of "types of operations," "targets," and "locations." The Somali military and police, as well as the Puntland Security Forces, were combined into "Somali Security Forces," while the Somali intelligence agency, NISA,

remained separate. Attacks on Somali government employees or buildings were categorized under “Somali government.” Two reported locations, Jarur in Puntland, and Hawa Abdi in the Middle Shabelle, could not be geolocated and were not added to the map above.

Of the total 45 claimed operations, 14 have occurred inside Mogadishu and a further three were reported within the city’s outskirts or suburbs. At least 12 were inside Afgooye. Other attacks were reported by the group in Bosaso, Baidoa, Bay, and Qandala. Operations also reportedly took place in lesser known towns, like Jarur in Puntland or Quf Jadud in western Somalia.

The most common type of operations are targeted assassinations, with Somali intelligence officers of NISA being the primary targets. The Islamic State has claimed at least five improvised explosive device (IED) blasts in Somalia, including its first ever claim in the country on April 25, 2016. Eleven of the claims included either assaults or clashes with Somali security forces, while a further six involved hand-grenade attacks.

African Union forces were the target in only four claims, with members of the Somali security forces or intelligence officials being the primary targets of the attacks. Only one government employee, a financial officer in Afgooye, and a government office in an unspecified town in Bay, has been targeted by Islamic State-loyal militants.

The Islamic State has claimed just one suicide bombing in the country. Last May, a suicide bomber detonated his explosives at a security checkpoint near the Juba hotel in the northern city of Bosaso. It has also only claimed capturing one city, Qandala in Oct. 2016, a city it held for two months before a Puntland military campaign recaptured it.

The main Islamic State faction operating in Somalia is led by Abdulqadir Mumin, a former Shabaab official who appeared in many of its propaganda videos before defecting to the Islamic State in Oct. 2015. In Aug. 2016, the US State Department added Mumin to its list of global terrorists. The US has also targeted Mumin’s men in airstrikes, starting last November.

Mumin’s group may have had around 200 to 300 members before a Puntland military campaign drove them back from Qandala, according to Voice of America. Last year, a defector from Mumin’s group reportedly told Puntland authorities that there are only around 70 people remaining in the group.

The faction is largely based in the Golis and Bari mountains of northern Somalia. It is known to run at least one training camp in that area. The facility is named after Bashir Abu Numan, a Shabaab commander who defected to the Islamic State but was killed by Shabaab's Amniyat (internal security force).

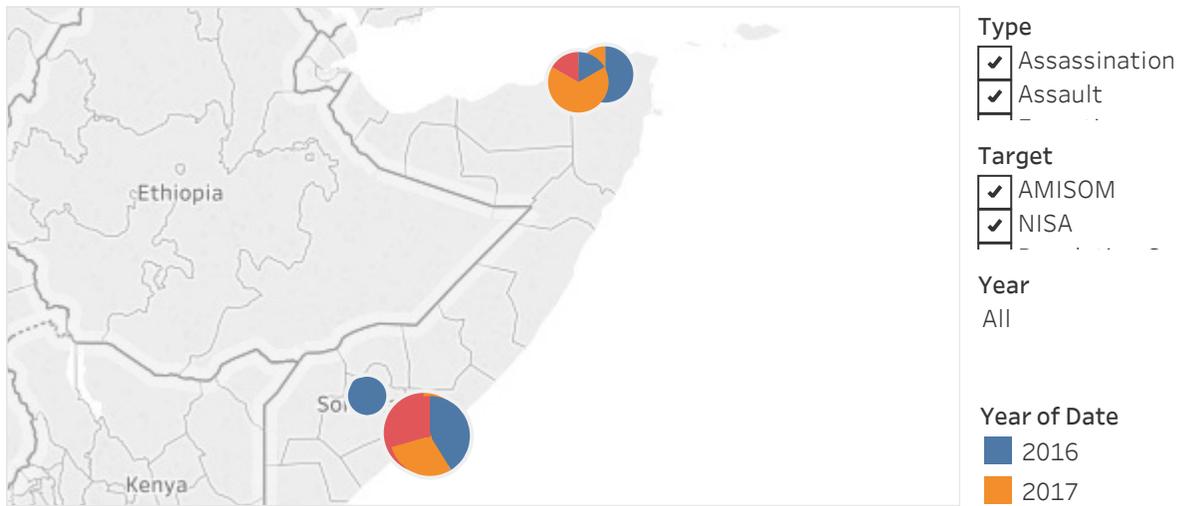
Smaller Islamic State-loyal cells are also present in central and southern Somalia. For example, the claimed attacks in Mogadishu and Afgooye are committed by these cells. However, it is unclear what their organizational relationship is, if any, to the larger Mumin-led faction in Puntland. Another Islamic State-loyal cell operating in southern Somalia captured a small town in Dec. 2015, almost a year prior to Mumin capturing Qandala.

However, the Islamic State has had a difficult time establishing a strong foothold inside the country. Shabaab's Amniyat has been tasked with hunting down and killing any members who seek to or have defected to the Islamic State. The Amniyat has arrested or killed dozens of pro-Islamic State minded members within its ranks since 2015. The assassinations in southern Somalia appear to be more opportunistic rather than part of a concerted strategy of increasing its presence, which is severely hampered by the Shabaab campaign against it.

That said, the competition with Shabaab has not completely stopped the group from continuing to operate inside Somalia, as the attack claims show the Islamic State's presence and operations. Some of these operations continue to be far from its stronghold in the Puntland region.

<https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2018/05/analysis-islamic-state-ramps-up-attack-claims-in-somalia.php>

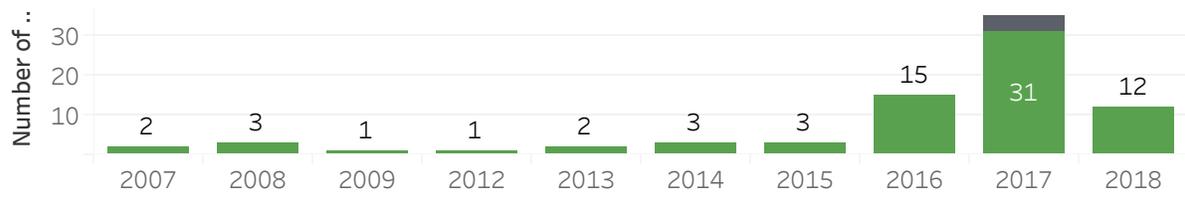
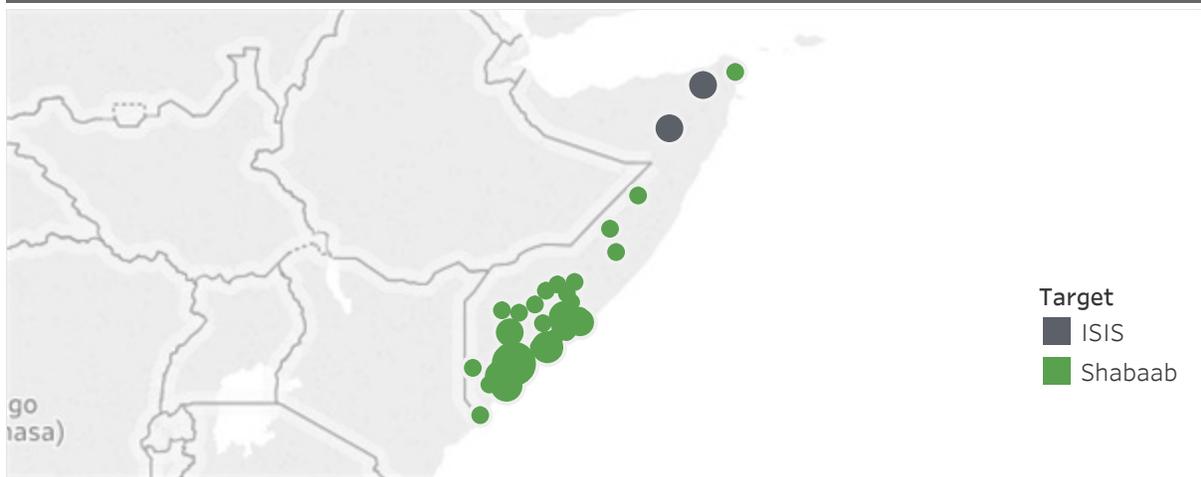
Claimed Islamic State Attacks in Somalia



| Type | Target | | | | | |
|---------------|--------|------|--------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| | AMISOM | NISA | Population.. | Pro Gover.. | Somali Go.. | Somali Sec.. |
| Assassination | | 10 | | | 1 | 9 |
| Assault | 1 | | | 1 | | 9 |
| Execution | | | | | | 1 |



US Strikes in Somalia





Life in Somalia under peacekeepers and al- Shabaab threats

Despite terror threats by al-Shabab insurgents, life in Somalia is relatively calm thanks to the peacekeeping forces. DW's Frank Yiga in Kampala visited the capital Mogadishu, and also toured the countryside.



Life in Mogadishu

After a long day's work, Somalis and foreigners like to catch up for a drink and chat at the Leaf Camp hotel in Mogadishu. The Somali capital is busy

and bustling despite the threat of attacks by the Islamist militant group al-Shabab, says Suleiman Elmem, one of the patrons. Maka al Mukarama is the busiest street in Mogadishu, with overflowing traffic jams, pedestrians crisscrossing under the scorching heat, and crowded business outlets displaying all sorts of merchandise. Life seems to be normal unlike in the past when the al-Shabaab Islamists were in control. "Three years ago, they used to control parts of Mogadishu - now they don't control anything, so their presence is insignificant," Elmem told DW.

Read more: [Escape from al-Shabab: 'I was turned into a sex slave'](#)

The al-Shabaab Islamists not only controlled Mogadishu but also large portions of the Somali countryside. Although an African Union–led military campaign has pushed them back, the insurgents remain a major security challenge in Somalia – where their ultimate goal is to establish an Islamic state.

"A journey of 1,000 miles (1,600 kilometers) begins with a step," says Ama Shiddo, a Mogadishu-based real estate salesman. He is convinced Somalia is headed for a bright

future. "People are coming back, rebuilding their houses, universities and hospitals are opening, and business is booming more than ever in the past three years," he told DW.

Bomb attacks occur often, especially in Mogadishu



Hope for the future

Young people like Ahmed Abdul, who studied civil engineering in Uganda, are increasingly returning home to be part of the reconstruction process of their country. "The Somali youth are now active and they participate in development and reconstruction," Abdul boasted.

Further to the southwest, in the village of Ceelijaale, the Quick Impact Project initiated by the Uganda People's Defense Force (UPDF) serving under the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), is helping young people develop their capabilities and talent. And they are excited about this initiative, says officer Muhumuza, pointing out the importance of targeting young people and keeping them busy "because if you don't, that gives al-Shabab the chance to lure them in their ranks."



For peacekeepers it's important to keep young boys busy and off the streets to prevent them from joining al-Shabaab Islamists

In the framework of the project, 25-year-old Salim Hamis joined the local soccer team in Ceelijaale and is now team captain. Soccer keeps him from being bored, and "joining bad company", the jobless young man told DW, adding that he fervently hopes to play professional football in the future, maybe abroad.

Endless conflict?

In Buufo, a remote village southwest of Mogadishu where people tend their cows, goats, chickens, and camels, 55-year-old Abdallah Bashir argues that al-Shabab is still a threat, explaining that is why people turned to the African Union (AU) for food, safety, and an education. The villagers can only go to UPDF-patrolled areas, he told DW.

Back at the AMISOM base, a group of women and children lined up for free medical treatment. Hadija is one of the patients who has come to seek medical treatment. "I have malaria, a headache, and a fever," she says. The soldiers say the turnout for free drugs to treat diarrheal diseases, malaria, respiratory tract infections, tuberculosis, and diabetes is always overwhelming.



AMISOM troops give out goodies to locals in times of plenty

Apart from free medical treatment, Somalis also enjoy free food handouts the soldiers share when they have plenty of provisions.

Despite such increasing threats from al-Shabaab, Brigadier General Paul Lokech, commander of the Ugandan contingent in AMISOM sector 1, concludes that the people of Somalia are now enjoying relative peace and stability apart from a few isolated areas where the peacekeepers are stepping up their operations.



Mogadishu - city of extremes

In the face of terror

The truck was loaded with explosives and detonated at a busy junction in the heart of Mogadishu in the afternoon of September 14, 2017. The

explosion of the bomb killed at least 276 people and injured hundreds more. It was the worst

terror attack in the history of Somalia. Nearly three decades of civil war and terror have also robbed the population of its resilience to drought.

Mogadishu - city of extremes

Fighting starvation - a Somali reality

Xamdi is a child of Somali nomads and has been in the nutrition ward of Mogadishu's Banadir Hospital since the beginning of August. Her



mother feeds her with the peanut -based 'Plumpy'Nut' paste to avoid severe acute malnutrition. Xamdi is three years old and only weighs seven kilograms. Most kids in Germany in the same age group weigh twice as much. About 800,000 Somalis are facing starvation.



Mogadishu - city of extremes

Collapsed health system - even in the capital

This boy recovers in the bed next to

Xamdi. He is fighting pneumonia, one of the all too common infections caused by chronic malnutrition and overcrowded conditions in Mogadishu's refugee camps. His hands are wrapped in paper to prevent him from pulling out his feeding tube. Banadir Hospital is the biggest public clinic in the capital, but even here the collapse of the health system is visible.

Mogadishu - city of refugees

Mogadishu is full of makeshift homes. Many nomads and countryside dwellers are determined to stay. They have fled civil war, terror, violence and hunger. The city's population has swollen to nearly 2.5 million. At least 600,000 are officially regarded as 'internally displaced people'.



Camp life takes a heavy toll

The congested and unhygienic living conditions in the camps are a health hazard. Acute respiratory tract infections and diarrhea are common diseases among Mogadishu's internally displaced

population. Life in the makeshift camps is a daily struggle for the next meal and the next bucket of water.



Life in waiting

There is not much to do inside the camps but to sit and wait. Many children don't have access to education. Most makeshift camps lack playgrounds or other recreational

spaces.



City of ruins

There is much hardship outside the camps, too. The old part of Mogadishu is particularly pockmarked by nearly three decades of

internal conflict. But there are also signs of new beginnings.

Selfie time

Early September 2017: These youngsters are having a good time in Mogadishu's Peace Park. All of them are students, all of them express faith in the new government of western-backed



President Mohamed. One of them wants to become a civil aviation engineer. He says: "It is much safer here than five years ago." Five years ago al-Shabaab ruled the capital. Today the extremists send suicide bombers.



No hand grenades

Right at the entrance to Peace Park, visitors are reminded to leave behind Kalashnikovs, knives, hand grenades and pistols.

The happening place

Liido beach draws huge crowds especially after Friday prayers. People meet to dance and play soccer. Soccer is hugely popular in Somalia. Young lovers meet to court each other. Mogadishu's Liido beach was deserted under al-Shabaab's brief rule of the capital.



Reconstruction in full swing

The international community has started to invest in rebuilding Somalia's shattered state. Reconstruction is most visible in the capital. This new street was built with

Turkish help. Turkey has also set up a huge military base in Mogadishu to train Somali soldiers.



Walls and fences

New villas spring up throughout town. Somalia's returning diaspora invests in Mogadishu's booming property market. So do politicians and other strongmen. Many of the new buildings are

surrounded by high blast walls and concertina wire to fend off terrorists, criminals and rivals.



Green Zone

The airport region has become the expats' hub. Like Baghdad and Kabul, Mogadishu has a green zone. The United Nations and most of the returning diplomatic missions

live and work in the vast compound which has developed around Mogadishu's International Airport. It is fenced off and guarded by African Union troops.



City of murals

Most of Mogadishu's shopfronts sport hand-painted murals which add some much-needed color to a city slowly rising from its ruins.

Online shopping

Modern billboards are also conquering the streets, advertising online shopping for Arab fashion or application details for private educational institutions.



Mogadishu - city of extremes, Not for all

The city's new attractions are out of reach for the many displaced people and the poor. Somalia's progress and stability will depend on the state's ability to win the trust of its people. Right now nearly seven million people, which is about half the country's population, depend on humanitarian aid.



Youth bulge

More than half of Somalia's population is under 18. The majority of citizens were born after the overthrow of Mohamed Siad Barre in 1991 — the pivotal event that caused the country to become a failed state. The capital's youth, if not engaged meaningfully, often feel disenfranchised, adding to Somalia's continued vulnerability.

Author: Sandra Petersmann

<http://www.dw.com/en/life-in-somalia-under-peacekeepers-and-al-shabaab-threats/a-43700820>



AU mission seeks to strengthen ties between Somali police, public

Wednesday May 9, 2018



The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) said on Tuesday that it has kicked off a week-long training to enhance communication skills of Somali police officers to help improve their interaction with members of the public. The AU mission said the training aims to strengthen relations between security

officers and the public and help Somali Police establish communication departments, within the force, in all the federal member states.

Simon Mulongo, Deputy Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (DSRCC) for Somalia, said the training, organized by the police component of AMISOM, is being attended by officers drawn from Mogadishu and the five federal member states.

"As part of your work as a police force in this country, you need to have skills, knowledge and capabilities to make people know what the police force in Somalia stands for and you can do this by speaking out," Mulongo said in a statement. He described the training as timely, adding that the skills learned will help improve cooperation between officers and the public on security matters. He noted that the training was part of the transition plan, which requires AMISOM to prepare Somali national security institutions to take over the country's security once AMISOM's mandate comes to an end

https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2018/May/157967/au_mission_seeks_to_strengthen_ties_between_somali_police_public.aspx

Leave Somali women alone - CDF Wamala warns soldiers

The Chief of Defense Forces, Gen. Katumba Wamala, on Saturday cautioned UPDF soldiers in Battle Group 16 and the UN Guard Unit who are flying to Somalia Monday against engaging in “any relationship whatsoever” with Somali women



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Katumba Wamala who replaced Aronda Nyakairima in 2013 as CDF cautioned male UPDF soldiers not to engage in any relationship, including being intimate with Somali women, as the move could jeopardize the mission.

Gen. Katumba Wamala arrives for the send-off ceremony of UPDF's Battle Group XVI to Somalia Peace Keeping Mission at Singo Training School in Nakaseke District on June 13, 2015. Photo/Godfrey Kimono.

Gen. Katumba Wamala (second left) inspecting a guard of honour during the send-off ceremony of UPDF's Battle Group XVI at Singo Training School in Nakaseke District on June 13, 2015. Photo/Godfrey Kimono.

Col. Felix kulayije joins some of the UPDF Soldiers in singing and dancing during the send-off ceremony of UPDF's Battle Group XVI to Somalia Peace Keeping Mission at Singo Training School in Nakaseke District on June 13, 2015. Photo/Godfrey Kimono.

Female UPDF soldiers were cautioned not to tangle with Somali men.

This was during the sendoff ceremony of 1972 troops at the Singo Military Training School in Nakaseke District Saturday.

The Ugandan soldiers under Battle Group UGABAG 16 (1442) and the UN Guard Unit (530) are flying to Somalia to replace UGABAG 13+ and another UN Guard Unit that are rotating out.

They will be in the horn of Africa country for the next one year, under the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).

https://www.newvision.co.ug/new_vision/news/1328269/leave-somali-women-cdf-wamala-warns-soldiers



Beyond security: The bliss that UPDF brings to Somalia

The Independent May 9, 2018 News Leave a comment 204 Views



UPDF offering health services to an old woman in somalia.

Kampala, Uganda | THE INDEPENDENT

| A market for women, a football playground for youth, food supplies and health services, are some of the projects

that Uganda Peoples Defence Forces (UPDF) contingent under the African Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) has started for folks in Somalia.

It's these projects that have aided the friendship between UPDF soldiers and communities in a country ruined by war and anarchy. The Ugandan troops have served for 11 years.

With a force of about 5,700 soldiers in Somalia, Uganda is in charge of Banadir region which covers Mogadishu city and Lower Shabelle regions. The lower Shabelle region covers part of Somalia's Indian Ocean coastline.

Uganda has three Battle Grounds in Somalia. The first is situated in Afgooye District, 30 kilometres from Mogadishu; the second in Ceelijaale, 125 kilometres from Mogadishu, and the third, in Barawe – south-west of lower Shabelle, 240 kilometres from Mogadishu.

From Ceelijaale, Our reporter observes that the interior of Somalia is poverty stricken. People have no access to basic needs such as health, water, food among others. Malnourished children, depressed and idle men and women living in fear of insecurity are what make living in the interior of Somalia quite depressing.

A glance at a sedentary old woman from a distance presents a striking resemblance of children who may also be indistinguishable from their parents. The people's miseries are compounded by lack government visibility in the areas where they dwell.

In such a situation, UPDF soldiers are largely the source of basic needs for Somalis living in their operation zones.

Muhumuza Wilberforce Fred, a UPDF medic at Ceeljaale Battle Group headquarters says they attend to between 40 to 70 patients every day with ailments such as diarrhoea, tuberculosis, respiratory infections and diabetes, which is common among elderly men and women.

Muhumuza says they have not come across HIV and AIDS-related conditions. What is common, he explains is malnutrition-related ailments.

According to 2016 statistics from the Somalia National Aids Commission, Somalia has a total of 26,000 people living with HIV & AIDS with 51 percent of them being women.

This figure includes those living in Southern Somalia, self-proclaimed independent states of Puntland and Somaliland. HIV and AIDS is still considered a taboo subject as is directly associated with promiscuity in a country where 99 percent of the population profess Islam.

Fatumah Muhammad, who connects Somalis to UPDF soldiers as an interpreter says health is generally bad because there are no health facilities apart from AMISOM services. She explains that diarrhoea prevalence generally goes up in January and February. When people fall sick, Fatumah says, they consult AMISOM commanders for treatment.

Adjacent to Ceeljaale battle group headquarters is an open space, often used as a market every evening. According to Maj Joram Kabegambire, the initiative was started to help needy and widowed women to earn a living. Often, UPDF soldier use the same market to purchase merchandise

Maj Kabegambire says they are planning a tailoring project through which women will be given sewing machines.

The UPDF has also established two playgrounds for youth, a group categorized as the most vulnerable due to the possibility of being swayed into terrorism activities by Alshabaab.

In the absence of schools, these playgrounds have become a relief to youths for play soccer morning and evening. Soccer has also unified youths from different clans who were once adversaries., according to Maj Kabegambire.

<https://www.independent.co.ug/beyond-security-the-bliss-that-updf-brings-to-somalia/>



Somalia: Deputy PM Boards Warship to Meet EU Delegates Over Piracy

Somalia's deputy PM Mahdi Mohamed Guled boarded an Italian warship off Somalia coast, where he held talks with EU Naval Force operating under the name of Operation Atalanta.

Guled met with a delegation from European Union and the Naval Force commander and discussed the EU-Somalia relations and the anti-piracy operation off the country's coast.

The deputy prime minister has commended the EU Mission for its commitment to rooting out the piracy and support for Somalia in the efforts to stop the illegal fishing.

"I met with delegates from EU accompanied by the General Commander of Atlanta Anti-piracy Operation on a warship near the coast of Somalia and discussed the Piracy and means to safeguard Somalia's waters," said Guled.

EU NAVFOR Somalia, also known as Operation Atalanta, is a currently conducting a counter-piracy military operation aimed at eradicating piracy and illegal fishing on Somalia's waters

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201805090529.html>

**XINHUANET**

More than half a million Somalis affected by floods and heavy rain

World Health Organisation (WHO) calls for redoubled efforts to assist Somali communities in need

KINSHASA, Democratic Republic of Congo, May 9, 2018/APO Group/ --

Flash and river floods, caused by heavy rainfall, in Somalia have affected more than 695 000 people, and displaced nearly 215 000 of these, in the last few days.

Most flooding occurred in the regions of Bakool, Banadir, Bay, Hiraan, Lower Juba, Middle Juba and Middle Shabelle. One of the worst-hit areas includes Belet Weyne, Hiraan, in the Hirshabelle State, where more than 120 000 people — some of whom have already been displaced from their original homes — were forced to flee riverine villages after the Shabelle River burst its banks, destroying houses and crops.

As part of an immediate response, WHO, in close collaboration with the Federal Government's Ministry of Health, airlifted and prepositioned 30.1 tonnes of emergency medical supplies to Belet Weyne, Baidoa and Kismayo to treat illnesses commonly spread during emergencies. These provisions include basic, essential, medical drugs, oral rehydration supplies (ORS), water-testing kits and cholera treatment supplies. Similar medical supplies will soon be sent to the South West and Jubaland States.

However, WHO estimates an additional US\$ 2 million will be required to purchase and distribute emergency supplies to other flood-affected areas. These resources would also fund staff needed to deliver services; monitoring and response to disease outbreaks; and the coordination of all these efforts.

“Once heavy rains pour into the river basins of Ethiopia and Somalia, this spells danger for communities living along the Shabelle and Jubba rivers. The flooding has taken a toll on

people living in Gedo, Hiraan, Lower Shabelle, Lower Jubba and Middle Shabelle,” said HE Excellency Dr Fawziya Abikar, Minister of Health, Federal Government of Somalia.

The flooding has taken a toll on people living in Gedo, Hiraan, Lower Shabelle, Lower Jubba and Middle Shabelle

At the onset of the floods, His Excellency Hassan Ali Khayre, Prime Minister of the Federal Republic of Somalia, briefed international development and humanitarian partners on the heavy flooding and its impact, and requested for emergency assistance to the flood-affected population.

However, the needs are outrunning the support available. “Urgent action is needed to respond to this emergency,” warned Dr Ghulam Popal, WHO Representative for Somalia. “A well-coordinated response by authorities, and local and international organizations averted a cholera epidemic last year. We need a similar response again, now, to save livelihoods and prevent the spread of diseases among an already vulnerable society.”

The Somali Health Cluster, a group of international and national agencies working jointly to improve health in the country, also called for national and regional partners to convene coordination meetings to discuss ongoing response activities and gaps, as well as to scale up the provision of lifesaving health and nutrition services to the people in need.

Flooding can trigger the transmission of water-borne and vector-borne diseases, such as cholera, malaria and dengue fever, and contaminate water sources. To respond to and manage any resulting disease outbreaks in a timely manner, health authorities and WHO have alerted the Early Warning System in Somalia and WHO’s communicable disease surveillance officers to look out for the emergence of any waterborne or vector-borne diseases. Senior Ministry of Health and WHO officials have conducted joint missions to Belet Weyne and Baidoa to meet state and local health authorities, and gather crucial information on the situation.

Urgent needs of the afflicted communities include shelter, food, health, nutritional supplies, access to water and sanitation, latrines, mosquito nets and tents.

Short-term forecasts made by the UN Food and Agriculture-managed Somalia Water and Land Information Management (SWALIM) suggest river levels inside Somalia are expected to continue rising in the coming days with more cases of flooding along the Juba and Shabelle rivers.

Somalis have suffered from natural calamities and civil strife over the years and endured drought, disease outbreaks, and insecurity among other challenges. This has resulted in malnutrition, poor access to health, and prevalent poverty all across the country.

<https://www.africa-newsroom.com/press/more-than-half-a-million-somalis-affected-by-floods-and-heavy-rain?lang=en>



وكالة الأنباء الكويتية (كونا)
Kuwait News Agency (KUNA)

OIC calls for urgent aid to Somalia

10/05/2018 | LOC00:38
21:38 GMT

JEDDAH, May 9 (KUNA) -- The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) has urged the Member States and their humanitarian organisations to urgently extend immediate assistance to Somalia, which is currently facing devastating floods in the southern parts of the country affected by the heavy rains on the Ethiopian highlands.

Based on the information received by the Somali Federal Government, and members of the Alliance of Islamic Cooperation Organisation, UN agencies, the OIC office in Mogadishu has warned from the consequences of a major humanitarian disaster in light of the continued high water levels in the rivers of Juba and Shabelle, the pan-Muslim organization said in a press statement Wednesday.

It added that this foreshadows the expansion of the disaster and the occurrence of large destruction resulting in the loss of shelter and food for tens of thousands of people, especially in light of the precarious situation of food security in Somalia, as well as epidemics due to the poor living conditions as a result of the disaster.

The OIC Office, has so far, provided food and drinking water, health care, and contributed to building temporary dams on the river banks, in addition to other quick and rubber boats to deliver aid to the besieged in the affected areas. (end) nsa.ibi

<https://www.kuna.net.kw/ArticleDetails.aspx?id=2725424&Language=en>



Somaliland: Vice President Hold Extra Ordinary Meeting with Civil Society

05/08/2018



Somalilandsun: The vice president H.E Abdirahman Abdillahi Ismael (Sayli'i) who is also the chairman of the organizing committee of Somaliland National Day slated for 18th May 2018 has held an extra ordinary meeting with the leaders of the civil society. This is according to news distributed by Somaliland News Agency (SOLNA) to news rooms.

The VP explained to the heads of non state actors' organizations the role the government expects them to play on this special day which Somaliland as a nation uses it to promote her sovereignty. It is also a platform for the international community to evaluate Somaliland achievements hence her quest for recognition from the global community.

The civil society organization promised the vice president that their members will come out forcefully to represent Somaliland agenda during the 18th May celebrations.

The deputy president thanked the civil society for their role in promoting public awareness of different issues affecting the country's citizens to live in peace, love and unity.

Somaliland national day which will fall on 18th May 2018 will be on a Friday which will coincide with the holy month of Ramadan. In this respect it has been brought forward to 15th May 2018. This day Somaliland celebrates her independence from Somalia following her ill fated unification.

<http://www.somalilandsun.com/2018/05/08/somalilandvice-president-hold-extra-ordinary-meeting-with-civil-society/>

Somaliland Must Be Free

The U.S. wastes blood and treasure propping up Somalia while denying its neighbor's sovereign aspirations. Why?

By ALI MOHAMED • May 9, 2018



Aerial view to Hargeisa, biggest city of Somaliland, Somalia. Credit:

In 1991, following the collapse of the authoritarian Somali government, the northwestern region of war-torn Somalia became a de-facto republic called Somaliland. Every year on May 18, millions of people take part in Somaliland's independence rallies. Though Somaliland is imperfect, it has all of the attributes of a functioning nation: a legitimate political order that has the consent of the people, a court system that enforces the rule of law, a security force protecting its people and denying sanctuary for terrorists, and a political process to ensure the peaceful transfer of power. In fact, last November, Somaliland had a free and credible presidential election, as certified by international observers.

Yet 27 years after declaring independence, Somaliland still struggles to be recognized as a member of international community, or even acknowledged for its transformation into a fledging democratic country in the Horn of Africa.

The problem for Somaliland, which has plenty of valid reasons to be considered a sovereign state, has to do with the politics of accepting new states into Africa. The African Union (AU), run by despotic regimes, has an unjust veto over Somaliland independence.

The AU charter prohibits changing Africa's borders that were inherited from the colonial powers. However, the African Union's argument to deny Somaliland sovereignty is not valid

because Somaliland was an independent state in 1960 before Somalia was. It had defined colonial borders that were established at the time of independence.

The 4 million Somaliland people made their voices clear in a May 2001 referendum. Thousands drove or walked miles to polling stations, stood patiently in the scorching sun, and voted overwhelmingly in favor of independence.

In contrast, the Somali government that the United States recognizes is riddled with corruption, and is struggling to govern, protect its people, and deliver basic services. It does not have support among ordinary Somalis. Its top leadership is constantly fighting over factional interests and the spoils of foreign aid. Without the support of African Union troops it would collapse.

Despite billions in foreign aid, U.S. counter-terrorism efforts, and some 22,000 AU troops, Somalia is still unstable and dangerous. Many African and UN soldiers, including U.S. Rangers and Delta soldiers, have lost their lives to bring peace and order to that sad country.

Senator Jack Reed, top Democrat on the Senate Armed Services Committee, recently assessed that “not much has changed about Somalia’s prospect for long-term stability” since he first visited 25 years ago, after a trip to Mogadishu, Somalia’s capital, last March.

The reason Somalia remains ungovernable is that its governance is a racket and a fraud. Its power-hungry politicians, businessmen, elders, and even clergy are mostly corrupt, profiting from human disasters and promoting chaos and manufactured political crises to serve their narrow self-interest.

In fact, America’s aid is inadvertently maintaining the culture of impunity and predation that prevails in Mogadishu. As long as the U.S. and others are rewarding bad actors—entrenched rivals clans and warlords—and cajoling with terrorists, defeating al-Shabaab, al-Qaeda’s affiliate group, and securing peace in Somalia will remain elusive.

The United States treats Somalia as a sovereign country, as though United Nations body membership somehow confers legitimacy. Yet democratic Somaliland, which manages its own affairs, is regarded as a pariah state.

Somaliland's biggest challenges are its economy, dilapidated infrastructure, rudimentary health care system, and recurring droughts due to climate change, which have decimated its livestock. It has been sustained by the export of mutton and sheep to the Middle East, and the remittance of the diaspora in North America and Europe. Yet with its legal status uncertain, those who might invest and develop Somaliland's resources—such as fishing, mining, oil, and agriculture—are not able to do so.

Somaliland's economy did receive a huge boost after the Dubai-based DP World, one of the globe's largest seaport management companies, agreed to invest \$442 million to expand the deep sea port of Berbera on the Gulf of Aden, a busy shipping lane. This will develop a free-trade zone in Berbera modeled on the one in Dubai's Jebel Ali. The new project will also help landlocked Ethiopia, the region's largest economy, get alternate access to shipping lanes. So far, DP World's investment is the largest single foreign investment Somaliland has received.

Instead of dictating Somaliland's political outcome and risking more American lives and treasure, the U.S. should use its diplomatic muscle to broker a negotiated settlement between Somaliland and Somalia, to end the legal fiction that the former is part of the latter.

I believe the only viable solution is an independent, democratic, free Somaliland trading with its neighbors, and helping maintain peace and stability in a region crippled with violence, despotism, and terror.

For the rest of Somalia, the best hope is for the international community to unite behind Turkey and others who want to bring peace and order to that troubled country. Most Somalis in south Somalia trust Turkey: unlike their nation's self-interested neighbors, it has no territorial ambition on Somalia, has significantly contributed to the security and rebuilding of their country, and has operated a vast military base and a port in Mogadishu.

I have no doubt these corrective actions alone will not end Somalia's tragedy. But keeping the status quo will only lead more terrorism, chaos, and disintegration. It will also deny Somaliland's people a chance to control their own political destiny.

<http://www.theamericanconservative.com/articles/somaliland-must-be-free/>



Somaliland: Prosecutions Threaten Free Expression

May 9, 2018

Nairobi -KNN-A string of recent prosecutions in Somaliland targeting people who spoke out on controversial issues is a dangerous attack of free expression, Human Rights Watch said today. In the latest such case, a prominent traditional elder was charged, tried, and sentenced to five years in prison on April 26, 2018, in proceedings that lasted less than an hour.

Over the course of the last month, the government has prosecuted three people under vague and overly broad provisions that restrict free expression. These laws are being used to criminalize disagreements with key state policies, as well as criticism of, or perceived insults to, public officials.

“Public space for criticism of the government on contentious issues is shrinking in Somaliland, as the authorities bring criminal charges to silence critics,” said Laetitia Bader, senior Africa researcher at Human Rights Watch. “This heavy-handed response is an assault on key human rights protections, and risks badly tarnishing the government’s image.”

The harm caused by the abusive prosecutions is not limited to the defendants. These cases also send a collective message that state authorities will not tolerate certain forms of dissent, which creates a chilling environment that may fuel self-censorship.

Somaliland declared its independence from Somalia in 1991 but has not received international recognition. It shares a border with Somalia’s semi-autonomous Puntland state. Since January, tensions between Somaliland and Puntland have increased in the contested border Sool region with Somaliland deploying forces and taking over Puntland bases in the town of Tukaraq.

On April 19, police arrested traditional elder Boqor Osman Aw-Mohamud, known as “Buur Madow” – Black Mountain in Somali – after he called on Somaliland and Puntland to withdraw their troops from Sool at an elder’s inauguration event in Puntland. On April 26, a Somaliland prosecutor charged him with bringing the state into contempt and with the circulation of false information. He was tried that day and sentenced to five years in prison. His appeal hearing was set for May 8 but has been delayed.

On April 15, Naima Ahmed Ibrahim, a popular poet, was sentenced to three years in prison on charges of bringing the country into contempt for commentary promoting unity of Somaliland with Somalia. Naima Ahmed was released on May 7, on a presidential pardon, after over three months in detention.

On April 16, Mohamed Kayse Mohamud, a blogger, was sentenced to 18 months in prison for offending the honor of the head of state in Facebook comments in which he called Somaliland’s president a local, not national, president.

Journalists have been harassed and prosecuted, often with the same vague and overly broad criminal provisions. According to the Human Rights Center, a leading human rights organization in Somaliland, since the inauguration of Somaliland’s new president, Muse Bihi Abdi, in December 2017, four journalists have been convicted on defamation charges or other charges that criminalize propaganda or insults against the state. In each case, the court sentenced the journalist to prison but later converted the sentence to a fine.

Somaliland’s parliament should move urgently to repeal all laws that criminalize the free expression of political opinions, including criticism of state authorities or national symbols, Human Rights Watch said. In the meantime, prosecutors should refrain from bringing criminal charges under these laws.

Trials under these abusive laws have at times violated basic due process guarantees. Boqor Buur Madow was charged, tried, and sentenced in a hearing that lasted less than an hour. Two people who were there said the presiding judge denied Boqor Buur Madow’s request to postpone the trial so he could get a lawyer.

Trial observers said that during Naima Ahmed’s trial, she alleged that Somaliland intelligence agency officials had threatened, slapped, and sexually harassed her during her first two days

of incarceration. She also alleged that an officer at the police's Criminal Investigation Department had mistreated her.

One of her lawyers told Human Rights Watch that the judges admitted evidence that the lawyers said was obtained under duress. He said that the courts have not responded to the complaints the lawyers filed calling for an investigation into the allegations of mistreatment in detention. The same lawyer represented Mohamed Kayse, and said the police repeatedly denied him access to his client during his pretrial detention, and that the lawyer met with his client in person for the first time on the first day of his trial.

Somaliland's 2001 constitution guarantees freedom of expression and of the media, in "accordance with the law." But the penal code, which came into force in 1964, includes a number of vague and overly broad crimes including offending the honor and prestige of the head of state, insulting a public officer or institution, and contempt against the nation, state or flag. These can be punished by sentences of up to three years in prison.

As the African Commission on Human and People's Rights has stated, "People who assume highly visible public roles must necessarily face a higher degree of criticism than private citizens; otherwise public debate may be stifled altogether."

"Somaliland should amend its laws and stop prosecuting people for expressing their political views," Bader said. "Instead it should focus on investigating mistreatment of detainees, and creating a conducive environment in which people can freely debate and comment on sensitive issues without fear or having to self-censor."

<http://radiokulmiye.net/2018/05/09/somaliland-prosecutions-threaten-free-expression/>

Ethiopiaforums.com

Ethiopia's Djibouti-Somaliland ports power dynamics in horn of Africa — Quartz

When Eritrea gained its independence from Ethiopia in 1993, Ethiopia became landlocked and therefore dependent on its neighbors—especially Djibouti—for access to international markets. This dependency has hampered Ethiopia's aspiration to emerge as the uncontested regional power in the Horn of Africa.

Recently, however, the ground has been shifting. As we point out in a recent article, Ethiopia has attempted to take advantage of the recent involvement of various Arab Gulf States in the Horn of Africa's coastal zone to reduce its dependency on Djibouti's port. The port currently accounts for 95% of Ethiopia's imports and exports. It has done so by actively trying to interest partners in the refurbishment and development of other ports in the region: Port Sudan in Sudan, Berbera in the Somaliland region of Somalia, and Mombasa in Kenya.

But it is Berbera, in particular, that will prove the most radical in terms of challenging regional power dynamics as well as international law. This is because a port deal involving Somaliland will challenge Djibouti's virtual monopoly over maritime trade. In addition, it may entrench the de-facto Balkanization of Somalia and increase the prospects of Ethiopia becoming the regional hegemony.

Ethiopia's regional policy

Ethiopia's interest in Berbera certainly makes sense from a strategic perspective. It is closest to Ethiopia and will connect the eastern, primarily Somali region of Ethiopia to Addis Ababa. It will also provide a much needed outlet for trade, particularly the export of livestock and agriculture.

The development and expansion of the port at Berbera supports two primary pillars of Ethiopia's regional policy. The first is maintaining Eritrea's isolation. The aim would be to weaken it to the point that it implodes and is formally reunited to Ethiopia. Or it becomes a pliant, client state.

The second pillar rests on maintaining the status quo in post-civil war Somalia. Simply put, a weak and fractured Somalia enables Ethiopia to focus on quelling persistent internal security difficulties. It also keeps up pressure on Eritrea.



Ethiopia's ambitions for Berbera have been hampered by two problems. Firstly the Republic of Somaliland – a de-facto independent state since 1991 – still isn't recognised internationally. This makes engagement a political and

legal headache. Secondly, Ethiopia, doesn't have the critical resources needed to invest and build a port.

Ethiopia had been trying to get Abu Dhabi and Dubai interested in the Berbera Port for years. It's latest push was assisted by a number of factors. These included a shift in the UAE's military focus in Yemen and Ethiopian assurances of more trade and some financing to upgrade the port.

Ethiopia's diplomatic push – which coincided with developments across the Gulf of Aden – finally got it the result it craved. In May 2016, DP World, a global mega-ports operator, signed an agreement to develop and manage Berbera Port for 30 years.

The Berbera Port deal

It is unlikely that DP World would have signed the deal if it didn't see some long-term commercial benefit. The deal also includes economic, military and political dimensions.

Economically, for example, there will be investments in Somaliland's fisheries, transportation and hospitality industry. The UAE will also establish a military installation in Berbera. The base is intended to help the UAE tighten its blockade against Yemen and stop weapons being smuggled from Iran.

<http://ethiopiaforums.com/ethiopias-djibouti-somaliland-ports-power-dynamics-in-horn-of-africa-quartz/36257/>