European Union Training Mission Somalia

PRESS SUMMARY

16th May 2018

“In ‘Media’ stat virtus”
Approval of Transition Plan Will Set Somalia on Path to Ensuring its Own Stability, Special Representative Tells Security Council

‘Astonishing’ Gains Made against Al-Shabaab, Says Permanent Representative

The recent approval of Somalia’s security transition plan by the Council of Ministers, and its endorsement by the African Union Peace and Security Council, marked a milestone in the country’s path towards assuming full responsibility for its own stability, the Secretary-General’s Special Representative told the Security Council today.

Speaking via videoconference from Mogadishu, Michael Keating, who also heads the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), underlined the imperative of implementing the plan. A successful transition would also require deep reform of Somalia’s security forces and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) alike, he said, whether relating to more flexible joint operations, greater emphasis on policing, adequate enablers or stronger accountability as well as operational support by the United Nations Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS).

On the political front, he said, there were crises resulting from competition for power and resources, complicated by the weakness of national institutions, ambiguities in the Constitution and growing pains relating to the emergence of federal arrangements. The humanitarian situation, while improved, remained serious, with flooding affecting more than 718,000 people in the central and southern regions, he said. Unity among Somalia’s leaders, complemented by coherent support from the Security Council and the broader international community, would be the key to its success.

On that point, Francisco Caetano José Madeira, Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia and Head of AMISOM, said several challenges had been exacerbated by the spillover effects of international rivalries within the region, which were sowing the seeds of division among Somalis, forcing them to choose sides.
Also speaking from Mogadishu, he pressed the Council to deliver an unequivocal statement requesting that all actors refrain from actions that could further heighten tensions. Underscoring the need to ensure that all parties embraced common goals, he declared: “These people speak the same language, they belong to the same nation and they have the same aspirations.” Warning that Al-Shabaab had expanded its reach, he underlined that destroying the group would require the Council’s continued attention and predictable funding for AMISOM.

Following the briefings, Somalia’s representative said progress had indeed been made on the President’s priority commitment to security sector reform. The Government had developed a security transition plan through an inclusive process, laying out strategic guidelines that would facilitate detailed planning in the coming years.

Describing the gains made against Al-Shabaab as “astonishing”, he said stabilization efforts would be just as critical in addressing the causes of conflict. “Our credibility and legitimacy as a Government hinges on our ability to promote social reconciliation, good governance, and provide public services,” he said. While Somalia’s challenges were significant, the Council’s continued support would help to shift the perception of Somalia from weakness to resilience.

Also speaking today were representatives of Equatorial Guinea, Bolivia, Peru, Côte d’Ivoire and Kazakhstan.

The meeting began at 3:26 p.m. and ended at 4:35 p.m.

Briefings

MICHAEL KEATING, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UN SOM), speaking via videoconference from Mogadishu, said events over the last 48 hours highlighted the complexity of the situation. Today had seen the conclusion of the National Constitutional Convention, which augured well for enhancing the rule of law as well as stability and reconciliation. In Baidoa, federal member state presidents were meeting in the Council of Interstate Cooperation to prepare for engagement with the federal Government on critical issues relating to security, resource and revenue sharing.
Meanwhile, the African Union and the United Nations joint review team were meeting Somali and international actors to discuss the implications of the national security transition plan for the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). In Beledweyne, humanitarian personnel were working with local communities to address the catastrophic impact of floods on 200,000 people, he said. To its credit, the federal Government had not been deflected from embracing economic reform, security sector reform and inclusive politics, an agenda that required support from the Security Council and other international partners.

While the humanitarian situation had improved over the year, it remained very serious by any global measure, with the Gu rains and flooding having affected more than 718,000 people in the central and southern regions, creating large-scale population displacement, economic damage and cholera. He appealed to donors to support the $1.5 billion 2018 Humanitarian Response Plan, which was only 24 per cent funded. Success in raising revenues, attracting grants and budget support had provided a basis for investment and the creation of jobs, as well as for tackling security and State-building challenges, as well as strengthening relations with federal member states, not least through resource and revenue sharing agreements.

On the security front, Al-Shabaab continued to execute deadly terrorist attacks against civilians and military targets, including AMISOM, he said, emphasizing that the factors breeding terrorism — youth unemployment, corruption, a sense of injustice and unresolved conflict — could not be left until later. On defence reform, the Government was taking bold steps such as biometric registration, payroll reform and operational readiness assessments, while recognizing that more must be done, he said. Further, the Council of Ministers had approved the security transition plan on 19 April, seeking to build operational and institutional capacity for the armed forces, as well as in the areas of justice, accountable local governance, freedom of movement and service delivery.

For its part, AMISOM continued to protect population centres, main supply routes and Somalia’s overall political progress, he continued. However, a successful security transition would require deep reform of Somalia’s security forces and AMISOM alike, whether relating to more flexible joint operations and combat mentoring, greater emphasis on policing, adequate enablers and force multipliers, or stronger accountability. More flexible
operational support from the United Nations Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS) would also be needed, as would predictable financing.

Turning to the political front, he said competition for power and resources was complicated by the weakness of Somali institutions, ambiguities in the Provisional Federal Constitution, and growing pains associated with the emergence of federal arrangements. The most prominent fault lines related to the impact of the dispute in the Arabian Gulf, the role of parliamentarians in politics and relations between the leaders of the federal member states and the federal Government. The stand-off between the federal Government and Parliament had been resolved in early April, with the resignation of the Speaker of the House of the People and the election of a new one. However, the zero-tolerance policy of the United Nations on violence by any party in the resolution of political disputes had led to Somalis accusing each other of bias, he said, explaining that relations among powerful Somali actors were being tested as a result. The country needed respectful relations with all its international partners, he added, emphasizing that greater Somali unity was the best way to minimize the impact of the Gulf dispute.

Regarding the dispute in Tukaraq, he said fighting had erupted and deaths had been reported, but the President had called for an immediate ceasefire and resumed dialogue between leaders of Somaliland and Puntland. At risk was the welfare of hundreds of thousands of people and possibly mass displacement at a time when humanitarian funds were low. Warning that such a conflict would unravel more than 20 years of relatively peaceful coexistence, he urged the Council to engage with all concerned to reduce tensions and discourage those who might seek advantage from the situation. That crisis could not distract from the progress made in resolving conflicts in Gaalkacyo, which was more peaceful today than it had been for years, as well as in Marka, Lower Shabelle and Galmudug, he stressed. The Government continued to advance its national reconciliation framework, recognizing that many conflicts in Somalia — whether over resources, clan disputes or the federal member state formation — must benefit from engagement with civil society. He reiterated that unity among Somalia’s leaders, complemented by coherent support from the Council and the broader international community, would be the key to the country’s success.

FRANCISCO CAETANO JOSÉ MADEIRA, Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia and Head of the AMISON, also briefed via
videoconference, stressing that the country had faced many challenges since his last briefing — some of which threatened to reverse progress made there. Citing several military operations currently being undertaken by Somali forces despite limited resources, he said challenges had been exacerbated by the spillover effects of international rivalries and divisions within the region. Warning that those rivalries were sowing the seeds of division among Somalis, forcing them to choose sides, he asked the Council to deliver a strong and unequivocal statement to all actors requesting that they refrain from actions that could further heighten tensions. In Somalia, recent political crises had further underscored the need to rebuild the country’s institutions and ensure that all parties embraced common goals. “These people speak the same language, they belong to the same nation and they have the same aspirations,” he said, emphasizing that those commonalities could serve to draw Somalis together and help them reject divisions.

Spotlighting the Government’s commitment to completing Somalia’s constitutional review and setting the stage for elections by 2020-2021, he said the convening of a constitutional convention this week in Mogadishu had been a clear demonstration that the Government intended to “match its words with deeds”. The executive branch was already improving Somalia’s fiscal management and fighting corruption. It had drafted a modern and realistic budget and put in place stronger tax collection measures. Similarly, the Government’s Anti-Corruption Commission was taking shape, and Somalia’s pathway to debt relief was fast becoming a reality. For its part, he said, AMISOM must adjust its approach to better suit the reality on the ground. Its uniformed personnel would require additional resources and the Mission must take a more flexible approach to its provision of logistical support. Urging the international community to focus on addressing gaps identified in the last operational readiness assessment, he spotlighted the need to satisfy such critical operational requirements as adequate supplies, transport and logistics.

In the coming weeks and months, he said, Somali forces would be implementing the operational portion of the country’s transition plan. It could not afford to spend resources liberating towns from Al-Shabaab only to see them returned to that group. Effective recovery — as well as the permanent holding of towns and cities and the effective protection of populations — was critical. Conditions must be created for the local economy, trade and commerce to flourish and for citizens to go about their lives freely and without fear of
attacks from Al-Shabaab. That would require the full commitment of the Government and its institutions as well as the United Nations and other partners. Warning that Al-Shabaab had recently expanded its reach and resilience, he said countering and destroying it would require the Council’s continued attention and its provision of predictable, sustainable funding for AMISOM.

Statements

NARCISO SIPACO RIBALA (Equatorial Guinea) said despite challenges to strengthening the State, consolidating security institutions and a fragile economy, Somalia had taken significant steps since presidential and parliamentary elections. The challenges ahead were immense, as represented by the threat of Al-Shabaab, whose determination could be related to the lack of job opportunities for young people, unresolved disputes and a weak judicial system. Disagreement between federal State leaders and the Government were other challenges. Somali political leaders must be forced to reach an understanding to foster a healthier political atmosphere that encouraged international actors to offer support. Stable funding for UNSOM and AMISOM was essential.

SACHA SERGIO LLORENTTY SOLÍZ (Bolivia) said stability in Somalia was crucial and must be sought through formalization of the status of the federal member states, implementation of the security architecture, strengthening of resilience and steps to overhaul the economy. Hailing the President’s visits to various regions of his country, he said the road map for inclusive politics 2017-2020 had led to significant progress. It was vital that the national transition plan be delivered upon once military and police forces, and legal and anti-corruption bodies were fully operational. He advocated Somali ownership of confidence-building measures. He supported AMISOM mediation efforts, underscoring the role of the African Union Peace and Security Council. The Security Council must play a role alongside in boosting the Mission’s capacity. He voiced concern over the humanitarian situation and recruitment of child soldiers, and high levels of sexual violence.

FRANCISCO TENYA (Peru) said the humanitarian crisis weighed heavily on 5.4 million people, while the security situation was unstable amid unchecked violations against women and children. He pointed to significant progress on the economy, expressing hope that technical support would foster economic reform. Condemning attacks by Al-Shabaab, he underscored
the importance of the transition plan so that Somali forces could assume full responsibility for security, and the need to guarantee financial support for such implementation to be coordinated between the federal Government and federal member states. He welcomed Government efforts to maintain momentum on peace and reconciliation issues. Priority should be given to the constitutional reform process, he said, highlighting the need to involve women in such work and empower young people, and for Gulf countries to support Somalia’s federal Government.

THÉODORE DAH (Côte d’Ivoire) welcomed the improved relations between the federal Government and local States, the adoption by political parties of the political road map for 2017-2020 and the involvement of federal authorities in reconciliation and electoral initiatives. However, he also expressed concern about continued tensions within the federal Government and the continued threat posed by Al-Shabaab. Recent attacks — including against AMISOM personnel — attested to the need to move more quickly towards implementing Somalia’s security transition plan and for all actors to pool their efforts to combat Al-Shabaab. Somali authorities continued to make progress in implementing the national security architecture and improving the rule of law, he noted, citing recently signed agreements relating to the country’s judicial and penitentiary systems. Expressing concern about Somalia’s humanitarian situation — one of the most alarming in the world — he said conditions had recently been aggravated by severe flooding. Humanitarian needs were increasing while only 19 per cent of the 2018 humanitarian plan was funded. He concluded by urging the Somali authorities and their international partners to address the root causes of famine in the country.

KAIRAT UMAROV (Kazakhstan) said that, over the last year, Somalia’s new Government had been able to develop an effective plan of action — including reform of the financial sector, the creation of jobs, social cohesion policies, conflict resolution and security sector reform. Commending those efforts, he said follow-up steps were also needed to formalize agreements on the division of powers, managing resources and sharing revenues. However, Kazakhstan remained concerned about Al-Shabaab’s continued attacks against the national army, AMISOM and civilians, which were exacerbated by inter-clan violence, he said. While the troops on the front lines were playing a critical role in restoring State authority, predictable and sustainable funding remained a challenge in ensuring its ability to function
adequately, he said. Commending the Government on having finalized the security transition plan, he said realistic time frames and conditions were needed to ensure compliance with the priority tasks and benchmarks. Somalia’s acute financial condition — as well as its need for more effective coordination and cooperation with partners — posed serious challenges, he stressed.

ABUKAR DAHIR OSMAN (Somalia) noted that today marked the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Somali Youth League, the country’s first political party, which had been instrumental in achieving independence in 1960 and creating one of Africa’s first democracies in the process. The hope created by that party was a major source of optimism in the quest for peace in a resurgent Somalia today. He emphasized that safeguarding political stability was a prerequisite for security, economic development and recovery. The parliamentary tensions cited in the report had been resolved, a testament to the capacity of Somalis to engage in peaceful democratic solutions while respecting parliamentary rules of procedure and the Constitution.

There had also been progress on the President’s commitment to accelerate security sector reform, he continued, noting that the Government had developed a realistic, phased and conditions-based transition plan, working with AMISOM, troop-contributing countries, the United Nations, the European Union and other partners. The plan, endorsed by the Cabinet and the African Union Peace and Security Council, laid out strategic guidelines that would facilitate planning in the coming years, he said, adding that it focused on the building the institutional capacity of Somalia’s forces while outlining security operations and support for stabilization efforts.

He went on to state that while the gains made by AMISOM and Somalia’s national armed forces against Al-Shabaab had been “astonishing”, stabilization efforts would be just as critical in helping the country address the causes of conflict. “Our credibility and legitimacy as a Government hinges on our ability to promote social reconciliation, good governance, and provide public services,” he said. The only way to implement the transition was for the Somali National Army to carry out joint operations with AMISOM, he said.

Meanwhile, the President and Prime Minister had offered a national vision to foster unity and reconciliation, he noted. On the political front, the federal Government would continue
to work with federal member states to implement an ambitious road map that would include
the revision of the provisional constitution and preparations for elections
in 2020. Addressing Somalia’s challenges would require long-term efforts to address the
structural political and legacy issues of corruption, from lack of oversight and accountability,
to resourcing legitimate institutions. “But we are on the right path”, with continued support
from the Council, he said.

Government and Donors to Meet on Reconciliation for Somalia

May 15, 2018 - Joakim Gundel

Today, May 16th, the first so-called Sub-Working Group 1 (SWG 1) meeting on Federalism and Reconciliation will take place in Mogadishu. As this is a very important first step, we think it is vital that the Somali public do have access to what is happening and what will be discussed.

Although, KATUNI is not directly part of the process, we have an objective of sharing documents of importance and have decided to make our website available for that purpose. It is therefore with pleasure that we hereby can share the meeting agenda, the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Sub-Working Group as well as the more in depth Concept Note for the National Reconciliation Framework.

We hope this process will be as transparent and open as possible. As it appears now, it does seem to be squeezed into the National Development Plan, and UN styled work process, which may risk bureaucratize the process. It is vital, however, that something happens, and it is a hope that this is taken on by the Somalis within the framework of an as independent Reconciliation Commission as possible.

http://katuni.net/2018/05/15/government-donors-meet-reconciliation-somalia/
PWG 1 SUBWORKING GROUP 1
FEDERALISM & RECONCILIATION

Wednesday, 16th May 2018
10:45AM - 12.30 PM
AIRPORT HANGAR

• Opening Remarks by Co-chairs
• Presentations:
  ➢ Discussion of the Roadmap for the National Reconciliation Framework development
  ➢ Reconciliation, Federalism and Effective Institutions in Somalia project

• Discussion and approval of ToR for the sub-working group
• AOB
TERMS OF REFERENCE (ToR)

SUB-WORKING GROUP 1 ON FEDERALISM AND RECONCILIATION

1. Background

This sub-working group (SWG) is one of four sub-working groups that come under Pillar Working Group 1 (PWG1) of Inclusive Politics. The overall objective of establishing the sub-working groups is to provide mechanisms that support the implementation of the defined priorities of the National Development Plan (NDP).

Strategic Objectives

The Sub-Working Group 1 (SWG1) will primarily focus on Federalism and Reconciliation as the title indicates but it also enriches the work of PWG1 in its sectorial policy formulation, planning and programmatic co-ordination in relation to the following PWG1 priorities:

- Priority 1: Advance inclusive political dialogue to clarify and settle relations between the Federal Government and Federal Member States (FMS) and initiate a process of political and social reconciliation to restore trust between communities;

- Priority 2: To set foundations for durable peace, stability and end the violent conflict that has caused unnecessary loss of lives and human displacement.

As far as issues on Federalism and Reconciliation are concerned, the SWG1 will also contribute to Priority 3: Finalize and adopt a Federal Constitution by 2019.

2. Composition

SWG1 will bring together representatives from the Federal Government of Somalia, Federal Member States, relevant Parliament sub-Committees, National Independent Electoral commission (NIEC), Boundaries and Federalization Commission (BFS), bilateral donors, International Financial Institutions (IFIs), implementing partners and civil society.

3. Lead

The Ministry of Interior, Federal Affairs and Reconciliation (MOIFAR) will chair the sub-working group while Germany and Finland will co-chair with the Ministry on Federalism and Reconciliation issues respectively.
The Aid Coordination Unit (ACU) will support logistics and coordination of the Sub-Working Group. This includes the coordination of meetings, compiling inputs, and producing the regular progress reports of implementation against the milestones.

The Ministry of Planning, Investment and Economic Development (MOPIED) will have the coordination responsibility of this SWG while it ensures that the meetings of the SWG take place as scheduled and that there is project alignment with the National Development Plan (NDP) priorities.

MOIFAR, supported by the co-chairs will be responsible to coordinate with relevant line Ministries and relevant meetings of the CAS-Strand 3, as well as represent SWG1 in other related sub-working groups of PWG1. They will also be responsible for setting the agenda whereas the ACU, with secretariat support from UNSOM will circulate the meeting agenda, minutes and sending invitations of the Sub-Working Group meetings. The co-chairs will lead the coordination of international partners' engagement and inputs.

4. Responsibilities

The Sub-Working Group will maintain an overview of all work related to Priority 1 of PWG1 and ensure that existing and planned support is aligned to the defined NDP priorities.

Specific responsibilities include:

**Coordination**

- Develop a detailed work plan with milestones, in support of the relevant PWG1 priorities, clearly setting out activities, roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders, timelines and required resources;
- Support and advise on the adaptation of the ‘Consolidated and Enhancing State Building in Somalia’ Programme (CESBS) and, where necessary, on the joint identification and planning of new projects/programs to address gaps and needs, as identified in its work plan;
- Ensure cross-cutting issues are addressed in its work plan and closely coordinated with various levels of the government and other relevant institutions;
- Ensure coordinated resource mobilization for the work plan, including recommending the allocation of funds to the SDRF Steering Committee via PWG1;
- Ensure regular exchange of information with all PWG1 sub-working groups.

**Policy Guidance**

- Provide inputs to policies aligned to the PWG1 priorities;
- Provide inputs on aspects related to the preparation and eventual implementation of the National Reconciliation Framework as well as aspects related to addressing relevant active conflicts;
• Ensure higher degree of harmonization of international assistance and application of partnership principles;
• Highlight those PWG1 areas where significant gaps exist or that are under-resourced as to present program and project priorities and make recommendations to ensure gaps and priorities are addressed.

**Monitoring and Reporting**

• Contribute to the development of the M&E framework for the NDP, especially into the development and review of PWG-specific milestones and indicators, as far as they relate to Federalism & Reconciliation;
• Monitor progress of priorities and milestones;
• The outcome of the Sub-Working Group meetings will be shared with PWG1;
• Undertake the necessary revisions and adjustment to the Sub-Working Group following consultations.

**Expected Outputs**

• To contribute to PWG1 strategy regarding Federalism and Reconciliation aspects;
• An implementation plan supporting the roll-out of the Sub-Working Group strategy, including required and available resources and concrete actions to address cross-cutting issues of the NDP;
• Detailed work plan setting out any existing and planned activities, roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders, timelines, and existing and required resources;
• Prioritized list of programs and projects for endorsement or information sharing in the SDRF and PWG1 in support of strategy and plans;
• Six-monthly reports to the PWG1 highlighting progress made, challenges encountered, and corrective measures proposed.

5. **Meetings frequency**

The Sub-Working Group will meet once in every two months in Mogadishu or elsewhere in the country to discuss progress, challenges and the way forward. A minimum of 10 days notice should be given for regular meetings whenever possible.
CONCEPT NOTE
(Background Document)

National Reconciliation Framework (NRF) and Roadmap
(DRAFT – May 2018)

BACKGROUND

The more than two decades-long civil war in Somalia has not only destroyed governance and state institutions of the country but also gravely damaged the very fabric of the Somali people’s unity, social cohesion, nationalism and affinity. In addition to the total collapse of the Somali state institutions and structures, relationships, trust and confidence within the Somali people have been eroded by the rampant violence and bloody civil war as well as violent extremism and international terrorism. Because of grave human rights violations and insecurity, mistrust and enmity have gained ground between the Somali people.

Since the collapse of the central state of Somalia several reconciliation conferences, most of them outside the country, have been convened with the aim to resurrect the Somali State. These conferences have mainly focused on state-building with limited attention to social reconciliation, except for the conference in Arta, Djibouti in 2000-2001. Participation in these conferences has been exclusive, most of the participants being politicians and military leaders from different clans. The National Reconciliation Conference held in Mogadishu in 2007 was the first attempt to address national-level social reconciliation. From thereafter, as the Somali Government institutions have been gradually restored, state-building conferences have been held in Mogadishu.

The outcomes of those subsequent state-building conferences finally laid the ground for consensus-based political system, agreements on political representation and power-sharing between different government institutions and for laying down the provisional constitution. These political agreements have
ultimately resulted in legitimate and representative governance structures both at federal and federal member state level. Today, the main Federal Government institutions, for example, the two Houses of Legislature, Judiciary and Executive (Cabinet) as well as semblance Federal Member State institutions are in place. District council formation is the last remaining process of building the state governance structure.

As cited in the Portfolio of Expert Briefing Papers on Peace and Reconciliation (2018), remarkable achievements have been made in recent years: “Political dialogue has nevertheless delivered results: a provisional constitution, the establishment of Federal States, an Upper House of Parliament that represents the country’s regions and not just its clans, an electoral process in 2016 that was limited but more inclusive than any since 1969, transitions of central power, a national development plan, and agreement on the national security architecture”.¹

**SIGNIFICANCE OF NATIONAL RECONCILIATION FRAMEWORK**

While the governance and state structures are resurrected from the ashes, like in other countries that have gone through similar conflicts, a genuine truth and reconciliation process has not yet taken place. The result is that the destruction of the Somali people’s bonds, unity, nationalism and affinity remain unattended except in some regions such as Somaliland and Puntland, where people have lived in relative peace compared to the south and central parts of the country. Thus, the grievances, injustices and human rights violations that have taken and are still taking place among the Somali people have not been addressed. Nation-wide social reconciliation that restores trust and fosters unity and interdependence is inevitable. It will re-establish the deep cultural and historical bonds that shape the ‘Somali-ness’.

The necessity for genuine a National Reconciliation Process has been pending for long even though every government has campaigned to carry it out. Every government document starting from the Provisional Constitution (2012) to the National Development Plan (2016) refer to reconciliation, but there is no one coherent document outlining the issues and priorities of national reconciliation. It

¹ Portfolio of Expert Briefing Papers on Peace and Reconciliation
is against this backdrop that the process of developing a National Reconciliation Framework was started. In the Somali context, the word “Dib-u-heshiisiin”, which literally means reconciliation, is used mainly for social reconciliation. Dib-u-heshiisiin means reconciling conflicting parties and it is closely linked to the Arabic work, “Musalaha” or “Sulha” which is a concept widely used in Muslim communities as it has references in the Quran and Hadith. Dib-u-heshiisiin means resolving conflicts, repairing relationship damaged by the conflict and restoring trust between the conflicting communities. (More in-depth analysis and definitions of this concept will be elaborated in the National Reconciliation Framework based on the outcome of consultations – see below).

Reference to Government Documents

A. Reconciliation in the Provisional Federal Constitution

Bearing in mind the necessity of nation-wide national reconciliation, article 111(i) of the Provisional Constitution states that “there shall be established a Truth and Reconciliation Commission” whose mandate is to “foster national healing, reconciliation and unity”. The independent commission is tasked to “promote forgiveness, reconciliation and national unity”. In order to form this Commission, the Ministry of Interior, Federal Affairs and Reconciliation (MoIFAR) is currently drafting the Truth and Reconciliation Commission bill that will be taken for approval to Parliament. While the Act will define the legal status of the Commission, the National Reconciliation Framework will also lay the ground for the work of the Commission although it will not be limited to the Commission’s work alone.

B. Reconciliation in the National Development Plan (NDP)

Reconciliation is referred in the NDP in the Benchmark and in the Policy Priority sections. Achieving reconciliation is the first of the eight benchmarks of the NDP which reads “Secure environment, more open politics and reconciliation”. Putting reconciliation as the first benchmark of the NDP underscores its significance. Reconciliation is also the second of the eleven Policy Priorities of the NDP which reads, “Make significant inroads towards a society where our citizens can live in security, including larger proportion of our territory under firm government control,
a reduction of terrorist attacks and reconciliation of communities that have been or are living in adverse relations”.

C. Reconciliation in the Political Roadmap

In addition to the Constitution and the NDP, two actions related to reconciliation is in the approved Political Roadmap for the Inclusive Politics. Thus, action item 3.2 is related to the abovementioned Truth and Reconciliation Commission Act while action item 4.4 is related to the Formation of National Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

D. National Consultative Conference on Reconciliation recommendations

The initiative of the development of a National Reconciliation Framework came out from a national consultative conference on reconciliation held in June 2017 by the MoIFAR. The main conclusion and recommendations from that conference stressed the formulation of a national document that works as a policy, strategy or framework (whatever term used for it) for the National Reconciliation process. Below are recommendations adopted from the conference:

➢ Through its different institutions, especially the MoIFAR, as well as other Federal bodies (such as the Parliament, ministries and agencies that have reconciliation elements in their mandates), the Federal Government must facilitate the development of broad-based National Reconciliation Framework, Policy or Strategy (whatever term used).

➢ The development of the Framework must be open, transparent and developed through consultations with Federal Member States and different Somali society sectors (women, elders, youth, religious leaders, business community, professional organizations’ leaders and media). The reconciliation process should be owned, led and implemented by the Somali people with the support of international partners.

➢ Such Framework does not need to be prescriptive and rigid, but it must lay the principles, pillars, pathways and conceptual aspects of reconciliation in Somalia. It should also include the structure and operational aspects of a successful and sustainable reconciliation.
Somalia’s international partners’ technical and financial support is essential to the formation of National Reconciliation Framework and the resolution of the active conflicts. In particular, the new Reconciliation Department added to MOIFAR’s portfolio needs to be firmly established and injected with capacity building.

OBJECTIVES

The overall objective of the NRF is to lay the ground for genuine and comprehensive national reconciliation for the Somali people to restore trust among themselves and confidence in government and its institutions that result in peaceful co-existence and the reconstruction of human relationships (this part will be informed by the consultations with the Somali people).

Specific objectives are:

1) through wide consultative process, to identify and provide a framework that outlines key issues, actions and priorities of National Reconciliation, that the Somali people collectively see relevant to the Somali conflict;
2) to identify guiding principles, methods and mechanisms that underpin the Somali reconciliation practices and corresponding to the Somali context, culture and faith, and how they can be utilized to for National Reconciliation;
3) based on the findings, to develop blueprints for a reconciliation implementation strategy that operationalizes the activities necessary for the national reconciliation.

APPROACH AND ROADMAP

The development of the NRF is led by MoIFAR through genuine consultations with the Somali people in different parts of the country and with different societal groups including women, minorities and youth. Government ministries and institutions at the Federal and FMS levels will also be consulted. Periodical consultations will be conducted with Somali and non-Somali experts with extensive knowledge on peace building and reconciliation. The process will start with consultations in the FMS working capitals, with two meetings each, and one with
regional government institutions and another with local civil society actors. A dedicated group of Somali experts, supported by international experts who have worked in similar processes in other parts of the world, under the direction of MoIFAR will lead the process until the final NRF document is produced, validated and finally submitted to the Ministry.

The document will be developed by the Somalis and the whole process is Somali-owned, -led, and -driven, under MoIFAR guidance. As to guiding principles, the development of the document rests on genuine consultations and an impartial, non-political and transparent process.

National Reconciliation Process and Activities Roadmap

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| 1   | • Finalize all tools/documents for the Reconciliation Consultations | • Drafts are ready, need finalization  
• Fixing dates for the first two consultations in Mogadishu  
• Translate June 2017 Conference Report |
| 2   | Two Consultations in Mogadishu with:  
1. Prominent National-level Civil Society and Professional Umbrella Organizations  
2. FGS Institutions (both houses of Parliament, ministries of justice, constitution, planning, women and HR, internal security, religious affairs, OOP, OPM, election commission, boundary commission, human rights commission) | • Civil Society sectors (LNGOs with expertise in peace building (HIPS, CRD, SOYDEN, Peace Line, Zamzam Foundation, SOCSENSA, etc.), women, youth, traditional/religious leaders, business community, and professional orgs. and umbrellas such as media, higher education, human rights, Majma’/Hay’adda, Sufi Sheikhs, Resource persons,, etc.)  
• Composition: Participants from diverse groups as much as possible in terms of gender, age, profession, political orientation and clan |
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<td>• Broader participation of women and youth as well as marginalized groups will be guaranteed</td>
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<td>• Periodic Consultations with Reconciliation Experts (Somali and non-Somali)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Participate and update Federalism and Reconciliation Sub-working Group under IP pillar working group *PWG1</td>
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<td>• NRFD team regularly meets Somali experts on the subject matter</td>
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<td>• Selected experts from those contributed to the Portfolio on Reconciliation – Colloquium</td>
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<td>• Reaching out key resource persons on the subject matter</td>
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<td>• NRF team constantly meet and consult subject matter experts</td>
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<td>• Engage expert international institutes,</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>• Consulations with FMS (6 consultations)</td>
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<td>▶ NRFD team will visit FMS seats and conduct 2 consultations in each FMS with</td>
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<td>1. <strong>FMS government officials:</strong> including relevant ministries, FMS presidency office, regional parliament sub-committees, judiciary branch representatives, governors, district commissioners, police commissioners and other governmental bodies who are involved in reconciliation and conflict resolution</td>
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<td>2. <strong>Civil society groups:</strong> consisting of community sectors such as local and international organizations leaders, top traditional and</td>
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<td>• <strong>FMS: Hirshab, SWS, JSS, GM, PL and Banadir region</strong></td>
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<td>▶ Consultations will be similar to those in Mogadishu (with FMS govt. institutions, civil society and international partners operating in FMS areas)</td>
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<td>▶ Composition: Participants from diverse groups as much as possible in terms of gender, age, profession, political orientation and clan. Broader participation of women and youth as well as marginalized groups will be guaranteed</td>
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<td>▶ Focus Group Discussions and Key Informant Interviews will be conducted alongside the consultations</td>
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<td>• MoIFAR will liaise with relevant ministries in FMS</td>
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| 5 | **Consultations in Mogadishu**  
  with:  
  - Women Influential Leaders,  
  - Prominent Religious Leaders and  
  - Influential Prominent Marginalized Groups’ Leaders |
|   | • Prominent women leaders/politicians, including current/former ministers, MPs, civil society leaders from different demographical and geographical backgrounds (including those from minority clans)  
  • Most prominent religious leaders representing demographical and geographical background (including those from minority clans). Proposed venue is Mogadishu, but some participants can come from regions if needed  
  • Most prominent members of marginalized communities including current/former ministers, MPs, civil society leaders from different demographical and geographical backgrounds (including those from minority clans) |
| 8 | **Consultation with Parliamentary sub-committees in Mogadishu** |
|   | • Sub-committees on Peace, Security, Reconciliation  
  • Both Houses |
| 9 | **Consultation with International Partners** |
|   | • UNSOM, EU, Donor Countries, USAID, DfID, World Bank, IGAD, UNDP, SSF, OTI, TIS+, FCA, NIS other International NGOs, |
| 10 | **Developing first draft of the NRF** |
|   | • By NRFD team  
  • Technical writers, translation |
| 11 | **Validation Conference**  
  - Grand Conference on launching the |
|   | • By MoIFAR, OPM and OOP as FMS leadership |
| Reconciliation Framework | ➢ Broad participation from all FMS (govt. incl. MPs, civil society and local institutions).
➢ Special representations from national conflict areas e.g., Galkayo, Lower Shabelle, Hiran
➢ FGS Institutions (Both houses of Parliament, ministries of justice, constitution, planning, women and HR, internal security, OOP, OPM, election commission)
➢ International Partners (UNSOM, EU, Donor Countries, USAID, SSF, OTI, TIS+, UNDP, FCA, NIS, etc.) |
|---|---|
| 12 | • Submit the **FINAL DRAFT**
➢ All inputs and feedback from the validation conference will be incorporated and final draft will be produced
➢ By the NRFD Team
➢ To be submitted to MoIFAR
➢ Approved and adopted by the Ministry |

1. **WHERE WE ARE NOW**

   1. Report and Material of the National Consultative Conference on National Reconciliation, June 2017
   2. Revised NRF Outline, under consultation (draft)
   3. Initial draft of consultation roadmap and questions
   4. Consultations’ agendas (draft)
   5. Consultations’ participants’ categories (draft)
   6. Portfolio of papers related to peace building and Recommendations for National Reconciliation
   7. Rich literature about peace building in Somalia, historical reconciliation agreements e.g. 2007 Grand Reconciliation and case studies about Somaliland and Puntland
   8. Literature review made by the team, more than 50 documents related to National Reconciliation Processes worldwide
9. Draft document of the Framework that will be incorporated to the new framework, as it develops

10. MoIFAR has already sensitized FMS-level Ministries of Interior/Reconciliation to prepare for the upcoming NRF work

11. MoIFAR established joint coordination and division of labor with funding partners - UNDP and FCA

12. Solid coordination with UNSOM/PAMG office
Qatar-Somalia defence ties reviewed

May 16 2018 - Somali President Mohamed Abdullahi Farmajo, currently on an official visit to Qatar, met HE the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defence Affairs Dr Khalid bin Mohamed al-Attiyah at the Somali president’s residence in Doha on Monday. During the meeting, they exchanged views on the latest regional and international developments and discussed a number of topics of common interest. They also reviewed bilateral relations between Qatar and Somalia and means of developing them. The meeting also discussed the areas in which the Qatar Armed Forces can co-operate with the Somali army.

Somali leader meets transport minister

President of Somalia, Mohamed Abdullahi Farmajo met with HE the Minister of Transport and Communications Jassim Seif Ahmed al-Sulaiti, at his residence in Doha yesterday. The Somali president is currently on an official visit to Qatar. They reviewed bilateral relations in the fields of transport and communications and means of further enhancing them, in addition to a number of matters of common interest.

http://www.gulf-times.com/story/592906/Qatar-Somalia-defence-ties-reviewed
Somali minister praises Amir’s vision for Qatar’s development

May 16 2018 - Somalia’s Minister of Planning, Investment and Economic Development Gamal Mohamed Hassan said the talks between His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani and Somali President Mohamed Abdullahi Farmajo were constructive. The talks were held in a brotherly atmosphere which proves the trust and depth of the relations between Qatar and Somalia, he said. Speaking to Qatar News Agency (QNA), the minister said the Somali president’s visit to Qatar is a reaffirmation of the continuous communication and consultation between the leaderships of both countries. The minister highlighted the willingness of the two countries’ leadership to improve relations between Doha and Mogadishu in all fields. The minister said the talks were comprehensive and covered all bilateral, regional and international issues of common interest. This confirms a sincere desire and the political will to move forward for the benefit and interests of both countries and peoples, he added. In addition, the minister praised the vision of His Highness the Amir, stating that under his leadership Qatar is moving in the right direction, steadily and confidently towards development, modernisation and growth. The minister said the Amir is a friend of the Somali leadership and people, thanking him for his interest in Somalia and his support and assistance to its people. The Somali people are aware of this and thank the Amir and the Qatari people for their support, assistance and for standing by them, the minister said.

He stressed that Qatar’s support to Somalia is clear and continuous in all fields adding that the future is promising for relations between the two countries. The minister said Somalia is satisfied with Qatar’s support and with the Amir’s interest in the country, its development and the prosperity of its people. With regard to Somalia’s vision of the Gulf crisis, the minister said Somalia is neutral, supports the Kuwaiti mediation and hopes for its success, calling for resolving the situation peacefully through dialogue and diplomatic methods. The minister said the GCC states are brothers and they should sit at the negotiating table to resolve this crisis and any other differences. He called for the establishing peace through negotiation and dialogue. The Somali Minister of Planning, Investment and Economic
Development Gamal Mohamed Hassan stressed the need to spare the region from any conflicts, and focus instead on the challenges the area faces, including terrorism represented by “Al Qaeda and the ISIS.” On his views on the so-called Republic of Somaliland and its decisions and agreements, the minister said that “Somaliland” is part of the motherland, and that Mogadishu does not recognise any agreements and steps without the consent of the Somali federal government, in that regard, the Somali parliament rejects any agreements signed with any party. Regarding the Somali government’s stance on the subject of the relocating the US embassy in Jerusalem, the minister said that his country’s stance is the similar to that of the Arab League and the Organisation of Islamic Co-operation. In response to a question on the role of Somalia as a member of the Arab League, he said that the member-states should intensify their efforts to overcome the problems they face. In response to a question on the internal affairs in Somalia, the minister said that things are improving and will be better. He said that President Farmajo met the Somali community in Qatar and heard from the members their praise of and gratitude to Qatar, the leadership of Qatar and the people for their assistance, support and brotherly relations. The minister stressed that the issue of sovereignty and territorial integrity and non-interference in the affairs of others is a priority of Somali politics.

http://www.gulf-times.com/story/592905/Somali-minister-praises-Amir-s-vision-for-Qatar-s-
Somalia-Qatar: firmato memorandum di intesa nel settore della salute

Mogadiscio, 15 mag 12:51 - (Agenzia Nova) - La Somalia e il Qatar hanno firmato un memorandum di intesa per la cooperazione nel settore della salute. Lo riferisce il quotidiano qatariota “The Peninsula”. La firma è avvenuta nell’ambito della visita in Qatar del presidente somalo, Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed Farmajo. Il capo dello stato è stato ricevuto ieri dall’emiro Tamim Bin Hamed al Thani. Le parti si sono impegnate a rafforzare le relazioni bilaterali e la collaborazione nella lotta al terrorismo nel paese del Corno d’Africa. L’incontro contribuirà a rafforzare i rapporti esistenti tra i due paesi, ha detto l’emiro, garantendo che lo stato del Qatar continuerà a sostenere la Somalia e gli sforzi del presidente Farmajo di superare le numerose sfide cui deve fare fronte, prima tra tutte quella della sicurezza. Il presidente somalo per parte sua, ha ringraziato l’emiro per il sostegno fornito al suo paese, in particolare nei settori della salute, dell’istruzione e delle infrastrutture.

UN reauthorizes African Union Mission in Somalia until July

Extension of the AMISOM mandate allows for review of upcoming joint report on Somalia

Fergus Kelly May 15, 2018

The U.N. Security Council on Tuesday unanimously reauthorized until July 31 the African Union Mission in Somalia to give additional time for consideration of an upcoming report.

With 22,126 personnel currently deployed, AMISOM operates with the approval of the United Nations and relies on international funding.

The mission was launched in 2007 to defend the internationally-backed government against attacks by al-Shabaab, the Somali-led al-Qaeda affiliate.

By extending AMISOM’s mandate to the end of July, the Security Council allowed for a review of recommendations expected in a “joint assessment” report on Somalia to be presented by June 15.

In its resolution, the Security Council recalled that it authorized the African Union to reduce by October 30 AMISOM’s uniformed personnel to 20,626 – to include a minimum of 1,040 police personnel.

Around 1,000 AMISOM troops were pulled out last year.


Reform of Somali security forces and AMISOM required

In a Tuesday briefing to the Security Council, Michael Keating, the Secretary-General’s Special Representative for Somalia, said AMISOM “continues to play an indispensable role,
at great human cost, in protecting population centres, main supply routes and Somalia’s overall political progress.”

Keating said that successful security transition will require deep reform of the Somalia security forces together transformation of AMISOM,” adding that this could entail “more flexible joint operations and combat mentoring, greater emphasis on policing, adequate enablers and force multipliers or stronger accountability systems, whether for assets or relating to human rights.”

Experts have described the bloated and largely ineffective Somali army as a collection of clan militias, with various international militaries providing poorly-coordinated training to different units.

There are plans for a full withdrawal of foreign troops by December 2020, but in March, heads of state and ministers from the main troop contributors, including Burundi, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda, warned the timeframe for the drawdown was “not realistic and would lead to a reversal of the gains made by AMISOM.”

On April 1, dozens were reportedly killed in coordinated al-Shabaab attacks on three AMISOM bases in Bulo Marer district.

Al-Shabaab was blamed for the country’s worst ever attack, an October 2017 truck bombing in Mogadishu that left more than 500 dead.

Separately, the United States regularly carries out airstrikes against al-Shabaab and Abnaa ul-Calipha, Islamic State’s affiliate in Somalia. U.S. forces also train, advise and assist Somalia’s military in operations against the insurgents.

Renewed clashes in disputed northern Somali border region

Rival forces from two northern regions in Somalia, each claiming differing levels of independence from the central government in Mogadishu, clashed on Tuesday leaving casualties on both sides, officials said.

The militaries of the unrecognised breakaway northern state of Somaliland and the semi-autonomous Somali state of Puntland exchanged fire in a disputed desert region.
Each side accused the other for starting the fight and claimed victory in the skirmish, which was a resumption of long-standing, sometimes deadly tensions between the neighbours.

The fighting occurred near the village of Tukaraq, between the Somaliland town of Las Anod and the Puntland town of Garowe in the disputed Sool region, in an area claimed by both states.

“They have attacked our positions from two directions this morning, but we defeated them,” said Brigadier General Nuh Ismail Tani, commander of Somaliland’s armed forces.

Puntland’s information minister, Abdi Hersi Ali, made similar claims: “Puntland forces were attacked this morning by the Somaliland troops, and the Somaliland forces were defeated,” he said.

A local elder, Abdulahi Moalim Farah, said the fighting was the heaviest for some months and that dozens of combatants may have died.

“We don’t have the exact information yet, but we are hearing that nearly 30 soldiers from the two sides have died, and more than that number were wounded,” he said.

It was unclear who was left in control of the village, while officials on neither side would confirm casualty numbers.

https://thedefensepost.com/2018/05/15/un-amisom-somalia-extension-july/
Al Shabab fueling disunity and fighting among clans in Somalia

Added 15th May 2018

The fighting amongst the clans originated from ownership of land

Col. Bonny Bamwiseki chatting with chiefs and elders at Ceerjaale in Somalia.

The fighting amongst the clans originated from ownership of land

The Al Shabab militants have been fueling clashes between the different clans in Somalia, exploiting their confusion and disunity to recruit and wage war against the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) peacekeepers.

Col. Bonny Bamwiseki, the commander of Battle Group 22, which has its headquarters at Ceeljaale in Marka district, said Al Shabab had been at the helm of encouraging clans to fight and kill each other, from where they would recruit massively to fail the peace mission.

Ceeljaale is located in Lower Shabelle region, about 120km South of Mogadishu.

But the Uganda People’s Defense Forces (UPDF) under AMISOM have been engaging the rivaling clans with a mission of stopping the fighting and reconciling them to be able to work together in harmony.

According to Bamwiseki, the different clan chiefs have discovered that Al Shabab’s mission of encouraging clashes was different and accepted to stop killing each other.

On weekly basis, he said, clan chiefs and elders from the region meet at their base in Ceeljalee where they have been able to discuss for a way forward.
They have also realised that their people would benefit from their reconciliations, by trading with each other for the sake of development.

As a result, the local militias who operate under the command of chiefs and elders have instead joined the struggle and have turned the guns against one common enemy, Al Shabab.

The fighting amongst the clans originated from ownership of land, where for some time major clans have been clashing on who owns the fertile land for cultivation.

The clan disunity, Bamwiseki said, had made it difficult for the peace keepers to win the Al Shabab since they would also mix with the population from where they hatched plans to attack their bases.

In a recent meeting at the Battalion heads office, several local leaders expressed gratitude to the contribution made by AMISOM forces. It was attended by the District Commissioner for Marka, Mohammad Osuman Ali, Sheikh Yusuf Osman, the Clan Chief for Ceeljaale, elders from Marka led by Muhammad Ali Abdi Jeylani Hassan Osman and Muhammad Abdikadir Bujeti, among others.

Bamwiseki said that their efforts have started bearing fruits with militias working with the Somali National Army, the chiefs and elders have control over militias who have too ceased fighting amongst themselves and instead turned guns against the Al Shabab, fighting alongside the Somali National Army (SNA) and AMISOM forces.

He said as a result of the dialogues, the clans have started trading by allowing commercial vehicles to ferry goods from either sides, which he said had given an opportunity to the local communities to engage in income generating activities.
“We have greatly benefited from their unification, the elders know and can easily identify Al Shabab militants and are able to follow them, and SNA and AMISOM come later to give them support,” he explained.

Sheikh Ali said that stopping clan clashes had enabled them to defend themselves even without government forces.

“We have started working together and trading, business is going on. Traders from one clan come and buy stones here, we also buy foodstuffs from them. We have opened our school where all children are allowed to study,” he said, adding the Al Shabab was the only enemy.

The elders said they had finally abandoned killing each other and united themselves against Al Shabab, and ‘if they come we shall fight them, if they want to kill AMISOM forces, we are ready to die together’.

Muhammad Abidi Ali however asked AMISOM forces to extend their stay in the area and move further to liberate more towns where Al Shabab is still controlling.

He said if AMISOM withdraws, Al Shabab will gain control of the areas they already liberated and cause chaos.

“We have managed to ease the tensions amongst ourselves and we are united against one common enemy who are Al Shabab,” he said. He explained that their biggest worry was about the plans of for AMISOM to reduce forces and finally withdraw, yet there were still more areas in the enemy territory, which he said they needed to liberate.

East African chief justices want bigger role in EAC affairs

Tuesday May 15, 2018 - By GALGALO BOCHA

Chief justices from the East African Community member states want to be officially involved in the activities of the bloc so they can help coordinate legal affairs and strengthen administration of justice in the region. The chief justices said they are ready to offer legal solutions to “the controversies standing in the way of integration process.” They said that the treaty which established the EAC envisaged judiciary cooperation but felt short of giving proper elaboration on the engagements.

COLLABORATION

The CJs resolved to revive the East African Community Chief Justices Forum (EACJF) to enable them engage with other arms of regional governments and the regional integration body. The chief justices were in Nairobi for a consultative forum on enhancing regional collaboration in the administration of justice. Those in attendance were David Maraga (Kenya), Ibrahim Juma (Tanzania), Bart Katureebe (Uganda), Omar Makungu (Zanzibar), Chan Madut (South Sudan) and Sam Rugege (Rwanda). Somalia Chief Justice Ibrahim Suleiman attended as an observer. East African Chief Justices Forum President Emmanuel Ugiradshebuja was also present. They said EACJF, where the President of East African Court
of Justice will also sit, will also help enhance judiciaries' contribution to regional and national development, protection of rule of law and promotion of East Africa citizens’ well-being.

STRATEGIES

“We urge EAC partner states to include the EACJF as an official actor in the EAC processes particularly on the administration of justice, make the EACJF engagements part of the calendar of EAC activities, and provide for regular and structured direct consultations between the forum and the EAC on matters relating to the judiciaries,” they said in a joint communique after a two-day meeting, Nairobi. They added: “We undertake to enhance inter-institutional dialogue by reaching out and exploring modalities for regular and continuous engagement with the executive and legislative arms.” The chief justices also agreed to collaborate in the identification, implementation and sharing of experiences on innovative strategies to improve dispensation of justice through adoption of technology, institutionalisation of performance management and strengthening integrity mechanisms.

INDEPENDENCE

Each judiciary in the region is grappling with case backlog which the chief justices conceded has negative impact on delivery of justice hence the decision to scale up initiatives to address the situation. “As part of strengthening judicial integrity and independence, we commit to improve mechanisms for accountability of judicial officers and staff and communication to the public on our work, “they added. They, however, observed that current judiciary budgets in their countries is a serious drawback to delivery of quality and effective service to court users. “ We resolve to continue engaging the legislative and executive arms of government to improve financial allocations and security for the judiciary, and to support the establishment and operationalisation of a Judiciary Fund or other mechanisms of ensuring financial autonomy of the judiciary,” they added.

Ugandan troops not at ease inside Somalia war

May 15, 2018 Written by Sadab Kitatta Kaaya

After their April 2 attack on a Ugandan army peacekeepers base in Burmalelle, Lower Shabelle region of Somalia, Islamist Al-Shabaab militants telephoned Monah Muhammad Zubair and warned her against collaborating with soldiers deployed in the area.

Monah is one of several Somali nationals who work as informers for the African Union peacekeeping force in Somalia (AMISOM) in Marka district, an area with a high concentration of the Al-Shabaab. Monah was not moved by the telephone call. Instead, she asked them to pay her if they wanted her to give up the AMISOM job.

“They sent me $30 on mobile money and I asked them to increase the amount to at least $50 which they did. Days later, they sent me a text message telling me to prepare for my funeral since I had refused to give up my cooperation with an infidel force,” Monah told The Observer.

Monah spoke to The Observer from Buufow, where the UPDF sector one under the 19th battalion is headquartered. It is 81km southwest of Mogadishu, and about 9km from the detach at Burmalelle where the Al-Shabaab killed 10 Ugandan soldiers and wounded several others on April 2.

Besides the direct messages to AMISOM collaborators, the Al-Shabaab send similar warnings through their Andulus radio that broadcasts from Kunyabarow; the militant group’s biggest base in Lower Shabelle.
At Kunyabarow, according to Abdallah Bashir, the chief elder in Marka district, the Al-Shabaab have their biggest hospital, high court and main jail in which they keep captured AMISOM soldiers.

“Al-Shabaab uses a lot of false propaganda against AMISOM through their own radio and TV stations; telling the locals not to cooperate with us because AMISOM is a force of the kafir [infidels]. But we are trying to counter that through our civilian-military cooperation by showing the population that we also have Muslims amongst us,” Lt Col Robert Nahamya told journalists on May 1.

To cripple their propaganda machinery, US forces last month bombed Al-Shabaab’s transmission site at Dara Salaam. The militants switched to mobile broadcasts from a van.

Maj Ceasar Otim Olweny, the spokesman of the Ugandan contingent in Somalia, said the militants have other radio stations as well as TV stations some of which broadcast from central Mogadishu.

HARSH CONDITIONS

The last UPDF outpost is about 240km from Mogadishu. Given the heavy rains that have been pounding Somalia over the past couple of weeks, most access roads have been cut off, making movement by road difficult for both sides.

The UN mission in Somalia airlifted journalists to Ceeljalle UPDF forward operating base. From here, the journalists boarded infantry fighting vehicles locally known as Mamba to Shalamboot which is 8km from the headquarters of the Al-Shabaab.

This offered an opportunity for the soldiers to speak about their poor facilitation given the harsh conditions under which they operate. The infantry commander at Shalamboot, Lt Col Fred Mwesigwa, was not as direct as his counterpart Lt Col Nahamya at Buufow.

“Why are our payments delayed? We came here without anything until AMISOM came in. Why should a UN person get paid on time and there is nothing for the Ugandan soldiers? I hope you help us carry this message to the bosses,” Nahamya said.

Nahamya said the UPDF have the worst facilities.
“When you compare our FOBs [forward operating bases] they are the worst. We must have good FOBs, not improvised ones. Good shelter, helipads and enough supplies for drugs with which we treat the locals,” Nahamya said.

In the Al-Shabaab infested areas, the AMISOM forces depend on local intelligence given through interpreters. The Al-Shabaab have mastered the art of mixing with the civilians which has made it difficult for the AMISOM forces to identify them.

“We have recently started using the sea to take our supplies to Barrawe [the furthest base which is 240km from Mogadishu] but in the medium and long term, we hope to start using air; the EU is financing the construction of a runway at Barrawe,” Brig Paul L’Okech, the Uganda contingent commander in Somalia, said on May 3.

DIFFERENT APPROACHES

“We are not here as UPDF; if we were UPDF, it would be a different story [but] AMISOM has its own way of operation. It is more defensive yet UPDF is offensive - we would have attacked, shelled their bases and flashed them out,” Mwesigwa said.

Even in situations where AMISOM has authorised the UPDF to attack, they never hold ground.

“In June last year, we went to Jenalle and flashed them out but we couldn’t hold ground because the known AMISOM base is Shalamboot, we had to come back, and the Al-Shabaab later returned to Jenalle,” Mwesigwa said.

UN RESOLUTION

Last year, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 2372 to have a gradual draw-down of peace-keeping troops by 2021 so that the Horn of Africa nation takes charge of its own security. But the troop-contributing countries say Somalia is not ready.

“After 10 years of presence, the UN wants us to hand power to the Somali National Army but the transition is condition-based; that as we move, there must be a stable and secure country,” said Col Richard Omwega, the AMISOM force spokesman.
Omwega belongs to the Kenya Defence Forces. According to the withdraw plan, another 1,000 troops will be withdrawn in October this year which comes with a closure of a FOB for each of the troop-contributing countries. Besides Uganda and Kenya, AMISOM has troops from Burundi, Ethiopia and Djibouti.

The big debate among the AMISOM commanders is whether the UN wish is achievable within three years.

“The transition must be shaped in such a way that the SNA [Somali National Army] is well trained and prepared. They are well trained but not well prepared to take over the challenge,” said L’Okech.

Currently, there are 75 SNA cadet officers training in Uganda. These will join an earlier force of 4,000 SNA officers who were trained by Uganda. Turkey is training another force of about 1,000, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) trained about 500 troops plus some more being trained separately by the US and European Union.

“Getting fighters is easy but how do you maintain them? Somalia for quite a long time didn’t have an army, we are trying to build one but we need to put a lot of effort in training, reorganisation and preparation,” L’Okech said.

AMISOM is also selling to the Somali government the idea of an LDU-like force to secure villages.

Somali MP Hospitalized After Brutal Assault By Kenya Police

On May 15, 2018

Somalia MP Mohamud Sheikh Siraji who is brother to slain Minister Abass Siraji was early Tuesday hospitalized with “serious injuries” after he was brutally beaten by Kenya police officers after they suspected then vehicle he was in was stolen.

“The Mp was attacked by police after he dropped a colleague in Westlands. He escaped death” a message sent to Radio Dalsan by an Nairobi based journalist said.

Radio Dalsan reporter in the Kenya capital says police have confirmed the incident to him.

Police say they were pursuing a Toyota Lexus said to have been stolen in neighbouring Kiambu county.

The Lawmaker had however rented a Toyota RAV4 and it is not clear why the police targeted him.

Ana accompany of the MP claims that he lost up to $ 2000 to the police.

Siraji is admitted at a Nairobi hospital.

The youthful MP replaced his brother as MP in February. The older Siraji was shot dead when the guards to a top government official mistook suspected that his vehicle had militants.

Fighting between Somaliland and Puntland forces erupts in Tukaraq town

The battle which erupted early Tuesday in Tukaraq town is reported to be ongoing.

Both Puntland and Somaliland have traded accusations of the attack. Abdi Ali Hirsi Qarjab, Puntland minister for Information who confirmed the fighting said the forces of Somaliland have attacked bases of Puntland troops in the area. "Somaliland forces attacked our troops near the frontline, they were repulsed and drove back," said Qarjab. Somaliland chief of Army, Noah Ismail Tani accused Puntland State of carrying out attack on the town saying the fighting is ongoing in Tukaraq town.." Puntland forces invaded Tukaraq town and the forces are still fighting in the area," said Tani. A statement by the office of the President which could not be independently verified accused the President of Somaliland of ordering his forces to attack Puntland territory for the second time. “Consequently, on this day, 14 May 2018, the President of Somaliland has irresponsibly ordered his forces to launch an unprovoked attack on territory belonging to Puntland for a second time,” the statement reads in part. “All the while he continues to mislead the people of Somaliland b stating that he is fulfilling his previous electoral campaign pledges. This cynical policy of armed aggression represents clear of proof of the hostility of the regime in North Western Somalia.” No casualties have been reported so far as the fighting is continuing.

Official: Somaliland-Puntland Clash Leaves 4 Dead

May 15, 2018 - Heavy fighting broke out early Tuesday in a disputed part of Somalia's Sool region, leaving at least four people dead, a security official told VOA.

The fighting between Somaliland and Puntland erupted outside the village of Tukaraq. It lies between the main towns of Las Anod in Somaliland – a breakaway Somali state and self-declared republic – and Garowe in Puntland.

The office of Puntland's president, Abdiweli Mohamed Ali, issued a statement accusing Somaliland of launching an "unprovoked" attack on its territory.

Somaliland officials accused Puntland of attacking their positions, local media report.

Both sides reported casualties including deaths, but neither side provided any figures to confirm those provided by the security official.

The official, who is not being named because he is not authorized to speak with journalists, described "intense" fighting with heavy weaponry.

Both Puntland and Somaliland reportedly have well-armed forces, and troops have massed in the disputed area in recent weeks. Michael Keating, the United Nations' special representative for Somalia, visited Puntland and Somaliland over the weekend and urged de-escalation.
Somaliland forces captured Tukaraq village in January after a surprise attack. At the time, Somaliland military officials said their forces conducted an operation "within our own borders." Puntland leaders, meanwhile, said Somaliland was "occupying" parts of its own territories and vowed publicly to "retake" the land.

Territorial disputes in the region go back to the colonial era, when Britain colonized Somaliland and Italy colonized the rest of Somalia. The people in Sool region are represented in both the Somaliland and Puntland administrations.

Somaliland announced its secession from the rest of Somalia in 1991, but has not been recognized as an independent state.

Observers worry that continued fighting will aggravate humanitarian concerns in a region prone to recurrent droughts.

https://www.voanews.com/a/official-clash-between-somaliland-and-puntland-leaves-4-dead/4394682.html
President Farmaajo calls for end to Tukaraq fighting, appeals for dialogue

May 15, 2018 - President Mohamed Farmaajo has called for an end to the fighting in Tukaraq urging for dialogue to resolve the dispute.

President Farmaajo asked leaders and elders to stand up for peace and create room for dialogue noting it was unfortunate the fighting was happening as the country was about to enter into the holy month of Ramadan.

“The killings must stop forthwith and everything should be resolved through negotiation,” the President said through the state news agency, SONNA.

It is unfortunate, President Farmaajo noted “We are bleeding as we prepare to enter the holy month of Ramadan.”

The President’s remarks come amid defiant response from Somaliland president Muse Bihi. “Our forces have secured the victory in all directions they attacked us from,” Bihi told the media. “We have seized their weapons and defeated them.”

Somaliland and Puntland soldiers went on the offensive Tuesday morning exchanging heavy artillery fire following days of tension in the border village of Tukaraq.

One person was killed and two others injured in Burao town following protests against the fighting in Tukaraq. Witnesses said police opened live fire killing one person.

PRESIDENT FARMAJO CALLS ON WARRING SIDES IN TUKA-RAQ TO IMMEDIATELY END HOSTILITIES

The President of the Federal Republic of Somalia, His Excellency Mohamed Abdullahi Farmajo is saddened by the recurrence of violence in Tuka-raq village in Sool region.

The President calls for immediate and unconditional end to the clashes in Tuka-raq.

The President has implored leaders and elders to negotiate for peace and an agreeable coexistence.

"The hostilities in Tuka-raq must cease immediately, it has already caused death and damage, it is senseless and must stop."

President Farmajo has urged all sides to resolve their differences through dialogue and respect the sanctity of life.

The President has also equally urged the warring clans of El-Afweyne who had recently clashed to coexist in harmony.

President Farmajo is saddened by the loss of life in these clashes and sends condolences to the families of those who lost kin and prays for quick recovery of the wounded.
Leaders defiant as fighting continues in Tukaraq

May 15, 2018 - Somaliland President Muse Bihi. Photo: courtesy

Leaders in Puntland and Somaliland have traded barbs over the ongoing deadly clash in the border area of Tukaraq.

Somaliland President Muse Bihi said Tuesday his forces had prevailed in the clash adding they also seized military equipment from Puntland side.

“Our forces have secured the victory in all directions they attacked us from,” Bihi told the media. “We have seized their weapons and defeated them.”

Forces from the two sides clashed last year forcing residents to flee and have since stayed in the area until another round of fighting last week.

Puntland information minister Abdi Qarjab said Puntland forces had managed to push Somaliland forces back. “Our forces launched an offensive and they have been able to drive the Somaliland forces back.”

Somalia: Statement on the Unproven Acts of Aggression of Somaliland (15.05.2018)

Somaliland: High Court Listen to Election Petition Filed by Mohamed Musa Abees

05/15/2018 - Somalilandsun: The high court yesterday started listening to an election petition filed by Mr. Mohammed Musa Abees against his rival Mr. Hussein Ahmed Aideed. The two politicians are wrangling for a parliamentary seat left vacant by the late politician Hon. Ibrahim Ahmed Haybe.

The assistant minister of information culture and national guidance filed the petition following the Somaliland Electoral Commission (SLNEC) decision to name Hon. Hussein Ahmed Aideed as the heir of the seat left vacant by Hon. Ibrahim Ahmed Haybe.

The petition was presided by five high court judges led by the chief justice Mr. Adam Ali Ahmed. During the hearing the lawyer representing Mr. Mohammed Musa Abees whose name was given as Mr. Adam Ahmed Musa defended his client. Hon. Hussein Ahmed Aideed represented himself. The high court stated that it will deliberate on the case after hearing both sides contention.

Somaliland wants Uganda recognition

May 15, 2018 - Written by JONATHAN KAMOGA

The state of Somaliland, which seeks to attain international recognition has opened talks with Uganda about a consulate in Kampala.

Somaliland, a tiny country in the horn of Africa, was granted independence by the British in 1960 and shortly after joined Somalia, a former Italy colony to form the Somali republic. The union soured in 1991 after a civil war, prompting Somaliland to declare independence from Somalia. Since then, the international community has not yet recognised it as sovereign.

Now, Somaliland intends to add Uganda to the list of countries with which it has diplomatic ties and they include; Kenya, South Africa, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Belgium, United Kingdom, France and South Sudan.

While the Somaliland community in Uganda was celebrating their 27th independence on Sunday in Kampala, a Somaliland government representative, Dr Mustapha Awil, said they were engaging Uganda to have a consulate in Kampala to ease movement of Somaliland nationals to Uganda, especially students.

“We enjoy diplomatic relations with countries like Kenya, Djibouti, Ethiopia, United Kingdom and the European Union. We are engaging Uganda and we are looking forward to see that it follows suit,” Awil said.
Somaliland issues passports which Uganda does not recognise according to Margaret Kafeero, the head of public diplomacy at Uganda’s foreign affairs ministry. Awil said that they have written to Uganda’s ministry of foreign affairs.

Kafeero said today that “I’m not aware of the letter but it very well could have been received. We get very many groups or communities world over that seek political recognition. Somaliland would not be an exception.”

Some Somaliland students here told The Observer that to get into Uganda, they first have to go to Mogadishu, Somalia, attain a Somalia passport and then apply for a Ugandan visa.

The former minister of state for Economic Monitoring in the Office of the President, Henry Banyenzaki, who is now the director of Monitoring and Evaluation at the Operation Wealth Creation (OWC) said that since the African Union had just signed the Africa Free Trade Zone agreement, Somaliland should be included.

“We intend to explore all the avenues of how the issue of Somaliland can be addressed to see to it that they are recognised,” Banyenzaki said.

According to the national chairman of the ruling party’s entrepreneurship league, Robert Mwesigwa, who was the chief guest, recognition of Somaliland should be looked at in terms of business.

“The unification of Germany started with entrepreneurs. I have been reading about the investment opportunities available in Somaliland and I think we should embrace them,” Mwesigwa said.

Flooding affects 1.2 mln people in East Africa: global charity

NAIROBI, May 15 (Xinhua) -- About 1.2 million people have been affected by flooding due to heavy rains pounding parts of Somalia, Ethiopia and Kenya, an international charity said on Tuesday.

The World Vision International said heavy rains have submerged homes, schools and businesses, displacing more than 700,000 people from their homes, and they are now camped out in tents on higher ground, in schools or other evacuation sites.

Stephen Omollo, World Vision's Vice President for East Africa said the charity's emergency response teams in partnership with local governments, in-country humanitarian agencies, and communities themselves, are working to address the immediate life-saving needs of the flood affected children and their families.

"Through our multi-country flood response, we are working to ensure access to food, water, shelter, and sanitation," Omollo said in a statement issued in Nairobi. According to World Vision, 718,000 people are affected by flooding and 220,000 displaced in Somalia, some 170,000 have been displaced in Ethiopia while 311,000 others have been displaced by flooding in Kenya. "Hundreds of thousands of children are at risk. They don't have food, and the water they're drinking is dirty. Their schools have been damaged, and their parents' means of earning an income has been destroyed by successive disasters," said Omollo. He said first was the drought, and now flooding is wreaking havoc and will impact the lives of people for several months to come. He said World Vision is distributing shelter kits, blankets, clothes, cooking material and hygiene kits to flood-affected families.

itor: Mu Xuequan

http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-05/16/c_137181635.htm
From drought to flooding: More than a million people struggling as continual rain submerges homes across East Africa

15 May 2017 - World Vision is rushing to respond to 1.2 million of people affected by flooding in parts of Somalia, Ethiopia and Kenya. Continual rains have submerged homes, schools and businesses, displacing more than 700,000 people from their homes, and they are now camped out in tents on higher ground, in schools or other evacuation sites.

"Hundreds of thousands of children are at risk. They don’t have food, and the water they’re drinking is dirty. Their schools have been damaged, and their parents’ means of earning an income has been destroyed by successive disasters. Firstly, it was the drought, and now flooding is wreaking havoc and will impact the lives of people for several months to come. Truly, people are struggling to cope,” said Stephen Omollo, World Vision’s Vice President for East Africa.

Stephen continued, “Through our multi-country flood response, we are working to ensure access to food, water, shelter, and sanitation. World Vision emergency response teams in partnership with local governments, in-country humanitarian agencies, and communities themselves, are working to address the immediate life-saving needs of the flood affected children and their families.”

Somalia In southern Somalia, more than 718,000 people are affected, and 220,000 have been displaced. Flooding has destroyed crops, killed livestock, damaged water and sanitation systems, and it has also disrupted schooling. Cholera cases are expected to rise as flood waters contaminate shallow wells, and pose a major threat to human health.

World Vision is distributing shelter kits, blankets, clothes, cooking material and hygiene kits to flood-affected families. Already, in two states affected, 13,600 people have been reached. Another 58,400 people are expected to be provided essential emergency relief items in the weeks to come. In the longer term, World Vision aims to distribute nutrition and food supplies, repair flood-affected schools and set-up emergency health care treatment.
Kenya Heavy rains and flooding has displaced about 311,100 people, killed 132 and damaged more than 200 schools. Community water systems have been damaged in several counties, and the number of cholera cases is climbing in the north and east of the country.

To those displaced by the flooding, World Vision is distributing blankets, mosquito nets, soap, buckets, cooking pots and food items. Already, in six counties affected, 1,450 families have been reached and another 36,000 people are expected to be provided assistance in the days to come.

Ethiopia Flooding in the Ethiopia has displaced 170,760 people, primarily in the southeast of the country. Homes have been destroyed, farmland submerged, crops destroyed, livestock killed and schools inundated with water. There is an urgent need for food, water, health services and core relief items such as temporary shelter materials, blankets and hygiene kits.

World Vision is responding in Dollo Ado, where 26,000 people have been displaced. World Vision Ethiopia aims to provide mosquito nets, mattresses, jerricans for carrying water, and cooking stoves to families affected by the flooding. The organization aims to provide more than 14,000 people with assistance in the new few weeks to come.

Overall

World Vision has been responding to the East Africa Hunger Crisis since 2017, and reached more than 3.5 million people facing food insecurity in the face of drought, conflict and political instability. The organization provided a comprehensive package of assistance that saw millions of those in desperate need receive clean water, food, nutrition support, health care, livelihood assistance, along with access to education and protection activities, with support from private donors, grants from foreign governments and UN agencies such as World Food Programme.

"Over the past few years, the intensity of recurring natural disasters in the eastern Africa has worsened by the effects of climate change. With the recent flooding in Somalia, Ethiopia and Kenya, millions of people have been affected and thousands displaced. People are living in makeshift shelters without food, clean water or adequate sanitation. Further forecast of rains are amplifying the plight of the already displaced children and their families," says
Christopher Hoffman, World Vision’s Humanitarian and Emergency Affairs Director in East Africa.

**Key figures:**

Somalia: 718,000 people affected by flooding, 220,000 displaced

Ethiopia: 170,000 people displaced by flooding

Kenya: 311,000 people displaced by flooding

**About World Vision:**

World Vision is a Christian humanitarian organization dedicated to working with children, families, and their communities worldwide to reach their full potential by tackling the causes of poverty and injustice.

UN Migration Agency: 48,000 Somalis to Benefit from Health Services

05/15/18 - Nairobi — IOM, the UN Migration Agency, in close partnership with the Ministries of Health in Somaliland and Puntland, will provide emergency life-saving health services to some 48,000 drought-affected people in the Sool, Sanaag and Mudug regions over the next five months, with funding from the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF).

“There is a continuous need for health services due to the critical health gaps across Somalia,” said Abdikadir Abdow, IOM Somalia’s Health Programme Officer.

The massive migration from rural to urban and peri-urban centres in Somalia has placed a strain on the capacity of municipal authorities to provide basic services, further exacerbating existing vulnerabilities, particularly among women, children, the elderly, persons with disabilities and marginalized communities. Aid agencies estimate that over 2 million people remain internally displaced in Somalia.

Some of the worst affected districts continue to grapple with limited access to life-saving assistance. Crisis-affected communities in these areas are disproportionately affected by food insecurity, malnutrition, and disease outbreaks.

In response to the effects of the drought and current flooding, the project will provide access to emergency primary healthcare for IDPs and host populations in the targeted regions. IOM has deployed four Integrated Emergency Rapid Response Teams (IERTs) in each of the targeted states.

“In close partnership with regional and federal ministries of health and local communities, IERTs are [deployed to] underserved regions with limited access in order to prevent deterioration of the health status of vulnerable communities, especially women and children,” Abdow said.
He added: “The eight teams will provide life-saving primary health services to 48,000 Somalis including consultations, nutrition screenings, referral services and health education.”

In 2017, IOM set up 22 static clinics and 33 IERTs, up from 10 and 4 static clinics and IERTs, respectively, in 2016. This was a more than a threefold expansion in operations which extended IOM’s health coverage to underserved areas.

The massive increase in service provision in the second quarter of 2017 was enabled by CERF. IOM provided over 550,000 individuals with health consultations in 2017.

http://www.iom.int/news/un-migration-agency-48000-somalis-benefit-health-services
Informing rapid emergency response by phone surveys

Tue, 05/15/2018 - In 2017, a severe and prolonged drought had hit countries in Africa and the Middle East, bringing crop shortage, livestock death, water scarcity and disease. Food shortages escalated into near-famine conditions in countries with low resilience against shocks, such as Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan and Yemen. In such a context, rapid quantitative data is required to respond to urgent developmental needs of the affected populations. Therefore, we designed and implemented the Rapid Emergency Response Survey (RERS).

Through the RERS, we were able to find that more than 7 in 10 households of the survey population are highly food insecure in South Sudan. In Nigeria and Yemen, every second household is highly food insecure, while 3 in 10 households in the Somali population face high food insecurity. Food insecurity is worse in the countries that faced conflict during the crisis. High incidence of conflict was reported in Nigeria, South Sudan and Yemen, while for the Somali population, the crisis was primarily due to dry agricultural seasons and a lack of resilience.

Apart from food insecurity, the populations faced a range of developmental challenges. Livelihoods were affected in all four countries, with large portions of the populations (ranging from 31 percent in Nigeria to 84 percent in Yemen) facing a decrease in income and changing the main source of livelihood. Poor health, insufficient access to water and low preparedness for the drought were also common to the countries. Other issues like school attendance and livestock loss were more context specific.

Results Dashboard
The results dashboard showcases selected trends for the four countries. In Nigeria, the survey represents the North-East, North-Central and South-South zones. Of these, the North-East zone has states classified under Emergency by the IPC. For the Somali population and South Sudan, only areas declared to be in Emergency or worse are surveyed. In Yemen, the survey covers all regions, stratified into Emergency and non-Emergency. Non-Emergency regions are sampled because they had pockets of highly food-insecure households.
In the context of crises, traditional face-to-face survey methods are not only too costly but also often unsuitable. They take a long time to prepare making it difficult to deliver timely data in a volatile situation. Data collection itself can be risky in crisis locations, for instance if the crisis involves conflict or a health epidemic. The design of the RERS responds to these constraints.

**How did we do it?**

The RERS is a phone survey, allowing rapid access to crisis-affected populations without exposing field teams to unnecessary risks. Interviews are 20 minutes long to avoid response fatigue and minimize the risk of burdening already stressed respondents with long interviews. Local call-centers are inexpensive to operate, leading to a low overall cost. Enumerators record and upload interviews instantaneously onto a cloud server, allowing for parallel analysis of the data and complete result dashboards within 8 weeks.

A limitation of this approach is that the population that does not use mobile phones, for instance because of poverty or lack of mobile phone coverage, is not represented. Even with this caveat, the RERS allows for an immediate, quantitative assessment of challenges from the crisis. If the survey population is less poor or better-connected, the results of the survey can be interpreted as a conservative estimate of how the entire population is affected.

Sampling strategies are flexible to local constraints. Existing surveys that represent the target population and have phone data, are a very suitable sampling frame. These were available and used in Nigeria. In the absence of existing surveys and reliable phone lists, different strategies can be employed, as we did in the other three countries. In Somalia, a bulk-SMS was sent to mobile customers and a random sample of interested and consenting respondents was selected. In South Sudan and Yemen, random digit dialing (RDD) was used to circumvent the need for a phone list while ensuring random selection of respondents.

**Lessons from the implementation**

The RERS approach shows us that it is possible to collect quantitative data on populations in crisis, and generate results rapidly. In all four countries, the turn-around from survey inception to results took less than 8 weeks. The data collection phase ranged from 10 days (completing 2600 interviews) in Somalia to 25 days (for 600 interviews) in Nigeria. Team size
and response rates were key in determining the speed of data collection—in Somalia, 25 enumerators were deployed, five times the size of the Nigeria team. The Somali case further demonstrates that extremely rapid data collection can be done with a reasonable enumerator team size, even in constrained environments. This rapid implementation was completed at roughly $50,000 per country. The cost per interview was less than $35 in all countries except for Nigeria.

Questionnaire design is a crucial step to accurately capture relevant dimensions of the crisis. Given the crisis was unfolding and with limited existing data, we designed the questionnaire to cover a diverse spectrum of developmental themes. These included education, livelihoods, health, remittances and market access. Given the short interview time, the diversity of themes limited in-depth exploration. Once the data was analyzed, it became clear that the survey population faced more challenges in certain sectors more than others, warranting a more in-depth exploration of those themes to better guide developmental interventions. For example, in South Sudan, more than 90 percent of the households were afflicted by illnesses over the past 3 months. While the questionnaire explored details of the most recent illnesses in the household, the depth of the health module did not allow for drawing specific, targeted health interventions. In hindsight, Additional information on household-member specific and less recent illnesses would have been valuable. The collected data also showed that remittances were not severely affected in South Sudan. Fewer questions on remittances could have made space for the more detailed questions on health. The challenge is that it is not possible to make such choices \textit{a priori}, especially in data-scarce, unfolding crisis situations.

\textbf{The way forward}

The RERS has shown to gather data in a timely and cost-effective manner under crisis situations but the experience also reveals that we need a system that would help modify questions on the fly based on the data trends. That’s where adaptive questionnaire design can help. The main premise is to allow the questionnaire to change over the course of data collection. The questionnaire starts with a broad range of developmental themes, with preliminary questions about the extent to which the population is affected in each theme. After about 500 interviews, data trends will indicate the developmental themes where the population is affected most. Less relevant themes can be eliminated (marked grey below),
and more relevant themes can be explored in increasing detail (marked green). Even saving 5 minutes from skipping preliminary questions on irrelevant themes, creates crucial space for more relevant ones in a rapid, 20-minute interview. The questionnaire can be updated in this way after every 500 interviews.

This design fits well with the RERS methodology that has proven to be feasible. Training enumerators on the full questionnaire beforehand can allow quick adaptation of relevant and irrelevant topics. The design will create systematically missing values for detailed questions in interviews conducted at the beginning of data collection and for explorative questions later in the implementation. The random sequence of interviews, however, ensures that the missing data is not biased and, thus, can be analyzed by ignoring missing values. The call center set-up of the RERS allows for meeting sample size requirements for different topics at virtually no extra cost.

**Somalia Rainfall Forecast**

*Issued: 14 May 2018*

Moderate to heavy rains will continue in the coming week in Somali and within the Ethiopian highlands whose rainfall contribute significantly to the river flow in Juba and Shabelle Rivers.Somaliland and Puntland will record the highest amounts of rainfall given the forecast.

Given the current ground situation, high river levels and the rainfall forecast, riverine flooding is expected to continue and spread further especially along the Shabelle River. Flash floods are likely to be experienced in the coastal areas of Puntland (Bari and Nuugal) and central (Mudug and Galgaduud) regions.

Users are advised that this is a forecast and at times there may be discrepancies between forecast and actual amounts of rainfall received. The forecast, observed river levels and rainfall amounts are updated on a daily basis and can be found in this link: [http://systems.faoso.net/frrims/](http://systems.faoso.net/frrims/)

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This update is produced by the: FAO - Somalia Water and Land Information Management—SWALIM. For more information regarding this product please contact SO-hydro@fao.org or visit [http://www.faoswalim.org](http://www.faoswalim.org)

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International Monetary Fund (IMF) Staff Completes Review Visit and Reaches Staff-Level Agreement on a Third Staff-Monitored Program with Somalia

For 2018, growth is projected to increase to 3.1 percent from an estimated 2.3 percent in 2017, and inflation is expected to ease to under 3 percent from around 5.2 percent in 2017.

WASHINGTON D.C., United States of America, May 15, 2018

The Somali authorities and the IMF reach a staff-level agreement on a new 12-month Staff-Monitored Program (SMP) covering the period May 2018-April 2019 (SMP III).

The IMF supports the authorities’ initiative to reach out to donors to mobilize the needed support and funding to launch a new national currency.

IMF staff welcomes the authorities’ continued satisfactory progress under the SMP in a difficult environment.

An International Monetary Fund (IMF) team, led by Mohamad Elhage, visited Nairobi, Kenya, from May 7—14, to conduct discussions on the second review of the second Staff-Monitored Program (SMP II) and to agree on SMP III. The team met with the Somali authorities to discuss recent economic developments, review progress on the implementation of reforms under SMP II, and discuss a follow-up SMP to consolidate reforms.

At the conclusion of the visit, Mr. Elhage issued the following statement:

The external public debt is high, and there is no capacity to service public debt obligations.

“The Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) successfully completed the third Article IV Consultations with the IMF and first review under its second SMP (SMP II) in February 2018.
The Somali authorities continue to demonstrate a strong commitment to implement critical reform measures in a very difficult environment.

“The FGS is making progress in building institutions and improving economic performance. Budget execution, the treasury and cash management frameworks, and domestic revenue collection are improving. Efforts to lay the foundation for sustainable financial sector development and strengthen compliance with anti-money laundering and combating the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) standards are underway and preparatory work to launch a new national currency is well advanced.

“Economic activity in Somalia is recovering from the effects of the drought in 2016-17. The drought hurt economic activity last year, but sustained international community support and remittances helped Somalia avoid a severe humanitarian crisis. For 2018, growth is projected to increase to 3.1 percent from an estimated 2.3 percent in 2017, and inflation is expected to ease to under 3 percent from around 5.2 percent in 2017. At the same time, reflecting a strong resolve to implement important fiscal measures under the SMP, the fiscal framework and fiscal performance improved in 2017 and during the first quarter of 2018.

“Performance under SMP II was satisfactory. However, despite the important reforms implemented since the first SMP I (May 2016-April 2017), significant challenges remain. Growth is too low to make a significant dent in Somalia’s widespread poverty, high youth unemployment, and large social needs. The economy is vulnerable to shocks and lacks buffers needed to develop resilience. The external public debt is high, and there is no capacity to service public debt obligations. Without proper compliance with the AML/CFT international standards, Somalia will continue to suffer from pressures related to the reduction in correspondent banking relationships. This could result in lower and volatile remittances inflows, which are Somalia’s lifeline.

“SMP III will help maintain reform the momentum and macroeconomic stability. It will also continue to support the authorities’ broad reform agenda. In particular, it will focus on (1) enhancing public financial management and revenue mobilization; (2) completing Phase I of the currency reform, which consists of exchanging all Somali Shilling currently in circulation with a new national currency; (3) putting the foundation of financial sector reforms to foster financial development, inclusion, and stability, while strengthening compliance with the
anti-money laundering and combating the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT); and (4) improving data reporting. Strengthening the procurement framework and improving governance and transparency are important features of SMP III, which will be support by technical assistance from the IMF. “Somalia’s debt relief is a priority for the IMF, and every effort is being made to accelerate the process within the established framework under the HIPC Initiative, which is designed to help countries avoid slipping back into arrears while putting them on a path to sustainable debt and reducing poverty.

“During the visit, the team met with Finance Minister, Mr. Abdirahman Duale Beileh; the Minister of Fisheries and Marine Resources, Mr. Abdirahman M. Abdi Hashi; Central Bank Governor, Mr. Bashir Issa Ali; Assistant to the President and Special Advisor, Hussein A. Gendisch; Representative of the Prime Minister’s office, Mr. Abdi Abdullahi; and other officials. The team also met representatives from development partners. The IMF team would like to thank the Somali authorities for their cooperation and the open and productive discussions.”

The New Scramble for Somalia: The Role of Diaspora Somalis with dual citizenship

By Hassan A. Keynan - Monday May 14, 2018

Becoming an American citizen through naturalization requires taking the Oath of Allegiance, loudly. The first part of the Oath of Allegiance reads, “I hereby declare, on oath, that I absolutely and entirely renounce and abjure all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate, state, or sovereignty of whom or which I have heretofore been a subject or citizen.” Mr. Mohamed Abdullahi Farmaajo did exactly that when he took the Oath of Allegiance and became a US citizen some 30 years ago. On 8 February 2017, he was elected President of the Federal Republic of Somalia.

President Farmaajo is not alone. His administration is packed with diaspora Somalis holding dual citizenship, who returned from Europe, North America, and Australia. Diaspora Somalis from these continents represent less than 30 percent of the estimated 2 million Somali immigrants abroad; and about 5 percent of the total Somali population. However, politically they disproportionately dominate state institutions, at federal and state levels. For our purpose here, attention will be devoted to the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS). Details are sketchy, as government officials do not feel or believe that they ought to disclose their association with foreign powers through citizenship or any other affiliation. Nevertheless, information compiled from different sources indicates that they have established and maintain a firm foothold in all branches of the Federal Government (FG), especially the executive and legislature.

The American Camp: Somali-Americans occupy the most powerful position in the Federal Government of Somalia. The President of the Federal Republic of Somalia, who is also the
head-of-state and Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces, leads the Camp. It also includes holders of important cabinet posts: Minister of Finance, Minister of Religious Affairs, Minister of Women and Human Rights, and Minister of Fisheries. American citizens of Somali origin also hold other important positions in the Federal Government.

**The Norwegian Colony:** Norwegian citizens of Somali origin prominently feature in the business of the FGS. They occupy two of the top three most powerful positions in the country: The Prime Minister/Head-of-Government and Speaker of the People’s Assembly. In addition, they hold the positions of the Minister of Defence and Minister of education and Culture. A few are members of the Federal Parliament.

**The Canadian Corner:** Somali-Canadians preside over the largest number of ministerial portfolios, including some of the most coveted posts in the cabinet. They are: Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Constitutional Affairs, Minister of Planning, Minister of Transport and Aviation, and Minister of Labour.

**Lone-star portfolios:** Dual citizens hailing from Australia, Britain, Denmark, Nederland, and Sweden also hold cabinet posts. Each has one ministerial position: Energy & Water, Health, Posts, Telecom & Technology, Disaster response, and Internal Security.

Concerns about dual citizenship: divided loyalties and conflict of interests

Acquiring dual citizenship is a personal decision. It bestows a variety of opportunities and benefits on the holder. Most importantly, it is perfectly legal according to the Provisional Constitution (PC) of Somalia. However, countries vary greatly when it comes to laws governing dual citizenship. Some reject it completely, while others permit dual citizenship with certain conditions and restrictions. It becomes particularly problematic when dual citizens seek and/or hold the highest public offices in a country. Concerns about dual citizens holding high political office primarily emanate from issues related to divided loyalties and conflict of interests.

Even big and powerful countries warn their citizens not to rush to professing allegiance to a foreign power. According to an editorial piece by the Los Angeles Times (December 26, 2014) the U.S. State Department warns American citizens from ‘retaining or applying for citizenship in another country.’ The most important reason given was that dual citizenship could be
seen as a security threat, creating a situation in which dual citizens could be barred from obtaining employment in some diplomatic and intelligence/security positions considered to be highly sensitive. More recently, issues relating to dual citizenship have turned Australian politics topsy-turvy as many MPs lost their parliamentary position for failing to disclose and renounce their status as dual citizens before they stood for election. In Ukraine, a country in which more than 100 members of parliament are dual citizens, MPs “flaunt the laws of the country, route their money into hidden accounts in tax havens, and generally enrich themselves at their country’s expense,” according to an article published on Forbes webpage (July 31, 2017). The article also mentions the case of a former Prime Minister who was travelling on a foreign passport and detained in Switzerland ‘for money laundering,’ and that of another senior official in the Ukrainian fiscal service, who ‘may be tried in Britain on corruption charges due to his British Citizenship.’ The practice in most countries is that dual citizens are either barred from occupying top national leadership positions, or they voluntarily renounce their second citizenship.

The special case of Somalia

The situation in Somalia is both different and rare. Somalia has just started the process of moving out of the degrading and deeply humiliating legacy of a failed state. Its Provisional Constitution (PC) is in disarray and highly contested. In fact, the Somali people have not been consulted about the provisions in the PC that allow dual citizenship. Its institutions are fragile and extremely vulnerable to infiltration, destabilization, corruption, and even takeover by internal usurpers and/or external predators with vested strategic and geopolitical interests. Moreover, dual citizens have and wield immense executive and legislative powers in a context characterized by lack of accountability and transparency, coupled with debilitating capacity limitations. How these enormous powers are used or abused and in favour of whom and against whom is therefore a matter of utmost importance. Somalis and informed foreigners who closely follow the events unfolding in the country express concerns that are many, deep, and legitimate.

**Domination of power:** There is not any country in Africa or elsewhere where so much power is concentrated in so few individuals with dual citizenship. The numbers are staggering. Access to the reigns of power is quick, easy and unfettered for dual citizenship. They hardly go through appropriate background checks. This has become a source of frustration and
resentment among non-diaspora Somalis, who feel exploited and marginalized in their own country. Current events indicate a disturbing trend regarding the manner in which state power and authority has been exercised. Contrary to the principles of the PC, the power and resources of the state are concentrated in a few federal entities based in Mogadishu, causing a huge and deepening crisis between the FGS and Federal Member States (FMS). This is a serious, even dangerous, matter which, if not resolved, could squander the limited gains made, or even cause the entire fragile federal edifice to collapse.

**Obsession with external legitimacy:** There is evidence that the FGS looks towards external powers for legitimacy. This is bizarre in the context of established norms underlying state sovereignty and legitimacy. But in the peculiar and befuddled state of Somalia, it is seen as a normal practice. Since the presence and authority of the Federal Government across the country are very thin or non-existent, it finds it easier and more convenient to seek and depend on external actors not only for legitimacy but also for resources. The UN, EU, World Bank, IMF, AMISOM, IGAD, AU, UAE, USA, UK, Qatar, Turkey, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Djibouti have replaced the Somali people as the principal source of legitimacy for the Federal Government of Somalia. Shuttle visits to and weekends in Nairobi, Dubai, Ankara, Brussels, Washington, Addis Ababa, Kampala, Riyadh, and Cairo have become easier and more frequent than spending time with and serving the citizens in Baidoa, Kismayo, Brava, Marka, Jowhar, Beledweyn, Dhusamareb, Galkayo, Garow, and Bosaso. Somaliland does not even feature in the business of the FGS except when Somaliland authorities seek or secure promising investment deals and development opportunities. Success and progress are measured in terms of pledges from the EU, promises from the World Bank, projects from the UN, and secret deals with both sides in the messy and deepening conflict in the Gulf.

**Corruption and scramble for Somalia’s strategic assets:** The strategically located Horn of Africa region is in the throes of a new and fierce scramble. Somalia is at once a strategic beachhead for the new, enterprising mission; and a principal target if the price is right. The new scramble for Somalia involves a wide range of competitors. The motives and interests of the scramblers vary greatly, as are the tools, narratives, capabilities, and resources deployed in the service of the business. The scramblers have their eyes focused on the country’s main strategic assets: ports, airports, marine resources, and areas with promising oil and mineral wealth. There is also a tough competition for other lucrative sectors,
especially security, logistics, infrastructure, and service provision. As indicated in recent reports, the country is being fleeced openly and with total impunity. Diaspora Somalis have been implicated in a number of dubious, even illegal, deals either as brokers, lobbyists, shareholders, or facilitators. Concerns are also expressed regarding attempts by powerful forces in the FGS to bend, pervert, or flaunt existing laws or tamper with new legislative endeavors in the service of greed and corruption. The Institutions of the Federal Government of Somalia are saddled with a host of lethal afflictions. The one that is most pervasive and most corrosive is corruption, a scourge that the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Somalia and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) recently referred to as ‘horrendous.’ Reports from the UN, World Bank and other credible sources have documented in great detail the horrendous levels of corruption and embezzlement during the past seven years. These reports indicate that “70 percent of funds that had been earmarked for development and reconstruction in Somalia were unaccounted for.” On 2 March 2014 the Daily Nation in Kenya published a summary of an audit report that alleged an estimated $700 million, mostly from Arab countries, basically ended in the pockets of senior government officials between 2000 and 2013.

Role of the International Community

For over a quarter century, the International Community (IC) has dominated the affairs of Somalia and the lives and future of Somali people. Billions have been spent to help Somalia navigate the arduous journey from protracted and bloody civil war, to failed state, to transitional state, to fragile state, and finally to a fully sovereign but bankrupt state. This was an unprecedented engagement and a rare experiment in the annals of international cooperation. For the IC, cracking the Somali conundrum has been a constant and messy struggle, involving a great deal of experimentation and improvisation. Some progress has been made. But the achievements have been too little, too slow, and uneven. Most importantly, there is very little to show for the billions of dollars spent to date. A huge chunk of the financial resources earmarked for the country went into the pockets of private individuals and groups many of whom occupied top leadership positions in the government. Things are so bad that ordinary Somalis are beginning to doubt if they have a country any more. The current government has made serious efforts to address the scourge of corruption that blighted the country for decades. However, given the combined and deadly
impact of weak government, fragile institutions, and powerful and entrenched networks of corruption, it is hard to even contemplate a satisfactory resolution anytime soon. It is therefore high time for the IC, the UN in particular, to realize that it cannot continue financing an expensive fiction forever. The monster the IC has been feeding and protecting for more than two decades might end up destroying whatever is left of its credibility and integrity, and in the process leave an entire nation feeling betrayed, humiliated, and profoundly angry.

The Great Somali Welfare Rip-Off

$100 million in taxpayer cash shipped out of country in past year alone.

May 16, 2018 - Lloyd Billingsley

At the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport, the carry-on bag bulged with $1 million in cash from a welfare rip-off scheme. The loot was headed for Somalia, some of it to regions controlled by the al Shabaab terrorist group, and this shipment was part of $100 million sent over the past year alone.

This scheme was not uncovered by the New York Times, CNN, “Frontline” or any “investigative” journalist in the old-line establishment media. It came to light in “Millions of dollars in suitcases fly out of MSP, but why?” a story by Jeff Baillon of KMSP, a Fox News outlet in Minnesota and the subject of a Powerline blog by John Hinderaker on Monday.

Back on March 15, Fox 9 got a tip about a man leaving the country with $1 million in cash, but this was only part of the story. “Fox 9 learned that these cloak-and-dagger scenarios now happen almost weekly at MSP. The money is usually headed to the Middle East, Dubai and points beyond. Sources said last year alone, more than $100 million in cash left MSP in carry-on luggage.”

Glen Kearns, a former Seattle police detective formerly with the FBI’s joint terrorism task force, told Fox “it’s an outright crime, it’s unbelievable.” The operator was part of “Hawalas,” businesses that transport money to countries that have no legitimate banking system.

According to Kearns, the money was going to an area controlled by al Shabaab, which operates the Hawala there. As Kearns learned, those sending tens of thousands of dollars
“happened to be on government assistance in this country,” the USA. As Kearns’ sources explained, “It’s welfare fraud, it’s all about the daycare,” a story Fox 9 had been covering for five years.

Somali fraudsters would start a daycare center and sign up low-income families that qualify for child-care assistance funding. Parents would check in the kids and promptly leave, but the center would bill the state for a full day.

Fozia Ali, a city official in Hopkins Park, ran a daycare center in south Minneapolis that billed the government for more than $1 million in bogus childcare services. The FBIs Craig Lisher told Fox that “some of the funds went overseas.” On trips to Dubai and Kenya, staying in luxury hotels, Fozia Ali “used an app on her phone to bill the state of Minnesota for childcare services.” She is now serving time in federal prison, but the rip-off did not end there.

In 2015, investigators tracked $14 million in those mysterious suitcases at Minneapolis-St. Paul airport. By 2016 it was $84 million and last year a full $100 million, all ripped off from American taxpayers. Fox reporters asked Kearns if any of the money was funding terrorism.

“I say absolutely,” Kearns confirmed. “Our sources tell us that. Good sources, from the community leaders.” And as Fox noted, “fraudsters in other states are now using the Minnesota playbook to rip off millions of public dollars meant to help kids.”

Way back in November of 2002, one year after the 9/11 attacks, historian Roger McGrath authored “The Great Somali Welfare Hunt.” As he noted, Lewiston, Maine, a mill town of 36,000 on the Androscoggin River, “has been the destination for hundreds of Somali Muslims.” This was due to the Refugee Act of 1980, which changed the priority of favoring refugees from Communist countries and rebranded “refugee” as any person unwilling or unable to return to their homeland because of a fear of persecution etc.

According to Renee Bernier of the Lewiston city council, the Somalis “came in droves off the busses” and “some made the welfare office their first stop.” They could grab five years of assistance, public housing and Section 8 vouchers. As McGrath noted, “employment opportunities are evidently a low priority.”
In similar style, as Soeren Kern observed, “Jihadists Exploit Welfare Benefits” in Europe. In Austria, jihadists used welfare payments to finance trips to Syria. Jihadists in Belgium received nearly $60,000 in welfare benefits and used the money to finance terror plots. Some jihadists continued to receive welfare after they had traveled to Syria and Iraq to fight for the Islamic State.

In Britain, Manchester suicide bomber Salman Abedi used taxpayer-funded student loans and benefits to bankroll his terror plot. The Islamist Anjem Choudary, a supporter of ISIS, was taking home $32,000 a year in welfare benefits, plus money for housing and income support.

As Kern noted, “Choudary believes that Muslims are entitled to welfare payments because they are a form of jizya, a tax imposed on non-Muslims as a reminder that they are permanently inferior and subservient to Muslims.”

In all likelihood, the Somali Muslims in Minnesota believe they are likewise entitled to the money of non-Muslim American workers. So they rip off American taxpayers, stuff suitcases with cash, and send the money winging to Islamic terrorists abroad.

As Glen Kearns told Fox, “my personal opinion is we need a nationwide task force to clamp down on this type of fraud.” It might take just a bit more than that.

Criminals and welfare cheaters abound in the United States. A ballpark figure for the number the USA should import is zero.

Counter Daesh Insight Bulletin 7 – 13 May

May 15, 2018

This summary includes notable items of Daesh propaganda from the previous week, including attacks and claims in Paris, Indonesia and West Africa. It is intended as a quick overview for those who do not have time to follow monitoring services on a daily basis and is not a comprehensive listing of every piece of Daesh propaganda released. Daesh often make fictitious claims which should not be taken as fact.

Overview

Between 7 and 13 May Daesh claimed attacks and killings in Iraq, Syria, France, Indonesia, Afghanistan, Libya, Pakistan, Somalia, Russia and Dagestan. Some of these attacks relate to the anti-democracy rhetoric Daesh has used in the last couple of months and focussed on events around the Iraqi elections held on 12 May. Last week’s al-Naba included an article urging imprisoned jihadists to try to escape using examples of previous jailbreaks and the latest attempt in Indonesia. It also carried an infographic on the alleged rise of Daesh activity in West Africa and an article on military operations in Syria over the last three weeks, claiming 640 Syrian soldiers killed. Daesh’s Amaq brand issued a statement claiming the Paris knife attack, followed by a video featuring the alleged attacker. Amaq also released an infographic of Daesh claimed attacks in Afghanistan over the last 12 months, possibly in response to a similar product issued by the Taliban.

Unofficial channels released threats against the World Cup in Russia and the Egyptian president using posters inciting for, and warning of, attacks. Daesh supporters criticized their rival Hayat Tahrir al-Sham over the deal they made with the Syrian government and praised Daesh’s harsh treatment of Syrian soldiers.

Paris knife attack
On 12 May around 21:00 local time a man yelling “Allahu Akbar” stabbed passers-by in Paris. The attacker was shot after he killed one man and wounded four others. Three hours later Daesh claimed responsibility by releasing a statement via Amaq saying the perpetrator was a member of the group and that he acted in response to Daesh’s calls to target countries of the coalition. They did not give any evidence to support this claim.

Later Amaq released a short video, of the man they claimed was the attacker, pledging his allegiance to Daesh and calling for attacks in France, Germany and England. As the man in the video keeps his face covered and does not give his name, it cannot be verified that he is Khamzat Asimov, the French citizen of Chechen origin named by French authorities as the attacker.

Daesh supporters distributed several posters following the attack; one with the words “sang pour sang” (blood for blood) and one showing a man with a knife approaching Pope Francis.

Prison riots and bombings in Indonesia

On 8 May Daesh claimed responsibility for a riot in a high security prison in Jakarta, a detention centre for convicted terrorists. Under the brand of East Asia province, it released photos, and Amaq released a video, claiming to show members of the security forces killed inside the prison. On 11 May, the weekly Al-Naba newspaper featured an article urging imprisoned jihadists not to ‘live in humility in prison’, but to escape, referring to the unsuccessful attempt in Indonesia, which it called the “blessed operation”.

Daesh claimed responsibility for three attacks on churches in Indonesia on Sunday 13 May, but offered no evidence. The claim gave no detail of the attackers, despite the unusual feature later revealed by Indonesian authorities that a single family, including young children, was responsible. Amaq reported that the attacks caused 52 casualties (11 killed and 41 wounded), a figure corresponding closely to that given by the East Java police.

Suicide operations in West Africa

The 11 May edition of al-Naba also carried an infographic entitled “a month of battles”, in which confrontations with soldiers of the Multinational Joint Task Force are claimed in Eastern Nigeria and to the west of Lake Chad. The article claims to show proof of three
suicide operations in Chad, killing 10 soldiers, wounding hundreds more and destroying tanks and military vehicles. In Nigeria, it claims to have targeted seven military vehicles with IEDs and killed 95 soldiers. It also claims to have killed an unspecified number of Nigerian soldiers in Koloram village in the state of Borno, and that Nigerian aircraft mistakenly caused casualties to their own side.

Ethiopian coffee facing serious threat from khat

May 15, 2018 - For generations, farmers planted the lush earth of Awedai and nearby areas in eastern Ethiopia with coffee trees, earning a livelihood from a crop that is now the country’s main export.

But the centuries-long practice is now being abandoned in favor of khat, a leafy plant chewed as a stimulant in the Horn of Africa and the Arabian Peninsula.

“Coffee comes only once a year. But you can harvest khat twice a year,” said Jemal Moussa, a 45-year-old farmer and father of six who depends on the narcotic leaf for income. “Khat is much more useful.”

He said it was in the early 2000s that farmers in the Awedai area started planting khat as its popularity rose and coffee prices remained stagnant.

One kg of coffee sells for between 50 and 60 birr. A bunch of khat, while not measured in kilograms, goes for 100 birr.

Jemal said by this year, the entire economy of Awedai, a small town 35 km outside the ancient city of Harar, relied on the leaf.

Trucks piled with khat head out of the town every 30 minutes, dispersing their produce to the nearby Ethiopian Somali Region and Hargeisa, in the neighboring semi-autonomous region of Somaliland.

Illegal in several Western nations, the leaf is immensely popular in the region, giving the chewer a mild amphetamine-like high.
In addition to cash incentive of khat, coffee growing is being affected by dwindling forest coverage as well as drought.

Farmers believe the characteristic flavor of Ethiopian coffee is derived from growing it in the shade of larger trees – leaving it vulnerable if trees are stunted or removed.

And in 2015/16, a drought induced by the El Nino phenomenon – the warming of surface sea temperatures in the Pacific – ravaged the country’s east, before below average autumn rains in the southern and southeastern parts of the country led to a new drought in lowland pastoralist areas the following year.

Indeed, some 5.6 million people required emergency food assistance in the country in 2017.

“The harvesting is already delayed by three and a half weeks. By now we would have processed 85-plus percent. But now we have not even picked that much as you can see,” said Aman Adinew, chief executive of Metad Agricultural Development, which processes coffee in Yirgacheffe in southern Ethiopia.

Yirgacheffe is one of the best known coffee brands for Africa's biggest producer of the bean.

“The coffee is still green on the tree – it needs rain to turn red. We are hoping it comes soon,” said Aman. “But if this trend continues, it is going to adversely impact the farmers and businessmen like us the growers like us and the country.”

While coffee is heavily dependent on rain, Khat needs less, making it a more attractive option for some farmers.