

Devin Morrow, MIGS Desk Officer for Somalia
5 - 11 February 2013



1. Al-Shabab & internal violence
2. Human rights & freedom of the press
3. Governance: Puntland, Somaliland & Jubaland
4. International relations

1. Al-Shabab & internal violence

Privately-owned media

Shabelle Media Network, dated 7 February 2013
“AMISOM dismantles terrorist ambush point”

- AMISOM and Somali national forces defeated an ambush attempt by Al-Shabaab in Gedo region
- Al-Shabaab “suffered many casualties”

Pro-Puntland media

Garowe Online, dated 4 February 2013
“President ready to open talks with Al Shabaab ‘if they abandon objective”

- President Hassan told the BBC he was willing to open dialogue with Al-Shabaab if they abandon their objective to overthrow the federal government
- Al-Shabaab has never been willing to enter negotiations with the government

Garowe Online, dated 7 February 2013
“Ethiopian troops battle Al Shabaab fighters in south central Somalia”

- Fighting broke out between Ethiopian troops and Al-Shabaab in Bakool region, with casualties on both sides, after an IED in Baidoa went off, killing at least 2 Ethiopian troops

Garowe Online, dated 8 February 2013

“Lifting the arms embargo spells new catastrophe for Somalia” editorial

- This editorial insists that the Somali National Forces are primarily made up of troops from the same clan as the president, and believes that the president’s repeated calls for the UN to lift the arms embargo is an attempt to rearm his clan
- While it offers a clear analysis of how clan and regional politics happen in Somalia, the editorial also seeks to show that only Puntland has an administration that understands the ramifications of these politics
- In the end, it urges the UN to maintain the arms embargo

2. Human rights & freedom of the press

Privately-owned media

Shabelle Media Network, dated 6 February 2013

“Human Rights Watch calls on Somali govt to quash the conviction and release jailed journalist”

- Five human rights and media organizations condemned the Somali conviction and 1 year imprisonment of a woman who was allegedly raped by security forces and the journalist who reported her story
- The journalist, Abdiaziz Abdinur, was held for 19 days without charge or access to a lawyer
- During the trial, the defense was not allowed any witnesses

Jowhar News Portal, dated 5 February 2013

“Alleged rape victim, reporter sentenced to 1 year in prison”

- More national reports of the 1 year conviction of Abdiaziz Abdinur and the woman whose alleged rape he reported
- It also covers the Human Rights Watch criticism and concern over the case
- Finally, the report refers to Somali government institutions as “weak and corrupt”

Jowhar News Portal, dated 5 February 2013

“Somali PM launches human rights task force and attacks ‘culture of impunity’”

- This report gives more details on the independent human rights commission set up by the Prime Minister, noting that it counts among its members 13 “prominent and respected Somalis” including peace activists, women’s rights activists, and educators

- The chair of the commission is human rights lawyer Maryam Yusuf Sheikh Ali

Pro-Puntland media

Horseed Media, dated 6 February 2013

“Faith in Somali judiciary hard to find as Abdiiaziz jailed” by Borja Bergareche

- Despite the government’s assertions that Somalia is a ‘safer’ place now than in previous years, this editorial purports that in fact, there is a serious lack of faith in the judicial system after the conviction of journalist Abdiiaziz Abdinur and the woman whose alleged rape he reported
- The government continues to insist that the decision of the trial was just

Horseed Media, dated 7 February 2013

“Prime Minister welcomes UN report on Somalia”

- A UN report that stated Somalia’s recent election was “the most transparent and representative” election in two decades is being lauded by the Prime Minister
- The Prime Minister also insisted that there is a zero tolerance policy towards human rights abuses by security forces, but made no comment regarding the incarceration of a Abdiiaziz Abdinur and the woman whose alleged rape he reported

Garowe Online, dated 6 February 2013

“PM selects independent body to investigate abuse cases”

- An independent commission to investigate human rights abuses in Somalia was officially opened by the Prime Minister on the same day of the sentencing of Abdiiaziz Abdinur and the woman whose alleged rape he reported
- There is some discussion the new commission may investigate the rape case, as the Prime Minister and President have insisted they cannot interfere in judiciary discourse

3. Governance: Puntland, Somaliland & Jubaland

Pro-Puntland media

Garowe Online, dated 9 February 2013

“Technical committee for Jubaland state arrives in Kismayo”

- A technical committee including UN representatives is currently arriving in Kismayo to discuss the inauguration of the Jubaland state convention
- A state convention may happen as early as later this month

Garowe Online, dated 11 February 2013

“Suicide bomber targets Puntland Deputy Police Chief”

- At least 3 police officers were killed in a suicide bomb attack targeting the deputy police chief in Galkayo

No further information available

Horseed Media, dated 8 February 2013

“Puntland security minister warns the opposition with arrests and executions” by Khalid Yusuf

- Puntland security forces fired upon thousands of youth protesting the Puntland government during their demonstration, though no one was reportedly injured
- In response, the Puntland Security Minister Col. Khalif Isse Mudan threatened the arrest and death of those who “resist”
- The protest came shortly clan leader Sultan Muse Farah Muse was killed in Bosaso by gunmen in military uniform

Horseed Media, dated 9 February 2013

“More anti-regime rallies in Puntland state of Somalia” by Abdirizak Mohamed

- More reports of demonstrations in Puntland against the current President, which have ended violently

Pro-Somaliland media

Somaliland Sun, dated 8 February 2013

“Turbulent politics stalling security improvements” by Luke Varga

- A UN report accused unstable politics as the key source of violence across Somalia, with particular attention to the current situations in Somaliland and Puntland
- Undisciplined troops were identified as a specific source of violence

4. International relations

Independently-owned media

Raxanreeb.com, dated 11 February 2013

“U.N. monitors see arms reaching Somalia from Yemen, Iran”

- Despite the continuation of the UN arms embargo against Somalia, Al-Shabab fighters in the country are receiving arms from Yemen and Iran
- The decision of whether or not to lift the arms embargo is still in discussion