

Devin Morrow, MIGS Desk Officer for Somalia
29 January – 4 February 2013



1. Al-Shabab & internal violence
2. Humanitarian issues, human rights & freedom of the press
3. Governance: Puntland & Somaliland
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1. Al-Shabab & internal violence

Mareeg.com, dated 2 February 2013

“Africa mission on Somalia condemns mortar attack on civilians in Beletweyne”

- Al-Shabaab used mortars to attack Beletweyne, killing one and injuring another
- In response, AMISOM forces followed the militants outside the city, resulting in at least 19 casualties

Privately-owned media

Shabelle Media Network, dated 29 January 2013

“Suicide bomber targets near Somali Prime Minister’s office”

- There are reports that up to six people were killed when a suicide bomber struck outside of the Prime Minister’s office in Mogadishu

No further reports yet

Pro-Puntland media

Garowe Online, dated 29 January 2013

“Govt condemns terrorist attack on Prime Minister’s home”

- Al-Shabaab has claimed responsibility for a suicide bomb attack that killed one soldier outside the Prime Minister’s home
- According to the Somali Information Minister, “the suicide bomber was formerly a member of Somali intelligence agency, who previously defected from Al Shabaab”

Garowe Online, dated 3 February 2013

“Gunment wage night-time attack on Mogadishu police station”

- Gunmen attacked a Mogadishu police station over night, injuring three with grenades including one civilian
- None of the gunmen were caught, and no group has yet claimed responsibility for the attack

Pro-Somaliland media

Somaliland Sun, dated 3 February 2013

“The problem of disarmed fighters” by Professor Paul D. Williams, George Washington University

- Analysis outlining the difficulties of DDR programs when they are severely limited in both finances and technical skills
- Further, this proves incredibly problematic for disarmed fighters, who, if not provided appropriate assistance, can return to lives of violence or banditry, reinforced by their dissatisfaction with the program and the state

2. Humanitarian issues, human rights & freedom of the press

Privately-owned media

Shabelle Media Network, dated 29 January 2013

“Food assistance returns to Kismayo”

- For the first time in four years, the U.N. World Food Programme has reinstated its food assistance programs in Kismayo
- There are five nutrition centres now running in the city, providing hot meals to 15,000 people and special support for 5,000 mothers and children, in a city where survey results recently showed high levels of malnutrition

Shabelle Media Network, dated 29 January 2013

“EU should urge release of jailed journalist, others”

- This Human Rights Watch report published by Shabelle urges President Hassan to immediately release journalist Abdiaziz Abdinur and three others

- who have been detained since January 10 for reporting on an alleged rape by Somali security forces on a woman in Mogadishu
- It is unclear what charges the detainees are being held on

Shabelle Media Network, dated 1 February 2013

“Unpos- statement on opening of journalist trial”

- Shabelle again published a report that condemns the treatment of journalist Abdiaziz Abdinur and four others in relation to the reported case of rape by Somali security forces
- The UN Political Office for Somalia reiterates that the trial must be done in accordance to international law, and will be monitoring accordingly

Shabelle Media Network, dated 3 February 2013

“The trial of the Somali journalist, Abdiasis Koronto started in Mogadishu”

- Shabelle continues to follow the trial of Abdiaziz Abdinur, who is being tried by the Attorney General on charges of insulting the state and fabricating a false story
- The Attorney General required more witnesses and evidence, and the trial will continue on 5 February

Shabelle Media Network, dated 3 February 2013

“PM pledges commitment for human rights and press freedom”

- Despite the current trial of a journalist and his associates for reporting an alleged rape by Somali security forces, Prime Minister Shirdon stated his commitment to human rights and freedom of expression
- He also “acknowledged deep-seated problems with the Somali army and the judiciary” which are not elaborated
- He pledged to develop an Independent Task Force on Human Rights in the near future

*Note from monitor: the acknowledgement of ‘deep-seated problems’ should be enough to dismiss the case altogether, it is alarming that it is still underway especially as some of the charges are in reference to insulting the state, which completely undermines freedom of expression

Shabelle Media Network, dated 4 February 2013

“Meeting held over increase in gender violence cases”

- MP and women’s rights activist Asha Haji Elmi (also the Prime Minister’s wife) conducted a meeting to discuss rape prevention strategies in Mogadishu
- There is no indication she mentioned the current case of alleged rape in the courts

****Note from monitor:** Shabelle appears to be the only local media reporting on the rape case, and publishing the international human rights reports condemning it. Shabelle has also been the employer for a majority of murdered or missing journalists in the last year.

Foreign media

Human Rights Watch (Washington, DC), dated 29 January 2013

“Alleged rape victim charged – journalist who interviewed her also faces prison”

- Journalist Abdiaziz Abdinur has been charged with insulting a government body and inducing a woman who claimed she was raped by security forces to give false evidence
- If found guilty, he faces up to four and two years in prison for each respective charge
- The woman who alleges she was raped was charged with insulting a government body, simulating a criminal office, and making a false accusation, carrying punishments of up to three and six years
- Her husband and two acquaintances have been charged with assisting her to evade investigation, and assisting her to secure a profit for the rape allegation
- All of these charges violate the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Somalia has agreed

IRIN humanitarian news and analysis, dated 1 February 2013

“Landmine danger persists in Somalia”

- Landmines are a danger in Somalia, and are still being planted, according to a deminer with the Somali National Army, especially by armed groups
- The most heavily mined areas of the country are Galgadud, near the Ethiopian border, south-central parts of the country, areas of Mogadishu, and parts of Somaliland
- This is alarming, because Somalia has signed the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and has pledged to destroy its stockpiles

3. Governance: Puntland & Somaliland

Pro-Puntland media

Garowe Online, dated 31 January 2013

“Puntland political associations sign joint code of conduct”

- In preparing for the upcoming elections, the Transitional Puntland Electoral Commission have created a Code of Conduct in order to ensure the process is fair and transparent
- The local elections are tentatively planned for May 2013

Pro-Somaliland media

Somaliland Sun, dated 1 February 2013

“Puntland to parley Somaliland after threatening Somalia” by Yusuf M Hasan

- Despite having a long history of conflict and tension with Somaliland, President Farole of Puntland intends to repair the relationship following his threats last week to Somalia
- President Farole has remained in office past his mandated period, ahead of upcoming elections in Puntland
- Somaliland has yet to respond to the announcement

4. International relations

Privately-owned media

Shabelle Media Network, dated 2 February 2013

“President calls on citizens in the diaspora to come home and rebuild their nation”

- Even as numbers of Somali refugees and internally displaced persons remain high, Somali President Hassan is encouraging members of the Somali diaspora to return and join the nation-building project

Pro-Puntland media

Garowe Online, dated 1 February 2013

“Political effects of U.S. recognition of the Somali federal govt” by Professor Michael A. Weinstein, Perdue University

- This analysis of the U.S. recognition of the Somali federal government better explains the ramifications of this proclamation on the regional areas of Somaliland, Puntland, and the possible creation of Jubaland
- The implications of the recognition will change the way the United States conducts its diplomatic channels with Somalia, from a dual track system recognizing the semi-autonomous governance of the regions, to a mono-track system that deals only with the centralized government in Mogadishu

*Note from monitor: tensions are rising between the central Somali state and the regional governments, and the recognition by the U.S. has only exacerbated this. Continue to watch carefully

Foreign media

PressTV, dated 2 February 2013

“Kenyan airstrike kills dozens of al-Shabab militants in Somalia”

- A Kenyan airstrike in southern Somalia reportedly killed “dozens” of Al-Shabaab militants, as well as two vehicles and three trucks filled with ammunition
- Kenya has increased its security along the Somali border