

**Devin Morrow, MIGS Desk Officer for Somalia
8 - 14 January 2013**



1. Al-Shabab & internal violence
2. Democratization in Puntland
3. Humanitarian concerns & freedom of the press
4. Governance
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1. Al-Shabab & internal violence

Privately-owned media

Shabelle Media Network, dated 10 January 2013

“Army to launch attacks on military in Gedo region”

- Military deployment has begun in the Gedo region of southwestern Somalia, in an attempt to overcome Al-Shabab fighters entrenched there

Shabelle Media Network, dated 12 January 2013

“Al Shabab execute two civilians in Jilib”

- Two civilians accused of being spies for the Somali government were taken off of a public bus in the southern town of Jilib by Al-Shabab militants and executed on the side of the road
- The people of Jilib now have greater concerns for their safety

Pro-Puntland media

Garowe Online, dated 12 January 2013

“MP survives roadside bomb in Mogadishu”

- Despite AMISOM claims to the increased safety in Mogadishu, a Somali MP barely survived a roadside bomb set off in the capital

2. Democratization in Puntland

Pro-Puntland media

Garowe Online, dated 8 January 2013

“Puntland politicians ‘interviewed on Al Shabaab radio’”

- Interviews with two Puntland politicians were released on radio shows affiliated with Al Shabaab: SomaliMemo.net and Radioalfurgqan.com
- Former Puntland security minister General Abdullahi Said Samatar and Abdirahman Mohamed Gablah both made statements that they would “declare a new government” or that a “new government will be declared” in the Puntland region
- Both Samatar and Gablah are resisting the transition towards a democratic multiparty system developing in Puntland’s approaching elections

Privately-owned media

Shabelle Media Network, dated 9 January 2013

“Puntland president extends term, sets election date”

- Despite promises of an election in Puntland in early to mid-2013, President Abdurahman Mohamed (Farole) announced he would extend his own term by one year, and democratic, multiparty elections would take place in January 2014
- The President’s term was set to expire last week, causing accusations that he has violated Puntland’s constitution
- Farole denied this allegations, insisting that his term has been successful in industry and defense sectors, but did not directly answer to the constitutional crisis he has caused

3. Humanitarian concerns & freedom of the press

Foreign media

Committee to Protect Journalists, dated 11 January 2013

“Journalist arrested for interviewing reported rape victim”

- Somali journalist Abdiaziz Abdinuur (known as ‘Koronto’) was arrested by Somalia’s Central Investigations Department and is being held without a warrant for arrest or any charges against him
- After an Al-Jazeera expose on instances of rape in IDP camps Mogadishu, Koronto interviewed a woman claiming to have been raped by government forces, and was arrested immediately after. It is not clear if she is the same person interviewed by Al Jazeera
- Authorities arrested Koronto after detaining the rape victim and demanding she reveal who interviewed her

- The Committee to Protect Journalists demands Koronto's immediate release

Human Rights Watch (Washington, DC), dated 12 January 2013

"Free Journalist, others linked to rape allegation – police should investigate sexual violence cases"

- *Human Rights Watch* condemns the Somali government for detaining a journalist arrested for interviewing a woman raped in Mogadishu by government forces
- The woman who was raped as well as a female acquaintance who assisted in her association with the journalist were also illegally detained after the interview, though the woman who reported the rape was later released to her husband's care

Voice of America, dated 10 January 2013

"Refugees fear insecurity in Kenya, return to Somalia" by Gabe Joselow

- The Dadaab refugee camp which is home to over 600,000 Somali refugees has become so dangerous that refugees who have lived there for decades have felt forced to flee the camp and return to Somalia
- Tensions regarding the continuing existence of Dadaab in Kenya have risen after violence broke out between ethnic Somalis and Kenyans in a Nairobi suburb, and recent statements by the Kenyan government pushing for Somali refugees to be deported back to Somalia

Privately-owned media

Shabelle Media Network, dated 12 January 2013

"Humanitarian access to Somalia improves following Al Shabab defeats"

- As the Somali military continues to defeat Al-Shabab in their strongholds across the country, there is likely to be a positive future for humanitarian work in Somalia
- A report by the *UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs* reveals there has been a gradual decrease of attacks against aid workers, as well as an increase in international presence in some regions of Somalia which allows better project monitoring

4. Governance

Privately-owned media

Shabelle Media Network, dated 8 January 2013

"Corrupt judges release 'Killer of MSF staff'"

- Three judges who released a man accused of murdering two foreign *Medecins Sans Frontieres* aid workers have had their positions at the high court revoked. The three are accused of corruption, and releasing the accused

murderer after accepting bribes. It is not clear who is responsible for bribing them

Foreign media

Pambazuka News, dated 10 January 2013

“Justice and reconciliation casualty of clan morass” by Mohamud M Uluso

- This article attempts to explain how clan divisions affect Somali politics
- Ultimately, Somali political affiliations are continually disrupted by clan politics, and this will continue to effect the attempts to reexamine the constitution and the transitions to federalism
- It is unclear in this article however whether the author believes the continued existence of clan politics is a positive or negative factor, and he fails to elaborate on the future of the peacebuilding process in response to the existence of clans

Pambazuka News, dated 10 January 2013

“The Quagmire of Somaliland” by Abdirahman Mohamed Dirye

- This pro-Somaliland article demands that Somaliland be internationally recognized as a state, as it has its own economy and is a stabilizing force in the region
- There have been recent rumours that Somalia and Somaliland may reopen a dialogue ahead of a move towards independence

5. International relations

Foreign media

Government of Ethiopia, dated 10 January 2013

“France to give one million euros to help displaced Somalis”

- In an attempt to stabilize migrant populations in Somalia, including internally displaced persons and refugees, France pledge to give one million Euros to the International Organization for Migration’s work in Somalia

RFI English, dated 12 January 2013

“French soldier killed in failed Somali hostage rescue bid, Shebab claims”

- A French soldier was killed in an attempt by French forces to free French intelligence agent Denis Alex, who has been kidnapped by Al-Shabab in 2009 and has been held hostage since then
- Initial reports are uncertain about the events of the failed rescue attempt, but at least one foreigner was definitely killed and the body left behind. Alex was not freed in the mission
- There have not been any reports of civilian deaths
- The French government has not yet commented on the mission

RFI English, dated 13 January 2013

“Somalia governor tells RFI he knew of French hostage rescue attempt” by Mohamed Sheikh Nor

- Lower Shabelle region Governor Abdulkadir Mohamed Siidi stated he was aware of the French actions to free their agent held by Al-Shabab ahead of the operation that resulted in the deaths of a reported 27 Al-Shabab militants, and two civilians
- Siidi stated there have been discussions between the administration and the French government for the entirety of Alex's detainment

RFI English, dated 14 January 2013

“French soldier wounded in failed hostage rescue bid is dead says Somalia's Shebab”

- A second French soldier that was missing after the failed rescue attempt of French hostage Denis Alex died of his wound after being captured by Al Shabab during the operation

Privately-owned media

Shabelle Media Network, dated 10 January 2013

“More foreign embassies to open in Mogadishu – minister”

- After AMISOM's announcement of increased safety and security in Mogadishu, some foreign governments may move to reopen their diplomatic missions in Somalia
- Turkey, Ethiopia and Djibouti have recently reopened their embassies, and Somali foreign minister stated that the United Kingdom, Italy, and China will soon reopen their consular offices

Shabelle Media Network, dated 12 January 2013

“French confirms commando raid on militant outpost in Somalia”

- The French government has finally commented on its failed attempt to free hostage Denis Alex, an intelligence agent held by Al Shabab since 2009, stating 2 French soldiers as well as Alex and 17 Somali militants were killed in the raid
- Al-Shabab stated on an affiliate website that Alex is still alive and being held by them

Shabelle Media Network, dated 12 January 2013

“What led the French commando raid on Al Shabab to be a botched one?”

- More information is being released regarding the failed rescue attempt of hostage Denis Alex by French forces
- The raid took place in Bulomarer town in southern Somalia, and local witnesses allege the French forces – which may have been at least 50 armed men – accidentally killed civilians on their way to the home where Alex was being held, which alerted Al-Shabab to the raid

Shabelle Media Network, dated 14 January 2013

“U.S. troops lent ‘limited technical support’ in France’s bloody and unsuccessful bid in Somalia to rescue an intelligence agent who’d been held hostage for years, President Barack Obama said Sunday” by Maalik Eng

- The evolving reports of the failed French hostage rescue have revealed that the United States was aware of the operation and provided technical support to the mission
- One French soldier was killed in the attack, another is missing, and it is unclear whether Alex has been kept alive by his captors or assassinated

Pro-Puntland media

Garowe Online, dated 13 January 2013

“Federal govt condemns France military operation in Somalia”

- Despite the governor of the Lower Shabelle region stating he was aware of the French operation to free agent Denix Alex from his Al-Shabab captors, the Somali government condemned the unilateral military operation that was apparently done without government knowledge or consent

Garowe Online, dated 14 January 2013

“Somalia govt ‘uninformed’ of French raid – defense minister”

- The Somali defense minister released a statement stating he was “very disappointed with France’s unilateral military action [to free a French hostage held by Al Shabab] as the government was uninformed”
- It is unclear how this will effect future Somali-French relations