

## Somalia Domestic Media Monitoring

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**Content: March 19 – 25, 2013**

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### Al-Shabaab's Continued Insurgence

**Government of Somalia and the Al-Shabaab Claim Victories After Yesterday's Battle**

Raxanreeb, March 25, 2013 (Independent Media)

<http://www.raxanreeb.com/2013/03/somalia-government-of-somalia-and-the-al-shabaab-claim-victories-after-yesterdays-battle/>

- Both the government of Somalia and the Al-Shabaab group proclaimed victories from a fight which took place in the Gedo region.

- The Commissioners for Garbaharey Town, Limaan Adow Kaariye said government troops killed 4 al-Shabaab members, set on fire fighting vehicles, secured a number of weapons left behind and took control of Bitra-deer where the fighting occurred
- Al-Shabaab, on the other hand, tweeted “At least 5 invaders killed and 7 injured before the enemy retreated back to their bases in Garbaharey. [#JihadDispatches](#)” from their official Twitter press account<sup>1</sup>

### **Al-Shabaab Renews Offensive in Southern Somalia**

Monitor.co.ug, March 19, 2013 (Independent Media)

<http://www.monitor.co.ug/News/World/Al-Shabaab-renews-offensive-in-southern-Somalia/-/688340/1724270/-/eq7hgmz/-/index.html>

- Al-Shabaab has renewed their offensive in Southern Somalia, seizing control of Hudur, the capital of the Bakol region, 420 km southwest of Mogadishu
- The militants entered the town late on Sunday when Ethiopian troops and accompanying Somali forces had abandoned the town earlier in the day.
- Other reports on Monday the 18<sup>th</sup> confirmed that Al-Shabaab fighters overwhelmed Somali government forces in Awdinle district, 30 km west of Baidoa, seizing the place after two days of bitter confrontations.

### **AMISOM Reassures the Citizens of Somalia of the Security Situation in Bay and Bakool**

AMISON Official Website, March 21, 2013 (Independent Media)

- Following the security vacuum caused by the withdrawal of Ethiopian troops from Hudur AMISOM reaffirmed that they are closely working with the Federal Government of Somalia in their efforts to re-establish a security presence in the area.
- Force Commander General Gutti also strongly condemned the beheading of the prominent cleric in Hudur by al-Shabaab who is accused of conspiring with the Somali government and Ethiopian troops
- AMISOM urges members of any armed opposition group to lie down and turn in their arms. He also promised that they would be treated fairly and in accordance with international conventions

### **Al-Shabaab Still to Achieve Mission**

Radio Dalsan, March 24, 2013 (Privately-Owned Media)

- Sheikh Hassan Ya'qub, the Al-Shabaab representative to the Bay and Bakol regions candidly admitted that al-Shabaab is yet to achieve their war mission in Somalia
- He also reiterated that their vision to control the country and impose Sharia law has not wavered and that they are committed to continuing the war against the AMISOM and neighbouring countries' forces whom they see as foreign occupiers and the Federal Government of Somalia, whom they see as an illegitimate government

## **AMISOM Says Ready for Ethiopia Withdrawal from Somalia Towns**

In Depth Africa, March 24, 2013 (Foreign Media)

<http://indepthafrica.com/amisom-says-ready-for-ethiopia-withdrawal-from-somalia-towns/#.UVjVoxykp3E>

- Ethiopian withdrawal has forced AMISOM and Somali government to take steps to fill in the potential security vacuum.
- “We have in place contingent measures to ensure that areas in Bay and Bakool where AMISOM are co-located with Somali National Security Forces remain stable and secure in the event of further Ethiopian troop withdrawals,” said General Gutti, the AMISOM Force Commander.

## **Somali Government Forces Split on Ethnic Lines in the Town of Marka**

### **Tension Still Height [sic] in Marka Town After Yesterday Fight**

Raxanreeb, March 23, 2013 (Independent Media)

<http://www.raxanreeb.com/2013/03/somalia-tension-still-height-in-marka-town-after-yesterday-fight/>

- At night on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of Friday, two groups both from the Somalia military faced each other in an “ugly” battle after the military was divided upon ethnic backgrounds
- The governing body of lower Shabeele region have requested the government of Somali to take these troops back to military camps to train them
- Marka residents expressed their fear over the high tensions between the two warring sides

### **Appeal to the Government of Somalia to Reshuffle the Governing Body of Marka Town**

Raxanreeb, March 26, 2013 (Independent Media)

<http://www.raxanreeb.com/2013/03/somalia-appeal-to-the-government-of-somalia-to-reshuffle-the-governing-body-of-marka-town/>

- Commissioner Ahmed Maalim Ukash said “Things are getting out of hands, differences have come [sic] in between officials in the governing body, it has now turned into a tag of war and if nothing is going to be done, the trouble that has already brewed will make matters worse than they are right now”
- Ahmed also highlighted the tension between his deputy and him, including claims that his deputy wants to murder him and that he was the mastermind behind the gangs that attacked his house last night

### **Ethnic Rivals in Somali Military Clash in Marka, killing 2**

Sabahi, March 24, 2013 (Foreign Media)

[http://sabahionline.com/en\\_GB/articles/hoa/articles/newsbriefs/2013/03/24/newsbrief-04](http://sabahionline.com/en_GB/articles/hoa/articles/newsbriefs/2013/03/24/newsbrief-04)

- Thus far, the clashes have killed two people and injured 4
- Lower Shabelle Governor Abdiqadir Mohamed Nur called on the Ministry of Interior to address arising problems as clan militias integrate into the police force

### Freedom of the Press Takes One Step Forward, and then a Few Backward

#### **Jubilation, then Tragedy, for Mogadishu Press this Week**

CPI (Committee to Protect Journalists), March 23, 2013 (Independent Media)

<http://cpj.org/blog/2013/03/jubilation-then-tragedy-for-mogadishu-press-this-w.php>

- Abidaziz Abidunnur was arrested on January 10 in Mogadishu for interviewing a rape victim who alleged security personnel were responsible. He was sentenced to a year for “offending state institutions” and “false reporting” although he had not published any story based on the interview
- The Supreme Court eventually threw out the charges, citing a lack of evidence. Similar charges against the woman were also dropped
- The Supreme Court actions followed pressure from Somali journalists and intense scrutiny and disapproval from the international community
- The day after Abidaziz was killed, journalist Mohamed Ali Nuxurkey was killed at a café when a car bomb, whose intended targets were Mogadishu’s security chief and several other intelligence officers, was detonated near the Presidential palace
- Local journalists have had high expectations and this attack further highlights that human rights are not mutually-exclusive to one another. Establishing a rule of law and ensuring the freedom from violence are necessary conditions to safeguarding the rights of the press

Monitor’s Note: It is relevant to notice that while the Supreme Court’s ruling is encouraging, its reasoning is not. The Supreme Court believed the case lacked evidence and made no real comment on the virtue of the charges. While the international community’s points of contention were that the original charges are baseless and in contradiction to a number of international conventions, the Supreme Court’s point of contention was merely that those charges could not be proven in a court.

#### **Female Freelance Journalist Shot Dead in Mogadishu**

Raxanreeb, March 25, 2013 (Independent Media)

- Rahma Abdulkadir, a freelance journalist working with local media in central Somalia was heading to her home in the Yaaqshiid neighborhood when two armed men shot her at the head, a colleague journalist Munira Ahmed told local media
- She is the third journalist killed in Somalia so far this year.

- 2012 was recorded as one of the deadliest years for journalists in Somalia, taking the lives of 18 journalists.

Monitor's note: There are no reports yet that conclusively describe why Rahma was targeted. But we do know that she was specifically targeted by the two assassins who fired their guns five times before fleeing.<sup>1</sup>

## Somalia Making Progress in Human Rights

### **UN Rights Expert Praises Somalia for Human Rights Progress**

Shabelle, March 21, 2013 (Independent Media)

<http://shabelle.net/un-rights-expert-gives-somalia-a-vote-of-confidence-for-human-rights-progress/>

- The UN's Independent Human Rights Expert on Somalia gave Somalia a vote of confidence on human rights during a meeting with the Prime Minister in Mogadishu
- Citing that the rule of law and justice are taking root and that the people can "relate" to the government, Shamsul Bari remarked that his "heart is much lighter and full of hope"
- The Government also reiterated its commitment and emphasized the steps it has had in place to ensuring that the progress relating to human rights are not negated by al-Shabaab's continued attacks
- In February, the government established an Independent Task Force on Human Rights with a limited, three-month mandate to investigate the killings of journalists and sexual violence against women
- The government will adopt a Somali-owned Human Rights Road Map later this summer
- It will also be announcing a new Directorate General for Human and Minority Rights and Rule of Law

### **Press Releases: Somalia Announces Judicial Conference on Human Rights**

Republic of Somalia, Directorate of Communications (Government Media)

Accessed from: <http://puntlandi.com/press-release-somalia-announces-judicial-conference-on-human-rights%E2%80%8F/>

- The President Hassan Sheikh announced his intention to have Somalia join the UN Human Rights Commission
- The President stated: "I assure you, my fellow citizens, that our number one policy pillar is security, and human rights is part of that pillar. We are committed to that and we will prevail."

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<sup>1</sup> <http://allafrica.com/stories/201303251153.html>

## Reviewing Somalia's Provisional Constitution

### **Somali Lawmakers Face Critical Test with Implementation of Federalism**

Sabahi Online, March 20, 2013 (Foreign Media)

[http://sabahionline.com/en\\_GB/articles/hoa/articles/features/2013/03/20/feature-01](http://sabahionline.com/en_GB/articles/hoa/articles/features/2013/03/20/feature-01)

- The review process began on March 9<sup>th</sup>, but most of the controversy and scrutiny surrounds Article 49<sup>2</sup> which deals with the guidelines around establishing federal states (their number and boundaries)
- "Federalism is something new for Somalia, and if the process of creating the nascent federal states is not done properly and resources are not distributed fairly, this could cause a new conflict to engulf the country," said Ahmed Aden, a political analyst in Mogadishu.
- Under the constitution ratified by the Somali parliament in August, two or more regions can unite and form a state with federal government representation.
- Parliamentarians must now decide how many of these states will be allowed and how to distribute resources. Both of these issues are not explicitly detailed in the Constitution
- Current regional entities are divided on a tribal basis but this could tear the country apart and incite competition between tribes
- The Parliament is also tasked with establishing laws that govern the relationships these state have with the central government including matters concerning political representation, movement and the sharing of resources

## Jubaland Conference Re-Starts, with the Federal Government

### **Federal Government to Participate in Jubaland Conference**

Garowe, March 24, 2013 (Pro-Puntland Media)

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201303240147.html>

- Originally, the SFG (Somali Federal Government) opposed the conference when Prime Minister Shirdon accused local leaders of trying to establish regional statehood with appropriate federal government involvement
- However, sources told Garowe that their stance is shifting to a more conciliatory approach
- Authorities have tightened security in the commercial capital in preparation for the ministerial delegation, following an incident where an IED detonated, injuring 15 people in the Alaney neighborhood of Kismayo
- Crime syndicates opposing the state building process have resorted to planting IEDs as a means of disrupting the ongoing process.

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<sup>2</sup> [http://sabahionline.com/shared/static/information/120708\\_Harmonized\\_Draft\\_Constitution-ENG-en\\_GB.pdf](http://sabahionline.com/shared/static/information/120708_Harmonized_Draft_Constitution-ENG-en_GB.pdf)

## Somaliland and Puntland To Work Together in Fighting Al-Shabaab

### **Somaliland and Puntland Agree to Jointly Fight Al-Shabaab**

Garowe, March 21, 2013 (Pro-Puntland Media)

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201303211261.html>

- Puntland and Somaliland have engaged in a joint security cooperation meeting in Nairobi to collaborate to battle terrorism, piracy and organized crime
- Issues that were agreed upon include: intelligence sharing in terrorism, piracy and organized crime; intelligence sharing on operating al-Shabaab agents in both regions; that both security institutions can jointly interrogate suspected al-Shabaab agents and that confiscated arms/supplies could be shared in investigations
- Puntland has repeatedly accused Somaliland of not doing enough to stop terrorism in their jurisdiction, even turning a blind eye to al-Shabaab agents fleeing southern Somalia and entering Golis Mountain Range - where an al-Shabaab faction have gone into hiding - shared by the two regions. However, Somaliland has improved the almost non-existent security cooperation with Puntland after Britain's warning for its nationals living in Somaliland to "leave immediately".

### **Somaliland: Anti-Terror Pact with Puntland in Place**

Somaliland and Sun, March 22, 2013 (Pro-Somaliland Media)

- A joint security cooperation meeting Somaliland and the Somalia regional administration of Puntland in Nairobi has ended in an anti-terror pact.
- The pact is unprecedented given the recent tension between Puntland and Somaliland
- Puntland lay claim to parts of Somaliland's eastern regions earlier this month even after Somaliland extradited to Puntland a man accused of assassinating a prominent religious leader in Garowe

Monitor's Note: The key difference between the two above articles is how each perceives the *other* to be, historically. Somaliland sees Puntland as an agitator and aggressor, and Puntland sees Somaliland as stubborn and complacent. Moreover, Somaliland refers to Puntland as a "Somalia regional administration" which implicitly highlights Somaliland's continued claims to be a sovereign state by not referring to themselves as the regional administration the international community sees them as