

Devin Morrow, MIGS Desk Officer for Somalia
16-22 October 2012



1. Internal conflict
2. Kismayo aftermath
3. Al-Shabab activity
4. Humanitarian concerns
5. Freedom of the press / attacks against journalists

1. Internal conflict

Independent media

Shabelle Media Network (Mogadishu), 15 October 2012 [possibly 16 October: publication is unclear]

“Large Anti-Government Rally in Somalia”

-Hundreds of Shalandbod town residents in the lower Shabelle Region of Somalia protested against Somali security forces after a number of them were victims of robbery

-This article is unclear, but accuses military of attacking and beating residents who complained about the robbery

Shabelle Media Network, (Mogadishu), 18 October 2012

“Gunmen assassinate local official in Mogadishu”

-Three gunmen assassinated a local government official as he left evening prayer, in what is described as “the latest in a series of killings in the city as the federal parliament approved a new Prime Minister”

-No group has claimed responsibility for the murder, and the assailants remain uncaught

Privately-owned media

Garowe Online, 19 October 2012

“Puntland seizes arms from Yemen”

-Local Puntland government officials believe Al-Qaeda factions in Yemen continue to arm Al-Shabab militants in Somalia after they seized a weapons and explosives cache along the northern coastline

-Local security officials believe a regular route from the sea through Somaliland is used by rebels to bring arms into Somalia

Garowe Online, 19 October 2012

“Mogadishu cannot dictate to Jubaland” [Editorial]

-This editorial is the first evidence [witnessed by the monitor] of nationalist sentiments for the southern region of Somalia, which includes the city of Kismayo

-Political unrest and feelings of disillusionment with the central government in Mogadishu are apparent throughout, with a number of references to clan differences and “hatreds” – as the author discusses that only powerful clan are granted places in the central government

-Other issues at stake are Kenya’s involvement in creating the new administration in Kismayo. As the region borders Kenya, this could be a foreshadowing to greater instances of resistance to Amisom troops (that are largely Kenyan)

2. Kismayo aftermath

Privately-owned media

Garowe Online, 16 October 2012

“Govt commander in Jubaland rejects reports of ‘looting by soldiers’”

-Kismayo remains unstable since it was captured by Amisom and Somali government troops last month

-A Somali/Amisom soldier is accused of killing a woman in the city, troops are accused of looting the city (rejected by Somali commander General Ismail Sahardid), and Al-Shabab agents continue to infiltrate the city

-Instability in the city is reflected by reported propaganda put out from Mogadishu by Hawiye clan members in the government, who are apparently concerned that instability in the southern region could result in the attempted separation or fight or autonomy, not unlike the current situation in Puntland

****Note by monitor: continue to watch instability in region that has potential to result in southern nationalist sentiments or movements**

Garowe Online, 22 October 2012

“Explosions rock lower Jubba region”

- A Kismayo security post guarded by allied forces was hit with two explosions, allegedly grenades thrown by Al-Shabab insurgents
- Insecurity continues to rock the newly-captured city
- Casualty numbers have not yet been released

**This was also reported by Shabelle Media Network*

Independent media

Shabelle Media Network, 19 October 2012

“A well-known elder shot dead in Somalia’s port city Kismayo”

- Two unidentified gunmen shot and killed a prominent elder in Kismayo after leaving prayer
- No group has yet claimed responsibility for the murder, it is unknown if it was politically motivated
- It is noted in the article that since the capture of Kismayo from Al-Shabab militants there has been a “security vacuum” that “seems deteriorating each passing day”

3. Al-Shabab activity

Privately-owned media

Garowe Online, 15 October 2012

“Al Shabaab clash with government forces in two Mogadishu districts”

- Conflict broke out in two Mogadishu districts after government forces located Al-Shabab militants targeting police and defense forces in the city
- Heavy artillery used in residential neighbourhoods resulted in the deaths of 5 Al-Shabab members, and civilians also report 1 death
- Al-Shabab continuously tries to infiltrate Mogadishu’s urban centre, despite Amisom and Somali government forces presence.

Garowe Online, 16 October 2012

“12 killed in insurgent violence in Beledweyne, Central Somalia”

- In the ‘biggest’ conflict to erupt in the central Somali region since it was captured by Amisom forces in December 2011, Al-Shabab ambushed government troops in their continued fight against the current administration
- Twelve people were reported killed, including both civilian and non-civilian casualties
- Attacking Al-Shabab militants were eventually deterred
- The area remains damaged by recent heavy rains and flooding

Independent media

Shabelle Media Network (Mogadishu), 16 October 2012

“Fighting erupts near Burhakaba on Afgoye-Baidoa corridor”

-Fighting between Amisom troops and Al-Shabab militants broke out on the main road between Mogadishu and Baidoa City as allied forces continue to push towards the rebel-controlled city of Burhakaba

-Al-Shabab continues to fight throughout the country despite its losses in the city of Kismayo last month

4. Humanitarian concerns

Foreign media

IRIN Humanitarian News and Analysis, 16 October 2012

“Food insecurity still a problem”

-Rising food costs in urban centers and continuing flooding in central and southern Somalia are leading to food insecurity throughout the country

-Further, incomes are steadily decreasing after poor harvests earlier this year

-A 26 September Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit Report cited that almost a quarter of a million children in the southern regions of the country are suffering from acute malnourishment

-October – December rains are expected to increase flooding across the country, thereby worsening the situation

IRIN Humanitarian News and Analysis, 17 October 2012

“Refugee relocation order sparks concern”

-Thousands of Somali refugees living in northern border towns have been ordered by the Kenyan government to move into Dadaab refugee camp, the largest refugee complex in the world

-Dadaab is severely under-resourced: on October 1, Medecins sans Frontieres released a statement outlining their concerns at the lack of adequate shelter and sanitation. The camp houses almost half a million refugees, and MSF warned that with the continuing influx of refugees, particularly with this latest order by the Kenyan government, “it is only a matter of time before the next major humanitarian crisis hits the camps”

-Part of the problem is the lack of documentation for Somali refugees who have settled in the northern areas of Kenya, but due to their status have no “legal” rights to be there

Independent media

Shabelle Media Network (Mogadishu), 21 October 2012

“IDPs march in Mogadishu streets for help”

-Despite the UN declaring in February that famine condition in Somalia had ended, hundreds of internally displaced people continued to live in camps in Mogadishu

-After living in poor conditions for seven months, they marched in a large demonstration in an attempt to bring attention to their situation.

5. Freedom of the press / attacks against journalists

Privately-owned media

Garowe Online, 21 October 2012

“Radio reporter wounded in Mogadishu”

- Radio Shabelle reporter Mohamed Mohamud Turyare was shot several times by unidentified gunmen yesterday; his condition unknown
- No group has yet claimed responsibility for the attack
- This article describes the responsibility of the government to provide security for Somali journalists as an “ever-mounting burden”

Independent media

Shabelle Media Network (Mogadishu), 22 October 2012

“Somali MP condemns attack on Shabelle media journalist”

- Mohamen Mohamud Turyare, a Shabelle media journalist who was shot by unidentified gunmen is reportedly recovering
- MP Omar Mohamud has “criticized in strongest terms” the attack

Foreign media

IRIN Humanitarian News and Analysis, 17 October 2012

“Somaliland journalists under fire”

- More journalists are in danger in the semi-autonomous region of Somaliland, as accusations of police arrest and torture have emerged
- Local NGOs continue to be concerned that independent media is in danger.