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1. Al-Shabab conflict

Privately-owned media

Shabelle media network (Mogadishu), dated 23 October 2012

“Somali police put on show 4 alleged Al-Shabab agents in Mogadishu”

-At a press conference in Mogadishu, police spokesman Abdullah Hassan Barise “displayed” four alleged Al-Shabab militants accused of the deaths of “several” journalists

-Article is unclear as to whether sentences have been given to the four people: it variously states that the men were “found guilty,” “accused,” “charged,” or simply “alleged members of Al-Shabab,” and does not release the “date of their verdict”

-This inconsistency is vaguely libelous as it is unclear whether any charges have actually been laid against the four, or whether the accused have already been convicted

Because this is in association with the deaths of journalists, the monitor would like to note these inconsistencies

Shabelle Media Network (Mogadishu), dated 24 October 2012

“Somali, AU forces battle Al-Shabab in lower Shabelle region”

- Al-Shabab continues to attack AMISOM military bases in the Baidoa corridor, outside of Mogadishu
- Residents confirm there is shelling on both sides

Shabelle Media Network (Mogadishu), dated 25 October 2012

“Uganda contingent of Amisom overruns Al-Shabaab hideout”

- Uganda AMISOM forces supported by Somali government forces successfully raided an Al-Shabaab base outside of Mogadishu and captured a weapons cache
- AMISOM forces are committed to dispersing Al-Shabaab militants, after claiming a number of previously held urban centres (such as Kismayo) earlier this year
- Despite the general dispersion of major groups, Al-Shabaab continues to use guerilla tactics to attack AMISOM and government troops

Shabelle Media Network (Mogadishu), dated 28 October 2012

“Al Shabab ambushes KDF in southern Somalia”

- More clashes reported outside Kismayo between Al-Shabab militants and KDF/AMISOM forces

Pro-Puntland media

Garowe Online (Garowe), dated 23 October 2012

“Bombing in Las’anod injures young boy”

- Two explosions were set off in Las’anod, the capital of the Sool region, by forces suspected to be Al-Shabab rebels
- The first explosion wounded a young boy as well as another civilian
- Article also notes of initial, unconfirmed reports that a Somali Universal TV journalist Ahmed Sakin Farah was killed by gunmen in the same town

Garowe Online (Garowe), dated 25 October 2012

“Bus carrying civilians hit with mortar – kills eight”

- There continues to be danger in the lower Shabelle region, after a bus carrying civilian passengers was hit with a mortar resulting in the deaths of 8 passengers
- The location of the attack was near the Baidoa corridor, which continues to see heavy military action
- Suspected Al-Shabab actions

Independent media

Raxanreeb.com, English language, dated 23 October 2012

“Al Shabab vows to attack UK”

- In a series of messages posted from their Twitter account, Al-Shabab pledged to attack the United Kingdom due to its “oppression”
- The messages encouraged American Muslims to rise and join in this attack

Daynille.com, sourced from Middle East Online, in English, dated 23 October 2012

“Fears of new Tora Bora in northern Somalia: Shebab bolster mountain bases”

- As Al-Shabab militants continue to withdraw from major areas captured by Somali government forces and AMISOM, they continue to use guerilla tactics while based in mountain strongholds in the border region between Puntland and Somaliland
- The northern Galgala region in the Golis Mountains is believed to be where a number of Al-Shabab bases are currently located
- Local residents of the area have confirmed the existence of training camps
- The danger is that the area could attract other movements associated with Al-Qaeda.

Foreign media

The New Times (Kenya), dated 25 October 2012

“Amisom forces arrest 72 militants”

- 72 militants accused of being Al-Shabab fighters were arrested by KDF (AMISOM) forces, including the supposed female leader of the organization, Marianna Issa Mohammed. KDF forces insist the situation is improving in Kismayo

2. Kismayo aftermath

Pro-Puntland media

Garowe Online (Garowe), dated 23 October 2012

“Kenyan forces vacate Kismayo University”

- Attempts to improve Kismayo living conditions improved after AMISOM troops vacated the Kismayo University campus they had been using as a base since the capture of the city.
- Kismayo continues to be rocked by explosions and killings, despite AMISOM’s presence in the town
- The end of this article alludes to possible discussions on the autonomy of a lower Juba state

Garowe Online (Garowe), dated 27 October 2012

“Five soldiers killed in bomb attack on Kismayo police station”

- An explosion at a police station in Kismayo resulted in the deaths of five soldiers
- Unrest in the southern part of the country has sparked discussions of a political process giving autonomy to the Jubaland region
- The leader of Puntland’s government has provided vocal support for Jubaland’s future

**Monitor would like to note that so far only Garowe Online has mentioned the possible future of an autonomous state of Jubaland: see final section of this report for more Garowe coverage of Jubaland separation possibilities*

Privately-owned media

Jowhar News Portal (online), in English, dated 22/24 October 2012 (unclear)
“People witness a profound transformation in Kismayo” by Peter de Clercq
-Supportive article suggesting that the recovery of Kismayo will be helped by a stable central government that will assist the formation of a regional administration
-If a power vacuum is allowed to exist, the possibility of a peaceful, prosperous future would be in danger

Foreign media

The Star (Kenya), dated 25 October 2012
“Five ships dock at Kismayu [sic] Port as business picks up”
-Improving economic conditions allowed five ships to dock in Kismayo to deliver food and cement
-During Al-Shabab’s control of the region, the UN imposed sanctions limiting the export of charcoal from the port, resulting in a stockpile of thousands of bags in the city. AMISOM is requesting the ban to be lifted to allow business for civilian residents to recover

3. Attacks against journalists

Domestic media

National Union of Somali Journalists (Mogadishu), dated 22/23 October 2012
“TV journalist killed in north, journalist death toll rises to 16 this year”
-Confirmed reports that Universal TV’s Ahmen Farah Ilyas (also known as Saakin) was shot and killed in Las’anod (also written Las Anod) on his way home from work
-The National Union of Somali Journalists condemns this death, and believes there is a conspiracy against journalists in the country, who deal with threats and work without pay on a regular basis

**Also reported by Shabelle Media Network on 24 October 2012*

National Union of Somali Journalists (Mogadishu), dated 29 October 2012
“Poet and media worker killed in Mogadishu”
-Another report of the assassination of celebrated Somali poet Warsame Shir Awale close to his home by unidentified gunmen

Foreign media

Committee to Protect Journalist (New York) press release, dated 24 October 2012
“In first for Somaliland, gunmen kill journalist”

- Another report regarding the death of Universal TV (based in London) correspondent Ahmed Farah Ilyas, who was reportedly shot by unidentified gunmen after leaving work
- More details emerge: Ahmed was detained by police earlier in October with two other journalists after publicly they stated their support for the new Somali prime minister

International Freedom of Expression Exchange Clearing House (Toronto), dated 29 October 2012

“Somali poet killed by gunmen – journalist dies a week after being shot”

- Warsame Shire Awale, a celebrated Somali poet who worked for Radio Kulmiye was shot by unidentified gunmen after receiving a number of threats for engaging in freedom of expression
- Turyare Mohamed Mohamud, a 28 year old journalist who was shot last week succumbed to his injuries in hospital and died

4. International Relations

Pro-Puntland media

Garowe Online, dated 24 October 2012

“Puntland military court sentences Yemeni to death on terrorism charges”

- A Yemeni citizen was the first non-Somali to be found guilty of conspiracy to commit acts of terrorism in Puntland, and sentenced to death
- Salihi Afifi Al Amoudi was transporting weapons and explosives earlier this year from Yemen to arm rebel groups in Puntland
- The weapons were expected to be transported to new Al-Shabab bases in the Golis Mountains.
- Al Amoudi can appeal the decision

Foreign media

IRIN: Humanitarian news and analysis, dated 29 October 2012

“Ethiopia’s ONLF rebellion”

- Conflict has been increasing in Ethiopia’s ethnic Somali region, which is mainly controlled by the separatist group Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF)
- This article broadly outlines the history of the ONLF, and its current political disagreements with the Ethiopian government, however what is important to note here is that due to its goals of separatism and its border with Somalia, this could be a foreshadowing of unrest in the region*
- Since 2007 civilians living in the region have reported feelings of fear of future fighting
- The ONLF has a history of human rights abuses, according to Human Rights Watch, including attacks against journalists

-Both the Ethiopian government and ONLF administration have supported the new Somali government, however they have not been able to cooperate with attempts to contain and disperse Al-Shabab militants in the region

5. Humanitarian Issues

AllAfrica.com, Government of Ethiopia (Addis Ababa), dated 24 October 2012 “UN to open a new camp in Ethiopia to host refugees”

- UNHCR spokesperson Andrej Mahecic announced the opening of a sixth refugee camp in Ethiopia to deal with the influx of refugees from Somalia
- The news comes after Ethiopia's Dollo Ado camp (the second largest refugee camp in the world after Dadaab in Kenya) opened an all-weather airstrip to assist in more efficient relief
- The number of refugees from Somalia in the camps of neighbouring countries of Kenya and Ethiopia is over one million, due to last year's drought and famine, current flooding, and conflict

Mareeg.com, dated 26 October 2012

“Ethnic Somalis suffering unprecedented abuse by Kenyan police - Human Rights Watch”

- Human Rights Watch is reporting human rights abuses against Somali civilians by Kenyan security officers
- Many of the victims are assumed to have associations to Al-Shabab
- Human Rights Watch's Kenyan researcher notes that without effective rule of law and due process for Somali citizens, peacebuilding in the region will be impossible
- The government of Kenya has said it will investigate accusations against its officers but as of yet denies the allegations

Privately-owned media

Jowhar Media Portal, dated 25 October 2012

“Groundbreaking start to cooperation on military justice and human rights”

- Representatives from Mogadishu's military court met with UNPOS Human Rights Unit in Nairobi to discuss military justice and human rights compliance in military courts
- Currently, Somalia prosecutes accused Al-Shabab and other members of terrorist groups in military court, however under international law they must be tried in civilian court
- Other discussions included “fair trial standards, amnesty, and conditions of detentions for disengaged fighters”
- Technical cooperation must take place to ensure the independence of the judiciary

Jowhar News Portal, dated 23/25 October 2012 [unclear]

“Progress on cracking piracy but for others horror continues” by John Steed, UNPOS Chief Maritime Security

- Somali piracy continues to be a major problem though it has fallen from importance on the international stage
- Notes there are currently 29 hostages held by various pirate groups in abysmal conditions
- In order to decrease piracy, there must be more stability on land, which is the responsibility of the new Somali government

Shabelle Media Network (Mogadishu), dated 25 October
“3 killed, 5 wounded in ‘ransom’ fight in central Somalia”

- An argument over foreign hostage ransoms between different pirate gangs turned deadly, resulting in the deaths of 3 people
- Unconfirmed reports note that civilians were included in the number of dead

Foreign media

The Star (Kenya), dated 25 October 2012
“Help us take refugees in Dadaab to Somalia, Ogeri tells UN” by Monicah Mwangi

- The Kenyan minister of Foreign Affairs insists the UN relocates Somali refugees from Dadaab camp back to their original homes. The Dadaab refugee camp has existed for 22 years
- Due to approaching elections in Kenya, the government is concerned about future instability in the region
- *Monitor would like to note that as these statements were made by the Foreign Affairs minister, this could mean future tensions between Kenya and Somalia*

6. Separation of Jubaland

**note from monitor that all reports of Jubaland’s possible future state of autonomy is reported from the pro-Puntland news outlet Garowe Online*

Pro-Puntland media

Garowe Online (Garowe), dated 26 October 2012
“Puntland president supports democratization, Jubaland formation”

- Puntland president Abdirahman Mohamed Farole has provided outspoken support for the possible formation of an autonomous state of Jubaland to form, with multiparty elections and state administration
- The president believes Puntland is an excellent template for the possible formation of Jubaland
- Puntland has been a semi-autonomous region since 1998

Garowe Online (Garowe), dated 28 October 2012
“Local communities to build Jubaland – political leader”

-Sheikh Ahmed Mohamed Islam, a local chairman of the armed Ras Kamboni group has called for an autonomous region of Jubaland, claiming he has already been in discussions with the central Mogadishu government for Jubaland's future

-Garowe Online notes that "political sources" claim the Somali president has not yet made any decision regarding Jubaland and is in fact concerned about possible separation

-The Ras Kamboni armed group worked with the KDF and AMISOM forces to capture Kismayo last month

-Since the siege of Kismayo by AMISOM and Kenyan-led forces, there have been more discussions of Jubaland's possible autonomy, under the auspices of a regional IGAD bloc