



Forensic Anthropology and Human Rights: Uncovering Somaliland's Troubled Past

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SOMALILAND, HORN OF AFRICA



Somaliland was a part of the former Republic of Somalia. For 21 years until his fall, the regime of Mohammed Siad Barre carried out massacres against the people of Somaliland. About 60,000 civilians were killed, thousands were victims of enforced disappearance, and 500,000 individuals were displaced before the declaration of independence, in 1991.

Since its independence, Somaliland has managed to secure the political stability, economic and social development needed to investigate the atrocities committed in the past, through a War Crimes Investigation Commission of 6 members. The forensic field school in Hargeisa will help to determine the universe of missing people through a systematic approach, ante mortem data collection and research of mass and clandestine graves.

In this 4-weeks long field school, the participants will attend virtual and in situ workshops on the culture, society, religion and post-conflict issues of Somaliland. The field school will assist in training the staff of the War Crimes Investigation Commission of Somaliland in forensic investigation of human rights violations.

COURSE OBJECTIVE

At the completion of the course, the participants will have an understanding of the application of forensic sciences to the investigation of Human Rights violations, as well as the process involved in the examination, recovery and analysis of mass graves.

CONTENT AND SCHEDULE

Week 1

Participants will attend a virtual module on the culture, society, religion and recent history of Somaliland. This will be followed by extensive lessons about the legacy of human rights violations in the country, an introduction to the forensic investigations about crimes against humanity, the applicable International Humanitarian Law and the International Law of Human Rights.

At the end of week one, participants will understand the procedures involved in a forensic investigation, the important role that ante mortem data plays to investigating cases of forced disappearance, and begin to discussing strategic approaches to deal with the issue of missing persons in Somaliland.

Week 2 and 3



Participants will be guided through the exhumation process from mass graves selected by the War Crimes Investigation Commission of Somaliland, including (but not limited) to surveying, mapping, collection of surface evidence and exhumation procedures.

At the end of week three, participants will possess a framework for assisting in the exhumation process of a mass grave.

Week 4



Participants will be exposed to the examination of remains and associated artefacts recovered during the exhumation process as well as prepare chain of custody forms, clean recovered remains and associated artefacts and storage.

By the end week four, participants will be acquainted with the post recovery process that follows an exhumation.

COSTS, DATES AND OTHER INFORMATION

The estimated cost for each participant is US\$ 4,050 for the month (US\$155.00 per day). A non-refundable deposit of US\$300.00 is necessary to reserve the participant's space for this field school by July 27th 2012 and final payment should be completed by August 17th. Vacancies are limited.

For further information on payment methods, write to fieldschool@epafperu.org.

The cost includes:

- Accommodation: Participants will stay at the Hargeisa Club, a peaceful environment, with all basic services for the participants' comfort.



- Meals: All three (3) meals are included in the price for the entire month.

Airfare and travel insurance is not included.

The field school will run from September 24th through October 21st 2012.

- Participants will be monitored and guided through the process.
- Participants will be constantly quizzed and assessed throughout the field school to determine their knowledge.
- In order to explore options for best prices and routes, group travel arrangements can be made.

FACILITATORS

Jose Pablo Baraybar has over 20 years of experience as a forensic anthropologist. He has consulted and/or trained on the use of forensics in cases of Human Rights violations in Guatemala, Colombia, Venezuela, Haiti, Ethiopia, the Congo, Sierra Leone, Kenya, Iraq, and the Philippines. He is the Executive Director of the Peruvian Forensic Anthropology Team (EPAF). He served as forensic anthropologist for the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda in 1996 and as Chief Forensic Anthropologist/Archaeologist for the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) from 1996-2002. He has expert witness status in the International Criminal Tribunal and was one of a handful of scientists to present forensic evidence in the case of Srebrenica (Bosnia) which is the first case of Genocide to be prosecuted using forensic evidence after the Tribunals of Nuremberg and Tokyo. In 2002 he created the Office of Missing Persons and Forensics (OMPF) in Kosovo and served as its head until 2007. During his tenure as head of OMPF was awarded with the UN21 Awards. Mr. Baraybar was awarded the 2011 Judith Lee Stronach Human Rights prize by the Center for Justice and Accountability in San Francisco.

Chris Cobb-Smith served for twenty years in the British Army, retiring in 1994. Recruited by the UK's Foreign and Commonwealth Office, he gained further operational experience as an UNSCOM weapons inspector in Iraq and as a monitor for the OSCE's Kosovo Verification Mission. Increasing awareness that journalists were ill prepared for hostile environments led to him founding Chiron Resources to provide specialist media support. In addition, Mr. Cobb-Smith is retained as a military/weapons expert by news agencies and NGOs to conduct investigations, not only into the deaths of journalists (most notably Abed Takoush in 2000 and James Miller in 2003), but also of alleged human rights abuses and potential war crimes.

Scott Emmons is a respected teacher and an expert in different fields related to the use of spatial data. He uses his expertise to support people in gathering, managing and sharing information through technology and local knowledge. He has led the development of software and techniques to better promote the interests of community projects and spends much of his time working with Aboriginal groups throughout British Columbia. Mr. Emmons runs the GIS Lab at UNBC, which operates as an open door educational facility.

EPAF Security Brief for Proposed Mission to Hargeisa, Somaliland on October 2012

Security is of course of primary concern and will be awarded the utmost priority in the planning and execution of the mission. Every possible effort will be made to ensure the safety of the team and have every contingency in place.

Security for the EPAF deployment to Hargeisa will be dependent on three elements:

- A commitment from the Somaliland government to provide physical security, information and support from the security service
- The maintenance of liaison with the local NGO Consortium and the affiliated NGO Safety Program
- Strict adherence to mandatory regulations for EPAF staff and attached personnel whilst in country

Despite travel advisories from national governments cautioning against all travel to Somalia, the distinction must be made between the generic name of the region and Somaliland. The proposed mission will be exclusively located in the city of Hargeisa where the security situation has been stable for some years.



EPAF Medical Brief – Hargeisa

All aspects of the provision of medical cover for expatriates working in Somaliland are handled by Exmed Global Medical Services of Hereford, United Kingdom.

Exmed UK are contracted by the United Nations (UN) to provide Emergency Care, Medevac as far as Nairobi and primary care to all registered NGOs. Exmed will have a doctor and two paramedics on call 24/7 and based in one of the secure UN compounds in Hargeisa. In addition there is also a UN doctor and ambulance based at a clinic in the World Health Organization (WHO) compound.

Everyone deploying to Hargeisa with the EPAF program should have medical insurance and must have the following inoculations:

- Yellow Fever
- Hepatitis A & B
- Rabies
- Tetanus

Hargeisa is not classified as a Malaria risk area. Prophylactics are not required, neither are mosquito nets.



Letter from Hon. Jim Karygiannis from the House of Commons of Ontario in support of the Somaliland initiative

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May 7, 2012

Mr. Jose Pablo Baraybar
Executive Director
Peruvian Forensic Anthropology Team (EPAF)
Jr. Mello Franco 341
Jesus Maria
Lima, Peru

Dear Mr. Baraybar:

I wish to advise you of my support of the Peruvian Forensic Anthropology Team's (EPAF)'s operations in Somaliland, specifically the establishment of a forensic field school. The forensic field school will be a valuable assistance to the War Crimes Investigation Commission in Somaliland as it examines atrocities committed in the past.

Under the provisions of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Somaliland and the Peruvian Forensic Anthropology Team, EPAF will set up the training facility whose program will include virtual and situ workshops on the culture, society, religious and post-conflict issues in Somaliland. EPAF will also train Commission staff and foreign students in forensic investigation of human rights violations as well as the process with respect to the examination, recovery and analysis of mass graves.

I have visited Somaliland twice and have worked with the Somaliland Diaspora internationally with respect to issues of concern including peace and reconciliation. I know that this project will be of great importance to Somalilanders.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jim Karygiannis".

Hon. Jim Karygiannis, M.P.,
Scarborough-Agincourt

Testimonial from a survivor of the armed conflict and supporter of the Somaliland initiative



I Aziz Deria, along with four other plaintiffs opened a case against General Mohamed Ali Samatar, who currently resides in the United States, for crimes against humanity. The battle was long, and reached as far as the US Supreme Court. In May 2011, I met with Jose Pablo Baraybar, Executive Director of the Peruvian Forensic Anthropology Team (EPAF) at the Center for Justice and Accountability (CJA) event in San Francisco. After the event I pursued Jose Pablo to help me with the exhumation of human remains in "Malko Durduro site" as well as others sites in Somaliland. I convinced Jose Pablo to join us in Somaliland to examine the sites and determine the best way to approach such a huge project. We arrived in Hargeisa in June 2011, and met with Somaliland government officials, religious and other important community leaders. In addition, we visited most of the sites in three cities including locations in Hargeisa, Barbara and Gabiley. After many discussions, we concluded that the purpose of this project should be:

- To count the remains, identify the cause of death and inhumation in a dignified and proper way.
- To establish a data base where we can collect the correct data about individuals murdered by the Somaliland government in 1988 war between SNM and the Somali army.
- To hold accountable to those who committed these horrific crimes in the future.

In addition, I believe both my late father Mohamed lid and my younger brother Mustafa are among those remains in Malko Durduro and thus, for me, this initiative in Somaliland is personal. Furthermore, for the sake of this project as well as other related projects, including establishing a library and memorial site for the victims, I am moving to Somaliland by the end of the summer 2012. In short, I will dedicate myself for this cause for the rest of my life.

It is so disgusting to see the skeletons come out. Those skeletons could be my father, my brother, my cousins. For me to have any closure, those people need to have a proper burial.... It bothers me whenever it rains. It really makes my heart sink.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For questions, comments, or additional information please write to:
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Or contact:

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