

Somali Domestic Media Monitoring Report
March 8 – 14, 2010
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March 14, 2010

(Source: Shabeelle Media Network website, Mogadishu, in Somali, 14 March 2010)

- Hisb Al-Islam's Banaadir Regional Administration accused the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia [TFG] and African Union's Mission in Somalia [AMISOM] troops of “being responsible for the losses sustained in the last few days of fighting in Mogadishu.”
- He blamed AMISOM troops and the TFG of “being responsible for the killing, injury and mass displacement of civilians in Mogadishu during the last three days.”
- “The Hisb Al-Islam official said AMISOM troops and those of the TFG have been firing mortars in areas that are very far away from the battle ground thus the reason for the heavy civilian casualty in the capital”.
- The official also said re-emphasized the statement by the Banaadir Regional Administration urging civilians to “leave areas near the frontlines is meant to legitimise the shedding of civilian blood”.
- “Although Hisb Al-Islam has squarely laid the blame for the heavy civilian casualty in the Mogadishu fighting on TFG and AMISOM troops, the extent of losses inflicted upon civilians in Mogadishu by both sides in the conflict is self evident in the hospitals in the capital”.

(Source: Shabeelle Media Network website, Mogadishu, in Somali, 14 March 2010)

- The first Deputy Speaker of Parliament, Prof Muhammad Umar Dalha held a news conference in Mogadishu in which he addressed the arrest of members of the Federal Somali Parliament in the Somali self-governing regions of Ethiopia.
- Prof Dalha asked the Ethiopian government to “release the MPs that are imprisoned in Jigjiga”. The deputy Speaker said “since the Ethiopian government is currently mediating between the TFG and Ahlu Sunna wal Jama'a, the agreement that is expected to be signed by both sides in Ethiopia should also include releasing of all Somali prisoners from Ethiopian jails”.
- Prof Dalha called on warring groups in central Somalia regions to “stop fighting and resolve their differences through dialogue”.

March 12, 2010

(Source: Radio Shabeelle, Mogadishu in Somali 0500 GMT, 12 March 2010)

- [Presenter] “Mass displacement has started in some neighborhoods in northern Mogadishu, which was the scene of heavy fighting in the past two days. Tension remains high in these areas.”
- [Reporter] “The mass displacement is taking place in some districts that include Abdiaziz, Kaaraan and Yaaqshiid. The displacement follows two consecutive days of shelling and fighting in these areas, where the government forces backed by the AU peacekeepers clashed with Al-Shabab mujahidin movement. Neighborhoods in northern Mogadishu have been a scene of heavy fighting. The situation in the area has changed. The handful of the remaining families in the areas were seen fleeing

these neighborhoods, where indications of impending confrontations could be noticed. The displaced people said that they were heading to Ceelasha Biyaha locality in the southern outskirts of Mogadishu and to Afgooye District in Lower Shabeelle Region. Some of those fleeing from the northern districts, who were contacted by Shabeelle, said that they the two day fighting in the area has affected them, adding that they were now fleeing the area this morning.”

- [Residents] “We are fleeing from these artillery but nothing more. We are heading to Ceelasha [in outskirts of Mogadishu]. Many people were killed in the neighbourhood yesterday. All the local residents are heading to Ceelasha. All are fleeing. The few people who remained were killed by the shelling in Arjentin. We are coming out and move to Ceelasha. We don't have transport since we are poor.”

(Source: AllPuntland.com website in Somali, 12 March 2010)

- Shaykh Fu'ad Muhammad Khalaf, a senior Al-Shabab official, has said “they are unconcerned about the attacks being planned by the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia [TFG] and African Union's Mission in Somalia [AMISOM] troops, which he said are being masterminded by Western nations”.
- “Anyone coming to attack the Somali people can rest assured they will not benefit from it and vowed to inflict heavy losses upon the United States of America, if it makes good its threats”.
- Shaykh Fu'aad said they “do not have the slightest fear in their hearts as God is on their side and so are the Somali public, whom he said are willing to fight alongside Al-Shabab forces, and are now ready to attack those that have been subjecting them to continued suffering in the country”.
- "We fight the unbelievers wherever we see them, as you can see in Mogadishu where God's soldiers are fighting the AMISOM enemy. The American's are no different from these ones, the arms they have shipped from the country are now being used to massacre Somali civilians. Their threats are of no consequence, if anything, they are a blessing to God's soldiers and God willing we will respond appropriately," said Shaykh Fu'aad Muhammad Khalaf, who is among senior Al-Shabab officials.
- "These days I hear reports saying that Al-Shabab and Hisb al-Islam fighting. That is a blatant lie as the Mujahidin do not fight amongst themselves, but instead, they jointly confront their enemy. We will not fighting amongst ourselves. If you hear conflicting statements [among us], it is understandable that individuals can have a difference in opinion over issues, however, we stand united in Jihad," said Shaykh Fu'aad Muhammad Khalaf.

March 11, 2010

(Source: Radio Gaalkacyo, Gaalkacyo, in Somali, 1015 GMT, 11 March 2010)

- The state minister for defense Yusuf Muhammad Siyaad aka Indhacade accused Radio Shabelle of “serving Islamists groups in Mogadishu”.
- Speaking at a news conference in Somali capital, he said that “the radio is operating under the policies of the Islamists groups adding that they yesterday aired news that led many families to flee from their homes”.

(Source: Radio Gaalkacyo, Gaalkacyo, in Somali, 1015 GMT, 11 March 2010)

- Thirty people died and 65 others wounded in heavy fighting between Islamist groups and Somali government forces backed by African Peacekeepers in northern parts of Mogadishu.
- “An eye-witness told Radio Gaalkacyo that nearly 65 people wounded in today's gun battle and are being treated at Madina hospital sources say that strayed mortar killed five people from one family including a mother and her children.”
- “African peacekeepers are reported to have been fighting alongside Somali troops and dozens of its armored vehicles were supporting the government forces, destroying a number of civilian houses. Hundreds of people have fled from their homes and the fighting is still under way.”

(Source: Garoweonline.com in English, 11 March 2010)

“Press Release: Ministry of Information, Communication, Culture and Heritage; Government of Puntland. Reference is made to a New York Times article (“Somalia Food Aid Bypasses Needy, UN Study Finds”) published on 9 March 2010, whereby the renowned U.S.-based newspaper cited a still-secret report drafted by the U.N. Monitoring Group regarding a number of issues in Somalia.”

- According to the Times article, the U.N. report alleges that the President of Puntland had "extensive ties to pirates in the area, who then funneled some of the money they made from hijacking ships to authorities".
- “The above is a huge nonsensical accusation; a feeble attempt to defame the president that requires to be proven.”
- “The Government of Puntland has not received a copy of this U.N. report yet, but the Government's position on piracy has remained consistently clear since the election of the current government.”
- “To highlight our commitment to combat and eradicate the scourge of piracy, the President of Puntland H.E. Abdirahman M. Farole declared a campaign against all forms of piracy throughout Puntland territory. The President underscored this state policy in a U.S. Congressional hearing in June 2009.”
- “The Government also sponsors a social campaign designed to discredit piracy and the proceeds of the loot of the pirates also forbidden by Islamic law. Puntland's Islamic scholars and community activists are leading this social campaign to prove that pirates have brought nothing except cultural, social and religious degradation to the Somali society.”
- “Our anti-piracy partnerships cooperation with NATO alliance (EURONAVFOR) is well known among leading nations such as USA, France, Spain and Britain, as well as the international media. Therefore, we strongly condemn the piracy activity, not only in Somalia but also all over the world. At the same time, we strongly condemn this baseless allegation, which is a politically motivated slander and defamation of Puntland and its leadership. We believe that these derogatory remarks are made by certain elements in the IMG who have accustomed to do these shameful allegations in other organizations in the past but now have infiltrated this UN mission (International Monitoring Group).”

(Source: Somaaljcel website in Somali, 11 March 2010)

- “Fierce battles and heavy shelling are raging in Mogadishu, specifically in northern neighborhoods, between insurgent forces and interim government troops backed by AMISOM [African Union Mission in Somalia] soldiers.”
- “The fighting, which is concentrated in Abdiiaziz, Shibis, and Kaaraan districts, has caused casualties and destroyed buildings. Reports say that over 50 people have been killed and more than that number have been wounded in the fighting that is still raging. A number of buildings were destroyed after being hit by artillery shells.”
- “AMISOM troops and interim government forces used everything in their arsenal, as insurgent fighters mounted a stiff defence. Reports say that insurgent forces were pushed back as their positions fell.”

(Source: Shabeelle Media Network website, Mogadishu, in Somali, 11 March 2010)

- The Transitional Federal Government of Somalia's [TFG] Ministry of Internal Affairs asked the United Nations to “conduct investigations into the operations of aid agencies operating in Somalia.”
- The TFG minister of state for internal affairs, Abdirashid Muhammad Hidig, held a news conference in Mogadishu to address the operations of aid agencies in Somalia. The minister called upon the United Nations secretary-general to “conduct investigations similar to the ones conducted on the World Food Program by the United Nations committee.”

March 10, 2010

(Source: Shabeelle Media Network website, Mogadishu, in Somali, 10 March 2010)

- A United Nations Committee that monitors the humanitarian aid operations in Somalia has confirmed that there “has been rampant corruption in handling of food aid in Somalia and travelling visas for politicians.”
- The report indicate that “most the food aid meant for needy Somali civilians is diverted as hundreds of food sacks with the WFP logo are sold in markets in various regions across Somalia.”
- The report suggests that “there is rampant corruption within WFP and calls for independent investigations.”
- The United Nations report also indicates that “ministers in the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia [TFG] have been illegally selling Visas allocated for their trips to European countries”.

March 9, 2010

(Source: Shabeelle Media Network website, Mogadishu, in Somali, 9 March 2010)

- The president of the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia, Shaykh Sharif Shaykh Ahmad, emphasized that “his government has decided to capture areas controlled by the insurgent groups.”
- The president held a press conference during which he spoke about Somali domestic issues. He asserted that his “government plans to attack areas under the control of the insurgents in the course of this month, adding that the government will capture these areas.”

March 8, 2010

(Source: Shabeelle Media Network website, Mogadishu, in Somali, 8 March 2010)

- Al Shabab has alleged that “they will defend themselves from any attack launched against them by US government and the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia [TFG].”
- Al Shabab has also reiterated that “they would not allow the WFP to operate in Somalia.”
- The spokesman of Al Shabab, Shaykh Ali Mahmud Rage aka Shaykh Ali Dhere, addressed numerous issues and alleged that “the US declaration would not deter Al Shabab and that the TFG could launch its planned attack any time it wanted as Al Shabab was ready.”