

HORN OF AFRICA REVIEW

This Update Covers the Period 27 May - 26 June 1996

The following is the second in a series of updates prepared by the UNDP Emergencies Unit for Ethiopia (UNDP/EUE) on the general situation in the countries of the Horn of Africa. Updates cover events in Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan, Somalia and Uganda.

Information in this update has been obtained from UN, NGOs and media reports; reference is made to the sources as appropriate. No claims are made by the EUE as to the accuracy of these reports.

IGAD

A technical meeting of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) convened at Africa Hall (UN Economic Commission for Africa), Addis Ababa 10-14 June to finalise details of a plan of action to be launched in relation to the three IGAD priority areas of: 1) food security and environmental protection, 2) infrastructure, and 3) humanitarian affairs and conflict prevention, management and resolution.

Of the over 100 project ideas that were discussed at the technical meeting, 31 project profiles were selected for presentation as the "priority of priorities" of the member states. These include 15 in the area of infrastructure development, 13 for food security and environmental protection and three in the area of humanitarian issues and conflict resolution.

Immediately following the IGAD technical experts meeting was a consultative meeting on 15 June between IGAD and members of the donor and international community. This meeting discussed the prioritised outputs of the technical experts meeting.

Among the issues raised by the donors at this meeting were: 1) strengthening of IGAD's coordination role at the regional, sub-regional and national levels to avoid overlap and duplication; 2) the need to prioritise the list of 31 proposed projects and to provide a realistic timeframe for implementation; and, 3) the need to strengthen ownership and commitment on the part of the member states through financial support at the national level. *(United Nations, Addis Ababa - June 1996)*

A United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) report issued in Nairobi on 29 May has described food security in sub-Saharan Africa as "precarious". The report estimates the aggregate 1995-96 cereal production in the Horn of Africa at 5 percent below the previous year's harvest. According to the report, "reduced crops in Eritrea, Somalia and Sudan more than offset the significant gain in production in Ethiopia. Production also declined in Kenya, but remained above average.

The report notes that "large numbers of vulnerable people and those affected by localised crop failures (in the Horn) require continued food assistance throughout 1996." The FAO report estimates that "nine million people are currently facing severe food shortages in eastern Africa, including some seven million in the Horn of Africa." *(FAO GIEWS - USIS Addis Ababa Special Report)*

A "Friends of IGAD" meeting took place in the Hague (Netherlands) on 24 June. In addition to discussing the Sudan peace process, the meeting also discussed recent developments in the IGAD revitalisation process. (*United Nations, Addis Ababa*)

DJIBOUTI

On 16 June, a small protest meeting was held in Djiboutiville against the national assembly's decision to lift the parliamentary immunity of three former Djiboutian ministers, now facing court charges. The three ex-ministers, who have been banned by the national parliament, are supporters of Ismail Gedi Hared, President Gouled's former cabinet director who was recently removed from his post. (*Indian Ocean Newsletter, 22 June*)

A new political alliance, the Coordination de l'Opposition Djiboutienne was formed in mid-June by the Parti National Democratique (headed by Aden Robleh Awaleh), the Front Uni de l'Opposition Djiboutienne (headed by Mohamed Ahmed Issa) and the Rassemblement Populaire pour le Progres (headed by Ismail Gouled, the recently-fired chef de cabinet of Djibouti).

The COD have denounced the "authoritarian drifting" of the regime and called for a fourth party, the Parti du Renouveau Democratique, to also join this alliance in order to "complete the unification of all democratic parties in Djibouti". (*Indian Ocean Newsletter, 22 June, 1996*)

ERITREA

The President of Eritrea, Issayas Afeworki has reportedly said that, in view of the close relations developing between Ethiopia and Eritrea, the border between the two countries is gradually becoming "meaningless". This statement was made at an interview to the monthly Tigrinna magazine Asser, published in Addis Ababa. (*Press Digest No.26, 27 June 1996*)

An agreement providing a peaceful end to the row over sovereignty of the Hanish islands was signed in Paris in late May by the foreign ministers of Eritrea and Yemen. According to this agreement, the two parties agreed in principle to renounce the use of force and accept the ruling of a special court of five international jurists (two named by Eritrea, two by Yemen and the fifth by Egypt, Eritrea and France. France as mediator will also guarantee military status quo on the island until a decision is made by the court. (*Indian Ocean Newsletter, No 720, May 1996*)

A French military delegation arrived in the Eritrean capital, Asmara, for talks aimed at monitoring a cease-fire agreement between Eritrea and Yemen over the disputed Hanish islands in the Red Sea. The delegation, which arrived on 30 May, met and held talks with the Eritrean Defense Minister, General Sebhat Efraim. (*Reuters - Asmara, 31 May 1996*)

Sudan deported some 224 Eritreans and 20 Ethiopians amid growing tensions between the Eritrean and Sudanese governments. According to the Asmara-based UNHCR head of mission,

the Sudanese security rounded up the Eritrean and Ethiopians in Kassala during the first week of June, trucked the people to the border and told them to cross on foot.

Eritrea broke diplomatic relations with Sudan in December 1994, ordering the Sudanese embassy closed and accusing Khartoum of sending armed Muslim fundamentalists to destabilise Eritrea. Ethiopia has also accused Sudan of trying to destabilise the region (see Ethiopia section).

(The Monitor, 15-16 June, 1996)

ETHIOPIA

On May 28, the downfall of the Derg regime was celebrated in Ethiopia. In an statement made on the occasion, the Ethiopian President, Negasso Gidada called on the Ethiopian people, governmental and non-governmental organisations to consolidate efforts in maintaining peace, ensuring democracy and bringing about sustainable development. *(The Ethiopian Herald, 28 May 1996)*

In mid-June, the Ethiopian parliament approved a more liberal investment code. This authorizes foreign investors to enter the construction sector and hotel industry, abolishes the requirement of \$125,000 deposit, and allows foreign investors to repatriate capital holdings, open foreign currency accounts in Ethiopian banks, and pay dividends in foreign currency to shareholders living outside of Ethiopia. Local investors will be allowed into new sectors, such as short-haul air transport with light planes. *(Indian Ocean Newsletter, 22 June, 1996)*

The Ethiopian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense, Tamrat Layne, has accused Sudan of mounting cross-border raids on Ethiopia in an attempt to destabilise the Horn of Africa region. In an interview given in Addis Ababa, Ato Tamrat stated that "Sudan has turned deaf ears to Ethiopia's repeated request to change its interventionist policy." "It is true that Sudan is carrying out an inflammatory propaganda campaign against Ethiopia ... this does not mean, however, that Ethiopia and Sudan are in a state of war." Tamrat also accused Sudan of interfering in the internal affairs of neighbouring countries.

In an interview in Addis Ababa on 12 June, Prime Minister Meles Zenawi said that despite deteriorating relations with Sudan, Ethiopia would not allow its territory to be used by Sudanese rebels. Meles accused Khartoum of trying to destabilise the region, but denied that the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), the main anti-Khartoum military force, was operating from inside Ethiopia as alleged by Sudan. *(Reuters -Addis Ababa, 12 June 1996)*

A three-day meeting of the chiefs of staff of the Central Organ of the Organisation for African Unity Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution opened in Addis Ababa on 3 June, to discuss peacekeeping operations.

The military chiefs agreed to enhance the continent's role in the rapid deployment of peace keeping forces under the auspices of the OAU. A declaration issued at the end of the session called on member states to earmark a well trained and equipped military contingent that could be called upon at short notice by the UN and the OAU to participate in peace-keeping operations. The meeting proposed that a military staff unit be set up at the OAU headquarters in Addis Ababa

to plan, organise and deploy peace-keeping missions. (*The Ethiopian Herald, 1 June & IRIN 2-7 June 1996*)

Dr. Abdulmejid Hussein, Ethiopian Minister of Transport and Communications, revealed last week that preparations are underway to launch an "Internet" service in Ethiopia. Upon arrival at the Bole International Airport after participation in the International Telecommunications Conference held in Washington D.C., Dr. Abdulmejid told reports the "Internet" service would be launched in Ethiopia at the end of August 1996. (*Addis Zemen, 14 June, 1996*)

The Central Statistics Authority of Ethiopia announced that partial results of the housing and population census conducted in early 1995 have been released. (*Press Digest, 13 June, 1996*)

KENYA

At least six people were killed and 137 wounded during fighting between two groups of Sudanese refugees in a camp in north-western Kenya, according to a spokesman for UNHCR. The clashes, which occurred on 3-4 June in the Kakuma camp, took place between refugees from the Dinka tribe (loyal to southern Sudan leader John Garang) and the mainly Nuer tribe supporters of Riek Machar.

Observers said that the fighting could have been triggered by the recent signing of a peace agreement between Machar's faction (the South Sudan Independence Movement - SSIM) and the Islamist government of Khartoum.

An opposition leader has called for the expulsion of Asians and other foreigners from Kenya, after accusing them of being responsible for the poor state of the country's economy.

Kanneth Matiba, the chairman of the Forum for Restoration of Democracy (Asili) told a press conference in Nairobi that his party also wanted citizenship rights granted to foreigners revoked. (*West African, 27 May - 2 June 1996*)

A three-day meeting on "Decentralised Political Structures in Somalia" was convened in Naivasha (Kenya) by the European Commission to discuss possible political structure for Somalia. Delegates representing most Somali warlords participated at the meeting and endorsed a series of decentralisation and institutional power-sharing principles.

A statement issued on 23 June by the European Union's Nairobi office said that the 20-22 June meeting (in Naivasha) saw decentralisation and power-sharing as preconditions to establishing a peaceful and viable Somali state, and called on the Somali population and political leaders to adopt them. (*Reuters - Mogadishu, 24 June, 1996*)

Kenya and Germany recently signed a bilateral agreement on reciprocal investments, the first of its kind ratified by Nairobi. German investments in Kenya are estimated to amount to Ksh 8 billion (around \$145 million) and are predominantly concentrated on the tourist sector (nearly 20 per cent of the tourists visiting Kenya are Germans). The balance of trade between the two countries is basically equal. German exports and imports to and from Kenya were valued at \$180 million each last year. (*Indian Ocean Newsletter, 15 June, 1996*)

SOMALIA

Inter-factional fighting between rival militia intensified in Mogadishu on 22 June, as supporters of Muse Sudi (an ally of Ali Mahdi Muhamed) and militia loyal to Mohamed Farah Aideed clashed for the first time since March. Hospital officials in the city said that 9 people were killed and 16 seriously wounded. More fighting took place in the capital on Sunday between the forces of Aideed and those loyal to Osman Ali Atto, with at least 11 people killed and 25 wounded. According to a witness "clashes have resulted in the closing of the road linking the Medina district and South Mogadishu, and at least 60 families have fled the area".

The Red Cross reported that fighting between supporters of Aideed and Atto since March 1996 has killed 200 people and left more than 1,000 wounded. Sporadic clashes have also been reported between the forces of General Aideed and the Rahanweyn Resistance Army (RRA) in the Hoddur area of Bakool region.

While the situation remains tense in South Mogadishu and parts of southern Somalia, most other the country remain relatively calm. (*Reuters - Mogadishu, 24 June, 1996 & UNCU Nairobi*)

Somali warlord, Mohamed Farah Aideed increased his government to six vice presidents and 93 ministers by announcing two new vice presidents and six ministers in early June. (*The Ethiopian Herald, 7 June, 1996*)

Local Somalia newspapers have reported that celebrations marking the first anniversary of the formation of Osman Ali Atto's wing of the United Somali Congress/Somali National Alliance (USC/SNA) were held in South Mogadishu on 14 June. The following day, a similar ceremony was held in Mogadishu Stadium marking the first anniversary of Aideed's self-declared administration. (*UNCU - Nairobi, 1-15 June*)

Population movements in the Juba Valley continued to be reported during the first week of June, with displaced families arriving in Kismayo and along the Kenyan border. UN and NGOs are discussing an inter-agency plan of action to address the situation. (*UNCU - Nairobi, 1-15 June*)

A Somali security guard was killed when a Red Cross convoy was attacked by gunmen in southern Somalia. Two vehicles were ambushed on the road from Mogadishu to Jilib on 17 June, a Red Cross official disclosed. (*The Ethiopian Herald, 19 June, 1996*)

Representatives of the United Somali Congress/Somali National Alliance faction, which is favourable towards Osman Ali "Atto" and the higher command of the Rahanwein Resistance Army, decided in late May to reinforce trade relations and co-ordination.

(Indian Ocean Newsletter, No. 720, 28 May 1996)

On 11 June, an one-day inter-agency meeting was jointly organised in Addis Ababa by UNHCR, UNDP-EUE and USAID on Somalia under the theme of "Humanitarian Assistance and Development in Support of Peace and Stability.

The meeting, which was attended by UN agencies and donors, discussed a series of issues including ongoing activities, co-ordination and information exchange, resource mobilisation and building upon the lessons learnt. A number of recommendations were made at the end of the consultative meeting for follow-up. It is anticipated that a second meeting would take place some time in autumn 1996. *(United Nation, Addis Ababa, 13 June, 1996)*

"Somaliland"

Hargeysa and Boorama remain relatively calm. According to reports by the local Somaliland press, a peace agreement was signed in Ethiopia on 1 June between the Haber Yonis and Haber Je'elo elder. Local Somaliland newspapers have also reported that in an attempt to advance peace and reconciliation efforts in the North-west, Egal's administration released on 4 June three senior opposition militia commanders serving prison terms at Hargeysa's central prison.

(UNCU - Nairobi, 1-15 June)

Peace talks between parties to the conflict in the self-declared Republic of "Somaliland" made unexpected breakthroughs in June concerning the town of Bur'o. A meeting in the Ethiopian village of Balli Dhaaye between elders of the Habar Yonis and Habar Je'elo clans has apparently restored peace between the two communities, and people have reportedly started moving back.

Talks are expected to continue inside Somaliland between these and other groups. An official declaration from the meeting will have to await the arrival of several key figures, including Suldaan 'Isse of the Habar Yonis clan. The results of the Baali Dhaaye meeting are expected to give impetus to the peace talks planned in Kam Aboker, Ethiopia between members of the Hargeysa clans.

After a series of delays, the Kam Aboker talks are expected to start at the end of June.

(United Nation, Addis Ababa, June 1996)

SUDAN

Coinciding with the Arab Summit in Cairo, the Sudanese President Omar Hassan Al Bashir met with President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt on 23 June for brief discussions. This is the first meeting of the two leaders since Egypt accused the Sudanese of helping and sheltering the men suspected of the terrorist attempt on President Mubarak in June 1995.

Al Bashir told reporters after the meeting that security officials of the two countries would meet to discuss Egypt's complaints that Moslem militants are operating from Sudan. However, despite this recent meeting, relations between Egypt and Sudan have a long way to go before they become normal once again.

The government newspaper Al Jomhuria quoted the Egyptian President (Hosni Mubarak) on 24 June as saying: "I cannot say today that everything is over or that there are no disputes between us (Egypt) and Sudan."

Al Akhbar quoted Mubarak as stating that "improving Egyptian-Sudanese relations is linked to the measures the Sudanese government takes in regaining the trust of the Egyptian people."

(Reuters - Cairo, 24 June, 1996)

Sudanese children marched through Khartoum on 26 May to hand a memorandum to the United Nations in protest against sanctions imposed on Sudan in May. Another copy of the memorandum was handed to the Sudanese State Minister. *(Reuters - Khartoum, 27 May, 1996)*

Russia, China, Jordan and Germany have reportedly informed Khartoum's Islamist government that they will not implement UN Security Council resolution 1054 which imposed diplomatic sanctions on Sudan, and will not reduce the size of their diplomatic missions in the country.

(Africa Analysis, 31 May 1996)

Sudan has denied a Ugandan newspaper report of 2 June that its forces shelled Ugandan troops battling rebels in the north of Uganda. The official Sudanese news agency quoted an army spokesman as saying that no Sudanese troops participated in the fighting in Uganda, accusing the Ugandan army of using the accusations of Sudanese involvement as a pretext for three days of continuous shelling of the Sudanese border. *(Reuters - Khartoum, 2 June, 1996)*

A recent report issued by the Human Rights Watch on Sudan condemned the denial of basic freedoms and discrimination against minorities by the ruling Islamist National Islamic Front. The report also targets the mainly Christian and animist groups in the south for a record of human rights abuses - including the prolonged detention of fellow rebels, seizing food from civilians, looting and summary executions.

Human Rights Watch also reported forced recruitment of teenage boys, many of whom die in battle, by SPLA. According to the report, specific recruitments took place between March and April in refugee camps.

In a letter addressed to SPLA leader John Garang, Human Rights Watch made a personal plea for the release of surviving teenage recruits and urged co-operation of the SPLA with a UN-run family reunification programme. This letter accompanied the report on alleged human rights violations in Sudan. *(Reuters - Nairobi, 29 May and 14 June, 1996)*

Egypt has ordered the expulsion of three Sudanese diplomats in line with the UN sanctions imposed against Khartoum for allegedly supporting international guerilla groups, a Sudanese diplomatic source said on 10 June. The source also said that arrangements were underway for the envoys' departure, but did not know when they would leave. The Consul-General and Political Counsellor of the Sudanese mission would also be leaving as their assignments had ended.

(Reuters - Cairo, 10 June 1996)

On 27 May, Sudan denied allegations that it had mounted cross-border raids into Ethiopia and in turn accused its neighbour of inciting trouble in the region. Major-General Mohamad Abdel-Ghadir, official spokesman of the Sudanese armed forces, said Ethiopian accusations were a smokescreen for aggression by Addis Ababa. "The Ethiopian forces were the ones taking provocative acts against Sudanese border posts with material and moral support to the outlaw forces," he said. *(Reuters - Khartoum, 27 May, 1996)*

According to reports received from NGOs, UN personnel and the European Commission Humanitarian Office (ECHO), health and food security in large parts of southern Sudan is rapidly deteriorating. The hardest hit areas include northern Bahr Al-Ghazal, the hunger triangle in Jonglei and riverine communities in the central region of upper Nile. South-eastern Equatoria region is also experiencing severe hardship. *(UNHCU - Khartoum, 1 June 1996)*

According to Medecins Sans Frontieres (Belgium), a cholera epidemic sweeping southern Sudan has killed at least 700 people in the past two months. More than 1,800 cases were reported in a seven-week period with a death toll of 360 in Adok region alone. MSF has further reported that gathering information on the spreading epidemic and assistance has been extremely difficult as many areas of southern Sudan are inaccessible.

The first cholera cases were identified by Health Net International in Mid-April, in fishing camps along the Nile River near Adok (Western Upper Nile Province). The epidemic has since then spread to Ler town and the districts of Jagai, Jikany and Leek to the north. Cases have also been identified in northern Bahr Al-Ghazal and Western Upper Nile regions.

(The Ethiopian Herald, 6 June 1996)

Sudan's President General Al-Bashir has renewed an amnesty offer to southern rebels and reshuffled his top military commanders.

Bashir repeated his amnest offer during a speech at a public ceremony in southern Kordofan state, near where government troops recently pushed back rebel SPLA troops.

Bashir's earlier appeal (in December) to exiled opposition politicians and rebels, mainly in Eritrea and Egypt, to return and form a national unity government, was declined.

(Reuters - Khartoum, 12 June 1996)

Sudan has strongly criticised Ethiopia for planning to construct, without an agreement, two dams on rivers flowing through both countries. Reuters quoted a statement of the Sudanese Minister of Irrigation and Water Resources in the private daily Akhbar Al Youm as also having criticised the World Bank for funding the building of the dams on both the Blue Nile and Atbara rivers.

Ethiopia has originally put off the construction of the dams for five years until the projects were approved by the Nile Valley countries, but according to Akhbar Al Youm, Ethiopian Minister of Finance has said that Ethiopia is no longer committed to seeking this approval.

(The Entrepreneur, 19 June, 1996)

A little known anti-government group has become the third southern Sudanese warring faction to sign the "political charter of peace" with the government of General Al-Bashir. The Equatoria Defense Force, a splinter group from John Garang's Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) signed the peace charter on 23 June. Two factions, the Southern Sudan Independence Movement (SSIM) of Riak Machar and the Bahr Al-Ghazal group of the SPLA led by Colonel Carbino Quanyin had earlier signed agreements with the Khartoum government in April 1996.

(The Monitor, 25 June, 1996)

UGANDA

A recent report issued by the Ugandan governmental body in charge of licensing new investments indicates that foreign investment projects totalling \$2.84 billion have been approved in Uganda since 1991. A total of 1,839 projects have been licensed and of the authorised \$2.84 billion in projects, so far \$1.9 has been invested.

The Ugandan Investment Authority has indicated that it is planning to purchase large tracts of land for sale to private investors, after equipping the areas with necessary services and utilities.

New investors have been encouraged by the return of properties owned by Asians in the country, but are also encouraged by Uganda's adherence to the multilateral investment guarantee agency, the international body securing foreign investment. *(Reuters - Kampala, 10 June 1996)*

A force of some 400 rebels of the West Nile Bank Front (WNBF), supporters of the former dictator Idi Amin, carried out a major attack on the Ugandan army and blew up a key bridge 320 miles north of Kampala on the main route to the Sudanese border.

According to a Ugandan military spokesman, 31 rebels were killed by the army in the attacks, which were carried out 29 May. The rebels are part of the forces (some 2,000 troops) that are reported to have crossed from Sudan into Uganda and had broken up into smaller groups.

(IRIN - Nairobi, 3 June 1996)

Ugandan President, Yoweri Museveni, facing a fresh wave of rebel attacks in northwestern Uganda, has offered amnesty to the West Nile Bank rebels supporting former dictator Idi Amin. The rebels have stepped up operations since their forces crossed from Sudan in late May.

Subsequent to a request by tribal leaders, Liberation Resistance Army leader Josph Kony is also reported to have said that he wants peace talks with Kampala. The government, however, has said that it would not enter into peace negotiations with the LRA. Moreover, on 9 June, Yoweri Museveni specifically told a news conference that the government would not take up the rebels' offer of negotiations, but was recruiting more forces to crush the rebel forces.

(Reuters - Kampala, 3 June, IRIN 2-7 June, 1996)

The recent re-election of President Museveni with the support of three-quarters of the voters obscures the fact that in the northern districts of Gulu and Kitgum, more people voted against him than for him. Some 10,000 of these anti-Museveni people are refugees from rural areas who have fled to towns to escape the civil war in the countryside. The people in the north reportedly voted for the leading opposition leader Paul Ssemogerere.

The main reason for Museveni's immense popularity in the country is that he has restored peace to Uganda, after many years of turmoil *(Foreign Report, 6 June, 1996)*

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