

## HORN OF AFRICA

### The Monthly Review

---

**This update covers the period March - April 1999**

## REGIONAL ISSUES

### ***Update on the Ethiopia-Eritrea conflict***

Following nearly two weeks of relative calm on the disputed border between Ethiopia and Eritrea, hopes were again voiced that perhaps there would be a new opportunity for the two sides to reach an agreement regarding the implementation of the OAU peace proposals.

During early April, envoys from both countries met separately with Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe, who has played a central role along with Burkina Faso President and current OAU Chairman Blaise Compaore and outgoing Djibouti President Hassan Guled Aptidon in pursuing an OAU-led solution to the conflict. From Harare, Ethiopian Deputy Foreign Minister Takeda Alemu traveled to Ouagadougou where he also discussed the conflict with Burkinese leaders. Apparently linked to these meetings, on April 12, it was announced by the OAU that a four-man delegation would be travelling to Asmara in an effort to follow-up discussions begun by a team that visited the two capitals earlier in March. The mission was subsequently postponed.

In an interview given to Voice of America radio and broadcast on April 13, Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi indicated his government's recognition that a ceasefire is a necessary component of any peace deal which includes the withdrawal of Eritrean troops from territories they still occupy. Meles said that if Eritrea promises to withdraw, and makes a formal commitment to do so within an agreed timetable, Ethiopia would be willing to stop fighting. Once these essential elements have been agreed, Meles said implementation of the OAU framework agreement, which both sides have now accepted, could move ahead. Meanwhile, the UN Security Council repeated its call for an end to the hostilities and the implementation of the OAU agreement. Current Security Council President, Alain Dejammet of France, told journalists that the UN was working with the OAU to examine the possibility of rapidly deploying military observers to monitor any agreement that might be reached. Dajammet also said that the Security Council had welcomed a decision by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan to send his special envoy, Ambassador Mohammed Sahnoun, on another mission to the region.

Ending the first lengthy period of calm since the latest phase of fighting first broke out in early February, at about midday on April 15, Ethiopian warplanes attacked and bombed what were described by the Ethiopian spokesperson, Selome Tadesse, as "military targets" near the Eritrean towns of Adi Keyh and Mendafera. Eritrea's main military training camp at Sawa in the northwest of the country was also bombed at about the same time.

### ***Other regional news***

***US-Africa ministerial meeting:*** The United States Government hosted a three day summit in Washington DC as part of its continuing efforts to strengthen US relations with the African continent. The meeting brought together the US Secretaries of State for Treasury, Commerce, Transportation, Labour, Energy and Agriculture and three ministers from each of 45 sub-Saharan African countries. Somalia, which has no government, and Sudan, which the US has classified as a state sponsor of terrorism, did not attend. Representatives of US development agencies such as USAID and African inter-governmental organisations such as the OAU, IGAD and COMESA also participated in the panel discussions, workshops, roundtables and networking activities planned to pave the way for better dialogue between African governments, businesses and their US counterparts.

Past efforts related to improve US - Africa economic ties includes the recent establishment of US regional trade offices in Africa and high level missions to the continent. President Clinton's high profile trip to the continent last year was the first presidential visit to the continent in 20 years and earlier this year Vice President Al Gore and Attorney General Janet Reno toured South Africa. In his keynote address at the opening session of the conference President Clinton called on the international community to join the United States in a US \$70,000 million debt relief plan for the world's heavily indebted poor countries, most of which are located on the African continent. (*The Monitor, March 16 & 18; Ethiopian Herald, March 16; USIS Special Report on US-Africa Ministerial, March 1999*)

**UN Social Summit follow-up:** Some 350 representatives of 24 east and southern African countries met in Nairobi, Kenya for a three day conference to follow-up the UN Social Summit. The meeting was held to assess the status of implementation of the goals and targets that were agreed to in Copenhagen four years ago at the World Summit on Social Development. Professor George Saitoti, Kenya's Minister of Planning and National Development, said the aim of the Nairobi conference was to monitor rather than evaluate compliance to the actions agreed in Copenhagen and would provide a forum for countries to share experiences on how they had addressed the problem of poverty. The Deputy Executive Secretary of the UN Economic Commission for Africa said that overall, African economies had demonstrated encouraging economic performances since Copenhagen, growing at a rate of 3.2 percent since the summit, compared to 1 percent in the two years before it. This figure is still short of the rates required to reduce poverty by half, by the year 2015. The ECA estimates that meeting this goal will require sustained GDP growth rates of 8 percent for East Africa and 6 percent for Southern Africa. In addition the positive growth achievements are not being matched by recovery in the social sectors. Per capita GDP growth has had no significant impact on the social sectors. The conference is the first of three African sub-regional follow-ups to Copenhagen taking place in 1999 and was jointly organized by ECA and UNDP in collaboration with the Kenyan government. (*ECA Press Release No. 71 & 72, March 15 & 17*)

**OAU to restructure:** The 69<sup>th</sup> ordinary session of the OAU Council of Ministers has approved recommendations for the restructuring of the general secretariat and the implementation of cost cutting measures, including the elimination of 210 posts. According to the OAU spokesman, Ibrahim Dagash, the restructured OAU general secretariat will consist of five streamlined departments, (the office of the secretary-general, the political, African Economic community, administration and finance, and communications and conferences.), with 217 professionals and 234 general staff. The restructuring process is subject to approval by African heads of state and governments at the OAU summit meeting due to be held July 12 – 14 in Algiers. The restructuring will be implemented within two years after this approval. Meanwhile, the Secretary-General of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) has told the Pan African News Agency that wars in the region have impacted negatively on the economic programmes in COMESA member states. Mr. Erastus Mwencha, who heads the 20-nation economic grouping, noted that COMESA members included countries at war or in conflict situation saying that some of these conflicts are related to economics, poverty or competition for scarce resources in the region. He stressed regional integration and cooperation as economic measures that could help prevent conflicts and avoid the unnecessary impediments to trade and investment that conflicts create. (*AP, March 25; PANA, March 23 & 25*)

**Rift Valley Fever update:** The Saudi Arabian ban on imports of sheep and goats from the Horn of Africa was officially lifted for Eritrea only in mid-March. No explanation was given as to the reason for the partial lifting. At the end of March, Somaliland officials reported that livestock exports to Saudi Arabia had resumed, despite the fact that they had not received an official written statement lifting the ban. Ships carrying as many as 20,000 sheep and goats have reportedly been departing from Berbera on a regular basis. The cargo is said to be offloaded at Jeddah, a port which Somaliland traders have not used since 1989. Deliveries of livestock to Jizan, the normal port of offloading, have not yet resumed. Livestock prices throughout Somaliland, and parts of the Somali region of Ethiopia, are reported to be increasing, though it will take several months before the local economy recovers from the losses incurred by the ban over the last year. (*Various sources*)

## ETHIOPIA

**France and Ethiopia Development Cooperation:** The French development agency, Agence Française de Développement (AFD), has extended a grant of 60 million French Francs, (US \$9.9 million), through the Ministry of Economic Development and Cooperation, to further upgrade the Addis Ababa city water supply. The grant will finance part of the Akaki Groundwater Project - Phase II and will be implemented by Addis Ababa Water and Sewerage Agency (AAWSA). The project aims at increasing the present daily water production of AAWSA by 72,000 m<sup>3</sup> by providing 14 pumping stations and 3 water tanks for the Akaki well field. In addition, connecting pipelines and the main transmission line to Addis Ababa will be installed. AFD has also financed a project to rehabilitate six locomotives for the Ethio-Djibouti Railway. The completion of the project was marked by a ceremony attended by H.E. Mr. Alain Rouquié, Ambassador of France to Ethiopia, Mr. Didier Robert, Regional Director of AFD for the Horn of Africa, and Mr. Karl Harbo, Delegate of the EU in Ethiopia. The rehabilitation project is part of a larger AFD financed project that included the purchase of four new reconditioned locomotives and equipment necessary for the maintenance of the track. The total value of the project is 56.7 million French francs (US \$9.35 million). (*The Monitor, April 8*)

**Hydro Power Station rehabilitation:** The Ethiopian Electric Power Corporation announced that maintenance work at the Fincha hydroelectric power plant has been completed and that the station resumed work effectively at the end of March. The rehabilitation work, which started on March 1, at a cost of US \$3 million, had involved reducing power output and an electricity-rationing programme was in place throughout the month. The station now has a capacity to generate 100 megawatt of hydroelectric power and the Corporation has announced that the Norwegian and Austrian contractors engaged in the rehabilitation completed work ahead of schedule. The work on Fincha is part of programme to rehabilitate five existing hydroelectric power stations in order to increase the capacity of power generation in Ethiopia. The rehabilitation works on Melka, Wakena, Koka and Awash has already been completed. (*Xinhua, March 25*)

**NGO Code of Conduct:** A total of 165 local and international NGOs have endorsed and signed the Code of Conduct for NGOs in Ethiopia. The document establishes the “norms, principles and values to standardize the conduct, action and behavior of NGOs. NGO activities in Ethiopia have been ‘unregulated’ for almost three decades and although a guideline for NGO operation was prepared in 1995, it is not complete. In this regard, the adoption of the NGO Code of Conduct is expected to provide a basic input into the development of the regulation. The Code has two major sections, Standards of Conduct and Code Observance. A seven-member committee of five NGOs and two civil society representatives has also been established to ensure code observance by signatories of the agreement. (*The Monitor, March 20*)

**Kidnapping in Somali Region:** Unidentified gunmen in eastern Ethiopia kidnapped one international and two national staff members from the private relief agency Action Contre la Faim, (ACF). Five other passengers who were travelling in the same car were released, but one Frenchman, one local elder and a member of the agency’s local staff were taken away by the gunmen. The incident occurred on 3 April, between Kebri Dehar and Warder in the central Ogaden area of the Somali Regional State. Kebri Dehar is about 660 kilometers east of the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa. (*AP, April 4; AFP, April 5*)

**Bloody battle between lions and hyenas:** Strange and spectacular, a bloody war has been waged between lions and hyenas in the lowlands of East Hararghe. According to media reports, the predators started fighting each other in the Gobebe wilderness southeast of the town of Girawa in early April. What initially was thought to be a delayed April’s Fool Joke has now enjoyed wide national and international media coverage. Providing updates on the territorial dispute in the animal kingdom, press and radio reports tried to ensure transparency and accountability on the development, while Ethiopian Television thrilled its viewers with breathtaking footage showing ferocious battling between the lions and hyenas. In its issue of April 20 the Ethiopian Herald said that after the situation “returned to normal”, the latest death toll stood at 6 lions and 35 hyenas killed – the former obviously having won the upper-hand over the latter. According to a local villager, the lion-versus-hyena-war is an “old blood feud” going back 45 years, when a lion escaped from emperor Haile Selassie’s palace menagerie in Harar and wreaked havoc on a hyena family. Ever since, the locals believe, the hyenas have waited for an opportunity to get even with the lions. (*Ethiopian Herald, April 20; DPA, April 20; AFP April 19; Reuters, April 8; and other media reports.*)

## ERITREA

**Libya to help normalise Eritrea-Sudan relations:** President Isaias Afewerki attended a meeting of the Community of Sahel and Saharan States, held in Libya from April 12–15. In addition to the proceedings of the first session of the summit meeting, Libyan leader Moammer Qadhafi also chaired a meeting between President Afewerki and the President of the Republic of Sudan, Hassan el-Beshir. The meeting was a continuation of the Qatari initiative to normalize relations between Eritrea and Sudan. An agreement was reached that the Eritrean and Sudanese foreign ministers, in the presence of Libyan and Qatari delegates, would meet again to assess the causes of the deterioration in relations between the two countries and identify suitable solutions for them. (AFP, April 17.)

**Eritrean Opposition:** The Sudan-based Islamic Jihad Movement, opposed to the government of Eritrea has reported that it has killed 218 government troops in fighting which it claims occurred in the areas of Shinkolit, Adidab and Garora. The daily *Alwan* quoted a communiqué it received from the movement as saying the killings took place in “military confrontations with Eritrean forces” on March 26. There has been no independent confirmation of the fighting. (Reuters, April 4).

**Aid agencies invited to return:** Eritrea has asked private aid groups to help its efforts to address humanitarian needs of Eritreans displaced by the war with Ethiopia. An official with the Eritrean Relief and Refugee Commission (ERREC) has confirmed that the government has invited 15 international aid organisations to return to Eritrea and resume operations. He said the government hopes the organisations will “send money to buy grain and other food and donate blankets tents medical supplies and trucks to the country’s relief effort”. Eritrean officials said they would distribute the aid but would allow donors to monitor assistance to 450,000 Eritreans that the commission says are homeless or unable to tend to their farms and businesses because of the war. In 1997, the Eritrean government introduced restrictions on the operations of international aid agencies, including a 38 percent income tax for expatriate staff. Only a few organisations have kept a presence in Eritrea since then. The Eritrean officials are now saying that some changes have been made to these restrictions but declined to provide details. According to the spokesman for ERREC, the only agencies currently operating in Eritrea are Norwegian Church Aid, Swiss Disaster Relief, Caritas Germany and the United Nations. In related news, in response to an appeal for assistance, the UN World Food Programme has announced that it will begin providing emergency food aid to Eritreans affected by the conflict with Ethiopia. The agency will be requesting US \$15.4 million from donors to resource an emergency operation to feed about 268,000 displaced people in three southern provinces. WFP is already providing food to 900,000 (AP, April 7; AFP April 7; AP, April 21)

## DJIBOUTI

**New president elected:** Ismail Omar Guelleh, 52, a close aide to Djibouti’s veteran ruler Hassan Gouled Aptidon, has been elected president of Djibouti. According to local radio reports, Guelleh garnered 74.09 percent of the vote against 25.78 percent for his opposition rival, Moussa Ahmed Idriss. Guelleh is expected to take over from Aptidon in May. Election observers from the OAU, Arab League and International Francophone Organization who monitored the polls have validated the election process. Opposition groups contesting the election organised a protest rally to highlight irregularities in the run-up to the presidential elections. 80,000 people reportedly attended the march. Also prior to the elections, landmine explosions in the northern district of Tadjourah were blamed by the state radio on a lingering rebellion among the members of the country’s ethnic Afar minority. Diplomatic and security sources reported that at least four people were killed in pre-election rebel attacks carried out a week before polling day on April 9. A land mine explosion on a road in the city of Djibouti killed two people and another two were reported killed when 20 rebels from the Front for the Restoration of Unity and Democracy (FR UD) attacked the home of a local official in Tadjourah. During the elections, in the mainly Afar north, five voting districts at Tadjourah were reportedly declared a military zone. More recently, on April 15, the interior ministry announced on that six policemen were killed when their vehicle hit a landmine in Boli town, Tadjourah district of north Djibouti. State radio also said a woman was killed and her driver injured in a separate landmine explosion in Tadjourah. This brings the number killed in mine explosions in the last few weeks to 10. (Reuters, March 28; The Monitor, March 30; AP, April 7 ; AFP, April 10; Reuters, April 11; AFP, April 15)

## SUDAN

**Peace and humanitarian aid:** A one-day meeting organised by the multi-donor IGAD Partners Forum was held in Oslo Norway to discuss international support for efforts to resolve Sudan's 15 -year civil war. Participants at the fourth meeting of the IGAD Partner's Forum (IPF), Committee on Sudan urged the establishment of a full-time secretariat to support the Sudan peace process and encouraged Kenya to appoint a special envoy to spearhead the mediation efforts. The proposed secretariat is to be based in Nairobi with the cost of its operations to be shared among IPF members, the UN and others. The secretariat would expand the negotiation sessions by conducting regular meetings and organizing issues for discussion in advance. Participants at the forum expressed concern about the sustainability of current levels of aid flow to the Sudan in the absence of accelerated and strengthened political process toward peace and appealed for an extension and expansion of the humanitarian cease-fire in Bahr al-Ghazal. The next round of negotiations involving the government and the SPLA was due to take place in Nairobi from 20–25 April but was postponed at the last moment at the request of the Sudanese government. Meanwhile, in the United States, USAID administrator Brian Atwood has announced that US \$130 million has been allocated to Sudan in the 1999 financial year. USAID is currently responding to needs in south Sudan through Operation Lifeline Sudan and other organisations. The European Commission has approved humanitarian aid worth Euro /13.5 million, (US \$14.7 million) for victims of conflict in Sudan. The European Community Humanitarian Office, (ECHO), has said that about a third of the funds made available will go to operations in government-controlled areas and the rest to rebel controlled areas held by SPLA and other factions. (*IRIN, March 16 & 25; AFP, April 21*)

**Slavery and Sudan:** Following a statement made by the Swiss aid agency, Christian Solidarity International, (CSI), that it spent US \$52,000 over the past four years to “buy back“ a total of 5,066 slaves in Sudan, UNICEF proposed a plan of action to combat slavery in Sudan. UNICEF Executive Director, Carol Bellamy, stated that “now that there is irrefutable evidence of an established and ongoing slave trade in Sudan, UNICEF hopes to cooperate effectively with the government of Sudan and other interested members of the international community.” The Sudanese government subsequently demanded a retraction of UNICEF’s announcement and the SUNA news agency reported that the Foreign Under-Secretary Hassan Abdin summoned UNICEF’s Khartoum representative, Thomas Ekvall to convey his government’s rejection of the statement. He said that the statement contradicted normal good relations and warned that “the future relationship between Sudan and UNICEF will depend on the organisation’s response to the request to have the statement retracted.

The Sudanese Council of Ministers has meanwhile formed a committee to respond to what Khartoum describes as an international campaign against Sudan. The inter-ministerial committee is chaired by Information Minister Ghasi Salah Eddin Atabani and includes the foreign, justice and interior ministers with representatives of NGOs. In addition, Ahmed Ali al-Nasry, chairman of a government committee for investigation of slavery allegations has accused UN agencies and other international organisations of pressuring human rights rapporteur, Leonardo Franco, who recently visited the country, to “change his report to condemn Sudan.” He said Sudan would prepare its response to the human rights report, which will be presented to the UN Human rights commission in Geneva. The human rights envoy and rapporteur Leonardo Franco told the Human Rights Commission on April 6, that Sudan’s government must do more to end slavery and examine its causes. (*AFP, March 17; IRIN, West Africa, March 20 –26*)

**Ceasefire extended:** Sudanese President Omar al Beshir has declared a comprehensive cease-fire in all parts of south Sudan as of April 15, the day the previous partial one expired. He appealed to the rebel Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA) to respond positively to this call for a comprehensive ceasefire. In a related development, in early March, Dinka and Nuer community leaders met at a reconciliation conference in Bahr Al-Ghazal aimed at ending more than seven years of tribal conflict. The meeting ended with an agreement for an immediate ceasefire and the signing of an accord. The accord, known as the Wunlit Dinka-Nuer Covenant, was settled after over a week of community-based discussions facilitated by the new Sudan Council of Churches. The covenant was signed by more than 300 chiefs, community and church leaders. It promises an end to conflict on the west bank of the Nile, amnesty for offences prior to the beginning of 1999, freedom of movement, the sharing of grazing and fishing rights and the identification of missing persons and abductees. (*AFP April 5 ; IRIN, March 18*)

**ICRC condemns hostage killings:** Rebels from the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) have executed four Sudanese nationals abducted in February, the ICRC said April 1. ICRC has called for an investigation into the killings, and has stated in a press release that "the SPLA/M is accountable for their deaths." The Sudanese foreign ministry has said that, in light of the slayings, all humanitarian agreements with SPLA would be reconsidered. The government has also demanded the return of the bodies of the four Sudanese nationals as a precondition to attending the IGAD sponsored peace talks scheduled for April 20 in Nairobi Kenya. Foreign Minister Mustafa Osman Ismail told reporters that "the concerned authorities will ascertain the information and then will reconsider all humanitarian agreements concluded with the SPLA. The four were in the group of six people abducted by the SPLA on February 18. Two Swiss delegates of ICRC and four Sudanese nationals, reportedly on an ICRC seed distribution programme in Sudan, were taken hostage after inadvertently straying into territory held by the SPLA/M. The Swiss nationals were released on March 12. The rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army spokesman Samson Kwaje has denied any execution, claiming that three government officials and a Red Crescent worker were killed by crossfire when government soldiers stormed the insurgents' camp in a rescue bid. (ICRC, April 1; AFP, April 1,2,)

**Fighting in Ulu:** According to a statement by the Sudanese army, published in the official *Al Ababa* daily paper, rebel troops tried to take over the area of Ulu, 485 kms southeast of Khartoum, and attacked areas in eastern Sudan. The rebel SPLA, however, has responded by saying that government forces launched the attack near Ulu, an attack which the SPLA successfully repulsed with 83 government soldiers killed and 200 wounded. The SPLA has also claimed that they have advanced within eight kilometers of a major oil field in southern Sudan. Meanwhile, the Sudanese army said it had inflicted "heavy losses" on the main rebel group, in fighting in the western Blue Nile province. This government claim came in stark contradiction to an earlier statement by the SPLA, who said they killed 405 government troops in the fighting. Government military spokesman Mohammed Othman Yassin told journalists that the fighting had broken out when the SPLA had attempted to break through a siege imposed on them by government forces in the Ulu region. On April 4, the Sudanese opposition said it was preparing to step up operations along the road linking Khartoum to the country's main port, Port Sudan, and warned civilians not to use it. The umbrella National Democratic Alliance (NDA), declared the road, "a zone of military operation", in a statement received by AFP. The Sudanese army has dismissed this announcement and said the road was "quite safe". Commenting on the opposition claim that Khartoum, fearing opposition attacks, had to close the road from sunset to sunrise, General Mahamed Osman Yassin said a local military commander had closed branch roads leading to the highway in the eastern Kassala State following car-jacking incidents by "the traitors and hirelings infiltrating across the border from Eritrea." Yassin has also rejected "hollow" threats by the SPLA to obstruct Sudanese plans to produce and export oil beginning June 30 1999. The operation involves the export of 150,000 barrels a day via a 1,610 kms pipeline to the Red Sea and General Yassin said the petroleum production sites and pipelines were "fully secured" by the armed forces. (AP, April 1, March 31, AFP, April 6)

## SOMALIA

**Fighting in Moqdishu** In August 1998, Ali Mahdi and South Moqdishu warlords Hussein Mohammed Aideed and Mohamed Qanyare Afrah set up a joint administration for Moqdishu, which was rejected by warlords Muuse Suudi Yalahow, Osman Hassan Ali "Atto" and Hussein Haji Bod. Fighting erupted in early March between loyalists of warlord Muuse Suudi Yalahow and militiamen funded by the business community in northern Moqdishu after Yalahow tried to impose taxes at the Karan market in northern Moqdishu. The fighting claimed 22 lives and subsided March 15 after Abgal elders arranged a cease-fire and resumption of negotiations. However, fighting flared up again on March 17 and 18, bringing the total number of casualties to 38 people and 88 injured since the fighting began. The dispute has disrupted public transport and telephone lines have been cut. Muuse Suudi Yalahow rejected a plan by elders to end the latest round of fighting and refused to withdraw the tax demand. In addition, another round of clashes was reported between clan militias of warlord Yalahow and those of the Moqdishu governor Hussein Ali Ahmed. The fighting which began in mid-March is reported to be more political in nature and not a continuation of the fighting sparked by a dispute over taxation rights. This dispute has reportedly ended with Yalahow's take-over of equipment belonging to a north Moqdishu radio station which supports Ali Mahdi Muhammad. (AFP, April 3)

**Ali Mahdi accuses Ethiopia:** In an interview with AFP, Somali warlord Ali Mahdi Mohammed accused neighbouring Ethiopia of providing arms to his rivals and undermining local and international peace efforts in Somalia. Ali Mahdi said Ethiopia brought consignments of arms to Belet Weyne in central Somalia and distributed them to "anti-peace elements and groups". The Abgal clan leader said Ethiopia's relations with Somalia are characterised by "invasion, destabilization and encouraging us to kill each other". The arms are allegedly for the Hawadle clan's United Somali Congress/Patriotic Movement, and the Rahanwein Resistance Army (RRA) that are currently fighting warlord Hussein Mohammed Aideed's militia. Ali Mahdi's has also alleged that Ethiopia supplied several lorry loads of arms that were recently collected in Hiran region by Hussein Haji Bod and brought to Moqdishu. Ethiopia has denied the allegations. (AFP, April 6)

**New banknotes increase tensions:** Tensions are rising in Moqdishu over reports that a shipment of new banknotes is set to arrive in the city. Militiamen from the Ayr sub clan and gunmen loyal to warlord Hussein Mohammed Aideed have been arriving at Balidogle airstrip (near Moqdishu), and Aideed's militia has reportedly sealed off the Balidogle airport. The disputed shipment is the first installment of some US \$14 million worth of new Somali shilling banknotes, printed in Canada by a Malaysian firm. One of the main faction leaders, Hussein Aideed, says the banknotes, said to be paid for by local businessmen, are being imported without his permission. Reports received by journalists indicate flight operations at the airstrip stopped because of the increasing number of rival militia massing there. In negotiations held to resolve the currency dispute the Somali daily newspaper, *Xog-Ogaal* reported that Ugas Abdi Dahir had organized a meeting between Hussein Aideed and the traders importing the money. The paper reported that Aideed claimed the currency was a national asset and should therefore be stored in a central bank. (AFP, April 6; *the Reporter*, April 7)

**Moqdishu police force disbands:** Moqdishu's joint police force, set up last August by leading warlords to unite the Somali capital, has been disbanded for lack of food and non-payment of salaries. The 700 former militia men-turned-police took away with them their weapons and equipment, including guns, 40 battlewagons mounted with heavy machine guns and anti tank weapons. The police force was established jointly by warlords Ali Mahdi Mohamed, Hussein Mohamed Aideed and Mohamed Qanyare Afrah, who each control part of the divided capital. The establishment of the police force was assisted by a donation from Libya of US \$800,000 envisaged to finance the force for three months. The police force had not been paid for the last four months. Thirty percent of the force was former policemen while the rest were from clan militia that manned roadblocks and checkpoints in Moqdishu. Rival warlords Hussein Haji, Musa Sudi Yalahow and Osman Hassan Ali "Atto" had not joined in the exercise and called it an unrealistic exercise aimed at attracting funds from unsuspecting outsiders. (AFP; March 31)

**Security update:** 25 people have been killed during clashes between two armed Somali factions, (representing the Rahanwein Resistance Army and militiamen loyal to Hussein Aideed), which are fighting near the south central town of Baidoa. The area has been the center of intermittent battles between the two factions since 1995 when Hussein's father, the late General Aideed, seized control of the area from Rahanwein clans. Mohamed Aden Qalinle, spokesman for the Rahanwein Resistance Army said his group killed 20 militiamen loyal to Hussein Aideed. On April 6 a spokesman said four people were killed and six others wounded after RRA fighters sneaked into Baidoa and clashed with militiamen loyal to Aideed. The RRA spokesman, Bashir Abdi told AFP that the attack was in retaliation for the killing of three RRA sympathisers and the burning of 14 houses in Baidoa by Aideed's militiamen. (AP, April 1 & March 31; AFP, April 6)

**Puntland-Somaliland tensions:** Informed reports say that over 100 soldiers, including some who had completed training in Garoowe, were taken by the Puntland administration to Laascaanood town, the capital of Sool region, where they captured the town's police station, then under the control of the Somaliland administration. Somaliland President Ibrahim Egal released a statement accusing Puntland of taking forces to Laascaanood. He said the attack had been repulsed with no deaths or injuries. Egal added that no Somaliland troops would be taken to Laascaanood to fight but that Sool region's forces opposed to the Puntland administration would be supported. (AFP, March 7; *Xog Ogaal*, March 21)

**Severe drought looming:** Some 300,000 people in southern and central Somalia are threatened with famine due to poor rainfall during the last season which has compounded the critical water shortage in affected areas and led to a very disappointing secondary *deyr* harvest in January. It is expected that the main *gu* harvest in July will most probably be lower than normal, and an increase in malaria and other diseases is expected, especially in areas where displaced people are concentrated. Coping mechanisms have been exhausted and the number of displaced persons has increased. UNICEF announced that its requirements for the southern and central Somalia emergency programme for the period November 1998 to July 1999 has increased to US \$7.4 million. Of the estimated 300,000 people considered to be at great risk, a large number are children under 5 of whom 60,000 are considered malnourished. In addition to normal food requirements, they need supplementary food, water, seeds and health assistance to prevent a major famine and multiple health problems. UNICEF had appealed for US \$4.9 million in November to which donors had so far contributed US \$2.5 million. Due to the severity of the crisis in southern and central Somalia, UNICEF is seeking additional funding to provide emergency food, water and health assistance for about 300,000 very vulnerable Somali's until the next harvest in July.

The Somali Aid Coordination Body (SACB) has appealed for an additional US \$9.6 million to fund relief activities in famine-hit areas from April 1999 to June 1999. The group said in a statement that it received US \$25 million from donors between November last year and January 1999 but that its emergency task force now estimates that additional funds will be needed to keep its relief efforts in Somalia going until the end of June.

Hassan Abshir Farah, the minister of internal affairs in Puntland (north-eastern Somalia) has said that 20 people were dying of hunger and thirst daily in the region as a result of the drought. Abshir said despite an appeal to relief agencies for assistance four months ago, not a single aid agency had come forward to assist. (*IAG Monthly Update Jan/Feb 1999: Volume 7, No. 1*)

## KENYA

**Army to combat cattle rustlers:** The Kenyan government has announced the mobilisation of the army in an effort to end cattle rustling and banditry in the periphery of the country. Previously, contingents of regular and paramilitary police had been used unsuccessfully to curb cattle rustling in the North Eastern province of Kenya. The province borders Ethiopia and Somalia and has recently been plagued by repeated incidents of violence. In a statement to the Kenyan *Daily Nation* newspaper, General Daniel Opande explained that while soldiers were trained to defend the country from external aggression the problem with cattle rustling had become such a threat to security in the affected areas that the direct involvement of the army was needed. The general called on all cattle-rustlers throughout the country to disarm. (*Daily Nation, April 4*)

**New influx of Somali refugees:** UNHCR have reported a new influx of Somali refugees into Kenya comprising mainly young men between the age of 15 –22 from Moqdishu and Kismayo seeking to be resettled in a third country. A spokesman for UNHCR said the refugees were misguided by unfounded rumours of "mass settlement of Somalis in the United States". He said rumours of resettlement were likely to lead to a further influx of Somali refugees to Kenya. Kenyan authorities allowed the Somali's to disembark from their boats and UNHCR will transport the asylum seekers to Daddab refugee camp in eastern Kenya. (*AFP, March 17*)

## UGANDA

**Cabinet Reshuffled:** Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni has carried out a major cabinet reshuffle, appointing 12 new ministers, according to a press statement from his office. The changes come after a parliamentary select committee completed a report on mismanagement and misappropriation of public funds in the agriculture ministry, which included criticism of cabinet officials. In an interview with the weekly paper, *East African*, the President declared he would not intervene in the wave of parliamentary censures which has forced four of his ministers out of office. (*AFP, April 6; East African, March 22*)



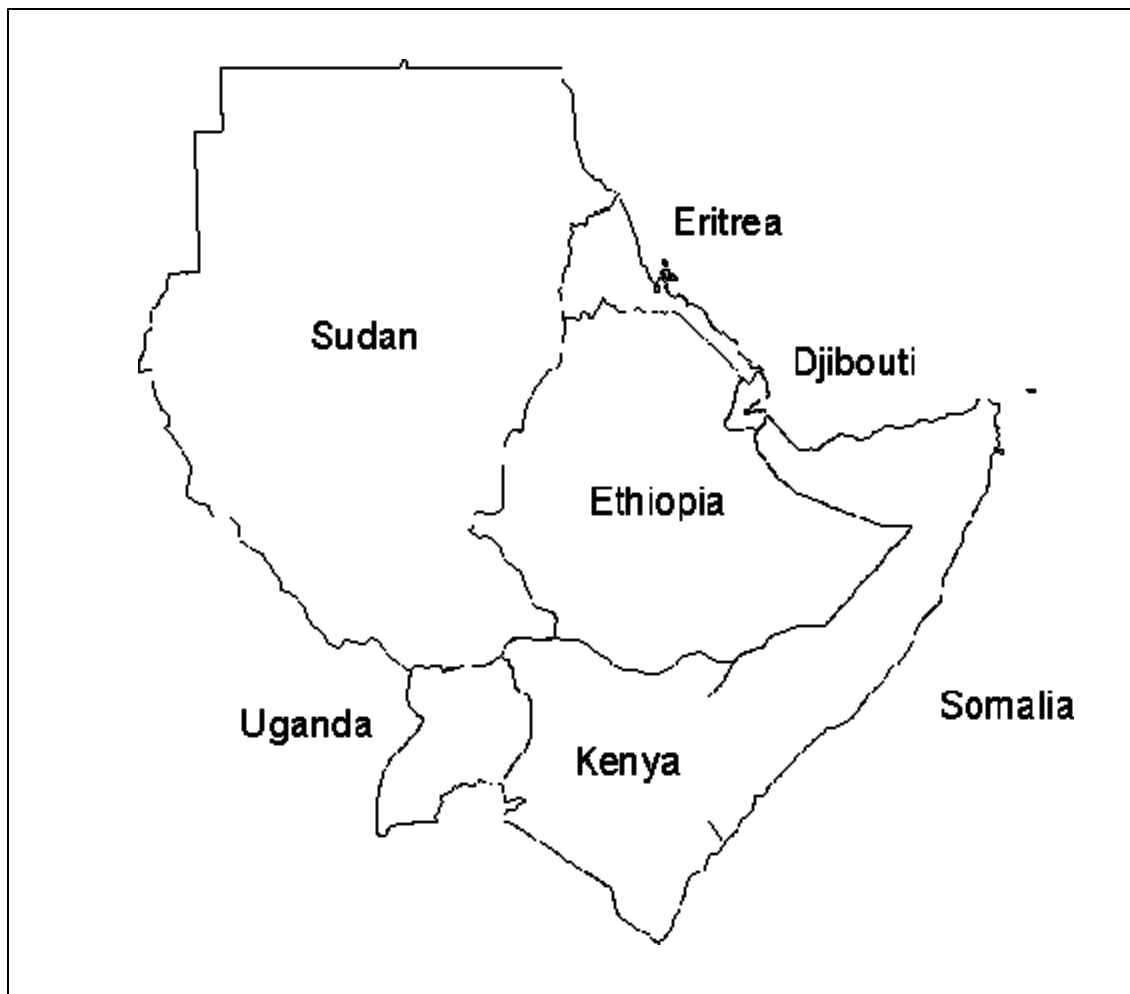
**Group of 77 Meets:** Some 122 delegates from 28 countries met in Kampala for the Eighth General Assembly of the Group of 77 developing countries. The theme was "bridging the information gap for better trade within G77" to increase the South-South flow of information to make potential customers aware of markets. A trade exhibition held on the outskirts of Kampala, was organised to coincide with the conference. 180 exhibitors, 80 of them foreign participated in what was the first time such promotional activity had been held in conjunction with the diplomatic event. In his opening address, President Yoweri Museveni, appealed for more South - South cooperation and decried efforts within the World Trade organization to include a "social clause" in the WTO mandate. He called such measures, "non-tariff barriers" that had to be monitored. The 132 member states have agreed to set up a development bank to finance businesses and industrial advancement in the 132 member states. The bank will have its headquarters in the Kenyan capital, Nairobi, with an initial capitalization of one billion dollars. Share capital will be drawn from both the private sector and the G77 member states. The institution should be operational in one to two years. (AFP, April 5)

**Rebel leader resigns:** David Nyekorach-Matsanga, exiled political affairs chief of the rebel Lords Resistance Army (LRA) has quit the group, accusing them of being a "fifth column of the Sudanese army." Matsanga was due to formally announce his resignation at a press conference in London on April 5, and issued a five-page press release explaining his objectives for joining the LRA and reasons for leaving it. The LRA, led by former Roman Catholic catechist, Joseph Kong has been fighting since 1988 in an attempt to overthrow President Yoweri Museveni and replace it with a system of rule based on the Biblical Ten commandments. Since 1994 the LRA has been operating out of bases in government-held territory in Southern Sudan, where they are deployed as a militia against the SPLA. Uganda accuses Sudan of backing the LRA while Sudan counter-accuses Uganda of backing the SPLA rebels. Matsanga pledged to continue fighting until Museveni, and what he described as Uganda's Tutsi-dominated government, was removed from power. He said that he would continue the fight with his own rebel group, the Uganda Salvation Front in eastern Uganda. (AFP, April 5)

**Rebel attacks in Western Uganda** - In western Uganda rebels killed 11 civilians and looted property during an attack in Budibugyo district local newspapers reported on Wednesday April 7. Over the Easter weekend six people were killed by Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) rebels during an attack on Hamakungu fishing village in Kasese district. The incident came 10 days after ADF rebels launched a similar attack on the Kayembe Trading Centre in the same district, where three civilians were beheaded and four abducted, including a Roman Catholic priest. Also in Western Uganda, in a separate incident, suspected ADF rebels shot and injured an MP for Buyangabo in Western Uganda's Kabarole district. The ADF is a coalition of the Tabliq Moslem group and former rebels of the now defunct National Army for the Liberation of Uganda who have been fighting since 1996 to destabilise the government of President Yoweri Museveni. Since the start of the year over 60 civilians have been killed in rebel raids in western Uganda. A Ugandan military official confirmed reports that 4,000 soldiers would be deployed in Bandibugyo to protect civilians from rebel attacks. (AFP, April 7)

**Government suspends fish exports** - Ugandan fishermen's use of poison to increase their catch led the government to temporarily suspend the export of fish to Europe, pre-empting the possibility of an EU embargo. Kampala city council also banned fish sales in the capital for a month after poison was blamed for the deaths of three children. The restrictions were imposed after the Uganda National Bureau of standards (UNBS) said it was no longer able to guarantee the safety of Ugandan fish exports and advised exporters to halt shipments. EU imports of Ugandan fish currently generate between US \$60 and \$80 million per year in revenues. There are 12 fish processing plants in Uganda, where some 3.5 million people depend on the fish sector according to industry figures. After coffee and tourism, fish exports are the country's third largest foreign currency earner. In related news, on April 14, Kenya announced it had lifted a two week ban on fishing in Lake Victoria. "We can now confirm that over the last week, water and fish samples taken from the lake for the poisonous chemical analysis were all negative," Health Minister Jackson Kalweo said in a statement received by IRIN. He said the government will continue intense surveillance and monitoring of fish harvested in Kenya to ensure it will pose no danger to consumers. The government has sent a delegation to the European Union in Brussels to convince it that Kenyan fish is safe. (AFP, March 23; IRIN, April 14)

## THE HORN OF AFRICA



### DISCLAIMER

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

### SOURCES:

Information in this update has been obtained from official and private media reports, UN agencies and NGO sources. No claims are made by the UNDP-EUE as to the accuracy of these reports.

21 April, 1999

**UNDP-EUE**  
PO Box 5580,  
Addis Ababa  
Ethiopia

Tel.: (251) (1) 51-10-28/29  
Fax: (251) (1) 51-12-92  
e-mail: [undp-eue@telecom.net.et](mailto:undp-eue@telecom.net.et)