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HIGHLIGHTS

Djibouti

WFP says 95,000 people are affected by drought.

Eritrea

Government detained political dissidents, ban privately owned newspapers and arrested journalists.

Ethiopia

Parliament elects new President unopposed.

Ministry of Justice bar Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association, from operation.

Sudan

Government denounced terrorist attack on US and the strike on Afghanistan.

UN lift sanction on Sudan.

Kenya

Parliament's vote against anti-corruption Bill costs Kenya US\$ 15 million loan.

Somalia

UN announce the resumption of flights to Somalia after six days of interruption.

WFP says more than half a million people face food crisis due to failure of rains.

REGIONAL ISSUES

Security Council extends mandate of UNMEE: On September 14, the United Nations Security Council unanimously voted for the extension of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) until March 15, 2002. On the extension, the Security Council called on the two parties to provide freedom of movement for UNMEE personnel, pursue confidence-building measures and facilitate the establishment of a direct air corridor between Addis Ababa and Asmara. The Security Council also called on Eritrea to allow UNMEE to monitor the temporary Security Zone (TSZ) without restriction, provide UNMEE with information on local militia and police in the zone and conclude the status-of-force agreement (SOFA). Regarding Ethiopia, it said Ethiopia must avoid creating restrictions on the freedom of movement of UNMEE in the TSZ and provide information on minefields. *(UNMEE press release, September 14)*

Eritrea denies preparing for war: Eritrea rejected Ethiopia's claim that the Eritrean army was on a state of high alert and that troops had already been dispatched to the disputed border area as informed by Ethiopian Foreign Minister Seyoum Mesfin to ambassadors of five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council. The United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), that is monitoring a transitional security zone between the two countries, says it has no evidence that Eritrea is preparing for war. *(BBC, October 8)*

Shooting at the TSZ: The United Nations Mission for Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) is investigating a shooting incident that occurred on September 5 in Sector East of the Temporary Security Zone (TSZ) near the Assab-Bure road. One Eritrean policeman was hit in the leg and was taken by an UNMEE ambulance to hospital in Assab. The Eritrean authorities have attributed the shooting to the Ethiopian Armed Forces (EAF). Nevertheless Ethiopian authorities denied having any involvement in the shooting. *(UNMEE press release, September 17)*

Ethiopia close border with Somalia: Reports from Somalia indicate that Ethiopian Prime Minister, Meles Zenawe ordered the closure of its country boarder with Puntland. The action was said to have been taken by Meles who claimed that the border is being used as a gate way for terrorists who are threatening security in Ethiopia. However Puntland leader, Abdullahi Yusuf, claimed that the allegation is false and baseless. *(HornAfric Online text web site, September 18: Quoted by BBC Monitoring Services; Somali newspaper Mogadishu Times September 19: Quoted by BBC Monitoring Service)*

Ethiopia and Kenya improving their border relation: Ethiopia and Kenya agreed to open additional checkpoints along their common border at their 21st regular meeting held in Kenya. The two sides have also reached agreement to develop information exchange capacity (by improving radio communication systems), eliminate terrorist activities and control arms trafficking on their border areas. Moreover, the two sides issued a joint communiqué noting that since the last meeting held in Ethiopia, incidents of cattle rustling, banditry and armed incursions have declined. The next meeting between the two

sides is expected to be held in Bahir Dar, Ethiopia in February 2002. (*Xinhuanet, August 28*)

Sudan and Kenya sign OTTAWA Treaty: Under the auspices of a "Geneva Appeal", a human rights group that demotes the use of landmines, Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) signed an agreement to ban anti-personnel landmines in areas under its control. SPLM promised to ban the use, production, reserve and transfer of anti-personnel landmines and also agreed to cooperate with de-mining and assisting victims. According to experts, there are between 500,000 and two million landmines in Sudan, placed by both the government and rebel groups. The government of Sudan has also signed the OTTAWA treaty even though it has not ratified it yet. Similarly on October 6, the government of Kenya announced the ratification of the Ottawa Treaty banning production and use of land mines. (*Daily Nation web site, October 8; AFP, October 4*)

Ethiopia using port Sudar following difficulties with Djibouti.

Ethiopia starts using Port Sudan: Ethiopia started importing and exporting goods through Port Sudan. On July 31 a Sudanese embassy official said the highway linking the port with Ethiopia has already been completed and goods have started shuttling. Reports indicate that Ethiopia started using Port Sudan following Djibouti President Ismael Omar Gulleh's declaration that banned companies based in Ethiopia from handling stevedoring business in Djibouti. (*Reuters, August 1*)

Somalia receives Djibouti ambassador: On September 30, the Prime Minister of Somalia, Ali Khalif Galeyr received in Mogadishu, Djibouti's new Ambassador to Somalia, H.E. Ismael Gudal. The two sides raised issues pertaining to bilateral relations between the their countries and other subjects of mutual concern. (*HornAfrik, September 30*)

Eritrea repatriates POWs: Eritrea repatriated twenty-four Ethiopian prisoners of war (POW) under the auspices of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), as part of the peace agreement signed between the two countries, on October 10. Following the release, Ethiopia issued a statement that demanded the release of a pilot it claimed was captured by Eritrea in June 1998, before it releases Eritrean POWs. (*AFP, October 10; BBC online, October 11*)

DJIBOUTI

Djibouti

WFP to supply food aid for 95,000 people: The World Food Program (WFP) said it will supply 11,000 tones of food for 95,000 people affected by drought in Djibouti. The Djibouti chief of cabinet said the drought affected people, who are forced to migrate into the city of Djibouti along with rural-urban drift inside the country and movement from neighboring countries, is overburdening the health, water and social service systems of the city. (*IRIN, September 5; AFP, August 27*)

President set up of a national anti-terrorism committee to fight against local and international terrorism.

President stands against terrorism: Djibouti President, Ismael Omar Gelleh, condemning the terrorist attacks against the United States, announced the setting up of a national anti-terrorism committee that will take necessary steps in the fight against local and international terrorism. The committee's creation comes on the heels of a UN resolution unanimously adopted by the Security Council, which compels states to weaken terrorist networks of financial and logistical support. Reports also state that Djibouti police and other security forces have increased security on the US embassy, foreign installations and the airport. (*AFP, October 4 & September 26; ADI news agency web site, September 12: Quoted by BBC Monitoring*)

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EU pledged US\$ 9 million: On September 23, the European Union pledged US\$ 9 million aid to support Djibouti's programme of economic reforms. Djibouti says the money would be used to pay off part of the national debt and pay the wage arrears of civil servants working in health and education sectors. (AFP, September 23)

ERITREA

Instabilities in Eritrea: Following the suspension of private newspapers, the government of Eritrea arrested 11 journalists on September 23, while two escaped arrest by fleeing to Sudan. The government claimed that the journalists had broken laws and put the unity and best interest of the country at risk. The government similarly has arrested 11 former senior government officials and soldiers, who were members of the G-15 (a group of dissident founding members of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front) who published a letter urging for more democracy. In an official statement, the government said the members betrayed Eritrea by plotting the removal of the Eritrean President in May 2000 when Eritrea was retreating in the face of a major Ethiopian offensive. The statement also said despite the leniency shown by the government to the members on what it called "act of betrayal", the reformists persisted in "secret machinations".

In response, Amnesty International demanded that the Eritrean government release or give fair trial to the arrested journalists, immediately free the detained political dissidents, lift the ban it decreed on privately owned newspapers and allow the return of the about 20 university students who are members of the leadership of the Asmara University Student Union. Reporters Sans Frontieres (RSF) has also asked the Eritrean government for the release of the journalists. (Reporter sans Frontieres press release, September 21; Los Angeles times, September 26; AFP, September 20 & 21, shaebia web site, September 26)

Ambassadors persona non grata: The government of Eritrea expelled the Italian ambassador to Eritrea, Antonio Bandini, after giving him a 72-hour ultimatum to leave the country on September 29. In response, the Italy government expelled the ambassador of Eritrea to Italia, Tseggai Mogos, with in 72-hours. The Eritrean Foreign Ministry said in an official statement that the action was taken due to the ambassador's inappropriate interference in the country's internal affairs. Reports also indicate that the Italy ambassador, who also represents the European Union, was expelled due to a letter he presented protesting against the arrest of 11 members of the ruling party and the closure of private newspapers. The EU countries are among major donor countries and fund many humanitarian and development projects in Eritrea. In related news, the Eritrean ambassador to the European Union, Tesfay Ghirmazion left his job after he submitted his resignation to the government effective from October 1, 2001. (Awate.com web site September 28, Asmarino web site September 29, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Asmara, 1 October 2001, CNN on-line; October 2; AFP October 2)

US\$ 130 million pledged for demobilization: Eritrea's development partners pledged US\$ 130 million for the country's demobilization program even though the total cost of the demobilization and reintegration program was estimated to have been US\$ 190 million. President Isaias Afwerki, noting the demobilization and reintegration of 20,000 soldiers, said the program plans to demobilize 200,000 fighters over the next 18 months. However Isaias Afwerki made it clear that the demobilization program would depend

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*UNICEF allocate US\$ 48.8
million to back up health
sector development
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on progress in the peace process that was signed with Ethiopia. (*shabia web site, September 14*)

ETHIOPIA

Ethiopia condemn terrorist attack: Denouncing the terrorist attacks in the United States, the Ethiopian ruling party Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), said terrorism can not be justified by any political cause. EPRDF also stressed that it will support any and all struggle against terrorism in Ethiopia, in the sub-region and globally. It also expressed its deep sorrow and voiced solidarity with the government and people of the United States in their fight against terrorist attacks in their country. The Ethiopian Islamic Affair Supreme Council also condemned the attack saying it is against the Islamic faith. (*Radio Ethiopia external service, September 28; Quoted by BBC Monitoring Service; ENA, September 26; WIC, September 12, 2001*)

Parliament elects new President: The joint session of the Council of People's Representatives and the House of Federation of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) elected Lieutenant Girma Wolde-Giorgis as the new president of Ethiopia on October 8. Girma was elected unopposed after his nomination was put before parliament. (*ENA, October 8*)

Women lawyer association barred: Ethiopian Ministry of Justice barred the Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association, EWLA, from operation. The Ministry of Justice announced EWLA was engaging in activities different from those it was mandated by law. EWLA argued that the dispute started after the case of Hermela Wosenyeleh, a victim of harassment, was brought to the public. EWLA said the Ministry's action was against freedom of association and expression and accused the Ministry of failing to act immediately to stop the harassment perpetrated by a young man. Moreover EWLA claimed that it has not received written or verbal warnings on banning the association as claimed by the ministry. (*Addis Tribune, September 28; The Daily Monitor, September 4*)

Court order investigation to be finalized: The Ethiopian Federal High Court ordered police to finalize their investigations into the cases of suspected corrupt businesspersons and the politicians behind them within 10 to 14 days following a request by the police for an extension of time. The court said it did not find it convincing to extend the investigation by six months, and ordered the commission to speed up its investigation and present the findings as soon as possible. Among those being investigated is Ethiopian former Defense Minister, Siye Abraha. (*Walta Information Center, September 22 & August 31*)

UNICEF allocated US\$ 48.8 million: The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) allocated US\$ 48.8 million to back up Ethiopian health sector development programs (HSDP) over the coming five years. The ministry of health said the money would be utilized to finance vaccination programs, malaria prevention initiatives, integrated childcare and reproductive health services, among others. UNICEF stated in its press release that with the US\$ 4.2 million contribution received from the government of Japan it is preparing to provide 14 million children vaccinations against polio and 1.6 million vaccinations for children against measles. (*ENA, October 3 & September 15*)

RADO educated 29, 487 people on landmine: The Rehabilitation and Development Organization (RaDO) said that it offered education to 29,487 people in Irob and Gulomekheda woredas in Eastern Tigray Zone (where many unexploded ordnances are believed to have been laid) on preventing

damages from land mines. Organization coordinator, Dawit Berhe said to date 88 people have been either killed or maimed and 1,150 domestic animals perished due to land mines planted during the conflict with Eritrean. (*Walta Information Center web site, September 27*)

Cabinet reshuffled: Following a reshuffle ratified by parliament on October 16, Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi named 18 ministers and 27 assistance ministers. Under the changes, which had been expected for several months, some ministries have been merged while others have been created afresh, such as departments responsible for rural development, infrastructure development, capacity building, economic development and finance, as well as income and revenue. (*AFP, October 16; Ethiopian radio, October 16: Quoted by BBC Monitoring services*)

The Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Committee has revamped their web site. Their web can be accessed at the following address:

<http://www.telecom.net.et/~dppc/>

SUDAN

Sudan against terrorism: Sudan, a country that was home for Osama Bin Laden (a terrorist suspected to have links with the September 11 terrorist attack on the US) from 1991 to 1996, denounced the US-British air strikes on Afghanistan. It called the air strikes a war on "a Muslim people" that definitely will harm innocent people. Thousands also staged demonstrations denouncing the war that they claimed is a terrorist attack on Afghan people.

Sudan had also condemned the September 11 terrorist attack on the United State and offered its full cooperation in the war against terrorism. To this end, Sudan has tightened security on gateways to Sudan, on the US embassy and other US facilities. Furthermore, in the past 18 months Sudan has been cooperating with the US in monitoring alleged terrorist groups .

... UN lifts sanctions: Sudan's stand on the attacks has enabled it to have its sanctions, imposed in 1996, to be lifted on September 28. The United Nations lifted the sanctions after the United States dropped its objections to the move since the US was the only member who abstained to end the sanctions that aimed at forcing Sudan to hand over several people suspected of involvement in a failed plot to assassinate Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. The US has also backed down from plans to step up aid to rebels in southern Sudan. The main rebel group in Sudan, the Sudan Peoples Liberation Army (SPLA), responded to the sanctions lift by saying that the move was "counter-productive". SPLA said Khartoum will soon start supporting terrorism.

The US government stated that even though Sudan did not turn over the suspects, it has taken substantial steps to meet the specific demands of the UN Security Council resolution. It said Sudan has cooperated in eliminating the presence of terrorist groups that could threaten American interests. However, US economic sanctions remain in place preventing any business dealings between the US and Sudan as it remains on the US list of nations that sponsor terrorism. (*Sudanese news agency Suna, October 8, AFP, October 8, Reuters, September 28, 21 & 17; AP, September 25; BBC News online, September 23*)

UN moving out due to aerial bombing: The World Food Programme (WFP) says intense aerial bombing, on October 5, 6 and 8, in Mangayath in Raga

UN lifts sanction after five years.

US says its economic sanction on Sudan stil remains.

province of the Bahr el-Ghazal (southern Sudan) disrupted the distribution of relief food that targeted 20,000 people displaced by recent fighting in the rebel-held area. The air raid on October 8 took place 15 minutes before a UN cargo plane airdropped food to the area. WFP reported that the 30 bombs dropped left one person killed and 14 others injured. WFP spokeswoman, Brenda Barton, who accused the Sudanese government of the bombing, said the UN has already sent three "proces-verbaux", a stern form of letter, to the government in Khartoum over the matter. Following the bombing, the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator for Sudan reported that it was leaving southern Sudan after carrying "... out the last food drop and immediately evacuate humanitarian personnel from Mangayath without completing the planned delivery of assistance". (*Reuters, October 9; AFP, October 8; BBC, October 8; AFP, October 7; AP, October 7*)

Khartoum intention to give IGAD peace initiative one last chance is opposed by pro-government in South..

Khartoum to give IGAD one last chance: The government of Sudan said it will give the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) peace initiative one last chance before reconsidering its position. Peace adviser to Sudanese President Omar el-Beshir, Ghazi Salah Eddin Atabani, said on October 6, "The government has become fed up with the failure by the IGAD initiative to reach positive results in eight years. IGAD partners have not exercised any pressure on the rebel movement, casting doubts in their intentions." However a pro-government official in southern Sudan opposed government decision claiming that the government has no right to withdraw from the initiative. National Assembly Deputy Speaker Angelo Beda said if the government withdraws from IGAD initiative which he said is "the sole agreed upon forum" for resolving the southern Sudan problem, it should come up with another alternative. (*AFP, October 7 & 6*)

Government denies SPLA claim of bombing gunships: Sudanese Government Army denied Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) claims of shooting down two government war helicopters in southern Sudan. SPLA had claimed that it bombed three government helicopter gunships and killed 28 soldiers during fighting in southern Sudan on October 1 and September 21. (*AFP, October 7; AP October 4*)

UN checks relief efforts for flood affected people: In response to the flood that destroyed hundreds of homes and left thousands of families homeless in Sudan, the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator, Kenzo Oshima, arrived in Sudan to check relief efforts. Mr. Oshima said he would meet with government officials and representatives of the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), to discuss obstacles facing humanitarian operations. According to a September 3 statement from the local government of Bahr al-Jabal, southern Sudan, floods have made 17,000 people homeless following the overflowing of the River Nile. Floods had largely affected thousands of people in the northern and eastern parts of the River Nile in August. (*AFP, September 9; DPA, September 3*)

KENYA

Tight security on Muslims in Kenya to fight Terrorism: On September 29, Kenyan President Daniel Arab Moi led hundreds of people in Nairobi in a peaceful demonstration condemning the terrorist attacks on the United States. Kenya, in its effort to controlling terrorism in its country and internationally, has tightened security controls on Kenyans of Asian and Arab decent. However, the council of Imams and Preachers condemned the action saying it is discriminatory against Muslims in Kenya. Furthermore the presence of FBI agents in the port of Mombassa has resulted in a demonstration demanding them to leave. Islamic organizations based in Mombassa enquired that the FBI operations in the area be accompanied by local security officials to avert the kind of public outcry that was aroused due

to the FBI presence following the bombing of the US embassy in August 1998. Kenya has also tightened security on its borders with Uganda and Tanzania. (*Daily Nation website, September 30; BBC, September 26, 25 & 6; KTN TV, September 29: Quoted by BBC Monitoring*)

Majority of MPs vote against anti-corruption bill.

Bill for anti-corruption fails: On August 14, a majority of the Kenya Members of Parliament voted against the re-establishment of an anti-corruption body that would have enabled Kenya to receive a US\$ 15 million loan for the war against corruption from the international Monetary Fund (IMF). The bill that was to entrench the Kenya Anti-corruption Authority (KACA) in the constitution was thrown out after President Daniel Arab Moi failed to get 65 % of the 222 MPs votes needed to pass the Constitution of Kenya Amendment Bill into law. The Bill was also crucial in efforts to negotiate the resumption of US\$ 198 million aid from the IMF, which has been pegged, in July 1999, until the Government shows commitment in the fight against corruption. The loss is reported by the government to have led in a US\$ 25 bn financial deficit in the current financial year. In spite of the Bill being lost – it cannot now be brought back to the House for at least six months – political analysts argue that its failure offers the President a vital crutch in his talks with donors because he can now argue that it is the Parliament, and not his Government, that stood in the way of the anti-corruption law. (*KTN TV, August 17: Quotation by BBC Monitoring Service; Daily Nation website, August 15 & 13; EastAfrica Website August 13*)

WFP appeals for 120,000 food aid to feed half a million people.

120,000 tonnes food needed for half a million people, WFP: The World Food Programme (WFP) has appealed for 120,000 tonnes of emergency food supplies to feed more than three million Kenyans suffering serious food shortages due to the failure of seasonal rains in the north and centre of the country. The Kenyan government has distributed more than 100,000 tonnes of maize since February 2000 to the area. (*BBC, August 1*)

Ethnic clash over grazing land: A clash between Pokomo and Orma tribesmen left four people dead and 1,000 people homeless in Tana River District. The two sides have been fighting over grazing land for the past one year, and between September 18 and October 3, 30 people have died because of the conflict in Tana River District. Government police reported that they arrested fourteen people connected to the attack of October 3. A contingent of the General Service Unit personnel deployed in the area to beef up security said displaced people due to the clash urgently needed relief assistance. (*The Daily Nation website, October 1 & 6; BBC News Online, October 5 & September 19*)

SOMALIA

UN resumes flights to Somalia: On September 30 the United Nations announced the resumption of flights to Somalia, after six days of interruption due to the temporary loss of its war-risk insurance. According to UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, Randolph Kent, the UN has received the necessary insurance guarantees and resumed its flight operations. In related news, the European Union has pulled out its international staff following a demonstration in Somalia in support of Osama Bin Laden and against the United States. The Somalia's Transitional Government (TNG) came out against the demonstration but did not try to stop it for fear of provoking violence.

... TNG stands against terrorism: The TNG, despite the demonstration, denied having any links with Bin Laden and with the Somali Islamic group Al-Ittihad Al-Islamiya, which the US named as being among organizations suspected of having links with terrorists. It also announced its readiness to

TNG set up an anti-terrorism unit to co-operate in the fight against international terrorism.

Somalia

*Deployment of International
peacekeeping force option to
bring peace to Somalia failed.*

co-operate with the US in the fight against international terrorism. To this end, the TNG has set up an anti-terrorism unit headed by Interior Minister, Dahir Shekh. However tension is growing as the United States on September 24 named a Somali group as having links with terrorism. (BBC online, October 4 & September 24; HornAfrik Online October 1; AFP, October 1)

Drought affects half a million people: The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) says more than half a million Somalis face a serious food crisis following the failure of the rains in southern Somalia, an area that usually produces 70 to 75 % of the annual sorghum crop. However, this year's harvest in the area is not expected to reach more than 10 % of the average yield. WFP is appealing for 40,000 metric tones of food assistance to avoid what it termed as a humanitarian tragedy. Reports from the area say that the dry weather is forcing families to begin early migration in search of food and grazing land for their cattle. (Africa Church information service, September 4; BBC online, August 23)

SRRC warns TNG on its intention of collecting taxes: Following reports of the Transitional Government of Somalia (TNG) plans to tighten security and collect taxes, the Somalia warlords warned of renewed fighting in Mogadishu. The Somalia Reconciliation and Restoration Council (SRRC), rejecting the legitimacy of the TNG, stated that tax payments will only be legitimate when there is a nationally or locally elected administration. (AFP, August 20; HornAfrik Online, August 1)

Peacekeeping option ruled out: Growing hostility between the Transitional Government of Somalia (TNG) and various opposition militias, especially the Somali Reconciliation and Restoration Council (SRRC), has led Somalia to be what the TNG referred to as an emergency situation. The state of affairs led 37 MPs to put the idea of bringing in foreign peacekeepers to the table of the parliament, which was unanimously rejected by the Council of Ministers of the TNG. Husayn Muhammad Aydid, a prominent member of the SRRC also opposed the idea saying " such action would be seen as an act of aggression that would be fought brutally by Somalis". (AFP, August 23&12; Radio Banaadir, August 21: Quoted by BBC Monitoring Services; Qaran, August 19: Quoted by BBC Monitoring Services)

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SOURCES:

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UNDP-EUE
PO Box 5580,
Addis Ababa
Ethiopia

Tel.: (251) (1) 51-10-28/29
Fax: (251) (1) 51-12-92
e-mail: un-eue@unocha.org