

## ***HORN OF AFRICA - THE MONTHLY REVIEW***

**This Update Covers the Period 21 February - 28 April 1997**

*The following is the tenth 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.*

### **Drought Relief Update**

*Although the rains have brought relief to most of the drought-affected areas, food and rehabilitation assistance are still needed*

The drought conditions reported in our last issue were relieved by the onset of the rains in almost all areas. While need for some assistance such as water tankering has subsided, food assistance and water point rehabilitation continue to be required in all affected areas.

#### *Ethiopia*

In Ethiopia, the drought continued into the first half of March. The most severely affected areas included virtually all of the Somali National Regional State, as well as Borena and Bale Zones of the Oromiya National Regional State and South Omo Zone of the Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's Regional State. The drought was mainly the result of failed rains in October and November 1996. Effects of the drought included stress migration by pastoralists to remote water points (including the reported movement of 72,000 Kenyans and 50,000 Somalis into southern Borena), large numbers of dead and weakened livestock, and isolated outbreaks of meningitis.

The main rains in the south and east started with-out significant delay. Although these rains almost immediately alleviated the most pressing water problems, many areas had already experienced significant livestock losses and surviving animals are still in poor condition. Planned relief efforts such as food distributions should continue and there is still an urgent need to initiate well and water point rehabilitation programmes in both the Somali Region and Borena Zone.

The Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission has requested food donations for more than one million people as well as assistance in rehabilitating water points and providing health supplies to avert the danger of epidemics in the area. During March, the DPPC transported water, fodder and food to remote locations.

The DPPC has been drawing from its own food stocks and diverting food originally earmarked for other regions to the most drought-affected areas.

UNDP has suggested the reallocation of US\$ 100,000 from "Programme 4" funds to be used for water rehabilitation. It has also granted US\$ 150,000 from special emergency funds to be used for assessments, logistical support and monitoring. UNHCR organised an emergency airlift of essential relief items.

USAID suggested that the Government of Ethiopia consider using 40,000 MT of Title III Development Aid grain to meet the demands of the emergency. The European Union has forwarded proposals from NGOs to its headquarters in Brussels. *(Source: UN agencies, Donors, and NGOs in Addis Ababa)*

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#### *Kenya*

In Kenya, although rains are reported to have been steady and well-distributed since the end of March, the drought situation continues to exist due to a period of extremely low rainfall (25% of average) in

February and March, which compounded 18 months of drier than normal conditions. The poor rains in the country have severely affected even high potential agricultural districts. Significantly below normal production countrywide in both long and short rains seasons in 1996 has resulted in very high maize prices.

Humanitarian organisations operating in Kenya report that the affected population has largely depleted the few resources they had and are becoming increasingly dependent on relief assistance. NGO nutritional surveys in some of the affected districts indicate increased malnutrition rates among children under five years of age.

Relief assistance will continue to be needed in the most severely affected parts for at least four to five months, with priority now shifted to seeds and fertilisers for the next harvest. The Government continues to supply maize to the affected areas, currently covering 40 out of 63 districts. So far, the purchases, in two phases, of 180,000 MT of relief maize have been tendered. The Government is currently considering ways to improve relief food distributions to maximise the benefit of its interventions. In addition, the World Food Programme has made available 24,694 MT of relief food for distribution during the February-August period, and has expanded its school feeding programs to cover the affected areas of Makueni, Kitui, Machakos, Mbere, and Tharaka-Niti. UNICEF has appealed for USD 12.5 million to assist 1.5 million affected persons in 20 districts in the areas of health, nutrition, water/sanitation, education, and implementation management/monitoring. FAO is conducting rinderpest surveillance and providing vaccinations for livestock. In March, immediate assistance valued at USD 305,000 was approved for the nomadic communities in southern Kenya, complementing the campaigns in northern Kenya.

*(DHA Situation Report, No. 3, 28/4/97, WFP Emergency Report, 18/4/97)*

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#### *Somalia*

The failure of the long *deyr* rains and late onset of *gu* rains in many parts of Somalia has led to drought conditions throughout the country. Despite the depletion of grazing land and watering points, the normal coping mechanisms of the pastoralists appear to have helped them to minimise the effects of the drought. This said, UNICEF reported that migrations of sedentary farmers had been noted in some areas. Pastoralists are also reported to be migrating to water and assistance distribution points (e.g. Bardera or further south to Buale where NGOs are currently operating).

Attempts by agencies to bring relief assistance into Somalia were hampered by the continuation of low-level civil unrest and military actions. At the end of March, cross-border operations between Kenya and Somalia were suspended.

Food distributions have been going on in many parts of the country, with ICRC working along the Juba river from Bardera to Bulu Hawa, UNICEF supporting NGOs to provide supplementary food to children in Gedo region, and WFP purchasing sorghum from Ethiopia to be distributed in Somalia. In addition, water tankering operations in five regions were launched in March by UNICEF and UNDP, but were suspended on 31 March with the onset of the rains.

*(UNICEF Report, 3/27/97)*

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#### *Uganda*

An estimated 612,000 drought-affected people in eastern Uganda are reported to be in need of assistance for the next three months. Those particularly targeted to receive assistance are the high-risk groups, including severely malnourished children, expectant and lactating mothers and primary school children.

It is expected that food assistance to the drought affected and internally displaced will be required until the next harvest, at the end of July. A WFP mission conducted in mid-April found that in the most-affected areas, household cereal reserves are only enough to last, on average, until mid-May. In many households, food reserves have already been depleted. In the worst-hit areas, the mission observed the following patterns: reduced food consumption; reduced school attendance; reduced attendance at medical units by pregnant and lactating mothers and sale of livestock and possessions.

The problem of drought is compounded by the civil strife going on in the northern and south of the country, which generates large numbers of refugees seeking assistance in Uganda. In a recent survey,

between 180,000 - 185,000 displaced Ugandans were identified in Gulu district. Another registration exercise was being carried out in Kitgum, but final figures have not yet been received. The recent deterioration in security has forced the postponement of food distribution to internally displaced persons in the northern part of the country bordering Sudan.

(WFP Emergency Report, 25/4/97)

## Horn of Africa Regional News

### *Regional financial agreement*

A financial agreement providing for about USD 245 million was signed on 28 March on the regional indicative programme for East Africa between the EU and the East African countries (Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda). The agreement sets out the framework for regional co-operation activities to be financed from the European Development Fund. The agreement concentrates on improving the performance of the region in transport, trade and regional integration as well as solving problems of food security and the conservation of natural resources. (*Ethiopian Herald*, 29/3/97)

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### *Nile waters debate*

Ethiopia accused Egypt and Sudan of unfairly using more than its share of the waters of the Nile at the expense of other countries in the basin of the world's longest river. "The stark inequity currently prevailing in the Nile Basin cannot remain in the future since only the downstream riparian states (Egypt and Sudan) are exclusively utilising the Nile waters while upstream countries have not been able to secure their equitable right," said an Ethiopian policy paper. The paper was presented at the annual conference on the use of the Nile river waters. Ethiopia's paper further rejected as a delaying tactic Cairo's call for a regional databank to be established to update the statistics of national databanks of different Nile basin states. "It is believed there is sufficient available water resource data currently in most of the Nile Basin countries. The argument for a databank has been constantly used to prolong the issue of Nile water allocations," said Ethiopia. Sudan, meanwhile, said it was committed to work towards an agreement on a framework of co-operation acceptable to all Nile Basin states. (*Reuter* 26/2/97, by Tsegaye Tadesse, cited in *Horn of Africa Bulletin*, 1/97)

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## Djibouti

### *Djibouti and Ethiopia to combat flow of contraband*

The governments of Ethiopia and Djibouti reached an agreement with a view to combating illegal cross border trade practices and crimes at the sixth meeting of the Ethio-Djibouti joint border administrative committee, held in Nazareth, Ethiopia. (*Press Digest*, 27/3/97)

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### *Government and opposition parties hold congresses*

The congress of the government's *Rassemblement Populaire pour le Progrès* (RPP) took place on March 19 and 20. Hassan Gouled Aptidon was re-elected chairman of the RPP and a list of 125 members of its central committee was established. Gouled faces a challenge in settling the conflict between prime minister Barkat Gourad Hamadou and Gouled's cabinet head Ismail Omar Gelleh. Meanwhile, the opposition *Parti du Renouveau Démocratique* held an important congress in late March to elect a successor to its late leader Mohamed Djama Elabe. (*Indian Ocean Newsletter*, 22/3/97)

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### *First FRUD congress held*

The *Front pour la Restauration de l'Unité et de la Démocratie* (FRUD), which formed a governmental alliance with the RPP in December 1996, held its first congress on 15-16 April. The congress adopted a mandate to work towards the political and economic development of the country. It also elected a national council of 153 members and an executive committee of 21 members. The FRUD is seeking to enlarge its membership to non-Afar people. The executive committee is composed of one third Afar delegates, while the remaining members are drawn from Issa (four), Gadabursi (two), Arab (two) and Issak (one) groups. Ali Mohamed Daoud, an Afar, retained his post as President, but the post of vice president was given to Issa Djama Djellai. The second vice president is a Gadabursi, Ismael Youssouf. (*Indian Ocean Newsletter*, 19/4/97)

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## Eritrea

### *Eritrea acknowledges sending troops to Sudan*

President Isayas Afewerki confirmed that Eritrean troops are fighting in Sudan. He told a seminar of civil servants that the destruction of the Khartoum regime could be accomplished "only by force". "We are working for development here in Eritrea," he said, "but if there is no peace and stability in the region, nothing can succeed." Sudan reacted to the admission by saying that "the confession... is tantamount to a declaration of war on Sudan, and Afewerki has to bear the responsibility... These confessions nullify claims by some quarters that what is going on in Sudan is an internal affair." (Agence France Press, 24/4/97 and 25/4/97)

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### *President quietly shuffles cabinet*

President Isayas Afeworki discreetly reshuffled his cabinet in mid-February imposing the most sweeping changes in three years and carrying out a partial reprise of the finance ministry, said the Indian Ocean Newsletter, quoting diplomats residing in Asmara. Petros Solomon was reported to be shifted from his role as Foreign Minister to Head of the Marine Resources Ministry. Haile Woldensae, former Minister of Finance, replaced him. Dr. Saleh Meki, former Minister of Marine Resources, was given the position of Health Minister. Ato Gebre Sellassie Yosef was appointed as the new Finance Minister. In addition, Weyzarit Worku Tesfa Michael, ex-Tourism Minister was named Commissioner of Refugee Affairs, Ato Ahmed Hagi Ali, ex Minister of Labour and Human Welfare was appointed as Tourism Minister, and Ato Oqbe Abraha was given the former's position. Ali Said Abdella was named Minister of Trade and Industry. In addition to these changes, a new ministry, that of Environment and Water, was created. The Ministry will be headed by Dr. Tesfai Ghirmazion, former head of the Ministry of Agriculture, who was replaced by Arefayni Berhe. The changes were not publicly announced. (Indian Ocean Newsletter, 29/3/97)

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### *US First Lady visits Eritrea*

US First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton visited Eritrea in early April as part of her six nation visit to Africa. She began her nine-hour visit by acknowledging Eritrea's 'martyrs' in the independence struggle, laying a wreath near the grave of the patriot Woldeab Woldemariam. In a symbolic gesture reflecting the nation's efforts to rebuild, the First Lady and daughter Chelsea planted a juniper tree in the parched and rocky soil of the cemetery. She also visited a carpentry workshop run by former female fighters, participated in a women's round-table discussion, and inaugurated a rural health clinic outside the capital city of Asmara, sponsored by the US Agency for International Development (USAID). (USIS Press Release, Addis Ababa, 03/04/97)

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## Ethiopia

### *Bomb blasts leave Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa residents in a state of fear*

Three bomb blasts in four days shook the capital, Addis Ababa, and a fourth grenade attack occurred in Dire Dawa during April. One woman was killed and 41 others sustained serious and minor injuries in two separate blasts that occurred within minutes of each other on 12 April. The two explosions took place at Tigray Hotel in Addis Ababa's Piazza neighbourhood, and at Blue Tops, a restaurant located near Sidist Kilo. The blast at the Tigray Hotel claimed the life of a 25 year old waitress and caused heavy and minor injuries to 33 others. In the Blue Tops attack, four Britons, and two French people were among the injured. On 15 April, a third blast occurred at the Tana Supermarket, in the centre of the busy Markato area of the capital. 33 people were wounded in the blast. No one has claimed responsibility for any of the bombings. (Ethiopian Herald, 15/4/97 and Monitor, 15/4/97)

On 26 April, eleven people were injured in explosions in a bar in Dire Dawa, Ethiopia's second biggest city. No one claimed responsibility for the attack.

(Agence France Presse, 28/4/97)

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### *Danish Missionary, five others found murdered*

A Danish Missionary and five Ethiopians were found murdered in the Dolo-Mena area of Bale in early April. According to the BBC, they were travelling together when their car was hijacked. The Ethiopian passengers were killed immediately. A sixth man, a taxi driver, was killed when he stopped

to see what had happened. The body of Janne Pedersen, a Danish nurse who had been working for Dansk Ethiopian Mission, was found five days later several kilometres from the scene of the attack, her throat slit. (*The Monitor*, 8/4/97)

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#### *New charges relating to Red Terror involvement*

Seventy-five people, including Olympic gold medalist Captain Mamo Wolde, appeared in court on 14 April on alleged involvement in perpetrating the Red Terror in Addis Ababa from 1976 to 1978. Those who appeared are among the 128 people the Special Prosecutor has accused of allegedly taking part in the Red Terror in one area of the capital. In total, 5198 people have been charged with crimes related to the Red Terror. Approximately 2,200 of the defendants are in custody, while the remainder are free on bail or have fled the country. (*Ethiopian Herald*, 15/4/97)

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#### *Protests over land redistribution*

An estimated 2000 farmers from Gojjam and North Shewa Zones of Region 3 came to Addis Ababa to protest the land redistribution. They claimed to have lost some of their landholdings because they had been associated either with the previous Derg military administration or the regime of Emperor Haile Selassie. They complained that their land was being confiscated and given to those peasants who sympathise with the EPRDF government. Monasteries hostile to Ethiopian Orthodox Church Patriarch Paulos Gebre Yohannes, who was appointed by the EPRDF, are also reported to have been dispossessed of their lands. The farmers' delegation was denied a permit to stage a public protest over their grievances. The farmers submitted a letter of protest to the Prime Minister's office, and settled inside St. George's church at the centre of the city to await an answer. They were finally given an audience by a member of Parliament, who directed them to return to their localities. (*The Monitor*, 22-23/3/97)

In a related development 212 students were arrested on 21 March at a protest held on the grounds of Addis Ababa University. The students were protesting against the land redistribution system in the Amhara region. According to police the protest was illegal because its organisers had not obtained official permission for the event. The Ethiopian Human Rights Council has issued a report condemning the treatment of the students, most of whom "were detained for six days in two houses, with nothing to wear during the night except the clothes they had worn on the day of their arrest." The EHRCO also alleged that the students had been subjected to cruel and degrading punishment and were deprived of sufficient food. 171 students were released on 26 March after signing a petition denouncing their part in the demonstration. 27 participants in the protest were retained for refusing to sign the petition, and another 14 who signed but are suspected of being co-ordinators of the event are also being held. (*Addis Tribune*, 4/4/97)

In the largest demonstration in recent years, an estimated 20,000 people gathered for a peaceful protest in Addis Ababa's Meskel Square to support peasant farmers from the Amhara region who oppose the government land redistribution programme. The protesters called for the release of university students still in detention following their arrest in March at the Addis Ababa University demonstration opposing the land distribution. They also appealed for the release of other political prisoners, including Professor Asrat Wolde Yesus, president of the All Amhara People's Organisation (AAPO). The protesters also complained against recent Addis Ababa government rent increases of up to 1,500 percent. The protest was organised by the AAPO and was addressed by the organisations acting leaders, and representatives of students and merchants. (*Agence France Presse*, 6/4/97 and *Fiametta* 9/4/97 reported in *Press Digest* 17/4/97)

Not all appeared to be against the land redistribution, as an estimated 18,000 farmers from East Gojjam and South Gondar zones took to the streets in Bahir Dar on 21 March to express their support for the land redistribution. Demonstrators claimed that the land redistribution had helped to rectify the problem of unfair distribution of land. (*The Ethiopian Herald*, 22/3/97)

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#### *Tamrat Layne charged with abuse of office and corruption*

Ato Tamrat Layne, Former Deputy Prime Minister, was charged on 27 March with abuse of office and involvement in corruption scandals. Ato Tamrat was charged with eight others, including his secretary and business associates of entering into illegal business deals from which he extracted personal benefit. Alleged partners in the deals include a textile distributor, a bogus coffee trading company, and a construction equipment firm. He is also charged with unfairly granting contracts to companies,

including the contract for the Assab-Awash road which serves as the main artery for import/export through the Assab port. The court refused bail for all of the accused. On 15 April, Tamrat and the other defendants were arraigned. (*The Monitor*, 29-30/3/97)

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#### *Ethiopian refugees repatriated from Kenya*

A total of 2,264 Ethiopian refugees were flown back to Gode and Dire Dawa in eastern Ethiopia from Dadaab, Kenya between 13 February to 8 March. The Ethiopian refugees, who opted to return voluntarily to their respective villages in and around Gode and Jijiga areas of the Somali National Regional State, were flown in from Dadaab. The flights were organised and paid for by UNHCR. Upon arrival, the returnees were provided assistance by UNHCR to reach their final destinations and be able to integrate in their home areas. (*UNHCR Press Release*, 26/4/97)

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#### *Social Sector Investment Workshop leads to donations*

Ethiopia is to receive US\$ 655 million from the bilateral and multilateral donors who participated in a three-day government-led-workshop on Ethiopian social sector investment programmes and indicative budgetary support of donors held in Debre Zeit. This amount is to be paid out of the US\$ 2.5 billion pledged to Ethiopia by the World Bank Consultative Group at its meeting in Addis Ababa last December. (*Addis Tribune*, 21/3/97)

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#### *Ethiopian Somali parties to form coalition*

The Ethiopian Somali Democratic League (ESDL) and Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF), which have long been rivals, have agreed to form a coalition conference in Kebri-Dehar in May. (*Ethiopian Herald*, 19/4/97)

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## **Kenya**

#### *Movement of refugees from the coast to camps in the northeast*

On 28 February, UNHCR began the relocation of refugees from the Swaleh Nguru camp in coastal Kenya to the Dadaab and Kakuma camps in Northeast Kenya; 316 refugees – the majority of Somali origin – moved in convoy to the new location. This comes after repeated demands from the Kenyan government to close the coastal refugee camps. A total of 172,680 refugees remain in Kenya. (*UN Situation Report*, 28/2/97)

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#### *Border dispute with Ethiopia ends in negotiations*

At the end of March, Kenyan troops and paramilitary police moved to the border with Ethiopia after Ethiopian bandits allegedly killed 80 Kenyans, including 19 policemen, in cattle raiding. The fighting occurred in the Marsabit district of Kenya. About 300 armed Shangilla and Armakolle tribesmen from Southern Ethiopia allegedly crossed into Kenya and raided a nomadic settlement at Kopkai. They reportedly kidnapped 6 women, killed 36 Kenyans and stole 4,000 head of livestock. More casualties resulted from later clashes between the raiders, local tribes and police. Military sources said the raiders had fled across the border into Ethiopia, pursued by Kenyan security forces. Kenya lodged an official complaint with the Ethiopian government and talks were subsequently held in Kenya concerning the possibility of securing reparations for the families of those who were killed. The Ethiopian government agreed to pressure those who were involved in the conflict to return stolen Kenyan livestock, firearms, and police uniforms. The two governments also agreed to work together to control illicit trading and arms trafficking across their common border. Elders and officials are scheduled to meet in June to discuss possible compensation. (*Reuter*, printed in *The Reporter*, 2/4/97, *The Monitor*, 5-6/4/97, and *Urji*, printed in *Press Digest* 17/4/97)

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## **Somalia**

#### *Two attempts at peace create conflict*

Two peace processes competing with each other are placing tensions on Somalis and bringing new armaments to the war-weary country. On one side is the Ethiopia/OAU brokered 'Sodere' agreement, which Hussein Mohamed Farah Aydiid did not participate in, but which his rival Ali Mahdi Mohamed, head of the Somali Salvation Alliance, did. The Sodere conference has been criticised, among other things, for not including either Hussein or the Hargeisa-based "Somaliland" government. On the other side, Kenya is brokering peace talks between the two main rivals, but lacks the backing of the OAU.

In the wake of the Sodere agreement, Ethiopia has reportedly made a sizeable arms shipment to Ali Mahdi, which have reduced the Mogadishu price of a Kalashnikov bullet by over a third, to 2500 Somali shillings (30 US cents). (*Africa Confidential*, 28/3/97)

*Meeting to plan coalition government planned for June, but Aydiid will not participate*

The Somali National Salvation Council (SNSC), composed of the signatories of the Sodere agreement, all of whom are opposed to the self-declared president Hussein Mohamed Aydiid, have agreed to meet on 10 June in Bosasso to plan a coalition government. On a recent visit to Cairo, however, Aydiid announced that he would not participate in the SNSC's meeting. He protested that these meetings should take place only in Mogadishu, which he described as stable and peaceful. Aydiid's Interior Minister, Mohamed Qanyare Afrah, went further, saying that his government was unaware of any meeting to be held in Bosasso, and that it was not the place of anyone else to be holding any kind of national meetings. (*CNN, reported in the Monitor*, 10/4/97; *Indian Ocean Newsletter* 12/4/97; *BBC Somali Service*)

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*Northern Somali Alliance created*

Two organisations allied with Hussein Mohamed Aydiid but made up of nationals originating from Somaliland decided, in Mogadishu on 15 March, to merge within a newly-created Northern Somali Alliance. The organisations are the United Somali Party (which includes Dolbahante and Warsangeli members) and the United Somali Front (made up of Issa). Both oppose Somaliland president Ibrahim Mohamed Egal and the idea of independence for the self-proclaimed state of Somaliland. (*Indian Ocean Newsletter*, 29/3/97)

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*Aydiid and Ali Mahdi make foreign visits to gather support*

Hussein Mohamed Aydiid travelled to Cairo and Libya in March to gather support for his faction, the United Somali Congress/Somali National Alliance. Libya was the only African country to recognise Hussein's father's government in June 1995. In response, Ali Mahdi Mohamed also travelled to Libya to "stress to them the real situation prevailing on the ground in Somalia." Ali Mahdi's delegation planned to request logistical support for the Somali reconciliation conference to be held in June in Bosasso. (*Agence France Presse*, 20/4/97)

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*Belgian military investigates charges of atrocities committed against Somalis*

Three members of an elite parachute unit have been arrested for allegedly committing sadistic acts during the 1993 "Operation Restore Hope" in Somalia. The investigation was called for by Belgian Defence Minister Jean-Pol Poncelet after reports and photographs were released implicating Belgian paratroopers in tortuous acts. Allegations include an account of a young Somali caught stealing food who died after being locked in a container for two days with no food or water. Another child was forced to drink his own vomit, and a man was held suspended over a fire. Poncelet vowed to discharge any soldiers found guilty, and possibly to dissolve the brigade if the tortures were found to be widespread, as was done by his Canadian counterpart in 1995 following the release of videotape footage showing soldiers making racist remarks and conducting degrading initiation rites. (*Agence France Presse*, 17/4/97 and 25/4/97 and *BBC Somali Service*)

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While peace talks between Hussein Mohamed Aydiid and Osman Hassan Ali "Atto" went on in Yemen, fighting between the two sides broke out in Mogadishu on 26 and 27 April. At least 17 militiamen and civilians were killed and 26 others wounded during the fighting. On 27 April, unidentified gunmen opened fire on a bus carrying nine Egyptian teachers in north Mogadishu. Two guards were wounded, but no deaths or other injuries were reported. (*Agence France Presse*, 26/4/9, 27/4/97, 28/4/97)

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*Sporadic fighting reported*

Kismayo town and the Juba valley remained tense through the end of February. Vehicle looting incidents between the Marehan and Majerteen clans caused tension during the first half of February. During the last week of February in the Badade area, some tension was reported between the Tolomogue and Muqabul families, both sub-clans of the Absame Ogaden clan. A car travelling from Hagar to Kismayo was ambushed by gunmen 30 km northwest of Kismayo, wounding three persons. Fighting later broke out between rival clans in the Juba Valley 30 kms west of Jilib town, where six persons were killed and two vehicles looted. Kismayo port and airport were reported functioning. General Morgan was absent from Kismayo during the period. The fluctuating situation caused all

international staff of UN and other agencies to be temporarily relocated for varying periods of time, hence interrupting efficient programme delivery. (*UN Situation Report, 28/2/97*)

At least eight people were killed and 20 were wounded in heavy fighting between rival clans in the southern Somali port city of Kismayu on 23 March, radio reports said. Fighting erupted when armed militiamen of the Marehan clan gunned down members of the Majertein clan at Gobwein village, 5 km north of Kismayu. Majertein militiamen then took to the streets of the town, killing four Marehan. At least two other Somalis died in the fighting, the reports added. The fighting escalated with other sub-clans joining both rival groups. On 21 April, fighting was reported between the Galje'el and Hawadle sub-clans in the Middle Shabelle region north of Mogadishu. At least nine people were killed and 12 others wounded. The fighting took place in Burane village, 100 km north of Mogadishu. (*Reuter, reported in The Monitor 25/3/97, and Agence France Press, 21/4/97*)

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#### *Cholera cases reported*

Cholera continues to plague parts of Somalia. On 25 February, the World Health Organisation (WHO) reported 359 cholera cases had been treated in Mogadishu North, with nine deaths recorded. No data was available for South Mogadishu, although many of the patients seen in the Forlannai treatment centre (North Mogadishu) had arrived from the south. Cases were also reported in Merca and the Lower Shabelle region. Between 30 November 1996 (when the first cases were reported) and 15 April, a total of 1535 cases (including suspect cases) with 47 deaths, have been reported. According to WHO, the number of cases in Mogadishu North has almost tripled in recent weeks following heavy rainfalls. Although the treatment centre there is coping well with the increased cases, medical supplies are running short and WHO is trying to purchase these elsewhere. ECHO (European Community for Humanitarian Office) is also providing support and sending supplies.

Based on trends of cholera outbreaks in previous years, a decline in numbers is expected in the next six to eight weeks. The remote areas affected will continue to be difficult to reach because of insecurity and logistical constraints. (*UN Situation Report, 28/2/97 and WHO, 15/4/97*)

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## **Sudan**

#### *Peace agreement signed between Government and rebel factions*

On 22 April, the Government of Sudan signed a peace agreement with six southern rebel factions. The accord was reached between the ruling junta and the South Sudan Independence Movement (SSIM), the Bahr el-Ghazal group of the Sudan's People's Liberation Army (SPLA), the Independence Movement, the Bor group, the Equatoria Defence Force, and the United Sudanese African Parties (USAP). The agreement provides for a referendum on self-determination of south Sudan and unity with the north after a four year interim period, during which a 25 member co-ordinating council will run affairs in the south. All members of the signatory factions are to be granted amnesty for criminal and civil offences committed during the war. In addition, compliance with the conditions of the peace agreement and adherence to international human rights protocols will be monitored by the Organisation of African Unity, Arab League, the United Nations, and the Carter Center among others. Signatory factions will retain command of their forces for a four-year transitional period, under the supervision of the Sudanese government's armed forces. Notably absent from the signing was Colonel John Garang, head of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), who has dismissed the agreement as a bid to boost the low morale of the Sudanese government troops. The main branch of the SPLA has joined the northern opposition in fighting central government forces in the eastern and southern parts of the country.

Following the signing of the agreement, the SSIM and the SPLA Bahr El-Ghazal Group agreed to form a united faction under the name of the United Democratic Salvation Front of South Sudan.

A second agreement was signed with another SPLA splinter group from the Nuba mountains. According to Mohamed al-Amin Khalifa, Secretary General of the Government's Supreme Council for Peace, the agreement was based on a declaration of principles that the government reached with the Nuba mountains group in Nairobi last year. It provides for the creation of a mechanism for the implementation of provisions during the four -year interim period. Such a mechanism would be formed by the executive, legislative, and political bodies in South Kordofan state and representatives



of the SPLA-Nuba mountains branch. (*The Monitor*, 22/4/97 and *Agence France Presse*, 20/4/97, 21 /4/97, 22/4/97 and 23/4/97)

Former US President Jimmy Carter travelled throughout the Horn of Africa in April, speaking to government and rebel leaders involved in the conflict in Sudan. In Khartoum, he held talks with President Omar Hassan al-Beshir and other government officials about the possibility of bringing more southern groups into discussions over a peace agreement with the government. From Khartoum he travelled to the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa where he met with Sudan's representative to the United Nations Fateh Ourwa and Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi. Carter said that the peace agreement signed on 22 April between the government and four southern rebel factions was a step towards further negotiations, and highlighted the potential importance that the regional Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) might play in this process. (*Agence France Presse*, 21 /4/97)

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A meeting of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), a coalition of the SPLA and northern opposition forces held in Asmara on 17-21 March approved an intensification of the armed fight against the Khartoum regime, both in the southern and eastern parts of Sudan. General Abdelrahman Saeed, Deputy Head of the military opposition group Legitimate Command, was elected to the NDA Executive Committee. The SPLA's main branch was represented by cabinet director Deng Alor, who received a message of congratulations on behalf of Colonel John Garang for his force's successes in the southern Sudan. Alor had just met with representatives of the Egyptian government about the possibility of a visit to Egypt by Garang. (*Indian Ocean Newsletter*, 29/3/97)

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#### *Fighting on Sudan-Eritrea border*

Sudan announced a full scale mobilisation to cope with rebel fighting in the east and south of the country. A Sudanese army spokesman said on 9 April that government troops had repulsed attacks by Eritrean forces in the north-east near the border with Eritrea at Togan, Gadamait, and Kadamet. A government newspaper also said that the country's armed forces had recaptured areas in central Sudan (south Kordofan and on the border of Rashad and Kadguli provinces) which had been under rebel control for at least 10 years and had released hundreds of people trapped there. The previous week, Sudan lodged a formal protest with the United Nations Security Council and the Organisation of African Unity accusing Eritrea of attacking border areas in east Sudan's Red Sea State, including Qarora and Itairbah. Additional fighting between Eritrean troops and Sudanese forces took place between 21-25 April in Sudan's Red Sea state on the border with Eritrea. Sudan claimed success in the fighting, which reportedly involved 5000 Eritrean-led troops. (*Reuter, reported in the Monitor*, 13-14 April 1997 and *Agence France Presse* 25/4/97)

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#### *Government and rebels claim victories in the south*

Sudanese government forces were reported to have repelled an attack on its positions by southern rebels. *Alwan*, a private Sudanese newspaper, said that the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) of John Garang attacked the SPLA/Bahr al Ghazal group's positions in Wun Rog, 150 km north of Wau, the South's second largest town. Garang's forces were reported to have suffered huge losses in men and weaponry (315 Kalashnikov guns, 17 mortars, and two heavy machine-guns, plus 100 SPLA soldiers taken prisoner). Bol's forces were also reported to have seized Akak airport.

SPLA forces loyal to John Garang captured the southern town of Yei from government troops at the end of March. Yei is a key town on the main road to the southern capital of Juba. When reporters arrived on 27 March to meet Garang, the town was empty, abandoned by civilians who had fled the battle. Garang vowed to push on to take Juba soon. (*Reuters, reported in The Monitor* 22-23/3/97 and *George Mulala for the Reporter*, 2/4/97)

Sudanese officials said that Sudan had crushed an attack by Ugandan forces in the south of the country, near Lanya, destroying tanks and causing a large number of casualties. Sudan has accused Uganda of direct military support for the Sudan People's Liberation Army. Uganda denies that it is involved. Sudanese rebels, however, claimed a victory in capturing Lanya. (*The Reporter*, 19/3/97 and *The Monitor*, 18/3/97)

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#### *Fighting generates refugee repatriation in south*

Following the recent upsurge in fighting in the south, further numbers of displaced persons and returning refugees gathered in Juba. 8,400 people were reported to have arrived in the city from Uganda and Zaire. An additional 10,000 to 15,000 Sudanese refugees from camps in northern Uganda were reported to be on the road from Yei to Juba. An assessment mission to Yei and Kajo Keji counties in late March/early April identified a total number of 100,000 people, including returning refugees from northern Uganda and vulnerable persons among the resident population requiring immediate assistance. On 10 April, WFP initiated an airlift operation into Juba to deliver 200 MT of food. The Norwegian Church Council will deliver a further 300 MT of food by air. In addition, Government of Sudan and SPLA clearance has been obtained to deliver 2,500 MT of relief food to Juba on a barge convoy. Assistance is also being provided through WFP to Yei town. (*WFP Emergency Report, 11/4/97*)

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#### *Sudan accuses aid agencies of assisting rebels*

Sudan has accused UN agencies and non-governmental relief organisations of violating provisions of UN-sponsored Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS) and of supporting rebels by carrying out relief operations in rebel-held areas. "United Nations specialised agencies, including the World Food Programme and UNICEF, and some voluntary organisations have violated Operation Lifeline guidelines and have breached Sudan's sovereignty by carrying out relief activities in the war zones in south Sudan," said Sudanese State Minister for Social Planning Hassan Dhahawa to the Sudan News Agency. He accused aid organisations of failing to obtain clearance from the Sudanese government to use planes and other vehicles to transport relief to the war-stricken areas. OLS coordinator in south Sudan was asked to take measures to make sure that such violations are not repeated. The Sudanese Information Minister and government spokesman warned that UN agencies and nongovernmental organisations operating in rebel-held areas of Yei and Kaya would be regarded as targets of the Sudanese army if they continued such activities in the disputed areas. (*Agence France Presse, 5/4/97*)

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#### *Government grounds UN relief plane*

The Government of Sudan grounded a relief plane that it said was masquerading as a supply aircraft for the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army. The plane was reported to have been grounded after it landed without permission at the Bor airport in the southern Jonglei state. The plane had been flying for the United Nations Operation Lifeline Sudan and was alleged to have been carrying documents intended to be handed over to the SPLA. (*The Monitor, 18/3/97*)

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#### *Call for boycott*

While the United Nations adviser to the Department of Humanitarian Affairs went to Sudan to evaluate the impact of the international embargo on Sudan Airways (imposed under UN Security Council Resolution 1070), the ACP-European Union joint assembly gave its support to the sanctions on 20 March. The call was included in a resolution which, on the instigation of the representatives of Eritrea and Ethiopia, also condemned Khartoum's "violation of territorial integrity of certain countries of the Horn of Africa". The same resolution "urgently called on" the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to bring pressure on the Sudanese government to cut back the amounts allocated to the country's military security budgets, and asked both the IMF and the African Development Bank to abstain from granting the government any advantages at all until the Khartoum authorities have brought an end to "most flagrant" human rights violations. The resolution was voted through after European Commissioner for Relations with ACP Countries and Development Joao De Deus Pinheiro spoke in favour of the continued suspension of EU development aid to Sudan. He justified the option by the fact that Sudan's presidential and general elections were not carried out democratically, by the country's many human rights violations, and by the continuation of armed fighting in southern Sudan. EU sources stress that humanitarian aid would nevertheless continue, principally for populations hit by the civil conflict in the south. Aid topped 13 million ECU in 1996 and an envelope of 11.8 million ECU is set for 1997. (*Indian Ocean Newsletter, 29/3/97*)

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## **Uganda**

#### *WBNF and UNRF-2 to join LRA*

Two Ugandan rebel movements, the West Nile Bank Front (WBNF) and Uganda National Rescue Front Two (UNRF-2) have agreed to join forces with the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). The move

was seen as a measure taken to strengthen the Ugandan opposition following attacks by the Sudan People's Liberation Army led by John Garang. Both the WBNF and LRA are accused of receiving support from the Sudanese government, and as such are under attack by the SPLA. WBNF and UNRF-2 bases inside southern Sudan were reportedly destroyed in attacks by the SPLA on 9 and 25 March. (*Agence France Presse, 23/4/97*)

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#### *Increased fighting around Gulu*

WFP reported that rebel activities close to Gulu have increased during April. Various ambushes are said to have occurred just 20 km north of the town, and land-mines were discovered on the Gulu Kitgum road. The presence of large rebel groups was reported in several areas. A planned ICRC seeds and tools distribution had to be postponed due to the poor security situation. Despite these problems, various aid agencies continued to operate in Gulu, carrying out distribution of food, agricultural implements, clothing and continuing health and water related work. (*WFP Emergency Report, 25/4/97*)

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#### *Ugandan government captures rebels*

In late April, Ugandan government authorities charged 746 captured rebels of the WBNF with treason. According to state-owned New Vision newspaper, most of the rebels were taken prisoner in southern Sudan by the Sudan People's Liberation Army, which handed them over to the Ugandan military. Others were captured in eastern Zaire after they had fled there from Sudan. At the same time, Ugandan forces were said to have been holding more than 100 Sudanese government soldiers and 64 Lord's Resistance Army rebels as prisoners of war at an army post just south of the border. The International Committee of the Red Cross is being guaranteed access to prisoners on both sides, although access is difficult due to the remote location of the camps. Reporters visiting the sites said that many of the prisoners appear to be suffering from severe lack of food. (*Agence France Presse, 23/4/97*)

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#### *Sudanese army alleged to have killed Ugandan soldiers*

Sudanese troops were reported by military officials to have killed more than 300 Ugandan government soldiers who crossed into Sudan in pursuit of Ugandan rebels. A Ugandan prisoner-of-war said the raid into Eastern Equatoria state had aimed to crush the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and capture the movement's chief, Joseph Kony, official Sudanese press reported. LRA attacks inside Uganda have increased as members have been forced from their bases in Sudan by the SPLA. The Ugandan troops were reportedly following the orders of President Yoweri Museveni to crush the LRA forces and bring Kony back to Uganda alive. The division reportedly consisted of 4,000 troops. Officially, however, Uganda continues to deny that its troops are operating in southern Sudan. (*Agence France Presse, 23/4/97*)

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#### *Uganda to receive debt relief*

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank have agreed that the east African nation of Uganda would be the first beneficiary of a multilateral debt relief scheme. Under the deal, USD 338 million of Uganda's total USD 3.5 billion debt to multilateral lending organisations will be cancelled starting in April next year. According to the *East African* newspaper, the debt write-off had originally been scheduled for this year, but pressure from donors resulted in its postponement. Critics charge that the delay will cost Uganda between \$35 million and \$40 million and will jeopardise its plans to extend primary school education. The IMF, the World Bank, the Paris Club of government creditors and certain regional lending institutions developed a plan last year under which certain of the world's most heavily indebted poor nations would be eligible for substantial relief provided they implement macroeconomic reforms. (*24/4/97 Agence France Presse and The East African, 21-27/4/97*)