



UNITED NATIONS

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Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) – SOMALIA  
**Situation Report #21 – 5 January, 2007**

### **Main Developments**

Although there has been no wide-spread conflict in Somalia in the last number of days, reports continue of serious security incidents. On 2 January, a UNDSS staff member was detained by Ethiopian forces at Afmadow (Lower Juba) and the UN is seeking information on his whereabouts. There have been incidents of NGO staff being subject to harassment and arbitrary detention by Ethiopian military. On 3 January, two UNCAS flights (one passenger and one cargo) were refused offloading at K50, with the passenger flight being forced to return to Nairobi and the cargo flight carrying UNICEF supplies being rerouted to Jowhar. On 4 January, an UNCAS flight was refused landing at Kismayo air strip. Armed militia are said to be on the roads leading from Mogadishu to Lower Shabelle, Middle Shabelle and Baidoa, with looting, banditry, extortion and harassment occurring. There have been specific reports of three separate incidents of freelance militia committing rapes – of female passengers on the road from Mogadishu to Lower Shabelle at 60km, of businesswomen near Afgoye district at Bushka and of girls in Gandershe village between Merka and Mogadishu (the latter during an attack on 4 January that left four people dead).

Former warlords are reportedly resuming or attempting to resume power in Jowhar, Kismayo, and Mogadishu. After PM Gedi's call for voluntary disarmament in Mogadishu last week went largely unheeded, the TFG announced today (5 January) that it will begin disarming citizens of Mogadishu tomorrow, forcibly taking weapons from those who do not surrender them voluntarily. Such a move could trigger further insecurity.

In Galkayo, the situation is said to be generally stable, although revenge killings have been reported in parts of southern Galkayo and people are said to be restricting their movements out of fear. The president of Puntland announced the pardon and release of all conflict-related prisoners. Apparently, however, very few prisoners have been released in Bossaso and none in Galkayo. There are about 212 wounded TFG and ICU troops in hospital/clinics in Galkayo. There are also a reported 58 wounded (mostly combatants) in Gellinsoor who have not reported to any hospital for fear of arrest or revenge.

### **Displacement**

It is estimated that up to 65,000-70,000 people have been displaced by the recent conflict. Some of these suffered secondary displacement, having already left their homes due to flooding. Much of the displacement was localized and many have returned to their places of origin since the conflict abated. Returns of conflict-related IDPs have been reported in Jilib (an estimated 2,000) and in Mudug, where 800 people have returned to Bandiiraley village, the scene of heavy fighting.

The Kenyan border remains closed to Somali asylum-seekers, despite efforts by the humanitarian community to persuade Kenyan authorities to reverse the closure order. Four-hundred asylum-seekers, many of them women and children, were deported from Liboi's Reception Center in Kenya on 3 January. Prior to being deported, about half of them had already been screened and registered by Kenyan authorities. The 4,000 Somali asylum seekers who were stranded at Dhobley on the Kenya-Somali border, unable to cross due to the border closure, have reportedly dispersed. Another 600 Somalis are said to be at the border at Shabtug, also unable to cross to Kenya. Kenyan authorities are citing security concerns as the reason for the border closure. To date, Kenyan police are reported to have arrested 14 people at Liboi and El Wak border points accused of being ICU fighters.

### **Access and Response**

It is generally recognized that a momentum now exists in Somalia that may enable the establishment of some degree of governance, law and order, and humanitarian actors are assessing the unfolding situation with regard to humanitarian re-engagement on an increased level. However, serious concerns exist about the return of

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warlords, particularly with the reports of increased lawlessness, roaming freelance militia and re-establishment of checkpoints. All efforts must be made to support legitimate governmental authorities and institutions during this transitional period. With regard to its own engagement, the humanitarian community will immediately begin developing a code of conduct to be adhered to by humanitarian and development actors operating in Somalia. Such a code would help to prevent the resumption of a system of coercion and violence that has prevailed in the past.

Roaming militia groups and the increasing number of checkpoints are reportedly causing transport delays, especially around Mogadishu.

Following security reassessments of airfields across Somalia in the wake of the recent conflict, Hargeisa, Bossaso, Wajid and K50 have been declared open for passengers and freight, while Jowhar and Baidoa are open for freight. All other airfields are currently undergoing or will undergo security assessments in the coming days.

The United States announced on 4 January that it was pledging \$16 million in humanitarian assistance for Somalia. The pledge includes \$11.5 million for WFP, \$1.5 million for UNICEF and \$3.575 million for UNHCR.

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