



Office of the Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia

Appeal To Warring Mogadishu Factions To Act With Humanity

Nairobi, 29 May – Increasingly worrying reports from Mogadishu describe indiscriminate shelling of civilian populations and the city's medical facilities, with dozens dead in the last few days. Due to the intensity of the recent fighting, an increased number of civilian casualties have been unable to reach medical facilities.

Since the beginning of the year about 1,500 conflict related war-wounded have been admitted to Mogadishu's two main hospitals.

The Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia, Mr Eric Laroche, is deeply concerned by these reports, as well as shocked at the targeting of hospitals, which are blatant violations of the basic rules of international humanitarian law. He urges the warring parties to 'spare the lives of those not involved in the hostilities and to take all the necessary measures to prevent unnecessary human suffering.'

Mr Laroche reminded the warring factions 'that any deliberate attempt to prevent wounded or civilians receiving assistance and protection during fighting in the city may constitute elements of future war crimes.'

Furthermore, Mr Laroche stated that 'the fighting does have the potential to spread into other areas of southern Somalia leading to further aggravation of the humanitarian crisis at a time when stability is needed for the success of the humanitarian drought response in the region.' He said it is 'ethically unacceptable for fighting to be occurring in Mogadishu at a time when southern Somalia is experiencing a humanitarian emergency.'

On Friday, the Secretary-General deplored the loss of life and suffering caused by the renewed violence and has called on both sides to enter into an immediate and unconditional ceasefire.

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