



UNITED NATIONS

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Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) – SOMALIA

### **Situation Report # 16 – 25 April, 2008**

#### **Main Developments**

This week Mogadishu experienced the heaviest fighting so far this year. Fighting escalated over the weekend of 19-20 April in five out of the 16 districts in the city - (Dharkenley, Yaaqshiid, Heliwaa, Hodan and Wardhiigleey districts). The number of civilian casualties are estimated to be at least 66 and the number of wounded nearly 200 according to hospital records. On 20 April 20 civilians – many of them clerics - were killed in and around Al-Hidaya Mosque in Heliwaa district. In a press release issued on 24 April, the UN Humanitarian Chief, John Homes, strongly condemned the brutal killings and further stated “...there has been an increasing trend of indiscriminate and disproportionate use of force against civilians by all parties to the conflict, in contravention of International Humanitarian Law. Those who are responsible include members of recognized armed forces who should be held accountable for their actions, but non-state actors are equally bound by the obligations of international law.”

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and partners, the recent fighting displaced 7,000 people. They have mainly been displaced to other parts of Mogadishu but around 2,000 fled to Afgooye district. The total displacement from Mogadishu this year is estimated at 85,000 people.

Insecurity, although at a much lower level, continued in others parts of south central Somalia. On 18 April UNHCR received reports that an estimated 15,000 people – 80% of the population - fled Bula Burto town, Hiraan region, for fear of fighting due to the arrival of Ethiopian troops. In Kodey Island, a port town in Lower Juba, fighting between clan militias and ICU supporters displaced nearly 270 people. On 21 April anti-government groups captured Waajid town, Bakool region. As the weekly went to press, they were still in control of Waajid town. This has not caused new displacement or impacted on humanitarian operations in the region

The deteriorating security all over the country is slowing down humanitarian deliveries. This week alone five security incidents were reported, which directly affected distribution of food aid.

Humanitarian response to the drought-affected is ongoing but still far from meeting needs in the affected areas. World Food Programme dispatched 1,475 metric tons of food aid to 90,100 beneficiaries in Puntland, Somaliland and South Central Somalia. In Hiraan region, CARE International distributed 3,532 metric tons of food aid to 52,956 beneficiaries. CARE also trained 20 community health workers and conducted four outreach clinics in Galgaduud and Hiraan regions. In Gaalkacyo, Galgaduud region, a local drought committee raised over \$ 50,000 from the local business community and the Diaspora and distributed 15 days of food rations for 300 families in South Mudug. Water trucking is ongoing in Mudug, Galgaduud and Sool regions.

#### **Other Developments**

On Sunday 20 April, a Spanish commercial fishing boat carrying a crew of 26 was seized by Somali pirates some 400 km off the coast and is still held in captivity. The next day a Japanese tanker escaped an attack by a group of Somali pirates. On 22 April Puntland coastal guards rescued a Dubai-flagged cargo ship. According to field reports the increasing risks of Somali piracy has reduced the number of boats and ships delivering goods into Somalia, thereby reinforcing the already escalating food prices in the country.

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