



UNITED NATIONS

NATIONS UNIES

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs – Somalia

### **Situation Report # 44 – 07 November, 2008**

#### **Key Overall Developments**

Humanitarian workers continued to be targeted in Somalia as insecurity increased and humanitarian space further diminished. On 5 November, four expatriate staff working for Action Against Hunger (ACF), were abducted by gunmen as they headed to the airport in Dhuusamarreeb, Galgaduud region. A press statement by ACF stated that the kidnappers took the four ACF staff members along with two Kenyan pilots.

The abduction elicited strong condemnation from the United Nations Secretary-General who stated he was deeply concerned about the worsening trend of killings and abductions of aid workers in Somalia. ACF has worked in Somalia since 1992 and the four taken were part of a team of 220 local and 14 expatriate aid workers implementing programmes in South/Central regions. Since January, 23 aid workers have been abducted in Somalia and 14 remain in captivity.

The Independent Expert on the Situation of Human Rights in Somalia, Dr. Shamsul Bari, and UNICEF condemned the stoning to death of a girl who was charged with adultery. A statement by UNICEF on 4 November, explained that Aisha Duhulow was stoned to death in a stadium full of spectators in Kismayo, Lower Juba region, on 27 October. Reports indicate that she was raped and when she sought protection from authorities, she was accused of adultery and was sentenced to death. The killing of a human rights defender and chairperson of Bay region women's organisation, Ms. Mariam Aden Mohamed, in Baidoa, Bay region on 3 November, also drew reaction from the Human Rights expert. In a statement issued on 5 November, Dr. Bari condemned the recent wave of violence in Somalia. A total of 33 aid-related workers have lost their lives since January 2008.

Following the death of two UN workers in an explosion in Hargeysa, Somaliland, on 29 October, the President of the UN Security Council issued a press statement on 30 October, condemning the attacks on the UNDP compound. He said, "The Security Council underlines the need to bring the perpetrators, organisers, financiers and sponsors of these reprehensible acts of terrorism to justice." The Council also sent a message of condolences to the families of the victims.

At least 12 people drowned in the Gulf of Aden as they crossed to Yemen on 2 November. They were on a boat carrying 115 people - mainly Ethiopians and Somalis - and were forced overboard in deep water off the Yemen coast. According to UNHCR, more than 38,000 people have arrived on the Yemen coast since January 2008. Some 577 people have died while another 296 are still missing and presumed death. Last year, 29,500 people had made the same journey.

Due to continuing insecurity and violence challenging access within Somalia, the UN has recently relocated and reduced staff at a number of locations. In an effort to continue operational flexibility, WFP has setup a Rapid Response Support Team base in northeastern Kenya on the boarder of Somalia. This will keep staff in closer proximity to Somalia and facilitate missions. Other fall-back options within Somalia are also being explored. Meanwhile, the Dutch frigate and two NATO warships belonging to the Greek and Italian navies, have safely escorted four vessels with a total of 25,000 metric tons of life saving food shipments into Somalia between 26 October and 1 November.

#### **Response**

UNICEF is supporting life-saving services in the newly established stabilization care unit for treatment of severely malnourished children with medical complications in Baidoa hospital, Bay region. This unit is the first of its kind in Baidoa and the services are now available to approximately 16,000 children under five years in Baidoa and a further 33,000 people in the outskirts of Baidoa.

On 21 and 22 October, a joint partnership of Danish Refugee Council, WFP and UNICEF distributed a ration of 10 kg of blended food (UNIMIX) to 6,585 children under five years in Bossaso IDP settlements, Puntland.

During the week, WFP and a local NGO GECPD distributed 80 metric tons of food aid commodities to 849 IDP women participating in Food for Training project in Gaalkacyo, Mudug region.

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