



SOMALIA

REPORT OF FACT FINDING MISSION TO NAIROBI,
8-15 SEPTEMBER 2010

Country of Origin Information Service

8 October 2010

Contents

Introduction

Executive summary

1. CONTROL OF AREAS IN SOUTHERN AND CENTRAL SOMALIA	1.01
Who controls Mogadishu?	1.01
Who controls other regions in Southern and Central Somalia?	1.10
2. INTERNAL TRAVEL	2.01
Mogadishu airport.....	2.01
Mogadishu airport to the city	2.10
Mogadishu city	2.19
Areas outside Mogadishu.....	2.28
3. SECURITY SITUATION	3.01
Mogadishu.....	3.02
Areas outside Mogadishu.....	3.16
4. HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION.....	4.01
What is the human rights situation in areas controlled by the TFG?	4.06
What is the human rights situation in areas controlled by Al Shabaab?	4.13
What is the human rights situation in areas controlled by Hizbul Islam?	4.28
What is the human rights situation in areas controlled by Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a?	4.29
5. CONDITIONS IN INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSON (IDP) CAMPS.....	5.01
Mogadishu.....	5.04
Afgoye corridor	5.11
Other areas in Southern and Central Somalia.....	5.20
Annex A	List of outline questions sent to sources before interview
Annex B	Glossary of abbreviations and acronyms
Annex C	Interview notes
Annex D	References to source material

Introduction

The Somalia Fact Finding Mission (FFM) was undertaken by the Country of Origin Information Service (COIS) and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). The FFM was led by Debbie Goodier, senior researcher in COIS. Eugenio Bosco, a researcher in COIS, and Darren Forbes-Batey, First Secretary (Migration) at the British High Commission, Nairobi, also took part in the visit.

The purpose of the FFM was to obtain specific information on the current security and humanitarian situation in southern and central Somalia. The FFM did not set out to be comprehensive nor to replicate current reliable country of origin information that is available from publicly available sources, but aimed to fill gaps in that information. The final report of the FFM must be read in that context.

In particular, the FFM sought to obtain information on the following issues:

- which groups currently control each area in Southern and Central Somalia;
- how easy it is to travel between different areas in Southern and Central Somalia
- update of the security situation;
- update of the human rights situation; and
- update of conditions in the IDP camps.

The FFM sought to interview a range of sources representing differing perspectives on the issues being considered. All meetings were arranged by the British High Commission in Nairobi. The list of contacts interviewed was partially determined by availability and time constraints with meetings taking place between 8 and 15 September 2010.

All interlocutors were sent the list of questions to be considered in advance and advised that the information obtained may be published in a report placed in the public domain and/or used by immigration officials to assist the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) when it considers a Somalia case in late 2010. The document sent to sources is at [Annex A](#).

Given the time constraints the report is presented as a collation of the agreed notes of answers provided by each interlocutor in response to the questions asked. A short summary of the information gathered from different sources has been provided at the start of each section on the main thematic questions. All information gathered has been attributed to sources and no attempt has been made to provide any analysis of the material. Most of the sources interviewed asked to remain anonymous and only to be identified in general terms.

A glossary of acronyms and abbreviations is at [Annex B](#).

Copies of the interview notes are at [Annex C](#)

Any comments regarding this Report or suggestions for additional source material are very welcome and should be submitted to UKBA at the address/email address below.

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[Return to contents](#)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CONTROL OF AREAS IN SOUTHERN AND CENTRAL SOMALIA

Most of southern and central Somalia was controlled by Al Shabaab, with only the Galmudug region, small pockets around the Ethiopian border and key strategic locations in Mogadishu controlled by the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) or elements sympathetic to them. There were some areas that were nominally under the control of Hizbul Islam, most notably Haradheere and part of the Afgoye corridor, however, Al Shabaab influence in these areas was such that they hold most of the power.

TRAVEL BETWEEN DIFFERENT AREAS IN SOUTHERN AND CENTRAL SOMALIA

There were regular flights into Somalia, most notably to Mogadishu International Airport which was under the control of the TFG and African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) troops. Over 1,000 people travel into the country every month. From the airport Somali civilians can use taxis to travel to the city; the road from the airport was controlled by the TFG (supported by AMISOM troops). Views differed on the scope for individuals to travel within Mogadishu however most sources stated that Somali civilians could move around the city without much difficulty.

Travel within Al Shabaab controlled areas of southern and central Somalia was common and considered relatively safe. There were checkpoints operated by the organisation and these were used to monitor the movement of people. For Somali civilians with no affiliation to the TFG there were usually no problems passing through checkpoints as long as Al Shabaab's rules were followed. There were buses that will take civilians between towns. Travel between Belet Weyne, Mogadishu and Kismayo is popular.

SECURITY SITUATION

Civilians were at risk of being caught in the cross fire of the conflict rather than being targeted. Outside of Mogadishu all of southern and central Somalia has seen conflict since 2007 although the level of conflict is now much reduced and most areas were described as stable. Only Belet Weyne was specifically mentioned as an area of ongoing conflict (for control of the town).

The situation in Mogadishu is fluid with AMISOM identified as responsible for most civilian deaths, mostly as a result of shelling residential areas such as Bakara Market. Al Shabaab's military tactics and attacks have become more sophisticated as the influence of foreign elements in the organisation has increased. They have targeted TFG and AMISOM interests, for instance Mogadishu airport. Day to day life continues in Mogadishu and the economy is functioning.

HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION

The TFG are making a public attempt to improve the human rights situation in areas they control. However they are able to make little difference because their control is limited. Human rights in Al Shabaab-controlled areas were generally poor as the organisation imposes its strict interpretation of Sharia (Islamic law) on these populations. Women in particular were negatively affected by its rules. Al Shabaab has restricted access to and sought to remove non government organisations (NGOs) from certain areas they control. Human rights were considered to be better in the Galmudug region where Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a has influence.

CONDITIONS WITHIN INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSON (IDP) CAMPS

There was displacement throughout southern and central Somalia but the focus of this movement was in Mogadishu and the Afgoye corridor (a 20km strip of road to the west of Mogadishu), where many people fled to from the city. The Afgoye corridor is the largest IDP settlement in southern and central Somalia, with population estimates ranging between 200,000 and 500,000. Access for NGOs was difficult but they do make efforts to provide aid to the area. The area has become increasingly urbanised and although some people travelled back to Mogadishu in order to work, the number of businesses in the region was increasing. IDPs elsewhere in southern and central Somalia tended to live with family members.

[Return to contents](#)

1. CONTROL OF AREAS IN SOUTHERN AND CENTRAL SOMALIA

WHO CONTROLS MOGADISHU?

Summary of interview notes*

- 1.01 Control of Mogadishu is divided between the Transitional Federal Government (TFG), backed by African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM) troops, and Al Shabaab (AS). There are different views on which groups control which districts, even sub-divisions within districts. The overall pattern of control ebbs and flows but remains broadly the same: the TFG controlled only the airport, seaport, Villa Somalia compound (the presidential compound), K4 junction and the road between the airport and Villa Somalia. Medina is controlled by local militias who have a broad allegiance with the TFG.

* This summarises the main points raised by interlocutors in response to the particular question(s) for the convenience of users. Every effort has been taken to ensure the summary accurately reflects what was reported by the interlocutors however users are advised to read the interview notes in full for a complete and detailed picture.

Interview notes

The quotes from the interview notes are arranged in no particular order.

- 1.02 An international NGO noted:
- “The Transitional Federal Government has made rehabilitation of Hamar Weyne a priority. The TFG is under severe pressure from Al Shabaab offensive action aimed at bringing the downfall of the TFG. Within the districts of Mogadishu, the TFG soldiers often roam around disrupting commercial activity and robbing and abusing citizens in order to acquire sufficient money to buy qat; the TFG soldiers have no barrack sites for off duty periods and have not been paid. The new Mayor of Mogadishu is attempting to solve problems in the city but does not have authority or control of TFG soldiers. There is serious concern about the precarious nature of the TFG's control.” [4]
- 1.03 An international NGO noted:
- “Al Shabaab control around half of Mogadishu or more – they have consolidated their position recently.” [6]
- 1.04 A security advisor noted:
- “The TFG (Transitional Federal Government) controls six districts in Mogadishu.
- “Villa Somalia (the presidential compound in Mogadishu) is protected by the Ugandan battalion but there are problems with snipers and mortar shells getting there. The airport, the seaport and Villa Somalia are under the control of AMISOM and TFG but Al Shabaab (AS) is currently [9/9/10] only 200 metres from Villa Somalia. They are trying to take it but this is unlikely to happen as it will be well defended by AMISOM. If the government falls and AS gets full control over Mogadishu, Ethiopia is likely to be back in Somalia very soon.
- “However, over the last two years there has been no significant movement in terms of control in Mogadishu. The conflict has peaks and troughs but the status quo remains.” [7]

- 1.05 An international NGO noted:
- “The TFG officially controls six districts in Mogadishu, but also controls around 70-80% of the Hodan region. Medina and Dharkenely are controlled using a form of 'community policing' where the local warlords are aligned to the TFG, but control the areas themselves. Shingani is under the control of AMISOM.” [8]
- 1.06 An international NGO noted:
- “Al Shabaab (AS) controls most of Mogadishu – AMISOM controls only Villa Somalia, K4, the airport and the seaport. AS will not take control of the whole of Mogadishu while AMISOM is still in place.” [9]
- 1.07 A security consultant noted:
- “Control of some districts in Mogadishu is based on clan lines. Waberi is controlled by a clan militia. Recently, the manager of the seaport was sacked for corruption, and the TFG were threatened in order to appoint someone of the same clan.” [11]
- 1.08 A diplomatic source noted:
- “Control of Mogadishu can change very quickly and is not dependent on clan allegiances.” [12]
- 1.09 An international NGO noted:
- “The TFG have a small area of control but they are finding it difficult to expand beyond this. After initial optimism surrounding the formation of the TFG, Somalis have become disillusioned, and Al Shabaab have gained from this.” [13]

[Return to contents](#)

WHO CONTROLS OTHER REGIONS IN SOUTHERN AND CENTRAL SOMALIA?

Summary of interview notes*

- 1.10 Sources had different perspectives on details but all agreed that Al Shabaab (AS) held control of most of the land south of a line drawn between Belet Weyne and Dhusarmareb. There are pockets of land on the Ethiopian border, particularly around Dollo, that are controlled by militias broadly aligned with the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) which have fought Al Shabaab. There are also some small areas where Hizbul Islam (HI) is nominally in control, for instance Haradheere and parts of the Afgoye Corridor. However, Al Shabaab influence in these areas is significant.
- 1.11 The region of Galmudug, from Dhusarmareb up to south Galcayo, is controlled by a local clan-based administration which acts under the umbrella of Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a.

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Interview notes

The quotes from the interview notes are arranged in no particular order.

1.12 An international NGO which has worked in Somalia noted:

“Al Shabaab controls Bay, Bakool, Middle Juba regions and also areas south of this.” [2]

1.13 A diplomatic source noted:

“Al Shabaab (AS) is trying to get into Puntland.

“In Galmadug, where Galcayo is located, all the way down to Haradheere there is a president and this is generally a secure area apart from an area controlled by pirates. There is no AS presence here, but local clan militias acting under the ASWJ (Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama’a) name are present around Dhusarmareb and El Dheere. Habr Gedir and Hawiye dominate but there is a mix of clans in the local councils and there is also international presence, including in Galcayo. The area from the Hiiran-Galgudud regional line to the southern border of Somalia is mainly controlled by AS, which means they are able to move freely. This is partly because of the power vacuum, but everybody can move freely in that area.

“There are pockets of territory close to the border with Ethiopia where TFG-allied forces and Ethiopians are in control.

“There are places such as Dollo and Yeed where ASWJ seems to be in control. ASWJ provides an ideological identity to clan groups of various kinds, mainly majority clans.

“Belet Weyne has changed hands multiple times in the last two years.

“AS try to ensure that administrators in areas they govern are of the clan associated with the area.” [3]

1.14 An international NGO noted:

“Along the border with Ethiopia there are groups allied with TFG (Transitional Federal Government), as well as clan militias opposed to Al Shabaab’s presence, ASWJ forces, most of them supported by Ethiopian forces. The south and much of central Somalia is under the control of AS, with a smaller presence of Hizbul Islam (HI) in the Afgoye corridor and Haradheere.

“The Afgoye corridor is not under the control of TFG (Transitional Federal Government). Al Shabaab (AS) is in control of the access, and the area surrounding it. HI nominally controls the Afgoye corridor, although in recent months there have been localised skirmishes between AS and HI over control of HI areas.” [5]

1.15 An international NGO noted:

“Al Shabaab control large parts of southern and central Somalia, including Baidoa. The TFG have a presence in Dollo.

“Galmudug is under the control of local clans, however it is possible that Al Shabaab might move to that area and try to take control.” [6]

1.16 A security advisor noted:

“Somalia is really about money. The example of the port of Kismayo is typical. Controlling it is vital, considering the influx of goods. AS would be prepared to fight to the death to keep it under its control. The influence of the Somali diaspora is everywhere, especially in terms of funds.

“ASWJ (Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama’a) are in control of isolated areas near the Ethiopian border.” [7]

1.17 An international NGO noted:

“The Galmudug area is self administrating and is stable. It contains [Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama’a] ASWJ elements.” [8]

1.18 An international NGO noted:

“[Al Shabaab] AS control the area between Kismayo and Merca even though they do not have any soldiers there – they could be overpowered but maintain control because there is nobody else to take over.

“AS and Hizbul Islam (HI) share control of the Afgoye Corridor and AS monitor those who travel there.” [9]

1.19 A security advisor noted:

“Al Shabaab controls regions from the south up to Belet Weyne (where control is variable) and Galgadud. Hizbul Islam have either been absorbed into Al Shabaab or killed. ASWJ’s influence shrinks and expands on an irregular basis.

“Al Shabaab have brought in around 1500 foreign fighters, including 18-20 year old advisers. The majority of advisers are young men.” [10]

1.20 A security consultant noted:

“Everywhere from Hiiran region south is under AS control. They maintain training camps in Baidoa with a foreign fighter presence.

“Control of Kismayo is very important. AS currently control the port city and use it for the import of ammunition. They also regulate export of livestock and charcoal to the Gulf states.

“The local AS administration report to the central command in Mogadishu.

“Allegiances from clan militia depend on the current situation and how they can benefit.” [11]

1.21 A diplomatic source noted:

“Al Shabaab control most of southern and central Somalia, from the line between Belet Weyne and Haradheere south to the Kenyan border.

“The Galmudug region is under the control of a local administration, supported by the TFG and Puntland. It is based along clan lines (Habr Gedir) and extends from South Galcayo to Dhusarmareb. AS have never been allowed to gain control of any part of

Dhusarmareb as local militias have fought them and won. [Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a] ASWJ are also present in this region and are fighting AS for control of Haradheere.

"There is a small HI presence in Hiiran and Mogadishu.

"Belet Weyne is currently disputed.

"There are Ethiopian forces in the border regions and they are TFG affiliated. There is still TFG support for ASWJ, but the TFG do not have the means to support them with ammunition.

"Control of Middle and Lower Juba regions may change.

"Many clans will join together to fight against AS, clan conflict is negated by the common enemy." [12]

1.22 An international NGO noted:

"There are pockets of land on the Ethiopian border that are controlled by anti-AI Shabaab forces. Although they are referred to as TFG allied, they are instead simply against AI Shabaab.

"AI Shabaab have now taken Belet Weyne, and Ras Kambooni and Hizbul Islam have retreated from the southern border regions and now AS can potentially move freely around the southern and central regions of Somalia. Hizbul Islam control the Afgoye Corridor, but even in areas controlled by Hizbul Islam, AI Shabaab have considerable influence.

"AMISOM have troops up to K13 at the start of the Afgoye Corridor, however AI Shabaab and Hizbul Islam control the rest of the area, with AI Shabaab having far more influence. AI Shabaab demand \$10,000 registration fee from NGOs and further fees to be paid whenever NGOs take part in activities.

"People will not support AS if it is not in their clan interest." [13]

1.23 An international NGO noted:

"AI Shabaab controls almost all of southern Somalia from Lower Juba region to Belet Weyne town. There is a group who call themselves Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a controlling a small area around the southern part of the Kenyan border, however it is not clear whether they are affiliated with the larger Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a or simply using the name to fight AI Shabaab. Hizbul Islam are thought to be in control of much of the coastline from Mogadishu to Haradheere, however it is uncertain whether AI Shabaab also have some control over this." [14]

[Return to contents](#)

2. INTERNAL TRAVEL

MOGADISHU AIRPORT

Summary of interview notes*

- 2.01 Members of the diaspora flew to Mogadishu “fairly regularly”, with an established route from Nairobi carrying thousands of passengers in the first eight months of 2010. Somalis travelling back made arrangements with family members to be met on their return.

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Interview notes

The quotes from the interview notes are arranged in no particular order.

- 2.02 A security advisor to the EU Special Representative for the EU Delegation on Somalia noted:

“African Express flights are viewed as the safest way into Mogadishu. There is a total of around 15-18 flights arriving in Mogadishu per day. The checks by the Immigration Department on arrivals are practically non-existent.

“There are not many Somali civilians at the airport – businessmen and others linked with militia are more common. Members of the diaspora travel back to Mogadishu fairly regularly, but these are all well connected.

“AMISOM control who can enter the airport.” [1]

- 2.03 An international NGO noted:

“Somalis returning to Somalia make arrangements with family in order to ensure that they have somebody to meet them at the airport and somewhere to stay on arrival. Any Somalis returning to Mogadishu airport would need a lot of preparation and would need to ensure they had contacts in Mogadishu. The Somali diaspora travel back to Somalia frequently.” [4]

- 2.04 An international NGO noted:

“A lot of people are flying to Mogadishu but the organisation’s viewpoint is that Somalia is not a place to send people back, certainly not in Mogadishu.” [5]

- 2.05 A security advisor noted:

“The source was last in Mogadishu four weeks ago. He is generally happy to go to the airport which is controlled by AMISOM but Somalis are not allowed within the AMISOM area. The airport is improving and airlines are flying normally to Mogadishu. Airport security is also improving. There are more and more contractors working at the airport as the number of passengers is going up. Contractors live in protected accommodation

(similar to those in Afghanistan) within the airport but at the moment there is no protective fencing for the entire area.” [7]

2.06 An international NGO noted:

“There are many regular flights to Mogadishu from Nairobi. There are also flights to Hargeisa from Nairobi and from Djibouti to Berbera. African Express, Puntair, Juba and Dallo all operate flights in Somalia.” [8]

2.07 An international NGO noted:

“AS know who is landing at the airport as some TFG soldiers will work for them and give them information or risk being killed. AS will give informants phone credit to enable them to report.” [9]

2.08 A security advisor noted:

“Many people travel into Mogadishu, especially from Nairobi. African Express, in particular, offer popular flights.” [10]

2.09 Captain Bulhan, Managing Director, African Express Airways stated:

“African Express has confirmed passenger numbers for the year (to end August 2010) into Mogadishu on their various routes...

“Nairobi (NBO)

“Berbera (BBO) - Somaliland

“Aden (ADE) - Yemen

“Galcaio (GLK) - Puntland (border with South Central), new route on 30 seat Umbria aircraft.

“There have been just over 12,000 passengers in 8 months.” [15]

MOGADISHU AIRPORT TO THE CITY

Summary of interview notes*

2.10 The road between the airport and the city was controlled by the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) with African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) support.

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Interview notes

The quotes from the interview notes are arranged in no particular order.

2.11 A security advisor to EU Special Representative for the EU Delegation on Somalia noted:

“Mobility is limited unless the individual is aligned with a militia.” [1]

2.12 A diplomatic source noted:

“The road between the airport and Villa Somalia (the presidential compound) is kept open but there has been some fighting and the road is dangerous for TFG-connected people. For ordinary Somali civilians it should not be particularly dangerous apart from being in the wrong place at the wrong time. Somalis of excessively western appearance would be noticed as members of the Somali diaspora but this does not mean they would be necessarily targeted by AS. Ordinary Somalis could not afford armed escorts but they are not needed in general. They are likely to use minibuses and the drivers may have to buy their way through checkpoints.” [3]

2.13 An international NGO noted:

“Somali citizens do not need or use armed escorts between the airport and the city. Ordinary Somalis would not be able to afford an armed escort [sic] and even if they could afford such guards it would draw attention to their importance and wealth, and thereby make them more attractive targets for robbery and kidnapping.” [4]

2.14 A security advisor noted:

“The source travels to Villa Somalia in an armed convoy protected by the AU (African Union) troops but they are not geared to look after ordinary visitors and average convoys. He cannot go anywhere else for security reasons. Four weeks ago, the source found the journey to Villa Somalia difficult, as TFG troops were protesting about not being paid. Difficulty in travelling to Villa Somalia has been reported on other occasions.

“Both the airport and the seaport are now managed by private contractors and are getting safer. In general travelling from the airport to the city should not cause any problems to ordinary Somalis as the airport is quite close to the city. Normal Somalis are likely to be picked up by family members. One cannot just walk outside the airport and get a taxi. Some arrangements have to be made in advance but armed escorts are not necessarily needed.

“Checkpoints from the airport into Mogadishu are more defined. There is a series of checkpoints managed by AMISOM and TFG.” [7]

2.15 A security advisor noted:

“It is possible to travel between the city and the airport by taxi.” [10]

2.16 A security consultant noted:

“Buses and taxis operate between the airport and the city and Somali civilians can, and do, use them.” [11]

2.17 A diplomatic source noted:

“The TFG will use protective escorts, but Somali civilians will not and do not need to.” [12]

2.18 An international NGO noted:

“The organisation uses armed escorts to travel from the airport to the city. However, the organisation sees the route between the airport and city as safe ('surprisingly OK') for Somalis to travel.” [14]

MOGADISHU CITY

SUMMARY OF INTERVIEW NOTES*

2.19 Sources had differing views on the ease of movement within Mogadishu. Most sources stated that Somalis were able to travel around the city without much restriction.

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Interview notes

The quotes from the interview notes are arranged in no particular order.

2.20 A security advisor to EU Special Representative for the EU Delegation on Somalia noted:

“[The following quote is also cited in paragraph 3.03 below] All civilians in Mogadishu will either be aligned to a militia or completely unable to get out of the town. Many cannot leave their own district...” [1]

2.21 A diplomatic source noted:

“The average Somalis can go everywhere in the city. Business people are usually able to move across all districts without the need of armed escorts.” [3]

2.22 A security advisor noted:

“Checkpoints in Mogadishu are in various places, mostly along lines of confrontation. Checkpoints are managed by TFG military and police where they are in control, or by AS and other groups, for instance local warlords. Checkpoints are fairly random, rather than in specific set places. They change according to fighting areas and the level of control of specific groups.” [7]

2.23 An international NGO noted:

“There are four main roads in Mogadishu and three are controlled by AS. There are no checkpoints on the AS main road, and the TFG does not carry out checks on vehicles on the one road it controls. People move freely in Mogadishu but can be hit by stray bullets, and they tend to make sure they travel before fighting begins in the afternoon, if possible. There are no limitations on travel based on prayer times.” [9]

2.24 A security advisor noted:

“People move about the city with a large degree of freedom and there is no clear division between areas controlled by the TFG/AMISOM and areas under AS control, which means that people can travel between the areas freely. The border is porous and in order to get across people go via checkpoints. There are some roads in the city that

have been closed and are described as being in a 'no man's land'. Trade continues in the city and goods move freely." [10]

2.25 A security consultant noted:

"There are many ordinary people travelling around Mogadishu in their day to day life. They pass through TFG checkpoints without hindrance." [11]

2.26 A diplomatic source noted:

"There are no travel restrictions within Mogadishu and people are generally free to travel as they wish." [12]

2.27 An international NGO noted:

"The organisation stated that there are checkpoints within the city, however they move on an irregular basis and are variable in nature. Those operated by Hizbul Islam and the Transitional Federal Government can be more difficult to negotiate as they are operated with less discipline. They normally request money. Al Shabaab operated checkpoints normally check that people are obeying their code of behaviour, for instance they will stop women who are travelling alone. They can be harsh, and some individuals operating the checkpoints on behalf of Al Shabaab will punish those who do not act according to Al Shabaab rules." [14]

AREAS OUTSIDE MOGADISHU

Summary of interview notes*

2.28 Many people travelled within areas controlled by Al Shabaab (AS). In these areas there were checkpoints, mostly operated by Al Shabaab, where travellers were asked where they were travelling to and why. However, as long as they obey Al Shabaab's rules they were generally allowed to continue with their journey. Road travel between Mogadishu and Belet Weyne, and Mogadishu and Kismayo was frequently used; there were buses and lorries that carry passengers between towns.

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Interview notes

The quotes from the interview notes are arranged in no particular order.

2.29 An international NGO which has worked in Somalia noted:

"Travel between different areas controlled by Al Shabaab is certainly possible, and a system exists where civilians can obtain a permit in order to travel, as long as they explain to Al Shabaab where they are going and why. People have to travel through Al Shabaab checkpoints and may have to exercise some caution when explaining why they are travelling if they know it is against the Al Shabaab rules. It is not unknown for people to lie about their reasons for travel. Al Shabaab have removed all 'illegal' roadblocks and left only their own checkpoints." [2]

2.30 A diplomatic source noted:

“Everybody can move freely in central-southern Somalia and there is public transport in the form of minibuses. Business is taking place, it is cross-clans. There are AS and clan-based checkpoints but 90% of them do not cause threats to Somalis. Sometimes people have to pay facilitators to go through.

“People can, for instance, get out of Mogadishu and travel to the Afgoye Corridor for business.

“Young men may be targeted by AS for recruitment when travelling in AS held areas.” [3]

2.31 An international NGO noted:

“It is possible to travel from Mogadishu to other parts of [southern and central Somalia] SCS. Airports are working. There are five small airports in the outskirts of Mogadishu which all seem to have a lot of movement and passengers. Al Shabaab frequently use the main routes between Kismayo and Mogadishu in order to move military supplies and important personnel between the towns; travel on this route is generally possible, but there have been security incidents along the route.

“There is movement between Mogadishu and Galcayo in order to carry out trade or business.” [4]

2.32 An international NGO noted:

“There is a lot of travelling between Afgoye and Mogadishu. In general Somalis can get around in AS-controlled areas as long as they follow their rules (no music, dress code etc). With regards to checkpoints, the organisation provided the example of the situation of travelling between Belet Weyne and Galcayo: there are a number of AS checkpoints, followed by clan militia checkpoints, then Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama’a (ASWJ) checkpoints. However, usually it is possible to go through, although there is a certain amount of risk involved.” [5]

2.33 An international NGO noted:

“Al Shabaab have reduced the number of checkpoints in areas they control and have made travelling by road more secure against criminals, but they commit their own abuses, including recruitment of young men from buses that they stop at checkpoints. Forced recruitment is getting systematic, and young men are asked to register with Al Shabaab.

“People have been stopped outside Belet Weyne by criminal groups.” [6]

2.34 A security advisor noted:

“Information on this comes from NGOs operating throughout southern and central Somalia. People travel regularly within Somalia by land and by air. Most airports are operational, mainly with charter flights and it is possible to fly into Mogadishu, Hargeisa, Garowe, Galcayo and Bossasso. Those who can afford to fly internally do, others travel over land.” [7]

2.35 An international NGO noted:

“There are regular flights from Mogadishu to Galcayo.” [8]

2.36 An international NGO noted:

“It is possible to travel between Mogadishu and Kismayo without difficulty.

“People will travel if their means allow it, and there are many ways of getting around, including buses, taxis and space rented from truck drivers. There is an informal bus timetable system with buses travelling to Galcayo and other major towns in Somalia. There is a bus station at Bakara market.

“AS will ask why people are moving around the country, and if they do not recognise you then they will ask who you are, where you are going and why you are going there.” [9]

2.37 A security advisor noted:

“It is possible to travel anywhere in Somalia as long as you have money and contacts. There are numerous checkpoints operating that seek to establish who is travelling where and why, but the Somali population can generally pass through these checkpoints safely. The number of checkpoints depends on Al Shabaab's or the TFG's level of paranoia on any particular day and those passing through may need to pay in order to travel. There is some evidence that AS have begun to operate a database recording movements. People stopped at Al Shabaab checkpoints will only be harmed if they are infringing the Al Shabaab rules.

“Buses in southern and central Somalia are often stopped at checkpoints, asked where they are travelling to and then issued with letters of passage.” [10]

2.38 A security consultant noted:

“Checkpoints can appear overnight and are operated by all parties to the conflict.” [11]

2.39 A diplomatic source noted:

“In areas controlled by AS, it is quite easy for Somali civilians to travel, as long as they are no[t] an AS target (for instance, by being associated with the TFG). AS will not target civilians.

“There are few restrictions on Somali civilians travelling through the country and it is safe to travel from Dhusarmareb to Nairobi. The main risks for travellers are in getting caught in crossfire.” [12]

2.40 An international NGO noted:

“The old clan system still functions as a protection mechanism for Somalis wishing to travel through the country. Anyone wishing to travel will need to negotiate in advance with the clans in control of the areas they wish to travel through.

“It is generally safe to travel through areas controlled by AS.” [13]

2.41 An international NGO noted:

“The organisation has used armed escorts when travelling throughout Somalia since 1991. Somali representatives of the organisation travel freely between Kismayo and Mogadishu, and also Belet Weyne and Mogadishu. The representatives get asked to stop at checkpoints, however as long as they behave according to the rules of those operating the checkpoints, they are normally allowed to travel. Checkpoints are similar in nature to those in Mogadishu, however the Somali nationals are normally able to negotiate them successfully, as they would know the rules.” [14]

2.42 Captain Bulhan, Managing Director, African Express Airways, noted:

“The new flight to Galcaio from Nairobi is now operating on Mondays (AXK 711 ETD Nairobi 0800 ETA Galcaio 1100). This flight then picks up passengers in Galcaio, continues onto Mogadishu and returns to Galcaio from Mogadishu the same day ...African Express would be unlikely to open up operations to Garowe as it is not cost effective.” [15]

[Return to contents](#)

3. SECURITY SITUATION

3.01 A diplomatic source noted:

“The average Somalis are victims of violence not a target of violence – they can be caught in the crossfire. However, those perceived to have TFG affiliation would be at risk in AS-controlled areas.” [3]

MOGADISHU

Summary of interview notes*

3.02 The security situation in Mogadishu was changeable. The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) was named as being responsible for most of the civilian deaths in the city as a result of shelling of areas with high numbers of civilians, particularly Bakara Market. Al Shabaab’s (AS) tactics were increasingly to focus on Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and AMISOM targets. The attacks were becoming more sophisticated, as seen in the Muna Hotel attack [24 August 2010] and the failed attack on the airport.

* This summarises the main points raised by interlocutors in response to the particular question(s) for the convenience of users. Every effort has been taken to ensure the summary accurately reflects what was reported by the interlocutors however users are advised to read the interview notes in full for a complete and detailed picture.

Interview notes

The quotes from the interview notes are arranged in no particular order.

3.03 A security advisor to European Union (EU) Special Representative for the EU Delegation on Somalia

“The violence in Mogadishu is increasing as Al Shabaab have used Ramadan as an opportunity to attempt to further destabilise the TFG. Attacks in Mogadishu by Al Shabaab are far more sophisticated than they were 12 months ago, and this is thought to be because of the presence of foreign fighters in Somalia. Al Shabaab want the TFG to leave Somalia, and they can react quickly to events in order to carry out attacks at short notice and with impunity. Foreign Al Shabaab fighters are bringing new expertise in to Somalia, including snipers.

“Security in Mogadishu is dependent on clan militia, and even AMISOM use them for protection. The security situation in [is] incredibly dynamic and reliant on many different factors, including shifting allegiances.

“All civilians in Mogadishu will either be aligned to a militia or completely unable to get out of the town. Many cannot leave their own district. For ordinary Somalis, life can be really difficult. Bakara market is attacked daily.

“There is a large amount of trade in Mogadishu, including both legitimate and 'black market' trade. Livestock is available in Mogadishu. The port is incredibly busy with imported goods arriving. Both the TFG and Al Shabaab get revenue from the port. The TFG also get revenue from sales at Bakara Market.

“AMISOM are trying to take control of more of the city but it is difficult as they need to consider the effects of their actions on civilians in Mogadishu.

“Areas controlled by Al Shabaab (the North and East of the city) are at risk of shelling by AMISOM. Areas controlled by AMISOM are at risk because they are targeted by Al Shabaab. Medina is an area with some success as there has been investment by the TFG in health facilities, and local residents ensure security.” [1]

3.04 A diplomatic source noted:

“In Mogadishu there are functioning banking services (dealing with Somali Shillings and USD [US dollars]). Hawalas (money transfer companies) offer some banking services, but are not banks per se. Telecommunications (including mobile networks and internet connection) as well as services such as water, sewage and electricity are provided by private contractors. Big business is done in USD while ordinary transactions (such as paying a bus driver) are done in Shillings. It is also very easy to exchange money.” [3]

3.05 An international NGO noted:

“Retaliatory fire by AMISOM often kills and injures civilians, especially in Bakara Market. Wadajir [Medina] is considered to be the safest district of Mogadishu as local residents are involved in security in the region. Until August 2010, violence in Mogadishu was sporadic, and it was difficult to tell whether violence was due to the insecurity or isolated incidents. The hardest fighting seem to be happening in central Mogadishu in the areas in and around Hamar Weyne at the moment. Rape seems to be an issue in many areas.” [4]

3.06 An international NGO noted:

“Thousands of civilians have been killed as they are caught in the fighting between AMISOM and AS. Bakara market has been closed for the last couple of weeks, although it has since re-opened. Many casualties are caused by exchanges of artillery and mortar fire between AS and AMISOM, with the latter engaging in indiscriminate fire into populated areas.

“The TFG is considered corrupt without a leadership who could stay above petty issues.” [5]

3.07 An international NGO noted:

“The clan protection system in Mogadishu has been destroyed. There has been constant movement of [internally displaced persons] IDPs into and out of Mogadishu as the security situation changed. AMISOM have been firing into civilian areas of Mogadishu since 2008 and their retaliatory fire does not always hit Al Shabaab. AMISOM has been firing indiscriminately and commit violations. It is not a stabilising presence in Mogadishu.

“The foreign elements of Al Shabaab are getting stronger in Mogadishu.” [6]

3.08 A security advisor noted:

“The status quo in the last two years has not changed significantly but of course there are peaks and ebbs in the fighting. The TFG is supposed to be in place until August

2011, when there should be elections. It is hoped that a referendum on a new constitution will take place before then.

“Recently a lot of AS fighters and arms have been brought into Somalia from Eritrea. The nature of the AS violence has become more sophisticated over the last 12 months and the nature of AS has recently changed. AS fighters are now mainly foreigners – which include Afghans, Pakistanis, Chechens – and many local AS members are not very keen on this, although some are being radicalised by the foreign fighters. Techniques such as suicide bombers and IEDs (Improvised Explosive Devices) have been brought to Somalia by foreign fighters who have been killed in large numbers. Chechens in particular have brought extensive knowledge of conflict in urban areas. AS is becoming quite aggressive in trying to bring down the TFG and AMISOM before the [African Union] AU brings in an expected 2,000 troops. It is hoped that the total contingent of AMISOM could be up to 20,000. The problem is that TFG forces are badly led, poorly trained, frequently not paid and overall ‘pretty useless’. Within AMISOM, Ugandans and Burundians are particularly targeted by AS.

“AS has many groups and sub-groups. Negotiations between the TFG and ASWJ have already taken place and it is thought that there is some potential for negotiations with Hizbul Islam (HI) and ‘weaker’ parts of AS.

“AS carries out targeted attacks against Ugandan and Burundian troops, as well as TFG ministers and MPs, but they also carry out random killings of civilians in Mogadishu to create disorder and chaos. It is not even safe to be in Medina hospital. Civilians are particularly in danger in Bakara market and in areas close to those controlled by AMISOM. However, apart from some areas, you can see normal life in Mogadishu, like children playing in the street. Most of the city is traversable but it depends who you are. Everybody who is not Somali is at risk, including AMISOM and NGOs. For ordinary Somalis who go about their day-to-day life Mogadishu is reasonably safe. They can go shopping and to the market, children go to school. There is public transport, minibuses and taxis are available. The Mogadishu economy is booming and thriving on the lack of regulations. Quite a lot of people have left Mogadishu but there is still evidence of a normal life. It is difficult to establish how many civilians have left the city but estimates indicate up to 500,000 might have left.

“In his opinion, returnees would not be at risk at all in Mogadishu.

“There are still some clan areas but Mogadishu is more ‘cosmopolitan’ and less defined in terms of clans. However, by and large, people in Mogadishu tend to stick to their clan areas.

“Bringing casualties outside of Mogadishu to Kenya is now very difficult unless people have suitable papers.” [7]

3.09 An international NGO noted:

“There is continuous shelling of the AS areas in Mogadishu and many people flee that, rather than AS. In the TFG controlled areas, life goes on as normal, however no areas are considered to be completely safe. AS have developed a new style of fighting including more targeted attacks, such as at the airport [on 9 September 2010]. There is infighting amongst TFG soldiers who have not been paid and this infighting has led to a change in mood in the city.

“There is indiscriminate shelling by all parties to the conflict. AS will use a populated area as a base and then move on.

“The private sector in Mogadishu is booming and many businesses now operate from Hamar Weyne and the Afgoye corridor.” [8]

3.10 An international NGO noted:

“The areas controlled by opposition groups are generally safer than areas governed by the TFG. Shibis and Abdi Aziz have been affected quite heavily by fighting. There is indiscriminate shelling throughout Mogadishu. Bakara Market is shelled quite often by AMISOM as AS regularly and intentionally fire from the area. Looting occurs throughout the city and is perpetrated by all parties to the conflict.

“Life goes on in Mogadishu to an extent and education continues in all districts in the city.” [9]

3.11 A security advisor noted:

“In areas of Mogadishu controlled by AS there are police on the streets and little or no crime. However, in TFG controlled areas, street crime occurs. This is largely a reflection of the punishments meted out to offenders.

“All parties in the conflict have an interest in maintaining the situation in Mogadishu, mostly for financial gain.

“AMISOM kill more civilians than Al Shabaab. This is usually by indirect fire – often in the form of reprisals for killings of AMISOM troops.” [10]

3.12 A security consultant noted:

“The recent increase in violence in Mogadishu appeared to be a military offensive, rather than an insurgency. The attacks in Mogadishu are becoming more sophisticated and targeted in nature – in the Muna hotel attack [24 August 2010], and the failed airport and sea port attacks [9 September 2010 and 12 September 2010 respectively] the AS fighters were dressed as TFG soldiers and were not stopped at TFG checkpoints.

“AS have continued to use mortars and in some cases, there has been no retaliation to this from either the AMISOM or TFG soldiers. TFG soldiers have recently walked away from some posts in Mogadishu as they have not been paid, AS took these posts but were pushed back again by AMISOM who reclaimed the positions.

“The situation is precarious and fluid and the country is also suffering from a political dispute within the TFG. Clans still have power in Mogadishu and clan militia have been used in the fighting.

“It is believed that AS have many suicide bombers waiting to attack.

“There is some fatigue with regard to the reporting of the security situation in Mogadishu, and minor incidents are not reported.” [11]

3.13 A diplomatic source noted:

“AS are outnumbered in Mogadishu with 20,000 TFG and AMISOM soldiers compared to 2-3,000 AS fighters. Many AS fighters come from overseas.

“Not all of Mogadishu is dangerous – over 1 million people live there. Those who have their roots in the city will not have problems finding somewhere to settle there. Hamar Jabjab is considered to be quite safe.

“The risk of indiscriminate violence has increased since 2009, however support from clans is available and it is entirely possible to live in non-conflict areas of Mogadishu.” [12]

3.14 An international NGO noted:

“Indiscriminate shelling by all parties to the conflict is affecting civilians and people want to leave Mogadishu because of this. The number of civilian casualties in Mogadishu is high when compared to the number of battles taking place.

“There are daily reports of clashes between TFG soldiers.” [13]

3.15 An international NGO noted:

“The organisation sends Western representatives to Mogadishu around every two to three months. The representatives will spend one night in Mogadishu and limit their visit to a specific part of Mogadishu before returning to Nairobi as there is a risk of kidnapping. The risk is greatly reduced for Somali nationals.” [14]

[Return to contents](#)

AREAS OUTSIDE MOGADISHU

Summary of interview notes*

3.16 Areas controlled by Al Shabaab were considered to be stable. There was some fighting in Belet Weyne and occasional clan conflicts in other areas.

* This summarises the main points raised by interlocutors in response to the particular question(s) for the convenience of users. Every effort has been taken to ensure the summary accurately reflects what was reported by the interlocutors however users are advised to read the interview notes in full for a complete and detailed picture.

Interview notes

The quotes from the interview notes are arranged in no particular order.

3.17 A security advisor to EU Special Representative for the EU Delegation on Somalia noted:

“Areas controlled by Al Shabaab are more stable and harvests have increased, however these areas are controlled by the local Al Shabaab administrators, rather than the foreign fighters.

“There are three profiles of Al Shabaab fighters:

“Local/indigenous Somali fighters;
Fighters from the diaspora;

Foreign fighters.

“The balance of the groups is showing definite movement towards foreign fighters.” [1]

3.18 An international NGO which has worked in Somalia noted:

“There are no safe areas in southern-central Somalia as long as Al Shabaab and Hizbul Islam are present. In Bay, Bakool and Middle Juba regions there have been few physical clashes over the last year or so – Al Shabaab took over without a great deal of conflict and foreign fighters have now overwhelmed local fighters with no opposition. There have been some incidents where Ethiopians have crossed the border and killed Al Shabaab fighters, but this is very uncommon. There is, however, a lot of uncertainty over how long the stability will last.” [2]

3.19 A diplomatic source noted:

“Kismayo is in general safe as long as people are not accused by AS of any crimes. The average Somalis 'play the game' and – in the vast majority of cases – are able to avoid unnecessary attention by AS.

“AS does not have enough people to control all areas, usually fighters come in first and then leave administrators behind. AS administrators are usually left in charge of an area rather than moved around. There are, however, places like Baidoa where there is a higher military presence.

“The role of foreign fighters (such as Afghanis and Pakistanis) is inspiring the 'ideological' Somalis, those AS local members who want to feel part of a global movement. The AS fighters in Mogadishu are usually more committed and ideologically oriented. AS has a core group of fighters and then a 'reserve' group in which there are more clan militias who can be involved when needed. AS in general take into account – at least to some extent – the clan dynamics.

“Minority clans are in general no more affected by AS than anyone else, but the group has played on their dissatisfaction with the previous system and the minority clans constitute a suitable recruitment basis for AS.” [3]

3.20 An international NGO noted:

“There has been fighting in Galgudud between July and September [2010], and many Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a and Al Shabaab fighters were killed. However, Galgudud is an area which can be considered slightly safer than other areas for civilians. Baidoa and Kismayo (both areas under Al Shabaab control) can also be considered safer, but are under Al Shabaab control.” [4]

3.21 An international NGO noted:

“Internal areas in south-central Somalia are generally safe for Somalis, if we look at the number of incidents. In Galgudud there is a problematic presence of [Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a] ASWJ (this is due to the fighting between ASWJ and AS, rather than the presence of ASWJ in that area. The security situation of the Afgoye corridor is not clear. There are problems caused by the rivalry between AS and Hizbul Islam (HI).

“AS is not always a coherent group. Within the organisation, there are more extremist and less extremist groups. There is a growing influence of foreign elements within AS.

The group is currently getting more cohesive. The number of foreign fighters went from 200 to 2,000 over the past year, particularly when AQAP in Yemen was getting pressure from Government forces and subsequently moved some of its operatives to South Central Somalia. They introduced suicide attacks and increased radicalisation, which is an indirect cause of danger for civilians. There has been a marked increase in the use of IEDs and other styles of attack reminiscent of Pakistan, Iraq, Chechnya and Afghanistan.” [5]

3.22 An international NGO noted:

“Everywhere in southern and central Somalia has been affected by violations of international humanitarian law and by a situation of generalised violence and displacement over the last three years. There has been an expansion of the insurgency outside Mogadishu. The competition for the control amongst various groups has caused a situation of indiscriminate violence. Al Shabaab fighters melt into the civilian population, causing a potential increase in indiscriminate violence.

“Al-Shabaab controlled areas, for instance Baidoa, are fairly peaceful and subject to less indiscriminate violence, but the people there face human rights abuses committed by Al Shabaab.” [6]

3.23 An international NGO noted:

“Galmudug is the only region in southern and central Somalia without an AS presence, and is far more stable than other regions. South Galcayo is stable and considered to be relatively safe, although the infrastructure needs improvement.” [8]

3.24 An international NGO noted:

“AS is concerned with security and fears espionage. As such, in many areas it sees humanitarian workers as a 'soft target'. They are controlled mostly by foreign fighters, but there is little loyalty amongst the foot soldiers and there is some infighting.

“Anywhere in southern and central Somalia is safer than Mogadishu, although nowhere can be considered safe.

“The Ethiopian troops help in Galmudug and Dhusarmareb and have stopped AS moving into Puntland.

“AS have been targeting HIV clinics in Merca and recruiting patients as suicide bombers.

“In Merca and Kismayo there is greater security than in other areas as people fear AS.” [9]

3.25 A security advisor noted:

“Security is considered very good – in terms of AS security. They dominate their territory and control access. Checkpoints ensure that banditry on the roads is reduced, if not eliminated entirely. There are private armies operating throughout southern and central Somalia, and a lot of businesspeople are making a lot of money in the country. Clan conflicts are resolved within the clan. Clan militias will join AS only if it serves the interests of the clan. AS will try to maintain support of clans and sub clans by acting in their interests, or at least not provoking the clans. They provide a level of security to

civilians, for instance when moving non-clan members to other areas, which the sub-clans may welcome as it removes the competition of the dominant clans.

“Ethiopian troops still move into the border areas.

“Belet Weyne is considered commercially viable as NGOs can be 'taxed', and so there is conflict over who will gain control of the area.

“The Bantu have developed very high informal protection levels as a result of their lack of clan dominance and requirement therefore to establish alliances. Overall, the threat to Somali nationals is low in terms of life threatening violence” [10]

3.26 A security consultant noted:

“There is a 'Jubaland Defence Force' in place across the Kenyan border, made up of Somalis from southern and central Somalia, Kenyan Somalis and refugee recruits. There is also an Ethiopian National Defence Force contingent poised across the border from Dallo, using local clan militias under the TFG umbrella. Both will move in to Somalia when they are told to.” [11]

3.27 A diplomatic source noted:

“Everywhere is volatile and can change at any time. North of Belet Weyne is relatively peaceful.” [12]

3.28 An international NGO noted:

“In 2009, there have been conflicts in Belet Weyne, Dhusarmareb, the border regions, Belet Hawa and Lower Juba. Currently, the areas that fall under AS are stable and AS is supported by minority clans as they have been given more influence. There are local alliances depending on who can benefit, and some communities are less hostile to Al Shabaab than others.

“Most of the southern and central regions have remained calm, with only Mogadishu and one or two other clashes in 2010.

“Many of the AS commanders are very young – usually aged 20 to 22 – and this can lead to an increase in aggression. The arrival of a foreign contingent in AS has been publicly announced and this has led to an increase in suicide bombings.

“There is some clan conflict north of Baidoa, in an area entirely governed by AS. AS attended to conflict in order to ensure there was peace.” [13]

3.29 An international NGO noted:

“Al Shabaab are unpredictable but security in the Al Shabaab areas is generally better as the group does not tolerate any petty crime. Baidoa is less volatile than other parts of southern and central Somalia. The area around the Ethiopian border is quite unstable as Ethiopian troops are still crossing the border into Somalia.” [14]

[Return to contents](#)

4. HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION

The quotes from the interview notes are arranged in no particular order.

4.01 An international NGO noted:

“Anecdotal evidence from a network of 25 NGOs who track violations suggest [sic] that the current main violation is forced recruitment by various groups. This is a serious problem for those displaced in the Afgoye corridor.” [5]

4.02 An international NGO noted:

“All parties to the conflict (except [African Union Mission in Somalia] AMISOM) recruit children, although it is not certain that [Transitional Federal Government] TFG forcibly recruit.” [6]

4.03 A security advisor noted:

“Aid is stolen in all areas of southern and central Somalia by 'gatekeepers' who control the flow of aid in the regions where they operate. Aid distribution is a commercial enterprise.” [10]

4.04 An international NGO noted:

“All groups as[k] NGOs for money. It is not possible to send NGO workers into an area where they do not have clan protection.” [13]

4.05 An international NGO noted:

“The organisation tries to operate impartially, but has encountered occasional difficulty when trying to assess vulnerability and has been subject to complaints of unfairness based along clan lines. They use clan elders and another NGO to enable them to assess the needs in particular areas.” [14]

WHAT IS THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN AREAS CONTROLLED BY THE TFG?

Summary of interview notes*

4.06 The TFG have tried to improve their human rights record. Recruitment of child soldiers, though a problem in the past, appears to have stopped, and there was an effort to remove children from military service.

* This summarises the main points raised by interlocutors in response to the particular question(s) for the convenience of users. Every effort has been taken to ensure the summary accurately reflects what was reported by the interlocutors however users are advised to read the interview notes in full for a complete and detailed picture.

Interview notes

The quotes from the interview notes are arranged in no particular order.

4.07 A security advisor to European Union (EU) Special Representative for the EU Delegation on Somalia noted:

“There is no recruitment of child soldiers, but some children will attempt to fight for the TFG. There is a definite effort to remove any children serving in the military.” [1]

4.08 A diplomatic source noted:

“Human rights are improving in TFG-controlled areas.” [3]

4.09 An international NGO noted:

“The courts within the TFG area of Mogadishu are functional and schools are also being built in those areas. The Police in Mogadishu have not been paid consistently over the last 18 months, but they still work.

“The TFG had decided not to allow genetically modified food to be distributed, but has retracted this demand. The distribution of food to some 180,000 older people and disabled was recently suspended for about 6 weeks because TFG military had attacked a distribution centre.” [4]

4.10 An international NGO noted:

“The TFG has carried out forced recruitment of adults and children in the past.” [5]

4.11 An international NGO noted:

“All parties to the conflict (except AMISOM) recruit children, although it is not certain that TFG forcibly recruit.” [6]

4.12 An international NGO noted:

“The TFG makes many statements of intent regarding human rights, but as they are almost powerless, the statements have very little credibility.” [13]

[Return to contents](#)

WHAT IS THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN AREAS CONTROLLED BY AL SHABAAB?

Summary of interview notes*

4.13 Human rights in Al Shabaab areas were variable. Women were routinely targeted because of implementation of the organisation’s interpretation of Sharia (Islamic law). Forced recruitment, including of children, has been reported. Al Shabaab have made a concerted effort to drive NGOs out of the areas they control and have used various prescriptive measures to enforce this, including demanding payment of ‘registration fees’, looting of warehouses and threats against workers.

* This summarises the main points raised by interlocutors in response to the particular question(s) for the convenience of users. Every effort has been taken to ensure the summary accurately reflects what was reported by the interlocutors however users are advised to read the interview notes in full for a complete and detailed picture.

Interview notes

The quotes from the interview notes are arranged in no particular order.

4.14 A security advisor to European Union (EU) Special Representative for the EU Delegation on Somalia noted:

“The situation for women is not positive. Human rights abuses by Al Shabaab happen more often than currently reported.

“Child recruitment by Al Shabaab is very common - they will forcibly recruit the eldest son from local families. The children can be as young as ten years old. When children are injured in conflict, they are taken to health facilities in Lower Shabelle because it is less likely that they will receive negative publicity about it that way.” [1]

4.15 An international NGO which has worked in Somalia noted:

“Al Shabaab does not allow for good human rights in the areas they control and has banned almost all international organisations. They can make it very difficult for NGOs to operate and this can result in feeding and health programmes being stopped, with significant consequences for the civilian population. Al Shabaab have requested international organisations to pay 15,000 USD a month in order to operate. Many have refused to do so and their offices have been confiscated by Al Shabaab. They target both international and local organisations. Some organisations have been stripped of their assets which have then been sold by Al Shabaab. They have also been known to steal aid and sell it for their own profit.

“Al Shabaab demand food from every family in some areas they control. There is speculation that Al Shabaab steal in order to fund their operation as they are cash poor. They are currently attempting to extort money from a variety of sources, including local business people and farmers.

“Children are forcibly recruited by Al Shabaab and some are so small they cannot hold a Kalashnikov. Al Shabaab sympathisers provide education and there are fears that they are brainwashing the children and teaching them only about sharia and jihad.

“People live in fear as there are serious consequences for not obeying Al Shabaab orders, for instance not being in prayers at the right time. Radical preachers are in control of the local mosques. There are fewer amputations currently as people are obeying Al Shabaab's rules, but they are more common in Kismayo and Mogadishu. Just the fear of extreme sharia law application is a deterrent for the population. Such extreme application of Sharia law happens a lot where foreign Al Shabaab fighters – who are more extreme - dominate. It happens less where local Al Shabaab members operate.

“There is a foreign influence in Al Shabaab and this is spreading throughout southern and central Somalia. At the moment, out of the ten members of the supreme council of Al Shabaab only two are Somali. Foreigners are more radical than the local Al Shabaab commanders and administrators and local people and elders cannot communicate with them. The fighters are mostly coming from Afghanistan, Pakistan and Yemen. Local elders are unable to put any pressure on Al Shabaab foreign fighters who do not care about local people.” [2]

4.16 A diplomatic source noted:

“Those living in areas under AS face the danger of being punished, and sometimes they are the victims of false accusations. They are also subjected to restrictions and rules on clothing, work (women are discouraged or disallowed from working) or recreation, for example.” [3]

4.17 An international NGO noted:

“Al Shabaab demanded international NGOs and UN Agencies had to pay them or leave the country, on 7 September [2010]; it seems that this date was delayed, but that the first NGOs have now been named and are pulling out of [southern and central Somalia] SCS. Al Shabaab are now mostly controlled by foreign fighters, for instance, Pakistani nationals, which makes it all but impossible for NGOs to negotiate with them in order to provide humanitarian assistance. It is becoming increasingly hard to negotiate access to areas under Al Shabaab control, probably because of a recent influx of foreign entities who have been placed in positions of authority.

“Civilians do not like Al Shabaab because of their autocratic nature, severe system of punishment and forcible recruitment of fighters. Al Shabaab are harder to negotiate with in the front line areas of Mogadishu (Abdi Aziz, Shibis, Bondhere).

“Al Shabaab have prevented the distribution of food of US origin by NGOs.” [4]

4.18 An international NGO noted:

“AS is carrying out forced recruitment of adults and children. Al Shabaab has also prevented women from engaging in trade and amputated hands from thieves, as well as arresting and detaining NGO workers who were considered to be in breach of AS’s restrictions (e.g. holding a training workshop without permission, carrying documents that AS perceive to be related to spying or anti-AS activity.

“The weakness of the TFG is the strength of AS who does not have any opposition. They deliver peace where they are but equally a lot of hassle for Somalis (such as being unable to listen to the radio) in areas they control. AS seems to create a certain sense of security even in the Afgoye corridor. In AS-controlled areas people do not have to worry excessively about money to be paid, unlike the TFG-controlled areas where the level of corruption and extortion is high. Clans are now present in a less prominent way in AS-controlled areas.

“AS does not want expats in Somalia and wants NGOs to register and pay a registration fee to them. There are specific set registration fees. This order came from the central leadership of AS. This registration process started three weeks ago [circa mid August 2010]. The phenomenon had to some extent happened before but this was the first time the order came from the very top of AS.” [5]

4.19 An international NGO noted:

“Al Shabaab are the main persecuting agent in southern and central Somalia. Their application of sharia law is stretched away from the traditional concept. In Merca, men are forced to register with Al Shabaab, and systematic recruitment is taking place in Doble. Those who flee forced recruitment in one area may still face forced recruitment in their new location.

“In Baidoa, Hamar Weyne elders have lost influence and are not able to talk to Al Shabaab like they could in 2009. Baidoa residents face an extreme interpretation of sharia law. Al Shabaab's ideological agenda has changed to the detriment of Somali civilians.

“Al Shabaab commit many abuses against women and impose strict rules with harsh punishments.

“Some minorities should benefit, in theory, from sharia law, however it is not certain that sharia judgements will be sustainable as the administration of areas moves.” [6]

4.20 An international NGO noted:

“NGOs who have made deals with AS are able to operate by paying money to AS. Civilians do not have to pay money to AS, but business owners do.

“The application of extreme Shari’a law by AS is a way of subjugating the population. If you do anything wrong according to their rules it does not matter who you are.” [7]

4.21 An international NGO noted:

“There is over-reporting of human rights abuses in AS controlled areas by NGOs. It is almost impossible to verify any of the reports that come out of the country.” [8]

4.22 An international NGO noted:

“AS target children for forced recruitment.

“AS have requested a registration fee of \$10,000 from NGOs and this request has been made simultaneously in Baidoa, Hiiran, Middle Shabelle and Lower Shabelle. NGOs have refused to pay.

“Journalists find it difficult to report on AS as nobody is willing to talk about them.” [9]

4.23 A security advisor noted:

“Al Shabaab has brought greater stability to regions under its influence, but this also comes with human rights abuses, especially when compared to previous conflict. They rotate local leadership and with this, the rules that people must live by change. However, those who abide by their rules can live their day to day lives freely under Sharia law.

“Al Shabaab have begun to operate a feeding programme in some areas where there is no NGO presence.

“There is over-reporting of human rights abuses by Al Shabaab and it is difficult to determine what has been carried out by them and what has been the result of interclan or personal conflict. There have been some people tried for apostasy by Al Shabaab, but they were released after trial. There have been no mass executions. Ghosting and shadowing occurs, where one incident will be reported by more than one individual or organisation, and this leads to over-counting of incidents. Also, some NGOs will over-report incidents or issues because this will increase their funding.” [10]

4.24 A security consultant noted:

“AS have illegally occupied and raided NGO facilities throughout the areas they control, there is no international NGO presence left in the country any more. National staff remain in areas where the NGOs operated in order to maintain some form of presence, in case there is some opportunity to return.

“NGOs were given written notice to pay AS [US]\$10k registration fee – officially, nobody paid the fee, however businessmen in certain areas may have paid some fees as it was

in their own interests. The businessmen prioritised which organisations would have their fees paid on the basis of the local population's need and also the revenue potential of that organisation.

“There is no access to AS areas for non-Somalis.” [11]

4.25 A diplomatic source noted:

“AS rule the areas they control by fear – they may not have a huge presence in the areas but the local people are afraid enough to obey their rules. AS long as people obey their rules, they can live their lives freely.” [12]

4.26 An international NGO noted:

“In Al Shabaab areas, human rights are practically non-existent and there is no voice in Somalia to articulate this. Reporting of human rights abuses is difficult, and those NGOs that try to monitor are often threatened by AS.

“AS have become openly hostile since their leadership has changed and foreign fighters have become more influential. Previously it was possible to negotiate with local AS commanders, but now central control have [sic] made it very clear they do not approve of NGOs and the operating environment has become more difficult. Compounds have been closed and looted by AS. There are no international staff members working for NGOs in southern and central Somalia, and more NGOs are leaving the country every month, with AS giving some false reasons for the departures.

“In the past, extortion from NGOs has been on a local level, but now there are directives from the central operations of Al Shabaab asking for registration fees.

“The AS interpretation of Sharia law is not in accordance with the beliefs of ordinary Somalis, however the harsh punishments inflicted by them are not carried out on a regular basis – ie they are not daily or weekly. Petty thieves and adulterers in particular have been targeted. Men have been attacked for not having the correct style of beard. A court system operates in AS areas with a trial, however it is not possible to say whether due process occurs as the sentence usually comes very quickly after accusation. It is not known whether everyone who is tried gets convicted and sentenced.

“Al Shabaab in the Gedo region are not as harsh as in other regions as they are run by a local administration with an AS 'label'.

“There are many human rights abuses against women, particularly sexual assault and rape, especially when the women have no clan protection.” [13]

4.27 An international NGO noted:

“It is difficult to have a dialogue with Al Shabaab, however the organisation is 'tolerated' (respected to some extent) and is generally left to help Somalis. The organisation mainly focuses its work on the areas controlled by Al Shabaab and has Somali field officers in a number of towns in Lower and Middle Juba regions, Lower and Middle Shabelle regions, and also Gedo, Bay and Bakool, all regions governed by Al Shabaab. The field officers move between towns. The organisation is flexible in its approach to delivering aid to avoid encountering trouble from local governing groups and does not

have an official infrastructure within Somalia. However, Al Shabaab sometimes offer assistance to this organisation, especially in the Bay and Bakool regions.

“It is important to note that Al Shabaab members move between areas on an irregular basis – some administrations may be there for over a year, some for only two to three months. Al Shabaab are ill at ease in Somalia as they feel that the civilians view them as un-Somali, and so they seek to impose their presence when they first take over an area.

“The organisation is aware that they are in a fragile position and they may be expelled by Al Shabaab in the future. They are trying to work with the group to improve the humanitarian situation but they find this quite difficult at times as it can be difficult to have a dialogue with Al Shabaab.

“Al Shabaab offer those from minority groups positions with power and influence and move them between areas. They have tried to move beyond the Somali clan model, but they have had limited success with this.

“The general feeling is that if civilians follow Al Shabaab rules, they will be OK and will not face punishment. AS-controlled areas were described as safe – and with a certain degree of security - as long as people stick to their rules.” [14]

[Return to contents](#)

WHAT IS THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN AREAS CONTROLLED BY HIZBUL ISLAM?

Interview notes

4.28 An international NGO noted:

“Hizbul Islam operate a similar Sharia court system to AS.” [13]

WHAT IS THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN AREAS CONTROLLED BY AHLU SUNNA WAL JAMA'A?

Interview notes

4.29 A diplomatic source noted:

“Human rights are not good anywhere, but are considered better north of Belet Weyne, into the Galmudug region.” [12]

[Return to contents](#)

5. CONDITIONS IN INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSON (IDP) CAMPS

5.01 An international NGO noted:

“Movement is fluid and not all IDPs live in IDP camps. Data on IDPs is difficult to obtain with any level of accuracy as IDPs can be difficult to identify.” [9]

5.02 A security advisor noted:

“All aid agencies are in the process of moving their international staff out of southern and central Somalia. Life saving programmes do still occur but are in the minority. Some operate expensive wet feeding programmes and other medical agencies operate clinics and hospitals. This is currently under threat due to taxation from AS of [US]\$10 000 per 6 months. This is under debate by NGOs.”[10]

5.03 An international NGO noted:

“There are almost no NGOs helping IDPs in southern and central Somalia.” [13]

MOGADISHU

Summary of interview notes*

5.04 There was displacement in Mogadishu due to conflict; estimates of the numbers of IDPs within the city vary from “some” to 250,000.

* This summarises the main points raised by interlocutors in response to the particular question(s) for the convenience of users. Every effort has been taken to ensure the summary accurately reflects what was reported by the interlocutors however users are advised to read the interview notes in full for a complete and detailed picture.

Interview notes

The quotes from the interview notes are arranged in no particular order

5.05 An international NGO noted:

“Many of the temporary IDP shelters in Mogadishu appear to be empty, with IDPs moving to other accommodation within the city, often paying rent.” [4]

5.06 An international NGO noted:

“Estimates indicate that around 13,000 people have fled Mogadishu recently, with around 8-9,000 people moving internally [within Mogadishu].” [5]

5.07 An international NGO noted:

“There are still some IDPs in Mogadishu as they cannot afford to leave the city.” [6]

5.08 An international NGO noted:

“There is no humanitarian assistance available for IDPs within Mogadishu. Hamar Weyne and Shingani have seen a population increase by up to ten times due to IDPs, many from the Karan district. There have been efforts made to build [improve] the infrastructure of the city in order to cope with the increased numbers in some areas, this

includes a street cleaning and [Improvised Explosive Device] IED disposal programme that has begun to train around 3,000 people. There are other programmes planned, for instance roads, healthcare, schools and markets.

“Many IDPs now use former ministries as their homes.” [8]

5.09 An international NGO noted:

“There are an estimated 250,000 IDPs within Mogadishu, and most of these move between districts quite freely. Certain districts suffer from more population movement than others, such as Hodan and Wardighey. Those who had the resources have already left the city a[n]d those who remain are adjusting to the conflict and using what little resources they have to survive. There are many IDPs who live in houses belonging to others and look after the property for them. Businessmen are taking over property and increasing the price of rent.

“People are moving to areas such as Wadajeere, Dharkenely, Hamar Weyne and Waberi. The AS governed area of Karan, previously unaffected by fighting, is deserted.

“Houses destroyed by shelling are not being rebuilt as people are afraid of what will happen in the future to the houses.” [9]

5.10 An international NGO noted:

“There is a lack of access for NGOs in Mogadishu and this means that IDPs do not receive aid.” [13]

[Return to contents](#)

AFGOYE CORRIDOR

Summary of interview notes*

5.11 There are estimated to be between 200,000 and 500,000 people in the Afgoye corridor, which is becoming increasingly urbanised. There was movement between the corridor and Mogadishu. Some people chose to live in the corridor and commute to Mogadishu, although this practice was not as common as it had been due to recent instability in the city.

5.12 The area is under the control of different factions – Transitional Federal Government (TFG), Hizbul Islam and Al Shabaab (AS). Access for NGOs is difficult; entry into areas of the corridor is controlled by “gatekeepers”.

* This summarises the main points raised by interlocutors in response to the particular question(s) for the convenience of users. Every effort has been taken to ensure the summary accurately reflects what was reported by the interlocutors however users are advised to read the interview notes in full for a complete and detailed picture.

Interview notes

The quotes from the interview notes are arranged in no particular order.

5.13 An international NGO noted:

“Hizbul Islam are in control of the Afgoye corridor and they have attacked health facilities. The population has increased due to recent fighting.” [4]

5.14 An international NGO noted:

“The organisation carries out activities in the Afgoye corridor. It is difficult to say how many people there are in that area but UNHCR has a population tracking system. There are a lot of people going back and forward because of the nature of the fighting.

“The Afgoye corridor is an increasingly urbanised area. Satellite pictures show evidence of settling, urbanisation and of normal life with growing infrastructures such as water pipes. There is also some evidence from the satellite imaging that the population is decreasing.

“Not all the corridor is under the control of TFG. AS seems to create a certain sense of security even in the corridor.

“There has not been food distribution for quite some time but luckily there was a good harvest in Somalia this year. However, the implications of not getting food into the area – such as the price increase of food stuffs - are serious. The WFP (World Food Programme) is feeding around 8,000 people a day but not in the Afgoye corridor, only in Mogadishu.

“Most NGOs only access the corridor with local personnel. Access to the corridor is problematic because the protection provided by AS is not reliable. There is very little dialogue with them, also because of the political problem of them being a terrorist organisation. Engaging with them can be problematic.” [5]

5.15 An international NGO noted:

“Many people are mobile between Afgoye and Mogadishu and there is a fluidity of movement between the areas, depending on the security situation. Hizbul Islam control the area and AMISOM are approaching the area. The Afgoye Corridor has 'gate keepers' who control who and what moves into and out of the area. They are not necessarily aligned to any group and are seen as opportunists who have found a way to make money. They can make assistance from NGOs very difficult.

“There is thought to be a hierarchy in the IDP camps, but it is not certain whether this is related to length of residence or based along clan lines. It cannot be guaranteed that majority clan members will not face problems in IDP camps.” [6]

5.16 An international NGO noted:

“There is huge displacement from Mogadishu as people flee the general instability caused by shelling. Around 500,000 people are thought to be in the Afgoye Corridor, including a large contingent who have [sic] fled Mogadishu recently.” [8]

5.17 An international NGO noted:

“This organisation has a presence in Mogadishu and employs national staff who work in the city but live in the Afgoye Corridor and travel to work every day, and this pattern is mirrored by other Somalis who travel to Mogadishu to work every day. IDPs are seen as commodities by landlords who see them as an easy way to keep control of their land and to keep it safe.

“There are 'gatekeepers' on every settlement who attempt to take aid from NGOs and hand it out to the population, however NGOs are reluctant to let the 'gatekeepers' distribute aid as they know aid will be stolen.

“NGOs try to use blanket distribution rather than targeting as they are aware that there are so many people in need.

“There are many NGOs working on sanitation and latrines in the Afgoye Corridor.

“There are many businesses who have move [sic] to the Afgoye Corridor and the economy there is very good.” [9]

5.18 An international NGO noted:

“The Afgoye Corridor is incredibly difficult for NGOs to access and where access is available, aid is diverted. Landlords sell the land that IDPs live on or charge rent that they can't afford, meaning that they have to move. The price of land in the Afgoye Corridor is increasing.

“Satellite pictures of the Afgoye Corridor have demonstrated that the area is becoming more settled with businesses. It is now bigger than many towns in Somalia, although some of the buildings there may not house IDPs. The number of people living in the Afgoye Corridor is thought to be around 200,000.

“It is difficult to track movement of people in the Afgoye Corridor, however people previously have travelled between the area and Mogadishu. Now it is thought that people do not move as much because of the increased urbanisation.” [13]

5.19 An international NGO noted:

“The organisation tried to hand out aid in the Afgoye corridor (described as 'a nightmare'), but has faced difficulty as they encountered 'gate keepers' to the region who demand money. They claim to own the land that IDPs live on and also take money from them.

“People have previously travelled between the Afgoye corridor and Mogadishu for work or to maintain their houses, however this has become more difficult since Mogadishu became more violent in 2010, and also because the number of checkpoints (operated by various groups) has increased and people cannot afford to travel so much.” [14]

[Return to contents](#)

OTHER AREAS IN SOUTHERN AND CENTRAL SOMALIA

Summary of interview notes*

5.20 Beyond the Afgoye corridor there were a limited number of IDP settlements - most displaced people lived with relatives. Where there were IDP settlements, not all of the plots were taken by IDPs: some local residents set up plots to obtain aid.

* This summarises the main points raised by interlocutors in response to the particular question(s) for the convenience of users. Every effort has been taken to ensure the summary accurately reflects what was reported by the interlocutors however users are advised to read the interview notes in full for a complete and detailed picture.

Interview notes

The quotes from the interview notes are arranged in no particular order.

5.21 An international NGO which has worked in Somalia noted:

“Many IDPs move to stay with family members in houses rather than go to IDP camps. There is a lot of traffic from Mogadishu to Baidoa, however many IDPs will now move towards the Kenyan border. There has been a big increase in movement to Dadaab [UN-administered refugee camp] in Kenya.” [2]

5.22 A diplomatic source noted:

“Less people are fleeing to Dadaab in 2010 compared with 2009. Getting into Kenya from Somalia is still relatively easy.” [3]

5.23 An international NGO noted:

“In Galcayo, IDPs are targeted, mostly by young men and criminal gangs.” [4]

5.24 An international NGO noted:

“The organisation is not aware of major IDP camps outside the Afgoye corridor. In other areas there are small plots like the 10-15 settlements in Belet Weyne for up to 200-300 families. In the countryside there are a lot of people staying with relatives. There are lots of IDPs in Galcayo, Dhusarmareb and Baidoa.” [5]

5.25 An international NGO noted:

“There is a movement of IDPs throughout southern and central Somalia which is very dependent on the fluid security situation.” [6]

5.26 An international NGO noted:

“There has been an increase in IDPs moving towards Kenya, and there are also many IDPs moving through the Galmudug areas towards Puntland. Many IDPs travel to Somaliland where they are referred to as 'refugees'.

“It is difficult to provide assistance in the Lower Shabelle areas and many organisations have stopped.

“IDPs have moved from Puntland to South Galcayo and this has resulted in services in the city being stretched. The water supply is a problem and is operated by a private firm, so the cost of water increases with demand.” [8]

5.27 An international NGO noted:

“Belet Weyne and Jowhar are seeing more population movement.

“Puntland is hostile to IDPs from the south and will forcibly repatriate those that it finds on the basis of security concerns as the IDPs are mostly young men that Puntland claims are linked with AS.” [9]

5.28 An international NGO noted:

“Some IDPs have returned to their home regions and resettled in communities there rather than in IDP camps.

“There are some short term settlements in Galcayo, Baidoa, Dhusarmareb and Belet Weyne which have hosted IDPs from the local region for months. Baidoa hosts 40 settlements, but only 15 contain IDPs. Local residents have realised that assistance is only given to the people in the IDP camps, and so they set up camps to receive this assistance.

“IDPs can be vulnerable as they move out of areas where they have clan protection.”
[13]

[Return to contents](#)

Annex A

LIST OF OUTLINE QUESTIONS SENT TO SOURCES BEFORE INTERVIEW

SOMALIA FACT FINDING MISSION – SEPTEMBER 2010

Purpose

The purpose of the Fact Finding Mission (FFM) is to obtain specific information on the current security and humanitarian situation in Southern and Central Somalia. The FFM does not set out to be comprehensive or to replicate current reliable country of origin information that is available from publicly available sources, but aims to fill gaps in that information. The final report of the FFM must be read in that context.

Sources

The FFM will identify a range of sources that are qualified to contribute to an authoritative, accurate and up-to-date assessment. Sources will include representatives of international organisations, foreign and domestic non-governmental organisations, overseas missions and individuals who as a result of their professional or other activities are well placed to contribute to the picture.

Sources will be advised that any information they provide will be reflected in a publicly disclosable report. In every case the source will be asked to agree to be identified as the source of the information they provide. However, some sources may refuse to be publicly identified, in order to protect themselves, their staff, or the operations of their organisation. In such cases the source will be asked to agree to be identified in generic terms e.g. as “a senior official of an international humanitarian organisation”. If they are unwilling to agree to that level of identification the information they provide may be used anonymously.

Delegation

The delegation will comprise:

Debbie Goodier – Senior Country Researcher, Country of Origin Information Service
Eugenio Bosco – Country Researcher, Country of Origin Information Service
Darren Forbes-Batey – First Secretary (Migration), British High Commission

Areas of Enquiry

The fact-finding team will, to the extent possible, gather information on the following topics:

- which groups currently control each area in Southern and Central Somalia
- how easy is it to travel between different areas in Southern and Central Somalia
- update of the security situation
- update of the human rights situation
- update of conditions in the IDP camps.

With specific emphasis on the following areas:

Control of areas

- Who is currently in control of each district in Mogadishu?
- Who is currently in control of each of the regions in the rest of south central Somalia?
- Which areas are currently the subject of armed clashes?

- Is there any likelihood of particular areas or regions changing hands in the near future?

Internal Travel

Travel into Mogadishu

- How do people currently travel from the airport to the city?
- Are protective escorts used routinely?
- What is the up to date security/checkpoint position for travellers between the airport and city?
- Are there any restrictions on travel within the city?
- Is public transport available?
- What checkpoints are there within the city?

Travel away from Mogadishu

- How do people usually travel from Mogadishu to the south and central regions?
- Are there any restrictions on travel?
- Do travellers face risks in particular areas/circumstances?
- What are the numbers and nature of the checkpoints which might be encountered compared to previous years?
- Are protective escorts used routinely?

Update of security situation

- Which areas are less adversely affected by the conflict?
- Has the nature of the conflict changed in Mogadishu or elsewhere?
- Are any particular groups targeted?
- Is the security situation generally stable in non-conflict areas?
- Is the overall risk of being caught up in indiscriminate violence less in 2010 than 2009?

Update of human rights situation

- How many reports of HR abuses of ordinary Somalis in TFG, Al Shabaab, Hizbul Islam, ASWJ controlled areas in 2010?
- What was the nature and extent of such abuses?
- Do clans still provide protection/support?
- Are people able to live in relative safety in non-conflict areas?

Update of conditions within IDP camps

- How many people have been displaced in recent months? Are there alternatives to living in IDP camps?
- What are living conditions like for displaced persons?

Plus any other matters that arise and appear relevant to the FFM team.

[Return to contents](#)

Annex B

GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

- AMISOM – African Union Mission in Somalia
- AQAP – Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula
- AS – Al Shabaab
- ASWJ – Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a
- AU – African Union
- FFM – Fact Finding Mission
- HI – Hizbul Islam
- ICRC – International Committee of the Red Cross
- IDP – Internally Displaced Person
- IED – Improvised Explosive Device
- NGO – Non-Government Organisation
- SCS – Southern and Central Somalia
- TFG – Transitional Federal Government
- UK – United Kingdom
- UN – United Nations
- UNHCR – United National High Commissioner for Refugees
- USD – United States Dollar

[Return to contents](#)

Annex C

INTERVIEW NOTES

Interview with: Security Advisor to EU Special Representative for the EU Delegation on Somalia

Conducted by: Debbie Goodier and Eugenio Bosco

Interview date: 9 September 2010

2. Internal Travel

Mogadishu Airport

African Express flights are viewed as the safest way into Mogadishu. There is a total of around 15-18 flights arriving in Mogadishu per day. The checks by the Immigration Department on arrivals are practically non-existent.

There are not many Somali civilians at the airport – businessmen and others linked with militia are more common. Members of the diaspora travel back to Mogadishu fairly regularly, but these are all well connected.

AMISOM control who can enter the airport.

Mogadishu Airport to the city

Mobility is limited unless the individual is aligned with a militia.

3. Security situation

Mogadishu

The violence in Mogadishu is increasing as Al Shabaab have used Ramadan as an opportunity to attempt to further destabilise the TFG. Attacks in Mogadishu by Al Shabaab are far more sophisticated than they were 12 months ago, and this is thought to be because of the presence of foreign fighters in Somalia. Al Shabaab want the TFG to leave Somalia, and they can react quickly to events in order to carry out attacks at short notice and with impunity. Foreign Al Shabaab fighters are bringing new expertise in to Somalia, including snipers.

Security in Mogadishu is dependent on clan militia, and even AMISOM use them for protection. The security situation is incredibly dynamic and reliant on many different factors, including shifting allegiances.

All civilians in Mogadishu will either be aligned to a militia or completely unable to get out of the town. Many cannot leave their own district. For ordinary Somalis, life can be really difficult. Bakara market is attacked daily.

There is a large amount of trade in Mogadishu, including both legitimate and 'black market' trade. Livestock is available in Mogadishu. The port is incredibly busy with

imported goods arriving. Both the TFG and Al Shabaab get revenue from the port. The TFG also get revenue from sales at Bakara Market.

AMISOM are trying to take control of more of the city but it is difficult as they need to consider the effects of their actions on civilians in Mogadishu.

Areas controlled by Al Shabaab (the North and East of the city) are at risk of shelling by AMISOM. Areas controlled by AMISOM are at risk because they are targeted by Al Shabaab. Medina is an area with some success as there has been investment by the TFG in health facilities, and local residents ensure security.

Outside Mogadishu

Areas controlled by Al Shabaab are more stable and harvests have increased, however these areas are controlled by the local Al Shabaab administrators, rather than the foreign fighters.

There are three profiles of Al Shabaab fighters:

1. Local/indigenous Somali fighters.
2. Fighters from the diaspora.
3. Foreign fighters.

The balance of the groups is showing definite movement towards foreign fighters.

4. Human Rights Situation

What is the human rights situation in areas controlled by the TFG?

There is no recruitment of child soldiers, but some children will attempt to fight for the TFG. There is a definite effort to remove any children serving in the military.

What is the human rights situation in areas controlled by Al Shabaab?

The situation for women is not positive. Human rights abuses by Al Shabaab happen more often than currently reported.

Child recruitment by Al Shabaab is very common - they will forcibly recruit the eldest son from local families. The children can be as young as ten years old. When children are injured in conflict, they are taken to health facilities in Lower Shabelle because it is less likely that they will receive negative publicity about it that way.

Interview with: An international NGO

Conducted by: Debbie Goodier and Eugenio Bosco

Interview date: 10 September 2010

1. Control of areas in Southern and Central Somalia

Who controls regions in Southern and Central Somalia?

Al Shabaab controls Bay, Bakool, Middle Juba regions and also areas south of this.

2. Internal Travel

Outside Mogadishu

Travel between different areas controlled by Al Shabaab is certainly possible, and a system exists where civilians can obtain a permit in order to travel, as long as they explain to Al Shabaab where they are going and why. People have to travel through Al Shabaab checkpoints and may have to exercise some caution when explaining why they are travelling if they know it is against the Al Shabaab rules. It is not unknown for people to lie about their reasons for travel. Al Shabaab have removed all 'illegal' roadblocks and left only their own checkpoints.

3. Security situation

Outside Mogadishu

There are no safe areas in southern-central Somalia as long as Al Shabaab and Hizbul Islam are present. In Bay, Bakool and Middle Juba regions there have been few physical clashes over the last year or so – Al Shabaab took over without a great deal of conflict and foreign fighters have now overwhelmed local fighters with no opposition. There have been some incidents where Ethiopians have crossed the border and killed Al Shabaab fighters, but this is very uncommon. There is, however, a lot of uncertainty over how long the stability will last.

4. Human Rights Situation

What is the human rights situation in areas controlled by Al Shabaab?

Al Shabaab does not allow for good human rights in the areas they control and has banned almost all international organisations. They can make it very difficult for NGOs to operate and this can result in feeding and health programmes being stopped, with significant consequences for the civilian population. Al Shabaab have requested international organisations to pay 15,000 USD a month in order to operate. Many have refused to do so and their offices have been confiscated by Al Shabaab. They target both international and local organisations. Some organisations have been stripped of their assets which have then been sold by Al Shabaab. They have also been known to steal aid and sell it for their own profit.

Al Shabaab demand food from every family in some areas they control. There is speculation that Al Shabaab steal in order to fund their operation as they are cash poor. They are currently attempting to extort money from a variety of sources, including local business people and farmers.

Children are forcibly recruited by Al Shabaab and some are so small they cannot hold a Kalashnikov. Al Shabaab sympathisers provide education and there are fears that they are brainwashing the children and teaching them only about sharia and jihad.

People live in fear as there are serious consequences for not obeying Al Shabaab orders, for instance not being in prayers at the right time. Radical preachers are in control of the local mosques. There are fewer amputations currently as people are obeying Al Shabaab's rules, but they are more common in Kismayo and Mogadishu. Just the fear of extreme sharia law application is a deterrent for the population. Such extreme application of Sharia law happens a lot where foreign Al Shabaab fighters – who are more extreme - dominate. It happens less where local Al Shabaab members operate.

There is a foreign influence in Al Shabaab and this is spreading throughout southern and central Somalia. At the moment, out of the ten members of the supreme council of Al Shabaab only two are Somali. Foreigners are more radical than the local Al Shabaab commanders and administrators and local people and elders cannot communicate with them. The fighters are mostly coming from Afghanistan, Pakistan and Yemen. Local elders are unable to put any pressure on Al Shabaab foreign fighters who do not care about local people.

5. Conditions in IDP camps

Other areas in Southern and Central Somalia

Many IDPs move to stay with family members in houses rather than go to IDP camps. There is a lot of traffic from Mogadishu to Baidoa, however many IDPs will now move towards the Kenyan border. There has been a big increase in movement to Dadaab in Kenya.

Interview with: A diplomatic source

Conducted by: Debbie Goodier, Eugenio Bosco and Darren Forbes-Batey

Interview date: 9 September 2010

1. Control of areas in Southern and Central Somalia

Who controls regions in Southern and Central Somalia?

Al Shabaab (AS) is trying to get into Puntland.

In Galmudug, where Galcayo is located, all the way down to Haradheere there is a president and this is general a secure area apart from an area controlled by pirates. There is no AS presence here, but local clan militias acting under the ASWJ (Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a) name are present around Dhusarmareb and El Dheere. Habr Gedir and Hawiye dominate but there is a mix of clans in the local councils and there is also international presence, including in Galcayo. The area from the Hiiran-Galgudud regional line to the southern border of Somalia is mainly controlled by AS, which means they are able to move freely. This is partly because of the power vacuum, but everybody can move freely in that area.

There are pockets of territory close to the border with Ethiopia where TFG-allied forces and Ethiopians are in control.

There are places such as Dollo and Yeed where ASWJ seems to be in control. ASWJ provides an ideological identity to clan groups of various kinds, mainly majority clans.

Belet Weyne has changed hands multiple times in the last two years.

AS try to ensure that administrators in areas they govern are of the clan associated with the area.

2. Internal Travel

Mogadishu Airport to the city

The road between the airport and Villa Somalia (the presidential compound) is kept open but there has been some fighting and the road is dangerous for TFG-connected people. For ordinary Somali civilians it should not be particularly dangerous apart from being in the wrong place at the wrong time. Somalis of excessively western appearance would be noticed as members of the Somali diaspora but this does not mean they would be necessarily targeted by AS. Ordinary Somalis could not afford armed escorts but they are not needed in general. They are likely to use minibuses and the drivers may have to buy their way through checkpoints.

Mogadishu city

The average Somalis can go everywhere in the city. Business people are usually able to move across all districts without the need of armed escorts.

Outside Mogadishu

Everybody can move freely in central-southern Somalia and there is public transport in the form of minibuses. Business is taking place, it is cross-clans. There are AS and clan-based checkpoints but 90% of them do not cause threats to Somalis. Sometimes people have to pay facilitators to go through.

People can, for instance, get out of Mogadishu and travel to the Afgoye Corridor for business.

Young men may be targeted by AS for recruitment when travelling in AS held areas.

3. Security situation

The average Somalis are victims of violence not a target of violence – they can be caught in the crossfire. However, those perceived to have TFG affiliation would be at risk in AS-controlled areas.

Mogadishu

In Mogadishu there are functioning banking services (dealing with Somali Shillings and USD). Hawalas (money transfer companies) offer some banking services, but are not banks per se. Telecommunications (including mobile networks and internet connection) as well as services such as water, sewage and electricity are provided by private contractors. Big business is done in USD while ordinary transactions (such as paying a bus driver) are done in Shillings. It is also very easy to exchange money.

Outside Mogadishu

Kismayo is in general safe as long as people are not accused by AS of any crimes. The average Somalis 'play the game' and – in the vast majority of cases – are able to avoid unnecessary attention by AS.

AS does not have enough people to control all areas, usually fighters come in first and then leave administrators behind. AS administrators are usually left in charge of an area rather than moved around. There are, however, places like Baidoa where there is a higher military presence.

The role of foreign fighters (such as Afghans and Pakistanis) is inspiring the 'ideological' Somalis, those AS local members who want to feel part of a global movement. The AS fighters in Mogadishu are usually more committed and ideologically oriented. AS has a core group of fighters and then a 'reserve' group in which there are more clan militias who can be involved when needed. AS in general take into account – at least to some extent – the clan dynamics.

Minority clans are in general no more affected by AS than anyone else, but the group has played on their dissatisfaction with the previous system and the minority clans constitute a suitable recruitment basis for AS.

4. Human Rights Situation

What is the human rights situation in areas controlled by the TFG?

Human rights are improving in TFG-controlled areas.

What is the human rights situation in areas controlled by Al Shabaab?

Those living in areas under AS face the danger of being punished, and sometimes they are the victims of false accusations. They are also subjected to restrictions and rules on clothing, work (women are discouraged or disallowed from working) or recreation, for example.

5. Conditions in IDP camps

Other areas in Southern and Central Somalia

Less people are fleeing to Dadaab in 2010 compared with 2009. Getting into Kenya from Somalia is still relatively easy.

[Return to contents](#)

Interview with: An international NGO

Conducted by: Debbie Goodier and Eugenio Bosco

Interview date: 9 September 2010

1. Control of areas in Southern and Central Somalia (SCS)

Who controls Mogadishu?

The Transitional Federal Government has made rehabilitation of Hamar Weyne a priority. The TFG is under severe pressure from Al Shabaab offensive action aimed at bringing the downfall of the TFG. Within the districts of Mogadishu, the TFG soldiers often roam around disrupting commercial activity and robbing and abusing citizens in order to acquire sufficient money to buy qat; the TFG soldiers have no barrack sites for off duty periods and have not been paid. The new Mayor of Mogadishu is attempting to solve problems in the city but does not have authority or control of TFG soldiers. There is serious concern about the precarious nature of the TFG's control.

2. Internal Travel

Mogadishu Airport

Somalis returning to Somalia make arrangements with family in order to ensure that they have somebody to meet them at the airport and somewhere to stay on arrival. Any Somalis returning to Mogadishu airport would need a lot of preparation and would need to ensure they had contacts in Mogadishu. The Somali diaspora travel back to Somalia frequently.

Mogadishu Airport to the city

Somali citizens do not need or use armed escorts between the airport and the city. Ordinary Somalis would not be able to afford an armed escort and even if they could afford such guards it would draw attention to their importance and wealth, and thereby make them more attractive targets for robbery and kidnapping.

Outside Mogadishu

It is possible to travel from Mogadishu to other parts of SCS. Airports are working. There are five small airports in the outskirts of Mogadishu which all seem to have a lot of movement and passengers. Al Shabaab frequently use the main routes between Kismayo and Mogadishu in order to move military supplies and important personnel between the towns; travel on this route is generally possible, but there have been security incidents along the route.

There is movement between Mogadishu and Galcayo in order to carry out trade or business.

3. Security situation

Mogadishu

Retaliatory fire by AMISOM is often kills and injures civilians, especially in Bakara Market. Wadajir is considered to be the safest district of Mogadishu as local residents are involved in security in the region. Until August 2010, violence in Mogadishu was sporadic, and it was difficult to tell whether violence was due to the insecurity or isolated incidents. The hardest fighting seem to be happening in central Mogadishu in the areas in and around Hamar Weyne at the moment. Rape seems to be an issue in many areas.

Outside Mogadishu

There has been fighting in Galgudud between July and September [2010], and many Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a and Al Shabaab fighters were killed. However, Galgudud is an area which can be considered slightly safer than other areas for civilians. Baidoa and Kismayo (both areas under Al Shabaab control) can also be considered safer, but are under Al Shabaab control.

4. Human Rights Situation

What is the human rights situation in areas controlled by the TFG?

The courts within the TFG area of Mogadishu are functional and schools are also being built in those areas. The Police in Mogadishu have not been paid consistently over the last 18 months, but they still work.

The TFG had decided not to allow genetically modified food to be distributed, but has retracted this demand. The distribution of food to some 180,000 older people and disabled was recently suspended for about 6 weeks because TFG military had attacked a distribution centre.

What is the human rights situation in areas controlled by Al Shabaab?

Al Shabaab demanded international NGOs and UN Agencies had to pay them or leave the country, on 7 September [2010]; it seems that this date was delayed, but that the first NGOs have now been named and are pulling out of SCS. Al Shabaab are now mostly controlled by foreign fighters, for instance, Pakistani nationals, which makes it all but impossible for NGOs to negotiate with them in order to provide humanitarian assistance. It is becoming increasingly hard to negotiate access to areas under Al Shabaab control, probably because of a recent influx of foreign entities who have been placed in positions of authority.

Civilians do not like Al Shabaab because of their autocratic nature, severe system of punishment and forcible recruitment of fighters. Al Shabaab are harder to negotiate with in the front line areas of Mogadishu (Abdi Aziz, Shibis, Bondhere).

Al Shabaab have prevented the distribution of food of US origin by NGOs.

5. Conditions in IDP camps

Mogadishu

Many of the temporary IDP shelters in Mogadishu appear to be empty, with IDPs moving to other accommodation within the city, often paying rent.

Afgoye corridor

Hizbul Islam are in control of the Afgoye corridor and they have attacked health facilities. The population has increased due to recent fighting.

Other areas in Southern and Central Somalia

In Galcayo, IDPs are targeted, mostly by young men and criminal gangs.

[Return to contents](#)

Interview with: An international NGO

Conducted by: Debbie Goodier, Eugenio Bosco and Darren Forbes-Batey

Interview date: 9 September 2010

1. Control of areas in Southern and Central Somalia

Who controls regions in Southern and Central Somalia?

Along the border with Ethiopia there are groups allied with TFG (Transitional Federal Government), as well as clan militias opposed to Al Shabaab's presence, ASWJ forces, most of them supported by Ethiopian forces. The south and much of central Somalia is under the control of AS, with a smaller presence of Hizbul Islam (HI) in the Afgoye corridor and Haradheere.

The Afgoye corridor is not under the control of TFG (Transitional Federal Government). Al Shabaab (AS) is in control of the access, and the area surrounding it. HI nominally controls the Afgoye corridor, although in recent months there have been localized skirmishes between AS and HI over control of HI areas.

2. Internal Travel

Mogadishu Airport

A lot of people are flying to Mogadishu but the organisation's viewpoint is that Somalia is not a place to send people back, certainly not in Mogadishu.

Outside Mogadishu

There is a lot of travelling between Afgoye and Mogadishu. In general Somalis can get around in AS-controlled areas as long as they follow their rules (no music, dress code etc). With regards to checkpoints, the organisation provided the example of the situation of travelling between Belet Weyne and Galcayo: there are a number of AS checkpoints, followed by clan militia checkpoints, then Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a (ASWJ) checkpoints. However, usually it is possible to go through, although there is a certain amount of risk involved.

3. Security situation

Mogadishu

Thousands of civilians have been killed as they are caught in the fighting between AMISOM and AS. Bakara market has been closed for the last couple of weeks, although it has since re-opened. Many casualties are caused by exchanges of artillery and mortar fire between AS and AMISOM, with the latter engaging in indiscriminate fire into populated areas.

The TFG is considered corrupt without a leadership who could stay above petty issues.

Outside Mogadishu

Internal areas in south-central Somalia are generally safe for Somalis, if we look at the number of incidents. In Galgudud there is a problematic presence of ASWJ (this is due to the fighting between ASWJ and AS, rather than the presence of ASWJ in that area. The security situation of the Afgoye corridor is not clear. There are problems caused by the rivalry between AS and Hizbul Islam (HI).

AS is not always a coherent group. Within the organisation, there are more extremist and less extremist groups. There is a growing influence of foreign elements within AS. The group is currently getting more cohesive. The number of foreign fighters went from 200 to 2,000 over the past year, particularly when AQAP in Yemen was getting pressure from Government forces and subsequently moved some of its operatives to South Central Somalia. They introduced suicide attacks and increased radicalisation, which is an indirect cause of danger for civilians. There has been a marked increase in the use of IEDs and other styles of attack reminiscent of Pakistan, Iraq, Chechnya and Afghanistan.

4. Human Rights Situation

Anecdotal evidence from a network of 25 NGOs who track violations suggest that the current main violation is forced recruitment by various groups. This is a serious problem for those displaced in the Afgoye corridor.

What is the human rights situation in areas controlled by the TFG?

The TFG has carried out forced recruitment of adults and children in the past.

What is the human rights situation in areas controlled by Al Shabaab?

AS is carrying out forced recruitment of adults and children. Al Shabaab has also prevented women from engaging in trade and amputated hands from thieves, as well as arresting and detaining NGO workers who were considered to be in breach of AS's restrictions (e.g. holding a training workshop without permission, carrying documents that AS perceive to be related to spying or anti-AS activity).

The weakness of the TFG is the strength of AS who does not have any opposition. They deliver peace where they are but equally a lot of hassle for Somalis (such as being unable to listen to the radio) in areas they control. AS seems to create a certain sense of security even in the Afgoye corridor. In AS-controlled areas people do not have to worry excessively about money to be paid, unlike the TFG-controlled areas where the level of corruption and extortion is high. Clans are now present in a less prominent way in AS-controlled areas.

AS does not want expats in Somalia and wants NGOs to register and pay a registration fee to them. There are specific set registration fees. This order came from the central leadership of AS. This registration process started three weeks ago. The phenomenon had to some extent happened before but this was the first time the order came from the very top of AS.

5. Conditions in IDP camps

Mogadishu

Estimates indicate that around 13,000 people have fled Mogadishu recently, with around 8-9,000 people moving internally.

Afgoye corridor

The organisation carries out activities in the Afgoye corridor. It is difficult to say how many people there are in that area but UNHCR has a population tracking system. There are a lot of people going back and forward because of the nature of the fighting.

The Afgoye corridor is an increasingly urbanised area. Satellite pictures show evidence of settling, urbanisation and of normal life with growing infrastructures such as water pipes. There is also some evidence from the satellite imaging that the population is decreasing.

Not all the corridor is under the control of TFG. AS seems to create a certain sense of security even in the corridor.

There has not been food distribution for quite some time but luckily there was a good harvest in Somalia this year. However, the implications of not getting food into the area – such as the price increase of food stuffs - are serious. The WFP (World Food Programme) is feeding around 8,000 people a day but not in the Afgoye corridor, only in Mogadishu.

Most NGOs only access the corridor with local personnel. Access to the corridor is problematic because the protection provided by AS is not reliable. There is very little dialogue with them, also because of the political problem of them being a terrorist organisation. Engaging with them can be problematic.

Other areas in Southern and Central Somalia

The organisation is not aware of major IDP camps outside the Afgoye corridor. In other areas there are small plots like the 10-15 settlements in Belet Weyne for up to 200-300 families. In the countryside there are a lot of people staying with relatives. There are lots of IDPs in Galcayo, Dhusarmareb and Baidoa.

[Return to contents](#)

Interview with: An international NGO

Conducted by: Debbie Goodier and Eugenio Bosco

Interview date: 9 September 2010

1. Control of areas in Southern and Central Somalia

Who controls Mogadishu?

Al Shabaab control around half of Mogadishu or more – they have consolidated their position recently.

Who controls other regions in Southern and Central Somalia?

Al Shabaab control large parts of southern and central Somalia, including Baidoa. The TFG have a presence in Dollo.

Galmudug is under the control of local clans, however it is possible that Al Shabaab might move to that area and try to take control.

2. Internal Travel

Outside Mogadishu

Al Shabaab have reduced the number of checkpoints in areas they control and have made travelling by road more secure against criminals, but they commit their own abuses, including recruitment of young men from buses that they stop at checkpoints. Forced recruitment is getting systematic, and young men are asked to register with Al Shabaab.

People have been stopped outside Belet Weyne by criminal groups.

3. Security situation

Mogadishu

The clan protection system in Mogadishu has been destroyed. There has been constant movement of IDPs into and out of Mogadishu as the security situation changed. AMISOM have been firing into civilian areas of Mogadishu since 2008 and their retaliatory fire does not always hit Al Shabaab. AMISOM has been firing indiscriminately and commit violations. It is not a stabilising presence in Mogadishu.

The foreign elements of Al Shabaab are getting stronger in Mogadishu.

Outside Mogadishu

Everywhere in southern and central Somalia has been affected by violations of international humanitarian law and by a situation of generalised violence and displacement over the last three years. There has been an expansion of the insurgency outside Mogadishu. The competition for the control amongst various groups has caused

a situation of indiscriminate violence. Al Shabaab fighters melt into the civilian population causing a potential increase in indiscriminate violence.

Al-Shabaab controlled areas, for instance Baidoa, are fairly peaceful and subject to less indiscriminate violence, but the people there face human rights abuses committed by Al Shabaab.

4. Human Rights Situation

All parties to the conflict (except AMISOM) recruit children, although it is not certain that TFG forcibly recruit.

What is the human rights situation in areas controlled by Al Shabaab?

Al Shabaab are the main persecuting agent in southern and central Somalia. Their application of sharia law is stretched away from the traditional concept. In Merca, men are forced to register with Al Shabaab, and systematic recruitment is taking place in Doble. Those who flee forced recruitment in one area may still face forced recruitment in their new location.

In Baidoa, Hamar Weyne elders have lost influence and are not able to talk to Al Shabaab like they could in 2009. Baidoa residents face an extreme interpretation of sharia law. Al Shabaab's ideological agenda has changed to the detriment of Somali civilians.

Al Shabaab commit many abuses against women and impose strict rules with harsh punishments.

Some minorities should benefit, in theory, from sharia law, however it is not certain that sharia judgements will be sustainable as the administration of areas moves.

5. Conditions in IDP camps

Mogadishu

There are still some IDPs in Mogadishu as they cannot afford to leave the city.

Afgoye corridor

Many people are mobile between Afgoye and Mogadishu and there is a fluidity of movement between the areas, depending on the security situation. Hizbul Islam control the area and AMISOM are approaching the area. The Afgoye Corridor has 'gate keepers' who control who and what moves into and out of the area. They are not necessarily aligned to any group and are seen as opportunists who have found a way to make money. They can make assistance from NGOs very difficult.

There is thought to be a hierarchy in the IDP camps, but it is not certain whether this is related to length of residence or based along clan lines. It cannot be guaranteed that majority clan members will not face problems in IDP camps.

Other areas in Southern and Central Somalia

There is a movement of IDPs throughout southern and central Somalia which is very dependent on the fluid security situation.

[Return to contents](#)

Interview with: A security adviser

Conducted by: Debbie Goodier, Eugenio Bosco and Darren Forbes-Batey

Interview date: 9 September 2010

1. Control of areas in Southern and Central Somalia

Who controls Mogadishu?

The TFG (Transitional Federal Government) controls six districts in Mogadishu.

Villa Somalia (the presidential compound in Mogadishu) is protected by the Ugandan battalion but there are problems with snipers and mortar shells getting there. The airport, the seaport and Villa Somalia are under the control of AMISOM and TFG but Al Shabaab (AS) is currently [9/9/10] only 200 metres from Villa Somalia. They are trying to take it but this is unlikely to happen as it will be well defended by AMISOM. If the government falls and AS gets full control over Mogadishu, Ethiopia is likely to be back in Somalia very soon.

However, over the last two years there has been no significant movement in terms of control in Mogadishu. The conflict has peaks and troughs but the status quo remains.

Who controls other regions in Southern and Central Somalia?

Somalia is really about money. The example of the port of Kismayo is typical. Controlling it is vital, considering the influx of goods. AS would be prepared to fight to the death to keep it under its control. The influence of the Somali diaspora is everywhere, especially in terms of funds.

ASWJ (Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a) are in control of isolated areas near the Ethiopian border.

2. Internal Travel

Mogadishu Airport

The source was last in Mogadishu four weeks ago. He is generally happy to go to the airport which is controlled by AMISOM but Somalis are not allowed within the AMISOM area. The airport is improving and airlines are flying normally to Mogadishu. Airport security is also improving. There are more and more contractors working at the airport as the number of passengers is going up. Contractors live in protected accommodation (similar to those in Afghanistan) within the airport but at the moment there is no protective fencing for the entire area.

Mogadishu Airport to the city

The source travels to Villa Somalia in an armed convoy protected by the AU (African Union) troops but they are not geared to look after ordinary visitors and average convoys. He cannot go anywhere else for security reasons. Four weeks ago, the source found the journey to Villa Somalia difficult, as TFG troops were protesting about not being paid. Difficulty in travelling to Villa Somalia has been reported on other occasions.

Both the airport and the seaport are now managed by private contractors and are getting safer. In general travelling from the airport to the city should not cause any problems to ordinary Somalis as the airport is quite close to the city. Normal Somalis are likely to be picked up by family members. One cannot just walk outside the airport and get a taxi. Some arrangements have to be made in advance but armed escorts are not necessarily needed.

Checkpoints from the airport into Mogadishu are more defined. There is a series of checkpoints managed by AMISOM and TFG.

Mogadishu city

Checkpoints in Mogadishu are in various places, mostly along lines of confrontation. Checkpoints are managed by TFG military and police where they are in control, or by AS and other groups, for instance local warlords. Checkpoints are fairly random, rather than in specific set places. They change according to fighting areas and the level of control of specific groups.

Outside Mogadishu

Information on this comes from NGOs operating throughout southern and central Somalia. People travel regularly within Somalia by land and by air. Most airports are operational, mainly with charter flights and it is possible to fly into Mogadishu, Hargeisa, Garowe, Galkayo and Bossaso. Those who can afford to fly internally do, others travel over land.

3. Security situation

Mogadishu

The status quo in the last two years has not changed significantly but of course there are peaks and ebbs in the fighting. The TFG is supposed to be in place until August 2011, when there should be elections. It is hoped that a referendum on a new constitution will take place before then.

Recently a lot of AS fighters and arms have been brought into Somalia from Eritrea. The nature of the AS violence has become more sophisticated over the last 12 months and the nature of AS has recently changed. AS fighters are now mainly foreigners – which include Afghans, Pakistanis, Chechens – and many local AS members are not very keen on this, although some are being radicalised by the foreign fighters. Techniques such as suicide bombers and IEDs (Improvised Explosive Devices) have been brought to Somalia by foreign fighters who have been killed in large numbers. Chechens in particular have brought extensive knowledge of conflict in urban areas. AS is becoming quite aggressive in trying to bring down the TFG and AMISOM before the AU brings in an expected 2,000 troops. It is hoped that the total contingent of AMISOM could be up to 20,000. The problem is that TFG forces are badly led, poorly trained, frequently not paid and overall 'pretty useless'. Within AMISOM, Ugandans and Burundians are particularly targeted by AS.

AS has many groups and sub-groups. Negotiations between the TFG and ASWJ have already taken place and it is thought that there is some potential for negotiations with Hizbul Islam (HI) and 'weaker' parts of AS.

AS carries out targeted attacks against Ugandan and Burundian troops, as well as TFG ministers and MPs, but they also carry out random killings of civilians in Mogadishu to create disorder and chaos. It is not even safe to be in Medina hospital. Civilians are particularly in danger in Bakara market and in areas close to those controlled by AMISOM. However, apart from some areas, you can see normal life in Mogadishu, like children playing in the street. Most of the city is traversable but it depends who you are. Everybody who is not Somali is at risk, including AMISOM and NGOs. For ordinary Somalis who go about their day-to-day life Mogadishu is reasonably safe. They can go shopping and to the market, children go to school. There is public transport, minibuses and taxis are available. The Mogadishu economy is booming and thriving on the lack of regulations. Quite a lot of people have left Mogadishu but there is still evidence of a normal life. It is difficult to establish how many civilians have left the city but estimates indicate up to 500,000 might have left.

In his opinion, returnees would not be at risk at all in Mogadishu.

There are still some clan areas but Mogadishu is more 'cosmopolitan' and less defined in terms of clans. However, by and large, people in Mogadishu tend to stick to their clan areas.

Bringing casualties outside of Mogadishu to Kenya is now very difficult unless people have suitable papers.

4. Human Rights Situation

What is the human rights situation in areas controlled by Al Shabaab?

NGOs who have made deals with AS are able to operate by paying money to AS. Civilians do not have to pay money to AS, but business owners do.

The application of extreme Shari'a law by AS is a way of subjugating the population. If you do anything wrong according to their rules it does not matter who you are.

[Return to contents](#)

Interview with: An international NGO

Conducted by: Debbie Goodier and Darren Forbes-Batey

Interview date: 13 September 2010

1. Control of areas in Southern and Central Somalia

Who controls Mogadishu?

The TFG officially controls six districts in Mogadishu, but also controls around 70-80% of the Hodan region. Medina and Dharkenely are controlled using a form of 'community policing' where the local warlords are aligned to the TFG, but control the areas themselves. Shingani is under the control of AMISOM.

Who controls other regions in Southern and Central Somalia?

The Galmudug area is self administrating and is stable. It contains ASWJ elements.

2. Internal Travel

Mogadishu Airport

There are many regular flights to Mogadishu from Nairobi. There are also flights to Hargeisa from Nairobi and from Djibouti to Berbera. African Express, Puntair, Juba and Dallo all operate flights in Somalia.

Outside Mogadishu

There are regular flights from Mogadishu to Galcayo.

3. Security situation

Mogadishu

There is continuous shelling of the AS areas in Mogadishu and many people flee that, rather than AS. In the TFG controlled areas, life goes on as normal, however no areas are considered to be completely safe. AS have developed a new style of fighting including more targeted attacks, such as at the airport [on 9 September 2010]. There is infighting amongst TFG soldiers who have not been paid and this infighting has led to a change in mood in the city.

There is indiscriminate shelling by all parties to the conflict. AS will use a populated area as a base and then move on.

The private sector in Mogadishu is booming and many businesses now operate from Hamar Weyne and the Afgoye corridor.

Outside Mogadishu

Galmudug is the only region in southern and central Somalia without an AS presence, and is far more stable than other regions. South Galcayo is stable and considered to be relatively safe, although the infrastructure needs improvement.

4. Human Rights Situation

What is the human rights situation in areas controlled by Al Shabaab?

There is over-reporting of human rights abuses in AS controlled areas by NGOs. It is almost impossible to verify any of the reports that come out of the country.

5. Conditions in IDP camps

Mogadishu

There is no humanitarian assistance available for IDPs within Mogadishu. Hamar Weyne and Shingani have seen a population increase by up to ten times due to IDPs, many from the Karan district. There have been efforts made to build the infrastructure of the city in order to cope with the increased numbers in some areas; this includes a street cleaning and IED disposal programme that has begun to train around 3,000 people. There are other programmes planned, for instance roads, healthcare, schools and markets.

Many IDPs now use former ministries as their homes.

Afgoye corridor

There is huge displacement from Mogadishu as people flee the general instability caused by shelling. Around 500,000 people are thought to be in the Afgoye Corridor, including a large contingent who have fled Mogadishu recently.

Other areas in Southern and Central Somalia

There has been an increase in IDPs moving towards Kenya, and there are also many IDPs moving through the Galmudug areas towards Puntland. Many IDPs travel to Somaliland where they are referred to as 'refugees'.

It is difficult to provide assistance in the Lower Shabelle areas and many organisations have stopped.

IDPs have moved from Puntland to South Galcayo and this has resulted in services in the city being stretched. The water supply is a problem and is operated by a private firm, so the cost of water increases with demand.

[Return to contents](#)

Interview with: An international NGO

Conducted by: Debbie Goodier and Darren Forbes-Batey

Interview date: 13 September 2010

1. Control of areas in Southern and Central Somalia

Who controls Mogadishu?

Al Shabaab (AS) controls most of Mogadishu – AMISOM controls only Villa Somalia, K4, the airport and the seaport. AS will not take control of the whole of Mogadishu while AMISOM is still in place.

Who controls other regions in Southern and Central Somalia?

AS control the area between Kismayo and Merca even though they do not have any soldiers there – they could be overpowered but maintain control because there is nobody else to take over.

AS and Hizbul Islam (HI) share control of the Afgoye Corridor and AS monitor those who travel there.

2. Internal Travel

Mogadishu Airport

AS know who is landing at the airport as some TFG soldiers will work for them and give them information or risk being killed. AS will give informants phone credit to enable them to report.

Mogadishu city

There are four main roads in Mogadishu and three are controlled by AS. There are no checkpoints on the AS main road, and the TFG does not carry out checks on vehicles on the one road it controls. People move freely in Mogadishu but can be hit by stray bullets, and they tend to make sure they travel before fighting begins in the afternoon, if possible. There are no limitations on travel based on prayer times.

Outside Mogadishu

It is possible to travel between Mogadishu and Kismayo without difficulty.

People will travel if their means allow it, and there are many ways of getting around, including buses, taxis and space rented from truck drivers. There is an informal bus timetable system with buses travelling to Galcayo and other major towns in Somalia. There is a bus station at Bakara market.

AS will ask why people are moving around the country, and if they do not recognise you then they will ask who you are, where you are going and why you are going there.

3. Security situation

Mogadishu

The areas controlled by opposition groups are generally safer than areas governed by the TFG. Shibis and Abdi Aziz have been affected quite heavily by fighting. There is indiscriminate shelling throughout Mogadishu. Bakara Market is shelled quite often by AMISOM as AS regularly and intentionally fire from the area. Looting occurs throughout the city and is perpetrated by all parties to the conflict.

Life goes on in Mogadishu to an extent and education continues in all districts in the city.

Outside Mogadishu

AS is concerned with security and fears espionage. As such, in many areas it sees humanitarian workers as a 'soft target'. They are controlled mostly by foreign fighters, but there is little loyalty amongst the foot soldiers and there is some infighting.

Anywhere in southern and central Somalia is safer than Mogadishu, although nowhere can be considered safe.

The Ethiopian troops help in Galmudug and Dhusarmareb and have stopped AS moving into Puntland.

AS have been targeting HIV clinics in Merca and recruiting patients as suicide bombers.

In Merca and Kismayo there is greater security than in other areas as people fear AS.

4. Human Rights Situation

What is the human rights situation in areas controlled by Al Shabaab?

AS target children for forced recruitment.

AS have requested a registration fee of \$10,000 from NGOs and this request has been made simultaneously in Baidoa, Hiiran, Middle Shabelle and Lower Shabelle. NGOs have refused to pay.

Journalists find it difficult to report on AS as nobody is willing to talk about them.

5. Conditions in IDP camps

Movement is fluid and not all IDPs live in IDP camps. Data on IDPs is difficult to obtain with any level of accuracy as IDPs can be difficult to identify.

Mogadishu

There are an estimated 250,000 IDPs within Mogadishu, and most of these move between districts quite freely. Certain districts suffer from more population movement than others, such as Hodan and Wardighey. Those who had the resources have already left the city and those who remain are adjusting to the conflict and using what little resources they have to survive. There are many IDPs who live in houses belonging to

others and look after the property for them. Businessmen are taking over property and increasing the price of rent.

People are moving to areas such as Wadajeere, Dharkenely, Hamar Weyne and Waberi. The AS governed area of Karan, previously unaffected by fighting, is deserted.

Houses destroyed by shelling are not being rebuilt as people are afraid of what will happen in the future to the houses.

Afgoye corridor

This organisation has a presence in Mogadishu and employs national staff who work in the city but live in the Afgoye Corridor and travel to work every day, and this pattern is mirrored by other Somalis who travel to Mogadishu to work every day. IDPs are seen as commodities by landlords who see them as an easy way to keep control of their land and to keep it safe.

There are 'gatekeepers' on every settlement who attempt to take aid from NGOs and hand it out to the population, however NGOs are reluctant to let the 'gatekeepers' distribute aid as they know aid will be stolen.

NGOs try to use blanket distribution rather than targeting as they are aware that there are so many people in need.

There are many NGOs working on sanitation and latrines in the Afgoye Corridor.

There are many businesses who have move to the Afgoye Corridor and the economy there is very good.

Other areas in Southern and Central Somalia

Belet Weyne and Jowhar are seeing more population movement.

Puntland is hostile to IDPs from the south and will forcibly repatriate those that it finds on the basis of security concerns as the IDPs are mostly young men that Puntland claims are linked with AS.

[Return to contents](#)

Interview with: A security adviser

Conducted by: Debbie Goodier

Interview date: 13 September 2010

1. Control of areas in Southern and Central Somalia

Who controls regions in Southern and Central Somalia?

Al Shabaab controls regions from the south up to Belet Weyne (where control is variable) and Galgudud. Hizbul Islam have either been absorbed into Al Shabaab or killed. ASWJ's influence shrinks and expands on an irregular basis.

Al Shabaab have brought in around 1,500 foreign fighters, including 18-20 year old advisers. The majority of advisers are young men.

2. Internal Travel

Mogadishu Airport

Many people travel into Mogadishu, especially from Nairobi. African Express, in particular, offer popular flights.

Mogadishu Airport to the city

It is possible to travel between the city and the airport by taxi.

Mogadishu city

People move about the city with a large degree of freedom and there is no clear division between areas controlled by the TFG/AMISOM and areas under AS control, which means that people can travel between the areas freely. The border is porous and in order to get across people go via checkpoints. There are some roads in the city that have been closed and are described as being in a 'no man's land'. Trade continues in the city and goods move freely.

Outside Mogadishu

It is possible to travel anywhere in Somalia as long as you have money and contacts. There are numerous checkpoints operating that seek to establish who is travelling where and why, but the Somali population can generally pass through these checkpoints safely. The number of checkpoints depends on Al Shabaab's or the TFG's level of paranoia on any particular day and those passing through may need to pay in order to travel. There is some evidence that AS have begun to operate a database recording movements. People stopped at Al Shabaab checkpoints will only be harmed if they are infringing the Al Shabaab rules.

Buses in southern and central Somalia are often stopped at checkpoints, asked where they are travelling to and then issued with letters of passage.

3. Security situation

Mogadishu

In areas of Mogadishu controlled by AS there are police on the streets and little or no crime. However, in TFG controlled areas, street crime occurs. This is largely a reflection of the punishments meted out to offenders.

All parties in the conflict have an interest in maintaining the situation in Mogadishu, mostly for financial gain.

AMISOM kill more civilians than Al Shabaab. This is usually by indirect fire – often in the form of reprisals for killings of AMISOM troops.

Outside Mogadishu

Security is considered very good – in terms of AS security. They dominate their territory and control access. Checkpoints ensure that banditry on the roads is reduced, if not eliminated entirely. There are private armies operating throughout southern and central Somalia, and a lot of businesspeople are making a lot of money in the country. Clan conflicts are resolved within the clan. Clan militias will join AS only if it serves the interests of the clan. AS will try to maintain support of clans and sub clans by acting in their interests, or at least not provoking the clans. They provide a level of security to civilians, for instance when moving non-clan members to other areas, which the sub-clans may welcome as it removes the competition of the dominant clans.

Ethiopian troops still move into the border areas.

Belet Weyne is considered commercially viable as NGOs can be 'taxed', and so there is conflict over who will gain control of the area.

The Bantu have developed very high informal protection levels as a result of their lack of clan dominance and requirement therefore to establish alliances. Overall, the threat to Somali nationals is low in terms of life threatening violence.

4. Human Rights Situation

Aid is stolen in all areas of southern and central Somalia by 'gatekeepers' who control the flow of aid in the regions where they operate. Aid distribution is a commercial enterprise.

What is the human rights situation in areas controlled by Al Shabaab?

Al Shabaab has brought greater stability to regions under its influence, but this also comes with human rights abuses, especially when compared to previous conflict. They rotate local leadership and with this, the rules that people must live by change. However, those who abide by their rules can live their day to day lives freely under Sharia law.

Al Shabaab have begun to operate a feeding programme in some areas where there is no NGO presence.

There is over-reporting of human rights abuses by Al Shabaab and it is difficult to determine what has been carried out by them and what has been the result of interclan

or personal conflict. There have been some people tried for apostasy by Al Shabaab, but they were released after trial. There have been no mass executions. Ghosting and shadowing occurs, where one incident will be reported by more than one individual or organisation, and this leads to over-counting of incidents. Also, some NGOs will over-report incidents or issues because this will increase their funding.

5. Conditions in IDP camps

All aid agencies are in the process of moving their international staff out of southern and central Somalia. Life saving programmes do still occur but are in the minority. Some operate expensive wet feeding programmes and other medical agencies operate clinics and hospitals. This is currently under threat due to taxation from AS of \$10,000 per 6 months. This is under debate by NGOs.

[Return to contents](#)

Interview with: A security consultant

Conducted by: Debbie Goodier and Darren Forbes-Batey

Interview date: 15 September 2010

1. Control of areas in Southern and Central Somalia

Who controls Mogadishu?

Control of some districts in Mogadishu is based on clan lines. Waberi is controlled by a clan militia. Recently, the manager of the seaport was sacked for corruption, and the TFG were threatened in order to appoint someone of the same clan.

Who controls other regions in Southern and Central Somalia?

Everywhere from Hiiran region south is under AS control. They maintain training camps in Baidoa with a foreign fighter presence.

Control of Kismayo is very important. AS currently control the port city and use it for the import of ammunition. They also regulate export of livestock and charcoal to the Gulf states.

The local AS administration report to the central command in Mogadishu.

Allegiances from clan militia depend on the current situation and how they can benefit.

2. Internal Travel

Mogadishu Airport to the city

Buses and taxis operate between the airport and the city and Somali civilians can, and do, use them.

Mogadishu city

There are many ordinary people travelling around Mogadishu in their day to day life. They pass through TFG checkpoints without hindrance.

Outside Mogadishu

Checkpoints can appear overnight and are operated by all parties to the conflict.

3. Security situation

Mogadishu

The recent increase in violence in Mogadishu appeared to be a military offensive, rather than an insurgency. The attacks in Mogadishu are becoming more sophisticated and targeted in nature – in the Muna hotel attack [24 August 2010], and the failed airport and

seas port attacks [9 September 2010 and 12 September 2010 respectively] the AS fighters were dressed as TFG soldiers and were not stopped at TFG checkpoints.

AS have continued to use mortars and in some cases, there has been no retaliation to this from either the AMISOM or TFG soldiers. TFG soldiers have recently walked away from some posts in Mogadishu as they have not been paid, AS took these posts but were pushed back again by AMISOM who reclaimed the positions.

The situation is precarious and fluid and the country is also suffering from a political dispute within the TFG. Clans still have power in Mogadishu and clan militia have been used in the fighting.

It is believed that AS have many suicide bombers waiting to attack.

There is some fatigue with regard to the reporting of the security situation in Mogadishu, and minor incidents are not reported.

Outside Mogadishu

There is a 'Jubaland Defence Force' in place across the Kenyan border, made up of Somalis from southern and central Somalia, Kenyan Somalis and refugee recruits. There is also an Ethiopian National Defence Force contingent poised across the border from Dallo, using local clan militias under the TFG umbrella. Both will move in to Somalia when they are told to.

4. Human Rights Situation

What is the human rights situation in areas controlled by Al Shabaab?

AS have illegally occupied and raided NGO facilities throughout the areas they control, there is no international NGO presence left in the country any more. National staff remain in areas where the NGOs operated in order to maintain some form of presence, in case there is some opportunity to return.

NGOs were given written notice to pay AS \$10k registration fee – officially, nobody paid the fee, however businessmen in certain areas may have paid some fees as it was in their own interests. The businessmen prioritised which organisations would have their fees paid on the basis of the local population's need and also the revenue potential of that organisation.

There is no access to AS areas for non-Somalis.

[Return to contents](#)

Interview with: A diplomatic source

Conducted by: Debbie Goodier and Darren Forbes-Batey

Interview date: 15 September 2010

1. Control of areas in Southern and Central Somalia

Who controls Mogadishu?

Control of Mogadishu can change very quickly and is not dependent on clan allegiances.

Who controls other regions in Southern and Central Somalia?

Al Shabaab control most of southern and central Somalia, from the line between Belet Weyne and Haradheere south to the Kenyan border.

The Galmudug region is under the control of a local administration, supported by the TFG and Puntland. It is based along clan lines (Habr Gedir) and extends from South Galcayo to Dhusarmareb. AS have never been allowed to gain control of any part of Dhusarmareb as local militias have fought them and won. ASWJ are also present in this region and are fighting AS for control of Haradheere.

There is a small HI presence in Hiiran and Mogadishu.

Belet Weyne is currently disputed.

There are Ethiopian forces in the border regions and they are TFG affiliated. There is still TFG support for ASWJ, but the TFG do not have the means to support them with ammunition.

Control of Middle and Lower Juba regions may change.

Many clans will join together to fight against AS, clan conflict is negated by the common enemy.

2. Internal Travel

Mogadishu Airport to the city

The TFG will use protective escorts, but Somali civilians will not and do not need to.

Mogadishu city

There are no travel restrictions within Mogadishu and people are generally free to travel as they wish.

Outside Mogadishu

In areas controlled by AS, it is quite easy for Somali civilians to travel, as long as they are not an AS target (for instance, by being associated with the TFG). AS will not target civilians.

There are few restrictions on Somali civilians travelling through the country and it is safe to travel from Dhusarmareb to Nairobi. The main risks for travellers are in getting caught in crossfire.

3. Security situation

Mogadishu

AS are outnumbered in Mogadishu with 20,000 TFG and AMISOM soldiers compared to 2-3,000 AS fighters. Many AS fighters come from overseas.

Not all of Mogadishu is dangerous – over 1 million people live there. Those who have their roots in the city will not have problems finding somewhere to settle there. Hamar Jabjab is considered to be quite safe.

The risk of indiscriminate violence has increased since 2009, however support from clans is available and it is entirely possible to live in non-conflict areas of Mogadishu.

Outside Mogadishu

Everywhere is volatile and can change at any time. North of Belet Weyne is relatively peaceful.

4. Human Rights Situation

Human rights are not good anywhere, but are considered better north of Belet Weyne, into the Galmudug region.

What is the human rights situation in areas controlled by Al Shabaab?

AS rule the areas they control by fear – they may not have a huge presence in the areas but the local people are afraid enough to obey their rules. AS long as people obey their rules, they can live their lives freely.

[Return to contents](#)

Interview with: An international NGO

Conducted by: Debbie Goodier

Interview date: 15 September 2010

1. Control of areas in Southern and Central Somalia

Who controls Mogadishu?

The TFG have a small area of control but they are finding it difficult to expand beyond this. After initial optimism surrounding the formation of the TFG, Somalis have become disillusioned, and Al Shabaab have gained from this.

Who controls other regions in Southern and Central Somalia?

There are pockets of land on the Ethiopian border that are controlled by anti-Al Shabaab forces. Although they are referred to as TFG allied, they are instead simply against Al Shabaab.

Al Shabaab have now taken Belet Weyne, and Ras Kambooni and Hizbul Islam have retreated from the southern border regions and now AS can potentially move freely around the southern and central regions of Somalia. Hizbul Islam control the Afgoye Corridor, but even in areas controlled by Hizbul Islam, Al Shabaab have considerable influence.

AMISOM have troops up to K13 at the start of the Afgoye Corridor, however Al Shabaab and Hizbul Islam control the rest of the area, with Al Shabaab having far more influence. Al Shabaab demand \$10,000 registration fee from NGOs and further fees to be paid whenever NGOs take part in activities.

People will not support AS if it is not in their clan interest.

2. Internal Travel

Outside Mogadishu

The old clan system still functions as a protection mechanism for Somalis wishing to travel through the country. Anyone wishing to travel will need to negotiate in advance with the clans in control of the areas they wish to travel through.

It is generally safe to travel through areas controlled by AS.

3. Security situation

Mogadishu

Indiscriminate shelling by all parties to the conflict is affecting civilians and people want to leave Mogadishu because of this. The number of civilian casualties in Mogadishu is high when compared to the number of battles taking place.

There are daily reports of clashes between TFG soldiers.

Outside Mogadishu

In 2009, there have been conflicts in Belet Weyne, Dhusarmareb, the border regions, Belet Hawa and Lower Juba. Currently, the areas that fall under AS are stable and AS is supported by minority clans as they have been given more influence. There are local alliances depending on who can benefit, and some communities are less hostile to Al Shabaab than others.

Most of the southern and central regions have remained calm, with only Mogadishu and one or two other clashes in 2010.

Many of the AS commanders are very young – usually aged 20 to 22 – and this can lead to an increase in aggression. The arrival of a foreign contingent in AS has been publicly announced and this has led to an increase in suicide bombings.

There is some clan conflict north of Baidoa, in an area entirely governed by AS. AS attended to conflict in order to ensure there was peace.

4. Human Rights Situation

All groups ask NGOs for money. It is not possible to send NGO workers into an area where they do not have clan protection.

What is the human rights situation in areas controlled by the TFG?

The TFG makes many statements of intent regarding human rights, but as they are almost powerless, the statements have very little credibility.

What is the human rights situation in areas controlled by Al Shabaab?

In Al Shabaab areas, human rights are practically non-existent and there is no voice in Somalia to articulate this. Reporting of human rights abuses is difficult, and those NGOs that try to monitor are often threatened by AS.

AS have become openly hostile since their leadership has changed and foreign fighters have become more influential. Previously it was possible to negotiate with local AS commanders, but now central control have made it very clear they do not approve of NGOs and the operating environment has become more difficult. Compounds have been closed and looted by AS. There are no international staff members working for NGOs in southern and central Somalia, and more NGOs are leaving the country every month, with AS giving some false reasons for the departures.

In the past, extortion from NGOs has been on a local level, but now there are directives from the central operations of Al Shabaab asking for registration fees.

The AS interpretation of Sharia law is not in accordance with the beliefs of ordinary Somalis, however the harsh punishments inflicted by them are not carried out on a regular basis – ie they are not daily or weekly. Petty thieves and adulterers in particular have been targeted. Men have been attacked for not having the correct style of beard.

A court system operates in AS areas with a trial, however it is not possible to say whether due process occurs as the sentence usually comes very quickly after accusation. It is not known whether everyone who is tried gets convicted and sentenced.

Al Shabaab in the Gedo region are not as harsh as in other regions as they are run by a local administration with an AS 'label'.

There are many human rights abuses against women, particularly sexual assault and rape, especially when the women have no clan protection.

What is the human rights situation in areas controlled by Hizbul Islam?

Hizbul Islam operate a similar Sharia court system to AS.

5. Conditions in IDP camps

There are almost no NGOs helping IDPs in southern and central Somalia.

Mogadishu

There is a lack of access for NGOs in Mogadishu and this means that IDPs do not receive aid.

Afgoye corridor

The Afgoye Corridor is incredibly difficult for NGOs to access and where access is available, aid is diverted. Landlords sell the land that IDPs live on or charge rent that they can't afford, meaning that they have to move. The price of land in the Afgoye Corridor is increasing.

Satellite pictures of the Afgoye Corridor have demonstrated that the area is becoming more settled with businesses. It is now bigger than many towns in Somalia, although some of the buildings there may not house IDPs. The number of people living in the Afgoye Corridor is thought to be around 200,000.

It is difficult to track movement of people in the Afgoye Corridor, however people previously have travelled between the area and Mogadishu. Now it is thought that people do not move as much because of the increased urbanisation.

Other areas in Southern and Central Somalia

Some IDPs have returned to their home regions and resettled in communities there rather than in IDP camps.

There are some short term settlements in Galcayo, Baidoa, Dhusarmareb and Belet Weyne which have hosted IDPs from the local region for months. Baidoa hosts 40 settlements, but only 15 contain IDPs. Local residents have realised that assistance is only given to the people in the IDP camps, and so they set up camps to receive this assistance.

IDPs can be vulnerable as they move out of areas where they have clan protection.

[Return to contents](#)

Interview with: An international NGO

Conducted by: Debbie Goodier and Eugenio Bosco

Interview date: 8 September 2010

1. Control of areas in Southern and Central Somalia

Who controls regions in Southern and Central Somalia outside Mogadishu?

Al Shabaab controls almost all of southern Somalia from Lower Juba region to Belet Weyne town. There is a group who call themselves Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a controlling a small area around the southern part of the Kenyan border, however it is not clear whether they are affiliated with the larger Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a or simply using the name to fight Al Shabaab. Hizbul Islam are thought to be in control of much of the coastline from Mogadishu to Haradheere, however it is uncertain whether Al Shabaab also have some control over this.

2. Internal Travel

Mogadishu Airport to the city

The organisation uses armed escorts to travel from the airport to the city. However, the organisation sees the route between the airport and city as safe ('surprisingly OK') for Somalis to travel.

Mogadishu city

The organisation stated that there are checkpoints within the city, however they move on an irregular basis and are variable in nature. Those operated by Hizbul Islam and the Transitional Federal Government can be more difficult to negotiate as they are operated with less discipline. They normally request money. Al Shabaab operated checkpoints normally check that people are obeying their code of behaviour, for instance they will stop women who are travelling alone. They can be harsh, and some individuals operating the checkpoints on behalf of Al Shabaab will punish those who do not act according to Al Shabaab rules.

Outside Mogadishu

The organisation has used armed escorts when travelling throughout Somalia since 1991. Somali representatives of the organisation travel freely between Kismayo and Mogadishu, and also Belet Weyne and Mogadishu. The representatives get asked to stop at checkpoints, however as long as they behave according to the rules of those operating the checkpoints, they are normally allowed to travel. Checkpoints are similar in nature to those in Mogadishu, however the Somali nationals are normally able to negotiate them successfully, as they would know the rules.

3. Security situation

Mogadishu

The organisation sends Western representatives to Mogadishu around every two to three months. The representatives will spend one night in Mogadishu and limit their visit to a specific part of Mogadishu before returning to Nairobi as there is a risk of kidnapping. The risk is greatly reduced for Somali nationals.

Outside Mogadishu

Al Shabaab is unpredictable but security in the Al Shabaab areas is generally better as the group does not tolerate any petty crime. Baidoa is less volatile than other parts of southern and central Somalia. The area around the Ethiopian border is quite unstable as Ethiopian troops are still crossing the border into Somalia.

4. Human Rights Situation

The organisation tries to operate impartially, but has encountered occasional difficulty when trying to assess vulnerability and has been subject to complaints of unfairness based along clan lines. They use clan elders and another NGO to enable them to assess the needs in particular areas.

What is the human rights situation in areas controlled by Al Shabaab?

It is difficult to have a dialogue with Al Shabaab, however the organisation is 'tolerated' (respected to some extent) and is generally left to help Somalis. The organisation mainly focuses its work on the areas controlled by Al Shabaab and has Somali field officers in a number of towns in Lower and Middle Juba regions, Lower and Middle Shabelle regions, and also Gedo, Bay and Bakool, all regions governed by Al Shabaab. The field officers move between towns. The organisation is flexible in its approach to delivering aid to avoid encountering trouble from local governing groups and does not have an official infrastructure within Somalia. However, Al Shabaab sometimes offer assistance to this organisation, especially in the Bay and Bakool regions.

It is important to note that Al Shabaab members move between areas on an irregular basis – some administrations may be there for over a year, some for only two to three months. Al Shabaab are ill at ease in Somalia as they feel that the civilians view them as un-Somali, and so they seek to impose their presence when they first take over an area.

The organisation is aware that they are in a fragile position and they may be expelled by Al Shabaab in the future. They are trying to work with the group to improve the humanitarian situation but they find this quite difficult at times as it can be difficult to have a dialogue with Al Shabaab.

Al Shabaab offers those from minority groups positions with power and influence and move them between areas. They have tried to move beyond the Somali clan model, but they have had limited success with this.

The general feeling is that if civilians follow Al Shabaab rules, they will be OK and will not face punishment. AS-controlled areas were described as safe – and with a certain degree of security - as long as people stick to their rules.

5. Conditions in IDP camps

Afgoye corridor

The organisation tried to hand out aid in the Afgoye corridor (described as 'a nightmare'), but has faced difficulty as they encountered 'gate keepers' to the region who demand money. They claim to own the land that IDPs live on and also take money from them.

People have previously travelled between the Afgoye corridor and Mogadishu for work or to maintain their houses, however this has become more difficult since Mogadishu became more violent in 2010, and also because the number of checkpoints (operated by various groups) has increased and people cannot afford to travel so much.

[Return to contents](#)

Interview with: Captain Bulhan, African Express Airways

Conducted by: Darren Forbes-Batey

Interview date: 14 September 2010

2. Internal Travel

Mogadishu Airport

African Express has confirmed passenger numbers for the year (to end August 2010) into Mogadishu on their various routes.

See attached which includes flights from:

Nairobi (NBO)

Berbera (BBO) - Somaliland

Aden (ADE) - Yemen

Galcaio (GLK) - Puntland (border with South Central), new route on 30 seat Umbria aircraft.

There have been just over 12,000 passengers in 8 months.

Outside Mogadishu

The new flight to Galcaio from Nairobi is now operating on Mondays (AXK 711 ETD Nairobi 0800 ETA Galcaio 1100). This flight then picks up passengers in Galcaio, continues onto Mogadishu and returns to Galcaio from Mogadishu the same day.:

African Express would be unlikely to open up operations to Garowe as it is not cost effective.

[Return to contents](#)

Annex D

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a FFM notes of interview held on 15 September 2010.

[Link to notes](#)

[14] An international NGO

a FFM notes of interview held on 8 September 2010.

[Link to notes](#)

[15] Captain Bulhan, Managing Director, African Express Airways

a FFM notes of interview held on 14 September 2010.

[Link to notes](#)

[Return to contents](#)