



**Australian Government**  
**Refugee Review Tribunal**

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# Country Advice

## Somalia

Somalia – SOM36945 – Asharaf clan –  
Ceelasha Biyaha – Al-Shabaab –  
Amputation – Recruitment – Ethiopian  
Invasion – Musa Zude Yalahow – Yaqshid  
9 July 2010

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- 1. Please provide general information about the Asharaf (and Ashraf) clan, including its defining features, how the clan is distinguished from other clans in Somalia, key historical facts and significant leaders/figures of the clan. Please also advise of the difference (if any) between the Asharaf and the Ashraf clan.**

The Asharaf are a people of Arab origin, mostly now living in Somalia. There is also an historical community of Asharaf living in Ethiopia, and since the 1990s a large refugee population has been established in Kenya. In 2002 there were approximately 35,000 Asharaf living in Somalia, or 0.5 percent of Somalia's population.<sup>1</sup> Since 2002 it is thought that thousands more Asharaf have fled Somalia and its present population is not known. At least some Asharaf (also spelt Ashraf) also refer to themselves as Benadiri.

Like most minorities in Somalia, the Asharaf have linguistically assimilated, mainly speaking the May and Mahatiri dialects of Somali.<sup>2</sup> There are, however, sub-dialects spoken by Asharafi/Benadiri communities, delineated largely by geographical location: the Asharaf-Benadiri of Mogadishu speak Af-Reer Hamar; the Benadiri dialect of Merka is called Af-Merka; the dialect in Brava is called Af-Brava; and in the Bay area the Asharaf/Benadiri speak the Rahanweyn dialect. Most of the dialects are thought to be mutually comprehensible, apart from the Af-Brava.<sup>3</sup>

Sources conflict on the subject of regional differences in appearance: one source states that the Ashraf Sarman have darker skin than the Ashraf in Merka<sup>4</sup>; another states that the Asharaf generally have lighter skin than the majority of Somalis.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) 2002, 'A study on minorities in Somalia', ReliefWeb website, 1 August <http://www.reliefweb.int/rwarchive/rwb.nsf/db900sid/ACOS-64DFRT?OpenDocument&query=OCHA%20minority%20groups%20UNCU&cc=som> – Accessed 13 November 2009 – Attachment 1

<sup>2</sup> UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) 2002, 'A study on minorities in Somalia', ReliefWeb website, 1 August <http://www.reliefweb.int/rwarchive/rwb.nsf/db900sid/ACOS-64DFRT?OpenDocument&query=OCHA%20minority%20groups%20UNCU&cc=som> – Accessed 13 November 2009 – Attachment 1

<sup>3</sup> The Danish Immigration Service 2001, *Report on minority groups in Somalia: Joint British, Danish and Dutch fact-finding mission to Nairobi, Kenya 17 to 24 September 2000*, SOMRAF website, p.44 <http://www.somraf.org/research%20Materials/joint%20british%20danish%20dutch%20fact%20finding%20mission%20in%20Nairobi%20-%202001.pdf> – Accessed 1 July 2010 – Attachment 2

<sup>4</sup> The Danish Immigration Service 2001, *Report on minority groups in Somalia: Joint British, Danish and Dutch fact-finding mission to Nairobi, Kenya 17 to 24 September 2000*, SOMRAF website, p.42 <http://www.somraf.org/research%20Materials/joint%20british%20danish%20dutch%20fact%20finding%20mission%20in%20Nairobi%20-%202001.pdf> – Accessed 1 July 2010 – Attachment 2

A 2000 British, Danish and Dutch joint study into Somalia's ethnic minorities conducted extensive interviews with Asharaf elder refugees living in Kenya. The elders stated that the Asharaf trace their origins to the Prophet Mohammed, whose daughter Fatima had two sons, Hussein and Hassan. All Asharaf are said to trace their lineage to one of these two sons.<sup>6</sup> The Asharaf are considered to be deeply religious.<sup>7</sup>

The Asharaf are further subdivided into groups, delineated along patrilineal lines. These families are tabulated below:

<b>Asharaf (Ashraf) Sub-Groups</b>	
<b>Hussein</b>	<b>Hassan</b>
Reesharif Magbuul	Mohammed Sharif
Sharif Ahmed	Sharif Ali
Sharif Baalawi	Sharif Ahmed
	Ashraf Sarman

**Table 1: Asharaf sub-groups**

According to the elders in Kenya, the Prophet Mohammed conferred the title 'Sharif' upon Hassan and Hussein and, since then, all of their descendants "have the name Sharif as part of their name, added to the personal name and the father's, and sometimes the grandfather's, name. From this comes the name of the group, Ashraf being the plural of Sharif."<sup>8</sup>

The Asharaf now mostly live in southern Somalia, particularly in urban areas such as Bardera, Kismayo, Baidoa, Hoddur, Merka, Brava and Mogadishu. In Mogadishu the largest concentration of Asharaf was found in Shingani. There are also Asharaf living in the Ogaden district of Ethiopia, as well as a large refugee population in Kenya.<sup>9</sup> The severe fighting in Mogadishu following the Ethiopian invasion in 2006 precipitated a mass exodus of people from the city, including the Asharaf. It is no longer clear as to how many Asharaf have remained either in Mogadishu or Somalia.

In Somalia clan alliances are a traditional source of protection, and this is especially true for small minorities. Sources are contradictory on the subject of Asharaf clan alliances. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) states that the Asharaf have traditionally aligned themselves with the Rahaweyn clan.<sup>10</sup> However, persons interviewed for

<sup>5</sup> Barnes, C. 2007, *9th European Country of Origin Information Seminar: Country Report – Somalia*, Refugee Documentation Centre Ireland, ECOI website, August [http://www.ecoi.net/file\\_upload/432\\_1190380485\\_9th-european-country-of-origin-information-seminar-country-report-somalia-dr-cedric-barnes-soas-9th-august-2007.pdf](http://www.ecoi.net/file_upload/432_1190380485_9th-european-country-of-origin-information-seminar-country-report-somalia-dr-cedric-barnes-soas-9th-august-2007.pdf) – Accessed 1 July 2010 – Attachment 3

<sup>6</sup> The Danish Immigration Service 2001, *Report on minority groups in Somalia: Joint British, Danish and Dutch fact-finding mission to Nairobi, Kenya 17 to 24 September 2000*, SOMRAF website, p.42 <http://www.somraf.org/research%20Materials/joint%20british%20danish%20dutch%20fact%20finding%20mission%20in%20Nairobi%20-%202001.pdf> – Accessed 1 July 2010 – Attachment 2

<sup>7</sup> Pérouse de Montclos, M.A. 2003, 'Exodus and reconstruction of identities: Somali "minority refugees" in Mombasa', SOMRAF website, 13 June <http://www.somraf.org/downloads/Somali%20Minority%20Identities%20Mombasa%20refugees.pdf> – Accessed 1 July 2010 – Attachment 4

<sup>8</sup> The Danish Immigration Service 2001, *Report on minority groups in Somalia: Joint British, Danish and Dutch fact-finding mission to Nairobi, Kenya 17 to 24 September 2000*, SOMRAF website, p.42 <http://www.somraf.org/research%20Materials/joint%20british%20danish%20dutch%20fact%20finding%20mission%20in%20Nairobi%20-%202001.pdf> – Accessed 1 July 2010 – Attachment 2

<sup>9</sup> The Danish Immigration Service 2001, *Report on minority groups in Somalia: Joint British, Danish and Dutch fact-finding mission to Nairobi, Kenya 17 to 24 September 2000*, SOMRAF website, p.43 <http://www.somraf.org/research%20Materials/joint%20british%20danish%20dutch%20fact%20finding%20mission%20in%20Nairobi%20-%202001.pdf> – Accessed 1 July 2010 – Attachment 2

<sup>10</sup> UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) 2002, 'A study on minorities in Somalia', ReliefWeb website, 1 August <http://www.reliefweb.int/rwarchive/rwb.nsf/db900sid/ACOS-64DFRT?OpenDocument&query=OCHA%20minority%20groups%20UNCU&cc=som> – Accessed 13 November 2009 – Attachment 1

the 2000 British, Danish and Dutch joint study stated that “the Ashraf have no particular affiliation with any of the major Somali clans. They stated that they used to have good relations with all other clans in Somalia.” Intermarriage with other clans is said to be rare.<sup>11</sup> Perhaps as a consequence of their lack of numbers, alliances, and a militia, the Asharaf are said to be considered weak.<sup>12</sup> The Rahanweyn, who the OCHA states the Asharaf have an alliance with, are similarly not known for their military strength. However, since the 1990s some Rahanweyn have formed defensive brigades, possibly with the assistance of Ethiopia.<sup>13</sup>

A 2009 report on clans in Somalia states that although the Asharaf do not have their own militia, they tend to live with other clans such as the Digil-Mirifle and Benadiri. The author, Joakim Gundel, argues that the Asharaf are not specifically targeted by Somalis due to their special status as descendents of the Mohammed and religious teachers. However, Gundel states that they “may suffer the same problems as their ‘host’ clans”. Nevertheless, Gundel does concede that the al-Shabaab Islamist group “does not recognise the religious status of the Asharaf”, removing any collective immunity that they may have once enjoyed.<sup>14</sup> Internally displaced Asharaf in the north of Somalia have no political power and receive no protection from northern clans and sub-clans.<sup>15</sup> A 2004 profile of Somalia’s internally displaced people (IDPs) states that all southern IDPs living in the north are considered ‘criminals’.<sup>16</sup>

## **2. Please provide general information about Al-Shabaab, including its recruitment tactics. Please particularly look into whether Al-Shabaab is known to target males aged 14 – 40 and/or members of the Asharaf or other minority clans.**

During the civil war of the 1990s, Islamic courts were established in Mogadishu, headed by Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, in an attempt “to infuse a degree of order amidst the chaos plaguing the capital city at the time.” From this courts system emerged the Islamic Courts Union (ICU). The ICU would come into direct conflict with Mogadishu’s warlords and therefore a military wing was established, known as Al-Shabaab (the Youth), headed by Dahir Hasan Aweys. Together, Al-Shabaab and the ICU defeated the warlords and by June 2006 they controlled most of Mogadishu.<sup>17</sup> This monopoly of control, however, was to be short-lived. That same month Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and Ethiopian troops entered

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<sup>11</sup> The Danish Immigration Service 2001, *Report on minority groups in Somalia: Joint British, Danish and Dutch fact-finding mission to Nairobi, Kenya 17 to 24 September 2000*, SOMRAF website, p.44 <http://www.somraf.org/research%20Materials/joint%20british%20danish%20dutch%20fact%20finding%20mission%20in%20Nairobi%20-%202001.pdf> – Accessed 1 July 2010 – Attachment 2

<sup>12</sup> The Danish Immigration Service 2001, *Report on minority groups in Somalia: Joint British, Danish and Dutch fact-finding mission to Nairobi, Kenya 17 to 24 September 2000*, SOMRAF website, pp.45-46 <http://www.somraf.org/research%20Materials/joint%20british%20danish%20dutch%20fact%20finding%20mission%20in%20Nairobi%20-%202001.pdf> – Accessed 1 July 2010 – Attachment 2

<sup>13</sup> The Danish Immigration Service 2001, *Report on minority groups in Somalia: Joint British, Danish and Dutch fact-finding mission to Nairobi, Kenya 17 to 24 September 2000*, SOMRAF website, p.126 <http://www.somraf.org/research%20Materials/joint%20british%20danish%20dutch%20fact%20finding%20mission%20in%20Nairobi%20-%202001.pdf> – Accessed 1 July 2010 – Attachment 2

<sup>14</sup> Austrian Centre for Country of Origin & Asylum Research and Documentation 2009, *Clans in Somalia: Report on a Lecture by Joakim Gundel, COI Workshop Vienna*, December, pp.19-20 – Attachment 5

<sup>15</sup> Abby, A. 2005, ‘Field Research Project on Minorities in Somalia’, Oxford House, October [http://www.oxfordhouse.org.uk/download/Minorities\\_report.PDF](http://www.oxfordhouse.org.uk/download/Minorities_report.PDF) – Accessed 1 July 2010 – Attachment 6

<sup>16</sup> Norwegian Refugee Council 2004, *Profile Of Internal Displacement: Somalia*, Internal Displacement.org, 6 May, p.12 [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004BE3B1/\(httpInfoFiles\)/2849BC4616EC282C802570B50053ED1A/\\$file/Somalia+-May+2004.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004BE3B1/(httpInfoFiles)/2849BC4616EC282C802570B50053ED1A/$file/Somalia+-May+2004.pdf) – Accessed 1 July 2010 – Attachment 7

<sup>17</sup> Page, J. 2010, ‘Jihadi Arena Report: Somalia – Development of Radical Islamism and Current Implications’, International Institute for Counter-Terrorism, 22 March <http://www.ict.org.il/Articles/tabid/66/Articlsid/814/currentpage/1/Default.aspx> – Accessed 1 July 2010 – Attachment 8

the city, beginning what was to become an extremely violent and destructive battle with Al-Shabaab.<sup>18</sup>

Al-Shabaab is currently led by Ahmed Abdi Godane and Ibrahim Jama al-Afghani. According to the International Crisis Group (ICG), “Godane personally administers Al-Shabaab-controlled areas of Mogadishu, using loyal commanders selected from local clans” while “Al-Afghani administers Kismayo and the Jubba valley, also using loyal commanders from local clans.”<sup>19</sup> Kismayo, in the far south of Somalia, is reportedly the home base of Al-Shabaab, and the Kismayo Group is said to be the most radical in the organisation.<sup>20</sup>

Al-Shabaab and the ICU subscribe to a Salafist version of Islam, in contrast to the Sufism practiced by the majority of Somalis. Consequently, Al-Shabaab did not immediately attract popular support. This changed following Ethiopia’s invasion of Somalia in 2006. According to Jacqueline Page of the International Institute for Counter-Terrorism, the Ethiopian invasion created “a wave of changes in the Somalia arena”, with new alliances being formed in reaction to the foreign invasion. Al-Shabaab popularly styled itself as the bulwark against a foreign invader. Ironically, its version of Islam, its alliance with Al-Qaeda, its reliance on weapons from Eritrea<sup>21</sup>, and its reliance on foreign jihadis seriously undermined its own indigenous credentials. As a consequence of its alliance with Al-Qaeda, the United States placed Al-Shabaab on its list of foreign intelligence organisations.<sup>22 23</sup>

Since Ethiopia’s retreat in January 2009, Al-Shabaab has lost much of its legitimacy. It has since declared war on the peacekeeping force of the African Union Mission for Somalia (AMISOM), as well as the army of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG).<sup>24</sup> In 2009 Al-Shabaab also vowed to attack the Kenyan Government “if [it] doesn’t stop the military mobilization it is carrying out in its northeastern regions.”<sup>25</sup> In October 2009 Al-Shabaab threaten to attack targets in Uganda and Burundi due to their contribution to the AMISOM mission.<sup>26</sup> In July 2010 *IRIN News* reported that fighting between the TFG/AMISOM coalition and Al-Shabaab in the Mogadishu suburbs of Abdul-Aziz, Bondhere, Yaaqshid and Karan has trapped thousands of residents in their homes, leaving people “unable to bury their dead... or leave the house to get essential items.” One source has told the UNHCR that “a

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<sup>18</sup> Examined in detail in question 4

<sup>19</sup> International Crisis Group 2010, *Somalia’s Divided Islamists*, Africa Briefing N°74, 18 May, pp.8-9 – Attachment 9

<sup>20</sup> Fred Ngoga Gateretse, Adviser to the A.U Special Representative for Somalia, AMISOM, Statement before the House Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health, Washington, DC 2009, International Relations House, 25 June <http://www.internationalrelations.house.gov/111/gat062509.pdf> – Accessed 1 July 2010 – Attachment 10

<sup>21</sup> Human Rights Watch 2007, *Shell-Shocked: Civilians Under Siege in Mogadishu*, Volume 19, No. 12(a), August, pp.17-18 – Attachment 11

<sup>22</sup> Page, J. 2010, ‘Jihadi Arena Report: Somalia – Development of Radical Islamism and Current Implications’, International Institute for Counter-Terrorism, 22 March

<http://www.ict.org.il/Articles/tabid/66/Articlsid/814/currentpage/1/Default.aspx> – Accessed 1 July 2010 – Attachment 8

<sup>23</sup> ‘Human Rights Watch report implicates AMISOM, TFG, Al-Shabaab’ 2010, *Afrique en Ligne*, 19 April <http://www.afriquejet.com/news/africa-news/human-rights-watch-report-implicates-amisom,-tfg,-al-shabaab-2010041947982.html> – Accessed 5 July 2010 – Attachment 12

<sup>24</sup> ‘Somalia: Al-Shabab Declares War Against Amisom and TFG Troops’, 2010, *All Africa Global Media*, source: *Shabelle Media Network*, 12 February <http://allafrica.com/stories/201002150168.html> – Accessed 5 July 2010 – Attachment 13

<sup>25</sup> Somalia NGO Safety Program (NSP) 2009, *Report Number – 41/09 Reporting Period: 07TH – 12TH OCT 2009* [http://www.ecoi.net/file\\_upload/1794\\_1257777477\\_41-09-nsp-weekly-report.pdf](http://www.ecoi.net/file_upload/1794_1257777477_41-09-nsp-weekly-report.pdf) – Accessed 1 July 2010 – Attachment 14

<sup>26</sup> Guled, A. & Moahamed, I. 2009, ‘Somalia’s Shabaab rebels threaten Uganda, Burundi’, *Reuters*, 23 October <http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE59M10420091023> – Accessed 2 July 2010 – Attachment 15



daily average of 300 artillery shells [are] hitting the city.”<sup>27</sup> Al-Shabaab’s self-confidence has grown as its popularity in Somalia has collapsed.

Al-Shabaab’s legitimacy and popularity has declined dramatically in recent years, largely due to both the tactics it has employed while waging war against ‘foreign invaders’, as well as the horrific tactics it has employed recruiting young Somalis. In April 2007 a suicide bomber drove a truck laden with explosives into an Ethiopian base in Mogadishu; in the same month another suicide bomber attacked an Ethiopian camp in Afgoye, just outside Mogadishu; in October 2008 five suicide car bombers attacked United Nations sites in both Somaliland and Puntland, killing 28 people; in June 2009 a bomber targeted a hotel in Beledweyne, killing 36 people, including the National Security Minister, Omar Hashi Aden; in December 2009 Al-Shabaab attacked the graduation ceremony of students at Benadir University.<sup>28</sup> This last event proved to be the final straw for any remaining popular support for Al-Shabaab, galvanizing and militarising opposition towards them.<sup>29</sup> Al-Shabaab has also attacked Sufi shrines and in March 2009 they assassinated Sufi clerics. Consequently, “Ahlu Sunna declared jihad against the group who they referred to as ‘the Islamist strangers’.”<sup>30</sup> The majority of Somalis practice Islam infused with Sufism.

Aside from local and international volunteers, Al-Shabaab forcibly recruits young men. Refusal has resulted in men and boys having their right hand and left leg cut off. In January 2010 the *Toronto Star* ran an article on the practice, interviewing one young boy who was one of four to have his hand and leg removed for refusing to join the militia; “Ismael Khalif Abdulle was on his way home from school when they came to get him... He doesn’t remember when they cut off his left foot because the pain and blood from losing his right hand made him pass out. The severed limbs of the four boys were later hung in the town as a warning.”<sup>31</sup>

During the Ethiopian occupation, Al-Shabaab had little trouble recruiting young men. Despite, its successful use of ‘foreign invader’ propaganda, Al-Shabaab’s main adversaries are theological/ideological. The ICG states that in late 2008 the Emir, Ahmed Abdi Godane, began a purge of commanders and administrators “deemed ideologically too soft”. In 2009 Al-Shabaab was formally renamed Harakat Al-Shabaab al-Mujahidin “to buttress its jihadist identity and the global nature of its aspirations.”<sup>32</sup>

In 2010 Al-Shabaab’s edicts have become increasingly extreme and bizarre, further undermining its legitimacy and leaving many Somalis in fear of the movement. In March 2010 *Reuters* reported that Al-Shabaab militants told school teachers “to stop using bells to signal the end of classes because they sound like those of Christian churches.”<sup>33</sup> Radio

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<sup>27</sup> ‘Mogadishu faces a catastrophe’ 2010, *IRIN News*, 6 July

<http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?ReportID=89748> – Accessed 7 July 2010 – Attachment 16

<sup>28</sup> Page, J. 2010, ‘Jihadi Arena Report: Somalia – Development of Radical Islamism and Current Implications’, International Institute for Counter-Terrorism, 22 March

<http://www.ict.org.il/Articles/tabid/66/Articlsid/814/currentpage/1/Default.aspx> – Accessed 1 July 2010 – Attachment 8

<sup>29</sup> International Crisis Group 2010, *Somalia’s Divided Islamists*, Africa Briefing N°74, 18 May, p.1 – Attachment 9

<sup>30</sup> Page, J. 2010, ‘Jihadi Arena Report: Somalia – Development of Radical Islamism and Current Implications’, International Institute for Counter-Terrorism, 22 March

<http://www.ict.org.il/Articles/tabid/66/Articlsid/814/currentpage/1/Default.aspx> – Accessed 1 July 2010 – Attachment 8

<sup>31</sup> Shephard, M. 2010, ‘Al Shabab’s reign of terror grips Somalia’, *Wardheer News*, source: *Toronto Star*, 30 January [http://wardheernews.com/News\\_10/Jan/30\\_Al\\_Shabab\\_reign\\_of\\_terror\\_grips\\_Somalia.html](http://wardheernews.com/News_10/Jan/30_Al_Shabab_reign_of_terror_grips_Somalia.html) – Accessed 1 July 2010 – Attachment 17

<sup>32</sup> International Crisis Group 2010, *Somalia’s Divided Islamists*, Africa Briefing N°74, 18 May, pp.5-7 – Attachment 9

<sup>33</sup> Mohamed, I. 2010, ‘Bells toll no more for schools in Somali town’, *Reuters*, 15 April

<http://uk.reuters.com/article/idUKLDE63E0IQ.CH.2420> – Accessed 2 July 2010 – Attachment 18

stations are being ordered to close across the south.<sup>34</sup> People have been banned from watching soccer, days after the start of the 2010 World Cup, forcing many youths to travel to northern Somalia in order to watch the games. However, perhaps most bizarrely, Al-Shabaab has banned the sale and consumption of potatoes and onions. According to one source, “Al Shabaab’s administration in Bulo Burde did not give any reason for the ban of the goods but only gave more threats such as carrying out inspection in the markets and houses to ensure that Potatoes and Onions are not consumed by the residents.”<sup>35</sup> One explanation could be that Al-Shabaab associates potatoes and onions with westernisation. In March 2010 Al-Shabaab caused the World Food Programme to suspend its operations in southern Somalia, leading to mass starvation in many camps for internally displaced persons.<sup>36 37</sup> In April 2010 it was reported that five builders were beheaded in Mogadishu by Al-Shabaab for working on the construction of Somalia’s new Parliament.<sup>38 39</sup>

With Ethiopia gone and its ranks extremely radicalized, Al-Shabaab began an aggressive, international campaign to recruit foreign jihadis. Recruitment programs include targeting veteran jihadis, as well as young Somali males in Europe, North America and Australia. According to a 2010 report for Denmark’s Ministry of Justice, ten to twenty young Australian Somalis, and possibly as many as forty, have returned to Somalia to fight for Al-Shabaab. In August 2009, four Somali men were arrested on suspicion of planning a terrorist attack on Holsworthy Army Barracks in Sydney. Two of these men were Somalis from Melbourne who had returned from Somalia after training with Al-Shabaab.<sup>40</sup>

A June 2010 essay in *Strategic Forum* states that many of the members of Al-Shabaab’s rank-and-file have little real loyalty to the militia and its overall cause; “[m]any of these join al Shabab for parochial reasons and are not otherwise supportive of its radical Salafist ideology. Some clans send militia and money to al Shabab as a political hedge in uncertain times. Other clans agree to join al Shabab as a means of gaining short-term primacy in long-running struggles with other clans for local control. Some individuals join al Shabab for the financial incentives it offers (\$200 to \$300 promised at the time of recruitment), or for offers of food and clothing. Other individuals are simply forced to join al Shabab as they impress youth into militia, often accompanied by threats to families not to resist.”<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> International Freedom of Expression Exchange 2009, ‘Al-Shabaab administration orders closure of two radio stations in Baidoa’, IFEX website, source: National Union of Somali Journalists, 21 October [http://www.ifex.org/somalia/2009/10/21/warsan\\_jubba\\_closed/](http://www.ifex.org/somalia/2009/10/21/warsan_jubba_closed/) – Accessed 6 July 2010 – Attachment 19

<sup>35</sup> ‘Somalia: Al Shabaab Bans Potatoes and Onions from Bulo Burde Markets’ 2010, *Hiiraan Post*, source: *Radio Bar-Kulan*, 1 July <http://www.hiiraanpost.net/somali-webs/somaliaalshabaabbanspotatoesandonionsfrombuloburdemarkets> – Accessed 2 July 2010 – Attachment 20

<sup>36</sup> World Food Programme 2010, ‘Somalia’, WFP website <http://www.wfp.org/countries/somalia> – Accessed 7 July 2010 – Attachment 21

<sup>37</sup> Shokolokubangushey 2010, ‘Mogadishu Braces for Clash of Titans’, *Beautiful Horn of Africa*, 18 March <http://cleanthehorn.blogspot.com/2010/03/mogadishu-braces-for-clash-of-titans.html> – Accessed 2 July 2010 – Attachment 22

<sup>38</sup> ‘Beheaded bodies of 5 builders surface in Mogadishu as Somalia clashes kill 11 residents suspect executions were carried out by Al-Shabaab rebels’ 2010, *The Daily Star*, source: *Reuters*, 22 April [http://www.dailystar.com.lb/article.asp?edition\\_id=10&categ\\_id=2&article\\_id=114045#axzz0loBnvInc](http://www.dailystar.com.lb/article.asp?edition_id=10&categ_id=2&article_id=114045#axzz0loBnvInc) – Accessed 6 July 2010 – Attachment 23

<sup>39</sup> IASC Somalia 2010, ‘Protection Cluster Update Weekly Report’ 23 April – Attachment 24

<sup>40</sup> Taarnby, M. & Hallundbaek, L. 2010, *Al-Shabaab: The Internationalization of Militant Islamism in Somalia and the Implications for Radicalisation Processes in Europe*, Justice Ministry Denmark, 26 February, p.39 [http://www.justitsministeriet.dk/fileadmin/downloads/Forskning\\_og\\_dokumentation/Forskningspulje/Taarnby-rapport.pdf](http://www.justitsministeriet.dk/fileadmin/downloads/Forskning_og_dokumentation/Forskningspulje/Taarnby-rapport.pdf) – Accessed 2 July 2010 – Attachment 25

<sup>41</sup> Le Sage, A. 2010, ‘Somalia’s Endless Transition: Breaking the Deadlock’, *Strategic Forum*, No. 257, June [http://www.humansecuritygateway.com/documents/NDU\\_SomaliasEndlessTransition\\_BreakingTheDeadlock.pdf](http://www.humansecuritygateway.com/documents/NDU_SomaliasEndlessTransition_BreakingTheDeadlock.pdf) – Accessed 1 July 2010 – Attachment 26

One area where Al-Shabaab has had success is in the recruitment of young men from marginalised minority clans. Angry, radicalised men and boys from clans or tribes that have been traditionally marginalised by Somalia's dominant clans are disobeying their own tribal elders and are joining the ranks of Al-Shabaab. A June 2010 report in South Africa's *Mail & Guardian* states that some are as young as "14, 15, 16... They empower the young... They go to the young, give them power, the power to face that rotten structure of the tribe, power in the shape of a gun. Power as self esteem and belief... This is why they succeed."<sup>42</sup>



**Figure 1: The Symbol of Al- Shabaab: an open copy of the Koran and two AK-47 Kalashnikov rifles superimposed on a map of the Horn of Africa.<sup>43</sup>**

**3. Please provide information relating to the Ceelasha Biyaha refugee camp, including in relation to the activities of Al-Shabaab in the camp and whether minority clans are more vulnerable in the camp.**

According to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), Ceelasha Biyaha is a refugee camp located on private land in Afgoye district. In 2007 it had an estimated population of 24,500, comprising 20 percent men, 35 percent women, and 45 percent children. The UNHCR states that shelters in Ceelasha Biyasha "are made mainly from makeshift plastic, they have very few possessions, and the latrines on the site are insufficient for the number of people living there." It also states that its population are internally displaced persons (IDPs) from Mogadishu and described the camp as safe and secure.<sup>44</sup>

However, since 2007 Al-Shabaab has attempted to extend its control into Afgoye, in the process bringing it into conflict with its ally Hisb al-Islam (Party of Islam). According to *Radio Gaalkacyo*, "heavy fighting has broken out between Al-Shabab Islamic Movement and [a] Hisb al-Islam faction over the control of the town... Hundreds of fighters of the two groups armed with heavy weapons and armored vehicles have been seen patrolling Afgoye District. An eyewitness, who declined to be named, has told the media that the two sides are ready to clash. He further said that residents in Afgoye Town, Ceelasha Biyaha Locality and other towns of Lower Shabelle Region have fled from their homes in fear of gunfire."<sup>45</sup> In late June 2010, Ceelasha Biyaha was said to be the only town in the Afgoye district still outside of the

<sup>42</sup> Abdul-Ahad, G. 2010, 'How Somalia's civil war became new front against al-Qaeda', Ethiomedia.com, source: *Mail & Guardian*, 8 June <http://www.ethiomedia.com/absolute/3339.html> – Accessed 2 July 2010 – Attachment 27

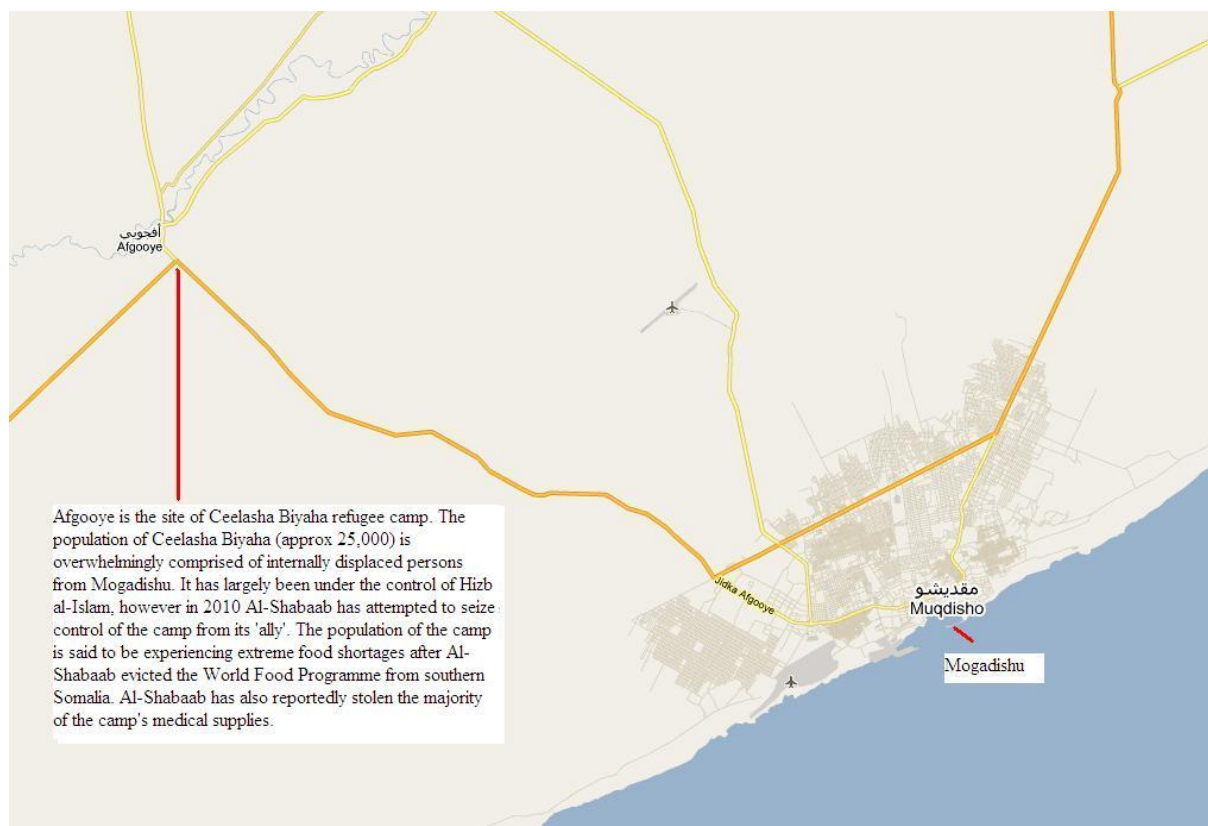
<sup>43</sup> Page, J. 2010, 'Jihadi Arena Report: Somalia – Development of Radical Islamism and Current Implications', International Institute for Counter-Terrorism, 22 March <http://www.ict.org.il/Articles/tabid/66/Articlsid/814/currentpage/1/Default.aspx> – Accessed 1 July 2010 – Attachment 8

<sup>44</sup> United Nations High Commission for Refugees 2007, 'SAACID Visual Assessment of IDP Locations in Mogadishu', 28 July [http://www.saacid.org/uploads/IDP\\_Survey\\_2007\\_-\\_Visual\\_Assessment\\_of\\_IDP\\_Settlements\\_Report\\_-\\_July\\_2007.pdf](http://www.saacid.org/uploads/IDP_Survey_2007_-_Visual_Assessment_of_IDP_Settlements_Report_-_July_2007.pdf) – Accessed 1 July 2010 – Attachment 28

<sup>45</sup> 'Al-Shabab, Hisb al-Islam said mobilizing to clash in southern', Markacadeey, source: *Radio Gaalkacyo*, 22 June [http://www.markacadeey.com/june2010/20100622\\_2e.htm](http://www.markacadeey.com/june2010/20100622_2e.htm) – Accessed 2 July 2010 – Attachment 29

control of Al-Shabaab. However, reports state that many of Hizb al-Islam's (HI) militants are defecting to Al-Shabaab and thus it appears unlikely that HI will remain in control.<sup>46</sup>

Al-Shabaab is reportedly causing starvation in Ceelasha Biyaha, not just because of its conflict with HI, but also because in early 2010 it evicted the World Food Programme (WFP) from southern Somalia.<sup>47 48</sup> A March 2010 report cites Muhammad Dheere, the ex-warlord of Ceelasha Biyaha and the Afgoye District, who complains that Al-Shabaab has "looted medicine stored in warehouses belonging to aid agencies in the town and later allowed the town's residence (sic) to descend on the little that they left behind."<sup>49</sup>



**Map 1: Ceelasha Biyaha**

#### **4. Please provide information relating to the use as a detention centre a stadium in Mogadishu by Ethiopian troops in around January 2008**

Ethiopia invaded Somalia in January 2006, with the support of both the United States of America<sup>50</sup> and the Transitional Federal Government (TFG). In mid 2006 Ethiopian and TFG forces began a campaign to retake much of Mogadishu under the control of Al-Shabaab, including Yaqshid and the city's main stadium. Both Human Rights Watch (HRW) and Amnesty International have accused Ethiopian and TFG troops of committing human rights

<sup>46</sup> Shokolokubangushey 2010, 'Beledweyne for al-Shabab', Beautiful Horn of Africa, 18 June <http://cleantehorn.blogspot.com/2010/06/beledweyne-for-al-shabab.html> – Accessed 5 July 2010 – Attachment 30

<sup>47</sup> Shokolokubangushey 2010, 'Mogadishu Braces for Clash of Titans', Beautiful Horn of Africa, 18 March <http://cleantehorn.blogspot.com/2010/03/mogadishu-braces-for-clash-of-titans.html> – Accessed 2 July 2010 Attachment 22

<sup>48</sup> World Food Programme 2010, 'Somalia', WFP website <http://www.wfp.org/countries/somalia> – Accessed 7 July 2010 – Attachment 21

<sup>49</sup> 'Ex-warlord accuses Al-Shabab of pursuing clan agenda in southern Somalia' 2010, Biyokulule online, 4 March [http://www.biyokulule.com/view\\_content.php?articleid=2606](http://www.biyokulule.com/view_content.php?articleid=2606) – Accessed 2 July 2010 – Attachment 31

<sup>50</sup> Rice, X. & Goldenberg, S. 2007, 'How US forged an alliance with Ethiopia over invasion', *The Guardian*, 13 January <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2007/jan/13/alqaida.usa> – Accessed 1 July 2010 – Attachment 32



abuses and war crimes during this campaign.<sup>51</sup> Mass detentions became standard practice, as was the release of prisoners following payments. In January 2009 Ethiopia withdrew from Somalia, however, human rights abuses have not abated.<sup>52</sup>

HRW argues that that within a week of arrival in mid 2006 in Mogadishu, insurgent attacks began on TFG and Ethiopian forces. The Ethiopian/TFG response was to seal off areas and conduct house-to-house searches. Their response to mortar attacks was to “return firing of mortars and rockets in the direction of origin of insurgency fire.”<sup>53</sup> The *Canadian Broadcasting Corporation* reported that in the first few days of fighting 381 people were killed in battles between the Ethiopians and the insurgents.<sup>54</sup>

The most heavily contested and subsequently shelled regions in 2006 were near the main stadium; “[n]eighborhoods like Casa Popolare (KPP) in the south, Towfiq and Ali Kamin around the Stadium, all along Industrial Road, and the road from the Stadium to Villa Somalia were heavily shelled or repeatedly hit by Ethiopian BM-21 multiple-rocketlauncher and mortar rounds. The Ethiopian military objective appeared to be to capture the Stadium and control the main roads leading to it from the Ministry of Defense and Villa Somalia. During the course of the bombardment, the insurgency continued to use neighborhoods around the Stadium to fight and shell Ethiopian and TFG targets, and to ambush Ethiopian convoys, particularly during the battle for the Stadium.”<sup>55</sup>

Ethiopian and TFG forces took control of the stadium and conducted mass arrests of young males in the region. In June and July 2007 mass arrests were particularly prevalent, “with TFG militias and Ethiopian troops cordoning off large neighborhoods of the city, and then arresting and detaining hundreds of individuals, including children in some cases.” Males from the Hawiye clan were particularly targeted, “from which the insurgency derives many of its fighters.” HRW states that the main Ethiopian/TFG detention centre locations were “Baarista Hisbiga; Saldhigga Bari police station; Hawlwadag police station; the CID prison at K-4 junction; and a detention center inside Villa Somalia [the Presidential compound near the stadium]. Some of the prisoners initially held in these locations were later transferred to the main central prison known as Galshire, near the sea port.” HRW states that large numbers of detainees were released, however this occurred after the captives, or their families, paid bribes; “[d]etainees paid at least US\$50 for their release, but the majority paid more than US\$100.”<sup>56</sup>

For a detailed map of Mogadishu, showing the locations Yaqshid, Shingani, Medina and the Sports Stadium click [here](#).

## 5. Deleted

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<sup>51</sup> Amnesty International 2010, *Somalia: International Military and Policing Assistance to should be reviewed*, January – Attachment 33

<sup>52</sup> Amnesty International 2010, *No End In Sight: The Ongoing Suffering Of Somalia’s Civilians*, March – Attachment 34

<sup>53</sup> Human Rights Watch 2007, *Shell-Shocked: Civilians Under Siege in Mogadishu*, Volume 19, No. 12(a), August, p.30 – Attachment 11

<sup>54</sup> ‘381 die in 4 days of Somali war: human rights group’ 2007, *Canadian Broadcasting Corporation*, source: *Associated Press*, 2 April <http://www.cbc.ca/world/story/2007/04/02/mogadishu-evacuate-070402.html> – Accessed 2 July 2010 – Attachment 35

<sup>55</sup> Human Rights Watch 2007, *Shell-Shocked: Civilians Under Siege in Mogadishu*, Volume 19, No. 12(a), August, p.33 – Attachment 11

<sup>56</sup> Human Rights Watch 2007, *Shell-Shocked: Civilians Under Siege in Mogadishu*, Volume 19, No. 12(a), August, p.70 – Attachment 11

**6. Please provide information about the Musa Sude Yalahow militia, particularly in relation to any activities targeting minority clans in and around Yaqshid.**

Muse Sude Yalahow is a Somali warlord and former Commerce and Trade Minister in Transitional Federal Government (TFG). Yalahow rose to prominence in the early 1990s when he established the first Islamic Court in Mogadishu, in his stronghold of Medina.<sup>57</sup> Yalahow's status as a warlord grew throughout the nineties and his militia is believed to have been armed in the early years by Ethiopia. He has since gained the backing of the United States.

In May 2006 Yalahow was dismissed as a minister in the TFG after his personal militia clashed with Al-Shabaab in Mogadishu.<sup>58</sup> In February 2006 Yalahow, together with other warlords, formed a coalition called the Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counter-Terrorism (ARPCT), with the backing of the United States, to counter the growing power of the Islamic Courts Union and its Al-Shabaab militia.<sup>59</sup> In 2006 a Somali advocacy group based in the United States 'demanded' the International Criminal Court (ICC) charge Muse Sudi Yalahow with war crimes, particularly in relation to his seizure of the Keysaney Hospital in Mogadishu.<sup>60</sup>

In 2007 Yalahow is said to have agreed to disarm his militia, however it is probably more accurate to say that his militia has temporarily merged with TFG forces. In June 2009 Yalahow was rumoured to have taken command of the TFG forces during what was known as the 2009 Battle of Mogadishu, a major offensive launched by Al-Shabaab and its allies to take back control of the city. Much of the fighting was conducted in Yaqshid (Yaaqshiid).<sup>61</sup>

Yalahow's main power base is the Hawiye-Abgal clan. Although Yalahow is not named directly, a July 2009 report by Minority Rights Group International states that the Abgal sub-clan is now enjoying greater influence in the TFG, thus dividing "the general Hawiye resistance to the TFG".<sup>62</sup> Many Hawiye youths had joined Al-Shabaab. This Hawiye-Abgal influence in the TFG is almost certainly attributable to the position of Yalahow. In April 2010 TFG forces loyal to Yalahow reportedly engaged in a gunfight with other TFG soldiers for reasons unknown. There are, however, reports that a number of TFG soldiers have been defecting to Al-Shabaab, due in part to their failure to be paid.<sup>63</sup>

Although Yalahow's support base is the Abgal, there is no evidence that he deliberately targets minority groups. Yalahow's primary aim is to prevent Al-Shabaab from taking control of Medina and Mogadishu. As mentioned previously, minorities are known to join Al-Shabaab as a means of political and economic empowerment.<sup>64</sup> Minorities who join, or who

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<sup>57</sup> International Crisis Group 2005, *Somalia's Islamists*, Africa Report N°100, 12 December, p.18 – Attachment 36

<sup>58</sup> 'Somalia PM sacks US-backed warlords' 2006, *Middle East Online*, 6 May <http://www.middle-east-online.com/english/?id=16642> – Accessed 2 July 2010 – Attachment 37

<sup>59</sup> Human Rights Watch 2007, *Shell-Shocked: Civilians Under Siege in Mogadishu*, Volume 19, No. 12(a), August, p.19 – Attachment 11

<sup>60</sup> 'Somalia; International Criminal Court Asked to Charge Somali Warlord Against War Crimes' 2006 [http://www.benadir-watch.com/2006%20News/0601\\_ICC\\_asked\\_to\\_charge\\_warlords.pdf](http://www.benadir-watch.com/2006%20News/0601_ICC_asked_to_charge_warlords.pdf) – Accessed 2 July 2010 – Attachment 38

<sup>61</sup> 'Somalia: President declares state of emergency, 12 killed in Mogadishu clashes' 2009, *Ethiovoice*, source: *Garowe Online*, 5 July <http://ethiovoice.synthasite.com/home/somalia-president-declares-state-of-emergency-12-killed-in-mogadishu-clashes> – Accessed 6 July 2010 – Attachment 39

<sup>62</sup> Minority Rights Group International 2009, *People's under Threat*, UNHCR Refworld website, July, p.13 – Attachment 40

<sup>63</sup> 'Somalia: Govt Troops Desert to Insurgents' 2010, *All Africa Global Media*, 30 April <http://allafrica.com/stories/201004300697.html> – Accessed 6 July 2010 – Attachment 41

<sup>64</sup> Abdul-Ahad, G. 2010, 'How Somalia's civil war became new front against al-Qaeda', *Ethiomeia.com*, source: *Mail & Guardian*, 8 June <http://www.ethiomeia.com/absolute/3339.html> – Accessed 2 July 2010 – Attachment 27

are suspected to have joined Al-Shabaab, would find themselves the subject of Yalahow's interest.

Yalahow once controlled much of Mogadishu, including the Daynile Airport. His stronghold, however, remains the Medina district of southern Mogadishu, west of the main airport. Yalahow's control of the airport was both strategic and lucrative. Aside from allowing him to control the flow of aid into the country, Yalahow also controlled the distribution of khat, also known as mira, the addictive narcotic leaf that many people in Yemen and Somali chew. This brought substantial financial reward. When the Somali government decided to divert planes away from the airport, Yalahow threatened to shoot down any plane attempting to land elsewhere.<sup>65</sup> In 2001 Yalahow's militia was involved in the kidnapping of foreign aid workers. The workers were later released and driven to the airport under armed escort from Yalahow's men.<sup>66</sup>

No information has been located that discusses members of the Yalahow militia engaging in extortion, however given its past behaviour the possibility of it occurring remains highly plausible. Furthermore, extortion by soldiers and warlord militias has a long history in Somalia. One of the reasons behind the initial success of the Islamic Courts Union was its promise to punish persons caught extorting.<sup>67</sup> In August 2009 two TFG soldiers, possibly members of the Yalahow militia faction, shot two civilians and each other dead in a dispute at a checkpoint. The local media speculated that the shootings were the result of a disagreement over sharing money being extorted from a taxi driver.<sup>68</sup>

## **7. Please also advise of anything else potentially relevant in your research.**

A report by the United Nations General Secretary states that in the first three months of 2010, southern and central Somalia have witnessed a significant escalation of violence, "with devastating consequences for civilians and over 110,000 people displaced during that period, which brought the total of displaced persons, as a consequence of conflict, to 1.4 million. In Mogadishu, civilians were increasingly caught in crossfire, mortar attacks and artillery shelling between insurgents and Government forces. In March, the Mayor of Mogadishu issued a statement urging civilians to flee the city as a precautionary measure."<sup>69</sup>

In July 2010 *IRIN News* reported that fighting between the TFG/AMISOM coalition and Al-Shabaab in the Mogadishu suburbs of Abdul-Aziz, Bondhere, Yaaqshid and Karan has trapped thousands of residents in their homes, leaving people "unable to bury their dead... or leave the house to get essential items." One source has told the UNHCR that "a daily average of 300 artillery shells [is] hitting the city."<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> 'Somali warlord threatens planes' 2005, *BBC News*, 28 October <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/4386904.stm> – Accessed 2 July 2010 – Attachment 42

<sup>66</sup> Hassan, O. 2001, 'British aid workers freed from hostage ordeal', *The Independent*, 4 April <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/africa/british-aid-workers-freed-from-hostage-ordeal-753170.html?cmp=ilc-n> – Accessed 2 July 2010 – Attachment 43

<sup>67</sup> 'SOMALIA: The challenges of change' 2006, *IRIN News*, 6 July <http://www.irinnews.org/PrintReport.aspx?ReportId=59567> – Accessed 7 July 2010 – Attachment 46

<sup>68</sup> 'Somalia: President Travels to Kenya, Seven Killed in Clashes' 2009, *All Africa Global Media*, source: Garowe, 3 August <http://allafrica.com/stories/200908040652.html> – Accessed 7 July 2010 – Attachment 45

<sup>69</sup> United Nations General Secretary 2010, Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia, 11 May, p.5 – Attachment 44

<sup>70</sup> 'Mogadishu faces a catastrophe', *IRIN News*, 6 July <http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?ReportID=89748> – Accessed 7 July 2010 – Attachment 16

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