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Issue Paper SOMALIA CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS APRIL 1995 - JANUARY 1997 February 1997

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MAP

See original.

Source: EC Somalia Unit, European Union (EU). August 1995. *A Study of Decentralised Political Structures for Somalia: A Menu of Options*.

GLOSSARY

NSC	National Salvation Council
OAU	Organization of African Unity
RRA	Rahanweyn Resistance Army
SDM	Somali Democratic Movement
SNM	Somali National Movement
SPM	Somali Patriotic Movement
SSA	Somali Salvation Alliance
SSDF	Somali Salvation Democratic Front
USC/SNA	United Somali Congress / Somali National Alliance
USF	United Somali Front

NOTE ON THE SPELLING OF PROPER NAMES

The spellings of names of Somali leaders, clans, cities and regions used in this chronology are those which appear most often in the sources consulted. Some common variant spellings are listed below.

Leaders

Hussein Mohamed Aidid	Aydid, Aydeed, Aideed
Mohamed Farah Aidid	Fara Aydid, Aydeed, Aideed
Osman Hassan Ali Ato	Uthman Ali Ato, Atto, Atoo
Mohamed Ibrahim Egal	Muhammad Haji (or Hajji) Ibrahim Egal Igal, Igaal
Mohamed Said Hersi Morgan	Hirsi « Morgan »
Abdirahman Ahmed Ali Tour	Abdurahman « Tur », « Tuur »

Cities and Régions

Baidoa	Baidoha, Baidowa
Bay	Bai
Belet Huen	Beled Weyn, Belet Weyne, Beledweyne, Belet Uen, Beletwein
Bosaso	Boosaaso, Bosasso, Bossaso, Bossasso
Burao	Borao, Buro

Hargeisa	Hargeysa
Hiran	Hiiraan, Hiraan
Huddur	Hoddur, Huddor, Oddur
Kismayo	Chisimayu, Kisimayo, Kismayu, Kismaayo
Merca	Marka, Merka
Mogadishu	Mogadiscio
Shabelle	Shebelle

Clans

Digil	Dighil
Habar Gedir	Habr Gedir, Habr Gedr, Habr Gidir, Habir Gidir, Haber Gedir
Isaak	Issaq
Mirifleh	Mirifle, Merefle
Mursade	Murasade, Murusade, Murusadeh
Rahanweyn	Rahanwein, Rahanwayn, Rahanweyn, Rahanwin

INTRODUCTION

This chronology updates the DIRB's July 1995 Question and Answer Series paper entitled *Somalia: Chronology of Events June 1994-April 1995*, which should preferably be read first. For more information on Somalia, you may also consult the following reports published by the DIRB: *The Horn of Africa: Somalis in Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya* (Feb. 1991), *The Horn of Africa: Multiple Citizenship of Ethnic Somalis* (June 1991), *Somalia: Chronology of Events Since the Fall of Siad Barre* (Aug. 1991), *Somalia: Inter-NGO Committee for Somalia (UK) (INCS-UK): 1991 Reports - Executive Summary* (March 1992), *Women in Somalia* (Apr. 1994), *Somalia: Chronology of Events December 1992-June 1994* (Nov. 1994), *Somalia: Update on the Situation in the North (Somaliland)* (Jan. 1995), *Victims and Vulnerable Groups in Southern Somalia* (May 1995).

CHRONOLOGY

1995

April

Jeune Afrique reports that an Islamic court in Mogadishu has condemned a young woman to having part of her lip cut off as a punishment for biting off part of a friend's lip (20-26 Apr. 1995, 36). [Translation] "Since doctors refused to carry out the sentence [...] a fanatic court official" performed the operation himself with a razor (ibid.).

6 April

Approximately one month after the last peacekeepers left Somalia, the UN Security Council states that it will maintain a [translation] "small political mission" to [translation] "promote national reconciliation" (AFP 6 Apr. 1995).

9 April

An Ethiopian diplomat in Somalia, Yemani Abdi, is kidnapped by "bandits" (*Africa Research Bulletin* May 1995, 11813; AFP 10 Apr. 1995). General Mohamed Farah Aidid condemns the kidnapping (ibid.). Abdi is released three weeks later (*Africa Research Bulletin* June 1995, 11842; AFP 30 Apr. 1995; *Afrique contemporaine* July-Sept. 1995, 96).

13 April

According to AFP, the alleged rape of a Luwaye woman by a Galadle man sparks clashes between the Galadle and the Luway, two sub-clans of the Rahanweyn clan. As a result, at least 5 people are killed and 3 injured in the Bai region of southern Somalia (14 Apr. 1995).

19 April

The term of the president of the self-proclaimed Republic of Somaliland, Mohamed Ibrahim Egal, is extended by 18 months (*Afrique contemporaine* July-Sept. 1995; AFP 20 Apr. 1995).

May

Factional violence reportedly claims more than 30 lives in May (*Keesing's Record of World Events* 27 June 1995, 40539). The port of Mogadishu is also shelled during the month (*Voice of the Somali People* 26 May 1995; *Voice of the Great Somali People* 30 May 1995). The shelling casts doubt on the effectiveness of the agreement signed last March by General Aidid and Acting President Ali Mahdi concerning the opening of Mogadishu's port and airport (*Keesing's Record of World Events* 27 June 1995, 40539).

5 May

At least four people are killed, and 13 others are injured, during clashes between members of the Mursade and Abgal clans in Mogadishu (Reuters 5 May 1995). The Abgal, who are loyal to Ali Mahdi, have been attempting since September to impose Sharia (Islamic law) in the Bermuda neighbourhood, and at times their attempts have caused heavy fighting between the two clans (ibid.).

8 May

During a press conference, General Aidid's former friend and financier, Osman Hassan Ali Ato, states that Aidid has "neither the support of the Somali people nor that of his own clan" (*Africa Confidential* 12 May 1995, 3; *Indian Ocean Newsletter* 13 May 1995, 3; *New African* July-Aug. 1995, 31). Both men belong to the Saad sub-clan (part of the Habar Gedir clan), but Ato is part of the Reer Ilowle sub-group, whereas Aidid is part of the Reer Jalaf subgroup (*Africa Confidential* 12 May 1995, 3-4; *Indian Ocean Newsletter* 13 May 1995, 3).

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reports that some 6,000 people fleeing fighting between rival militias in Burao, in the self-proclaimed Republic of Somaliland, have taken refuge in Ethiopia, bringing the number of Somali refugees in Ethiopia to 80,000 (AFP 10 May 1995). The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) estimates that the fighting in Burao has caused 85,000 civilians to move to surrounding areas of the town and that "thousands" of others have fled to Ethiopia (7 July 1995, 2).

Mid-May

The Islamic organization Jihad al-Islam threatens factional leaders with a holy war [translation] "unless

they find a solution to the country's political impasse within two months" (*Afrique contemporaine* July-Sept. 1995, 96; Radio France Internationale 14 May 1995).

16 May

Charity International-Africa, a charitable organization based in Dubai, states that famine and epidemic diseases threaten the lives of more than 500,000 people in southern Somalia (*Keesing's* 27 June 1995, 40539).

21-22 May

At least 8 people are reported dead and dozens injured when a demonstration in favour of General Aidid at the Mogadishu airport ends in skirmishes between his supporters and Osman Ato's (*Libération* 23 May 1995, 10; AFP 22 May 1995).

25 May

Representatives of the Digil and Mirifleh clans set up a Supreme Council to govern a new autonomous regional unit comprising the Bai and Bokol regions, with Baidoa as the capital (*Indian Ocean Newsletter* 8 July 1995, 4; see also Radio Mogadishu 4 Apr. 1995).

11 June

A meeting of several distinguished members of the Habar Gedir clan ends with General Aidid being ousted from the presidency of the United Somali Congress/Somali National Alliance (USC/SNA); businessman Osman Ato replaces him (*Indian Ocean Newsletter* 17 June 1995, 2; AFP 11 June 1995). In turn, Aidid's followers reaffirm their support for the General, thus creating a division within the USC/SNA (*Indian Ocean Newsletter* 17 June 1995, 2). According to some sources, the faction of the USC/SNA supporting Ato is collaborating with General Aidid's rival, Ali Mahdi (*Indian Ocean Newsletter* 17 June 1995, 2; *ibid.* 24 June 1995, 4; *Le Monde* 22 June 1995; VOA 6 Sept. 1995). Aidid is accused by his rivals of placing his own personal interests above the nation's (AFP 11 June 1995), and of "hindering the international community's efforts to help Somalis" (*ibid.*; *Le Devoir* 13 June 1995, A5).

14 June

A factional leader and supporter of Ali Mahdi accuses General Aidid's militia of "enslaving" peasant workers on banana plantations in the lower Shabelle region (*Deutsche Presse-Agentur* 14 June 1995; AFP 14 June 1995); on 23 June, Agence France Presse (AFP) states that farmers have made similar accusations (23 June 1995).

15 June

General Aidid [translation] "is elected acting president of Somalia by his supporters" (*Le Monde* 22 June 1995; *Libération* 16 June 1995, 11; *Keesing's* 24 July 1995, 40587). The next day, his two main rivals, Osman Ato and Ali Mahdi, condemn Aidid's "self-proclamation" (*ibid.*; *New African* Sept. 1995, 29; *Indian Ocean Newsletter* 24 June 1995, 4). On 19 June, General Aidid responds by forming a 60-member government (*Le Monde* 22 June 1995; *Indian Ocean Newsletter* 24 June 1995, 4).

1 July

To mark the 35th anniversary of the Somali Republic's independence, President Aidid gives a speech in which he extols free enterprise and invites Somalis living abroad to "return home to help rebuild" Somalia (*Voice of the Masses of the Somali Republic* 1 July 1995).

7-15 July

Dozens of people are reportedly killed during several skirmishes between rival clans in central Somalia and in Mogadishu (*Africa Research Bulletin* Aug. 1995, 11927; Reuters 14 July 1995).

9 July

General Aidid asks humanitarian organizations to resume activities in Somalia, stating that, "many people in the capital, Mogadishu, and elsewhere in the country are once again suffering from malnutrition and disease" (VOA 9 July 1995; *New African* Sept. 1995, 29). Employees of these humanitarian organizations had left Somalia after the departure of the UN forces (VOA 9 July 1995). A 28 July *Libération* article reports that [translation] "four months after the UN peacekeepers' withdrawal, hunger has brutally resurfaced in the Somali capital" (1995, 8).

16 July

General Aidid places Khadija Abdi Fandhe, the head of the Women's Branch of the USC/SNA, [translation] "under house arrest" for a number of days (*Le Devoir* 17 July 1995, A5; AI 1996, 274; *Country Reports* 1995 1996, 237). She allegedly criticized his government and warned women to [translation] "beware of General Aidid, who in her opinion was responsible for widowing many women and leaving many children traumatized or orphaned" (*Le Devoir* 17 July 1995, A5).

17 July

"Aidid is beginning to collect and repaint old battle vehicles—called *technicals*—as the first step in forming a national army" (*Africa Research Bulletin* Aug. 1995, 11927; AFP 17 July 1995). In addition, he reportedly informs his followers that Libya has promised to finance the vehicle repairs and pay the militiamen's wages for three months (*ibid.*; *Africa Research Bulletin* Aug. 1995, 11927).

22 July

The USC/SNA condemns the kidnapping and detention of journalist Adan Ali by armed men in Mogadishu (Radio Mogadishu 22 July 1995; *West Africa* 31 July-6 Aug. 1995, 1188). Adan Ali had written articles criticizing some of General Aidid's ideas (AI 1996, 274). According to Amnesty International, the kidnappers were General Aidid's men (*ibid.*). Adan Ali is freed about two weeks later and leaves the country (*ibid.*).

30 July

Radio Mogadishu reports that during Aidid's tour of the Jubadda Hoose region in southern Somalia, 4 members of his militia were killed in clashes with the local population (30 July 1995). Apparently the trouble began when "Aidid's men fired, in the General's presence, at a woman who had just openly expressed hostile feelings" about Aidid (*ibid.*).

August

In Somaliland, "divisions within the Somali National Movement (SNM), the ruling party, appear to have degenerated into heavy fighting during August" (*Keesing's* 25 Sept. 1995, 40669; BBC World Service 12 Aug. 1995; AFP 15 Aug. 1995; Voice of the Masses of the Somali Republic 20 Aug. 1995).

7 August

In Kismayo, a town in southern Somalia, an armed attack on a World Food Program (WFP) convoy leaves 3 dead (AFP 8 Aug. 1995).

It is reported that 12 fishermen (11 Pakistanis and 1 Palestinian) who have been held by Aidid's forces for a number of months because they had been fishing illegally in Somali waters, have begun a hunger strike (AFP 24 Aug. 1995). According to one witness, two of them have been beaten (*ibid.*). Both Osman Ato and Ali Mahdi have condemned the detention of these fishermen, which they describe as "an act of terrorism" (*ibid.*). On 6 October 1995, General Aidid orders their release "in the spirit of Muslim brotherhood" (Xinhua 6 Oct. 1995).

16-17 August

General Aidid orders all armed clans, factions and individuals to surrender their weapons within the next six months (AFP 16 Aug. 1995). The next day, Osman Ato's faction condemns the "illegal" confiscation of weapons by a group loyal to Aidid (Voice of Somali Pacification 17 Aug. 1995).

17 August

In Nairobi, a conference chaired by Osman Ato ends with several Somali factional leaders agreeing to a national unity plan that would lead to the establishment of a "transitional government" in Somalia (United Nations 19 Jan. 1996, 3; *Africa Research Bulletin* Sept. 1995, 11960; Voice of Somali Pacification 26 Aug. 1995). One source indicates that all factions present support the plan, except for the pro-Aidid factions and those supporting the president of Somaliland, Mohamed Egal (*Africa Research Bulletin* Sept. 1995, 11960).

19-29 August

In the divided city of Mogadishu, attempts by General Aidid's men to disarm their rivals by force lead to renewed fighting between Aidid's and Ali Mahdi's factions (*Africa Research Bulletin* Sept. 1995, 11960; *Africa Confidential* 8 Sept. 1995, 5-6; Voice of Somali Pacification 19 Aug. 1995; *ibid.* 27 Aug. 1995). On 19 August, 6 people are reported killed and 14 wounded (*Africa Research Bulletin* Sept. 1995, 11960); in addition, many more are killed or wounded from 26 to 28 August (AFP 28 Aug. 1995). According to some estimates, more than 18 are killed and 130 wounded between 26 and 29 August (Reuters 28 Aug. 1995; *Keesing's* 25 Sept. 1995, 40669).

27 August

Approximately 400 Somali refugees in Yemen are sent back to Bosaso in northern Somalia (United Nations 29 Aug. 1995; Xinhua 1 Sept. 1995; AFP 1 Sept. 1995). On 1 September, the Somaliland weekly *Kaaha Bari* reports that these refugees, most of whom are women and children, could starve to death in Bosaso (*ibid.*). They reportedly spent about one week in Yemen prisons; some of them state they were harassed during captivity (*ibid.*; United Nations 29 Aug. 1995). A few days after these refugees are sent back, UN workers travel to Bosaso to provide humanitarian assistance to them (Xinhua 1 Sept. 1995; Reuters 3 Sept. 1995).

4 September

General Aidid's radio station announces that "the President of the Somali Republic and his Vice-Presidents [...] with Cabinet" have just passed several pieces of legislation concerning passports, travel, regional autonomy and aid organizations (Voice of the Masses of the Somali Republic 4 Sept. 1995).

5 September

Ali Musa Abdi, a correspondent for AFP and the BBC in Somalia, is arrested in Mogadishu by General Aidid's men (AI 14 Sept. 1995; AFP 11 Sept. 1995). According to the pro-Aidid radio station, Abdi [translation] "will be put on trial for 'serious crimes' committed against the 'government' established by General Aidid" (*ibid.*; *Le Monde* 14 Sept. 1995). Amnesty International (which calls Abdi a prisoner of conscience) (14 Sept. 1995; AFP 11 Sept. 1995) and six Somali factional leaders, including Ali Mahdi, demand the journalist's unconditional release (*ibid.*). A few weeks later, on 27 September, Abdi manages to escape and flees to north Mogadishu (AI 1996, 274; Radio Mogadishu 27 Sept. 1995).

12 September

In south Mogadishu, witnesses report fatal clashes between militias of the Duduble and Ayr sub-clans of the Habar Gedir clan (*Le Monde* 14 Sept. 1995; BBC World Service 12 Sept. 1995). The same day, unidentified assailants murder six imams in south Mogadishu (*ibid.*; *Le Monde* 14 Sept. 1995; Reuters

12 Sept. 1995).

16-17 September

Aidid captures the town of Baidoa in southwest Somalia (*Africa Research Bulletin* Oct. 1995, 11994; *Keesing's* 24 Oct. 1995, 40714-40715; VOA 17 Sept. 1995; AFP 18 Sept. 1995). His rival, Ali Mahdi, "threatens to declare 'all-out war' on him if he does not withdraw from the town within the next 24 hours (*Keesing's* 24 Oct. 1995, 40714-15; AFP 18 Sept. 1995). At least 17 foreign workers in Somalia are reportedly kidnapped by Aidid's forces during the battle to capture Baidoa (*ibid.*; Voice of Somali Pacification 19 Sept. 1995; *Afrique contemporaine* Jan.-March 1996, 87). All of them are released over the next five days (*ibid.*; Reuters 22 Sept. 1995; *Le Monde* 25 Sept. 1995).

24 September

Aidid's self-proclaimed government announces that Libya is the first country to recognize it (*Africa Research Bulletin* Oct. 1995, 11976). On 7 November, Aidid sends a message to President Qaddafi, thanking him for his recognition and assistance (Voice of the Masses of the Somali Republic 7 Nov. 1995). The Libyan government does not confirm that it has recognized Aidid's government (Reuters 17 Oct. 1995; United Nations 19 Jan. 1996, 3). However, a September 1996 article states that the Aidid government was apparently recognized by Libya and by Sudan (Reuters 18 Sept. 1996).

7 October

Some of General Aidid's opponents form a committee to bring about the resumption of banana product exports, the main source of foreign revenue in Somalia (*Keesing's* 23 Nov. 1995, 40763). The previous month, Aidid announced his government would impose an export tax on banana products (*Indian Ocean Newsletter* 7 Oct. 1995, 4; also see Voice of the Masses of the Somali Republic 19 Sept. 1995). His two main rivals, Ali Mahdi and Osman Ato, responded by denying banana-exporting companies access to Somali ports (*Indian Ocean Newsletter* 7 Oct. 1995, 4; United Nations 19 Jan. 1996, 3; USAID 29 Nov. 1995, 1; Voice of Somali Pacification 1 Oct. 1995; Reuters 17 Oct. 1995). The embargo is lifted later after the two companies make an appeal; however, the Mogadishu International Airport remains closed (USAID 29 Nov. 1995, 2).

11 October

Fighting in Baidoa between Aidid's militia and local clans (AFP 11 Oct. 1995), particularly the Lisan sub-clan (Xinhua 11 Oct. 1995), claims at least 15 lives and leaves close to 30 wounded (*ibid.*; AFP 11 Oct. 1995) [translation] "in the militia's ranks" (*ibid.*). The fighting also causes [translation] "heavy civilian losses" (*ibid.*) and the flight of "more than 100 families" (Xinhua 11 Oct. 1995). Three days later, Osman Ato's radio station reports that according to a USC/SNA spokesperson, between 10 and 12 October Aidid's troops "massacred" civilians, mostly women and children, particularly in the Baidoa region but elsewhere as well (Voice of Somali Pacification 14 Oct. 1995).

12 October

According to the USC/SNA, the vice-chairman of its reconciliation committee, Hasan Dhimbil Warsameh, survives an attack by "armed men loyal to General Aidid." During the attack, which occurred in a locality 30 km west of Mogadishu, four of Dhimbil's bodyguards are killed, and five other people are wounded (*Keesing's* 23 Nov. 1995, 40763; *West Africa* 23-29 Oct. 1995, 1627).

16 October

The pro-Ato radio station reports that Mogadishu is becoming less and less safe, with Aidid's forces attempting to extort taxes from merchants and forcibly collect taxes they are imposing on public transit vehicles (Voice of Somali Pacification 16 Oct. 1995; also see Voice of the Masses of the Somali Republic 17 Oct. 1995; *ibid.* 2 Nov. 1995). Two weeks later, there are reports of two incidents in which Aidid's

militia shoot at vehicles whose drivers refused to pay the tax; the driver of one vehicle is killed and several people wounded (Voice of Somali Pacification 2 Nov. 1995).

18 October

In Hargeisa, the capital of Somaliland, the treason trial of former Somaliland president Abdirahman Ahmed Ali Tour and a number of his collaborators [translation] "begins, in absentia" (*Afrique contemporaine* Jan.-March 1996; AFP 18 Oct. 1995). Tour currently is the first vice-president in Aidid's self-proclaimed government (AFP 17 Jan. 1996). On 14 February 1996, three former members of the Government of Somaliland, currently General Aidid's allies, are sentenced to death in absentia, on charges of treason and involvement in a rebellion against the Somaliland government headed by Egal (AFP 15 Feb. 1996; Xinhua 15 Feb. 1996; Reuters 14 Feb. 1996).

22 October

In Merca, southern Somalia, a doctor of Italian origin is killed and one of her co-workers injured by armed men in a clinic run by a Catholic charitable organization (*Africa Research Bulletin* Nov. 1995, 12033; Reuters 22 Oct. 1995; USAID 29 Nov. 1995, 2). General Aidid reportedly orders an investigation into the incident (ibid.).

28 October

According to Radio Hargeisa, Government of Somaliland forces kill 35 members of the Issa clan and repel their attack on an army post in the village of Jidhi (*Africa Research Bulletin* Dec. 1995, 12063). However, these reports are denied by the leader of the United Somali Front (USF), Abdi Umar Ahmad Ananung (Radio Mogadishu 31 Oct. 1995).

30 October

In Baidoa, witnesses report that in the past two days, "at least 21 people lost their lives and 18 others were wounded" in fighting between Aidid's forces and the Rahanweyn Resistance Army (RRA) (AFP 30 Oct. 1995). Apparently the two groups had already been fighting "sporadically" since last September when Aidid captured Baidoa (ibid.). On 7 November, at least 17 people are reported killed and 15 wounded (Reuters 7 Nov. 1995), while on 16 November, more than 15 are killed and 20 wounded in fighting between these same groups (AFP 16 Nov. 1995). Similarly, on 6 December, other clashes between the same two groups claim at least 17 lives (ibid. 6 Dec. 1995).

30 November

Colonel Omar Hashi Aden, vice-president of the United Somali Congress/Somali Patriotic Movement (USC/SPM), a political organization of the Hawadle clan, accuses Aidid's forces, who were recently expelled from the Hiran region (central Somalia) which they had occupied for eight months, of looting and destroying the region, as well as causing the deaths of 487 Hawadle civilians (AFP 30 Nov. 1995). Aden also appeals to the international community to come to the Hawadle's assistance so as to "prevent a humanitarian disaster" (ibid.).

4 December

Fighting intensifies between the Abgal and Mursade sub-clans. An estimated 26 people have died since the hostilities began the previous week, and dozens of others have been wounded (AFP 4 Dec. 1995; see the entry for 5 May 1995). Apparently the conflict is worsening because of the fight to gain control of the road between Mogadishu and Baidoa (AFP 4 Dec. 1995).

6 December

A decree by the Islamic leader of north Mogadishu makes it illegal to own any weapon without a permit (AFP 6 Dec. 1995; Radio Mogadishu 7 Dec. 1995).

26 December

Italian agronomist Marco Lorenzetti, who was kidnapped in Mogadishu on 18 December, is released (RAI TV 26 Dec. 1995; USAID 9 Apr. 1996, 2). He reportedly was arrested by Aidid's men for "breaking the immigration rules set by Aidid, which forbid foreigners from entering Somalia through ports or airports not controlled by him" (ibid.; also see Reuters 12 Oct. 1995).

1996**January**

The RRA states it has won a major victory in Baidoa over General Aidid's forces (Voice of the Somali Republic 4 Jan. 1996; *Africa Research Bulletin* Feb. 1996, 12133) and that it has repelled their attack on Kismayo (ibid.).

8 January

In north Mogadishu, a region held by Ali Mahdi, the Islamic court's militia interrupt a concert, take about 30 musicians into custody and confiscate their instruments (Africa News Service 5 Feb. 1996; AFP 11 Jan. 1996). Two days later, the musicians, accused of "corrupting the morals of Somalis" (Africa News Service 5 Feb. 1996), are sentenced to twenty lashes each by an Islamic court; some are punished in public (ibid.; AFP 11 Jan. 1996; ibid. 23 Jan. 1996; Deutsche Presse-Agentur 11 Jan. 1996).

11 January

Libération citing information broadcast by Osman Ato's radio station, reports that clashes in Kismayo (southern Somalia) between Osman Ato's followers and those of Mohamed Said Hersi Morgan have claimed at least 15 lives and left several wounded (13-14 Jan. 1996, 12).

15 January

In Burao, Somaliland, a government attack against opposition forces supported by General Aidid leaves at least 59 people dead (*Africa Research Bulletin* Feb. 1996, 12133; AFP 16 Jan. 1996) and 130 wounded (ibid.).

16 January

Aidid's forces defeat the RRA and capture the town of Huddur in southwest Somalia (*Indian Ocean Newsletter* 20 Jan. 1996, 8; AFP 20 Jan. 1996; Africa News Service 5 Feb. 1996; *Africa Confidential* 16 Feb. 1996, 3). The battle for Huddur reportedly leaves at least 18 people dead (Africa News Service 5 Feb. 1996; AFP 17 Jan. 1996) and 47 wounded, and forces about 70 per cent of the population to leave the town (ibid.). A few days later, on 19 and 20 January, an attempt by the RRA to regain control of the town leaves at least 27 people dead and 32 wounded (Africa News Service 5 Feb. 1996; AFP 20 Jan. 1996). However, on 7 April, the BBC World Service reports that the RRA announced in a communiqué that it had recaptured the town of Huddur from General Aidid's army (7 Apr. 1996).

29 January

New fighting between the Abgal and Mursade clans in north Mogadishu reportedly leaves 31 people dead and about 60 wounded (AFP 29 Jan. 1996; *Afrique contemporaine* Apr.-June 1996, 88; see the entries for 5 May and 4 Dec. 1995).

Mid-February

General Aidid's militia capture the town of Dinsor, near Baidoa (*Africa Research Bulletin* March 1996, 12170).

26 February

It is reported that since January, dozens of people belonging to the Bantu ethnic minority in the lower Juba region of southern Somalia have been massacred by members of the Galje'el clan loyal to a local warlord who is a supporter of General Aidid (*Afrique contemporaine* Apr.-June 1996; Xinhua 26 Feb. 1996).

March

Cholera is reported to be on the rise in several regions of the country (USAID 9 Apr. 1996, 2). It is suspected that at least 4,000 people have been stricken by the disease in March, with about one hundred deaths resulting (*ibid.*). However, three months later, reports state that the cholera epidemic that has afflicted the country since January 1996 has diminished substantially, thanks to a chlorination program (United Nations n.d., 1).

1 March

New fighting is reported between Aidid's men and the RRA around the village of Daynuunay (Xinhua 3 March 1996; Voice of the Somali Republic 3 March 1996). At least 11 of Aidid's militia are reported killed, and 13 others wounded; four RRA soldiers are also reported to have lost their lives (*ibid.*; Xinhua 3 March 1996).

9 March

Elman Ali Ahmed, a peace activist, is murdered by three masked men in south Mogadishu, a region controlled by General Aidid (*Africa Research Bulletin* Apr. 1996, 12204; *Indian Ocean Newsletter* 16 March 1996, 4; AI 18 March 1996). He had recently had problems with Aidid's self-proclaimed government (*Africa Research Bulletin* Apr. 1996, 12204) and was planning to leave the country (*ibid.*; AI 18 March 1996; AFP 10 March 1996). Aidid's faction denies responsibility for the murder (*ibid.*).

10 March

Ali Mahdi, leader of the faction that controls north Mogadishu, is elected president of the United Somali Congress/Somali Salvation Alliance (USC/SSA) (Xinhua 11 March 1996; BBC World Service 11 March 1996; *Indian Ocean Newsletter* 16 March 1996, 4). This political/ethnic faction is made up of the Hawiyya members of the Abgal tribe (*ibid.*).

15 March

In the town of Jowhar, located in central Somalia north of Mogadishu, a 30-year-old married man, Mohamed Ali Arran, is stoned to death after an Islamic court sentences him to death for raping a 15-year-old girl (AI 18 March 1996; AFP 16 March 1996). According to AFP, if Arran had been a bachelor, he would have been sentenced to 100 lashes rather than to death (*ibid.*). This is reported to be the seventh execution by stoning in Somalia since the Somali state collapsed in 1991 (AI 18 March 1996).

16 March

The pro-Ali Mahdi radio station reports that the RRA killed nine members of General Aidid's militia and injured 15 others in an attack on a house where General Aidid was hiding (Radio Mogadishu 17 March 1996).

19 March

According to witnesses, fighting between General Aidid's and Osman Ato's militias in Merca claims at least 6 lives and leaves 12 wounded (*Africa Research Bulletin* Apr. 1996, 12204). The next day, Ato's militia, which had captured Merca a few days earlier, withdraws from the town (AFP 20 March 1996). However, fighting between the two rival factions of the USC/SNA south of Mogadishu continues for

several days (ibid. 22 March 1996; ibid. 26 March 1996; Reuters 26 March 1996).

22 March

Five UN workers, kidnapped 21 March by an armed man south of Mogadishu, are freed by villagers who apparently learned of the kidnapping through the BBC (Reuters 22 March 1996; USAID 9 Apr. 1996, 2). The kidnapper is reported to be a former Somali employee of UNICEF demanding money (ibid.; Reuters 22 March 1996).

24 March

Militiamen loyal to General Aidid loot the village of El-Ali near the town of Belet Huen in central Somalia, killing at least one person and wounding seven (AFP 24 March 1996; BBC World Service 24 March 1996).

27 March

In south Mogadishu, a deputy minister in Aidid's self-proclaimed government, Elmi Ahmed Sharmarke, is murdered in his home by unidentified armed assailants (Reuters 28 March 1996). Sharmarke belonged to the Hawadle sub-clan, most of whose members are opposed to Aidid's government (ibid.).

30 March

The pro-Ato radio station reports that four peace activists have been killed by militiamen loyal to General Aidid in the Jamaame district of southern Somalia (Voice of Somali Pacification 30 March 1996; Deutsche Presse-Agentur 30 March 1996).

31 March

More than 60 members of General Aidid's armed militia defect to Ali Mahdi's camp; most of these men are Rahanweyns who accuse General Aidid of discriminating against them (BBC World Service 31 March 1996; AFP 31 March 1996; Xinhua 31 March 1996).

4 April

Fighting between General Aidid's and Osman Ato's forces flares up in Mogadishu and continues "sporadically" over the course of the month (*Africa Research Bulletin* May 1996, 12241; *Keesing's* 23 May 1996, 41035). On 9 April, the Red Cross states that at least 100 people, including many civilians, were killed and 410 wounded (*Africa Research Bulletin* May 1996, 12241; Reuters 9 Apr. 1996). On 19 April, more fighting between the two factions claims more than 19 lives, leaves 47 injured, and forces dozens of families to flee the region (BBC World Service 19 Apr. 1996; Reuters 20 Apr. 1996). Ato's faction accuses Aidid of instigating the fighting and deliberately targeting civilian areas (Voice of Somali Pacification 6 Apr. 1996; ibid. 9 Apr. 1996; BBC World Service 19 Apr. 1996). One victim of the fighting is Osman Ato's son, Abdi Sallan Ali Ato, who dies on 11 April (ibid. 12 Apr. 1996; IPS 24 Apr. 1996).

13 April

In a report to the UN Security Council, Special Counsellor Chinmaya Gharekhan states "there has been no improvement in the political and security situation in Somalia since the UN peace forces left in February and March 1995" (*Keesing's* 23 May 1996, 41035). He also reports that "malnutrition and disease" are on the rise (ibid.).

16 April

More than 45 Somalis fleeing to Yemen die when the [translation] "overloaded boat" they were on capsizes near the Yemen coast (AFP 7 May 1996; AP 9 May 1996).

17 April

Two bombs explode in a refugee camp in south Mogadishu, killing 9 people, including 3 children, and

injuring at least 15 (*Africa Research Bulletin* May 1996, 12241; Reuters 20 Apr. 1996).

22 April

According to witnesses, militiamen loyal to General Aidid attack a civilian bus in south Mogadishu, killing 6 and injuring 5 (Reuters 22 Apr. 1996). In addition, Aidid's militia reportedly disperse a women's peace demonstration (*ibid.*; Voice of Somali Pacification 22 Apr. 1996; *Middle East International* 24 May 1996, 16).

The UNHCR announces the start of a new [translation] "massive repatriation operation" for some 2,000 Somali refugees in Kenya (AFP 22 Apr. 1996). In 1995, according to the UNHCR, about 40,000 Somali refugees in Kenya were repatriated while some 7,000 new refugees entered that country (*World Refugee Survey 1996*, 1996, 52).

27 April

At a meeting in Mogadishu, the USC/SNA faction supporting Osman Ato approves the establishment of Islamic courts in south Mogadishu, with a view to undermining General Aidid's authority (*Indian Ocean Newsletter* 4 May 1996, 2). Islamic courts already exist in north Mogadishu, where Ali Mahdi's forces dominate (*ibid.*; AFP 3 May 1996).

28 April

Aidid's militia [translation] "fired upon a gathering in Mogadishu's main mosque," killing one person and wounding seven (AFP 3 May 1996). Sheikh Omar Faruq, the imam of the mosque, is among the wounded (*ibid.*; *Middle East International* 24 May 1996, 16).

6 May

The Somali Democratic Movement/Somali Salvation Alliance (SDM/SSA) and the Somali Democratic Movement/Somali National Alliance (SDM/SNA) decide to work together to counter the violence perpetrated by General Aidid's faction (Radio Mogadishu 6 May 1996; *Africa Research Bulletin* June 1996, 12279; *West Africa* 13-19 May 1996, 732).

8 May

In Merca, clashes between two rival militias from the Habar Gedir clan cause six fatalities and leave seven people wounded (AFP 8 May 1996). A dispute over administration of the town's port apparently triggered the conflict (*ibid.*).

12-14 May

New clashes in the Dinsor district between Aidid's troops and RRA activists claim several lives and leave many wounded (AFP 13 May 1996; Radio Mogadishu 14 May 1996).

Mid-May

General Aidid signs an order requiring UN agencies and NGOs (except for the Red Cross and the Somali Red Crescent) to limit their humanitarian activities to regions controlled by his supporters (*Indian Ocean Newsletter* 18 May 1996, 4).

18 May

The British Foreign Minister reports that negotiations are under way to secure the release of 3 people kidnapped in Somalia—one Briton, one German and one Somali (AFP 18 May 1996; *Africa Research Bulletin* June 1996, 12282). They reportedly are released two days later (*ibid.*).

19 May

The self-proclaimed Republic of Somaliland celebrates the fifth anniversary of its independence (*Africa*

Research Bulletin June 1996, 12282; *Keesing's* 21 June 1996, 41083). Somaliland is still not recognized by the international community (*ibid.*; *Africa Research Bulletin* June 1996, 12282).

25 May

A USC/SSA spokesman uses the words "shameful and inhuman" to describe efforts by Aidid's militia to sabotage all humanitarian assistance provided to his opponents by UNICEF and other aid organizations (Radio Mogadishu 21 May 1996).

June

General Aidid expands his cabinet to 6 vice-presidents and 93 ministers (*Africa Research Bulletin* July 1996, 12303). He also appoints Mohamed Omar Habeb governor of Mogadishu (*ibid.*; *Indian Ocean Newsletter* 8 June 1996, 4). Habeb, who recently defected to Aidid's camp, is a former Ali Mahdi supporter (*Africa Research Bulletin* July 1996, 12303; *Indian Ocean Newsletter* 8 June 1996, 4).

12 June

In Somaliland, 15 civilians (including 2 Somali employees working for the humanitarian agency CARE International) die in inter-clan clashes (*Africa Research Bulletin* July 1996, 12314).

13 June

Three people are killed and 4 wounded when Somali rebels attack a World Food Program (WFP) convoy near the town of Hargeisa in Somaliland (TASS 13 June 1996).

Humanitarian aid workers state that fighting between Aidid's forces and those of Osman Ato have left 10 dead and 23 wounded in south Mogadishu (*Africa Research Bulletin* July 1996, 12314). Three other people reportedly died in clashes that occurred 16 June (*ibid.*). A few days later, in the night between 23 and 24 June, fighting between the same factions worsens, killing 11 and injuring 37 in south Mogadishu. Osman Ato's forces manage to capture a "strategic road linking Mogadishu to regions in the south" (Xinhua 24 June 1996).

27 June

Fighting close to the green line dividing the city of Mogadishu forces non-essential staff of several NGOs to evacuate (Reuters 27 June 1996). Over the past six days, some 50-60 people have been killed and more than 100 injured in these clashes between Aidid's and Ato's factions (*ibid.*).

1 July

General Aidid asks religious leaders to help establish Sharia in Somalia (Reuters 2 July 1996; *Africa Confidential* 5 July 1996, 8).

8 July

Le Devoir reports that for the first time [translation] "militias linked to Islamic courts" participate in fighting between Aidid and Mahdi supporters in Mogadishu (8 July 1996, A5). Over two days, [translation] "about 40 people are killed and roughly 100 are injured" in this fighting (*ibid.*).

12 July

According to witnesses, two mortar shells strike the Digfer Hospital in Mogadishu during fighting between the Aidid and Ato factions; 6 people die and about 20 others are hurt (Reuters 13 July 1996). Clashes between Aidid's and Mahdi's militias have reportedly claimed at least 110 lives and left 190 wounded over the last four weeks (*ibid.*).

21-23 July

Fighting continues in Mogadishu between Aidid's and Ato's militia. Witnesses report 7 people dead and

15 wounded on 21 and 22 July (Reuters 22 July 1996). Moreover, on 23 July, at least 20 people are reportedly killed and 50 others wounded south of Mogadishu in fighting between Aidid and Mahdi supporters (AFP 23 July 1996).

Late July

It is rumoured that General Aidid [translation] "has been badly wounded" during recent fighting in Mogadishu and that [translation] "his life is apparently in danger" (*Libération* 27-28 July 1996, 6; Voice of the Somali Republic 25 July 1996).

In Somaliland, clashes between the Idagale and the Abdalla Isaaq, two sub-clans of the Garhajis clan, leave 23 dead and 30 wounded near Qoton, 40 km southeast of the capital, Hargeisa (Reuters 1 Aug. 1996).

1 August

General Aidid dies at the age of 62 as the result of injuries sustained during fighting in Mogadishu between his faction and Mahdi's (*Le Monde* 3 Aug. 1996; Voice of Somali Pacification 2 Aug. 1996; AFP 6 Aug. 1996). Three days later, his 34-year-old son, Hussein Mohamed Aidid, a former US Marine, replaces him as leader of the USC/SNA (*ibid.*; Reuters 12 Aug. 1996; *Le Monde* 6 Aug. 1996) and as acting president of Somalia (*ibid.*). Hussein Aidid and his government state that the general died of a heart attack, not of injuries sustained in the fighting (Reuters 12 Aug. 1996; Voice of the Masses of the Somali Republic 2 Aug. 1996). After the death of General Aidid, the factions of his rivals Mahdi and Ato call for a cease-fire (United Nations 9 Aug. 1996; Voice of Somali Pacification 2 Aug. 1996; *Le Monde* 19 Aug. 1996; *Journal de Genève et Gazette de Lausanne* 24 Aug. 1996).

5 August

In his first speech, Hussein Aidid vows to follow in his father's footsteps and to "eliminate his domestic and foreign adversaries" (IPS 9 Aug. 1996; *Journal de Genève et Gazette de Lausanne* 24 Aug. 1996). In turn, Ali Mahdi threatens to break the cease-fire, and Ali Ato warns that Hussein Aidid's "inflammatory" remarks could rekindle an inter-clan war in Somalia (IPS 9 Aug. 1996; AFP 5 Aug. 1996).

8-9 August

The Ethiopian army carries out raids in the Gedo region of southwest Somalia in order to punish the Somali Islamic Movement Al-Ittihad al-Islami for its [translation] "terrorist" activities in Ethiopia. Both sides reportedly lose men and equipment (*Le Monde* 12 Aug. 1996; *Africa Research Bulletin* 26 Sept. 1996, 12357; AFP 10 Aug. 1996; *ibid.* 12 Aug. 1996; *ibid.* 31 Aug. 1996).

10-12 August

Fighting between Ali Mahdi's and Hussein Aidid's factions flares up in the capital and surrounding areas (AFP 11 Aug. 1996; Reuters 12 Aug. 1996). Witnesses state that the fighting left several people dead or injured, and displaced hundreds of families (*ibid.*; AFP 11 Aug. 1996; Reuters 12 Aug. 1996).

26 August

In the central town of Galkayo, armed clashes between members of the USC/SNA faction loyal to Hussein Aidid and members of the Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF) leave at least two people dead and four wounded (AFP 26 Aug. 1996).

14 September

In the Bakol region of central Somalia, fighting between the militia of the Jirron sub-clan loyal to Aidid and RRA members leaves six dead and eight wounded (AFP 14 Sept. 1996). About one month later, on

13 October, the RRA states that Hussein Aidid's militia has killed at least 5 people and wounded 23 others during fighting between the same factions in Gof-Gadud and Qahira, two villages located about 30 km from Baidoa. The RRA also accuses its enemies of setting fire to 73 houses (ibid. 13 Oct. 1996).

17 September

Two representatives of Somalfruit, a banana exporting company, are murdered by unidentified armed assailants in the lower Shabelle region (Reuters 18 Sept. 1996).

18 September

Witnesses report that unidentified armed men fired at a bus in south Mogadishu, killing five civilians and injuring seven others (Reuters 18 Sept. 1996). According to a witness, most of the victims belonged to the Mursade sub-clan loyal to Mohamed Kanyare Afrah, the Interior Minister in Farah Aidid's government (ibid.)

19 September

Hilal Mohamed Aden, an employee of a Swedish peace organization and the brother of an RRA politician, is wounded and abducted by armed men from his home in north Mogadishu (AFP 19 Sept. 1996; Reuters 5 Oct. 1996). In the following weeks, UN aid agencies and charitable NGOs cease non-essential operations as a means of pressing for Aden's release (ibid.; AFP 2 Nov. 1996). Aden is released about one and a half months later (ibid.). On 22 September, Abdi Abshir Kahie, another peace activist and a press officer for Osman Ato's USC/SNA, is murdered by armed men at his residence in south Mogadishu (ibid. 22 Sept. 1996).

4 October

Mohamed Ahmed Nuur, the secretary general of the USC/SNA faction supporting Osman Ato, is murdered in Mogadishu, as well as two other supporters of the faction (Reuters 5 Oct. 1996; *The Independent* 6 Oct. 1996). Ato's faction attributes these deaths to Aidid's supporters (ibid.; Reuters 5 Oct. 1996).

10 October

Reports indicate that at the invitation of Kenya's President Moi, the three main factional leaders in Somalia, Hussein Aidid, Ali Mahdi and Osman Ato, are holding peace talks in Nairobi (AFP 10 Oct. 1996; *Indian Ocean Newsletter* 12 Oct. 1996, 3). On 15 October, they agree to a peace plan that includes a cease-fire, the elimination of roadblocks in Mogadishu and free passage of humanitarian assistance (Deutsche Presse-Agentur 15 Oct. 1996; ibid. 16 Oct. 1996; *Africa Confidential* 18 Oct. 1996, 4-5). Nevertheless, in the last week of October, fighting between Ato's and Aidid's factions reportedly resumes, claiming dozens of lives and leaving many people injured (AFP 2 Nov. 1996; Reuters 1 Nov. 1996; *The Record* 2 Nov. 1996). On 6 November, a source states that the death toll has risen to 95 (ibid. 6 Nov. 1996), and on 16 November, 19 more people are reported dead (including 8 children) and 23 others wounded (AP 16 Nov. 1996; *The Record* 17 Nov. 1996).

6 November

Radio Hargeisa reports that the president of Somaliland, Muhamed Egal, has amnestied and freed 669 prisoners of war who were captured during the civil wars in Somaliland (6 Nov. 1996).

11 November

Fighting resumes between the RRA and Hussein Aidid's militia to gain control of the town of Huddur. According to witnesses, at least 7 are killed and 13 wounded (AFP 12 Nov. 1996; Arab Press Service Organisation 16 Nov. 1996) Aidid's militia succeeds in capturing the town (AFP 12 Nov. 1996).

15-18 November

About 30 Somali traditional and religious chiefs, intellectuals and businessmen attend a peace conference in Nakuru, Kenya (AFP 22 Nov. 1996; Xinhua 21 Nov. 1996; *Indian Ocean Newsletter* 30 Nov. 1996, 2). The aim of the conference, financed by the European Union (EU), is "to examine possibilities of decentralising political institutions in Somalia as a means to achieve peace" (AFP 22 Nov. 1996; *ibid.* 18 Nov. 1996). Aidid's faction accuses the EU of trying to "destroy the unity of Somalia" and refuses to take part in the conference (*ibid.* 22 Nov. 1996; *ibid.* 18 Nov. 1996). In addition, talks between the Somali political factions are scheduled to take place towards the end of November in Ethiopia, but Aidid's faction has said it will boycott these as well (*Indian Ocean Newsletter* 23 Nov. 1996; Arab Press Service Organisation 14 Dec. 1996; AFP 19 Nov. 1996), apparently because it was not invited as the Government of Somalia (*ibid.*).

18 November

Continuing clashes between Aidid's and Ato's militias in south Mogadishu claim 14 lives, leave 30 others wounded, and force six primary schools to remain closed indefinitely (AP 19 Nov. 1996). On 22 and 23 November, 17 more people are killed and 25 others wounded in clashes between the same groups (*ibid.* 23 Nov. 1996; Reuters 23 Nov. 1996).

11 December

At least six people are killed and nine others wounded in fighting between Aidid's and Ato's factions in the village of Mugambo, located in southern Somalia (Xinhua 12 Dec. 1996; AFP 12 Dec. 1996).

14-18 December

More than 107 people are killed and some 900 others wounded in five days of fighting between Aidid's supporters and opponents (*The Toronto Star* 18 Dec. 1996; AP 18 Dec. 1996; *The Baltimore Sun* 18 Dec. 1996; *The New York Times* 19 Dec. 1996).

24 December

Ethiopia's Defence Ministry claims to have repulsed an attack launched across the Somalia-Ethiopia border by members of the Al-Ittihad al-Islami Islamic group, "killing or wounding more than 100 attackers" (Reuters 24 Dec. 1996). In turn, Al-Ittihad al-Islami claims to have killed 70 Ethiopian soldiers and accuses Ethiopia of occupying the Somali town of Dollo, in the Gedo region (TASS 24 Dec. 1996). Sheikh Mohamed Moa'lin Hassan, a "moderate" Muslim leader, calls for a holy war against Ethiopia, a position that is later echoed by Ali Hassan Ali, the Sudanese chargé d'affaires in Somalia (AFP 25 Dec. 1996; *ibid.* 29 Dec. 1996; Arab Press Service Organisation 31 Dec. 1996). The incursion by Ethiopian forces into Somalian territory is also denounced by Aidid's government (*ibid.*; AFP 29 Dec. 1996; Voice of the Masses of the Somali Republic 26 Dec. 1996).

1997**2 January**

Hussein Aidid orders all foreign workers and journalists in Mogadishu to get residence permits from his government's immigration officers or risk "'severe punishment'" (Reuters 2 Jan. 1997; Xinhua 2 Jan. 1997).

3 January

It is reported that the peace talks among 26 Somali faction leaders that have been going on in Ethiopia for several weeks have resulted in the creation of a 41-member National Salvation Council (NSC) charged with the task of preparing the transition to a provisional central government (*ibid.* 3 Jan. 1997;

AFP 3 Jan. 1997; Reuters 3 Jan. 1997b; see the entry for 15-18 November 1996). Both Hussein Aidid and Somaliland president Mohamed Egal boycotted these peace talks (ibid.; Deutsche Presse-Agentur 4 Jan. 1997; AP 4 Jan. 1997).

Hussein Aidid's faction accuses the Ethiopian government of violating the 1992 United Nations arms embargo against Somalia by providing arms to Ali Mahdi's faction; this allegation is denied by one of Ali Mahdi's representatives (Reuters 3 Jan. 1997a).

4 January

Hassan Dahir Aweys, Al-Ittihad al-Islami's military chief, announces that the movement will become a political party in keeping with its intention "to rule Somalia by either political or military means" in accordance with the principles of Sharia (Xinhua 4 Jan. 1997; AFP 4 Jan. 1997). At the same time, Aweys rejects the peace accord recently signed in Ethiopia by Somali politicians, claiming that "it is not rooted in the teachings of Islam" (AP 5 Jan. 1997; Reuters 5 Jan. 1997; Xinhua 4 Jan. 1997).

6 January

The Interior Minister in Aidid's government, Mohamed Kanyare Afrah, threatens to "arrest all those who attended the [...] talks in Ethiopia and charge them with treason" (Reuters 6 Jan. 1997; AP 6 Jan. 1997; *The Record* 7 Jan. 1997).

13 January

The NSC, created as a result of the recent peace talks in Ethiopia, appeals to the United Nations to prevent the transfer of "a great quantity of arms and counterfeit Somali shilling banknotes" from Hong Kong to the port of Merca, which is controlled by Aidid's faction (Reuters 13 Jan. 1997; Xinhua 13 Jan. 1997; AFP 13 Jan. 1997). In addition, the NSC urges Aidid to join the other Somali factions in their efforts to restore peace to the country (ibid.; Reuters 13 Jan. 1997).

At least three people are killed and 22 others wounded as Ali Mahdi's supporters and the followers of Sheikh Ali Dhere, a religious leader, clash in Mogadishu (Deutsche Presse-Agentur 14 Jan. 1997).

14 January

The Somali Independent Journalists Union (SIJU), founded a year ago, protests against the "continuous intimidation and harassment" of Somali journalists by supporters of the various faction leaders (Xinhua 15 Jan. 1997), and Reporters sans frontières condemns the "violence and repression against journalists in Somalia, perpetrated by political factions and Mogadishu's Islamic courts" (AFP 15 Jan. 1997).

17 January

Hussein Aidid denies rumours that the arms shipped to Somalia are meant for him; he claims that, on the contrary, they are being sent to his political opponents by Ethiopia (AFP 17 Jan. 1997; also see the entry for 13 Jan. 1997).

19 January

After meeting with Hussein Aidid, Italy's special envoy to Somalia announces that Aidid has agreed to annul his father's April 1996 decree banning the EU's special envoy, Sigurd Illing, from Somalia^[1] (AFP 19 Jan. 1997; AP 19 Jan. 1997). On 24 January, Illing meets with Aidid in Mogadishu to discuss the issues of national reconciliation and humanitarian aid (Xinhua 24 Jan. 1997; Reuters 24 Jan. 1997). On 25 November, Illing talks with Ali Mahdi about security and humanitarian aid matters (Reuters 25 Jan. 1997).

20 January

Mogadishu's two rival leaders, Hussein Aidid and Ali Mahdi, meet in a hotel along the border between the northern and southern parts of the city; this meeting leads to an agreement to implement a cease-fire and create a committee to examine the issue of reopening Mogadishu's port and international airport (Xinhua 20 Jan. 1997; Reuters 20 Jan. 1997; AP 20 Jan. 1997).

21 January

The UNCHR prepares to repatriate some 10,000 Somali refugees from Ethiopia over the next few weeks (Reuters 21 Jan. 1997; *The Economist Intelligence Unit* 22 Jan. 1997; Xinhua 23 Jan. 1997; IPS 23 Jan. 1997). The refugees will be returning "voluntarily" to the self-proclaimed Republic of Somaliland in northwestern Somalia (*ibid.* 23 Jan. 1997).

26 January

In a public speech, Aidid expresses his desire to improve relations with the United Nations and with countries he formerly considered to be enemies (AP 26 Jan. 1997).

NOTE

[1] Mohamed Farah Aidid had declared Sigurd Illing a *persona non grata* in April 1996, claiming that the EU's special envoy had interfered in Somalia's internal affairs (AFP 19 Jan. 1997; AP 19 Jan. 1997). [\[back\]](#)

NOTES ON SELECTED SOURCES

Somali radio stations.

Most Somali radio stations are controlled by political factions. The following list gives the names of the main radio stations in Somalia and indicates which groups control them.

Radio Hargeisa broadcasts in the north and is controlled by the Somaliland government.

Voice of Somali Pacification broadcasts from Mogadishu and is controlled by the pro-Osman Ato faction.

Voice of the Somali People broadcasts from south Mogadishu and is controlled by General Aidid's supporters. Aidid changed the station's name to Voice of the Masses of the Somali Republic in mid-June, 1995.

Voice of the Somali Republic broadcasts from north Mogadishu and is controlled by Ali Mahdi's supporters.

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- _____. 13 May 1996. "Eleven Killed, 23 Wounded in Factional Violence in Central Somalia." (NEXIS)
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- _____. 7 May 1996. "Un bateau de réfugiés somaliens coule au large du Yémen : près de 50 morts." (NEXIS)
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- _____. 22 April 1996. "Le HCR reprend le rapatriement des réfugiés somaliens du Kenya." (NEXIS)
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- _____. 22 March 1996. "Somalia Fighting Leaves at Least 10 Dead: Witnesses." (NEXIS)
- _____. 20 March 1996. "Somalia Militia Faction Leaves Port to Aidid." (NEXIS)
- _____. 16 March 1996. "Sharia Court Stones Rapist to Death in Northern Somalia." (NEXIS)
- _____. 10 March 1996. "Somali Peace Activist Murdered." (NEXIS)
- _____. 15 February 1996. "Aidid Allies Sentenced in Absentia to Death in Somaliland." (NEXIS)
- _____. 29 January 1996. "Mogadishu Violence Death Toll Reaches 31 Dead, 60 Wounded." (NEXIS)
- _____. 23 January 1996. "Islamic Court Bans Hotels, Restaurant from Operating in Daytime." (NEXIS)
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