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(18)

4653

19 August 1988

Background Paper for the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense/ISA (Africa)

SUBJECT: Human Rights Abuses in Somalia (U)

1. (U) PURPOSE: To provide information on human rights violations in Somalia since May's outbreak of fighting.

2. (U) POINTS OF MAJOR INTEREST:

a. ~~(S/NF)~~ Since mid-May, the upsurge in fighting between government forces and Somali National Movement (SNM) rebels has resulted in numerous -- but frequently unconfirmed-- reports of human rights violations. These reports fall into several categories of alleged abuses: executions, indiscriminate airstrikes, artillery shelling of civilian areas, forced conscription, and the neglect or abuse of refugees displaced by the fighting.

(b)(1),(b)
(3):50 USC 3024(i),(b)
(3):50 USC 403(g),1.4

b. ~~(S/NF/NG/HN)~~ Summary execution by the government of northern tribesmen refusing to fight, SNM combatants, and suspected civilian sympathizers. Troops have been accused of murdering and committing abuses against the populations of Berbera and Hargeisa but these claims remain unconfirmed.

(c)

c. ~~(S/NF)~~ Indiscriminate air and artillery strikes on civilian areas were frequently cited. Such shelling and bombing during attempts to dislodge rebel positions at Burao, Hargeisa and Adadle.

(b)(1),1.4 (c),(b)(3):50 USC 3024(i),(b)(3):50 USC 403 (g)

d. ~~(S/NF/NG/HN)~~

(b)(1),(b)(3):50 USC 403 (g),(b)(3):50 USC 3024(i),1.4 (c)

recently charged Mogadishu with conscripting northern refugees, but this is not confirmed. The SNM as well was accused by northern tribal elders of impressment.

~~CLASSIFIED BY MULTIPLE SOURCES~~
~~DECLASSIFY ON DADR~~

(b)(3):50 USC 3024(i)

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~~NOT RELEASABLE TO FOREIGN NATIONALS~~
~~NO CONTRACT INTELL~~

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(b)(1),(b)(3):50 USC 3024(i),(b)(3):50 USC 403
(g),1.4 (c)

e. ~~(S/NF)~~
(b)(1),1.4 (c) 250,000 Somali refugees in eastern Ethiopia. there are an estimated

3. OUTLOOK: ~~(S/NF)~~ Clearly, human rights violations have occurred. Both government and guerrilla forces have committed violations, but the evidence seems to point to greater abuses on the part of the government. SNM activities are much more difficult to document. Recent reports of an insurgent withdrawal and a possible Mogadishu-SNM agreement to stop fighting--for the present--would, by the separation of forces, most likely lead to a reduced number of human rights violations. Nevertheless, Somalia will probably never be entirely free of such abuses until long-standing tribal grievances are addressed.

COORDINATION: [Redacted]

PREPARED BY: [Redacted]

1 Enclosure
Map of Somalia (U)

[Redacted]
(b)(3):10 USC 424,(b)(6)

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~~NOT RELEASABLE TO FOREIGN NATIONALS~~
~~-NO CONTRACT MINITEL~~

2

(b)(3):50
USC 3024

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DEB-52-33
3 Jun 83

(20)

Defense Estimative Brief: Somali
Democratic Republic (U)

(U) Summary

~~(S/NOFORN)~~ Since President Siad's rise to power in October 1969, Somalia's problems have become so extensive that his position could easily weaken, making Somalia an even more fragile and troubled ally for the US. Despite signs of recovery, the economy is narrowly based and will require long-term and substantial external aid. Likewise, the military for at least several years has little prospects of recovering its former pre-1977/1978 capability. Siad is expected to remain in power for at least the next year, but, if he were overthrown, it probably would result in the surfacing of leaders who would request substantially more outside military and economic aid. In Siad's absence, the United States would face difficult policy choices as the struggle to consolidate power evolved and rapprochement with the Soviets became a possibility, particularly if US aid were not forthcoming.

1. (U) Political Prospects

a. ~~(S/NOFORN)~~ President Mohamed Siad Barre is expected to remain in power over the next year, barring assassination or other unforeseen departure from office. The President is a survivor, adroitly handling political challenges, military setbacks, economic stagnation, and tribal hostilities. Prospects of a coup attempt--most likely from the military--are considered slight but cannot be discounted completely. No one has been identified as waiting in the wings to succeed Siad--either by a tapping from him or through the jostling of government and military political intrigue. A master at political infighting, Siad manipulates tribal rivalry to the advantage of his own Marehan clan, and maintains an effective monitoring network of political and military activities through the assignment of tribal loyalists to selected positions.

~~Classified by Multiple Sources~~
~~Declassify in 2000~~

~~DO NOT REPRODUCE OR DISTRIBUTE~~

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b. ~~(S/NOFORN)~~ Siad will continue to dominate the decisionmaking process and resist any effort at political change which could weaken his authority. His domination of the political process and his unwillingness to delegate real decisionmaking authority to his civilian and military advisors will hamper efforts at economic reform, reduction of corruption, and improvements in military capability. Siad's use of tribal conflicts as a political tool undermines any hope of diminishing tribalism, one of Somalia's most basic and intransigent problems. Consequently, Siad's unwillingness or inability to bring tribalism under control will continue to adversely affect Somalia's military capability and economic development, and will remain a threat to Somalia's political stability over the long term.

c. ~~(S/NOFORN)~~ Somalia will require continued military and economic assistance from Western and Middle East supporters. Somalia's military capability, stretched thin since the 1977-1978 Ogaden War with Ethiopia, will remain capable of controlling internal threats but will not be a match against the superior Ethiopian military if major hostilities erupt. Somalia's military, while primarily concerned with the Ethiopian threat, will expend much of its efforts to contain the threats posed by the Issak clan-based Somali National Movement (SNM), a northern anti-Siad dissident group, and the Somali Democratic Salvation Front (SDSF), a Majartain clan-based dissident movement in central Somalia operating out of Ethiopia. The effect of these threats is to dissipate Somalia's military capability, jeopardize efforts at economic reform by diverting needed economic planning and action to security concerns, and increase Somalia's reliance on external support.

2. (U) Economic Outlook

a. ~~(S/NOFORN)~~ Prospects for significant economic progress in Somalia over the next year are low. Somalia, with a population of six million, annual per capita income of less than \$200, high inflation, and spreading unemployment, is one of the world's poorest countries and has few natural resources on which to base economic development--resources which are further strained by the presence of 700,000 or more refugees. Much of the country is semiarid and vulnerable to droughts. Over two-thirds of the population are nomadic and raise livestock for a living. With the exception of livestock and a few cash crops--bananas and sugarcane--agriculture is carried out on a subsistence level. Manufacturing is rudimentary and primarily involved in import substitution and food processing.

b. ~~(S/NOFORN)~~ Defense requirements will adversely affect economic progress for at least as long as the dispute with Ethiopia over the Ogaden continues. Expenditures directed toward rebuilding the Somali military and maintaining a credible deterrent against Ethiopia will jeopardize Somalia's efforts to balance military expenditures most effectively with economic planning. The defense budget of \$131 million is 26 percent of the central budget and near 14 percent of GNP. Although recent hostilities focused on border areas and will have little short-term impact on economic activity, the long-term impact of ongoing confrontation could seriously affect Somalia's ability to control its debt service burden. Somalia's appetite for weapons will aggravate this problem and will most likely require additional external assistance to manage it.

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c. ~~(S/NOCFORN)~~ There is, however, some potential for economic progress this coming year if Somalia's commitment to economic reform and stabilization initiated in 1980 with the IMF remains strong. This commitment, highlighted by a second devaluation last July and including provisions for higher prices to agricultural producers based on free market forces, the elimination of some marketing controls, the dismantling of inefficient government-supported enterprises, and a decision to restrict government credit and borrowing, should provide a basis for reducing inflationary pressures and improving the balance of payments/foreign exchange reserve positions. In 1982, the ratio of imports to exports was more than four to one, and the outstanding foreign debt was one billion. If the government can persevere and broaden the scope of its economic reform, Somalia might be able to move out of economic stagnation.

3. (U) Military Trends

a. ~~(S/NOCFORN)~~ The mainstay of the Siad regime will remain the Somali National Army (SNA). It is both his powerbase and the greatest potential threat to his remaining in power. With SNA backing, Siad is likely to be able to withstand any internal threat to his leadership; however, the widespread dissatisfaction within the military over how military, economic, and tribal problems are being addressed provides an opening ambitious military officers may wish to seize. Although Siad keeps tabs on internal military activities through his own tribally based intelligence apparatus, this potential challenge will remain latent over the foreseeable future.

b. ~~(S/NOCFORN)~~ The problems of the Somali military are so fundamental and pervasive that it will be several years at best, coupled with massive external support, before the country will be able to defend itself effectively against an adversary like Ethiopia. Somalia has not recovered from its military adventurism against Ethiopia in the 1977-1978 Ogaden War. Evidence of Somalia's military ineffectiveness is its inability to dislodge Ethiopian forces from the Balenbale and Goldogob areas along Somalia's central border with Ethiopia. Neither of these situations nor the inability of the Somali military to defend its borders against either the dissident SDSF in the central region or the SNM in the north will change soon.

c. ~~(S/NOCFORN)~~ Military assistance from Western and Middle East supporters should improve Somalia's defensive capabilities in the next year. However, this support is not expected to be sufficient to prevent Ethiopian military successes inside Somalia if Ethiopia elects to pursue an aggressive policy. Somali irredentist goals in the Ogaden will continue to provide Ethiopia the motivation to maintain border superiority, to support the SDSF, to keep Somalia unsure of Ethiopian military intentions, and to test Somali military resolve through limited tactical engagements.

4. ~~(S/NOCFORN)~~ Foreign Policy. Somalia will maintain its Western orientation, but its foreign policy will continue to focus on regional issues and the need to secure external economic and military assistance. Although Siad, in cooperation with the international financial community, is expected to continue his economic reform effort, the issue most central to Somalia's foreign policy will be the need to obtain sufficient military assistance to provide adequate defense of its borders against Ethiopian incursions. Ethiopia will remain Somalia's principal adversary and no improvement in relations is expected in the near term. While Somalia appears to have reduced its aspirations toward

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~~NOT PERTINENT TO FOREIGN POLICY~~

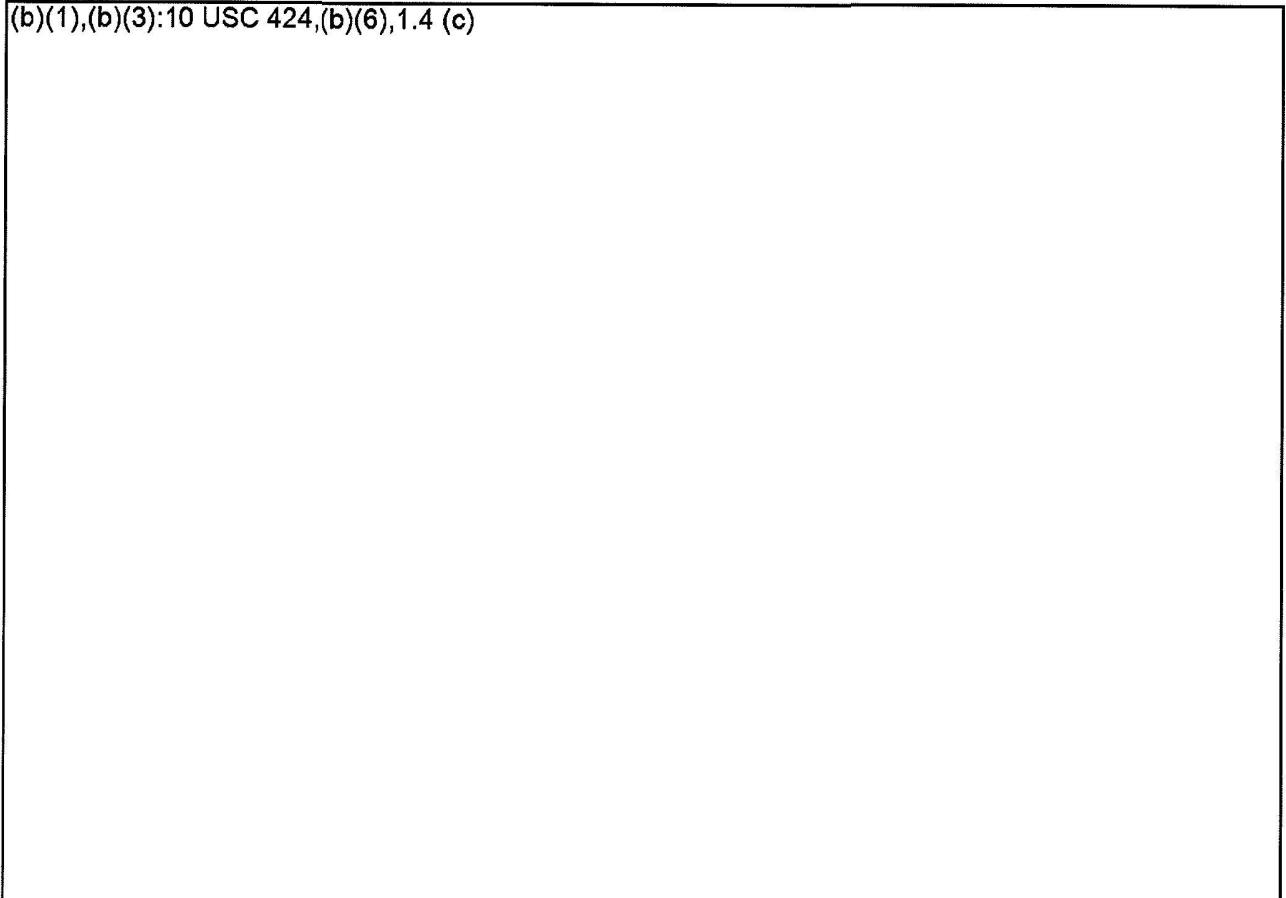
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Djibouti, and Kenya, its irredentism toward the Ogaden region in Ethiopia will remain intact and continue to be the principal source of the existing conflict.

5. (U) Implications for the United States

(b)(1),(b)(3):10 USC 424,(b)(6),1.4 (c)



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(22)

(b)(3):50 USC
3024(i)

DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE COMMENTARY

14 June 1983

1. DENMARK:

Coalition Prime Minister
Resists Conservative Party
Pressure for Elections as
Means To Override Antidefense
Left ~~(S, NOFORN)~~

SPECIAL ARTICLE

2. SOMALIA:

Defense Minister Will Seek
\$40 Million in New Military
Sales Credits in Washington
~~(S, NOFORN/NOCONTRACT
UNINTEL)~~

(Mohamed Ali Samantar will visit the US between
13 and 22 June. In his conversations with
officials, he is expected to justify requests
for further credits and good offices with
Saudi Arabia by the threat from hostile
Ethiopia and its radical backers. Although
Somalia's security assistance needs are real,
Samantar will probably over-stress the external
threat and may minimize tribal strife that we
consider to be of immediate and serious concern.)

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Declassify on OADR

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Page 1 of 4 Pages

22

WARFAA0000294

(b)(3):50 USC 3024

(i)

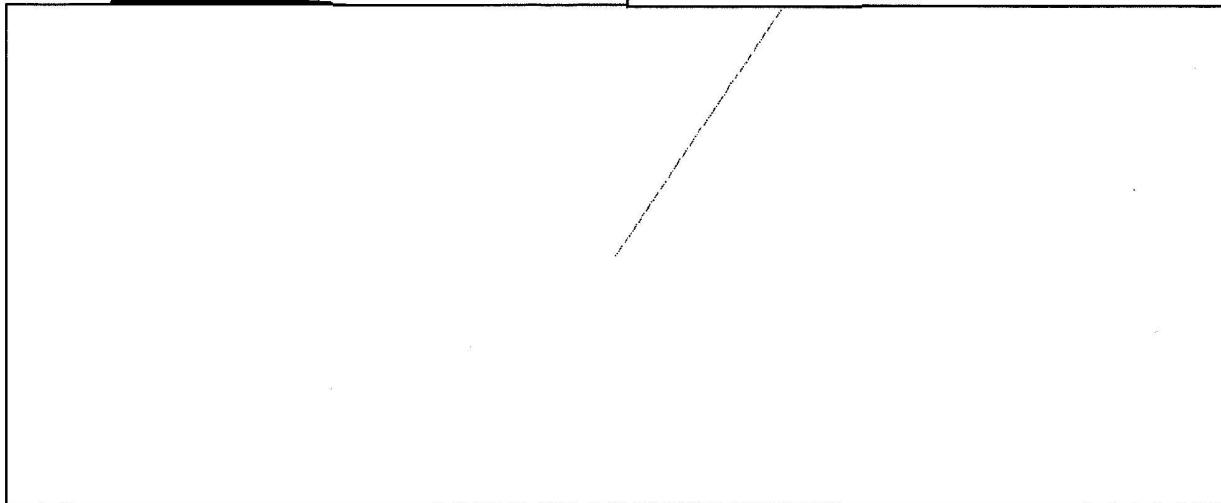
(b)(1), 1.4 (d), (b)(3):50
USC 3024(i)

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2. SOMALIA'S DEFENSE MINISTER WILL SEEK MORE AID DURING VISIT THIS MONTH (S/NOFORN)
~~NOCONTRACT~~ ~~MINTELE~~

(b)(3):50
USC 3024(i)

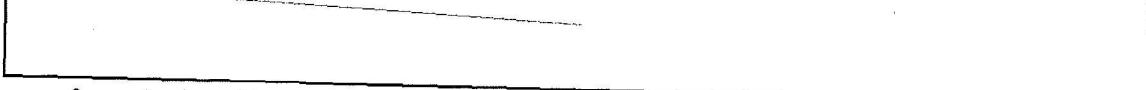
REF: (S/NOFORN/NOCONTRACT) [] (b)(3):50 USC 403 (g), (b)(3):50 USC 3024(i)



Samantar, while briefing US officials on the military situation, will stress the superiority of Ethiopian forces backed by the Soviets, Cuba, Libya, and East Germany over the Somali Army. Because of government inability to deal with it and because Somalia does not acknowledge "tribalism," he will probably not mention the sensitive subject of recent tribal fighting among Somali clans.

Samantar and President Siad have apparently been convinced by US representatives in Mogadishu, as well as a variety of delegations visiting there, that the presentation of a long shopping list of military equipment during the visit is counter-productive; thus the shorter priority list of lower cost items. Nevertheless, the shopping list can be produced should Samantar sense a particularly sympathetic audience.]

(b)(1), 1.4
(d)



Samantar's situation briefing will probably exaggerate Ethiopian strengths and the support from its allies. The Soviets have some 1,700 military advisers in Ethiopia but there are no combat units in the country. Moscow continues to supply arms but there have been no advances in sophistication in these weapons (no T-62 tanks, no new types of aircraft or missiles) since the introduction of Mi-24/HIND attack helicopters several years ago. Some 9,000 to 11,000 Cuban advisers and troops remain in Ethiopia, but they have not become directly involved in the recent fighting against Somalia. The same thing applies to East Germany, South Yemen, and Libya; all are believed by the Somalis to be more active than they are. Libya has provided large amounts of money, equipment, and training to anti-Siad dissidents but there is a lull currently. The Ethiopians outnumber and out-gun the Somalis

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14 Jun 83

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Defense Intelligence Commentary

Page 3 of 4 Pages

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both overall and along the border. Nevertheless, Ethiopia has serious internal security problems elsewhere, morale is low, resources are short, and there are both domestic and international political constraints which restrict their freedom to mount a major invasion of Somalia. Smaller attacks along the border are possible, and the Somalis are not capable of preventing the occupation of border towns as the Ethiopians did last year.

Samanter is likely to raise the occupation of the central Somalia border towns of Balenbale and Goldogob by the Ethiopians as a significant factor in declining domestic support for the Siad regime and as a justification for more aid. While Somalia's inability to push the Ethiopians out has been an embarrassment to President Siad and the army, we doubt it poses a serious threat to the regime.

A more serious problem, which Samantar may not raise, is that of tribal conflict. Tribal strife over water and grazing rights is not unusual in the predominantly nomadic Somali society. However, tribal fighting has been almost continual over the last 6 months. With Ethiopian- and Libyan-backed dissidents supporting one side and the Somali Government backing the other, some of the skirmishing has led to casualties numbering over 100. The conflicts have distracted the government and involved the army both in fighting against clans and in tribal fighting within units. Citizens have sided with or joined anti-Siad dissidents who aggravate the situation. This fighting is the most immediate and serious problem threatening the Siad regime, yet no policy to provide a lasting solution is in sight. We believe the failure to come to grips with this problem will continue to block national unity, feed dissent, contribute to the erosion of internal security, and make Somalia more vulnerable to the potential use of force by Ethiopia. Continued tribal fighting will also reduce the effectiveness of military and economic assistance. (Classified by multiple sources. Declassify on 08/08/88.)

14 Jun 83

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Page 4 of 4 Pages

Defense Intelligence Commentary

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PL038

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DIA/ (b)(3):10
31 May 83 USC 424

(21)

-4025 (b)(3):10
USC 424

WORKING PAPER FOR (b)(3):10 USC 424,(b)(6)

SUBJECT: Somalia: Current Threat Assessment (U)

1. ~~(S)~~ Summary. Somali President Siad faces several threats but at present, none of them seem to seriously menace his regime. Challenges to Somali security range from overwhelming Soviet-backed Ethiopian military superiority to internal political dissent based primarily on tribalism. Nevertheless, the key to power, and thus any serious threat to Siad, is his own military. Discontent in the armed forces over the lack of sufficient progress in rearming, the humiliation over dissident and Ethiopian occupation of Somali border towns and unwillingness to seek a lasting solution to tribal strife continue. However, Siad has a system of intelligence collection and control based on trusted fellow clansmen and other trusted allies, which makes plotting in the security forces dangerous.

2. (U) External Threat.

a. ~~(S)~~ Although the Ethiopians face logistical, morale and leadership problems, Soviet, Cuban and Libyan backing provides an overwhelming overall military superiority over the Somalis. However, except during the 1977 invasion of the Ogaden, northern insurgencies have always been the top priority security concern for the Ethiopian regime. Although some replacements have been sent to the southern Ogaden in the last few weeks, poor training and low morale make them only a marginal improvement. Despite the mid-1982 border attacks and early April skirmishes this year, the Ethiopians are unlikely to mount a full-scale invasion of Somalia unless Somali regular army or guerrilla activity again seriously threatens security in the Ogaden. The Ethiopians are capable, with little or no warning of conducting incursions into Somalia such as those of mid-1982. They can conduct air raids on Somalia almost at will, but again will probably be restrained, except in case of Somali activity along the border or in the Ogaden.

b. ~~(S)~~ Externally-based Somali dissidents pose an increasing threat to internal security in Somalia. These forces are supported by Ethiopia and Libya but essentially are clan-based groups which suffer from internal lack of discipline, logistical and training problems and in some cases sub-clan disputes. They are also somewhat limited to operations in their own clan homelands where they can garner greatest popular support. Within those areas, especially in northern Somalia, the number of ambushes, road minings and hit-and-run raids has increased over the last few months. They will probably continue to increase, especially in the north, due to the guerrillas' inability to transition to significant conventional operations and Somali difficulty in blocking infiltration across the border. The dissidents have attempted some terrorist acts but these have been few and more demonstrative than destructive. They are not expected to mount a significant terrorist campaign at least for the time being.

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3. (U) Internal Threat.

a. ~~(S)~~ Although there is a great deal of grumbling in various sectors of society there appears to be no immediate threat to Siad's control. Many are concerned that their clans have too little influence in the government; many in the military believe the pace of rearmament after its losses during the 1977-78 Ogaden war is progressing too slowly; others are frustrated by the continued Ethiopian occupation of Somali border towns. Nevertheless, few believe there is anyone available other than Siad with the political skill to maintain national unity. Opposition groups include leftist and dissident sympathizers. The leftists are watched closely and probably do not have the numbers or broad enough support to manage a coup. The dissident sympathizers' clan base probably makes their support too narrow to oust Siad on their own. They are not considered a serious threat unless Ethiopia chooses to try to unseat Siad using the dissidents as a front for their own action.

b. ~~(S)~~ Discontent in the military is probably Siad's greatest danger. Armed forces personnel are affected by lengthy frontline tours and repeated alerts, weapons obsolescence, poor training, supply and maintenance problems, and tribalism. The latter has been the most serious over the last few months. It has led to diversion of frontline personnel to control tribal fighting, tribal conflict within units, and command and control problems. Some reports suggest these problems may force LTG Samantar to relinquish the defense minister post after his return from a trip to the US in June. Such a move would be typical, since Siad shuffles key personnel frequently and controls most officer assignments, insuring that clansmen or other supporters have a major share of positions. Although this contributes to problems of tribalism, it has thus far provided an efficient system of informants and Siad supporters in key slots which makes plotting against the regime difficult.

(b)(3):10 USC 424,(b)(6)

(b)(3):10 USC 424,(b)(6)

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(b)(3):10
USC 424,(b)
(3):50 USC
3024(i)

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

SOMALIA

(19)

PENTAGON
TELECOMMUNICATIONS CENTER

EXC-1
RCL

IMMEDIATE/ROUTINE
O R 120431Z JAN 82

(b)(3):50 USC 3024(i) TO SECDEF WASHDC [REDACTED] IMMEDIATE (b)(3):10 USC 424

(b)(3):50 USC 3024(i) INFO SECSTATE WASHDC USCINCEUR VAHINGEN GE DA WASHDC/CSAF WASHDC CNO WASHDC/ [REDACTED] (b)(3):50 USC 3024(i) BT [REDACTED]

(b)(1),1.4
(c)

(b)(3):50 USC 3024(i) SUBJECT: VISIT OF MOD MG OMAR HAJI MOHAMED TO US (U)

1. [REDACTED] WITH BG MOHAMED ALI ABOKAR, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF MILITARY TECHNOLOGY, MOD. BG ABOKARI [REDACTED] PREPARED LIST OF ITEMS THAT THE SOMALI'S WOULD BE INTERESTED IN DISCUSSION WHILE IN WASHINGTON. THE LIST WAS A THREE PAGE SHOPPING LIST OF EQUIPMENT THE SOMALIS WOULD LIKE TO HAVE TO REPLACE THEIR SOVIET EQUIPMENT. THE LIST, IN ADDITION TO PREVIOUSLY REQUESTED EQUIPMENT SUCH AS RADIOS, TRUCKS AND ENGINEERING EQUIPMENT, CONTAINED LARGE AMOUNTS OF TACTICAL EQUIPMENT. I.E., 432 M60A2 TANKS, APPROX 400 M113 APCs, 12 F3E FIGHTER AIRCRAFT, 4 C-130 TRANSPORTS, 2 CH-47 TRANSPORT HELICOPTERS, ATTACK HELICOPTERS, 6 ASHVILLE CLASS PATROL BOATS, 6 MINESWEEPERS, ONE FLOATING DRYDOCK, 80,000 M16 RIFLES, SEVERAL HUNDRED M60 MACHINE GUNS, 155M ARTILLERY PIECES AND SEVERAL OTHER TYPES OF GUNS.

(b)(1),1.4 (c)

(b)(1),1.4
(c)

[REDACTED] THE WAS TOLD THAT THE LIST FAR EXCEEDED FMS CREDITS AVAILABLE TO SOMALIA AT THIS TIME AND THERE WAS LITTLE CHANCE, IF ANY, THAT HE WOULD GET MOST OF THE EQUIPMENT ON THE LIST. HE STATED THAT HE WAS PREPARED TO EXPLAIN WHY SOMALIA NEEDED THIS EQUIPMENT AND WOULD TRY TO JUSTIFY EACH AND EVERY ITEM ON THE LIST. ABOKAR THEN ASKED IF THE US WOULD TAKE ALL OF SOMALIA'S SOVIET MADE EQUIPMENT IN TOTAL OR PARTIAL EXCHANGE FOR US MADE EQUIPMENT. HE SAID THAT HE WAS PREPARED TO GIVE US TEN BATTALIONS OF SA2 AND SA3 MISSLES AND ALL OF THE MIG-21 FIGHTERS AS WELL AS EVERYTHING ELSE IN THE INVENTORY. DATT EXPLAINED THAT THE US WAS INTRESTED IN SOVIET MADE EQUIPMENT FOR STUDY AND RESEARCH.

(b)(1),1.4 (c)

2. [REDACTED] BG ABOKAR, ALSO A MEMBER OF THE PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY MAY BE THE CHIEF SPOKSEMAN FOR THE DELEGATION. HIS ENGLISH IS EXCELLENT AND HE IS VERY ARTICULATE. THE MINISTER SPEAKS ENGLISH, BUT HAS DIFFICULTY AT TIMES EXPRESSING THOUGHTS IN A CLEAR AND CONCISE MANNER.

4. [REDACTED] ON 11 JAN DURING DISCUSSION BETWEEN MINISTER OF DEFENSE AND US AMBASSADOR TO SOMALIA, OMAR HAJI STATED THAT HE DID NOT INTEND TO PRESENT A LIST OF EQUIPMENT TO DOD DURING HIS VISIT TO WASHINGTON.

(b)(1),1.4 (c)

5. [REDACTED] HE WOULD ONLY USE IT AS A GUIDELINE OF THE TYPES AND AMOUNTS OF EQUIPMENT SOMALIA NEEDED TO DEFEND ITSELF. HE STATED THAT HE WOULD DISCUSS SPECIFIC AMOUNTS AND TYPES OF EQUIPMENT ONLY IF HE WERE ASKED ABOUT CURRENT NEEDS. HE WILL ATTEMPT TO EXPLAIN SOMALIA'S POSITION IN THE HORN AND THREAT POSED BY COUNTRIES SUCH AS LIBYA, SOUTH YEMEN, AND ETHIOPIA, AND BY THE RUSSIAN AND CUBAN PRESENCE IN THE HORN. OMAR HAJI STATED THAT HE IS WILLING AND THE PRESIDENT AGREES, TO HAVE US FORCES STATIONED IN SOMALIA IF THE US DESIRES. HE ALSO STATED THAT IF THE US IS WILLING TO PROVIDE NEEDED MILITARY HARDWARE, HE WOULD EVEN AGREE TO HAVE US ADVISORS/MONITORS IN SOMALIA TO INSURE THAT THE EQUIPMENT IS NOT USED AGAINST ITS NEIGHBORS. HE STATED THAT SOMALIA ONLY WANTS A CREDIBLE DEFENSE ESTABLISHMENT.

DDOL 11 JAN 82

BT

ACTION
INFO (b)(3):50 USC 3024(i) [REDACTED]

(F)

MCN=82012/06096 TOR=82012/0601Z TAD=82012/0612Z CDSN=MAD571

PAGE 1 OF 1
120431Z JAN 82

WARFAA0000299

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~SECRET~~

DIA/
27 Jan 89

(23)

Background Paper for Senior Department of Defense Officials

SUBJECT: Political-Military Situation, Somalia (U)

1. (U) PURPOSE: To provide Senior Department of Defense Officials with background information on Somalia.

2. (U) POINTS OF MAJOR INTEREST:

a. ~~(S/NF)~~ Political Situation. Somali President Siad Barre has ruled Somalia since a 1969 coup through a delicate coalition of rival clans. However, the outbreak of a northern insurgent offensive in late May and Siad's inability to control it have severely weakened his ruling coalition and sharply reduced central government authority. Siad retains the support of his fellow Marehan clansmen and family members, but risks overthrow as long as his policies keep the country divided and unstable. Recent moves to alter the Constitution to allow economic reform and greater attention to human rights may improve Siad's position, but, at present, his regime is struggling for survival.

b. ~~(S/NF)~~ Military Situation. The Somali military consists of a 40,000-man Army, a 2,000-man Navy, a 2,000-man Air Force, and a 3,500-man Air Defense Force. The character of the Army has changed, owing to the large losses it has sustained in fighting the Somali National Movement (SNM) insurgents. The expanded use of forced conscription to supply its manpower needs has filled the Army with very young, inexperienced personnel, while the use of Ogadeni clan members in key combat roles and the appointment of an Ogadeni as Minister of Defense has entrenched their position in the Army and has created a political problem for the President.

c. ~~(S/NF)~~ The Northern Situation. Since late May 1988, the Army has attempted to defeat the SNM insurgents. Although it has driven the rebels out of Burao and Hargeisa, key northern towns captured during the initial SNM offensive, neither town is yet secure from insurgent attacks. Moreover, Somali Army personnel and equipment losses have been extensive. Despite earlier fears, the SNM has not attacked Berbera, where the United States enjoys military access rights. Continued SNM guerrilla attacks on Army forces and supply convoys keep the Army off balance and increase pressure on President Siad, whom the SNM wishes to drive from office. Thus far, the Army has failed to achieve the military solution Siad strongly desires.

d. ~~(S)~~ Economic Situation. The economy has long suffered from periodic drought and centralized government control, but the war in the north, which has disrupted trade and caused high inflation, is a more serious threat to the country's economic health. Recent constitutional revisions, allowing for the dissolution of some industrial monopolies, may improve economic performance, but not in the near term.

~~CLASSIFIED BY MULTIPLE SOURCES~~
~~DECASSIFY ON OADR~~

~~SECRET~~

~~NOT RELEASABLE TO FOREIGN NATIONALS~~

1. Release 17c TSIN 1.1

WARFAA0000300

DIA
27 Jan 89

e. ~~(S/NF)~~ Foreign Policy. Foreign policy centers on regional issues and the need for foreign assistance. Although Somalia is pro-Western, it has tried to improve relations with the U.S.S.R. and Ethiopia. The April 1988 peace accord with Ethiopia addressed key problems, such as aid to each other's insurgents, prisoners of war, and the disputed border. The late May SNM offensive, which Somali officials privately believe was aided by Ethiopia, has soured relations, even though neither country has yet renounced the agreement. Relations with Djibouti and Kenya are cordial. Relations with Libya are on the upswing, as Somalia has requested and Libya has provided an undetermined, but limited, quantity of military equipment. To counter SNM propaganda, which Mogadishu regards as harmful to its interests, and to attempt to free foreign aid frozen by Siad's controversial handling of the war, the Somali Government recently launched a diplomatic offensive. Prime Minister Samantar's impending visit to the United States is a part of this activity.

(b)(1),1.4
(d)f. ~~(S/NF)~~ Relations with the United States.

g. ~~(S/NF)~~ Relations with the U.S.S.R. Although Somali-Soviet relations have recently improved, prospects for a major change in the relationship are slim, because Moscow is the main military supplier to Somalia's traditional rival, Ethiopia.

3. ~~(S/NF)~~ EXPECTED DEVELOPMENTS: Siad will remain vulnerable in the near term. Until recently, he has shown little interest in trying to achieve a political, rather than a military, solution to the war in the north. Changes in the Constitution which permit reforms may improve Siad's image, but opposition to these developments from hardliners in his inner circle will still complicate a peaceful resolution to the conflict. Key clans such as the Marehan and Ogadeni still favor a military solution.

COORDINATION: None.

(b)(3):10
USC 424,
(b)(6)

PREPARED BY:

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