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HORN OF AFRICA BULLETIN

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HORN OF AFRICA BULLETIN SUBSCRIBER SURVEY 2008

Dear HAB-subscriber,

It has now been a bit more than a year since the new format of the Horn of Africa Bulletin (HAB) was launched. For us working with HAB, it has been an interesting year where we constantly did and continue to do our very best to make HAB a relevant and useful product for practitioners, scholars, students and other interested people within and outside the Horn of Africa. In order to help us to ensure that we actually achieve this goal, we would need your support.

Please complete our subscribers' questionnaire!

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<http://www.life-peace.org/default2.asp?xid=316>

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Thanks a lot for your contribution!

Best wishes,
The HAB editorial team

'Desperate exodus:' Somali civil society in peril

Somalia is dying, on our watch.

Those of us who follow Somalia have seen the country pass through very dark periods over the past twenty years – the Barre government's war against its own people, the civil war and famine of 1991-92, the disastrous failure of the United Nations (UN) peace operation in 1993-94, the rise of extremist violence in 2003-04, the war in Mogadishu between Islamists and a US-backed militia alliance in 2006, the rising tensions between the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) and Ethiopia in 2006, the shocking Ethiopian military invasion and occupation of December 2006, and the bloody insurgency and counter-insurgency since early 2007.

Each of these disasters exacted a heavy toll in human lives, lost livelihoods, and social trust. Each seemed to harden conflict lines and render the Somali crisis more intractable than before.

The current crisis in Somalia is, however, more dangerous and alarming than anything that has preceded it. Why? Because, unlike past crises, this one not only involves a horrific humanitarian emergency and a destructive war. This time, Somalia is killing or driving off the one constituency that is essential to successful peacebuilding, governance, and renewal in the country – its civil society. Civil society is Somalia's "vital center", the main source of partnerships and dialogue across clan, regional, and ideological divides. Without it, Somali politics is reduced to little more than a desolate landscape of extremists, opportunists, and conflict entrepreneurs – and their external patrons.

For years, civic leaders – professionals, businesspeople, heads of local non-governmental organisation, clan elders, religious clergy, journalists, and organisers of the hundreds of informal, often impoverished neighborhood self-help groups – have come under pressure and attack. In the late 1990s, they became the preferred targets of a lucrative kidnapping industry. By 2003, they were selectively targeted in a dirty war of threats and assassinations waged between local warlords and a new jihadist movement in the capital, the shabaab. When the UIC took control of Mogadishu in 2006, civil society groups were treated as potential threats to the UIC's power rather than as partners. They were marginalised politically and subjected to mounting restrictions.

However, through all of these challenges, civil society in Somalia grew stronger, a remarkable feat considering where it started in 1990. In the first years of civil war and state collapse (1991-92), it was questionable whether one could even speak of a civic movement in Somalia. Many sceptics, including this writer, thought the idea of civil society was oversold in the first half of the 1990s. Most Somali NGOs and civic groups were little more than fronts for clan-based factions or businesses fishing for foreign aid contracts.

But that changed. Over the past ten years, Somali civil society groups have become increasingly independent from militia and political leaders, autonomous from external sources of funds, legitimate in the eyes of their communities, and outspoken as voices for reconciliation, public order, and accountable and responsive governance. Though the notion of Somali civil society as a force for good can still be oversold – there are conflict entrepreneurs and opportunists within civil society too – there is no question now that the best and the brightest Somalis, those most deeply committed to ending Somalia's long national nightmare, are concentrated in the hundreds of formal and informal civic groups across the country and in the Diaspora.

This was perhaps made most evident in 2005, when civic groups in the capital led an impressive, if short-lived, effort to demobilize and canton armed groups and dismantle militia checkpoints. Women shouted at and shamed militiamen to leave their checkpoints; businesses provided funds for women's groups to feed and sustain canted militia; callers phoned into radio talk shows demanding an end to warlordism and extremism. This "intifada," as one civil leader recalls it, was eventually

undermined by the two groups most threatened by it – the warlords and the Islamists, who within a year were at war with one another. Nevertheless civil society had clearly flexed its muscles, giving many of us hope that it was now a viable platform for a united, sustainable coalition for peace and power-sharing.

Since 2007, however, Somali civil society has come under mortal attack, and now is reeling from violence and pressure on it from both sides of the fighting. The arrival of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) in power in early 2007 immediately made things much worse. TFG officials have treated local NGOs and civil society leaders with deep suspicion and hostility, and have cracked down hard on civic groups, arresting, detaining, and threatening hundreds of people, raiding and closing offices and media outlets, extorting businesses, and making it extremely difficult for civic organisations and businesses to operate. One senior TFG official recently summarised the government position to me when he opined that “what you call civil society are supporters of terrorism.” Fear of physical attacks and false accusations of terrorist links have largely silenced Somali civic groups.

Even greater physical danger now emanates from the radical fringe of the armed opposition to the TFG, namely portions of the shabaab which have reacted to an American airstrike on their leader by broadening their campaign of violence to target any Somalis with links to the West with threats or assassination. National officers of NGOs and UN agencies have been killed, as have clan elders, journalists, human rights advocates, and other civil leaders. Hundreds more have fled the capital for the relative safety of Nairobi, Dubai, or Hargeisa. The capital today has been largely emptied of its civic leaders.

The professionals and civil society figures who remain in the capital have essentially gone into hibernation. Those outside the country are utterly demoralized and in a state of shock. The violence in Mogadishu is now so random and unpredictable that they say they can no longer make informed calculations about their safety. “We used to know where the threat was and how to deal with it,” said one. “Now we have no idea who is shooting us, or why.”

Somalis are now openly comparing their plight to the Algerian civil war in the early 1990s, when efforts to remain neutral were seen as treason by both the government and the Islamist insurgency. This is the essence of civil society’s terrible dilemma in Somalia today – the complete absence of neutral space, whether for humanitarian relief, commerce, journalism, or civic action.

The flight of much of the civic and professional leadership from Mogadishu has been terribly painful for people who for years have risked their lives, and the lives of their families, in order to promote peace and human rights or provide essential social services. It is, as Professor Ahmed Samatar described it in a 2004 essay, an instance of *qaxootin*, or “desperate exodus.” But when the environment in Mogadishu is so dangerous and toxic that nothing good can be accomplished, staying in country goes from being heroic to foolhardy.

Therein lies the tragedy. With civic leaders fleeing southern Somalia or going into political hibernation, the constituency most essential to backing peace efforts like the Djibouti agreement of June 2008 has been sidelined. External efforts to promote and support the Djibouti agreement are welcome, but the real need is for external actors to vigorously support the moderate Somali community voices who form the social infrastructure for reconciliation. The peace agreement cannot possibly hold if its main constituency has been silenced, killed, or forced into exile.

Hardliners in the TFG and extremists in the opposition agree on almost nothing. But one thing they do share is a common antipathy toward civil society, and a willingness to demonise them – as terrorist sympathisers, or lackeys and spies of the West – and drive them off of the political scene. If they succeed, Somalia loses.

Ken Menkhaus,

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Somalia: twenty years of nightmares

While current Somali events hit the headlines of international media, the twentieth anniversary of the Somali civil war went largely unnoticed. Many would argue that, in times of imminent crisis, dwelling on historic incidences is dispensable. Yet, I suspect that the failure to commemorate Somali history is part and parcel of the amnesic attitude that characterises the world's dealings with Somalia. After all, it is easier to disregard a people's plight if one can ignore its past in the first place.

At individual level, history is about remembering as much as about reconstructing chronologies and timelines. Personally, I often remember the moment I first saw Brava town. It was in January 2001 and I had been traveling with my aid agency colleagues from war-ridden Mogadishu towards southern Somalia. After a tiresome drive on a bumpy gravel road, we reached a junction where we turned eastward. Our battered vehicle climbed a small hill and we encountered breathtaking beauty: Brava town, an ancient seaport, appeared on the slopes of the Indian Ocean, its white houses, walls and mosques glowing majestically in the afternoon sunbeams. It is hard to describe Somalia's grace and it is even harder to describe the misery of this impoverished Horn of Africa nation.

It was in Brava and its surrounding Lower Shabelle region that I first learned about the realities of the Somali civil war. Locals told stories about clan violence, random shootings at checkpoints, girls and women raped at night, property looted at gunpoint, children starving to death, and families torn apart by displacement.

The Somali civil war erupted in full force twenty years ago. In the end of May 1988, government planes bombarded the northern cities Hargeysa and Burco to quell a rebellion by the Somali National Movement (SNM). The air strikes and ensuing ground massacres killed sixty thousands civilians, antagonised the local Isaaq clans and eventually led to the proclamation of the breakaway Republic of Somaliland in May 1991.

In January 1991 another rebel group, the United Somali Congress (USC), had successfully ousted the detested Siyaad Barre regime from the capital Mogadishu. However, hopes for a fresh political start were shattered when factional infighting, state collapse and famine engulfed the country. Undoubtedly, Somalia's nightmares of the last two decades are all manmade. They had been sparked by colonial injustices at the hands of Italy, Britain and Ethiopia. They were nurtured by the militarisation of Somali society during the Cold War. They are kept alive by morally bankrupt leaders who excel in personal enrichment, fostering inter-clan violence, and signing empty peace declarations.

As if this wasn't enough, an Ethiopian military campaign against the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) in December 2006 catapulted Mogadishu from a situation of relative calm into an African Baghdad. Since 2007 soldiers of President Abdullahi Yusuf's Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and its Ethiopian backers are bogged down in a bloody confrontation with Islamist militants and other insurgents supported by neighbouring Eritrea. Hundreds of thousands of civilians fled Mogadishu to escape the indiscriminate mortar fire, stray bullets, improvised explosive devices and kidnappings by the conflict parties.

Despite these horrors, the world largely ignores the present Somali tragedy. It is not, as one might speculate, because of missing on-the-ground information. Somalia is famous for its efficient telecommunications and courageous local journalists provide round-the-clock reporting via radio and websites. Rather, the international community's silence speaks volumes about its failures to deliver upon the promises made to the Somali people. Once declared a test case of post Cold War humanitarian intervention in the 'new world order', Somalis saw the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) peacekeepers and aid workers arrive, fail and depart again. Western countries sponsored over a dozen Somali peace processes facilitated by regional powers, foreign diplomats and the United Nations (UN). They produced

little more than a series of virtual governments and courted the warlords who had destroyed the country in the first place.

More recently, U.S. attempts to prevent Somalia from becoming a terrorist safe haven backfired spectacularly. By financing Mogadishu's unpopular warlords and siding with Somalia's historic adversary, Ethiopia, the Bush administration handed Islamic hardliners a huge propaganda victory. Rather than restraining Mogadishu's warring factions, enforcing the UN arms embargo, and holding war criminals accountable, Western powers have become complicit in Somalia's culture of violence, impunity and lawlessness. Twenty years of failure to address the Somali conflict confront the West with its own inadequacies. Vows to build peace, promote democracy and protect human rights in the global periphery are superseded once again by humanitarian disengagement and a short-sighted anti-terrorist agenda.

Somalia serves as an uncomfortable warning of what is likely to happen to countries like Afghanistan or Iraq once the international community tires of its promises. Yet much could be done to improve Somalia's condition. Instead of focusing its efforts on killing Islamist radicals, the U.S. could pressure its Ethiopian ally to withdraw its troops. A resolute effort to deal with Somalia's displaced, hungry and traumatized population would save lives and help repair America's damaged reputation. Rather than clinging to the fiction of a state reconstruction process spearheaded by the undependable TFG, the UN would be well advised to strengthen the local authorities, which have earned legitimacy by maintaining pockets of security and delivering services in the midst of civil strife. As peaceful Somaliland demonstrates since 1994, bottom-up state building does work. Finally, diplomats must stop pretending that the Somali problem can be solved domestically. Future talks between members of the opposition Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia (ARS) and the TFG need to put both Ethiopian and Somali security concerns on the negotiation table.

Twenty years after the outbreak of the civil war, Somalia teeters on the edge of total disintegration. It is high time to end the nightmares that haunt beautiful Brava town and a despairing Somali population

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Food crisis and armed conflict in Somalia

The food riots in Mogadishu in May 2008, in which thousands of people violently protested against the rising food prices in the Somali capital, portend a bleak future for the violence-torn country of Somalia in the Horn of Africa. From a broader perspective this food crisis, which has a global spread, might deteriorate the prevailing situation of conflict not only in Somalia but also in other conflict-torn countries in Africa and world. Reportedly, during the ongoing violence about 700,000 out of 1.5 million people have fled from Mogadishu. Somalia, a majority Muslim country, has witnessed for the last seventeen years armed conflict of a catastrophic proportion, killing thousands of people, displacing more than one million and destroying the economy.

The Somali scenario came to limelight in 1991, when the dictator Mohammed Siad Barre was ousted from Mogadishu and replaced by a series of transitional governments, which all proved ineffective. In fact, the country has lacked a functioning national government since 1991. Again in 1993, with the killing of 18 US peacekeepers and gunning down of two helicopters by militants affiliated to Mohammad Farah Aideed, the Somali crisis came into international notice.

Since 2006, the violent clashes between insurgents and the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) – that since December 2006 is supported by the Ethiopian army – have severely affected the civilian population, whose rights were violated by the militants as well as the government forces with impunity. Though famines have been part of the country's situation for some years, the ongoing food crisis in Somalia is likely to worsen the situation further unless contained in time.

The food crisis in Somalia cannot be explained isolated from the international food scenario. In the past year, international food prices have witnessed a record high. In Somalia's case, the sharp devaluation of the shilling against the US dollar has further compounded the situation. It can be mentioned that the cereal prices of both commercial rice imports and locally produced maize and sorghum have increased by as much as 375 per cent in some areas in the last year, which makes them two to three times higher than their five-year average price. On top of that, the traders and businesspersons mainly settled in Mogadishu, who are intent to trade in hard currency such as dollar, have refused to take the thousand-note shilling. Their uncompromising refusal to trade in the thousand notes has further caused worry among the civilian population. After pressure from the government, however, the traders have decided to take the thousand notes, and therefore the situation may be reversed soon. The poor rain for the last two consecutive years has given rise to a serious drought situation. An estimated number of 60,000 pastoralists have been added to the list of people who require food aid in the country. Unless this year's Gu (the Somali seasonal rain) performs well, the situation will prove even more tragic.

Civilian insecurity has increased considerably since early 2007. The militants have targeted the Ethiopian troops as well as African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM) peacekeepers that are perceived as 'invaders', thus restraining their movements and humanitarian programmes. The militants have also been stealing UN food that was meant to support the poor. In 2008 so far, the militants are said to have killed two drivers for the World Food Programme (WFP) and one US aid worker, kidnapped two Italian aid workers and their Somali colleague in the Lower Shabelle region, and one German and one Spanish national. After an US airstrike killed one of the leaders of al-Shabaab, the armed wing of the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC), Aden Hashi Aryo, in early May, the militants have vowed to step up attacks against foreigners and invaders, indirectly referring to Ethiopian troops, UN aid workers and AMISOM peacekeepers. Reportedly, TFG forces too committed widespread pillaging and looting of civilian property, and interfered with the delivery of humanitarian assistance. They have also been accused of committing mass arrests and mistreating persons in custody. Similarly, the Ethiopian commanders and troops allegedly used both means of warfare and methods of warfare that violated international humanitarian law.

The food crisis in Somalia may lead to a further increase in the poverty rate, thus worsening the scenario of malnutrition, death and diseases in the country. It should be noted that the country imports about 60 per cent of its food grains and about 45 per cent of its people (out of the total 8 million people) live below poverty line with an income of less than one dollar per day. As per the 2001 United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Human Development Index, Somalia ranks 161 out of 163 countries. The prevailing crisis generated by both internal and external factors may witness further derangement in the people, causing a spiralling of violence in the trouble-torn region. The crisis may dangerously fuel the conflict between the TFG and the militants. The fragile scenario may likely give rise to a situation, which could be used by the Islamist rebels to accuse the TFG of inefficiency and malpractice, and mount an armed pressure to topple the government. UN monitors have accused the Ugandan peacekeepers of selling arms to insurgents, which could be used by the rebels against the weak government. Another factor of concern is that the international terrorist network, Al Qaeda, which allegedly has a strong base among the militants, may exploit the situation to woo

more fanatics into fold. The leader of al-Shabaab Hassan Abdullahi Hersi has stated “We call upon the Somali people to be prepared for an open war against the enemies of Allah – the foreign forces that are being proposed.” Acute poverty and hunger may force many to join their ranks.

Paraphrasing Franz Fanon, the Somali crisis may likely enhance the wretchedness of the Horn of Africa. Analysts have already expressed fear that the food crisis if not tackled properly may prove dangerous in terms of stability in the region. The food crisis and shortage of other basic necessities may trigger a process of human catastrophe in terms of violence in slums, attacks on immigrants, forced movements of populations, intensification of interethnic violence, etc. Though some of the NGOs like Mercy Corps have started commendable works like Cash-for-Work programme in the southern region, the humanitarian assistance needs to be widened. However, the most important task in the present circumstances is to provide security to aid workers and provide access to affected areas for free and fair distribution of goods to the needy. Though the impact of the UN-sponsored Djibouti Agreement of June 2008, which aimed at reconciliation between the TFG and the Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia (ARS), is laudable, its full implementation is crucial. The international body must step up efforts to ensure the implementation of the agreement, provide humanitarian assistance to the needy as well as take steps for initiating the post-conflict reconstruction of Somalia for the restoration of permanent peace.

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NEWS AND EVENTS

ETHIOPIA AND ERITREA

UN withdraws UNMEE mission

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) voted on 30 July to disband the 1,700-strong United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) force on the volatile border between Ethiopia and Eritrea from 31 July. The move had been expected since Eritrea had cut the force’s fuel supplies in February due to Eritrean anger that the UN did not enforce a 2007 ruling by an independent boundary commission. The ruling awarded most of the territory in dispute to Eritrea. The UNSC decision could to a large extent be seen as mere formality as the UNMEE mission since February had been placed in Ethiopia, rather than in its operational area within the Temporary Security Zone (TSZ) along the border. Originally, the UN wanted to extend UNMEE’s mandate and keep small monitoring missions on both sides of the border or, alternatively, liaison offices in Asmara and Addis Ababa, but according to council diplomats negotiations on the issue collapsed. Some analysts as well as the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon have expressed concern that the withdrawal of the UNMEE could spark renewed conflict along the 1,000 km border. Wahade Belay, spokesman for Ethiopia’s Foreign Ministry, did however state on 31 July that “Ethiopia does not entertain war as an option to resolve the impasse created by Eritrea”. He furthermore said that Ethiopia reserved itself the right to defend itself should Eritrea attempt to violate its territorial integrity and sovereignty. On the Eritrean side Eritrea’s UN Ambassador Araya Desta is reported to have said that Asmara does not want a military confrontation but is fed up with what Desta said was Ethiopia’s occupation of Eritrean territory.

IRIN, Sudan Tribune, Reuters Reuters and AFP

KENYA

Human rights abuses in Mt. Elgon: reports delivering contradictory results

In recent weeks different reports regarding the human rights situation in Mt. Elgon district, where the Kenyan military carries out an operation against the Sabaot Land Defence Forces (SDLF), were released. The Human Rights Watch (HRW) report “‘All the men have gone’. War crimes in Kenya’s Mt. Elgon district” (see *Resources*) speaks of serious abuses by both the SLDF and the Kenyan security forces. The report urges the Kenyan government “to promptly and impartially investigate and prosecute the individuals responsible” for the alleged war crimes. The Kenyan National Commission on Human Rights (KNCHR) had already in May this year accused the security forces of torture and killings in its report “The mountain of terror”.

However, findings of a probe conducted by a team of police officers that were released on 30 July by the Internal Security Minister George Saitoti claim that the police and military have not committed human rights abuses in the district. According to this report, many cases mentioned by the KNCHR lacked proof or were even false. A doctor who examined bodies of people killed in Mt. Elgon and whose findings were used to support the KNCHR report was interviewed by the police, accused of lacking the necessary license to conduct private medical examinations. The KNCHR reacted to the reports assertions and the treatment of the doctor in a press statement (see *Resources*). *The Nation (Nairobi); IRIN; HRW; KNCHR Press Statement*

SOMALIA

Djibouti agreement formally signed

The Djibouti agreement that had been reached between the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and the Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia (ARS) in June 2008 was formally signed on 18 August. A communiqué by the TFG and ARS reaffirms the commitment by the parties to continue political dialogue and cease all armed confrontation. The document also clearly calls on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to “accelerate the deployment of a UN peacekeeping force” in order to facilitate the withdrawal of Ethiopian forces from Somalia. On 19 August, the UNSC authorised the extension of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). The body’s resolution also encouraged the Secretary-General to explore ways and means for the UN to strengthen AMISOM’s capacity and assist its full deployment.

At the same time, both the TFG and the ARS face serious internal challenges. The ARS is still split in two factions. The crisis within the TFG reached a climax when Prime Minister Nur Adde discharged former warlord Mohamed Omar Habeb alias Mohamed Dheere as mayor and governor of the capital this week, accusing him of misusing public funds and for mounting insecurity. However, Interim President Abdullahi Yusuf revoked the discharge on 31 July. In the beginning of August, 10 out of 15 cabinet ministers resigned in criticism of the Prime Minister. Just a few days before, 32 Members of Parliament had demanded the prime minister’s resignation.

In a teleconference for the local media on 20 August Al-Shabaab spokesman Sheikh Mukhtar Robow Abu Mansur avowed that the Djibouti peace deal was “futile” and that the “Jihad” would go on. He added that the end of hostilities hinges on the re-establishing of the Islamic sharia in Somalia. Later that week, Al-Shabaab forces captured most of the southern port town Kismayo and fighting with local clan militias led to numerous casualties.

Garowe online, Reuters, IRIN, The Nation (Nairobi); Shabelle Media Network

First Women Lawyers' Association opens in Hargeisa

The first Women Lawyers' Association in Somalia has been established in the self-declared Republic of Somaliland with the help of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The association, which was created earlier this year, has five members, with a further 17 women set to graduate from the University of Hargeisa in September. The association is headed by Ifra Aden Omar, who was Somaliland's sole practising female lawyer until last year. Currently there are no female prosecutors or judges in Somaliland.

Catholic Information Service for Africa (CISA)

SUDAN

Heads of Sudanese churches meeting in Juba

Heads, delegates and women leaders of the churches of the Sudan met in Juba on 1 to 5 August under the topic "The road towards self-determination and popular consultation – Understanding the achievements and challenges of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA)". The aim of the meeting was "to assess the current situation in our country and plan how the Church can respond in cooperation with our communities and government. The concluding statement refers to several areas of concern connected to the implementation of the CPA and also the Darfur crisis. The full text can be accessed at www.africafiles.org/article.asp?ID=18722&ThisURL=./sudan.asp&URLName=Sudan.

Statement of the Sudanese Heads of Churches (Juba, 5 August); Catholic Information Service Africa (CISA), Sudan Tribune (ST)

New National Catholic University set to open in September

The Catholic University of Sudan is set to open this September and will accept 40 students. It is a project of the Sudan Catholic Bishop Conference and is approved by the Minister of Education, Science and Technology of the Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS).

According to the university's coordinator of planning, Jesuit Fr Michael Schultheis, the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences will be based in Juba, while Wau will host the Faculty of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences and Engineering in 2010. The Faculty of Computer Science will be based at Comboni College in Khartoum. The introductory year will put a strong emphasis on language and communication skills, mathematics and computer studies, social ethics and social analysis.

Catholic Information Service for Africa (CISA), Catholic University of Sudan

UGANDA

Hopeful signs of peace in northern Uganda

The United Nations (UN) special envoy for the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA)-affected areas, Joachim Chissano, said in mid-August that Joseph Kony is ready to sign the last peace deal to end the 20 year old conflict in northern Uganda, but that Kony first wants to meet the mediator of the peace talks personally. Chissano said that the meeting should take place towards the end of August and that Kony would hopefully sign the peace deal this time. In April, Kony failed to show up to a meeting, where he was supposed to sign the deal stating that some of the provisions regarding court trials were unclear to him. Chissano also said that one reliable sign of progress in the peace process is the steady return of IDPs from camps in northern Uganda. This steady flow of returns is also reported by the UN and the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) have now started to withdraw from IDP camps in northern Uganda as a result of the increased stability in the region. Special Police Constables (SPCs) are supposed to take over patrolling. However, lack of capacities

on their side is causing concerns about a security vacuum in the former UPDF-patrolled areas, as criminal activities and the circulation of illegal arms remain a large security threat to civilians in the region. To curb the circulation of illegal arms the UPDF carried out 12 disarmament operations in the Moroto, Kaabong, Kotido and Nakapiripirit districts during July. At the same time, the frustration among local civilians regarding the continued looting and killing by non-integrated ex-combatants is increasing, while locals in some cases are reluctant to identify attackers due to fear of reprisals.

UN News Services, IRIN, Resolve Uganda, Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR) and UNOCHA

URCS provides psychosocial support to war affected children

The Uganda Red Cross Society (URCS) has embarked on a psycho socio rehabilitation programme for children affected by war in northern Uganda. The programme has been piloted in two branches of Gulu and Lira, concentrating in four sub counties; Bungatira and Ongako in Gulu and Alooi and Amugu in Lira. In each sub county, four parishes are selected making an average of sixteen parishes. The goal of the rehabilitation programme is to empower the selected children and families with skills and capacity to counter the psychological challenges in order to live a productive life. The project targets children aged between 5-17 years and their parents or guardians who have been affected by the civil conflict.

Uganda Red Cross Society (www.redcrossug.org)

RESOURCES

ETHIOPIA AND ERITREA

UN Security Council Resolution 1827 on the situation between Eritrea and Ethiopia, 30 July 2008

www.un.org/Docs/sc/unsc_resolutions08.htm

KENYA

Human Rights Watch: “‘All the men have gone’. War crimes in Kenya’s Mt. Elgon conflict”, 28 July 2008

http://hrw.org/reports/2008/kenya0708/

Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (KNCHR):

Press statement “Mt. Elgon: Police action is an affront to the powers and mandate of KNHCR, a violation of the law and an attempt to cover up the torture in Mt. Elgon”, 18 August 2008.

www.knchr.org/dmdocuments/Mt%20Elgon%20.PDF

SOMALIA

“Massive displacement and humanitarian need. A profile of the internal displacement situation”, 29 July 2008

The Internal Displacement Monitoring Center (IDMC) and Norwegian Refugee Council provide an extensive analysis of internal displacement in Somalia.

http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004BE3B1/(httpInfoFiles)/9B3D83161C207B05C1257495002FDBC2/\$file/Somalia+-+July+2008.pdf

SUDAN

The International Criminal Court (ICC) case against the Sudanese president Al Bashir

Prosecutor's statement on the prosecutor's application for a warrant of arrest under Article 58 against Omar Hassan Ahmad AL BASHIR

<http://www.icc-cpi.int/library/organs/otp/ICC-OTP-ST20080714-ENG.pdf>

Prosecutor's application for warrant of arrest under Article 58 against Omar Hassan Ahmad Al Bashir, Case summary, International Criminal Court (Jul. 14)

<http://www.icc-cpi.int/library/organs/otp/ICC-OTP-Summary-20081704-ENG.pdf>

Reactions to the ICC warrant

Alex de Waal: "Sudan and the International Criminal Court. A guide to controversy", 14 July 2008

www.opendemocracy.net/article/sudan-and-the-international-criminal-court-a-guide-to-the-controversy

International Crisis Group (ICG) statement: "New ICC prosecution. Opportunities and risks for peace in Sudan", 14 July 2008

www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?l=1&id=5572&m=1

Human Rights Watch (HRW): "Darfur: ICC Moves Against Sudan's Leader", 14 July 2008

www.hrw.org/english/docs/2008/07/14/sudan19335.htm

African Union Communiqué of the 142nd meeting of the Peace and Security Council, 21 July 2008

<http://www.africa-union.org/root/ua/actualites/2008/juillet/psc/142-communique-eng.pdf>

Analyses by the Centre for Socio-Legal Studies, University of Oxford

In the coming months the Oxford Transitional Justice Research Center (OTJR) Working Paper Series will explore the legal, political and humanitarian issues that arise from the Bashir-case.

www.csls.ox.ac.uk/otjr.php?show=workingpapers

"Peace in Sudan may take a long time" – Interview with Marina Peter, 31 July 2008

www.oikoumene.org/en/news/news-management/eng/a/article/1722/peace-in-sudan-may-take-a.html

Darfur consortium: "Putting people first"

This report comes to the conclusion that – six months after initial deployment – UNAMID has failed to provide adequate protection. Darfur consortium is a coalition of more than 50 Africa-based and Africa-focused NGOs dedicated to working together to promote a just, peaceful and sustainable end to the ongoing humanitarian and human rights crisis in Darfur.

www.darfurconsortium.org/darfur_consortium_actions/reports/2008/Putting_People_First_UNAMID_report.pdf

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Editorial information

The media review Horn of Africa Bulletin (HAB) was published by the Life & Peace Institute between 1989 and 2006. The re-formatting of HAB as an e-bulletin 2007 is done in close collaboration with the Nairobi-based All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) and the Fellowship of Christian Councils and Churches in the Great Lakes and the Horn of Africa (FECCLAHA). The electronic base of HAB is LPI and the editors are Charlotte Booth, charlotte.booth@life-peace.org, and Kristina Lundborg, Kristina.lundborg@life-peace.org. For subscription matters contact: Selin Amirthalingam, selin.amirthalingam@life-peace.org. For a link to HAB and more information see www.life-peace.org

Editorial principles

The Horn of Africa Bulletin (HAB) is an international newsletter, compiling analyses, news and resources primarily in the Horn of Africa region. The material published in HAB represents a variety of sources and does not necessarily represent the views of the Life & Peace Institute (LPI) or the cooperating partners, the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) and the Fellowship of Christian Councils and Churches in the Great Lakes and the Horn of Africa (FECCLAHA). Writers and sources are normally referred to, although in exceptional cases, the editors of the HAB may choose not to reveal the real identity of a writer or publish the source.

