



UNITED NATIONS

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Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) – SOMALIA

Situation Report # 19- 16 May, 2008

Main developments

The worsening security situation and constrained humanitarian access continues to leave international and national aid organizations with little space to operate in Somalia. Violence and sporadic clashes between rival sides in the country continued unabated throughout the week. As a result, some international NGOs have temporarily relocated staff out of the Juba Valley areas of Southern Somalia following security concerns.

Renewed clan fighting and revenge attacks are also causing anxiety for the civilian population in Lower Juba Region. It has been reported many people from five villages in Jamame District have fled their homes following fierce fighting between two rival minority tribes of Bantu and Bimal. At least three people lost their lives and between 1,100-1,500 families displaced by the fighting this week. Tension is currently high as rival clans in the region mobilized their militia for possible retaliatory attacks.

As a result, operational movements of humanitarian aid workers in Kismaayo, Jilib and Jamame areas of Southern Somalia region have been very much restricted even for national staff. Elsewhere in southcentral Somalia, towns such as Baidoa, the number of internationals has been reduced to essential staff only.

A consignment of 38 metric tons of food for supplementary feeding for Anole village (30 km south of Buale in middle Juba) was looted on 9 May by militiamen escorting the food. The food was later retrieved by area clan militia which also facilitated the distribution process.

Despite the increased insecurity in April impacting humanitarian operations, with over 15 incidents that occurred directly targeting food distributions, WFP achieved 87% of the planned distributions. More than one million Somalis were provided with 18,495 metric tons of food aid. During the first two weeks of May, CARE International distributed 6387 metric tons of mixed commodities to 219,444 beneficiaries in Galgaduud, South Mudug, Hiraan and Middle Shabelle.

A report issued jointly by Famine Early Warning Systems Network and FAO/Food Security Analysis Unit on 9 May also highlights very critical rates of malnutrition. The report indicates 24.1 per cent Global Acute Malnutrition and 2.8 per cent severe acute malnutrition in El Berde District of Bakool Region in south central Somalia. Increasing trends of admission of severely malnourished children in international NGO feeding centers have been observed in various locations in Somalia, most notably in Mogadishu. The emergence of this report confirms that Somalia is in the throes of a dangerous humanitarian crisis never experienced before.

In an urgent response, UNICEF has started supplementary feeding for 44,000 children under the age of five through nine distribution sites along the Mogadishu-Afgooye corridor and in central regions. It is also working with national and international non-governmental organizations to provide life saving nutritional interventions with the aim of reaching more than 90% of all children under five who were displaced from Mogadishu.

Mediation talks between rivals in the country – the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia (TFG) and the Eritrea-based Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia (ARS) – opened in Djibouti on 12 May under the auspices of the UN. On 15 May, the delegates from both parties issued a joint declaration

OCHA SOMALIA

7th Floor, Kalson Towers, Crescent Street, off Parklands Road, P.O. Box 28832, 00200 Nairobi, Kenya

Tel No: (254-20) 3754150-5; Fax No: (254-20) 3754156

<http://ochaonline.un.org/somalia>

calling on their supporters and all Somalis to facilitate unhindered humanitarian access and the delivery of assistance to the affected civilian population in the country.

***Further Information in Somali or English, contact:
Abdi Yussuf Noor on 254 734 800 120 – nooryussuf@un.org***

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