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	MSC-01	IO-19	NEA-06	NSCE-00	NSAE-00	SSO-00	HA-09
	L-03	TRSE-00	PM-10	PA-01	OMB-01	INRE-00	USIE-00
	SP-02	SNP-01	C-01	PRS-01	P-02	T-01	/069 W

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O 171750Z JUN 88  
FM AMEMBASSY MOGADISHU  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5277  
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA  
AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI  
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY SANAA  
AMCONSUL JEDDAH  
USMISSION GENEVA  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK  
SECDEF WASHDC  
USCINCCENT MACDILL AFB FL//CCJ2//CCJ5//  
USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI

Dept. of State, RPS/IPS, Margaret P. Grafeld, Dir.  
(X) Release ( ) Excise ( ) Deny ( ) Declassify  
Date 10/21/05 Exemption \_\_\_\_\_

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E.O. 12356: DECL:OADR  
TAGS: MOPS, PREL, PREF, PINS, SO  
SUBJECT: FIGHTING IN SOMALIA'S NORTH: THE POLITICAL  
- IMPACT

1. ~~SECRET~~/NOFORN - ENTIRE TEXT.
2. SUMMARY. AS INSURGENCY IN THE NORTH ENTERS ITS FOURTH WEEK, THE SITUATION ON THE GROUND APPEARS STALEMATED. SOMALI NATIONAL MOVEMENT (SNM) FORCES HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO CONQUER ANY MAJOR URBAN CENTERS. THEY

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ARE NOW STRUGGLING TO HOLD PARTS OF HARGEISA. AT THE

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SAME TIME, SOMALI FORCES HAVE TWICE BEEN OVERRUN IN MAJOR MILITARY STRONGHOLDS. THEY HAVE LOST THEIR SUPPLY DEPOT AT AAWADLE, GIVEN UP CONTROL OF THE SHIIKH MOUNTAINS AND CANNOT USE ROADS CONNECTING THE NORTHWEST'S URBAN AREAS. BERBERA IS THE ONLY CITY IN THE NORTHWEST WHICH THE SOMALI FORCES FIRMLY HOLD, AND THAT BY DINT OF A CONTINUOUS AIR SHUTTLE WHICH IS DRAINING FORCES FROM THE SOUTH AND STRETCHING COMMERCIAL AND MILITARY TRANSPORT TO THE LIMIT.

3. WITH THE EVACUATION OF 260 EXPATRIATES (INCLUDING INDIAN BUSINESSMEN FROM HARGEISA), SOCIAL SERVICES AND COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY IN THE REGIONAL CAPITAL HAVE CEASED. ELU/CARE WAS ABLE TO GET ESCORTED CONVOYS OF FOOD TO THREE REFUGEE CAMPS NEAR BERBERA, BUT MOST CAMPS HAVE NOT HAD FOOD OR WATER FOR THREE WEEKS. MANY REFUGEES HAVE REPORTEDLY CROSSED BACK OVER TO ETHIOPIA. ALTHOUGH THE GENERAL POPULACE DID NOT RISE UP IN SPONTANEOUS SUPPORT OF THE SNM (AS HAD CONFIDENTLY BEEN PREDICTED IN SNM PROPAGANDA), THE SOMALI ARMY HAS TREATED THE LOCAL CIVILIAN POPULATION AS THOUGH IT WERE THE ENEMY. THE CIVILIAN CENTER OF HARGEISA HAS BEEN INDISCRIMINATELY SHELLLED AND BOMBED. HUNDREDS HAVE BEEN ARRESTED AND, IN THE BATTLE AREA, MANY HAVE BEEN SUMMARILY SHOT.

4. THE POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THESE SAD EVENTS DEPENDS ON THEIR EVENTUAL OUTCOME: WHETHER THE SNM CAN WREST A LIBERATED AREA FROM SOMALI GRASP OR WHETHER THE ARMY WILL EVENTUALLY BY FORCE OF NUMBERS, FIREPOWER, AND LOGISTICS PREVAIL, AND LAUNCH THE REPRESSION THAT WILL INEVITABLY ENSUE. ALREADY, WE

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CAN SEE SOME DIRECT EFFECTS OF THE STRUGGLE: THE POLITICIZATION OF THE ARMY, A RE-WRITING OF SUCCESSION SCENARIOS, A BREAKDOWN OF THE DAROD CONFEDERACY, THE WEAKENING OF THE ECONOMY, AND A HURRYING TWILIGHT FOR THE SIAD ERA. END SUMMARY.

5. THE ARMY. EVEN THOUGH KEY POSITIONS ALWAYS WENT TO TRIBALLY-RELIABLE COMMANDERS, SIAD TRADITIONALLY KEPT A SEMBLANCE OF TRIBAL BALANCE IN THE SOMALI ARMED SERVICES. HOWEVER, RECENT EFFORTS TO PUSH FORWARD HIS SON MASLAH AND ENSURE MAREHAN CONTROL OF

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INSTRUMENTS OF POWER IN MOGADISHU'S 77TH SECTOR HAD ALREADY DEEPLY POLITICIZED THE ARMY. THE CONFLICT IN THE NORTH HAS HAD TWO EFFECTS. IT HAS LOOSENEED THE MAREHAN MILITARY GRIP BY BRINGING BACK INTO COMMAND POSITION SIAD'S OLD CONFEDERATES: PRIME MINISTER SAMANTAR (NON-TRIBAL), FIRST MINISTER FOR INTERIOR SULEIMAN (DOLBAHANTE), AND FIRST MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC AFFAIRS KULMIE (HAWIYA). HOWEVER, AT LESSER COMMAND POSITIONS, ISSAKS LOYAL FOR TWENTY YEARS HAVE BEEN SIDELINED, SOME IMPRISONED. HAWIYA AND DOLBAHANTE COMMANDERS HAVE BEEN TAKEN OUT OF LINE POSITIONS.

6. THE SOMALI MILITARY, WHO SINCE THEIR DEFEAT AT THE HAND OF ETHIOPIA IN 1977 HAVE SPENT MORE EFFORT ON SELF AGGRANDIZEMENT THAN ON RESTORING FIGHTING POWER, ARE LEARNING THE COSTS OF BATTLE. THE DEAD AND WOUNDED AMONG CLOSE FRIENDS AND THE DESTRUCTION OF CIVILIAN POPULATIONS HAVE SICKENED MANY. SOME OFFICERS REFUSED TO GO NORTH AND WERE JAILED. OTHERS WERE REPORTEDLY SHOT IN HARGEISA FOR REFUSING TO FIGHT CIVILIAN ISSAKS. DESERTIONS HAVE BEEN HIGH. IN THESE THREE WEEKS, THE SOMALI ARMY HAS PROVED ITSELF TO BE AN UNDISCIPLINED,

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FM AMEMBASSY MOGADISHU  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5278  
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA  
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AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM  
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AMEMBASSY SANAA  
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SUBJECT: FIGHTING IN SOMALIA'S NORTH: THE POLITICAL

INEFFECTUAL FIGHTING FORCE AND IS NOW NO LONGER  
REPRESENTATIVE OF THE NATION AT LARGE.

7. REWRITING SUCCESSION SCENARIOS. EVEN BEFORE THE  
SNM ATTACK, WE HAD NOTICED AN INCREASING NATIONAL  
ROLE FOR PRIME MINISTER SAMANTAR. WITH THE EVENTS,  
HE QUICKLY ROSE TO HIS OLD PROMINENCE, TAKING CONTROL

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OF THE COMMAND CENTER IN MOGADISHU WHILE SIAD WAS STILL  
IN ADDIS, BEING THE TOP INTERLOCUTOR WITH WESTERN  
AMBASSADORS DURING THE EVACUATION CRISIS, AND THEN  
MOVING UP TO HARGEISA AS SUPERVISORY COMMANDER. YET,  
BY SIAD'S DESIGN, HE HAS BEEN PUT PROMINENTLY FORWARD  
IN A NO-WIN SITUATION. WE HAVE ONE REPORT THAT  
SAMANTAR LEFT HARGEISA LAST SUNDAY HAVING DECIDED THAT  
THE BATTLE AT PRESENT COULD NOT BE WON THERE. SINCE  
THEN, HE HAS NOT RETURNED. MINISTER OF DEFENSE NUR  
HAS TAKEN OVER THE NORTHWEST COMMAND.

8. MEANWHILE, SIAD'S SON, GENERAL MASLAH, HAS NOT  
DISTINGUISHED HIMSELF AS A WARTIME COMMANDER. WE  
PREDICTED IN MOGADISHU 5856 THAT MASLAH WAS MOST  
LIKELY TO SUCCEED SIAD, BUT THAT HE WOULD NOT BE  
ABLE TO HOLD THE COUNTRY OR THE ARMY TOGETHER AND  
THAT REVOLT IN THE NORTH AND CIVIL WAR WOULD ATTEND  
HIS REIGN. MASLAH QUICKLY FORESHORTENED THE TIME-  
FRAME OF THAT SCENARIO. IN THE FIRST DAYS OF THE  
ATTACK ON BURAO, HE PROVED SO OUT OF TOUCH WITH THE  
REALITIES OF CRISIS COMMAND THAT HE WAS EASILY  
SHUNTED ASIDE BY SAMANTAR. MASLAH HAS BEEN MORE  
ACTIVE SINCE DADDY'S RETURN FROM ADDIS, AND SOME  
DEFERENCE OF RANKS AT THE MINISTRY HAS REVIVED,  
BUT HE HAS BLOTTED HIS COPY BOOK AND WILL NOT LAST

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LONG IF DADDY LEAVES THE SCENE.

9. ANOTHER SHADOW SUCCESSOR, GENERAL GANNI, HAS APPEARED BACK IN UNIFORM BUT HAS SO FAR BEEN KEPT ON THE FRINGES OF ACTION. IN GENERAL, MARAHAN HAVE BEHAVED POORLY AND SOMETIME COWARDLY IN THIS CRISIS. THERE SEEMS TO BE BUT ONE REAL LEADER AMONG THEM - SIAD. BY SEVERAL ACCOUNTS HE HAS GIVEN UP TRAINING

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A DAUPHIN AND INTENDS TO REMAIN IN OFFICE UNTIL ALLAH CALLS HIM. HENCE, HIS REQUEST TO POSTPONE HIS WORKING TRIP TO WASHINGTON "FOR A YEAR".

10. POLITICAL BASE SHAKEN. POLITICAL EVENTS MAY OUTFRONT THE GRIM REAPER. SIAD'S POLITICAL COALITION MAY NOT SEE HIM THROUGH. NORTHERN ELEMENTS OF THE DAROD CONFEDERACY HAVE NOT FULLY SUPPORTED THEIR SOUTHERN BROTHERS IN THIS CRISIS. THEY ARE HISTORIC ENEMIES OF ISSAK (THE ALMOST EXCLUSIVE ISSAK BASE OF SNM LEADERSHIP IS ITS MAJOR LIABILITY), BUT CLAN LEADERS ALSO SEE THEMSELVES AS DEPRIVED NORTHERNERS WHO HAVE NOT EQUITABLY SHARED IN THE BENEFITS OF POWER. THEY VIEW WITH DISMAY THE MAREHAN EFFORT TO PERPETUATE CONTROL. TOP DOLBAHANTE LEADERS, FIRST MINISTER SULEIMAN AND PERMANENT SECRETARY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS ADAN, HAVE BEEN NORTH TO WIN OVER DOLBAHANTE ELDERS. BY MOST REPORTS, THE ELDERS ARE STILL ON THE FENCE.

11. A REPORT FROM GARDI HOLDS THAT WHEN SIAD'S EMISSARIES (WE DO NOT KNOW WHICH ONES) CAME THROUGH, THE VILLAGERS LISTENED RESPECTFULLY BUT OPENLY MOCKED THEM AS SOON AS THEY LEFT TOWN. OGADENIS WERE ALREADY BEING WRITTEN OUT OF POLITICAL EQUATIONS BY IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PEACE AGREEMENT WITH ETHIOPIA (MOGADISHU 5553). BIG TROUBLE WITH THE ISSAKS SHOULD PROVIDE THEM AN OPPORTUNITY TO PROVE THEIR WORTH TO SIAD, BUT THEY NOW KNOW HE HAS ALREADY GIVEN UP WHAT THEY MOST WANT, SOME CONTROL IN THEIR OWN HOMELAND. WE UNDERSTAND THAT OGADENIS ARE DEBATING WHETHER THEY WOULD BE BETTER OFF THROWING THEIR LOT WITH THEIR TRADITIONAL ENEMIES, THE ISSAKS.

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O 171750Z JUN 88  
FM AMEMBASSY MOGADISHU  
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12. ECONOMIC DETERIORATION. SOMALIA'S CUPBOARDS WERE BARE BEFORE THE CALAMITOUS EVENTS IN THE NORTH BROKE FORTH. HAVING TASTED BITTER RESULTS OF LAST SEPTEMBER'S ECONOMIC MEASURES (NO HARD CURRENCY, NO EXPORTS, NO SUPPLIES, LITTLE EXTERNAL AID), SOMALIA WAS RENEGOTIATING A SHADOW PROGRAM WITH THE IMF. REMAINING RESOURCES

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HAVE NOW BEEN DRAINED TO BUY SUPPLIES AND RECRUITS FOR

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THE NORTHERN FRONT. INDISCRIMINATE FIRING HAS DEPLETED MUNITIONS; OTHER MATERIEL HAS SUFFERED HEAVY LOSSES. THE COMMERCIAL SECTOR IS ALSO AFFECTED. AN AIR SOMALI 707 HAS HAD TO TAKE AN UNSCHEDULED REPAIR STOP IN GERMANY BECAUSE OF DAY-AND-NIGHT USE IN FERRYING TROOPS AND WOUNDED. THE REPAIR INCLUDES REUPHOLSTERING BLOOD-COVERED SEATS. PRESIDENT SIAD HAS APPEALED TO THE HAWIYA MERCHANTS OF THE MOGADISHU AREA TO OPEN THEIR WAREHOUSES AND ORDER MORE FOOD FROM ABROAD. THE HAWIYA ELDERS ARE REPORTEDLY DEMANDING A RETURN TO FREE MARKET PRINCIPLES AND ACCESS TO FOREIGN EXCHANGE. THE COMBINED EFFECT OF POLICY FLIP-FLOPS AND WAR DEMANDS IS BOUND TO BRING HIGH INFLATION AND FOOD SHORTAGES EVEN IF THE HAWIYA TRADERS FULLY COOPERATED WITH THE PRESIDENT'S REQUESTS. IN THE INTERIOR, SECONDARY RAINS HAVE NOT COME AS EXPECTED. SOMALIA'S TWO RIVERS ARE LOWER THAN USUAL. ITS TOO EARLY TO TELL, BUT THE SPECTRE OF DROUGHT AGAIN RAISES ITS HEAD.

13. A DIMING TWILIGHT. FOR A LONG TIME, IT WAS COMMONLY HELD THAT SIAD BARRE WAS THE ONLY MAN WHO COULD HOLD SOMALIA TOGETHER. MOST SOUTHERNERS MAY STILL BELIEVE THAT; SIAD HOLDS THE LEGITIMACY OF AGE AND POSITION. BUT NOW IN THE NORTH, SOMALIA FINDS ITSELF TORN APART BY A REVOLT WHICH HAS AS ITS PRIME GOAL THE REMOVAL OF SIAD FROM OFFICE. IF THE SNM CAN HOLD ON IN THE NORTH (AND THEY HAVE FAR OUTLASTED ALL OUR EXPECTATIONS), THEY MAY EVENTUALLY FORCE SOMALI LEADERS TO THE BARGAINING TABLE. BUT IT IS DIFFICULT TO SEE HOW SIAD COULD COMPROMISE WITH THE SNM. AS THE WOUNDED RETURN FROM THE NORTH, AS THE LIST

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OF DEAD GROWS, AS FOOD GETS SCARCE AND MONEY SHORT, THERE ARE BOUND TO BE A LOT OF PEOPLE ASKING THEMSELVES WHETHER SOMALIA WOULD NOT BE BETTER OFF UNDER OTHER LEADERSHIP. ANY CHANGE WOULD HAVE TO GET AROUND THE MAREHAN CONTROL OF FORCE IN THE NATION'S CAPITAL. NONETHELESS, THE LARGE NUMBER OF PRESIDENTIAL DEPENDENTS NOW SEEKING VISAS FOR THE UNITED STATES SUGGESTS THAT EVEN THE FAMILY IS HEDGING ITS BETS. WE MAY BE DEEPER INTO THE TWILIGHT OF THE SIAD ERA THEN WE IMAGINED.  
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