DTG
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FROM
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TO
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CONTROLS
(b)(3):10 USC 424
SERIAL:  DIR 105-93
/********** THIS IS A COMBINED MESSAGE **********/

BODY

SUBJ: SOMALIA: SITUATION UPDATE. (U)
DOI: 17 FEB 93

1. (U) MOST SOMALI FACTIONS FAILED TO MEET THE 15 FEBRUARY DEADLINE FOR PROVIDING THE COALITION WITH LISTS OF THEIR WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT.
2. (S/WN/FA/F) GEN AIDEED MAY BE LOSING INFLUENCE; HIS SUPPORTERS ARE SAID TO BE DRIFTING AWAY IN SEARCH OF BETTER PAY AND PROSPECTS ELSEWHERE.
3. (U) IN THE KISMAYO AREA, NEWLY RETURNED COL JESS IS ALREADY PROVING TROUBLESOME; HE DISCOURAGED ELDERS FROM ATTENDING A UNITAF-SPONSORED MEETING.

DISCUSSION

4. (S/WN/FA/F) OVERVIEW. THE UNIFIED TASK FORCE (UNITAF) REPORTS ADDITIONAL SNIPER INCIDENTS AND ACTS OF BANDITRY IN THE CAPITAL, INCLUDING THE LOOTING AT GUNPOINT OF A UNICEF COMPOUND. SOMALI FACTIONS WERE SUPPOSED TO MEET WITH COALITION REPRESENTATIVES THIS WEEK AND SUBMIT LISTS DETAILING THEIR WEAPONRY AND EQUIPMENT. ONLY THREE GROUPS COMPLIED; THE REST WERE TOLD TO HAVE THEIR LISTS READY IN TIME FOR ANOTHER MEETING SCHEDULED FOR NEXT WEEK. SOME OF GEN AIDEED'S SUPPORTERS ARE APPARENTLY BEGINNING TO SLIP AWAY IN PURSUIT OF OPPORTUNITIES ELSEWHERE, INDICATING THAT THE GENERAL'S INFLUENCE MAY BE DIMINISHING. IN KISMAYO, COL JESS HAS BEGUN TO INTERFERE WITH COALITION EFFORTS AT POLITICAL RECONCILIATION BY ADVISING A GROUP OF ELDERS THERE NOT TO PARTICIPATE IN UNITAF-SPONSORED MEETINGS UNTIL HIS OPPONENT, GEN MORGAN, Withdraws ALL OF HIS MEN FROM THE NEARBY TOWN OF BEER XAANI.
5. (U) MOGADISHU. FIRE FIGHTS AND BANDITRY. US FORCES WERE RECENTLY ENGAGED IN A FIRE FIGHT. A MARINE TEAM, WHILE MOVING INTO A NEW POSITION, WAS SHOT AT BY A GROUP OF 8- TO- 10 SOMALIS ON THE 15TH. THE MARINES RETURNED FIRE, POSSIBLY WOUNDING ONE GUNMAN. AFTER SWEEPING THE AREA, ONE ARMED SOMALI WAS CAPTURED AND INTERROGATED.
TO INITIAL REPORTS, HE MAY BE THE LEADER OF A LOCAL GANG THAT HAS BEEN STEALING FOOD FROM SOMALIS.

6. (U) ITALIAN FORCES WERE ALSO TARGETS OF SOMALI GUNMEN IN AN INCIDENT ON THE 12TH. ONE OF THEIR TWO-VEHICLE PATROLS WAS SHOT AT BY SNIPERS AS IT APPROACHED THE SITE WHERE A ROBBERY WAS IN PROGRESS. THEY DID NOT RETURN FIRE, HOWEVER, OWING TO THE PROXIMITY OF CIVILIANS IN THE AREA. NOT FAR AWAY, THE SOLDIERS CAME ACROSS A GROUP OF BANDITS LOOTING CIVILIAN VEHICLES. THEY FLEED, HOWEVER, AS SOON AS THEY SAW THE PATROL. THE ITALIANS BELIEVE THAT THE SNIPER FIRE WAS DESIGNED TO FORCE THEM TO DISMOUNT AND DEPLOY, THEREBY GIVING THE BANDITS ADDITIONAL TIME TO COMPLETE THE ROBBERY AND ESCAPE.

7. (U) A UNICEF COMPOUND WAS LOOTED AT GUNPOINT ON THE NIGHT OF THE 15TH. SIX SOMALIS TRAVELING IN TWO VEHICLES FORCED THE GATE GUARD TO GIVE THEM ACCESS TO THE FACILITY. THEY ESCAPED WITH ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT, SOME SOMALI MONEY, ONE M-16, ONE AK-47, AND ONE PISTOL.

. (U) WEAPONS SEIZED. MARINES CONFISCATED A PICKUP TRUCK ON THE 16TH THAT CONTAINED THE FOLLOWING WEAPONS: ONE AK-47, ONE 7.62MM MACHINEGUN, ONE 12.7MM MACHINEGUN, ONE .50 CALIBER MACHINEGUN, AND ONE 106MM RECOILLESS ROCKET. THE THREE SOMALIS IN THE VEHICLE WERE TAKEN IN FOR QUESTIONING. THEY CLAIM THAT THEY HAS BORROWED THE TRUCK EARLIER FROM GEN AIDEED'S AUTHORIZED WEAPONS STORAGE SITE NR3 (AWSS-3). WHEN THEY WENT BACK TO RETURN IT, HOWEVER, THEY COULD NOT FIND ANYONE TO LET THEM IN.

9. (U) UNITAF COMMENTS, HOWEVER, THAT IT IS VERY UNLIKELY THAT THERE WAS NO ONE AT AWSS-3, A SITE WHERE MANY GUN BATTLES HAVE RAGED BETWEEN AIDEED'S HABR GEDIR CLANSMEN AND MUROSADYE ATTACKERS. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THE SOMALIS WERE INTERCEPTED WHILE THEY WERE IN THE PROCESS OF SHIFTING THEIR WEAPONS CACHE FROM ONE SITE TO ANOTHER. UNITAF NOTES THAT EARLIER REPORTS HAVE INDICATED THAT HABR GEDIR FORCES MADE A PRACTICE OF MOVING THEIR WEAPONS ABOUT SO THAT THE COALITION WOULD BE UNABLE TO SEIZE THEM.

10. (U) CASUALTIES AMONG THE CHILDREN' TWO CHILDREN WERE SHOT AND WOUNDED ON THE 16TH BY SOMALI GUARDS AT A NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION (NGO) COMPOUND ADJACENT TO THE UNOSOM (UN OPERATIONS IN SOMALIA) HOSPITAL. THE CHILDREN WERE AMONG A GROUP OF FIVE OR SIX YOUTHS WHO HAS BEEN THROWING STONES AT THE FACILITY. THE GUARDS SAID THEY BELIEVED THE CHILDREN WERE PREPARING TO THROW GRENADES.

11. (U) BOTSWANAN FORCES ON PATROL ON THE 15TH DISCOVERED SIX CHILDREN, RANGING FROM 2 TO 6 YEARS OF AGE, LYING CRITICALLY WOUNDED IN THE STREET FROM A GRENADE EXPLOSION. THEY HAD EVIDENTLY BEEN PLAYING WITH THE DEVICE WHEN IT DETONATED. THE CHILDREN WERE EVACUATED FOR MEDICAL TREATMENT, BUT SEVERAL OF THEM WERE NOT
EXPECTED TO LIVE.

12. (U) FACTIONS FAIL TO MEET DEADLINE. MOST SOMALI FACTIONS DID NOT TURN OVER TO THE COALITION LISTS OF THEIR WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT LIKE THEY WERE SUPPOSED TO DO AT A MEETING HOSTED BY UNITAF AND UNOSOM ON THE 15TH. OF THE 16 GROUPS INVITED, ONLY 2 FAILED TO SHOW UP: THE UNITED SOMALI FRONT AND THE SOMALI DEMOCRATIC ASSOCIATION, BOTH OF WHICH ARE FROM NORTHWESTERN SOMALIA. ONLY THREE FACTIONS HAD THEIR LISTS READY. AN EXTENSION WAS GRANTED FOR THE OTHERS UNTIL THE 22D, AT WHICH TIME ANOTHER SUCH MEETING WILL BE HELD. ONLY THOSE PRESENTING THEIR LISTS AT THAT TIME WILL BE INVITED TO ATTEND THE CEASE-FIRE MEETING SCHEDULED FOR 2 MARCH.

13. (SAWNFC) AIDeed’s influence declining? The political and military influence of Gen AIDeed, Chairman of the United Somali Congress (USC), may be declining as a result of policies being pursued by UNITAF, according to a reliable source. AIDeed’s frequent public criticism of Coalition forces, the Coalition’s capture of AIDeed arms caches, and the arrest of AIDeed ally, Col Jess, have made suspect AIDeed’s claims of Coalition backing.

14. (SAWNFC) AIDeed’s military prowess has also been called into question by his failure to defeat Somali National Front (SNF) and Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF) forces near Galcaio (06- 47N 047-26E) in central Somalia. His military capability in Mogadishu itself is seriously diminished owing to his transfer of heavy weaponry to his traditional homeland area near Dusa Mareb (05- 31N 046-24E). Comment: AIDeed has also failed to retake the town of Bardera (02-20N 042-02E) from SNF forces, and has shown himself to be incapable of dislodging the SNF from positions that threaten the port city of Kismayo.

15. (SAWNFC) AIDeed’s power in Mogadishu was largely based on his ability to maintain a strong military force by stealing relief supplies or blackmailing donors to pay “protection” fees and by ensuring a steady flow of arms to his forces. Both of these sources of compensation have been blocked, however, by the Coalition forces’ imposition of improved security measures, which have greatly reduced the quantity and supply of arms available. AIDeed’s remaining troops in Mogadishu are beginning to slip away as they find that civilian jobs in the growing reconstruction sector offer better pay and prospects than AIDeed can provide.

16. (SAWNFC) Moreover, AIDeed’s key financial backer and counselor, Ali OSMAN “ATTO,” is seen to be distancing himself from the general. ATTO has made public comments to the fact that his
PERSONAL FORTUNE HAS BEEN DEPLETED AS A RESULT OF HIS SUPPORT FOR AIDDEED, AND THAT THERE IS A NEED FOR THE AIDDEED AND ALI MAHDI Factions of the USC TO RECONCILE AND REUNITE, EVEN AT THE EXPENSE OF AIDDEED'S CONTINUING CHAIRMANSHIP.

17. (U) ELSEWHERE IN THE SOUTH BALE DOGLE, MOROCCAN FORCES INTERRUPTED A BANDIT AMBUSH IN PROGRESS ON THE NIGHT OF 15 FEBRUARY SOUTH OF THE VILLAGE OF BARI WEYNE (02-40N 044-36E). ABOUT 15 BANDITS EQUIPPED WITH SMALL ARMS HAD ATTACKED A VEHICLE CONTAINING TWO SOMALIS, KILLING THE DRIVER AND WOUNDED A PASSENGER. THE BANDITS FLED TO THE SOUTH AS THE MOROCCANS ARRIVED. THE WOUNDED PASSENGER WAS EVACUATED FOR MEDICAL TREATMENT.

18. (S/NF) KISMAYO. A MEETING OF ELDERS REPRESENTING OPPOSING Factions in the Kismayo Area had been scheduled for the 15th, but it was postponed until the 17th. Col Jess, leader of the Somali Patriotic Movement (SPM) faction that controls Kismayo, apparently instructed one group of elders not to participate in such a meeting until his rival, SNA faction leader Gen Morgan, removed all his forces from Beer Xaani (00-14S 042-17E). Comment: Morgan promised a US liaison office (USLO) representative on the 9th that he would withdraw his troops to an area 20 km west of their current positions around Beer Xaani.

19. (U) UNITAF REPRESENTATIVES ANNOUNCED THAT THEY PLAN TO ATTEND THE MEETING ON THE 17TH AND TO TALK TO WHOMEVER APPEARS. THIS STATEMENT IS INTENDED AS A SUBTLE REMINDER TO ALL CONCERNED THAT THE POLITICAL PROCESS IS BUILDING MOMENTUM, AND THOSE WHO FAIL TO KEEP UP WILL BE LEFT BEHIND.

20. (S/NF) CENTRAL REGION, BELET WEYNE. CANADIAN REPRESENTATIVES IN BELET WEYNE (04-45N 045-12E) EVIDENTLY WERE SUCCESSFUL IN CONVINCING SNA FORCCESSLOYAL TO GEN HASHI GANNI TO CANTON A SIGNIFICANT AMOUNT OF HEAVY EQUIPMENT IN BELEMEL (05-54N 045-48E). THE SNA ARRIVED THERE ON THE 15TH WITH THE FOLLOWING ITEMS: 2 M-47 TANKS, 2 T-55 TANKS, 1 T-34 TANK, 2 TECHNICAL VEHICLES WITH TWIN 23MM GUNS, 2 TECHNICAL VEHICLES WITH TWIN 37MM GUNS, NINE 105MM HOWITZERS, ONE 120MM MORTAR, 11 D-44 ANTITANK GUNS, AND 2 SALADIN ARMORED CARS. MEANWHILE, THE CANADIANS ARE CONTINUING WITH THEIR EFFORTS TO MOVE UNAFFILIATED USC MILITIA UNDER GEN HUBERO INTO A CANTONMENT AREA AT THE OLD BELET WEYNE MILITARY CAMP.

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