



Security Council Topic Update

Somalia

The country of Somalia remains in turmoil as fighting between the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and the rebel group Al-Shabab continues in the capital of Mogadishu. No end to the fighting is in sight and with the UN declaring famine in many regions of Somalia in July, the humanitarian crisis has become an even more pressing issue for the people to cope with. Drought and famine have spread throughout the Horn of Africa, displacing thousands of families and resulting in an overpopulation of the few humanitarian camps present in the country. Approximately 1.5 million people are internally displaced and many have sought refuge in neighboring Ethiopia and Kenya along with thousands going to Mogadishu. This poses a great problem to aid agencies currently operating within Somalia as the conflict prevents any aid from getting to those near and in Mogadishu. Al-Shabab has prevented such operations in the past which resulted in Ethiopia calling for UN peacekeepers' assistance in allowing aid to reach those who are in rebel-controlled areas. The United Nations has called on the African Union (AU) to increase its peacekeeping forces in Somalia (AMISOM) from 8,000 troops to 12,000 but it remains to be seen how effective such a move will be. Finally the international community has pledged that such drought and famine cannot be ignored any longer and continue to send humanitarian aid to those regions most affected by the famine though more prompt and effective action is needed at this point.

Points to Consider:

- How can the work of aid agencies in the country be improved so that aid can be given to those in rebel-controlled areas?
- Would a change in the AMISOM mandate allow the mission to be more successful in dealing with the issues pressing the country?
- At this juncture, which should be dealt with first: the political or humanitarian crisis?
- Besides pushing for negotiations, what other measures can be taken by the UN, the AU, and the TFG, respectively, in order to best deal with the current situation?

Helpful Links:

1. <http://www.un.org/apps/news/region.asp?Region=AFRICA>
2. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-14248278>
3. <http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/auc/departments/psc/amisom/amisom.htm>
4. <http://www.un.org/apps/news/infocusRel.asp?infocusID=145&Body=Horn+of+Africa&Body1=>



Sudan

The nation of Sudan was split into two separate countries in July 2011 with the independence of South Sudan. Now the region faces problems dealing with post-referendum issues such as settling on the North-South border, the North's presence in the states of South Kordofan and Blue Nile, and most importantly the uncertainty surrounding Abyei. This region is being disputed by both sides primarily due to ethnic reasons as the Dinka Ngok (a southern group) and the Misseriya (a northern group) have claimed it. Temporary security agreements were in place in Abyei in early 2011 however, the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) deployed troops to take control of much of the region following an attack in a South-controlled area of Abyei. Currently, the SAF controls much of the region and have no intention of withdrawing. Furthermore, violence occurred in South Kordofan and the Blue Nile state which has led to thousands of civilians fleeing the violence and leading to the SAF ousting the South-elected governor of Blue Nile and taking over the government there. The Blue Nile state is a part of Southern Sudan and this move by the Northern forces has been strongly condemned. Also, forces of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) still remain in the Blue Nile state and South Kordofan continuing the violence in these states. In order for the stability of the region and the development of the new country of South Sudan such violence needs to be stopped before it escalates into another civil war.

Points to Consider:

- What key issues still remain for South Sudan to address as it develops as a new country?
- What steps need to be taken in order for both sides to return to the negotiating table and resolve the Abyei conflict?
- How can the UN mission to Abyei (UNISFA) be more effective in the region?

Helpful links:

1. <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/unisfa/index.shtml>
2. <http://www.un.org/apps/news/infocusRel.asp?infocusID=88&Body=Sudan&Body1=>
3. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13977178>