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Somalia

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Somalia (1) has been without a central government since its last president, dictator Mohamed Siad Barre, fled the country in 1991. Subsequent fighting among rival faction leaders resulted in the killing, dislocation, and starvation of thousands of persons and led the United Nations to intervene militarily in 1992. Following the U.N. intervention, periodic attempts at national reconciliation were made, but they did not succeed. In September 1999, during a speech before the U.N. General Assembly, Djiboutian President Ismail Omar Guelleh announced an initiative on Somalia to facilitate reconciliation under the auspices of the Inter-Governmental Authority for Development. In March formal reconciliation efforts began with a series of small focus group meetings of various elements of Somali society in Djibouti. In May in Arta, Djibouti, delegates representing all clans and a wide spectrum of Somali society were selected for a "Conference for National Peace and Reconciliation in Somalia." The Conference opened on June 15 with more than 900 delegates, including representatives of nongovernmental organizations (NGO's). In July the Conference adopted a charter for a 3-year Transitional National Administration and selected a 245-member Transitional Assembly, which included members of Somali minority groups and 25 women. On August 26, the assembly elected Abdiqassim Salad Hassan as Transitional President, and he was sworn in on August 28. Ali Khalif Gallayr was named Prime Minister in October, and on October 20, the Prime Minister appointed the 25-member Cabinet. Administrations in the northwest (Somaliland) and northeast (Puntland) areas of the country do not recognize the results of the Djibouti Conference, nor do several Mogadishu-based factional leaders. Serious interclan fighting occurred in part of the country, notably in the central regions of Hiran and Middle Shabelle, and the southern regions of Gedo and Lower Shabelle. Hussein Aideed is the leader of the Somali National Alliance (SNA) (SNA), which ceased to assert that it was the government of the entire country following the Djibouti Conference. Unlike in the previous year, there were no skirmishes between the SNA and other militias. No group controls more than a fraction of the country's territory. There is no national judicial system.

Leaders in the northeast proclaimed the formation of the "Puntland" state in July 1998. Puntland's leader publicly announced that he did not plan to break away from the remainder of the country, but the Puntland Administration did not participate in the Djibouti Conference or recognize the Transitional National Administration that emerged from it. In the northwest, the "Republic of Somaliland" continued to proclaim its independence within the borders of former British Somaliland, which had obtained independence from Britain in 1960 before joining the former Italian-ruled Somalia. Somaliland has sought unsuccessfully international recognition since 1991. Somaliland's government includes a parliament, a functioning civil court system, executive departments organized as ministries, six regional governors, and municipal authorities in major towns. The ban in Puntland on all political parties remained in place; however, in June the Somaliland ban on political parties was lifted.

After the withdrawal of the last U.N. peacekeepers in 1995, clan and factional militias, in some cases supplemented by local police forces established with U.N. help in the early 1990's, continued to function with varying degrees of effectiveness. Repeated intervention by Ethiopian troops helped to maintain order in Gedo region, a base of support for a local radical Islamic group called Al'itihad. In Somaliland over 60 percent of the budget was allocated to maintaining a militia and police force composed of former troops. In September a Somaliland presidential decree, citing national security concerns, in the wake of the conclusion of the Djibouti conference, arrogated special powers to the police and the military. Also in September, the Transitional Government began recruiting for a new 4,000-officer police force to restore order in Mogadishu. In November the Transitional Government requested former soldiers to register and enroll in training camps to form a national army. Over 10,000 former soldiers were enlisted by year's end. Police and militia committed numerous human rights abuses throughout the country.

The country is very poor with a market-based economy in which most of the work force is employed as subsistence farmers, agro-pastoralists, or pastoralists. The principal exports are livestock and charcoal; there is very little industry. Insecurity and bad weather continued to affect the country's already extremely poor economic situation. The country's economic problems caused a serious lack of employment opportunities and led to pockets of malnutrition in southern areas of the country.

The human rights situation is poor, and serious human rights abuses continued throughout the year. Citizens' right to change their government is circumscribed by the absence of an established central authority. Many civilian citizens were killed in factional fighting, especially in the Gedo, Hiran, Lower Shabelle, and Middle Shabelle regions. In Somaliland and Puntland, police used lethal force while disrupting demonstrations. The use of landmines, reportedly by the Rahanwein Resistance Army (RRA), resulted in several deaths. Kidnaping remained a problem. There were some reports of the use of torture by Somaliland and Puntland

Administrations and militias. Prison conditions are harsh and life threatening. Arbitrary arrest and detention remained problems. Somaliland authorities detained a number of persons for participation in the Djibouti Conference. The judicial system relied in most regions on some combination of traditional and customary justice, Shari'a (Islamic) law, and the pre-1991 Penal Code; there were occasional reports of harsh physical punishments by Islamic Shari'a courts, including public whippings and stonings. Citizens' privacy rights were limited. There were restrictions on the freedoms of the press, assembly, association, and religion. There were restrictions on freedom of movement. There were numerous attacks on international nongovernmental organizations (NGO's). Violence against women and discrimination against women remained problems. The abuse of children, including the nearly universal practice of female genital mutilation (FGM) remained a problem. Abuse and discrimination against ethnic minorities in the various clan regions continued. There is no effective system for the protection of worker rights, and there were isolated areas where local gunmen forced minority group members to work for them. Child labor and trafficking also were problems.

RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Section 1 Respect for the Integrity of the Person, Including Freedom From:

a. Political and Other Extrajudicial Killing

Political violence and banditry have been endemic since the revolt against Siad Barre, who fled the capital in January 1991. Since that time, tens of thousands of persons, mostly noncombatants, have died in interfactional and interclan fighting. Although reliable statistics were not available, numerous persons were killed during the year. On January 7, militia of the Matan Abdulle, an Abgal sub-clan, killed five persons and injured six in an attack on a bus in North Mogadishu. Observers believe that the probable target of the attack was businessman Mohamed Hassan Ali, alias "Maqarre," who was killed in the attack. On January 31, fighting between the Mohammed Zuber and Aulihyan sub-clans began in Doble (Lower Juba region) and lasted for several days; numerous persons were killed and hundreds injured. On February 4 in Lower Shabelle, fighting between the Islamic Court Militias and the Rahanweyn Resistance Army resulted in the deaths of approximately 15 persons and injuries to 10 others. On March 14, fierce fighting near the village of Buulo Fulaay between fighters from the Rahanweyn Resistance Army and militias from the Rahanweyn Salvation Army and the Digil Salvation Army resulted in the deaths of over 30 persons and injuries to numerous others. On March 19 in the village of Harardere (Mudug region), fighting between militias of the Abgal Wa'aysle sub-clan and the Habr Gedr Ayer resulted in the deaths of five persons. On March 20 near Buulo Burti (Hiran region), fighting between 2 Dir sub-clans resulted in the deaths of at least 20 persons and injuries to 10 others. On April 10, the Samawada Rehabilitation and Development Organization (SAREDO), a local NGO, accused the Islamic Court militias in Merka, Lower Shabelle, of killing one of its guards, Abukar Ali Ismail. The militias reportedly killed Ismail after he refused their order to disarm. On May 20, in Buulo Waambo, Kurtunwaarey District, Jiiddo clan militia killed seven members of the Garre clan, reportedly in retaliation for the earlier killing of two Jiiddo clan members in Hilowgey village by the Garre clan. Between May 26 and 28, in Guri Ceel District, Galgaduud region, fighting between the Habr Gedr and Galjeel clans resulted in the deaths of 13 persons. On June 9, two members of warlord Mohamed Said Hersi "Morgan's" militia murdered Jama Habeb, the commander of the militia, reportedly because of internal conflict within the militia. On June 22 in Qoryoley district, fighting between militias of the Garre and Jiiddo clans resulted in the deaths of over 30 persons; the clashes began after a Garre clansman killed a Jiiddo clansman. On July 7, fighting between militia loyal to SNA Commander Hussein Aideed and residents of southwest Mogadishu resulted in the deaths of seven persons; the fighting erupted when residents refused to pay a tax levied by the SNA. On July 26 in Lower Shabelle, renewed fighting between the Jiiddo and Garre clans killed numerous persons. On August 4 in the village of Kabsuuma, Lower Shabelle region, following the alleged rape of a Galjeel girl, fighting between militias of the Galjeel and Bimal clans resulted in the deaths of at least 9 persons and injuries to 10 others. On August 8, a revenge killing sparked fighting between the Hawadle and the Galjeel clans that left one person dead and several injured. On August 11 in Belet Weyne (Hiran district), fighting between the Hawadle and Galjeel, allegedly resulting from a dispute over the distribution of relief food resulted in the deaths of 11 persons and injuries to 20 others. There were no investigations into any of these incidents, nor was any action taken against militia responsible for abuses; however, local mediation efforts took place in some incidents, which resolved some cases.

Although many civilians died as a result of fighting during the year, politically motivated extrajudicial murder was uncommon; however, in the latter part of the year, acts of violence, including several killings, increased against supporters or members of the Transitional Government. In October in Mogadishu, unidentified men shot and killed Yusuf Tallan, a former army general under the Barre regime and a delegate to the Djibouti conference. He was shot after he refused to get into a vehicle with the men. The killing was linked to warlord Osman Atto because of Atto's business deals in the north and the possibility of a deal between Somaliland President Egal and Atto in order to destabilize the south. General Galal, chairman of the National Security Committee, also was linked to the killing; there was suspicion that he might have killed Tallan in order to prevent Tallan from becoming head of the National Security Committee. Tallan had been named as the head of a committee to oversee demobilization of the country's militias. In December the President announced that the police had arrested Tallan's alleged killers with foreign assistance; however, there has been no independent confirmation of this claim. The alleged killers were not known to have been charged or tried by year's end. On November 12, two unidentified men shot and killed Hasan Ahmed Elmi, also known as Hasan Jaale, a member of the Transitional National Assembly; he was killed in front of his wife and children at his home in Mogadishu. Observers believe that the attack may have been in retaliation for the recent killing of a Daud clan member by the Galjeel clan, of which Elmi was a member. An investigation into the killing was conducted; however, it was inconclusive. On November 17, 40 militiamen ambushed a convoy carrying a member of the Transitional Assembly, killing at least 7 persons and injuring at least 9 others. Local mediation occurred and the case was closed.

On at least two occasions police in Somaliland and Puntland used lethal force while disrupting demonstrations. On March 30, police in Puntland killed two persons while forcibly dispersing a demonstration in Bosasso (see Section 2.b.) and arrested several others (see Section 1.d.). On November 11 in Hargeisa, police forcibly

dispersed a crowd blocking the main road to the airport (see Section 2.b.); more than 60 protesters were arrested (see Section 1.d.) and 2 persons were killed. There was no investigation nor action taken in these cases by year's end.

There were a number of attacks on humanitarian and NGO workers by militia and other groups (see Section 4). On January 2 in Balad District, Abgal militia opened fire on a vehicle transporting three staff members from the NGO, Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere (CARE) members (see Section 4). Shucayb Mohamed Hussein, a CARE engineer, was killed in the attack. On January 28 near the village of Buqdaq, approximately 60 armed gunmen attacked another CARE convoy, killing 5 convoy security guards and 4 villagers (see Section 4). On January 29 in the town of Sablale, unidentified persons attacked the office of ACCORD, an international NGO, killing two persons (see Section 4). In response to this attack, ACCORD suspended its Polio Eradication Campaign. No investigation was made into the incident; however, the local community mobilized the Islamic Shari'a courts. A gunman was apprehended and his vehicle was towed to Merka.

There were occasional reports of the use of harsh physical punishments by the five Islamic Shari'a courts in Mogadishu, which are aligned with different subclans, including public whippings and stoning (see Sections 1.e. and 2.c.). The courts generally refrained from administering the stricter Islamic punishments, like amputation, but their militias administered summary punishments, including executions, in the city and its environs. For example, in June an Islamic Court in Buulo village, Lower Shabelle, sentenced Nuurto Muhammad Ali to death by stoning after she was discovered to have three husbands (see Section 1.c.).

On March 11, a firing squad in Jowhar, Middle Shabelle, executed a man, Hassan Ahmed, accused of murdering a woman on February 27. Ahmed was executed after the Mohammad Musa subclan of Abgal clan, which both Ahmed and the woman were members of, decided that he should be put to death. On April 24, South Mogadishu's Shirkole Islamic Court executed Farhan Muhammad Jama, who was accused of killing businessman Ahmad Muhammad Ali after the Saleban subclan of the Habr Gidr clan, which both men were members of, decided that he should be put to death.

Numerous extrajudicial killings during the year centered on conflicts over land or livestock. For example, on October 22 near the town of Qoryoley, fighting over land between Jiiddo clans and local farmers from other clans killed at least 10 persons and injured 15 others.

In October in Bosasso, an unidentified person threw a grenade into a temporary shelter for persons traveling to Yemen, killing two persons and injuring five others.

Landmines laid by different groups, particularly the RRA and possibly the SNA, caused several deaths and injuries during the year. On January 20 in the Hiran region, a landmine exploded, killing at least six persons. On January 30 in the Hiran region, landmines and gun battles killed 21 persons. On January 30 near El Ali, five escorts of a food convoy were killed when their vehicle hit a mine. Also on January 30, an aid convoy hit a landmine while crossing the Shabelle River for the Bakool Region. The Abgal clan reportedly planted the landmine; 10 persons were killed and 8 others injured. On February 5, landmines destroyed three "technicals," combat vehicles, belonging to the Islamic Court militias near the village of Buulo Warbo, west of Qoryoley, Lower Shabelle. The explosions killed three persons and injured five others.

Unlike in the previous year, there were no reports of attacks within Ethiopian territory by armed groups opposed to the Government of Ethiopia, supported by Eritrea, operating out of Somalia. Aideed and the SNA reconciled with Ethiopia, and the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) was disarmed and expelled from the country.

No action is known to have been taken against the persons responsible for the following 1999 killings: The February 1999 killing of Dr. Singh Bohgal; the March 1999 killing of a foreign religious worker; the July 1999 killing of Osman Jeyte; the August 1999 killing of one person during a demonstration at the Ismail Jumale Center for Human Rights; the September 1999 killing of a senior UNICEF official; and the September 1999 killing of businessman Haji Abdullahi.

No investigation was conducted into a 1998 attack by militia fighters on a World Food Program Convoy that killed two persons.

The investigation into the 1997 killing of a Portuguese doctor still was pending at year's end.

On November 24, an appeals court in Rome convicted Hashi Omar Hassan, a Somali, of the 1994 murder of two Italian journalists in Mogadishu (see Section 2.a.). The court sentenced Hassan to life in prison.

In 1997 a War Crimes Commission in Hargeisa in Somaliland began investigating the killings in 1988 of at least 2,000 local residents, including women and children, by Siad Barre's troops. Heavy rains in 1997 revealed numerous mass graves in the Hargeisa area. During the year, the War Crimes Commission continued to record eyewitness accounts and other evidence.

On September 23, approximately 30 Ethiopian soldiers attacked Haji Salah village in Somaliland, killed two persons, and confiscated radio equipment. Somaliland President Egal wrote a letter to the Ethiopian Government and asked for an explanation for the attack.

b. Disappearance

There were no known reports of unresolved politically motivated disappearances, although cases easily might have been concealed among the thousands of refugees and displaced persons.

Kidnaping remained a problem, particularly for relief workers and critics of faction leaders. On July 12 in Bosasso, Mohammed Deq, editor of the Puntland newspaper "Sahan," was abducted by a group of men in military uniform from the Puntland Criminal Investigation Division (CID) while standing in front of the CID headquarters (see Section 2.a.); he was released later that day. On May 29 in Bosasso, unidentified gunmen reportedly broke into the newspaper's offices and assaulted Deq (see Sections 1.c. and 1.f.). On July 26, technicals and Sa'ad militia attacked the compound of Action Against Hunger (ACF), an international NGO, in south Mogadishu. Militiamen kidnaped two foreign ACF employees and detained them until September 18.

There have been no developments in the February 1999 kidnaping case of two OLF officials from Ethiopia and a senior Al'itihad official.

c. Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

The Transitional National Charter, adopted in July, but not implemented by year's end, prohibits torture, and the Puntland Charter prohibits torture "unless sentenced by Islamic Shari'a courts in accordance with Islamic law;" however, there were some reports of the use of torture by the Puntland and Somaliland administrations and by warring militiamen against each other or against civilians. Observers believe that many incidents of torture were unreported.

Although reliable statistics were not available, a large number of persons were injured as a result of interfactional and interclan fighting (see Section 1.a.).

On May 29 in Bosasso, unidentified gunmen reportedly broke into the offices of the Puntland newspaper "Sahan" and assaulted Editor Mohammed Deq (see Sections 1.f. and 2.a.); on July 12 in Bosasso, Deq was abducted briefly (see Section 1.b.).

On September 10 in Borama, Somaliland police used small arms and guns to forcibly disperse a demonstration in support of the Djibouti reconciliation process (see Sections 1.d. and 2.b.). Police reportedly injured several persons.

In the latter part of the year, acts of violence, including several killings, increased against supporters or members of the Transitional Government (see Section 1.a.). For example, on November 17, 40 militiamen ambushed a convoy carrying Ahmed Duale Gelle "Haf," a member of the Transitional Assembly, and killed 7 persons and injured 12 others. Elders of the attackers' and Haf's subclan later met at Haf's home. They agreed that some government security forces should be posted where the attack took place.

There were a number of attacks on humanitarian and NGO workers by militia and other groups, which resulted in killings and injuries (see Sections 1.a. and 4).

Unlike in the previous year, there were no bomb explosions in Hargeisa, Somaliland. In December 1999, there was an explosion at the U.N. Development Program office in Hargeisa. Somaliland police attributed the bombing to disgruntled persons who had failed to get jobs with various international organizations, and reported that a number of persons had been arrested in connection with the bombings; however, no action had been taken against them by year's end.

There were occasional reports of the use of harsh physical punishments by Islamic Shari'a courts, including public whippings and stoning (see Section 1.e.).

In February representatives of the local Islamic Court militias flogged Omar Dini, a reporter for the Mogadishu-based newspaper "Qaran," allegedly for an anti-Islamic article he had written (see Sections 2.a. and 2.c.). In June an Islamic Court in Buulo village, Lower Shabelle, sentenced Nuurto Muhammad Ali to death by stoning after she was discovered to have three husbands (see Section 1.a.). The execution was suspended until after Ali, who was pregnant, gave birth; however, she was not executed by year's end. The same court sentenced Dalmar Mahmud Ahmad to a punishment of one hundred lashes for adultery on April 8.

As during past years, labor disputes sometimes led to the use of force (see Section 6.b.). For example, the Habr Gibr clan used force against the Digil and Biyamal clans in Lower Shabelle during the year.

There were no reported attacks within Ethiopia by armed opposition groups operating out of Somalia (see Section 1.a.).

Prison conditions varied by region. Conditions at the south Mogadishu prison controlled by the Aideed forces continued to improve because of visits by international organizations; however, conditions at the north Mogadishu prison of the Shari'a court system remained harsh and life threatening. Hareryale, a prison established by the Murursade subclan at the border between north and south Mogadishu reportedly holds hundreds of prisoners, including many children. Conditions at Hareryale are described as overcrowded and poor. Juveniles share cells with adult prisoners and there is a high incidence of tuberculosis. Similar conditions exist at Shirkole prison, an Islamic Court militia-run prison in south Mogadishu and at a north

Mogadishu prison for Abgal clan prisoners run by warlord Musa Sudi. A local NGO that visited the central prison in Hargeisa, Somaliland, documented a shortage of medicine, widespread tuberculosis, and juveniles sharing cells with adults. In May there was an outbreak of diarrhea in Burao prison, Somaliland, resulting in the death of one prison guard. According to an international observer, men and women were housed separately in the Puntland prison in Bosasso; this is the case in other prisons as well. Abuse by guards reportedly was common in many prisons. Conditions in other prisons reportedly were less severe, according to international relief agencies. The detainees' clans generally pay the costs of detention. In many areas, prisoners are able to receive food from family members or from relief agencies. Ethnic minorities make up a disproportionately large percentage of the prison population.

The Jumale Center for Human Rights visited prisons in Mogadishu during the year. The Puntland administration permits prison visits by independent monitors, and in April an international observer visited the Bosasso, Puntland, prison. Somaliland authorities permit prison visits by independent monitors, and such visits occurred during the year. In August a local NGO visited Hargeisa, Somaliland, central prison.

d. Arbitrary Arrest, Detention, or Exile

In the absence of constitutional or other legal protections, various factions and armed bandits continued to engage in arbitrary detention, including the holding of relief workers. On July 11, a group of men seized a foreign-registered cargo ship off the coast of Puntland and demanded a ransom.

In March Somaliland authorities detained three men for 2 days for sending a letter in support of the Djibouti reconciliation conference to the President of Somaliland.

On March 20 in the town of Galkayo, the Mudug (Puntland) region security committee detained five persons demonstrating in support of the Djibouti reconciliation process (see Section 2.b.). The demonstrators were released on March 28. On March 30, police in Puntland killed two persons and arrested and detained for a few days several others while forcibly dispersing a demonstration in Bosasso (see Sections 1.a. and 2.b.).

On September 10 in Borama, Somaliland police arrested five persons after forcibly dispersing a demonstration in support of the Djibouti reconciliation process (see Sections 1.c. and 2.b.).

Somaliland authorities detained a number of persons for participating in the Djibouti reconciliation conference. On February 28, Somaliland authorities detained for several days without charge four members of the Habr Awal sub-clan in Hargeisa for attempting to participate in the Djibouti reconciliation conference process. In March Somaliland police detained for several days without charge two men in Hargeisa for protesting against alleged pollution by a petroleum company in the town of Berbera (see Section 2.b.). On March 21, Somaliland authorities detained for several days 20 delegates to the Djibouti Conference as they attempted to cross the Somaliland-Djibouti border (see Section 2.d.). In May in Borama, Somaliland authorities detained one person for participating in the Djibouti reconciliation conference; he was released in late June. On May 12 in Hargeisa, Somaliland officials arrested Abdi Hashi, a Mogadishu-based scholar, for taking part in a conference of intellectuals in Djibouti. On August 30, Puntland President Abdullahi Yussuf decreed the arrest of any person returning to Puntland from Arta, Djibouti (see Section 3). On September 4, Somaliland authorities arrested and charged with treason Garad Abshir Garad Salah, Transitional National Administration representative and elected member of the Transitional Assembly, for his participation in the Djibouti conference (see Section 1.e.). Salah was sentenced to 7 years in prison for treason; however, he was released on October 4. On October 4 in Bosasso, Puntland police arrested and detained Bile Mahmud Qabowsadeh, editor of local newspaper "Yool," after he returned from the Djibouti conference (see Section 2.a.). In November the Somaliland Administration arrested Sultan Mohamed Abdulkadir when he returned to the country from Djibouti. On November 11 in Hargeisa, police forcibly dispersed a crowd protesting his arrest; more than 60 protesters were arrested and two persons were killed (see Sections 1.a. and 2.b.).

Somaliland authorities detained some foreigners for proselytizing. For example, on February 3 in Somaliland, nine Ethiopians allegedly were detained for engaging in Christian missionary activities (see Section 2.c.). In May 1999, seven Christian Ethiopians were arrested in Somaliland, allegedly for attempting to proselytize; they remained in detention at year's end (see Section 2.c.).

On November 5 in Baidoa, RRA soldiers forcibly abducted and detained more than 12 local elders believed to support the Transitional Government; however, they were released by year's end.

Authorities in Somaliland, Puntland, and in areas of the south detained both local and foreign journalists (see Section 2.a.).

There were no reports of lengthy pretrial detention in violation of the pre-1991 Penal Code in Somaliland or Puntland.

None of the factions used forced exile.

e. Denial of Fair Public Trial

There is no national judicial system.

The Transitional Charter, adopted in July, provides for an independent judiciary, and for a High Commission of

Justice, a Supreme Court, a Court of Appeal, and courts of first reference; however, the Charter had not been implemented by year's end. Some regions have established local courts that depend on the predominant local clan and associated faction for their authority. The judiciary in most regions relies on some combination of traditional and customary law, Shari'a law, the penal code of the pre-1991 Siad Barre Government, or some combination of the three. For example, in Bosasso and Afmadow criminals are turned over to the families of their victims, which then exact blood compensation in keeping with local tradition. Under the system of customary justice, clans often hold whole opposing clans or sub-clans responsible for alleged violations by individuals. Islamic Shari'a courts continued to operate in several regions of the country, filling the vacuum created by the absence of normal government authority. Islamic Shari'a courts traditionally ruled in cases of civil and family law, but extended their jurisdiction to criminal proceedings in some regions beginning in 1994. There were occasional reports of the use of harsh physical punishments by Islamic Shari'a courts, including public whippings and stoning. In Berbera courts apply a combination of Shari'a law and the former penal code. In south Mogadishu, a segment of north Mogadishu, the Lower Shabelle, and parts of the Gedo and Hiran regions, court decisions are based on a combination of Shari'a and customary law. Only three of the five Islamic Shari'a courts in Mogadishu continued to function during the year, those belonging to the Ayr, Saleban, and Murursade clans. The other two courts, belonging to the Sarur and Duduble clans, do not function. They are aligned with different subclans, raising doubts about their independence. The courts generally refrained from administering the stricter Islamic punishments, like amputation, but their militias administered summary punishments, including executions. In April Somaliland adopted a new constitution based on democratic principles, but continued to use the pre-1991 Penal Code. The constitution provides for an independent judiciary; however, the judiciary is not independent in practice. A U.N. report issued in January again noted a serious lack of trained judges and of legal documentation in Somaliland, which caused problems in the administration of justice. The Puntland Charter implemented in May 1998, provides for an independent judiciary; however, the judiciary is not independent in practice. The Puntland Charter also provides for a Supreme Court, courts of appeal, and courts of first reference. In Puntland clan elders resolve the majority of cases using traditional methods; however, those with no clan representation in Puntland are subject to the Administration's judicial system.

The Transitional Charter, which was not implemented by year's end, provides for the right to be represented by an attorney. The right to representation by an attorney and the right to appeal do not exist in those areas that apply traditional and customary judicial practices or Shari'a law. These rights more often are respected in regions that continue to apply the former Government's penal code, such as Somaliland and Puntland.

There was one known political prisoner in the country. On September 4, Somaliland authorities arrested and charged with treason Garad Abshir Garad Salah, Transitional National Administration representative and elected member of the Transitional Assembly, for his participation in the Djibouti conference. On September 16, the Berbera Court sentenced Salah to 7 years in prison for treason. President Egal pardoned Salah to reduce political tensions and Salah was released on October 4.

f. Arbitrary Interference with Privacy, Family, Home, or Correspondence

The Transitional Charter, adopted in July but not implemented by year's end, provides for the sanctity of private property and privacy; however, looting and forced entry into private property continued in Mogadishu, although on a smaller scale than in the previous year. The Puntland Charter recognizes the right to private property; however, authorities did not respect this right on at least one occasion. On May 29 in Bosasso, unidentified gunmen reportedly broke into the offices of the Puntland newspaper "Sahan" and assaulted Editor Mohammed Deq (see Sections 1.b., 1.c., and 2.a.).

Most properties that were occupied forcibly during militia campaigns in 1992-93, notably in Mogadishu and the Lower Shabelle, remained in the hands of persons other than their prewar owners.

Approximately 300,000 persons, or 40 percent of the population, have been displaced internally as a result of interfactional and interclan fighting.

Section 2 Respect for Civil Liberties, Including:

a. Freedom of Speech and Press

The Transitional Charter, adopted in July, provides for freedom of the press; however, the charter was not implemented by year's end and there were incidents of harassment, arrest, and detention of journalists in all areas of the country, including Puntland and Somaliland. The Puntland Charter provides for freedom of the press "as long as they respect the law;" however, this right is not respected in practice. The Somaliland constitution also provides for freedom of the press, but this right is restricted in practice. The print media consist largely of short, photocopied dailies, published in the larger cities and often linked to one of the factions. Several of these newspapers nominally are independent and are critical of the faction leaders.

Somaliland has two independent daily newspapers, one government daily, and an independent English-language weekly. Treatment of journalists in Somaliland reportedly continued to improve during the year.

In February Somaliland authorities detained for 4 hours the publisher of the daily newspaper Jamhuriya and of the weekly The Republic for printing a letter critical of Somaliland courts.

In February representatives of the local Islamic Court Militias flogged Omar Dini, a reporter for the Mogadishu-based newspaper "Qaran," allegedly for an anti-Islamic article he had written (see Sections 1.c. and 2.c.).

On March 13 in south Mogadishu, the Hararyale Islamic Court in Wardhigley District arrested Mohammed Ali Salad, a reporter for the Mogadishu-based newspaper "Qaran," allegedly because he wrote articles critical of deforestation caused by the activities of charcoal exporters. He was detained at the Hararyale Islamic Court in Wardhigley District for several days before being released in late March.

On May 29 in Bosasso, unidentified gunmen reportedly broke into the offices of the Puntland newspaper "Sahan" and assaulted Editor Mohammed Deq (see Sections 1.c. and 1.f.). On July 12 in Bosasso, Puntland, CID agents abducted and briefly detained Deq while standing in front of Criminal Investigation Division headquarters (see Section 1.b.).

On August 21, Islamic Court Militias detained Ahmed Abd Al-Rahman Dhalbaaq, the editor of the Merka, Lower Shabelle, bi-monthly newspaper "Gaim," allegedly for reporting on a decrease in security in the town. He was released on bail pending trial later that day. It was not known whether his trial occurred by year's end.

On October 4 in Bosasso, Puntland police arrested and detained Bile Mahmud Qabowsadeh, editor of local newspaper "Yool," after he returned from the Djibouti conference (see Section 1.d.).

In late October, Puntland authorities fired sheikh Abdi Rahman Bulbul, the head of religious programs at Galkayo Radio, because they believed him to be a supporter of the Transitional Government.

On November 24, an appeals court in Rome convicted Hashi Omar Hassan, a Somali, of the 1994 murder of two Italian journalists in Mogadishu. The court sentenced Hassan to life in prison. In 1999 in Puntland, the regional administration arrested Abulkadir Ali and Mohamed Deq of the newspaper Sahan, and Ahmed Mohamed Ali of the newspaper Riyaaq, reportedly for writing articles critical of the Government. They remained in detention at year's end.

Most citizens obtain news from foreign news broadcasts, chiefly the British Broadcasting Corporation, which transmits a daily Somali-language program. The major faction leaders in Mogadishu, as well as the authorities of the self-declared Republic of Somaliland, operate small radio stations.

There are restrictions on academic freedom; academics operate under restrictions similar to those imposed on members of the media. There is no organized higher education system in most of the country. There is a university in north Mogadishu and another university in Somaliland.

b. Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and Association

There is no mention of freedom of peaceful assembly in the Transitional Charter, nor is there legal protection for freedom of assembly, and although citizens are free to assemble in public, the lack of security effectively limits this right in many parts of the country. On August 30, Puntland President Abdullahi Yussuf ordered regional governors to ban all antigovernment demonstrations. Demonstrations occurred throughout the country during the year; however, authorities in Somaliland, Puntland, and the south sometimes forcibly dispersed demonstrations and used excessive force in some instances (see Sections 1.a. and 1.c.).

In March in Hargeisa, Somaliland police detained for several days two men for protesting against alleged pollution by a petroleum company in the town of Berbera. On March 20 in the town of Galkayo, the Mudug (Puntland) region security committee detained five persons demonstrating in support of the Djibouti reconciliation process (see Section 1.d.). The demonstrators were released on March 28. On March 29, Puntland police fired shots to disperse a demonstration in Gardo, Bari region, against the Puntland President; however, there were no reported injuries. On March 30 in Bosasso, Puntland police killed two persons while forcibly dispersing a demonstration in support of the Djibouti conference and against President Yusuf (see Section 1.a.) and arrested several other participants (see Sections 1.a. and 1.d.). On September 10 in Borama, Somaliland police forcibly dispersed a demonstration in support of the Djibouti reconciliation process. Several persons reportedly were injured in the clash and five persons were arrested (see Sections 1.c. and 1.d.). On November 1, security men guarding the Lafweyn Hotel in Mogadishu shot at a group of demonstrators protesting against the Transitional Government's recruitment of police forces in front of the hotel. There were no reported injuries. On November 11 in Hargeisa, police forcibly dispersed a crowd blocking the main road to the airport. More than 60 protesters were arrested and 2 persons were killed (see Sections 1.a. and 1.d.). The crowd was protesting the Somaliland Administration's arrest of Sultan Mohamed Abdulkadir when he returned from Djibouti (see Section 1.d.).

There were a number of peaceful demonstrations that occurred during the year without interference by authorities. For example, on June 15, members of a conservative Mosque protested against alleged Christian proselytizing by teachers at schools funded by the Coordinating Committee of the Organization for Voluntary Service (COSV) (see Sections 2.c. and 4). On October 17, hundreds of persons in the Bay and Bakol regions demonstrated against Hassan Mohamed Nur Shargudud, leader of the RRA, following his statements that he would no longer recognize the Transitional Government.

The Puntland Charter provides for freedom of association; however, the Puntland Administration banned all political parties for 3 years, beginning in August 1998. The Somaliland constitution provides for freedom of association. In June the Somaliland parliament approved legislation governing the formation of political parties (see Section 3). The law limits to three the number of political parties allowed to contest general elections. An ad hoc commission, nominated by the President and approved by the House of Representatives, will be responsible for considering applications. Approved parties that win twenty percent of the next Somaliland

elections will be permitted to operate.

Professional groups and local NGO's operate as security conditions permit.

c. Freedom of Religion

There is no national constitution and no legal provision for the protection of religious freedom, and there were some limits on religious freedom.

The Transitional Charter, adopted in July but not implemented by year's end, establishes Islam as the national religion. There is no central government, but some local administrations, including the Republic of Somaliland and Puntland, have made Islam the official religion in their regions. The judiciary in most regions relies on some combination of traditional and customary law (Xeer), Shari'a law, the Penal Code of the pre-1991 Siad Barre Government, or some combination of the three. There are three Islamic Shari'a courts operating in Mogadishu, which are aligned with different subclans, raising doubts about their independence (see Section 1.e.). These courts generally refrained from administering the stricter Islamic punishments, such as amputation, but their militias administered summary punishments, including executions, in the city and its environs (see Section 1.a.). There were occasional reports of the use of harsh physical punishments by Islamic Shari'a courts including public whipping and stoning (see Sections 1.a. and 1.c.).

In March 1999, the Minister of Religion in Somaliland issued a list of instructions and definitions on religious practices. Under the new rules, religious schools and places of worship are required to obtain the Ministry of Religion's permission to operate. The Ministry must approve entry visas for religious groups, and certain unspecified doctrines are prohibited.

Local tradition and past law make it a crime to proselytize for any religion except Islam. Proselytizing for any religion except Islam is prohibited by law in Puntland and Somaliland. Christian-based international relief organizations generally operate without interference, as long as they refrain from proselytizing. On February 3 in Somaliland, nine Ethiopians allegedly were detained for 1 month for engaging in Christian missionary activities (see Section 1.d.); all nine were deported following their release. Seven Christian Ethiopians arrested in Somaliland in May 1999, for allegedly attempting to proselytize, remained in detention at year's end (see Section 1.d.).

In February representatives of the local Islamic Court militias flogged Omar Dini, a reporter for the Mogadishu-based newspaper "Qaran," allegedly for an anti-Islamic article he had written (see Sections 1.c. and 2.a.).

d. Freedom of Movement Within the Country, Foreign Travel, Emigration, and Repatriation

The Transitional Charter, adopted in July but not implemented by year's end, and the Puntland Charter guarantee freedom of movement; however, this right continued to be restricted in some parts of the country. Checkpoints manned by militiamen loyal to one clan or faction inhibit passage by other groups. In the absence of a recognized national government, most citizens do not have the documents needed for international travel.

The Somaliland and Puntland administrations impeded the travel of participants in the Djibouti Conference. Numerous persons were arrested and detained for attempting to attend the conference (see Section 1.d.). On August 26, the Puntland Administration attempted to prohibit flights from landing at Bosasso Airport in an effort to restrict the movements of participants to and from the Djibouti Conference. On August 30, Puntland President Abdullahi Yussuf decreed the arrest of any person returning to Puntland from Arta, Djibouti (see Section 1.d.). In September the Puntland Administration reportedly denied entry to 12 Egyptian doctors and 30 Egyptian teachers who arrived at the Bosasso airport from Arta; they were allowed to enter the country at a later date. There were reports that some clan leaders sent armed militia to assist in the entry of some persons into the country in defiance of President Yussuf's decree.

As security conditions continued to improve in many parts of the country, refugees and internally displaced persons (IDP's) returned to their homes. Approximately 10,000 Somali refugees were returned from Ethiopia under the auspices of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) during the year, and unlike in the previous year, there were no interruptions in the repatriation process. Despite sporadic harassment, including the theft of UNHCR food packages by militiamen and attacks on World Food Program convoys, repatriation generally took place without incident. Approximately 9,000 refugees had returned to Somaliland by year's end. However, despite the relative stability in many parts of the country, many citizens continued to flee to neighboring countries, often for economic reasons. Most migrants left from the northeast and traveled via boat to Yemen. There were reports that hundreds of such migrants drowned in accidents at sea during the year.

There are approximately 300,000 internally displaced persons in the country, representing approximately 4 percent of the population.

The U.N. estimates that approximately 500,000 Somalis are living as refugees in neighboring countries, including approximately 125,000 in Kenya at year's end, down from more than 400,000 at the height of the humanitarian crisis in 1992. There were 170,000 Somali refugees in Ethiopia and 22,600 Somali refugees in Djibouti at year's end.

As there is no functioning central government, there is no policy of first asylum nor are there any laws with provisions for the granting of refugee or asylee status. A small number of Ethiopian refugees remained in the country, mostly in the northeast near Bosasso. The authorities in Somaliland have cooperated with the UNHCR and other humanitarian assistance organizations in assisting refugees. There were no reports of the forced

expulsion of those having a valid claim to refugee status.

In October in Bosasso, an unidentified person threw a grenade into a temporary shelter for persons traveling to Yemen, killing two persons and injuring five others.

Section 3 Respect for Political Rights: The Right of Citizens to Change Their Government

In the absence of a fully functioning national government, citizens cannot exercise this right. In most regions, local clan leaders function as de facto rulers. Although many such groups derive their authority from the traditional deference given clan elders, most face opposition of varying strength from political factions and radical Islamic groups.

In the Republic of Somaliland, the existence of which was endorsed by clan elders in 1991 and 1993, a clan conference led to a peace accord early in 1997. This accord demobilized militia groups, established a constitution and bicameral parliament with proportional clan representation, and elected a president and vice president from a slate of candidates. The Hargeisa authorities have established functioning administrative institutions in virtually all the territory they claim, which equals the boundaries of the Somaliland state that achieved international recognition in 1960. In June the Somaliland parliament approved legislation governing the formation of political parties (see Section 2.b.). Parties approved by an ad hoc commission that win 20 percent of the next Somaliland elections will be permitted to operate. Regional elections are scheduled for 2002 in Somaliland.

In March 1998, Puntland was established as a regional government during a consultative conference with delegates from six regions, including traditional community elders, the leadership of political organizations, members of legislative assemblies, regional administrators, and civil society representatives. Representatives of Puntland-based subclans chose Abdullahi Yussuf as President. Puntland has a single chamber quasi-legislative branch known as the Council of Elders, which plays a largely consultative role. Political parties are banned in Puntland. Regional elections are scheduled for 2001 in Puntland.

In May in Arta, Djibouti, delegates representing all clans and a wide spectrum of Somali society were selected for a "Conference for National Peace and Reconciliation in Somalia," which opened on June 15 with more than 900 delegates. In July the Conference adopted a charter for a 3-year Transitional National Administration and selected a 245-member Transitional Assembly, which included 24 members of Somali minority groups and 25 women. On August 26, the assembly elected Abdiqassim Salad Hassan as Transitional President, and he was sworn in on August 28. Ali Khalif Gallayr was named Prime Minister in October, and on October 20, the Prime Minister appointed the 25-member Cabinet. The Somaliland and Puntland Administrations do not recognize the results of the Djibouti Conference, nor do several Mogadishu-based factional leaders.

The Transitional Charter, adopted in July but not implemented by year's end, provides for universal suffrage. Both of the Puntland and Somaliland Administrations provide for universal suffrage.

Women as a group remained seriously underrepresented in regional government and politics, and no women held prominent public positions; however, several women were important behind-the-scenes figures in the various factions. There only are five female representatives out of a total of 69 representatives in the Puntland Parliament. Women played a prominent role in the Djibouti Conference. In the Transitional National Assembly women were allocated 25 seats out of a total of 245 seats. Minorities were allocated 24 seats in the Transitional National Assembly during the Djibouti conference.

Section 4 Governmental Attitude Regarding International and Nongovernmental Investigation of Alleged Violations of Human Rights

Several local human rights groups were active during the year, including the Mogadishu-based Ismail Jumale Center for Human Rights and the Hargeisa-based Horn of Africa Human Rights Watch Committee. The Ismail Jumale Center investigated the causes of conflict in the Mogadishu area, supported the Djibouti Reconciliation process, conducted effective human rights monitoring, protested the treatment of prisoners before the Islamic Shari'a courts, and organized periodic demonstrations for peace. The Horn of Africa Human Rights Watch Committee monitored human rights in Somaliland. Women's NGO's also played an important role in galvanizing support in the country for the Djibouti Initiative.

In Hargeisa in Somaliland, local NGO's continued to operate freely and without harassment during the year.

Numerous international organizations operated in the country during the year, including the Red Cross, CARE, the Halo Trust, Save the Children, and various other demining agencies. The Somaliland and Puntland administrations permitted visits by U.N. human rights representatives during the year. Sporadic security problems complicated the work of some local and international organizations, especially in the South. There were reported incidents of harassment against NGO's, including attacks on aid convoys and airplanes, which disrupted food distribution and U.N. flights into and out of the country (see Sections 1.b. and 1.c.). A number of humanitarian workers were killed in such attacks and one NGO suspended its programs as a result (see Section 1.a.).

On September 18, eight Islamic Court Militia gunmen attacked a World Health Organization (WHO) compound in Merca. Although they shot over 200 rounds of ammunition at the building, there were no injuries.

Section 5 Discrimination Based on Race, Sex, Religion, Disability, Language, or Social Status

The Transitional Charter, adopted in July but not implemented by year's end, contains provisions that prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex and national origin; however, societal discrimination and violence against women and widespread abuse of children continued to be serious problems. The 1997 Somaliland Constitution also contains provisions that prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex and national origin; however, these rights were not respected in practice.

Women

Violence against women exists, although there are no reliable statistics on its prevalence. Women suffered disproportionately in the civil war and in the strife that followed. Rape is commonly practiced in inter-clan conflicts. Laws prohibiting rape exist; however, they are not enforced. A statistically insignificant number of rapes were prosecuted during the year. Unlike in the previous year, there were no reports that fighters loyal to Hussein Aideed routinely raped women in southern Qoryoley district.

Women are subordinated systematically in the country's overwhelmingly patriarchal culture. Polygyny is permitted, but polyandry is not. Under laws issued by the former government, female children could inherit property, but only half the amount to which their brothers were entitled. Similarly, according to the Shari'a and Somali tradition of blood compensation, those found guilty in the death of a woman must pay only half as much to the aggrieved family as they would if the victim were a man.

Several women's groups in Hargeisa (Somaliland), Mogadishu, Bosasso (Puntland), and Merka (Lower Shabelle) actively promote equal rights for women and advocate the inclusion of women in responsible government positions. Women's groups played a prominent role in the Djibouti Conference.

Trafficking in women for the purposes of sexual exploitation was a problem (see Sections 6.c. and 6.f.).

Children

Children remain among the chief victims of the continuing violence. Boys as young as 14 or 15 years of age have participated in militia attacks, and many youths are members of the marauding gangs known as "morian," "parasites," or "maggots." Even in areas with relative security, the lack of resources has limited the opportunity for children to attend school. There are three secondary schools in Somaliland and more than three secondary schools in Mogadishu; however, only 10 percent of those few children who enter primary school graduate from secondary school. Parents generally pay fees for their children's education. Schools at all levels lack textbooks, laboratory equipment, and running water. Teachers are trained poorly and paid poorly. Approximately 10 to 20 percent of the school-age population attends school; more boys than girls are enrolled in school. The literacy rate is less than 25 percent. In 1999 the Somaliland authorities drafted guidelines for a national education policy; however, no action on such a policy was taken by year's end.

Medical care is rudimentary, and only a small percentage of children have access to adequate medical facilities.

Female genital mutilation (FGM), which is widely condemned by international experts as damaging to both physical and psychological health, is a near-universal practice. Estimates place the percentage of women who have been subjected to FGM at 98 percent. The majority of women are subjected to infibulation, the most harmful form of FGM. The practice was illegal prior to 1991, when the Siad Barre Government collapsed, and in Somaliland it remains illegal under the Penal Code (see Section 1.e.); however, the law is not enforced. In November 1999, Puntland authorities passed legislation banning FGM in northeastern areas of the country; however, in practice the law is not enforced strictly. While U.N. agencies and NGO's have made intensive efforts to educate persons about the danger of FGM, no reliable statistics are available on the success of their programs.

People With Disabilities

In the absence of a functioning state, no one is in a position to address systematically the needs of those with disabilities. There are several local NGO's in Somaliland that provide services to the disabled.

Religious Minorities

Non-Sunni Muslims often are viewed with suspicion by members of the Sunni majority. There is strong social pressure to respect Islamic traditions, especially in enclaves controlled by radical Islamists, such as Luuq in the Gedo region and Doble and Kulbiyow in such Lower Jubba region. There was an increase in religious intolerance among Muslims by Al'Itihad, a local radical Islamic group, which is an affiliate of the international Al'Itihad group. There reportedly have been mosque takeovers in Puntland and Lower Shabelle. On June 15 in Merca, members of a conservative Mosque protested against alleged Christian proselytizing by teachers at schools funded by COSV, an Italian NGO (see Section 2.b.). During the march, three members of Merca's "Shura" or council threw a grenade into the offices of COSV. There were no reported injuries; staff members were evacuated, and COSV programs were suspended for 2 weeks.

There was a continued influx of foreign Muslim teachers into the country to teach in new private Koranic schools. These schools are inexpensive and provide basic education; however, there were reports that these

schools required the veiling of small girls and other conservative Islamic practices not normally found in the local culture.

There is a small, low-profile Christian community. Christians, as well as other non-Muslims, who proclaim their religion sometimes face societal harassment.

National/Racial/Ethnic Minorities

More than 80 percent of citizens share a common ethnic heritage, religion, and nomadic-influenced culture. The largest minority group consists of "Bantu" Somalis, who are descended from slaves brought to the country about 300 years ago. In most areas, members of groups other than the predominant clan are excluded from effective participation in governing institutions and are subject to discrimination in employment, judicial proceedings, and access to public services.

Members of minority groups are subjected to harassment, intimidation, and abuse by armed gunmen of all affiliations.

Section 6 Worker Rights

a. The Right of Association

The 1990 Constitution provided workers with the right to form unions, but the civil war and factional fighting negated this provision and shattered the single labor confederation, the then government-controlled General Federation of Somali Trade Unions. In view of the extent of the country's political and economic breakdown and the lack of legal enforcement mechanisms, trade unions could not function freely.

The Transitional Charter, adopted in July but not implemented by year's end, the Puntland Charter, and the Somaliland Constitution established the right of freedom of association, but no unions or employer organizations yet exist.

b. The Right to Organize and Bargain Collectively

Wages and work requirements in the traditional culture are established largely by ad hoc bartering, based on supply, demand, and the influence of the clan from which the worker originates. As during past years, labor disputes sometimes led to the use of force (see Section 1.c.). For example, the Habr Gibr clan used force against the Digil and Biyamaal clans in Lower Shabelle during the year.

There are no export processing zones.

c. Prohibition of Forced or Compulsory Labor

The pre-1991 Penal Code prohibits forced labor; however, local clan militias generally forced members of minority groups to work on banana plantations without compensation. Trafficking in women for the purposes of sexual exploitation was a problem (see Sections 5 and 6.f.). The pre-1991 labor code prohibits child labor, including forced or bonded labor by children; however, child labor occurs, and there are child soldiers (see Sections 5 and 6.d.). Trafficking in children for forced labor is a problem (see Section 6.f.).

d. Status of Child Labor Practices and Minimum Age for Employment

The pre-1991 labor code prohibits child labor, including forced or bonded labor by children; however, child labor occurs, and there are child soldiers (see Sections 5 and 6.c.). Formal employment of children was rare, but youths commonly are employed in herding, agriculture, and household labor from an early age. The lack of educational opportunities and severely depressed economic conditions contribute to child labor. There were reports that trafficking in children for forced labor is a serious problem.

The country did not ratify ILO Convention 182 on the worst forms of child labor by year's end.

e. Acceptable Conditions of Work

There was no organized effort by any of the factions or de facto regional administrations to monitor acceptable conditions of work during the year.

f. Trafficking in Persons

The pre-1991 Penal Code prohibits trafficking; however, there were some reports of trafficking during the year. In July Djibouti law enforcement authorities arrested members of a group that was smuggling Somali women to such destinations as Lebanon and Syria to work in brothels (see Section 5). The number of women being trafficked from Somalia appears to be small. There were reports that trafficking in children for forced labor is a serious problem (see Sections 5 and 6.d.).

(1) The United States does not have diplomatic representation in Somalia. This report draws in part on non-Government sources.

[End.]

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