

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Extrajudicial Executions

26 November 1990

**SOMALIA** : Mohamed Sheikh Sharawe, aged 60, mayor of Bulu Burti  
Mohamed Hassan Hawadleh, aged 65, former member of parliament  
and former mayor of Bulu Burti  
Haji Kabaweyne, aged 80, clan elder and muezzin of mosque  
Sheikh Mohamed Balad, aged 70, Islamic judge (Khadi)  
and many others

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Some 50 unarmed civilians are reported to have been executed extra-judicially on 12 November 1990 by soldiers of the 77th battalion from Mogadishu, known as "red berets", in the town of Bulu Burti, 200 kilometres north of Mogadishu. Some were killed at their homes, which were then set on fire, others inside the mosque, and others in the main street of the town. Those executed included prominent local people, including elected officials, Islamic leaders, clan elders and government employees.

The killings are believed to have been a reprisal for an ambush in a nearby village of government troops by opposition guerrillas of the United Somali Congress (USC), when some government soldiers were killed. The USC draws its support from members of the Hawiye clan from this and other regions in central parts of southern Somalia. A pattern has developed here, as previously in the northwest, of arbitrary reprisals by the security forces against local clan members after rebel attacks.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Other recent incidents of extrajudicial executions of civilians by government soldiers in recent months include the killing of 17 people in the northern port of Berbera on 16 August 1990, two of whom were employees of an international relief organization and another was a former UN High Commission for Refugees employee. On 14 October in Baidowa, 225 kilometres northwest of Mogadishu, dozens of people were reportedly shot dead by soldiers when they demonstrated against President Mohamed Siad Barre during an official visit there. In Mogadishu on 23 October in demonstrations demanding the release of political prisoners, at least five but probably many more people were killed by "red beret" soldiers.

The government faces armed opposition from rebel movements in the northwest, central and southwestern regions of the country. During 1990 there have been frequent reports of killings of civilians by government troops in these areas of fighting, as well as some killings of government supporters by opposition fighters. Reprisal killings are a violation of the Geneva Conventions and international human rights standards, including those to which Somalia committed itself by acceding to the International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights in January 1990.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/express and airmail letters:**

- expressing concern at reports of extrajudicial executions in Bulu Burti by soldiers on 12 November, citing the individual victims named above;
- calling for an independent investigation into the killings in Bulu Burti, which would report its findings publicly and make recommendations on actions

to be taken to punish those responsible and to prevent further killings from occurring in similar circumstances;

- urging the government and military authorities to state publicly that reprisal killings of civilians and other killings of prisoners or unarmed civilians by soldiers are crimes which will not be condoned and will be severely punished in all cases.

**APPEALS TO:**

His Excellency  
President Mohamed Siad Barre  
President of the Somali Democratic Republic  
Villa Somalia  
Mogadishu, Somalia

Telegrams: President Siad Barre, Mogadishu, Somalia  
Telexes: 639 MOG (via Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

Brigadier General Mohamed Saeed Hersi ("Morgan")  
Minister of Defence and Army Chief of Staff  
Ministry of Defence  
Mogadishu, Somalia

Telegrams: Defence Minister, Mogadishu, Somalia  
Telexes: 3726 MINDIF SM

**COPIES TO:**

Dr Mohamed Omar Farah  
Attorney General  
Attorney General's Chambers  
PO Box 1745  
Mogadishu, Somalia

Colonel Dr Ali Abdurahman  
Attorney General of the Supreme Military Court  
Ministry of Defence  
PO Box 1505  
Mogadishu, Somalia

His Excellency Mohamed Ali Samatar  
First Vice President  
The Presidency  
Mogadishu, Somalia

Mr Ahmed Mohamed Aden  
Minister of Foreign Affairs  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Mogadishu, Somalia

and to diplomatic representatives of Somalia in your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat,  
or your section office, if sending appeals after 7 January 1991.