



Mission vs Safety OCHA Somalia and the Baidoa Raid

In July 2009, al-Shabaab militants raided the United Nations compound in Baidoa, Somalia, and expelled three UN agencies at gunpoint. The insurgents were attempting yet again to wrest control of the country from the internationally-recognized Transitional Federal Government (TFG), a weak coalition of clan leaders and Islamic reformers. By then, Somalia had been in the throes of civil war and drought for 18 years.

Throughout this period, the United Nations and scores of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) struggled to deliver aid to an ever-growing population of displaced persons in camps across the East African country. In 2009, Baidoa was the hub of humanitarian operations in south-central Somalia, the center of the Shabaab insurgency. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) was responsible for coordinating the international response to humanitarian emergencies. OCHA's work in Somalia was managed remotely from neighboring Nairobi, Kenya, because of hostile conditions in Somalia, but trained field workers and analysts worked in guarded compounds like Baidoa whenever possible.

On Monday, July 20, OCHA had two "international" (non-local) staff in Baidoa: Cedric Petit and Birgitt Hotz. In late morning, 40 armed Shabaab rebels raided the UN compound and expelled three UN agencies they accused of engaging in "political" activities: the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the UN Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS), and the UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS). The humanitarian agencies, the militants said, could stay. But under UN security protocols, they could not—if UNDSS security officials left, all international staff had to depart. After hours of uncertainty and failed negotiations with the Shabaab intruders, Petit, Hotz, and four other UN international staff members reluctantly left on a UN plane for Nairobi.

Over the next five days, the OCHA-Somalia team in Nairobi debated what to do. As Resident Coordinator (RC) and Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) for Somalia, Mark Bowden headed the team. Should he return a humanitarian team to Baidoa immediately, as Petit and Hotz urged, to maintain relationships and ensure a smooth flow of aid to some 6,000 refugees in the region? Could he trust Shabaab's promise of safety for the humanitarians? How could he honor the humanitarian principle of neutrality and still provide aid to an increasingly lawless society?

A Failed State

It was not the first time that OCHA had been forced out of Baidoa. In fact, it had just returned to the war-torn city in April 2009 after a five-month absence due to violence. Somalia had begun its downward spiral in 1991, when clan-based warlords overthrew the regime of Mohamed Siad Barre, plunging the country into civil war. In ensuing years the country became increasingly lawless as struggles among rival clans gave way to armed insurgencies, piracy, radical Islamic offensives, and terrorism. Countless political coalitions and transitional governments were established over the years only to resign, collapse, or be overthrown.

Since 2004, a Transitional Federal Government had been the titular authority. Though the TFG had the backing of the UN and the international community, it was able to control only a small portion of the country. In fact, in 2008 and 2009, Somalia ranked first among 178 countries in the Failed States Index issued annually by the Fund for Peace, which cited the TFG's inability to command authority, provide social services, or guarantee even basic security.¹

For several years, the government had been based in Baidoa, a city of 480,000 in south-central Somalia, because the official capital, Mogadishu, was considered too dangerous for government operations. The government's primary foe was al-Shabaab, an Islamist militant group that organized in 2006 and had grown steadily in strength and geographic reach. Top-level leaders of al-Shabaab, members of its Shura Council, were suspected of having ties with al-Qaeda.

2008 offensive. In summer 2008, al-Shabaab launched a sustained offensive against the TFG in Baidoa. The offensive was a fierce rejection of an accord called the Djibouti Agreement, brokered by the UN in June, which had given parliamentary seats to a group of moderate Islamists in exchange for a ceasefire, the gradual withdrawal of Ethiopian troops supporting the TGF, and other steps towards peace and recovery. In taking Baidoa by force, al-Shabaab hoped to end all efforts at power-sharing and pave the way for a Shabaab takeover of the country.

In January 2009, al-Shabaab captured Baidoa and the TFG retreated to Mogadishu. Insurgents now controlled almost all of south-central Somalia. The TFG, the official "host government," had become irrelevant. If humanitarian agencies wished to work in the Baidoa region, they would have to negotiate access with al-Shabaab.

OCHA mission

It was difficult enough for humanitarian agencies to provide aid to victims of natural disasters. Those difficulties were compounded when the needy lived in conflict zones. Especially

¹ The Fund for Peace, *2012 Failed States Index*, released June 18, 2012, ranking Somalia first for the fifth year running. See: <http://www.fundforpeace.org/global/?q=node/242>

problematic were so-called “complex emergencies” that arose in failed states and lawless territories where security was weak and government services unreliable. Humanitarian agencies could operate in areas like these only if the warring parties allowed it. While neutrality, impartiality and independence were core humanitarian principles, the agencies often found themselves embroiled in complex political calculations. Knowing when and how to deal with local political actors, especially armed insurgents, could mean the difference between staying to deliver aid or packing up supplies to go home.

Decades of hostilities and drought has caused great human suffering in Somalia. Forced migrations, malnutrition, famine, disease, and human rights abuses were entrenched humanitarian crises. Conditions were so desperate that the United Nations had been directing “emergency” operations in Somalia for 18 years.

In 2009, the UN team in Somalia comprised representatives from more than 20 aid and development programs, including such well-known players as the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Food Program (WFP) and UNDP. These agencies worked in partnership with some 90 humanitarian NGOs, including most of the global ones like Save the Children and CARITAS International, as well as many local NGOs and Somali service providers who actually manned the relief convoys and delivered aid on the ground. The UN alone had targeted more than \$850 million to humanitarian operations in Somalia for 2009, directing aid to 3.2 million people.

OCHA coordinates. The organization that coordinated disaster response among UN agencies, governments and NGOs was OCHA. The UN had created the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in 1998 to avoid duplication of aid and maximize resources.² OCHA was headed by a UN under-secretary general (who also carried the title of emergency relief coordinator: USG/ERC) responsible for overseeing all emergencies requiring UN assistance. By 2009, OCHA had six regional and 23 country offices worldwide and employed some 1,100 staff.

The ERC could appoint a Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) for any country affected by disaster or conflict. In most instances, the role was filled by the UN Resident Coordinator (who was also the UNDP Resident Representative). Every HC was supported by a local OCHA office. In 2008, USC/ERC John Holmes appointed Mark Bowden as HC for Somalia. OCHA funding came from three sources: the UN core budget, member states’ voluntary contributions and private donations. Its 2009 budget was \$227 million, with 70 percent devoted to salaries. As the UN’s primary humanitarian advocate, OCHA’s work was guided by the four principles of humanitarian engagement: impartiality, humanity, neutrality and independence. Its mandate was to monitor humanitarian crises and to rationalize aid delivery, ensuring that aid went

² It was preceded by the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, and before that by the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Coordinator.

where it was intended, met the humanitarian needs, and was evenly distributed in areas where the need was greatest.

OCHA itself provided no direct services—no food, no medicine, no clean drinking water. Instead, it provided organization, oversight, and direction. It was a kind of managerial “super---agency” with a broad mandate but little direct authority over its partners, depending instead on its unique resources—professional staff, local access, reliable information, and its own good reputation—to coordinate assistance. OCHA staff felt occasional frustration because, as OCHA staff member Bediako Buahene puts it, to be successful “you have to persuade, cajole, beg, plead, hope that [partners] want to coordinate.”³ But they also relished the difference their work made on the ground.

OCHA---Somalia. In Somalia, OCHA had taken on a variety of responsibilities. It negotiated with local authorities for access to Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps, monitored the condition of the refugees, checked that medical clinics were operational and adequately provisioned, hosted regular meetings of the resident NGOs, looked for gaps in their services, built relationships with local leaders, and ensured that human rights and legal protections were being observed. OCHA also coordinated the annual appeal for humanitarian funding from UN donor countries, raising money for both UN agencies and their partner NGOs. Altogether, OCHA’s 2009 Consolidated Appeal for Somalia totaled more than \$918 million.⁴

Because of the ongoing hostilities in---country, OCHA---Somalia as of 2008 had its headquarters in Nairobi, together with other UN agencies serving Somalia. Remote operation of any humanitarian mission was always challenging, and OCHA deployed professional staff from Nairobi to Somalia when it could.⁵ In 2008 and 2009, OCHA operated in as many as half a dozen locations in Somalia. OCHA---Somalia employed some 60 staff. Depending on security conditions, about five internationals operated in---country, along with an average of 25 local staff; the balance worked in Nairobi. The OCHA---Somalia head of office in 2009 was Kiki Ghebo. Among other duties, OCHA staff acted as secretariat to Humanitarian Coordinator Bowden.

In Baidoa, Somalia’s third largest city, OCHA shared premises in the UN Common Compound (UNCC), which housed offices for some 40---50 UN Somali staff as well as accommodations and workspace for as many as eight resident international staff. In addition

³ Lundberg interviews with Bediako Buahene, April 13, 2012 by telephone and April 23, 2012 in Nairobi. All further quotations from Buahene, unless otherwise attributed, are from these interviews. Buahene joined the OCHA protection unit—which oversaw the legal rights of aid recipients—in February 2008.

⁴ United Nations, OCHA, *2009 Consolidated Appeal, Somalia Case Statement*, Table II. OCHA later revised the need downward to \$849 million; OCHA, “Mid-Year Review of the Consolidated Appeal for Somalia 2009,” Summer 2009. See: <http://www.unocha.org/cap/appeals/mid-year-review-consolidated-appeal-somalia-2009>

⁵ Abby Stoddard, Adele Harmer and Jean S. Renouf, *Once Removed: Lessons and Challenges of Remote Management of Humanitarian Operations in Insecure Areas*, report issued by Humanitarian Outcomes, February 25, 2010.

to OCHA, the compound contained offices for UNDP, UNICEF, WHO, the UN refugee agency (UNHCR), and the UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS). UNPOS, which had earlier had a national staff officer in the compound, no longer had a presence there. The UN Mine Action Service (a landmine protection agency) had a compound nearby. The Common Compound, while compact, had the potential to house the most international personnel of any in Somalia.

For many years, the international staff at Baidoa lived in converted containers, two staff to each, with showers and other facilities outside the containers. In 2009, individual rooms with showers had just been completed. International staff rotated four weeks in---country, and one week out. That suited the staff, says Buahene: "There's actually nothing else to do. So, you tend to work all day anyway and you live and sleep 10---15 meters away from your office." International staff left the premises only in an armed convoy; the UN hired local security guards. The compound, with its high walls and guard towers, could feel like a jail.

Dangerous Conditions

OCHA watched the 2008 Shabaab campaign against Baidoa with trepidation. It coincided with an increase in violence against humanitarian workers across Somalia. According to Amnesty International, at least 40 human rights and humanitarian workers were killed in Somalia in the first nine months of 2008, many of them targeted killings.⁶ Many more were injured. UN workers and convoys were especially hard hit: WFP convoys and warehouses alone suffered six gunshot deaths that year.⁷

Kidnappings and abductions of humanitarian workers also became more common, as did attacks by suicide trucks and improvised explosive devices (IEDs). In June 2008, the head of the UNHCR office in Mogadishu was kidnapped from his home. In July, the national staff head of the UNDP office in Somalia was killed while leaving a mosque after evening prayers. In October, a car bomb at a UN compound in Somaliland killed two UN national staff and injured six others. Amnesty International put the problem plainly:

The attacks on the staff of international and national humanitarian organizations place them in an impossible situation; they are forced to weigh risks to the lives of their staff and local partner organizations against malnutrition, starvation and disease faced by millions of Somalis if their assistance doesn't arrive.⁸

⁶ Amnesty International, *Fatal Insecurity: Attacks on Aid Workers and Rights Defenders in Somalia*, October 2008.

⁷ Patronus Analytical, "Aid Worker Fatalities Data 1993-2009." See: <http://www.patronusanalytical.com/aid%20worker%20fatalities/Fatal%20Incidents%20Aid%20Workers%20DB/Fatal%20Incidents%20data.html>

⁸ Amnesty International, *Failed Insecurity*, p. 17.

In Baidoa, the UN took a wait---and---see approach. In late summer 2008, OCHA reported the worst malnutrition situation in Somalia in years, along with record food prices and the addition of more than 100,000 new refugees to the IDP rolls.⁹ Toward the end of the year, some 3.2 million Somalis were reported in need of assistance.

But in mid---November 2008, two hand grenades were thrown into the main market in Baidoa. OCHA and the other humanitarian agencies judged the situation too dangerous to remain. They reduced their operations in Baidoa and recalled their international staff to Nairobi.¹⁰ As Humanitarian Coordinator Bowden said at the time, “Somalia is one of the most dangerous places in the world for aid workers.”¹¹

Return to Baidoa

By April 2009, however, OCHA deemed it safe to return to the Baidoa compound. Over the preceding year, OCHA and its humanitarian partners had built good relations with the Shabaab leadership in the Baidoa area, in particular with Sheikh Mukhtar Robow, one of the founders of the Shabaab movement. A native of Baidoa, Robow had pursued Islamic studies in Mogadishu and at the University of Khartoum and was thought to have trained with the Taliban in Afghanistan.¹²

In 2009, Robow was one of the highest---ranking al---Shabaab commanders, a member of the supreme Shura Council, and a perennial contender for the top position of emir. His guarantees of security made it possible to return to Baidoa despite what UN Secretary General Ban Ki---moon described as an “extremely volatile and unpredictable” situation, warranting a Phase IV security designation under the UN’s Minimum Operating Security Standards (MOSS) guidelines (Phase V was mandatory evacuation).¹³

Hotz and Petit. Birgitt Hotz, a German national, and Cedric Petit, who was French, were the OCHA international staff who spent the most time in Baidoa. Petit, the senior humanitarian affairs officer, had joined OCHA---Somalia in 2007 after three years with OCHA---Darfur and 11 years working for NGOs in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, and Afghanistan. Hotz, nicknamed “Hotzi,” had first come to Somalia in 1988, and had been working with the UN and NGOs in Mogadishu, Baidoa, and the central region for several

⁹ OCHA, *Somalia Humanitarian Overview*, Vol. 1, Issues 6-8, June, July, and August 2008.

¹⁰ OCHA, *Somalia Humanitarian Overview*, Vol. 1, Issue 11, November-December 15, 2008.

¹¹ UNDP in Somalia, Press Release, “Two UN Staff Killed in Hargeysa UNDP Compound Attack,” October 29, 2008. See: <http://www.so.undp.org/index.php/Press/Two-UN-Staff-killed-in-Hargeysa-UNDP-Compound-Attack.html>

¹² Wikipedia, “Sheikh Mukhtar Robow.” See: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sheikh_Mukhtar_Robow. Also Nathanie Horadem, “Profile: Sheikh Mukhtar Robow,” *Critical Threats, Profiles of al-Shabaab Leadership*, November 14, 2011. See: <http://www.criticalthreats.org/somalia/al-Shabaab-leadership/sheikh-mukhtar-robow-abu-mansurnovember-14-2011>

¹³ United Nations Security Council, “Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1863,” Document S/2009/210, April 16, 2009.

years, primarily on population and women's health issues. She joined the UN team in April 2009 as OCHA's principal field worker.

Petit returned to Baidoa in April; Hotz in May. The region was now under *shari'a* religious law, so there were new restrictions. Hotz wore full hijab on her visits to IDP camps, was always accompanied by a Shabaab escort, and had to return to the compound before evening prayers. But she did not worry about her safety, and reported that the Shabaab escorts did not interfere with her work.

But as the weeks went on, conditions deteriorated both in Baidoa and throughout Somalia. Though aid agencies were delivering 35,600 metric tons of food aid a month, malnutrition was at levels high enough to constitute an emergency, especially among children in the south---central region. In April, one in six Somali children under five were reported as acutely malnourished— 180,000 children in south---central Somalia alone.¹⁴ Population in the IDP camps was approaching 1.5 million, and conditions in the camps were becoming increasingly desperate. Insurgent groups and unknown gunman were demanding "security fees" and "taxes" from humanitarian agencies in conflict areas; the UNICEF compound in Jowhar was taken over by a Shabaab militia in May.¹⁵

Petit remembers the week of July 13 as especially tense. The country was under a state of emergency, and insurgents had come within 300 meters of capturing the presidential palace in Mogadishu just the week before.¹⁶ WFP was running out of food and rainfall reports were dismal.¹⁷ Hotz made only a few visits to the IDP camps, and the other international staff seldom ventured outside the compound. On July 19, three NGO workers were abducted in the border town of Mandera, Kenya, 170 miles away, and transported into Somalia. Security was again precarious, and UN staff members were sleeping in their street clothes. "Basically, we were expecting to be kidnapped," Petit says. "There was no way, if al---Shabaab came in the compound, to fight against it."¹⁸

The Raid

On Monday, July 20, 2009, around 11:30 a.m., some 40 gunmen entered the UNCC in Baidoa. Some wore the uniform of al---Shabaab, others trousers and T---shirts; many were masked and all were armed. The gunmen deployed themselves around the inside perimeter

¹⁴ Ibid; also Save the Children, "Statement by 52 NGOs on the Rapidly Deteriorating Humanitarian Crisis in Somalia," October 6, 2008; archived on Relief Web. See: <http://reliefweb.int/node/282823>. Also OCHA, *Somalia Humanitarian Overview*, Vol. 2, Issue 8, August 2009. By August, the figures for malnourished children would reach 1 in 5.

¹⁵ United Nations, "Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1872," Document S/2009/503, Oct. 2, 2009, and OCHA, *Somalia Humanitarian Overview*, Vol. 2, Issue 7, July 2009.

¹⁶ United Nations, "Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia," October 2, 2009.

¹⁷ OCHA, *Somalia Humanitarian Overview*, Vol. 2, Issue 7, July 2009.

¹⁸ Lundberg interview with Cedric Petit in Nairobi on April 30, 2012. All other quotations from Petit, unless otherwise attributed, are from this interview.

of the compound and at the corners of each building. Eight men guarded the gate. In the street, a truck-mounted 20mm anti-aircraft gun was trained on the compound.

Petit was at work in the OCHA office when a call came from the radio room operator urging him to leave the compound immediately, without questions. Seeing gunmen, Petit headed toward one of the armored UN vehicles but was intercepted by militiamen, who directed him instead to a meeting with the DSS officer and the Shabaab commander. Inside the DSS office, the atmosphere was serious. The commander held several documents blazoned with the emblem of al-Shabaab: an open Koran set in a circle of green and gold, guarded by two AK-47 assault rifles.

The documents announced the immediate and permanent closure of three UN agencies. The Shabaab leader announced that—because of alleged interference in Somali politics—all foreign staff attached to UNDP, UNDSS, and UNPOS must leave immediately. He also announced that his men would seize all property belonging to those organizations.

Petit tried but failed several times to reach Sheikh Robow through a Somali colleague in OCHA.¹⁹ The commander then asked Petit to surrender his mobile and satellite phones, and after he and the DSS officer attempted to reach Nairobi by Skype and email, they were told to close their computers as well. Shortly afterward, the compound's generators were shut down. In the radio room down the hall, the phones were left to ring unanswered.

Hotz was unaware of the incursion into the compound until around noon, when she finished up a routine meeting with Somali staff and visiting NGO workers. She saw Petit and the DSS officer in heated conversation with the Shabaab commander. Sensing trouble, she slipped into the radio room and put on her hijab, then joined a group of Somali women under a tree in the courtyard. From there she watched militiamen remove weapons from the UN guardhouse. Soon after, she switched off her phone, hidden under her hijab, for fear an incoming call might attract notice. When the time came for midday prayers, she went with the women to the mosque beside the UNICEF office. From there she could see groups of insurgents carrying off the contents of the UNDP, UNPOS, and UNDSS offices while others drove all UN vehicles out of the compound.

All or none. In the DSS office, discussions were becoming tense. Of the three targeted agencies, only DSS had any foreign staff to expel: Field Security Coordination Officer (FSCO) Anton Boshoff. UNDP and UNPOS had had no international staff in Baidoa since the general pullout in late 2008. Boshoff argued that DSS's function in Baidoa was not political: his role was to protect the safety of humanitarian operations; therefore he should be allowed to stay.²⁰ The Shabaab commander was unmoved; he insisted that Boshoff had to go. Boshoff offered a compromise: he would remain in the UN guesthouse, but do no work.

¹⁹ Abdirashid Mohamed, a UN national staff member, was based in Baidoa but happened to be on leave in Mandera.

²⁰ DSS officers were not armed. Their job was to obtain and coordinate security information.

However, under UN rules, international staff could not remain in high---security areas like Baidoa without a FSCO officer present. Boshoff was the only such officer in Baidoa. If he left, all the international staff would have to depart—including the humanitarian workers. That meant six: Boshoff from DSS, Petit and Hotz from OCHA, two UNICEF workers, and a colleague in the UN Mine Action Service. In addition, a doctor from the World Health Organization, whom Sheikh Robow had recently requested come to the UNCC, would not be allowed to come to Baidoa.

The Shabaab commander was plainly troubled by this information. His orders were to expel the three targeted agencies but to allow UN humanitarian work to proceed. The commander faced a difficult dilemma: while he could order UN staff to leave, he could not order them to stay. All six UN international staff, including Boshoff, would have preferred to remain. “If we had had a choice, we would have stayed,” Petit says. “But we had no choice.”

With discussion at an impasse, Boshoff was permitted to call Nairobi and ask that a plane be sent to return the six international staff to Kenya. Hotz was identified and brought from the mosque without incident. The staffers collected their personal gear and what files they could, then made their way to the airstrip under armed Shabaab escort. By 5 p.m. they were boarding the plane for Nairobi.²¹

Nervous in Nairobi

In Nairobi, the situation was tense. Radio communication with Baidoa had been lost early in the raid. Occasional emails got through, sent by national staff, but the Somalis had been separated from the international staff early on and had little firsthand information about the negotiations. Bowden himself was out of the country, his duties falling to Rozanne Chorlton, the UNICEF representative to Somalia, who had arrived just months earlier from Liberia. Baidoa wasn't her only problem that day. Al---Shabaab had staged a second morning raid on the WFP compound in Wajid, 55 miles northwest of Baidoa, and sensitive negotiations were underway over the fate of the three NGO workers kidnapped the day before in Mandera.

Information out of Baidoa was fragmentary and conflicting. Nairobi didn't know how many commandos were involved, whether and which vehicles had been seized, or what al---Shabaab's intentions were toward the UN's local NGO partners. Chorlton had reports of Al---Shabaab's letters of expulsion, and a longer communiqué was beginning to make the rounds on Somali radio stations. The communiqué announced the creation of a new Shabaab “office for supervising the affairs of foreign agencies” in regions the insurgents controlled. All NGOs and foreign agencies were to report to the new office immediately to be “informed of the conditions and restrictions on their work and on how their work may continue.” The communiqué continued:

²¹ The UN staffers made an overnight stop in the Kenyan border town of Wajir, as was standard practice, so they arrived in Nairobi the next day, Tuesday, July 21.

Any NGO or foreign agency found to be working with an agenda against the Somali Muslim population and/or against the establishment of an Islamic State will be immediately closed and dealt with according to the evidence found.²²

Further details were not yet available.

In late afternoon on July 20, the Nairobi---based NGO Safety Programme (NSP), run by the Somalia NGO Consortium, issued an advisory on the raid to its members. Titled "Uncertainty in Baidoa," the advisory noted an increasing climate of hostility toward international organizations and cited reports of al---Shabaab's recent beheading of seven accused spies, its suspected involvement in the Mandera kidnappings, and the deployment of local Shabaab militia to fight against the TFG in Mogadishu.²³ NSP advised humanitarian aid agencies to consider "temporary hibernation of operations" in Baidoa, and to take measures to safeguard their staff, assets and operations in the surrounding area.²⁴

Suspension. That same afternoon, Chorlton announced the temporary suspension of all UN operations in Baidoa, calling it a "difficult decision" and expressing hope that the suspension would be "very short term."²⁵ The UN in Nairobi issued a press statement which cited two reasons for the suspension: the loss of emergency communications equipment and the departure of security officers.²⁶ The announcement came in time for the regular noon briefing from the secretary---general at UN headquarters in New York (there was a 7---hour time difference between New York and Nairobi). The briefing largely repeated the information in the Nairobi statement, though it did not identify the agencies that had been expelled and, unlike Nairobi, did not express any expectation that al---Shabaab would reconsider its actions.²⁷

Chorlton instructed the national staff in Baidoa to lay low, avoid the compound and do what work they could from home. Now it was up to Humanitarian Coordinator Bowden to decide whether and how to send the international OCHA staff back.

Consider Algiers

Bowden, a British citizen, was a seasoned veteran of African humanitarian affairs. Early postings with the UK Ministry of Overseas Development led to 20 years with the international

²² Harakat Al-Shabaab Al-Mujahideen, "Press Release on Behalf of the Department of Political Affairs and Regional Administrations," July 20, 2009.

²³ Al-Shabaab denied the report of the beheadings, though they were widely reported in the Western press. See: http://www.garoweonline.com/artman2/publish/Somalia_27/Somalia_Al_Shabaab_deny_beheadings_report.shtml

²⁴ Based on an internal, unpublished document.

²⁵ Based on an internal, unpublished document. Also, "Somalia's al-Shabab Names 3 UN Agencies 'Enemies of Islam,'" *Voice of American News* online, July 20, 2009.

²⁶ United Nations, "Statement from the United Nations in Somalia on the Looting of UN Compounds in South Central Somalia, July 20, 2009.

²⁷ United Nations, Marie Okabe, Deputy Spokesperson for Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, "Highlights of the Noon Briefing," July 20, 2009.

NGO Save the Children, mostly in East Africa. He joined the UN in 2001 as chief of OCHA's Policy Development and Studies branch in New York. After a tour in Sudan, he became Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia in May 2008.

Bowden wore many hats for the UN in Somalia, and each role affected his thinking about the raid on the Baidoa compound. As Resident Coordinator, his concern was promoting Somali development. As Humanitarian Coordinator, his focus was channeling aid to needy Somalis. But what first framed Bowden's thinking about the Baidoa crisis was a third role: that of Designated Official (DO) for Security.

In the United Nations security management system, the DO had responsibility for the safety and security of all UN staff members, operations, and property at the duty station. While day-to-day security matters were handled by DSS and a Security Management Team, an incident like the raid in Baidoa came straight to the DO.

The Baidoa incident reminded Bowden powerfully of Algiers. In December 2007, 17 UN staff members were killed and 40 injured in a truck-bomb attack on the UN headquarters there. In a report on the incident, a UN review panel cited the Resident Coordinator for security failures. Like Bowden in Somalia, the Algiers officer was both RC and DO. While acknowledging the inherent tension between the programming role of the RC and the security role of the DO, the review panel charged that the Algiers field office had been inattentive to local security threats, failed to provide senior guidance and supervision, demonstrated poor judgment, and exhibited a fatal "lack of urgency."²⁸

The Algiers bombing had had a chilling effect on UN field operations worldwide, and Bowden knew there would be hell to pay if a misstep in Baidoa caused harm to UN staff or operations. "After Algiers, it was very clear that the Designated Official would be held absolutely accountable and actually, usually blamed," Bowden remembers. "It created a culture of risk avoidance."²⁹

Hargeisa. Three weeks after the Algiers report was released, Bowden had faced a terrorist crisis of his own. On October 29, 2008, five months after Bowden took over as RC/HC/DO for Somalia, a car-bomb ripped through the UNDP compound in Hargeisa, capital of the semiautonomous region of Somaliland. Two UN staff members were killed and six injured.³⁰

²⁸ "Report of the Independent Panel on Accountability," Executive Summary, October 2008. See: http://www.un.org/News/dh/infocus/terrorism/Executive_Summary_RIPA.pdf.

²⁹ Lundberg interview with Mark Bowden in Nairobi, Kenya, on May 2, 2012. All further quotes from Bowden, unless otherwise attributed, are from this interview.

³⁰ "Deadly Car Bombs Hit Somaliland," *BBC News*, Oct. 29, 2008; see: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/7696986.stm>; UNDP in Somalia, "Two UN Staff Killed in Hargeysa UNDP Compound Attack," Oct. 30, 2008; see: <http://www.so.undp.org/index.php/Press/Two-UN-Staff-killed-inHargeysa-UNDP-Compound-Attack.html>

Nonetheless, after the bombing Bowden pushed hard to resume humanitarian efforts in Somaliland. He resisted pressure from UN headquarters to pull back in the region, and the Hargeisa offices remained open. Walking the line between mission and security, Bowden in general favored a policy of “stay and deliver.” Now he had to make the choice a second time. As he considered the first reports from Baidoa, he was wary. “I wouldn’t say I’m overcautious,” Bowden says. “But clearly the first thought when you have something like Shabaab coming in is for the security and safety of staff.”

Incident Reports

When Bowden returned to Nairobi on Thursday, he had on his desk incident reports from Petit and Hotz.³¹ These gave Bowden more information to work with. Both OCHA officers reported that the Shabaab raiders, while armed and determined, were generally relaxed and respectful. Though many were masked, they removed their face scarves when speaking to the UN staff. They knocked before entering the women’s areas, and they put down their guns during parlays in the DSS office. Petit tried a joke or two and found it easy to make the militiamen smile.

This was not the kidnapping or terrorist attack that Petit had been expecting. The NGO meeting went on without interruption. The UNICEF team continued work in its offices. “There was in fact no sign of hostility or nervousness on the side of any AS [al---Shabaab] in the first minutes of the incident, and only one exception until we left Baidoa,” Petit wrote in his report. Even as the discussion grew strained—Hotz characterized the discussions as “a bit high---tempered”—the Shabaab raiders remained “friendly” and “courteous.”

In fact, many of the gunmen were known to the UN workers. Hotz recognized some boys from the local orphanage where al---Shabaab recruited, and others had escorted her to the IDP camps in the preceding weeks. They brought her cold water at the mosque and told her she had nothing to fear. Petit recognized two Shabaab district leaders and their bodyguards. These were people they had dealt with before, and though they were under watch during the raid and allowed only infrequent outside communication, Hotz and Petit did not feel particularly threatened. “It was very clear that their instruction was not to harm anybody,” says Hotz.³²

The Shabaab raiders gave repeated assurances that so long as the three targeted agencies were shut down, other UN operations could go on as usual. Though the DSS, UNDP, and UNPOS offices were looted, and nine vehicles driven away, files and equipment belonging to the humanitarian agencies were left untouched, and the departing OCHA, UNICEF, and Mine Action staff were allowed to take their laptops and other belongings.

³¹ Cedric Petit and Birgitt Hotz incident reports (internal, unpublished documents). All information in this section is from those reports unless otherwise noted.

³² Lundberg interviews with Birgitt Hotz by telephone on April 23, 2012, and in Nairobi on May 3, 2012. All further quotes from Hotz, unless otherwise attributed, are from these interviews.

Reading the reports, Bowden saw that the Shabaab action was narrowly targeted. The militants had drawn a deliberate distinction between the UN's "political" and "humanitarian" work in Somalia. It did not surprise him. In his years in Africa, Bowden had observed that where central power was weak, insurgents quickly became sophisticated about outside actors. The locals carefully tracked the foreigners' activities, motives and capabilities.

Moreover, the OCHA team in Baidoa—in order to gain access to clinics and camps—had spent two years educating local leaders in the difference between the UN's political and humanitarian work. "[Somalis] have a more detailed knowledge of the UN than we expect," says Bowden.

I've been to meetings where a group of elders has got together and listed every single UN agency, what they want out of them, what has gone wrong before, what their history is.

But during the raid, it was the UN staff that remained in the dark.

Who's in charge?

Bowden read in Petit's incident report that the UN staffer had recognized one of the raid commanders as Hassan Derow, the regional head of security for al---Shabaab, and another as the district head of security. But the young man executing the expulsion orders was a stranger. Petit also identified an unfamiliar "man in blue," a black African dressed in an electric blue polo shirt, the only participant in the raid whose behavior was overtly hostile.

According to Petit, the man in blue differed from the other Shabaab commanders. He was not in uniform but was completely masked; at times he carried a Kalashnikov on his back. He commanded a nervous deference from the other militiamen. He spoke some English, and he demanded to know Petit's nationality. He acted as an enforcer, making sure Petit and the FSCO did not communicate with Nairobi, and he insisted Petit always sit in his presence, as though he had recently received training in hostage management.

It seemed to Petit that the Baidoa raid was being directed by high---ranking authorities outside the compound, people he did not know. Unable to reach Sheikh Robow during the raid, Petit had wondered about the sheikh's standing. Petit did not recognize the name of the Shabaab governor who had signed the expulsion order, and the raid commanders had made at least two lengthy calls to someone outside the compound seeking instructions after learning that all UN international staff would have to leave.

TRU assessments. Additional interpretation came from New York. On Monday, the day of the raid, the Threat and Risk Assessment Unit (TRU), a section of UNDSS at UN headquarters in New York had delivered an early assessment. Jean Lausberg, the Nairobi---based Chief Security Advisor (CSA) and head of the Security Management Team in Somalia, forwarded the report to Bowden and other UN Somalia team members.

TRU had analyzed the al---Shabaab expulsion orders, along with its public communiqué, and judged them the work of hardliners within the Shabaab movement who in the past had denounced UNDP, UNPOS, the United States and the African Union. UNDSS was new to the list. Citing linguistic evidence, the TRU analysts adduced a likely al---Qaeda influence. In a background section, they underscored connections between al---Shabaab and al---Qaeda, also noting the presence of “foreign extremists” in Shabaab leadership ranks. The analysts also confirmed that Sheikh Robow had recently lost his national leadership position.³³

On Wednesday afternoon, TRU issued an update on the communiqué. They reported that it may have been drafted first in classical Arabic, and then translated into Somali, increasing the likelihood that the raid had been directed by foreign entities within al---Shabaab. Moreover, the UN had learned that the communiqué had been disseminated through jihadist forums controlled by Ayman al---Zawahiri, who was then al---Qaeda’s second in command.

CSA Lausberg highlighted TRU’s observation that “in view of disintegrated command and control structure within Al---Shabaab and continuing internal power struggle within its ranks, it is difficult to rely on any forms of agreement with individual Al Shabab local components since this can be either overruled by Al---Shabaab core or disrespected by its regional branches.” Lausberg agreed. In his view, the more moderate, Robow---led Shabaab faction that previously controlled Baidoa had been “overruled” by hardliners.

The Frontline View

Despite these developments, both Petit and Hotz urged OCHA’s immediate return to Baidoa, preferably together with the other humanitarian agencies. Petit felt the Shabaab leadership did not understand why the humanitarian agencies had left. He feared their departure would be interpreted as retaliation for the expulsion of the political agencies, thus blurring the line between the UN’s humanitarian and political efforts and antagonizing the Somalis who had worked hard to allow them stay.

The UN had nurtured a special relationship with Shabaab leaders in Baidoa, and Petit did not want to jeopardize it. His recommendation to Bowden was to go back immediately with a security officer borrowed from one of the humanitarian agencies, and resume operations quickly— as Bowden had done in Hargeisa. Communications with al---Shabaab should remain open at all costs, Petit said. Hotz agreed they should return. One of her reasons was pragmatic: to preserve the local contacts that allowed the humanitarian work to go forward—relationships with elders, escorts, clinic operators, al---Shabaab, UN national staff, and NGO workers. “If we break off complete contact, then it becomes more and more difficult to reengage,” she says; to deliver humanitarian aid, the UN had to be there.

³³ All information on the TRU assessments is based on internal, unpublished documents.

Hotz also stood on principle. “As humanitarians... we should be able to go everywhere because our main concern is not the politics. Our main concern is the people and their needs and getting access to them,” she says. “Theoretically, we should negotiate with whoever gives us access and guarantees for our security.” She had also long felt that OCHA and its humanitarian partners made a mistake in co---locating with other, non---humanitarian UN agencies. She elaborates:

This is not a really healthy marriage... Because people cannot differentiate, if it’s one compound. For them, it’s all UN, we are all together... Then it’s difficult to prove that you are independent and not taking sides.

Bowden respected Hotz and Petit’s opinions. But he also recognized that field workers can become too close to the communities they serve to see problems in perspective. “Hotzi is totally wedded to the place, and that’s not always a good thing in terms of the decision making,” Bowden says.

Unexpectedly, Hotz and Petit gained support from the TFG. On Friday, July 24, the minister of humanitarian affairs and resettlement pleaded with the UN to return to Baidoa—and quickly. He wrote:

The Ministry appreciates to hear courageous statement from the UN that it will not halt its operations on the ground, the Ministry is also coaxing the UN agencies to re---double their assistance to the needy Somali people. We hence hope that this deplorable event will not hamper your industrious service for the deprived Somali people.³⁴

Contacts. That same day, Petit made specific recommendations in a memo titled “Proposed reengagement options”. He suggested Bowden contact as many Al---Shabaab leaders in Baidoa as possible. In particular, he mentioned Derow, al---Shabaab’s regional head of security who had directed the raid in Baidoa, and one of the two signatories to the letters ousting the UN agencies. Petit also suggested contacting the other signatory—the new governor for the region, Sheikh Mahad Cumar Abdulkarim. Finally, Petit advised simultaneous contact with specific elders and members of Baidoa’s intellectual community. Contact with Sheikh Robow, however, he recommended be kept to a minimum in order to avoid putting the Shabaad leader in a difficult position.

Weighing the Options

Bowden wanted to give Petit’s *approach* a try, and directed his staff to set up a phone call with Derow. Meanwhile, he considered the minimum security requirements. There were at least three: the return of the armored vehicles and radio equipment, the assignment of a new security officer, and the negotiation of new security guarantees with Al---Shabaab. The

³⁴ Based on an internal, unpublished document.

radio equipment and armored vehicles were essential to operations and required under MOSS guidelines. The UN would need assurances that staff could communicate freely, without Shabaab oversight or interference.

As for a security officer, with DSS expelled OCHA would have to look for someone attached to a different UN agency. There was precedent for such a solution. Many UN entities— UNICEF, UNHCR, and WFP among them—had their own security teams and had used them for decades. In fact, at the time of the Baidoa raid, DSS was only four years old, and implementation of its new UN---wide security system was still in progress.³⁵ There were never enough DSS officers to go around, and Bowden had the authority to borrow an officer from one of the humanitarian agencies to serve in Baidoa if the need arose.

Whether al---Shabaab would accept such an officer was another question. Bowden himself was skeptical. “There was a high level of paranoia among Shabaab at that time,” he recalls, “a tendency to see all security people as intelligence [officers].” But no progress could be made until communications had been reestablished with al---Shabaab. Earlier security guarantees, negotiated in the spring with Sheikh Robow, were apparently no longer operative. “What had happened was a change in the Shabaab power structure,” Bowden remembers. “There were the beginnings of signs that [Robow] was far more marginal than we had thought... and that they had put in someone deliberately who wasn’t from the region that couldn’t represent local interests.”

US Terror List and Aid

Talking to al-Shabaab, however, carried its own risks. In February 2008, Al---Shabaab had been placed on the State Department’s List of Foreign Terrorist Organizations. Under US law, neither the US government nor American NGOs could provide any “material support or resources” —even indirectly—to any identified terrorist organization.³⁶ That made contact with al-Shabaab tricky. What constituted material support? Bowden did not want to fall afoul of that line.

Talking to al-Shabaab might also, ironically, threaten the funding that paid for aid to Somalia. As in other conflict zones, it was difficult to be sure how much aid for Somalia actually reached the intended recipients. Inevitably, some went into the pockets of rebels—through checkpoint bribes, contract bonuses, escort and security fees, inspection taxes, diversion,

³⁵ A failure of the UN’s new security management system was one of the major findings of a report on the Algiers bombing, *Towards a Culture of Security and Accountability*, Report of the Independent Panel on Safety and Security of UN Personnel and Premises Worldwide, June 9, 2008. See: <http://www.un.org/News/dh/infocus/terrorism/PanelOnSafetyReport.pdf>

³⁶ Naz K. Modirzadeh, Dustin A. Lewis and Claude Bruderlein, “Humanitarian Engagement Under CounterTerrorism: A Conflict of Norms and the Emerging Policy Landscape,” *International Review of the Red Cross*, Vol. 93, No. 883, Sept. 2011. See: <http://www.icrc.org/eng/assets/files/review/2011/irrc-883-modirzadeh-lewisbruderlein.pdf>

and outright theft, to name just a few. Al-Shabaab had benefited before, sometimes using the proceeds for arms purchases.³⁷

The US had long been the biggest donor of humanitarian aid to Somalia, contributing more than \$1 billion since 1991. In 2008 alone, it had given \$227.5 million, most of it through USAID contributions to the UN Consolidated Appeal, the joint humanitarian appeal organized and administered by OCHA. More than 40 percent of all 2008 UN humanitarian aid to Somalia came from the US.³⁸

But in 2009, Bowden's first year managing the appeal, US pledges fell to just over \$86 million, or 17 percent,³⁹ and by mid-summer US funding was in danger of disappearing altogether. With rumors circulating about significant diversions to al-Shabaab from the UN World Food Program, the US had already delayed a decision about new funds for Somalia and was threatening to withhold distribution of food from warehouses in Kenya.⁴⁰

If Bowden sent staff back to Baidoa, and another incident occurred, might that imperil funding even further? Just to complicate matters, there were plans afoot for Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton to meet with TFG President Sheikh Sharif Ahmed on the future of Somalia in early August. It might be a poor moment to be actively negotiating for al-Shabaab cooperation.

Multiple Interests

Then there was the reaction from UN headquarters. On July 21, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon had condemned the looting of the Baidoa compound.⁴¹ The same day, UNPOS head Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah in his daily situation report had painted a grim picture of the Baidoa raid, calling Al Shabaab "one of Somalia's extremist groups" and reporting they had "ransacked" the compound "with impunity." He surmised that the insurgents aimed at "scaring the international partners from Somalia."⁴²

³⁷ Chris Harnisch, "Cutting Humanitarian Aid in Somalia and Fighting Terror," *Critical Threats*, Feb. 23, 2010. See: <http://www.criticalthreats.org>.

³⁸ United Nations, OCHA, *2009 Consolidated Appeal, Somalia Case Statement*, p. 112, reporting on the 2008 Consolidated Appeal.

³⁹ United Nations, OCHA, *2010 Consolidated Appeal, Somalia Case Statement*, p. 88, reporting on the 2009 Consolidated Appeal.

⁴⁰ UN Security Council, "Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1853 (2008)," Publication S/2010/91, Mar. 10, 2010, pp. 59-66; see: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2010/91. Also "Legal Roadblocks for U.S. Famine Relief to Somalia Creating Humanitarian Crisis," *Charity and Security Network*, Jan. 27, 2010; see: http://www.charityandsecurity.org/analysis/Legal_Roadblocks_Relief_Somalia_Humanitarian_Crisis. Also Jeffrey Gettleman, "U.S. Delays Somalia Aid, Fearing It Is Feeding Terrorists," *New York Times*, Oct. 1, 2009, and Gettleman, "U.N. Says U.S. Delays Led to Aid Cuts in Somalia," *New York Times*, Nov. 6, 2009.

⁴¹ United Nations, Department of Public Information, "Secretary-General Condemns Looting of United Nations Offices in Somalia," Document SG/SM/12375, July 21, 2009.

⁴² Based on an internal, unpublished document.

Ould-Abdallah was also the Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) to Somalia, the top UN position for Somalia. By coincidence, the day of the raid he had published an op---ed denouncing Somali extremists and foreign fighters linked to al---Qaeda and the Taliban. He had called on the international community to exert counter---pressure on the insurgents, warning that “the credibility of the United Nations and others is threatened if they stand by and allow... a takeover in Somalia.”⁴³ Might Baidoa become a test case for Ould---Abdallah’s exhortation to push back against al---Shabaab? If so, what would that look like?

NGO reaction. Some outspoken international NGOs operating in Somalia also held strong views. Bowden had already heard reports that a group of nine was distressed over the UN’s handling of the Baidoa expulsion. They included the Danish Refugee Council, International Rescue Committee, Islamic Relief, Oxfam, and Bowden’s own former employer, Save the Children. The NGOs had long objected that the UN failed to distinguish clearly between humanitarian efforts and political activities—jeopardizing everyone. Just 18 months earlier, policy analysts at *Médecins Sans Frontières* had faulted the UN’s “integrated” approach to humanitarian aid. They wrote:

The UN’s vision has grown into a highly coordinated system where humanitarian action is structurally subordinated to economic, military, diplomatic and security visions. In the often volatile and dangerous areas where humanitarian agencies try to deliver aid, neutrality or, more importantly, the perception of neutrality, facilitate access and acts as a guarantee of security for both those providing and receiving aid.⁴⁴

This time they were apparently furious about UN statements that the expulsion of UNPOS, UNDP and UNDSS would damage humanitarian relief—even though none of the targeted agencies had a humanitarian mission. Would sending OCHA officers back into Baidoa help alleviate their concerns?

Short phone call. Bowden appreciated these subtleties. Yet he saw no way around direct contact with Al---Shabaab if he wanted to maintain coordinated humanitarian aid to Somalia. On Saturday, July 25, his staff were able to put him through to Shabaab security chief Derow. Bowden wanted to discuss what conditions would need to be met before the UN humanitarian agencies could return to Baidoa. He reached Derow in Mogadishu. According to notes taken, Bowden said:

Looking at the immediate future we would like to be able to resume humanitarian operations because there are high needs among the population, you also know about these needs. We want to

⁴³ Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah, “The International Community Faces a Test in Somalia,” *Washington Post*, July 20, 2009. See: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/07/19/AR2009071901759.html>

⁴⁴ Eric Stobbaerts, Sarah Martin and Katharine Derderian, “Integration and UN Humanitarian Reforms,” in *Forced Migration Review*, Issue 29, Dec.2007, pp. 18-20. See: <http://www.fmreview.org/FMRpdfs/FMR29/Full.pdf>

discuss with you about how operations can be resumed and what could be the security arrangements to allow this resumption.

In response, *Derow* wanted to know if any UN staff had felt at any point in danger. As Bowden started to reassure him that they had not, the sound of fighting could be heard in the background. The conversation was broken off and the UN could not reestablish contact.

Return or Stay Out?

By the time he got off the phone with *Derow*, Bowden realized that time was running out for the “return quickly” option. If he was going to send *Hotz* and *Petit* back, it would have to be immediately—perhaps as early as Sunday.

As Humanitarian Coordinator, Bowden’s duty was to uphold the humanitarian principles of neutrality, impartiality, and independence of operation. Humanitarian organizations by their nature wanted to be on the ground, in the midst of any disaster that required their assistance. Remote management—trying to coordinate relief efforts from Nairobi—simply invited even more diversion of aid. As OCHA Protection Officer *Buahene* notes:

If you leave everything to national staff and national NGOs only, or even international NGOs... you get a very distorted or potentially distorted picture of what are the needs on the ground and what are the gaps on the ground. And so, you get a lot of corruption.

OCHA’s chief mission was to rationalize aid delivery across humanitarian agencies. It had only recently been able to return to *Baidoa* and reestablish strong local ties. If its international staff remained out now, who knew how long it might be until they could return. Other OCHA staff also offered Bowden their perspective. *Buahene*, for example, felt the price of staying out was too high. He says:

At the end of the day, you lose not only contact with the people you want to help. More importantly, you lose contact with the very people who are in authority... Ultimately how do you negotiate humanitarian access if you can’t actually talk to the person?

But as Resident Coordinator, and especially as the Designated Official, Bowden had to be sure of the security arrangements before taking such a step. Clearly the forces in charge in *Baidoa* had changed. But OCHA should be able to negotiate with the new group, as it had with the former one. From a security standpoint, a return was possible, at least theoretically. But was it feasible? Was it even desirable? As Bowden puts it: “Apart from thinking about the immediate safety of staff, you know, the second thoughts are about what room have you got for negotiation?”

Bowden decided to ask his staff to prepare a letter to the new governor and *Derow*. But what should he ask them to write? Should he use forceful language, as *Ould*---*Abdallah* seemed to suggest? Should he ask for guarantees—and if so, whose guarantees could he trust?

What about the new registration requirement? If it meant payments to al---Shabaab, as was apparently the case, could that be construed as aiding a terrorist organization?

APPENDIX 1

GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

CSA	Chief Security Advisor
DO	Designated Official (for Security)
HC	Humanitarian Coordinator
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
MOSS	Minimum Operating Security Standards
NGO	Non---Governmental Organization
NSP	NGO Safety Programme
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
RC	Resident Coordinator
SRSO	Special Representative of the Secretary---General
TFG	Transitional Federal Government
TRU	Threat and Risk Assessment Unit
UN	United Nations
UNCC	United Nations Common Compound
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDSS	United Nations Department of Safety and Security
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (also called the UN Refugee Agency)
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNPOS	United Nations Political Office for Somalia
USG/ERC	Under---Secretary---General and Emergency Relief Coordinator
WFP	World Food Program
WHO	World Health Organization