

Mediterranean Review



September 25, 2012

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Sahel Food Crisis	1
North Africa	2
Northeast Africa	4
Horn of Africa	6

ABOUT THE CFC

The Civil-Military Fusion Centre (CFC) is an information and knowledge management organisation focused on improving civil-military interaction, facilitating information sharing and enhancing situational awareness through the [CimicWeb](#) portal and our weekly and monthly publications.

CFC products link to and are based on open-source information from a wide variety of organisations, research centres and media sources. However, the CFC does not endorse and cannot necessarily guarantee the accuracy or objectivity of these sources.

CFC publications are independently produced by Desk Officers and do not reflect NATO policies or positions of any other organisation.

The CFC is part of NATO Allied Command Operations.



CONTACT THE CFC

For further information, contact:

Med Basin Team Leader
Trista Guertin
trista.guertin@cimicweb.org

The Mediterranean Team
Med.basin@cimicweb.org

This document provides an overview of developments in the Mediterranean Basin and other regions of interest from 18 – 24 September, with hyperlinks to source material highlighted and underlined in the text. For more information on the topics below or other issues pertaining to the region, please contact the members of the Med Basin Team, or visit our website at www.cimicweb.org.



In Focus: Sahel Food Crisis

[Food insecurity and malnutrition](#) rates are expected to improve during October in Africa's Sahel region, which encompasses nine countries, including Algeria, Cameroon, Chad, Eritrea, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, and parts of Sudan, reports UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). October is expected to bring the first harvests and with it, lower food prices. It is probable that for the remainder of the year, [food security indicators](#) will normalise as a result of the harvest, reports the *Famine Early Warning System Network (FEWSNet)*. However, *FEWSNet* warns that cereal prices will remain somewhat higher compared with normal seasonal trends.

In addition, between July and August, rainfall levels were [150% above normal](#), affecting most of the region, in particular Niger, where more than 7,000 farms have been flooded, killing at least 81 people and displacing another 525,000, reports *All Africa*. The current rainy season has brought heavy downpours and flash floods, seriously impacting the region, already hit by severe drought and acute food shortages. The UN currently estimates that some [18 million people](#) are currently facing food insecurity in the Sahel, as result of drought, high food prices, and political instability in the region, reports *UN News Centre*. Many households are in need of emergency food assistance, and malnutrition rates remain high. The World Food Programme (WFP) will scale up food assistance activities in the next few months, distributing food aid to approximately 10 million people in the Sahel, warning that humanitarian needs still remain "huge" before the October harvest. Furthermore, current environmental conditions may allow for a second generation of locusts in farming and pastoral areas by the end of the month.



North Africa

Eray Basar > eray.basar@cimicweb.org

Algeria

While the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) prepares for [intervention in northern Mali](#), Algeria is still calling for negotiations, reports *Voice of America*. According to Gilles Yabi, West Africa Director for the International Crisis Group, Algeria fears that the conflict in northern Mali may spread into its territory, as the results of an international intervention are unlikely to be sustainable. While Algeria seems ambiguous about its stance on the Mali crisis, Wolfram Lacher, researcher at the German Institute for International and Security Affairs, argues that “ECOWAS is an imperfect framework” which excludes Algeria and Mauritania, as these countries are very influential in northern Mali. Lacher also adds that the two countries are opposed to the intervention as well as to the mediating role of Burkina Faso’s President, Blaise Compaoré.

The People’s National Army in Algeria [recently seized](#) 32 weapons and 14,000 rounds of ammunition after a successful ambush on arms smugglers using the rugged border crossings along the Algerian-Libyan border, *Magharebia* reports. Three members of the gang were arrested and one was wounded. Due to increased activity by weapons traffickers on the southern borders of the country, the Algerian army has increased security measures and patrols, and units have been equipped with powerful surveillance devices, allowing them to cover broader areas.

Algerian Minister of Foreign Affairs Mourad Medelci said on 17 September that there is no “[material evidence](#)” in hand confirming the execution of Tahat Touati, the consular officer who was held hostage in Mali, *Bernamea* informs. He also stated that they have received information regarding the detention conditions of other diplomats held hostage, which have not changed nor have they any health problems.

The Algerian General Association for Entrepreneurs (AGAE) is planning to build [five skyscrapers](#), each containing about 1,000 housing units, informs *Ahram Online*. AGAE is currently running a feasibility study to implement the project in five locations (Algiers, Oran, Annaba, Constantine and Ouargla). Although [Algeria needs](#) 225,000 additional housing units each year to accommodate the growing population, the government builds only 75,000 new units annually. The skyscraper project will help meet the demand.

The Algerian Coast Guard rescued 33 Algerian [migrants attempting to reach Europe illegally](#) when one of their two fishing boats capsized on 17 September, according to *AFP*. The group was taken to court for attempted illegal immigration, and if found guilty, may be sentenced to six months in prison, while the traffickers may face up to 25 years imprisonment.

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, said at the end of her visit to Algeria that political freedom and [freedom of expression](#) in the press in Algeria have shown significant improvements over the recent years, informs *UN News Centre*. However, she expressed concerns about the deterioration of the rights to freedom of association and assembly, which limits sectors such as “civil society organizations, human rights defenders and trade unions”. Following Pillay’s visit, Algerian authorities made commitments to human rights treaties. A French-language daily, *l’Expression*, said “Algerian authorities have [shown their willingness](#) to ratify laws against torture and enforced disappearances, a very complicated process whose implementation will take quite a long time.”

Algeria’s 2013-2017 science strategy aims to keep the [science budget](#) at the previously allocated rate of 1.2% of the gross domestic product (GDP), and open up the country to foreign expertise and experience. By doing so, Algeria plans to “reverse brain drain and rebuild public trust in expertise” according to Mokhtar Sellami, Director of Research Programming and Prospective Studies at the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research.

Libya

The fighting between a Libyan Islamist militia group, Rafalah al-Sahati, and the protesters who stormed militia bases in Benghazi over the weekend left at least four people dead. The militia group announced that they detained 113 people for involvement in the 21-22 September [attacks](#), reports *Bloomberg*. On 23 September, the Libyan Prime Minister’s spokesman, Ahmed Shalabi, said they want to bring all militia groups under central control, starting in Benghazi. Ishmael Salabi, assistant commander of the Rafalah al-Sahati group, confirmed that they would accept orders from the army chief of staff. On 24 September, Col. Ali al-Sheikhi, spokesman for Libya’s Joint Chiefs of Staff, said that the chiefs of the Rafallah Sahati Brigade and the February 17 Brigade [will be replaced](#) with army commanders.

Yousef Jehani, a senior member of Ansar al Sharia, the group suspected of involvement in the attacks on the US Consulate in Libya, said that a US military intervention in Libya will cause Libyans to wage a [holy war](#) on America, *Reuters* reports. Jehani said “[i]f one U.S. soldier arrives, not for the purpose of defending the embassy, but to repeat what happened in Iraq or Afghanistan, be sure that all battalions in Libya and all Libyans will put aside all their differences and rally behind one goal of hitting America and Americans”. Meanwhile, the Libyan government called for a meeting with senior [Benghazi commanders](#) on 18 September to discuss the involvement of the local Islamist extremists and foreign elements in the deadly attacks on the US Consulate, reports the *Telegraph*. The meeting came after Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb’s (AQIM) call for more demonstrations. In related news, Matthew Olsen, Director of the US National Counterterrorism Center, said at a Senate Homeland Security Committee hearing on 19 September that the [attacks on the US Consulate](#) in Libya were not predetermined; they were “opportunistic”, *Bloomberg* informs. Olsen said that there is no specific intelligence in hand indicating “advance planning or coordination”. Reinforcing Olsen’s claim, White House spokesman Jay Carney said on 20 September that “[i]t is [self-evident](#) that what happened in Benghazi was a terrorist attack”. Carney did not clarify whether the Obama administration believes the attacks were pre-planned.

Morocco

Dozens of Sub-Saharan Africans who were deported from Morocco after the recent government clampdowns on [illegal migrants](#) are returning to Morocco in hopes of reaching Europe, reports *IOL News*. The migrants are currently living in camps in the Sidi Maafa woods under harsh conditions. While the immigrants are “tantalisingly close” to reaching “the other side”, the Spanish and Moroccan authorities are cooperating to prevent migrants from entering Spanish territory. Doctors without Borders (*MSF*) Morocco Director David Cantero said that many of these migrants suffer wounds they incurred while trying to evade Moroccan police or jumping over the border fences. The Moroccan Association of Human Rights (AMDH) condemned the government for systematically violating the human rights of the migrants.

The UN special rapporteur on torture, Juan Mendez, visited [former political prisoners](#) and victims of torture in Morocco on 19 September, reports *AFP*. The former prisoners are members of the Justice and Charity movement, a party which is “officially banned but usually tolerated”. Mendez also visited the prison in the city of Laayoune in Western Sahara. Moroccan Association of Human Rights (AMDH) called for the UN to “set up a mechanism to monitor human rights abuses in the Western Sahara”. On 24 September, Mendez stated that there have been [improvements](#) in human rights practices in the country, but there are still complaints about the ill-treatment of detainees during interrogations. He also expressed concerns about the mistreatment and violence against the Sub-Saharan Africans who are illegally immigrating to Morocco.

Tunisia

Seif-Allah Ben Hassine, believed to be the head of the Tunisian branch of Ansar al Sharia, [managed to escape](#) from a mosque where he was hiding despite hundreds of security forces stationed outside of the building, informs *Associated Press (AP)*. The Salafist leader reportedly [preached](#) at Al-Fatah mosque near the US Embassy in Tunisia provoking people to protest the following day. Tunisian media criticised the failure to arrest Ben Hassine.

French schools in Tunisia were closed from 19 September to 24 September due to [fears of unrest](#) over cartoons of the Prophet Mohammad by French artist Charlie Hebdo, reports *AFP*. A French Embassy source informed that they did not receive any threats and the measure was “preventive”. In addition, Tunisian Interior Minister Ali Larayedh announced in a radio broadcast that demonstrations were [not allowed](#) in the country for the security of the people, informs *AP*.

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) announced that they will provide Tunisia with [technical support](#) to help achieve its development goals, reports *Tunis Afrique Presse*. Tunisian Foreign Minister Rafik Abdessalem expressed the importance of foreign investment in the economic development of Tunisia. During their meeting, Director of the Economic Development and Globalisation Department at the ESCWA, Abdullah Al Dardari, and Foreign Minister Abdessalem explored cooperation opportunities and strategies to encourage foreign investment.

Have a question on North Africa?
Submit an RFI or recommend a topic for future *In Focus* coverage.
Contact us at Med.basin@cimicweb.org or visit us online at www.cimicweb.org.
We look forward to hearing from you!



Northeast Africa

Angelia Sanders > angelia.sanders@cimicweb.org

Egypt

An Israeli soldier and three militants were killed during an attack at the [Egyptian-Israeli border](#) on 21 September, reports *BBC*. Israeli soldiers came under fire by heavily armed militants who had crossed into Israel at the Sinai border. An [Islamist militant group](#) based in Sinai claimed responsibility for the attack, stating that it was “a response to an online video mocking the prophet Mohammad that triggered protests across the Muslim world”. This is the latest incident in an increasing number of attacks in Sinai since last year, including the killing of sixteen Egyptian border guards on 05 August 2012. Egyptian authorities have subsequently scaled up their military presence in the area, including additional armoured vehicles and helicopters to carry out air strikes on suspected militant locations. An Egyptian court sentenced to death fourteen men described as Islamic militants for a [2011 attack](#) on a police station in North Sinai, in which an army officer, five policemen and a civilian were killed, informs *Egypt Independent*.

Following anti-US protests which began on 11 September in Cairo, Egypt’s highest Islamic legal official urged Muslims, possibly insulted by cartoons mocking the Prophet Mohammad published in a French magazine on 19 September, [not to retaliate](#) with violence, informs *Egypt Independent*. Grand Mufti Ali Gomaa said the Prophet Mohammad had to “endure all personal insults and attacks without retaliation of any sort. There is no doubt that, since the Prophet is our greatest example in this life, this should also be the reaction of all Muslims”.

President Morsi travelled to New York to attend the [United Nations General Assembly](#) meeting on 25 September, his first visit to the United States since his June election, report *Ahram Online*. Morsi will not meet privately with President Obama but is expected to make another visit to Washington in the coming months. Denying any tension exists between Egypt and the US following anti-US protests in Cairo, Foreign Minister Mohamed Amr refuted reports that the US has threatened to cancel the USD 1.5 billion aid package to Egypt.

The European Commission announced on 20 September that it will grant Egypt USD 13 million to develop [water and sanitation projects](#), reports *Ahram Online*. The funding will support the improvement of infrastructure needed to supply water, as well as technical assistance, financial planning and project management. Egyptian authorities have stated they will not require parliamentary approval for a USD [4.8 billion loan](#) requested from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which would have potentially delayed receipt of the funds, informs *Reuters*. The IMF will send a mission to Egypt in October to discuss the potential loan once the government has finalised its economic programme, with the expectation to complete negotiations by the end of the year.

South Sudan

The African Union (AU) officially [assumed command](#) of operations against Uganda’s Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) on 18 September, reports *al Jazeera*. Soldiers from Central African Republic (CAR), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), South Sudan and Uganda have been hunting for LRA leader Joseph Kony, who is accused of conducting a brutal campaign of abductions, rapes and defilement in a remote patch of jungle straddling the borders of CAR, DRC and South Sudan since 2005. AU officials say that a scarcity of resources and disagreements over troop deployments pose major impediments to the operation. In other security news, South Sudan accused Sudan of air-dropping eight parcels of weapons and [ammunition](#) to rebel militia leader David Yau Yau in Jonglei state, reports *Reuters*. Sudan has denied the claims.

South Sudan plans to enact a [mining law](#) by the end of October that will help kick-start exploration and development within the country, according to *Reuters*. Many in the mining industry believe that the country has significant deposits of gold, copper, uranium, iron ore and other minerals. The country suspended exploration licenses for about seventeen companies upon gaining independence in July 2011; however, the new law will allow some of the companies to restart exploration. The European Union (EU) announced that at least EUR three million (approx. USD 3,900,000) has been earmarked to enhance South Sudan’s [microeconomic policies](#) and institutions and that the funds will be channelled through the IMF trust fund, reports the *Sudan Tribune*. East African Community (EAC) Minister Musa Sirma said that South Sudan must stabilise its currency and “address insecurity issues, among other concerns” before being considered for inclusion into the [regional bloc](#), reports the *Daily Nation*.

Sudan

A spokesman for the SLM-Minnawi rebel group announced that [clashes](#) between the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) and rebel forces on 19 September resulted in the deaths of eighty government troops and one Sudan Revolutionary Front (SRF) rebel in North Darfur, reports *Radio Dabanga*. SRF captured three SAF soldiers and seized several vehicles and weapons. Witnesses reported government forces used a helicopter, as well as Antonov and MiG airplanes to shell the region on Wednesday and Thursday. The aerial bombardment set several areas on fire, including farms, and caused local residents to flee the fighting. SAF announced on 19 September that it seized a Sudan People's Liberation Movement- North (SPLM-N) rebel position in the south western part of [Blue Nile](#) state in an operation that left "large numbers" of rebel fighters dead, and resulted in the capture of large quantities of artillery and ammunition, reports the *Sudan Tribune*. The AU's chief mediator for Sudan, Thabo Mbeki, has called on the Sudanese government and the SPLM-N to [negotiate directly](#) rather than relying on the current method of communicating through the AU High-Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP). Political talks between Khartoum and the SPLM-N remain unproductive, with the exception of an agreement to provide humanitarian assistance to the two areas of Blue Nile and South Kordofan. However, little aid has been delivered, prompting the UN Security Council to "once again" stress "the urgency of immediately delivering humanitarian [relief supplies](#) to the affected civilian populations, so as to avoid any further suffering or loss of life".

Sudan's Commissioner of Humanitarian Aid (HAC), Suleiman Marhab, stated that foreign [aid organisations](#) operating in Sudan must have a national partner from 2013 onwards or they will be expelled, reports *Radio Dabanga*. Marhab also said that all relief operations should come from inside the Sudanese territory and that organisations will not be allowed to bring in supplies via air or across borders. Already, the Sudanese government has accused some international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) of being involved in airlifting [humanitarian assistance](#) from a "neighbouring country" to rebel-controlled areas in South Kordofan without the government's permission, reports the *Sudan Tribune*. In other humanitarian news, the Minister of Health from the Darfur Regional Authority, Osman al Bushra, stated that [health and medical](#) services in all five states of Darfur are "tragic and catastrophic" and that the ministry is determined to design an integrated health project for all of Darfur, reports *Radio Dabanga*. Additionally it was reported that the states of South, East and West Darfur face problems of undrinkable water following recent heavy rains.

Sudan opened its first [gold refinery](#) on 19 September in order to improve the quality of its gold to international standards and to help reduce the amount of gold smuggled to overseas markets, reports *Reuters*. The country has increased its gold production and the government hopes to sell gold worth up to USD three billion this year, double last year's gold revenue. However, it is difficult to verify overall production figures because unofficial gold seekers account for a large part of the country's gold industry. Germany, one of the few Western countries maintaining good relations with Khartoum, has called off a conference next month that was intended to be held in Berlin with the aim of [generating investments](#) for Sudan, according to *Reuters*. The decision was made following the storming of the German Embassy in Khartoum in protest of a film that insults the Prophet Mohammad (see *CFC [In Focus](#): Recent Anti-US Protests*).

Humanitarian and Political Issues along Sudan and South Sudan Border

Relief agencies report that flooding, disease and an influx of additional refugees pose [new threats](#) to refugee camps in South Sudan, according to *Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN)*. As routes currently blocked by floods dry up, there is an expectation that up to 30,000 additional people could arrive in the camps, bringing the total number of refugees in South Sudan close to 200,000 people. Aid agencies are underfunded, with the UN World Food Program (WFP) reporting that they have only received a third of the USD six million it needs to airdrop food aid and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) stating that it has only received 40% of its USD 183 million appeal. The International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC) reports that severe potable [water shortages](#) in South Sudanese refugee camps close to the Sudanese border have contributed to an "alarming" rise in mortality and malnutrition rates. Following floods in Upper Nile state, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) is providing water and [sanitation services](#) to the Doro camp and is working to prevent overflowing latrines from contaminating surrounding water sources.

Sudan's President Omar al Bashir and South Sudanese President Salva Kiir met for [direct talks](#) on 23 September in Addis Ababa with AU mediators and Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn, reports *BBC*. Talks are on-going about the defining of their shared border, oil revenues and the disputed region of Abyei. There is some optimism that a deal will be finalised; however, both sides are under pressure from hardliners against any concessions. One of the main sticking points is the establishment of a fourteen mile demilitarised buffer zone.

Have a question on Northeast Africa?

Submit an RFI or recommend a topic for future *In Focus* coverage.

Contact us at Med.basin@cimicweb.org or visit us online at www.cimicweb.org.

We look forward to hearing from you!



Horn of Africa

Britta Rinehard > britta.rinehard@cimicweb.org

Ethiopia

Ethiopia's new Prime Minister and Meles Zenawi's successor, Hailemariam Desalegn, [took the oath](#) of office on 20 September, reports *Associated Press (AP)*. Last week, the ruling coalition Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), which controls 546 of the 547 seats in parliament, confirmed Hailemariam, also electing him chairman of the EPRDF. Hailemariam vowed to sustain his predecessor's policies, maintaining close ties with the United States and continuing its security role in Somalia. Hailemariam reiterated that Ethiopia will maintain its [neutral stance](#) between Sudan and South Sudan and provide "[s]upport to the two brotherly countries' effort towards resolving their dispute," reports the *Sudan Tribune*. Ethiopia hosted Sudan's President Omar Hassan al-Bashir and his southern counterpart, Salva Kiir, [for talks](#) over oil and border disputes on 23 September, reports *Reuters*. The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) threatened to impose sanctions if the two countries do not come to an agreement (see also *Sudan* section).

Swedish state broadcaster *Sveriges Television (SVT)* suspects that Ethiopia [blocked access](#) to their website during their coverage of the release of two Swedish journalists **imprisoned in Ethiopia since 2011**, writes *The Local*. **SVT has reported claims** that evidence was falsified during the trial to convict them on terror charges. *SVT* is investigating the cause of the interruption and will contact Ethiopia's embassy in Sweden for an explanation (see also *Mediterranean Basin Review* from 18 September 2012).

The African Development Bank (AfDB) [approved a loan](#) of USD 348 million for a 1,068-km high voltage transmission line between Ethiopia and Kenya. Co-financing will be provided by the Ethiopian and Kenyan governments, as well as the French Development Agency (AFD) and the World Bank. The project is considered timely as increasing demand for electricity in the East African region has led to sporadic power outages and a reliance on costly emergency generators. However, the region, and Ethiopia in particular, possesses substantial natural resources, including hydropower. The project will improve power supply, curtail outages and promote power trade and regional integration amongst the nine members of the Eastern Africa Power Pool (EAPP).

Kenya

Police believe that bodies [have been moved](#) from two mass graves discovered in Kilelengwani village, where ethnic clashes between the semi-nomadic Orma and Pokomo farmers have killed over 100 people since August, informs *Reuters*. The police noticed that the mass graves "[a]ppeared freshly dug and was exuding the stench of rotten flesh." However, after digging at the site, police were unable to find any remains, suspecting that the graves were tampered with to prevent an investigation into the Kilelengwani incidents where "raiders shot, hacked and burnt to death 38 people last week". Kenyan politicians have been accused of instigating the violence while vying for a seat in the March 2013 elections. In other parts of the Tana Delta, Pokomo and Orma communities [accuse police](#) of destroying homes, beating residents and injuring dozens during the search for illegal firearms, informs *Standard Media*.

The Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT) [called off](#) their three-week strike, asking teachers to resume classes on 25 September, writes the *Daily Nation*. The government and the union reached an agreement, whereby the government agreed to pay a lump sum of KES 13.5 billion (approximately USD 160 million), and will raise basic salaries for the lowest paid teachers by about 40% and basic salaries for the highest paid by 20%. In addition, teachers will receive hardship and special schools allowances.

The trade deficit in Kenya, the [largest economy](#) in East Africa, grew by more than more than 38% to USD 948.2 million, reports *Bloomberg*. While imports increased, exports of tea – the country's biggest export - declined due to poor weather conditions. Kenya is the world's largest exporter of black tea.

President Kibaki [is attending](#) the 67th session of the United Nations General Assembly on 25 September in New York, including the mini-summit on Somalia, reports the *Daily Nation*.

Somalia

Member of Parliament (MP) Mustafa Haji Maalim [was killed](#) in front of his house in Mogadishu by unidentified gunmen on 22 September, reports *Garowe Online*. Maalim, the father-in-law of former Somali President Sheikh Sharif Ahmed, is the first MP of the new federal parliament to be killed since elections were held on 10 September. More than eighty people have been killed as a result of increased violence since the elections. The latest incident occurred on 20 September when suicide bombers in Mogadishu killed at least [fourteen people](#), including three journalists, writes the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ). Another journalist, Hassan Yusuf Absuge, was shot on 21 September, making him the [tenth journalist](#) to be killed in Somalia in 2012.

A Kenyan soldier has been detained pending an investigation after six Somali [civilians were killed](#) in a town fifty kilometers from the al Shabaab stronghold of Kismayo, reports *BBC*. Somali army spokesman Adan Mohamed Hirsi called it a “[d]eliberate killing,” since the victims were in line to buy sugar at the time. An estimated 7,500 residents have [fled Kismayo](#) in the last several days in anticipation of renewed clashes between government allied troops and al Shabaab, reports the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Kenya assured UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia, Mark Bowden, that they will do their best to minimise the impact of the [military operations](#) on the civilian population and the “[K]enya Defence Forces (KDF) will help ensure humanitarian access to all people in need”, reports the *United Nations News Centre*.

Hawa Aden Mohamed received the UNHCR [Nansen Refugee Award](#). The former refugee left Canada and returned to her native Somalia to help rebuild the country. She founded the Galkayo Education Centre for Peace and Development, providing free schooling, training and health care in nine communities to displaced girls and women since 1999. Mohamed encourages women to become active members of society, and empowers the women to address female genital cutting, early marriage and HIV/AIDS. The Nansen Refugee Award is given to “visionaries who confront the horrors of war and oppression, yet still find cause for hope”.

Piracy

[The decrease](#) in Somali piracy incidents has been attributed to an international navy presence, increased use of private armed guards and compliance with Best Management Practices (BMPs), reports *Reuters*. From January to June of 2012, the International Maritime Bureau (IMB) reported 69 incidents, compared to 163 during the same time period in 2011. The decrease is responsible for a reduction in the cost of kidnap and ransom insurance, which has grown to a USD 250 million business in the last five years. Ship owners that use armed security guards are reportedly able to negotiate for discounted insurance premiums of up to 50%.

During the first bilateral [counter-piracy exercise](#) between China and the US, the guided-missile destroyer USS WINSTON S. CHURCHILL (DDG 81) and other US Navy assets participated with elements of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (Navy) PLA(N) near the Horn of Africa, reports the US Navy.

Organisation	Number of Hostages	Vessels Held
EU NAVFOR/	177 as of 21 September 2012	7
IMB*	212 as of 24 September 2012	11
NATO	177 as of 24 September 2012	7

For further information on piracy-related topics please visit our [Horn of Africa](#) page.

** The number of hostages and vessels held can vary from entity to entity. For example, EU and NATO statistics account for vessels hijacked for ransom, while IMB includes fishing vessels and dhows hijacked for reasons other than ransom.*

Have a question on Horn of Africa?
Submit an RFI or recommend a topic for future *In Focus* coverage.
Contact us at Med.basin@cimicweb.org or visit us online at www.cimicweb.org.
 We look forward to hearing from you!