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**DEVELOPING A COORDINATED AND SUSTAINABLE
STRATEGY FOR SOMALIA**

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICAN AFFAIRS

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

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DEVELOPING A COORDINATED AND SUSTAINABLE STRATEGY FOR SOMALIA

WEDNESDAY, MAY 20, 2009

U.S. SENATE,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICAN AFFAIRS,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:03 a.m., in room SD-419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Russell D. Feingold (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Present: Senators Feingold, Kaufman, Isakson, and Risch.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. RUSSELL D. FEINGOLD, U.S. SENATOR FROM WISCONSIN

Senator FEINGOLD. This hearing will come to order. On behalf of the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on African Affairs, I welcome all of you to this hearing entitled “Developing a Coordinated and Sustainable U.S. Strategy for Somalia.” I’m honored that I will be joined by the ranking member of this subcommittee, Senator Isakson, and I’ll invite him to deliver some opening remarks in just a moment when he arrives.

Last month the problem of piracy off Somalia’s coast hit home for a lot of Americans with the attack on the *Maersk Alabama* and the capture of Capt. Richard Phillips after his courageous actions to ensure the safety of his crew. I was pleased that Chairman Kerry of the full committee quickly organized a full committee hearing to examine this growing problem and in addition several other committees held hearings to assess this problem and also potential U.S. responses to it.

Now, this heightened level of attention to the Horn of Africa is long overdue. But in order to truly understand and address the piracy problem we need to know what’s behind it. We cannot ignore the conditions on land that have made the waters off Somalia a haven for pirates. The recent spike in piracy is an outgrowth of the state collapse and lawlessness and economic desperation that have plagued that country for well over a decade.

That’s why I decided to hold this hearing today. I’ve held many hearings over the years to examine how we can best address the crises in Somalia and am hopeful that today’s hearing will look at the situation in Somalia from a new light, ensuring any short-term measures we may take to eliminate the problem of piracy are sustainable and coordinated with broader efforts to establish stability and the rule of law.

We also cannot and should not isolate piracy from the many challenges the United States faces in Somalia. These challenges include the growth of the terrorist group al-Shabaab, some of whose leaders have links to al-Qaeda, the staggering humanitarian crisis in the country, and the standing problems of instability and the lack of a central government.

In addition, I've been greatly troubled by reports over the last 2 weeks of intensified fighting in and around Mogadishu that has left hundreds of people dead and displaced tens of thousands of people. Over the weekend there were reports that al-Shabaab and their allies are gaining momentum and had overtaken Jowhar, a strategic town in central Somalia. They pledge to overthrow the government and their ranks reportedly now include hundreds of foreign fighters.

More recently, the press has reported that some Ethiopian military forces have crossed back into Somalia. Although the Ethiopian Government has denied these allegations, the prospect of a return of Ethiopian forces into Somalia is very alarming and would greatly change the dynamics of the situation.

For months now I have encouraged the Obama administration to engage at the highest possible level to help establish stability and inclusive governance in Somalia. But if these recent events continue, we may miss a major opportunity. I've called on the President to personally call Somali President Sheikh Sharif and to indicate a clear commitment to work with the new government on security and governance issues. To my knowledge, though, neither he nor Secretary Clinton have yet made that call or issued such a statement.

We must take steps now to seriously and consistently engage at senior levels with the transitional government in Mogadishu. Now, while I recognize, of course, the fragile nature of this government, I am concerned by some reports that the government is losing both popular support and momentum. Helping to build stable institutions, expand effective, inclusive governance, and provide economic opportunities must be at the heart of any truly comprehensive strategy toward Somalia. At the same time, engagement and support for the government alone does not constitute a comprehensive strategy. We need a more sustained diplomatic push to communicate regularly with a wide range of nongovernmental actors within Somalia and help bring more groups into the political process. We also need to engage with stakeholders and partners in the wider region, both across the Horn of Africa and in the Middle East. It is impossible to separate Somalia's situation from wider regional dynamics, especially the historic tensions between Ethiopia and Eritrea and the instability in Yemen. To that end, I have proposed that the administration consider appointing a senior envoy for the Horn of Africa. I, of course, appreciate that the administration has many pressing priorities and also know there's an interagency policy review process under way, which I look forward to receiving an update about today.

Now, of course all this is an awful lot to ask for our first witness today, who has only been on the job as Assistant Secretary for African Affairs for 2 weeks. Of course I want to first congratulate you, sir, on your confirmation. But while he may have only had this

position through 2 weeks, I know that Assistant Secretary Carson has been thinking about, and working on, these issues for a very long time. In his testimony for his confirmation hearing he wrote about the need for a comprehensive U.S. strategy toward Somalia. So I'm very eager to hear what he sees as the key components for such a strategy, where the interagency strategy review stands, and how the administration and the Congress can work together.

Then on our second panel we'll hear from two nongovernmental experts on the latest developments in Somalia and how the United States can address the many challenges there in coordination. We will hear from Dr. Ken Menkhaus, a professor of political science at Davidson College and arguably the most prolific U.S. scholar on Somalia. Dr. Menkhaus is also a former special adviser to the United Nations in Somalia. He has testified before this committee before and I welcome him back.

We will also hear from Shannon Scribner, the senior policy adviser on humanitarian issues at Oxfam America. Ms. Scribner has worked on several humanitarian emergencies on behalf of Oxfam programs as staff on the ground, including in Liberia, the DRC, Iraq, Ethiopia, and areas affected by the tsunami. She currently serves as the cochair of the Interaction Somalia Working Group.

So I want to thank all of you for being here. I look forward to hearing your brief testimony and ask that you do keep your oral testimony to 5 minutes so we can have plenty of time for questions and discussions.

But it's now my pleasure to turn to the distinguished ranking member, Senator Isakson, for his opening comments. Not only is he a superb ranking member, but his timing is exquisite.

Senator Isakson.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JOHNNY ISAKSON,
U.S. SENATOR FROM GEORGIA**

Senator ISAKSON. Well, I apologize for being late. I never want to be late for anybody named Johnnie Carson, I can tell you that. Mr. Carson, welcome. We are glad to have you here today and look forward to meeting with you later today preceding our trip to Africa.

My opening remarks will simply be this, Mr. Chairman. Somalia, as I heard you saying as I came in, is a critical issue before us. It is important that we develop a strategy with regard to Somalia and, in fact, with regard to the larger region of Africa in which Somalia lies.

So I am looking forward to hearing from our witnesses today. I appreciate your allowing me a statement, and I would rather go on and get to the testimony. So thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Johnnie.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, sir.

All right, Secretary Carson.

STATEMENT OF HON. JOHNNIE CARSON, ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR AFRICAN AFFAIRS, DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. CARSON. Chairman Feingold, Ranking Member Isakson, members of the committee, thank you very much for inviting me

to testify at this important hearing to discuss the development of a coordinated and sustainable strategy toward Somalia. I do have written testimony which will be longer than my brief statement, which I will submit for the record.

Senator FEINGOLD. Without objection.

Mr. CARSON. This is my first appearance before you as Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs and I want to take this opportunity, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Isakson, again for showing your strong support for my nomination and rushing my hearings through to completion. I look forward to working closely with this subcommittee on the various issues that fall under your jurisdiction.

Mr. Chairman, you have consistently raised interest in Somalia and the greater Horn of Africa and the importance of the health of our relationship with the countries and peoples in the region. I know also, Mr. Chairman, that you've traveled in the Horn of Africa extensively and that Ranking Member Isakson has also visited Djibouti, one of the key capitals in the Horn of Africa.

Somalia is located in one of the most turbulent, violent, and complex regions in the world and finds itself embroiled in a cycle of violence and instability, despite promising efforts in recent years by the international community and Somali leadership to create an inclusive and stable government. In the past 2 weeks, the Somali Government has come under intense military and political pressure. Despite the best efforts of the violent extremists to overthrow the Transitional Federal Government, the TFG, by force, the TFG remains standing and determined to move forward.

This latest round of fighting occurs as we enter into a new chapter in the recent history of international efforts to assist Somalia in solving its longstanding crisis. Since the overthrow of the Siad Barre regime in 1991, there have been several distinct approaches taken by the international community to address the many crises that have enveloped Somalia.

In 1992, the international community authorized the United Nations Operation in Somalia known as UNOSOM I, in an effort to prevent starvation and a wider humanitarian crisis caused by a civil war. This effort proved ineffective and a second U.N. operation entered Somalia in December 1992. It was called UNITAF. While this operation successfully restored some order, UNITAF was eventually replaced by a third mission, also known as United Nations Operation in Somalia, UNOSOM II. It was during the United States participation in UNOSOM II in October 1993 that the tragic events described in "Blackhawk Down" occurred, leading to an eventual withdrawal of United States forces and the ultimate withdrawal of the majority of the international community from Somalia.

To be very blunt, the international community pulled down the shades, turned out the lights, closed the door, and walked away from Somalia. United States reengagement with Somalia did not begin again until 1996, when our policy shifted to one of containment. For the next decade, United States policy focused on managing or containing Somalia's problems within the country's borders so that the instability did not further destabilize the region.

In 2006, the Islamic Courts Union—ICU—defeated an alliance of militias known as the Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counter-Terrorism and became the first entity since the collapse of the Siad Barre regime to exert control over most of south-central Somalia. This change in the balance of power in Somalia was significant, as we faced a government in Somalia that was unfriendly to the United States and provided sanctuary to a number of known terrorists.

Ethiopia's intervention in late 2006 was another turning point that resulted in increased American interest in Somalia. Given the threats posed by the ICU's harboring of terrorists, the U.S. Government's Somali strategy focused on immediate terrorist threats.

The Djibouti Peace Process began in 2008 and led to the formation of the current Transitional Federal Government, an expanded Transitional Federal Parliament that includes members of the Djibouti faction of the Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia, and the election by Parliament of President Sheikh Sharif Ahmed. These are all significant steps forward for Somalia. Somalia now has at least the start of a government that is broadly representative of the Somali clan and societal landscape.

However, Somalia is clearly in crisis today. Approximately 43 percent of the Somali population relies on humanitarian assistance to survive and nearly 500,000 Somalis have fled the country and now live in overcrowded refugee camps throughout the region. The TFG controls only a small portion of the territory and the vast majority of Somalia is controlled by militias, clans, warlords, or terrorist organizations.

The blight of piracy off the coast of Somalia is without question a symptom of the instability and insecurity within Somalia. Without stability in Somalia, there can be no long-term resolution of the piracy problem. Furthermore, al-Shabaab, a designated foreign terrorist organization—FTO—continues to harbor terrorists, target civilians and humanitarian workers, and threatens to overthrow the TFG through violent means.

The resolution of these problems calls for a comprehensive solution that provides stability and promotes reconciliation, economic opportunity, and hope for the Somali people.

The Obama administration is working to address these challenges. The National Security Council has brought together the Department of State, the Department of Defense, USAID, the intelligence community, and a variety of other agencies to work to develop a strategy that is both comprehensible and sustainable. Such a strategy must be built around our work with international partners, including the United Nations, the African Union, the European Union, the International Authority on Development, IGAD, and the International Contact Group on Somalia.

Our effort is to achieve our foreign policy goals, which are to establish political and economic stability, eliminate the terrorist threat, address the dire humanitarian situation, and eliminate the threat of piracy. We're also working with other states in the region as Somalia's challenges are intertwined with other regional conflicts throughout the Horn. But to make it clear, our comprehensive strategy is to promote a stable and peaceful Somalia, to support regional peacekeeping efforts, to create a functioning and effective

central government capable of delivering services to Somalia's citizens, administering its territory, and providing security to its people, and finally to create a country that is at peace with its neighbors and does not harbor rebel groups from neighboring countries or regional or international terrorists.

The core of this policy effort is based on internal political reconciliation. The United States continues to assist the TFG in the development of a Somali security sector, which is crucial for the success of governance efforts throughout Somalia. With Congress's assistance, we are already committed to providing \$10 million to support the creation of a national security force in Somalia, and we are also working to strengthen the TFG's capacity so the United States and others in the international community can provide additional assistance.

We're also the largest supporter of the African Mission in Somalia, AMISOM, which facilitates the delivery of humanitarian assistance to Somalia, protects key installations in Mogadishu, and provides political space for a Somali-led reconciliation process.

Since the deployment of AMISOM in 2007, the United States has provided \$130 million for logistical and equipment support and predeployment training for Burundian and Ugandan forces on the ground. We plan to continue this level of support in the future. Additionally, the United States remains the largest bilateral donor of humanitarian assistance to Somalia, having provided more than \$137 million in emergency food and nonfood assistance to date.

Unfortunately, we do not have the luxury of time in Somalia. In the past 2 weeks, violent extremists, including al-Shabaab and a loose coalition of forces under the banner of Hizbul al-Islam have been attacking TFG forces and other moderates in Mogadishu in an attempt to forcefully overthrow the transitional government. We have clear evidence that Eritrea is supporting these extremist elements, including credible reports that the government of Eritrea continues to supply weapons and munitions to extremists and terrorist elements. We have publicly warned Eritrea to desist and stop its illegal arming of terrorists immediately, as such support threatens the stability of Somalia and the wider region.

There is also clear evidence that there is an al-Qaeda presence in Somalia. In 2008, East African al-Qaeda operative Saleh al-Nabhan distributed a video showing training camp activity in Somalia and inviting foreign fighters to travel there for training. A small number of senior al-Qaeda operatives have worked closely with al-Shabaab leaders in Somalia, where they have enjoyed safe haven. We have credible reports of foreign fighters with al-Shabaab. This further underscores the importance of urgent and decisive support to the TFG and engagement with states across the region and beyond to help stabilize Somalia.

The collapse of the TFG would be detrimental to the long-term stability of Somalia and it would negate the tremendous progress that has been made to date in the Djibouti Peace Process and in restoring a semblance of normalcy and peace in Somalia. The administration is considering ways in which we and other international partners can continue to help and support and bolster the Transitional Federal Government, and we will continue to support AMISOM.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my testimony. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Carson follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY JOHNNIE CARSON, BUREAU OF
AFRICAN AFFAIRS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON, DC

Chairman Feingold, Ranking Member Isakson, and distinguished members of the subcommittee. Thank you for inviting me to testify at this important hearing to discuss the development of a coordinated and sustainable strategy toward Somalia. This is my first appearance before you as the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs. I thank you for expeditiously holding a hearing on my nomination and for supporting my full Senate confirmation. I look forward to working closely with this subcommittee on the various issues that fall under this one subcommittee's oversight. Of these numerous concerns, Mr. Chairman, you have consistently raised our interests in Somalia and the greater Horn of Africa and the importance of the health of our relationship with the countries and peoples in the region. I also note that Senator Isakson's first trip to Africa as the ranking member included Djibouti. I join this subcommittee in its interest.

As you know, Somalia finds itself embroiled in a cycle of violence and instability despite promising efforts in recent years by the international community and Somali leadership to create an inclusive and stable government. I would like to note, though, that despite the best efforts of violent extremists to overthrow the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) by force, the TFG remains standing and determined to move forward.

This latest round of fighting occurs as we enter a new chapter in the recent history of international efforts to assist Somalia in solving its longstanding crisis. Since the overthrow of the Siad Barre regime in 1991, there have been several distinct approaches taken by the international community to address the many crises that have enveloped Somalia. In 1992, the international community authorized the United Nations Operation in Somalia, or UNOSOM I, in an effort to stave off starvation and a wider humanitarian crisis caused by civil war. This effort proved ineffective, and a second U.N. operation, the Unified Task Force, or UNITAF, entered Somalia in December 1992 under the name Operation Restore Hope. While this operation successfully restored some order, UNITAF was eventually replaced by a third mission, also known as the United Nations Operation in Somalia, or UNOSOM II. It was during the United States participation in UNOSOM II, in October 1993, that the tragic events described in "Black Hawk Down" occurred, leading to an eventual withdrawal of U.S. forces, and ultimately, the withdrawal of the majority of the international community from Somalia.

United States reengagement with Somalia did not begin again until 1996, when our policy shifted to one of containment. For the next decade, United States policy focused on containing Somalia's problems within the country's borders so the instability did not further destabilize the region.

In 2006, the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) defeated an alliance of militias known as the Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counter-Terrorism and became the first entity since the collapse of the Barre regime to exert control over most of South-Central Somalia. This change in the balance of power in Somalia was significant, as we faced a government in Somalia that was unfriendly to the United States and harbored and provided sanctuary to a number of known terrorists. Ethiopia's intervention in late 2006 was another turning point that resulted in increased American interest in Somalia. Given the threats posed by the ICU's harboring of terrorists, the USG's Somalia strategy focused on the immediate terrorist threats.

The Djibouti Peace Process began in 2008 and led to the formation of the current Transitional Federal Government, an expanded Transitional Federal Parliament that includes members of the Djibouti faction of the Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia, and the election by Parliament of President Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed. These are all significant steps forward for Somalia. Somalia now has at least the start of a government that is broadly representative of the Somali clan and societal landscape.

However, Somalia is clearly in crisis. Approximately 43 percent of the population of Somalia relies on humanitarian assistance to survive, and nearly 500,000 Somalis have fled their country and now live in overcrowded refugee camps throughout the region. The TFG controls only a small portion of the territory and the vast majority of Somalia is controlled by militias, clans, or terrorist organizations. The blight of piracy off the coast of Somalia is without question a symptom of the instability and insecurity within Somalia; without stability in Somalia, there can be no long-term

resolution of the piracy problem. Furthermore, al-Shabaab, a designated Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO), continues to harbor terrorists, target civilians and humanitarian workers, and attempt to overthrow the TFG through violent means.

The resolution of these problems calls for a comprehensive solution that provides stability and promotes reconciliation, economic opportunity and hope for the Somali people.

The Obama administration is working to address these challenges. The National Security Council (NSC) has brought together the Department of State, the Department of Defense, USAID, the intelligence community, and a variety of other agencies to work to develop a strategy that is both comprehensive and sustainable. Such a strategy must be built around our work with international partners, including the United Nations, African Union, the European Union, Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), International Contact Group on Somalia (ICG), and the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia, among others, to achieve our foreign policy goals in Somalia of political and economic stability, eliminating the terrorist threat, addressing the dire humanitarian situation, and eliminating the threat of piracy. We are also working with other states in the region, as Somalia's challenges are intertwined with other conflicts and issues throughout the Horn of Africa.

The United States continues to assist the TFG in the development of a Somali security sector, which is crucial for the success of governance efforts in Somalia. With Congress' assistance, we have already committed to providing \$10 million to support the creation of a National Security Force as part of this effort, and we are also working to strengthen the TFG's capacity so the United States and others in the international community can provide additional assistance. We are also the largest supporter of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), which facilitates the delivery of humanitarian assistance to Somalia, protects key installations in Mogadishu, and provides political space for a Somali-led reconciliation process. Since the deployment of AMISOM in 2007, the United States has provided \$135 million for logistical and equipment support and predeployment training for the Burundian and Ugandan forces on the ground. We plan to continue this level of support in the future. Furthermore, the United States remains the largest bilateral donor of humanitarian assistance to Somalia, having provided more than \$137 million in emergency food and nonfood assistance to date in fiscal year 2010.

Unfortunately, we do not have the luxury of time in Somalia. In the past 2 weeks, violent extremists, including al-Shabaab and a loose coalition of forces under the banner of Hizbul al-Islam, have been attacking TFG forces and other moderates in Mogadishu in an attempt to forcefully overthrow the transitional government. We have clear evidence that Eritrea is supporting these extremist elements, including credible reports that the Government of Eritrea continues to supply weapons and munitions to extremists and terrorist elements. We have publicly warned Eritrea to stop its illegal arming of terrorists immediately, as such support threatens the stability of Somalia and of the wider region, as well as creates a serious obstacle to the possibility of a new Eritrean relationship with the United States.

There is also clear evidence of an al-Qaeda presence in Somalia. In 2008, East Africa al-Qaeda operative Saleh al-Nabhan distributed a video showing training camp activity in Somalia and inviting foreigners to travel there for training. A small number of senior al-Qaeda operatives have worked closely with al-Shabaab leaders in Somalia, where they enjoy safe haven. We have credible reports of foreigners fighting with al-Shabaab. This further underscores the importance of urgent and decisive support to the TFG, and engagement with states across the region and beyond.

The collapse of the TFG would be detrimental to the long-term stability of Somalia, and it would negate the tremendous progress that has been made to date in the Djibouti Peace Process and in restoring a semblance of normalcy and peace in Somalia. The administration is considering ways in which we and our international partners can help to support and bolster the TFG, and we will continue to support AMISOM.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, sir. We'll do 7-minute rounds.

Thank you for your testimony. I wanted first to ask you about our public diplomacy efforts in Somalia. As you know, there's a growing mistrust and even resentment of U.S. intentions that has developed among Somalis over the last 2 years. In my view this lingering mistrust undermines our ability to engage constructively with different parties there and of course can be easily manipu-

lated by al-Shabaab. I have encouraged, as I said, the President to consider some kind of public statement to indicate his intention to break from past policies toward Somalia, a move which I believe could make a tremendous positive impression on ordinary Somalis.

In your thinking, how serious is this mistrust of U.S. intentions in Somalia and what public diplomacy efforts are being made or could be made to address this problem?

Mr. CARSON. Mr. Chairman, thank you for your question. There is no doubt that al-Shabaab and others have helped to generate the distrust that some Somalis have of the United States. We are working very hard to improve our image and to give Somalis a more comprehensive understanding of what the United States is doing and wants to do in Somalia.

I have myself spoken to a number of media groups that have access to Somalia in order to indicate to them that our primary goal is to promote political reconciliation, peace, and stability, and that our desire is to see a strong, stable Somalia that we can work with.

Through our public diplomacy efforts we continued to reach out to the media to talk to people, to issue press statements. I certainly will take into account and consult with whether it is feasible for the Secretary of State to make a statement that can be used on VOA, can be used on Al Jazeera and other media groups in Somalia. That sounds like a good idea and something that we should certainly consider.

Senator FEINGOLD. I appreciate that and look forward to the results. I appreciate the efforts you've described, but what I'm also talking about here, in addition to what you've said, is high-level public diplomacy. My sense is that well-timed statements and phone calls and engagement from senior government officials, be it the President, Secretary of State, or even Members of Congress, could help bolster ongoing United States efforts in Somalia.

I wrote the President about this. I spoke directly to the Secretary of State about this. I spoke directly to the Ambassador to the United Nations about this. No one has given me a reason why this wouldn't be a good idea, nor suggested anything with regard to any intelligence which suggests this would be a bad idea. I've seen nothing in my work on the Intelligence Committee suggesting this isn't a good idea.

So I'm wondering what the holdup is in terms of reaching out to this government that is trying to stabilize Somalia and that is under siege.

Mr. CARSON. Mr. Chairman, I think those are all good suggestions and I certainly will pursue them. But let me also say that we are in contact with President Sheikh Sharif's government, have reassured him of our support. We have underlined this to others. Our Ambassador in Nairobi, Mike Ranneberger, has been in regular contact with Sheikh Sharif. I myself last week met with the TFG Foreign Minister, who was in town. One of my deputies met with him on Monday of this week. I have been in direct consultation with the U.N. Secretary General Special Representative Ould Abdallah to reaffirm our commitment to support the TFG. We have provided financial assistance in the last 2 weeks to the TFG and

we continue to do as much as we can to assure governments in the region that we support them.

Senator FEINGOLD. Have you spoken to Sheikh Sharif?

Mr. CARSON. I have not spoken directly with Sheikh Sharif.

Senator FEINGOLD. If you do, I think obviously that would be one step. I've spoken to him. Ambassador Ranneberger, who I have enormous regard for, has spoken to him. But there are actually people at higher pay grade than all of us who I'm talking about, and I believe not only do you need to reach out, but people at that level as well.

Secretary Clinton has announced several new measures to combat piracy off Somalia's coast, which I strongly support. However, how can we ensure that these measures are coordinated within the overall Somalia strategy and do not somehow exist in a vacuum?

Mr. CARSON. I think that's excellent. I think in my statement I noted that the National Security Council is undertaking a comprehensive review of Somali policy. That review has not been completed, but I can assure you, Mr. Chairman, that the issue of Somali piracy has been folded into that review and does not in fact stand out alone. It is subsumed under a broader strategy toward Somalia.

I underscore that our overall policy efforts are aimed at promoting political reconciliation in Somalia, political stability in that country, which will generate a functioning and effective government capable of delivering services to its people, administering the central government, and providing security.

We don't have a separate strategy on piracy that is distinct from the issue of where we're going on Somalia. It is being wrapped into the review that is under way.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you.

As part of a comprehensive strategy for Somalia, I know you and I agree that we have to reexamine our relationships with regional players. These press reports of Ethiopian troops crossing back into Somalia are very alarming to me and I've been concerned for quite some time by Eritrea's unconstructive behavior in the Horn, whether it's in Somalia or along the Djiboutian border. How can we better engage the Ethiopians so they play a constructive role in Somalia and what about our relationship with Eritrea? What direction do you see that moving in?

Mr. CARSON. First of all with respect to the presence of Ethiopian troops, we have no formal confirmation that Ethiopian troops have actually gone across the border. There have been a number of press reports suggesting a small incursion. We are asking our Embassy in Addis to determine what the Ethiopians are doing there.

We agree with you, Senator, that the return of Ethiopian troops inside of Somalia will only inflame and worsen the situation, rather than lead to an early resolution of the problem. We hope that the Ethiopian Government will not in fact do anything which will further complicate the effort to find a solution to Somalia's problems. We are engaged actively in Ethiopia and our Ambassador is in constant contact with Prime Minister Meles, warning and expressing our concerns about the possible repercussions of Ethiopia's action inside Somalia.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. I'm going to turn it over to Senator Isakson now, but I'll have a couple more questions for you.

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Since you mentioned that subject, I traveled to Ethiopia in 2002 and spent a good deal of time in both Addis Ababa as well as Awasa, south of there.

Do the terrorist-related organizations or terrorist-supported organizations in Somalia pose a threat to the Ethiopians? Is one of the reasons for the Ethiopian concern the fact that there are terrorist organizations in Somalia which they fear might come into Ethiopia?

Mr. CARSON. No question that one of Ethiopia's concerns is support that Somalia or Somali groups might provide to groups in the Ogaden. They are concerned that weapons and support might flow from Somalia into the Ogaden.

Senator ISAKSON. My experience there, if you look at a map for a second, is that between Eritrea, the Sudan, and Somalia, Ethiopia is in a very difficult neighborhood. The country has tried for improvements and over the last decade has made many. So I am sure part of the Ethiopian concern is that they do not want to regress, nor do they want to experience what happened in Somalia, in terms of the breakdown of the countryside.

In terms of Sheikh Sharif, is he as strong a leader as we perceive him to be, or is he kind of battered down in Mogadishu with the Parliament trying to protect itself?

Mr. CARSON. Sheikh Sharif was elected as the President of Somalia through the Djibouti Process. We think that he was a compromise candidate who represented the views of the largest number of clan participants in that election. We think that he offers the best chance for possible reconciliation and peace in Somalia that we have seen over the last decade. He is not a warlord. He is not a militia man. He is from a rather humble background, an educator, and is a man who has sought to unite the various clans in Somalia in a more inclusive government.

We believe that it is important to do as much as we possibly can to support this TFG government as one of the last opportunities for bringing about stability in that country.

Senator ISAKSON. And he was elected by the Parliament, not by the people.

Mr. CARSON. That's correct.

Senator ISAKSON. But the Parliament was elected by the people, is that correct?

Mr. CARSON. Yes.

Senator ISAKSON. So you believe him to be a pretty representative compromise candidate between all the factions?

Mr. CARSON. Yes. But, sir, it is a very divided society and divided deeply along clan lines. The success of any leader is based on his or her ability to bring in clans and subclans into the central government.

Senator ISAKSON. In your testimony you made reference to the fact that we have credible reports of foreign fighters fighting with al-Shabaab, is that correct?

Mr. CARSON. Yes, sir.

Senator ISAKSON. Are those foreign fighters by chance Iranian or in any way affiliated with Hezbollah or Hamas?

Mr. CARSON. We don't know the precise nationalities of these foreign fighters. We don't know their political affiliations. But we do have a growing body of information passed on to us that there clearly are foreign fighters operating in Somalia. This information comes to us via the Ugandan military, which is a part of AMISOM. It comes to us via the U.N. It comes to us via Sheikh Sharif's government. It comes to us via observations by the media.

But yes, a growing body of information. We do not know how many people, how many foreign fighters there are. There have been claims of upward of 400 people. We think that these are probably a significant exaggeration, but there are clearly non-Somalis who are there.

Senator ISAKSON. We do have evidence that al-Qaeda is there as well, correct?

Mr. CARSON. We know that individuals who are directly affiliated with al-Qaeda have been in Somalia. These individuals are principally Fizul Harun and Nabhan Mohamed. These are individuals who were responsible for the destruction of the U.S. Embassies in Dar es Salaam and Nairobi in 1998 and the destruction of the Paradise Hotel in 2002. They clearly are the leaders of the East Africa al-Qaeda cell. They have been in Somalia, but they have also been in and along the northeastern coast of Kenya as well.

Senator ISAKSON. We are assisting the African Union troops at AMISOM with regard to the distribution of humanitarian aid into Somalia's countryside, is that correct?

Mr. CARSON. Yes.

Senator ISAKSON. We are doing the same thing in the Sudan, but we have had great difficulty. A month ago, two NGO workers were killed in the Sudan. What is the activity against AMISOM troops and the humanitarian aid personnel? Are the troops, the African Union troops, able to protect those NGOs?

Mr. CARSON. No. Let me just correct. The AMISOM troops are there to carry out several missions. The first is to protect key installations, the airport and the harbor in Mogadishu; to provide security to key government buildings, the Presidential palace and the Parliament; third, to protect key TFG government ministers; and last, to do limited training of TFG security forces.

Senator ISAKSON. So there is no protection effort for the NGOs that are there?

Mr. CARSON. No, there is not.

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Senator Isakson.

I'll start another round. Mr. Assistant Secretary, when can we expect the interagency review to be completed, and will Congress be notified when that happens?

Mr. CARSON. I can't predict a precise time. I know that the process is being carried out in an expeditious manner. I would hope that we would see something in the next 30 to 60 days. And yes, I would recommend that we brief you and other members of the committee once that review is completed and carried out. You have clearly demonstrated an interest in seeing the strategy and learn-

ing what it is. I think that we will share that with you, and I will certainly encourage it.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Mr. Assistant Secretary.

Just to add a point to the very effective questions by the ranking member, fleshing out the background of Sheikh Sharif, I certainly can't vouch for this man nor would I attempt to, but to have an accurate picture, this is the man who was the head of the Islamic Courts, which we identified as being obviously a problematic entity, who has now taken on the task of trying to unify the various elements within Somalia at enormous risk, because al-Shabaab is, I'm sure, outraged that he has done this.

So it's an interesting aspect of what he's done that I think should help inform our view of him and our willingness to work with him.

The State Department's report issued this month on the implementation of our strategy toward Somalia describes the importance of providing operational support to Somali security forces loyal to the transitional government, and I agree that building the security sector is important and the United States should have a role in this. We have to ensure that steps are taken to improve accountability and the human rights record of the security forces. Obviously, the past record of those forces is pretty appalling.

How can we ensure such steps are taken as we provide any assistance to a security sector in Somalia?

Mr. CARSON. We are doing as much as we can to vet the individuals who are a part of the Somali security force leadership. This is an ongoing process. It is a difficult process given the fact that we are not present on the ground. But we consider this to be extremely important and we are attentive to it and trying to do as best we can to ensure that any assistance that we give is given to individuals who have not, in fact, engaged in atrocities, war crimes, or any violations of civil rights.

Senator FEINGOLD. I'm also very concerned by these reports that al-Shabaab and its allied militias are gaining momentum and territory, including strategic towns in central Somalia. Beyond simply arming them, are there specific ways we can help the transitional government to peel off moderates and fracture the insurgency? And what about the foreign fighters that Senator Isakson was talking about that are being reported? What can be done to confront their role in the insurgency?

Mr. CARSON. Well, with respect to foreign fighters, we are working with neighboring countries to encourage them to make sure that their capitals and their airports, are not used as a conduit for foreign fighters going in. We have strongly encouraged the Eritrean Government to cease providing any support to al-Shabaab, to stop foreign fighters from coming through their territory to enter Somalia, and to play a more constructive role in trying to find a solution to Somalia's problems.

We will continue to work with neighboring states, including countries like Kenya, to make sure that they are not unwittingly used as way stations for people coming in from outside, transiting their airports, going into Somalia to work for al-Shabaab.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you.

Anything further, Senator Isakson?

Senator ISAKSON. Just a question out of curiosity. We talk about a coordinated policy for us to support the temporary government that has been formed in Somalia. Is there a coordination of all the factions outside of Mogadishu? You referred to the clans, you referred to al-Shabaab, and you referred to some al-Qaeda influence and foreign fighters. Do these people have different and separate interests in the country, all of which are disruptive, or is there some degree of coordination between them against the government?

Mr. CARSON. Well, over the last 2 weeks and certainly beginning around May 8 and 9, there appeared to be a concerted effort by al-Shabaab and a number of groups to work together to unseat the TFG. That degree of coordination seems to be fading away as the TFG has been able to maintain its control over most of Mogadishu.

The core element of unity inside of Somalia is clan and subclan. Clan and subclan interests over time appear to trump everything else in terms of loyalty. It's more important than religion. It's more important than politics. It is frequently more important than the central government and the state.

What we have seen over time is that some issues will bring clans together, groups together, to work against an issue, and then they will fall apart once that threat and issue has been resolved.

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Johnnie.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Senator Isakson.

Mr. Assistant Secretary, thank you. It's a pleasure to be working with you. We can now go to the second panel.

Mr. CARSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you very much.

Dr. Menkhaus, would you like to begin. Again, I'd ask that these witnesses limit your remarks, oral remarks, to 5 minutes. Of course, we will put your full statement in the record. Go ahead, doctor.

**STATEMENT OF DR. KEN MENKHAUS, PROFESSOR OF
POLITICAL SCIENCE, DAVIDSON COLLEGE, CHARLOTTE, NC**

Dr. MENKHAUS. Good morning, Senator Feingold, Senator Isakson. Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this discussion on United States policy in Somalia.

This hearing has been convened at a moment when Somalia is undergoing yet another dramatic political crisis, the latest in a long 20-year history of state collapse, warfare, and human suffering. Whatever the outcome of this latest round of fighting, Somalia will very likely remain a front-burner foreign policy challenge for the Obama administration.

We're very fortunate to have the experienced leadership of Ambassador Johnnie Carson, the new Assistant Secretary for African Affairs, at this time of crisis in Somalia. He understands the intricacies of the Horn of Africa better than anyone in or out of the U.S. Government, possesses invaluable diplomatic experience in the region, and has the leadership skills to help forge and maintain interagency consensus, which is essential for a coordinated United States strategy toward Somalia.

In recent years the United States and its regional and global allies have struggled to forge a coherent and effective strategy for

Somalia. In part, this has been a function of the uniquely complex problems associated with the Somali crisis. As the crisis has lengthened, the difficulties have grown. Reliable information on which to build policy is scarce. The resilience of internal spoilers has increased while many of the country's most dedicated civic leaders and peace-builders have been silenced, killed, or forced to flee the country. External actors have created additional impasses by playing out proxy wars in Somalia or funding jihadist violence.

In this increasingly complex environment, external state-building, peace-building, and counterterrorism initiatives have at times been based on flawed analysis and have produced unintended consequences which have left Somalia and its regional neighbors even more insecure.

The United States also faces the challenge of deconflicting its multiple objectives in Somalia. Over the past decade, American counterterrorism, state-building, and humanitarian initiatives have generally been unintegrated and have at times worked at cross-purposes.

The impact of the 2007–08 Ethiopian military occupation of southern Somalia has created still more challenges. That occupation and the destructive insurgency and counterinsurgency violence that it triggered helped to fuel an unprecedented level of radicalism in Somali society. Because the United States is widely blamed by Somalis for backing the Ethiopian occupation, anti-Americanism has been very high in the country and trust of American motives and policies low.

This has been ameliorated somewhat by the January 2009 Ethiopian withdrawal, the establishment of a more broad-based transitional government, and Somali expectations of a shift in United States policy under the Obama administration. But there is still a high level of mistrust of American policies and residual anger at the United States.

In addition, formulation of a coherent strategy toward Somalia is complicated by the fact that the Somali crisis is entangled in a regional conflict complex which includes the Ethiopian-Eritrean impasse, the insurgency and counter-insurgency in Ethiopia's Somali region, and the long-running tensions between Ethiopian and Somali security interests and territorial claims. Stand-alone strategies to deal with Somalia have been repeatedly undermined by these other regional dynamics.

A final challenge to creating an effective and coherent strategy is the fact that Somalia is currently in the midst of a major crisis which could result in one of several very different scenarios. The U.S. Government can and must prioritize its broad objectives and desired outcomes in Somalia, but in the face of considerable uncertainty about the political trajectory of the country in the weeks and months ahead a fully developed country or regional strategy may currently be beyond reach.

In weeks and months to come, one of several scenarios could emerge. In a best case outcome, the TFG will succeed in rallying support and pushing back the Islamist insurgency, negotiating with some insurgents and marginalizing or defeating the rest. This outcome would open the door to a U.S. strategy privileging timely and well-targeted state-building support to the TFG as a means of

consolidating those gains. It would also produce improved security for delivery of badly needed humanitarian assistance.

In a worst case outcome, the Shabaab and Hizbul al-Islamiya defeat the TFG and take control over most or all of south-central Somalia and the capital. Because of Shabaab's ties to al-Qaeda and the presence of foreign advisers and fighters in Shabaab, this scenario promises to draw Ethiopian forces back into Somalia and will create pressure for the United States to privilege counterterrorism interventions into Somalia as well. Somalia could then become the site of regional or even globalized armed conflict.

An insurgency victory over the TFG could also produce a different outcome, one in which two rival Islamist groups begin fighting among themselves. There are sharp tensions over leadership, ideology, foreign patronage, clan interests, and tactics both between and within Shabaab and Hizbul al-Islamiya and many Somalis anticipate a battle between them. Armed clashes pitting Shabaab and Hizbul al-Islamiya would present the United States with no obvious protagonist to support and would instead place emphasis on the need to avoid taking actions which would bring the two warring parties' hard-line groups together.

A final scenario is the reversion to status quo ante, in which no one side consolidates control over the country, which is left divided up into a variety of warring fiefdoms, some controlled by the TFG, others held by Shabaab, Hizbul al-Islamiya, clan militia, warlords, armed business groups, independent city-states, and others. This outcome would pose a major problem for U.S. state-building initiatives and would tempt counterterrorism operations to forge alliances with local nonstate actors, as was the practice in the past. That policy came at some cost and was in many respects counterproductive, however, and would need careful scrutiny.

In the interest of time, I won't share some of the remarks that I had which I hoped would contribute toward a discussion of United States strategy toward Somalia, but I refer you to my written remarks.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Menkhaus follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF KEN MENKHAUS, PROFESSOR OF POLITICAL SCIENCE,
DAVIDSON COLLEGE, DAVIDSON, NC

INTRODUCTION

Senator Feingold, subcommittee chairman, and Senator Isakson, ranking member, I thank you for the opportunity to participate in this discussion of United States policy on Somalia. This hearing has been convened at a moment when Somalia is undergoing yet another dramatic political crisis, the latest in a long 20-year history of state collapse, warfare, and human suffering. Whatever the outcome of this latest round of fighting, Somalia will very likely remain a front-burner foreign policy challenge for the Obama administration.

We are very fortunate to have the experienced leadership of Ambassador Johnnie Carson, the new Assistant Secretary for African Affairs, at this time of crisis in Somalia. Ambassador Carson understands the intricacies of the Horn of Africa better than anyone in or out of the United States Government, possesses invaluable diplomatic experience in the region, and has the leadership skills to help forge and maintain interagency consensus which is essential for a coordinated United States strategy toward Somalia. Ambassador Carson and his colleagues may face only poor options in Somalia, but I feel confident that the administration has assembled an excellent team on Africa policy.

CHALLENGES

In recent years, the United States and its regional and global allies have struggled to forge a coherent and effective strategy for Somalia. In part this has been a function of the uniquely complex problems associated with the Somali crisis, which has proven impervious to two decades of external efforts to bring an end to its state of collapse and armed conflict. As the crisis has lengthened, the difficulties have grown. Reliable information on which to build policy is scarce, a function of extraordinarily high levels of insecurity in the country. The resilience of internal spoilers has increased, while many of the country's most dedicated civic leaders and peace-builders have been silenced, killed, or forced to flee the country. External actors have created additional impasses by playing out proxy wars in Somalia, or funding jihadist violence. In this increasingly complex environment, external state-building, peace-building, and counterterrorism initiatives have at times been based on flawed analysis and have produced unintended consequences which have left Somalia and its regional neighbors even more insecure.

The United States also faces the challenge of deconflicting its multiple objectives in Somalia. Over the past decade, American counterterrorism, state-building, and humanitarian initiatives have generally been un-integrated and have at times worked at cross-purposes.

The impact of the 2007–08 Ethiopian military occupation of southern Somalia has created still more challenges for effective strategy. That occupation, and the destructive insurgency and counterinsurgency violence it triggered, helped to fuel an unprecedented level of radicalism in Somali society. Because the United States is widely blamed by Somalis for backing the Ethiopian occupation, anti-Americanism has been very high in the country, and trust of American motives and policies low. This has been ameliorated somewhat by the January 2009 Ethiopian withdrawal, the establishment of a more broad-based transitional government, and Somali expectations of a shift in United States policy under the Obama administration. But there is still a high level of mistrust of American policies and residual anger at the United States that poses additional obstacles to effective strategies.

In addition, formulation of a coherent strategy toward Somalia is complicated by the fact that the Somali crisis is entangled in a regional conflict complex which includes the Ethiopian-Eritrean impasse, the insurgency and counterinsurgency in Ethiopia's Somali region, and the long-running tensions between Ethiopian and Somali security interests and territorial claims. Stand-alone strategies to deal with Somalia have been repeatedly undermined by these other regional dynamics.

SCENARIOS

A final challenge to creating an effective and coherent strategy is the fact that Somalia is currently in the midst of a major crisis which could result in one of several very different scenarios. The United States Government can and must prioritize its broad objectives and desired outcomes in Somalia, but in the face of considerable uncertainty about the political trajectory of the country in the weeks and months ahead, a fully developed country or regional strategy may be beyond reach.

At present, the U.N.-backed Transitional Federal Government (TFG) is under siege by a loose coalition of hard-line Islamist insurgencies, most notably Shabaab and Hisbul Islamiyya (the latter led by Hassan Dahir Aweys, a designated terror suspect). Several months ago, when Ethiopian forces departed and a new government in the TFG was formed featuring moderate Islamist leadership, there was real hope that Shabaab was in trouble. It had thrived mainly as a resistance movement against Ethiopian occupation and the unpopular leadership of then-TFG president Abdullahi Yusuf. With those two nemeses out of the picture, Shabaab had much less appeal to Somalis, who find its radical application of sharia law, its desecration of sufi tombs, and its close links to al-Qaeda very disturbing. The hope was that Somali communities, clans, and factions would rally in support of the new TFG. But the TFG's ability to stand up a government has been disappointing, and Shabaab and Hisbul Islamiyya have drawn on external support from al-Qaeda, Eritrea, and other sources to launch an offensive that has captured strategic real estate in Mogadishu and southern Somalia and which threatens to drive the TFG out of the capital.

In coming weeks and months, one of several scenarios could emerge:

1. In a best-case outcome, the TFG will succeed in rallying support and pushing back the Islamist insurgency, negotiating with some insurgents and marginalizing or defeating the rest. This outcome would open the door to a U.S. strategy privileging timely and well-targeted state-building support to the TFG as a means of consolidating those gains, and would produce improved security for delivery of badly needed humanitarian assistance.

2. In a worst-case outcome, the Shabaab and Hisbul Islamiyya defeat the TFG and take control over most or all of south-central Somalia and the capital. Because of Shabaab's ties to al-Qaeda and the presence of foreign advisors and fighters in Shabaab, this scenario promises to draw Ethiopian forces back into Somalia and will create pressure for the United States to privilege counterterrorism interventions into Somalia. Somalia could then become the site of regional or even globalized armed conflict.

3. An insurgency victory over the TFG could also produce a different outcome, one in which the two rival Islamist groups begin fighting among themselves. There are sharp tensions over leadership, ideology, foreign patronage, clan interests, and tactics between and within Shabaab and Hisbul Islamiyya and many Somalis anticipate a battle between them. Armed clashes pitting Shabaab and Hisbul Islamiyya would present the United States with no obvious protagonist to support, and would instead place emphasis on the need to avoid taking actions which would bring the two warring hard-line groups together.

4. A final scenario is a reversion to status quo ante, in which no one side consolidates control over the country, which is left divided up into a variety of warring fiefdoms—some controlled by the TFG, others held by Shabaab, Hisbul Islamiyya, clan militias, warlords, armed business groups, independent city-states, and others. This outcome would pose a major problem for U.S. state-building initiatives and would tempt counterterrorism operations to forge alliances with local nonstate actors, as was the practice in years past. That policy came at some cost and was in many respects counterproductive, however, and would need careful scrutiny.

TOWARD A SOMALIA STRATEGY

I would like end my remarks by sharing several observations and recommendations toward the development of a Somalia strategy:

- In the short run, there is little the United States can do to shape the outcome of the current fighting between Islamist insurgents and the TFG. This ball is in play, and while some timely financial support to the TFG could help shore it up, direct external military interventions are likely to play into the hands of Shabaab and undermine rather than strengthen the credibility of the TFG.
- A regional rather than country-based strategy is more difficult to devise but ultimately more likely to bear fruit. This must include close scrutiny of the points of convergence and divergence in U.S. interests and the interests of regional allies, and a willingness to address those points of divergence frankly.
- U.S. strategy in the region must harmonize to the maximum extent possible its counterterrorism, state-building, and humanitarian objectives and programs. And harmonization must not come to be synonymous with counterterrorism objectives simply subsuming other policies.
- United States strategy must be informed by more accurate, nuanced assessment of both Somali actors and foreign interests in the country. Oversimplified analyses have at times led to serious errors by external actors. The fact that Somalia is a very complex crisis it is not a license to simplify, it is an obligation to take the time to understand.
- The United States currently enjoys a good position in the Somali political debate. We support the moderate Islamist governance of the TFG, a broad-based and inclusive government coalition, a negotiated end to the current fighting, an end to foreign interference in Somalia's internal affairs, peaceful coexistence with regional neighbors, and peace. These are very much shared values with the vast majority of Somali people. By contrast, al-Qaeda is urging Somalis to kill one another in the name of a radical, Wahhabist interpretation of Islam, and because the current government is too willing to seek coexistence with Ethiopia and the West. Al-Qaeda's position is quite unpopular with Somalis, who deeply resent foreigners imposing their ideological wars on the Somali people. This is a big advantage for the United States and one we must not squander.
- United States interests are best served by maximizing the extent to which the current conflict in Somalia is defined as an internal Somali affair. By contrast, Shabaab and Hisbul Islamiyya's interests are served when the conflict can be regionalized or globalized, framed as a "Somali versus foreigner" clash. This puts a premium on strategies which work to keep the Ethiopian military out of Somalia.
- Piracy off the coast of Somalia must be understood and treated as a second order security threat, one that international shipping companies consider manageable. Antipiracy efforts must not be allowed to compromise policies designed to address the first order security concern in the country, which is the increased activity of al-Qaeda in support of Shabaab in southern Somalia. Antipiracy ini-

tiatives which feature capturing or killing of Somali youth risk inflaming anti-Americanism in Somalia, which will play into the hands of the Shabaab.

- United States policies which maximize political space for Somalis to negotiate—especially the space for the TFG to reach deals with more pragmatic elements of the Islamist insurgents—will be of great assistance in promoting an end to the crisis. Conversely, United States policies which “redline” Somali groups and movements as terrorist reduce negotiating space for the moderates. Somali political affiliations are much more fluid and pragmatic than we usually presume.
- In the event of a worst-case outcome, in which the capital, Mogadishu, and most of Somalia falls into the hands of hard-line Islamists with ties to al-Qaeda, the most effective short-term policy may simply be to wait rather than rush to a military or political response. Somalis have a long history of using, and then discarding, foreigners and their ideologies once they are no longer of use, and there are reasons to anticipate sharp differences between al-Qaeda and its globalist agenda and the more nationalist agenda of the Somali hard-line Islamists. Somalia’s hard-line Islamists will face the country’s many faultlines—clan tensions, leadership rivalries, and ideological splits—and could well be pulled down by those centrifugal forces. Put another way, in the face of a worst-case scenario, Somali society may possess its own self-correcting mechanisms to deal with foreign and local radicals, and those mechanisms should be given a chance before we rush into risky military solutions. It is worth recalling that in the early 1990s al-Qaeda attempted to make inroads into Somali-inhabited East Africa and, like so many foreigners bringing ambitious political projects to Somalia, got its fingers burnt. If al-Qaeda does attempt to exploit Somalia as a new base or safe haven, we should work to ensure that the country becomes as much a quagmire for al-Qaeda as it has been for everyone else.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, doctor.
Ms. Scribner.

STATEMENT OF SHANNON SCRIBNER, SENIOR POLICY ADVISOR ON HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE, OXFAM AMERICA, WASHINGTON, DC

Ms. SCRIBNER. Good morning, Mr. Chairman and Senator Isakson, and thank you for the opportunity to testify today on developing a coordinated and sustainable United States strategy toward Somalia. Oxfam is grateful for the work this committee has done and in particular you, Senator Feingold, for your leadership in drawing attention to the humanitarian situation affecting almost half of the country.

Oxfam has been working in Somalia since the 1960s. Since the start of 2008, we delivered aid—we have been delivering aid to over 400,000 Somalis. Through a network of Somali partner organizations, we provide over 80,000 hot meals a day to people in Mogadishu, water and sanitation services to over 200,000 people in the Afgooye Corridor, which is about 18½ miles southwest of Mogadishu, and we are helping 70,000 people rebuild their livelihoods in central and southern Somalia.

In my testimony today, I will be focusing on the humanitarian situation and making recommendations on steps the U.S. Government can take to address the situation as part of a coordinated U.S. strategy.

Somalia is the site of world’s worst humanitarian crisis. The combination of conflict and drought has led to the displacement of up to 1.8 million Somalis and more than 3 million people are dependent on aid. Somalia is also one of the world’s most challenging environments for aid workers. Forty aid workers have been killed since the beginning of 2008 and most of them have been Somalis.

Half a million Somalis are finding refuge outside Somalia’s borders and approximately 250,000 of these refugees now inhabit the

overcrowded Dadaab camps in northern Kenya. The withdrawal of Ethiopian troops at the beginning of this year initially improved civilian safety in some areas, evidenced by the tentative return of up to 65,000 people to Mogadishu, and marginally improved access for aid workers. But over the last few weeks, as we have heard, recent fighting between the Transitional Federal Unity Government and opposition groups in Mogadishu has claimed civilian lives and sparked a new wave of displacement.

Beyond the obvious humanitarian impact of the ongoing conflict, the country faces drought conditions unseen since the 1991 famine, which is killing livestock at an alarming rate. Despite the many operational challenges and the shrinking operational space, Oxfam is still responsibly delivering aid programs. We work through proven and trusted local Somali NGOs, which come from the beneficiary communities, making them accountable not only to us, but also to their communities. These communities are often involved in the design, implementation, and monitoring of programs and as a result they protect their programs from third parties vying for control over territory.

It is critical to underscore that in order to successfully continue our work aid agencies must be perceived by communities and the warring parties as neutral and impartial. As the United States sets out a new strategy for Somalia, it is important that the strategy does not undermine aid operations and preserves at a minimum the limited operating space that we have. In the past, air strikes in Somalia have negatively impacted humanitarian access by casting suspicion on aid workers, which is often followed by threats and retributions. Likewise, restrictive Office of Foreign Asset Control licensing could slow down the delivery of urgently needed aid.

It is important to note that there are a range of actors—al-Shabaab, which there are many factions within al-Shabaab; the foreign fighters that have been mentioned; clan militias and criminal groups—fighting for control of territory. While conflict over who is in control is negatively impacting aid operations, the control over day-to-day administration of aid is to the most part done through local clan structures.

My submitted testimony touches on other issues affecting humanitarian response, such as widespread abuses by all parties, security sector reform, peacekeeping, and the importance of a regional approach. But with the minute I have remaining I would just like to make six recommendations on how a coordinated and sustainable United States strategy toward Somalia can improve the humanitarian situation.

As mentioned, it must preserve the limited humanitarian operating space. It should address the serious public health crisis unfolding in Dadaab by pressing the Kenyan Government to authorize UNHCR to start work on a new refugee camp and ensure that the border remains open to those that are fleeing the conflict.

We need to hold parties accountable for abuses. All parties have committed abuses and acted with impunity on the ground.

It must prevent security sector reform and peace-building from becoming part of the problem. While efforts to bolster security are necessary, support to security forces must be transparent and accountable to prevent abuses.

And any U.N. peacekeeping force should have wide acceptance by Somalis and a peace to actually keep. Otherwise they risk being drawn into the conflict.

It should foster credible Somali-led political and governance processes. This means doing things the Somali way with their consensus-building and power-sharing. The United States should not support specific individuals or factions.

Finally, ensure that any strategy for Somalia has a regional approach. Somalia shouldn't be dealt with in isolation, as peace in Somalia means engaging and resolving issues with the neighboring countries.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify. I'm happy to take questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Scribner follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SHANNON SCRIBNER, SENIOR POLICY ADVISOR ON
HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE, OXFAM AMERICA, WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. Chairman, Senator Isakson, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today on the humanitarian situation in Somalia and the importance of a coordinated and sustainable United States strategy. Oxfam is extremely grateful for the work this committee has done, in particular you, Senator Feingold, in drawing attention to the humanitarian situation affecting almost half of the country.

Oxfam America is an international development and relief agency committed to developing lasting solutions to poverty, hunger, and social injustice. We are part of a confederation of 13 Oxfam organizations working together in more than 100 countries with over 3,000 local partners around the globe.

OXFAM'S RESPONSE IN SOMALIA

We have been working in Somalia since the 1960s, providing humanitarian and capacity-building assistance. Since the start of 2008, we have spent more than \$7 million on emergency programs delivering aid to over 400,000 Somalis with a network of Somali partner organizations. In Mogadishu, we are part of a consortium working with a local partner to provide over 80,000 hot meals a day to the most vulnerable people. Together with the same partner, we have just finalized the design phase of a community therapeutic care program for severely malnourished children. In the Afgooye Corridor, about 18.5 miles southwest of Mogadishu, we are providing water and sanitation services to over 200,000 people displaced from Mogadishu and the surrounding areas. In central and southern Somalia, we are assisting 70,000 people to rebuild the livelihoods they have lost as a result of the crisis in their country.

In my testimony today, I will be focusing on the humanitarian situation inside the country and in the region and making recommendations on steps the U.S. Government can take to address the situation as part of a coordinated U.S. strategy.

CURRENT HUMANITARIAN SITUATION

Somalia remains the site of the world's worst humanitarian crisis. The combination of conflict and drought have led to more than 3 million Somalis dependent on aid within the country and the displacement of up to 1.8 million. Somalia is also one of the world's most challenging environments for aid workers and 40 of them, mostly Somalis, have been killed since the beginning of 2008. Half a million Somalis are finding refuge outside Somalia's borders in Kenya, Djibouti, Ethiopia, and Yemen. Over 250,000 of these refugees now inhabit the overcrowded Dadaab camps in northern Kenya. While the northern regions of Puntland and Somaliland have both achieved relative degrees of stability and security, the south and central regions in Somalia remain unstable and access for aid organizations extremely difficult.

LATEST HUMANITARIAN DEVELOPMENT

The withdrawal of Ethiopian troops in January 2009 initially improved civilian safety in some areas—evidenced by the tentative return of up to 65,000 people to Mogadishu between January and April of this year. This marginally improved the

ability of humanitarian actors to access people in need with the removal of road-blocks on major axes. But, over the last few weeks, recent fighting between the Transitional Federal Unity Government (TFG) and opposition groups erupted in the Somali capital of Mogadishu claiming the lives of civilians, and sparking a new wave of displacement. Hospitals in central Mogadishu are overwhelmed and among the newly displaced are families that had recently returned home following a period of relative peace in Mogadishu. Many of the displaced are heading toward the Afgooye Corridor. As of yesterday, it has been reported that there are close to 60,000 new displacements into the corridor.

Beyond the obvious humanitarian impact of the ongoing conflict, the country faces drought conditions unseen since the 1991 famine and meteorologists are warning of an 80-percent chance of drier than normal conditions in the Horn of Africa through 2009. Drought conditions continue to ravage livelihoods, particularly among pastoralist populations as livestock are dying and wasting at an alarming rate.

Despite the operational challenges, it remains possible to responsibly implement aid programs, and it is crucial that aid operations continue, and even expand where possible. Being able to operate within an insecure environment is largely based upon the perceptions of communities and warring parties as to whether we are operating neutrally and impartially. Oxfam works with proven and trusted local Somali NGOs which come from the beneficiary communities so they are accountable not only to us but to their communities. We also have a team of high-qualified Somali engineers and other technical experts who visit and monitor the programs we are funding.

HUMANITARIAN OBSTACLES

While our reach is limited due to security, aid is saving lives and livelihoods in Somalia. Aid agencies have access at the neighborhood, district and camp levels but this access must be protected. As the United States sets out a new strategy for Somalia, it is critical that the strategy does not undermine aid operations and preserves the limited operating space. In the past, United States airstrikes in Somalia have negatively impacted humanitarian access by casting suspicion on aid workers, followed by threats and retributions. Likewise, restrictive Office of Foreign Asset Control (OFAC) licensing could slow down the delivery of urgently needed aid, and so it is important that a workable middle ground be found on the OFAC issue that enables exemptions for those aid agencies working in al-Shabaab controlled territory (similar to the OFAC exemption granted to organizations working in Hezbollah territory in Lebanon). It is important to note that no matter who is in control of areas where we work, Oxfam's partners work directly within local clan structures, which continue to exercise effective control over day-to-day administration of aid.

It is also important to point out that there are a range of actors—al-Shabaab, foreign fighters, militias, and criminal groups—impacting our work on the ground. In Oxfam's case, it is our community-based approach that allows our partners to deliver aid because they involve the communities in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programs and as a result, the communities protect the program from parties vying for control of territory.

REFUGEE FLOWS TO NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES

The humanitarian challenges are not limited to Somalia. Kenya's northeastern province, Dadaab, is host to three refugee camps established in 1991. Originally designed to accommodate 90,000 refugees, Dadaab now constitutes the largest refugee site in the world with 250,000 mostly Somali residents. In January 2007, the Kenyan Government closed its border with Somalia but more than 100,000 have nonetheless arrived in Dadaab over the past 2 years, mostly from the conflict-affected areas of Mogadishu and Lower Juba. The high number of refugees in recent months has stretched resources and infrastructure beyond capacity and there is a lack of space on which to build a new camp unless the Kenyan Government authorizes new land to build an additional camp. In March, an Oxfam assessment report showed a lack of basic services, severe overcrowding leading to more than 20 cases of cholera, and a lack of funding. Half of the people in the camps do not have access to enough water and women and children—who make up over half Dadaab's population—rarely have access to adequate latrines.

THE NEED FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

Since the collapse of the Somali state in 1991 there have been widespread abuses against civilians. The lack of accountability for past and current crimes, reinforce a sense of impunity and further fuels conflict.

Since early 2007, there have been reports of widespread and systematic attacks on civilians, journalists, aid workers and human rights activists by all of the warring parties. The failure of the international community to hold these parties accountable for serious breaches of international humanitarian and human rights laws has contributed to a climate of impunity in Somalia.

Somalia is at a pivotal transitional moment and there is an opportunity for the new Transitional Federal Unity Government to draw a line with the past, demonstrate genuine willingness to end the prevailing climate of impunity, and gain the confidence of the Somali people.

SECURITY SECTOR REFORM AND PEACEKEEPING

At the donors' conference last month in Brussels, the United States and others pledged increased resources for the TFG and more than \$250 million for security efforts to bring order to the country. While efforts to bolster security are necessary, there needs to be recognition that recent international interventions in Somalia's security sector have exacerbated problems rather than eased them. For example, the United Nations Development Program gave direct financial support for police salaries and some of these police were implicated in serious human rights abuses.

A key component of the international community's engagement in Somalia is the African Union Peacekeeping Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). AMISOM's mandate is to protect key TFG officials and infrastructure, support the training of Somali security forces, and create security conditions conducive to the delivery of humanitarian assistance. The force has never been adequately staffed or resourced but in January 2009, the United Nations Security Council authorized the use of U.N. assessed peacekeeping contributions to fund a U.N. support package, including medical and communications support, and the creation of a trust fund to marshal voluntary contributions to the force. Discussion has been underway of deploying a multidimensional peacekeeping operation.

REGIONAL STABILITY

The situation in Somalia acts as a destabilizing force within the greater Horn region. Until there is some level of peace in Somalia, more Somalis will cross over the Somalia-Kenya border into Dadaab and piracy will continue. The major supply ports in Mogadishu, Kismayu, and Merka are major supply ports for the rest of the Horn of Africa. As these ports are disrupted, so is the distribution of aid and commercial traffic all up and down the roads that criss-cross from these ports. Somali-Ethiopian tensions continue to simmer as ethnic Somali rebels battle the Ethiopian Government in the Ogaden and Somalia serves a proxy battlefield for ongoing tensions between Ethiopia and Eritrea. All of these problems are symptoms of the same underlying cause—the perpetual challenge of weak governance in Somalia.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Following are steps Congress and the Obama administration should take to address the humanitarian situation in a new comprehensive and sustainable strategy toward Somalia:

1. *Preserve the limited humanitarian operating space*—humanitarian needs remain paramount and of such scale that anything that jeopardizes the humanitarian relief operations will by extension threaten regional stability.

2. *Take urgent steps to deal with the serious public health crisis unfolding in Dadaab*—press the Kenyan Government to authorize UNHCR to start work on a new refugee camp at Dadaab and ensure that its border remains open to those fleeing the conflict.

3. *Hold parties accountable for abuses*—the international community should use their diplomatic, financial, and political leverage with all parties to demonstrate that violations of international humanitarian and human rights law will not be tolerated, and that perpetrators will be held accountable.

4. *Prevent security sector reform and peacekeeping from becoming part of the problem*—any support to security forces must be transparent and accountable and any U.N. peacekeeping force should have wide acceptance by Somalis and a peace to keep. Otherwise they risk being drawn into the conflict.

5. *Foster a credible, Somali-led political and governance process*—this includes consensus-building, power-sharing, and moderation, but not supporting specific individuals or factions.

6. *Ensure any strategy for Somalia has a regional approach*—Somalia shouldn't be dealt with in isolation as peace in Somalia means engaging and resolving issues with neighboring countries.

Senator FEINGOLD. I thank both of you.

I thank Senator Kaufman for his attendance. Also Senator Risch has joined us, members of the subcommittee.

Let me start a 7-minute round for this panel. Dr. Menkhaus, I'll start with you. No one will dispute, I don't think, that the situation in Somalia is far worse than it was 2 or 3 years ago, and that the threat posed by terrorism as well as piracy is far greater now. Looking at the previous administration's approach, as well as that of the international community, what lessons do you believe can and should be learned so we don't repeat the same mistakes again?

Dr. MENKHAUS. First, I would argue for a more nuanced analysis and understanding of the political dynamics in Somalia. I think there's a great temptation on the part of decisionmakers across the world, when confronted with the extraordinary complexities of Somalia, to oversimplify them, and that usually comes at a cost in terms of effectiveness of policy.

Second, I would caution against careless use of state-building initiatives to a transitional government in the context of a war. This needs to be very calibrated assistance. To the extent that security forces of the Transitional Federal Government are controlled by the transitional government authorities, to the extent that there is a local ownership of those security forces, and to the extent that those local security forces are accountable to both the people and the government, that opens the door toward external assistance.

But in conditions where the security forces are essentially a paramilitary, a law unto themselves, and are a source of insecurity and predation against the local community, our assistance—"our" meaning international assistance—in the past essentially meant we were taking sides in an open civil war. That was one of the reasons why the U.N. and international aid agencies became targets in this insurgency and counterinsurgency.

Senator FEINGOLD. As you know, I'm very concerned that the fledgling transitional government is losing support, as well as losing ground with this recent fighting I described. In your view, Doctor, what specifically does the government need to regain support and momentum toward uniting the country? Are there important groups or clans or constituencies that should be engaged more and who would make a big difference if they were brought into the government?

Dr. MENKHAUS. I share your concern about the loss of ground that the TFG has experienced. The insurgents' offensive in recent weeks has been alarming. I don't know that there is a lot that the international community can do to shape the outcome of this current crisis at this time. There may be some calibrated financial support, there may be some diplomatic initiatives, that would facilitate the TFG's current effort to negotiate with some elements of the armed insurgency, those that we consider groups that are not in any serious way indoctrinated, committed jihadists. Bringing as many of those into the TFG is certainly a viable strategy on their part, and if there are things we can do to facilitate that we should.

I would caution against an impulse to provide direct military support at this time because that would play into the hands of the Shabaab. The Shabaab have every interest in framing this current

fight as Somalis versus foreigners. They would love to attract Ethiopia back in. They would benefit enormously from U.S. air strikes were that to happen.

To the extent that this is a Somali internal political struggle, Shabaab actually faces real challenges, because what they stand for is very unappealing for the vast majority of Somalis.

Senator FEINGOLD. Your view specifically about a sort of pivotal figure here, Sheikh Hassan Aweys, who recently returned to Somalia? How do you assess his role in all of this and what are his intentions?

Dr. MENKHAUS. Hassan Dahir Aweys is on our list of designated terrorist suspects, and that's very problematic when it comes to efforts on the part of the Transitional Federal Government to dialogue with him as a potential partner in this government. He is actually of greater concern to Ethiopia than he is to us, because he was in the group al-Itihaad al-Islamiya in the mid-1990s when al-Itihaad launched several terrorist attacks against the Ethiopian Government. That may well make him a nonstarter for Ethiopia were he to be brought into discussions.

He is currently leading—

Senator FEINGOLD. A nonstarter for Somalia?

Dr. MENKHAUS. For Ethiopia. Ethiopia would reject—

Senator FEINGOLD. Would reject it out of hand.

Dr. MENKHAUS. Exactly. And we have to take careful account of Ethiopia's legitimate security concerns in this.

Aweys is currently heading up the Hizbul al-Islamiya faction, which is a hard-line Islamist group, but which tends to embrace more nationalist, rather than globalist, agendas, and therein lies the tension, I think, between Hizbul al-Islamiya and Shabaab, Shabaab having forged closer links to al-Qaeda.

Senator FEINGOLD. Ms. Scribner, I'm glad you're here to give the humanitarian perspective and to highlight the great constraints which agencies like Oxfam are facing. As the U.S. Government considers a new strategy for Somalia, how can we ensure that we're not further impeding humanitarian access and independence? In your view how should addressing the humanitarian situation in Somalia connect with the efforts we've been talking about to support political reconciliation and governance?

Ms. SCRIBNER. I think in terms of things I mentioned in my testimony that one thing would be air strikes on the ground have really impacted aid operations on the ground, because that only casts suspicion on NGOs in terms of their alliance with the West, with the government, or with the U.S. military. And we've had aid organizations that had to suspend operations in some of those areas. So that would be really—that is one thing that's very critical for operating space on the ground.

Then the other thing is just holding parties accountable on the ground. There is really lack of holding anyone accountable for abuses that have been documented by human rights organizations and groups on the ground. So if we could somehow start holding people accountable that would be helpful to our access on the ground as well.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you.

Senator Isakson.

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Dr. Menkhaus, you include bullet points toward the end of your printed remarks, which you did not really discuss. The one I am reading seems to sum up everything we have been talking about. It is on the next to the last page. You write: "U.S. interests are best served by maximizing the extent to which the current conflict in Somalia is defined as an internal Somalian affair. By contrast, Shabaab and Hizbul al-Islamiya's interests are best served when the conflict is regionalized or globalized, framed as a Somali versus foreign fighter situation."

I am going to get to Ms. Scribner on the issue in a second. She has a statement that's interesting.

So I take it when we talk about a coordinated effort in Somalia that this effort must be coordinated in part with Ethiopia and with Ethiopian cooperation, is that correct?

Dr. MENKHAUS. That's correct. We've spent a lot of time this morning talking about coordinated strategy just within the U.S. Government, and that's not an easy thing to do. When you add all of the external actors whose interests matter, including western states, Islamic and Arab states, Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Kenya, this gets to be even a greater challenge.

The key with bringing Ethiopia in as a full partner to a solution in Somalia is, first, the very high levels of distrust between Somalis and Ethiopia. This is a long historical issue. Yet they do have common ground. When you talk to them privately, they do see opportunities for coexistence. Somali business people would benefit enormously from access to such a large internal market. Ethiopia would benefit, obviously, enormously from having a stable country on its long border.

But they haven't gotten to that point yet. So trust-building, confidence-building measures are really critical.

The other aspect of bringing Ethiopia more fully into these discussions is recognizing that, while our interests overlap closely with Ethiopia's and we are allies with them, our interests are not identical. They have different sets of security concerns and different ways of going about them, and we have to be frank with one another about those differences.

Senator ISAKSON. Ethiopia's difficulty with Eritrea was primarily over their border, if I'm not mistaken. Is there a border dispute between Somalia and Ethiopia?

Dr. MENKHAUS. Yes. That border has never been formally recognized by Somalia. It was the source of a major war, the Ogaden war in 1977-78. Periodically Somali groups, including al-Itihaad al-Islamiya, embrace irredentist claims, territorial claims, on the Somali region in Ethiopia, where about 4 million ethnic Somalis live. So this remains a source of enduring concern for Ethiopia.

Senator ISAKSON. So would a coordinated strategy require some settlement of that border dispute?

Dr. MENKHAUS. Absolutely. At a minimum, what we would have to start off with by way of confidence-building measures would be to ensure that any new government in Somalia and any partner in a new government in Somalia accept the premise of peaceful coexistence with Somalia's neighbors. That is a bitter pill to swallow for some Somali nationalists who continue to embrace the notion of a

greater Somalia. But under the circumstances, that's going to have to be one of the things they're willing to concede on the table if Somalia is going to get out of this 20-year impasse.

Senator ISAKSON. Ms. Scribner, in point six, you said, "Ensure any strategy for Somalia has a regional approach. Somalia shouldn't be dealt with in isolation, as peace in Somalia means engaging and resolving issues with its neighbors."

So I am getting the drift that you both agree, from two different perspectives which ultimately arrive at the same conclusion, that a coordinated strategy must be coordinated with Ethiopia and with Somalia. Is there another bordering country with which coordination is needed, or is it primarily the Ethiopian-Somalian difficulty?

Ms. SCRIBNER. Definitely the Ethiopians, the Eritreans, but also the Kenyans as well, and that has to do a lot with the refugee flows into Kenya and the Dadaab camps, and also the closing of the border off and on, but the Liboy reception center, which is where refugees go to be registered. That center has been shut down, so there's no process to register Somalis that are fleeing into Kenya at this point. So Kenya is also a very important country in terms of coordinated strategy.

Senator ISAKSON. Is the Transitional Federal Government actually stable enough to sit down at the table with those two neighbors, Kenya and Ethiopia, in order to reach an agreement, in your judgment?

Ms. SCRIBNER. I think that there is an effort by the new President to reach out to all parties on the ground. I think right now the focus has been on parties within Somalia, so the different warring parties. But I think as a next step definitely reaching out to the other, to Kenya and to Ethiopia. But I think right now on his plate is reaching out to the different groups on the ground.

Senator ISAKSON. I take it that the two organizations—the two terrorist organizations, al-Shabaab and the other that you mentioned—really play on the nationalist pride of the Somali people. And, in doing so, they create an "it's us versus Ethiopia" mentality, in order to whip up the locals and to keep the uncertainty going on. Is that correct?

Dr. MENKHAUS. That's exactly what Shabaab's successful formula was in 2007–08. They conflated a radical Islamist ideology with a nationalist, anti-imperialist, liberation ideology against the Ethiopian occupation, and that won them a lot of support, at least passive support, from Somalis who didn't accept some of the elements of their Islamist agenda, but who saw them as a legitimate leading freedom fighter force against the Ethiopian occupation.

Now that the Ethiopians are out and now that there is a new, more broad-based government that's actually led by their former leader and a moderate Islamist, Sheikh Sharif, Shabaab doesn't have anything to fight against. They have been trying to use the African Union forces and their presence in Mogadishu as the one remaining rallying point of the Somalis versus the foreigners, but that doesn't have as much traction in Somali society.

Senator ISAKSON. Is al-Shabaab's ultimate goal sharia law and control of Somalia? Is that what they really want?

Dr. MENKHAUS. It's difficult to say what Shabaab wants because it's actually quite internally divided.

Senator ISAKSON. Shabaab is?

Dr. MENKHAUS. Yes. What it certainly wants is to block and prevent the Transitional Federal Government from becoming operational. It wants to take control. It is definitely a power-seeker in that sense. What its policies would be beyond that we can only speculate.

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you both very much for being here.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator FEINGOLD. Senator Risch.

Senator RISCH. Ms. Scribner, you made reference to the fact that you—I think you said that you would like to see those who have committed human rights violations or other violations held accountable. How do you do that under present circumstances? Certainly everyone would agree with that, but pragmatically that seems like a difficult thing.

Ms. SCRIBNER. What a lot of human rights organizations have been calling for is a commission of inquiry. You could do that through the U.N., where you have people going in to investigate abuses on the ground. A lot of those investigations could be done in the bordering countries where refugees have flown, so talking to people in Dadaab camps. Most of those people in the camps are from Somalia. So you could actually get a lot of information.

Then when the situation or security on the ground allowed, go into the country and do some of the investigation, which would be helpful in terms of moving toward reconciliation, holding parties accountable, and also looking ahead at any further abuses that are committed, set up a system on the ground.

Senator RISCH. I guess I apologize for my parochial view of holding people accountable, but to me holding people accountable is dragging them into court and inflicting punishment on them for what they've done. I gather that's not what you were referring to. You're more of a—you're referring more to an inquiry and then a publication of the bad things that someone did, but not necessarily a punishment or something along those lines.

Ms. SCRIBNER. I don't think we can get to that yet. But yes, exactly, something similar to what's been done in Burundi or Rwanda or East Timor even, where it's more of a publication of kind of the wrongdoers on the ground, just to give people a sense that you cannot act with complete impunity, that people are watching, that people do care about the abuses being committed on civilians and aid workers, journalists, and human rights defenders.

Senator RISCH. I guess it depends on your point of view, but from my point of view it's almost counterproductive. If you do publish this and say, look, this is what these bad guys did, and then don't do anything about it, it doesn't—it's not the kind of thing that helps in the future. That is, people say, who cares? They discovered all this and then did absolutely nothing about it. These people did act with impunity. They're still walking down the street. They're still doing whatever.

So I guess that—I just need help here understanding this. I understand what you're saying and I think the frustration is you want to do something about it, but yet just investigating it and then publishing the results of the investigation it would seem to

me is not a good deterrent, either individually or from a general deterrence standpoint.

Ms. SCRIBNER. But it does set up a system for people to feel like their concerns are being heard, they're taken into consideration. It also depends on who is committing the abuses. If it's within the police that are part of the Transitional Federal Government—and that's something we talked about with security sector reform—in terms of holding people accountable, you can hold those people accountable because you can fire them.

So there are certain parties that will be held more accountable than others and that actions could be taken. But in places where there is conflict it does serve as a forum for people to have grievances and also just to have their voices heard and the problems that they've experienced at the hands of different parties heard as well. But again, very complicated and not an easy thing to do, but a first step toward actually holding people accountable. More needs to be done in the future, but we need to take that first step.

Senator RISCH. Thank you. I appreciate that.

Mr. Menkhaus, I was fascinated by your comment about some people have a vision for a greater Somalia. Could you expand on what you meant by that?

Dr. MENKHAUS. This is part of an old Somali desire to re-unify ethnic Somalis who were divided by colonialism into five different colonies in the Horn of Africa, Djibouti, British Somaliland, Italian Somalia, Kenya, and Ethiopia. Two of those five did unite, British Somaliland and Italian Somalia, at independence. Now, of course, Somaliland has issued a unilateral secession or a termination of the unity between the two.

But it's a core belief in Somali nationalism, which is, paradoxically, very, very strong despite the fact that they're internally riven by clan and other divisions.

Senator RISCH. Does that go away over a period of time or does it get worse?

Dr. MENKHAUS. It's been around since the 1950s. It's far less significant today than it has been in the past, when it drove wars in the 1970s, but it's still there, not so much for the Somali Kenyans, who really have no interest in re-uniting with Somalia, nor with Somali Djiboutians, who are enjoying all of the fruits of having an independent state. But it's the Somali Ethiopians, who are treated as second class citizens in Ethiopia, frankly, and who are currently bearing the brunt of a very heavy-handed counterinsurgency campaign by the Ethiopian Government.

Senator RISCH. What percentage of the population is that in Ethiopia?

Dr. MENKHAUS. It's about 4 million of a population of roughly 80 million in Ethiopia, if I'm remembering my numbers correctly.

Senator RISCH. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Senator Risch.

I'll ask some more questions. Ms. Scribner, I'm glad that you raise the problem of refugee flows to neighboring countries. I've been worried specifically about the overcrowding and lack of adequate resources in Dadaab, which you mentioned, in Kenya, one of the world's oldest, largest, and most congested refugee sites. Ear-

lier this week Doctors Without Borders said that hundreds of thousands of Somali refugees at this camp are finding the camp conditions so unbearable that some are considering returning home.

I know that there's been an effort over the last year to work with the Kenyan Government to secure some new land to accommodate the refugees, but it's my understanding that a solution still hasn't been reached. What is a workable solution to this situation and what's the greatest obstacle? Lack of leadership, resources, or something else?

Ms. SCRIBNER. In terms of the Dadaab camps, there are three camps—existing camps right now. The negotiation right now is to build a fourth camp. While the Kenyan Government has agreed with UNHCR in principle, they've announced that they would actually authorize land for this fourth camp, they haven't officially authorized it. They haven't given it up to them as of yet.

It's going to take about 6 months to construct that fourth camp. So in the mean time, as Doctors Without Borders and even Oxfam did an assessment report of the camps, we're finding there's not enough latrines, the latrines aren't separate between women and men, so a lot of the women and children aren't using the latrines because of cultural sensitivities of using the same latrine. There's not enough water for people.

So those demands need to be immediately met. Then that fourth camp needs to be up and running as quickly as possible. There's also an appeal—I believe it's \$91 million UNHCR appeal—and that's really important to get funding for the existing camps and then this fourth camp as well.

Senator FEINGOLD. Do you expect this fourth camp will be available in 6 months or is that not clear?

Ms. SCRIBNER. It's going to be 6 months from the time the Kenyan Government actually authorizes the land. As we hope—they've agreed in principle, but again they haven't given that specific authorization as of yet.

Senator FEINGOLD. Doctor, in terms of the piracy off Somalia's coast, you said previously that naval operations might help, but they cannot possibly stop this piracy when “the risks are so low, the rewards so high, and alternatives,” in your words, “so bleak in desolate Somalia.” That was very well put and I want to ask you specifically about possible alternatives and the importance of economic opportunities and, thinking about United States and international assistance to Somalia, how important is economic revitalization in promoting livelihoods?

Obviously, some of this is very difficult with combat violence going on in some regions of Somalia. But I'm thinking here also about Puntland or even Somaliland.

Dr. MENKHAUS. In the long term, economic revitalization to provide opportunities, alternative opportunities for pirates and their financial backers are the solution. In the short to medium term, though, the on-land solution can also and must also come from political authorities that are both willing and able to stop the piracy, which I would add is a second order security threat for us compared to what's going on in Mogadishu. I think we have to be careful not to allow any of our antipiracy efforts to compromise our policies toward counterterrorism and state-building in the south.

We do have two instances in Somalia where piracy has been prevented or stopped by local political authorities because they had a political interest in demonstrating their utility to the international community. One is Somaliland. Somaliland has the ideal coast along the Gulf of Aden for pirate lairs, and yet when pirates have attempted to use those shores Somaliland has prevented it, and that's again because they are trying to demonstrate their legitimacy and their utility to the international community in a bid for international recognition.

The other instance was the Islamic Courts Union in 2006, which put a quick end to piracy along the Indian Ocean coast. Again, that was in part because the pirates and their financial backers were political rivals of the Islamists, so they had incentive to put an end to it, but also because they wanted to demonstrate that they were a source of rule of law, someone that we would want to work with.

For me that's instructive. It means that they don't have to have a large coast guard. It means that they don't have to have the immediate economic revitalization. What they have to have is the political interest, the will, to put an end to it on shore, and if they have that they will do it.

Senator FEINGOLD. Doctor, I particularly appreciate your candor and your directness. It's exactly what you said, the piracy, as important as it is, is not the first order security risk here. Of course, we don't have a full room here, just a few weeks after the piracy. We don't have the heroes here who saved the people. So we revert back to the sort of, OK, Somalia's a terribly difficult place, and we forget the most elemental thing, which is that the pirates do not live in the water; they live on the land.

And if we're foolish enough to just let this go and move on to other things, the next crisis of the day, we will seriously involve ourselves in, I think, one of the greatest crises in the world. There's a tendency for people to say, well, the President's got so many things on his plate, how can he possibly have Somalia be at this level? Well, the fact is it may well be at that level, and it requires that kind of attention. It requires that attention now. So I greatly appreciate your comments.

Senator ISAKSON.

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I have just one question for Ms. Scribner. I am going to be in Kenya next week, so I need a little education. From what I understand, the Dadaab camp is there under the auspices of the Kenyan Government allowing it to be there. Who operates the camp?

Ms. SCRIBNER. UNHCR does, so the U.N.

Senator ISAKSON. So it's under the auspices of the U.N.?

Ms. SCRIBNER. I believe it is under the auspices of the U.N. They're the ones in charge and operating those camps there, but with the permission of the Kenyan Government.

Senator ISAKSON. And there are half a million refugees, you said, in that camp?

Ms. SCRIBNER. There are 250,000 refugees in three camps.

Senator ISAKSON. In three camps?

Ms. SCRIBNER. Yes. So there are 500,000 refugees in surrounding countries and half of those, 250,000, are in the Dadaab camps.

Senator ISAKSON. Which U.S.-based NGOs are providing assistance in that camp?

Ms. SCRIBNER. I believe Doctors Without Borders; International Rescue Committee is also in the camps. And Oxfam has done assessments in the camps and we've agreed with the government that if a fourth camp is opened that we would provide water and sanitation for that fourth camp.

Senator ISAKSON. The Kenyan Government?

Ms. SCRIBNER. Yes.

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you very much. Thanks to both of you for your testimony today.

Ms. SCRIBNER. Thanks.

Senator FEINGOLD. Senator Risch.

Senator RISCH. In the camps themselves, who provides the security? Is it the Kenyan Government or the U.N. that provides security in the camps, local policing, if you would?

Ms. SCRIBNER. I think it's the Kenyan police. But there have been some allegations of abuse by the police on the population within the camps, and I think it was Human Rights Watch in particular did a very detailed report of abuses within the camps and the problems, not just with the humanitarian situation, but with the security situation.

Senator RISCH. Is it the result of ethnic prejudice or that sort of thing? What's the source of that?

Ms. SCRIBNER. I think it's many issues, many different issues. Part of it is maybe the police not making enough money, so it's preying on the population. It may be that they are Somalis and not Kenyans. But I don't know specifically all the different issues of it, but I know that there has been a lot of reports and concerns about the treatment.

Half of those 250,000 people are women and children, so that's really important to point out.

Senator RISCH. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator FEINGOLD. I want to thank the panel very much. I particularly want to thank my colleagues for their diligence on this and other issues relating to Africa. It really has made the work on the subcommittee so far this year a pleasure. I want to thank everybody who was involved in the hearing. That concludes it.

[Whereupon, at 10:27 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]