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MEMORANDUM FOR: National Intelligence Officer for Africa

FROM :

[Redacted]

OPA

EO 12958
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SUBJECT :

Ethiopia-Somalia: Ogaden Situation and Its
Implications for President Siad [Redacted]

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Military Situation

[Large Redacted Area]

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The Ethiopian advances are causing major concern among Somali government and military officials. Ethiopian forces are now in a better position both to hamper the guerrilla operations of the WSLF and to support activities inside Somalia by the SSF. [redacted]

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Political Ramifications

The latest Ethiopian offensive has generated considerable domestic pressure on President Siad to step up the military effort. Annexation of the Ogaden is central to Siad's grand scheme for a reunification of all Somali people, and is one of the few issues on which all Somalis are in accord. He cannot afford to lose the Ogaden through either a military defeat or a negotiated settlement that does not satisfy key elements within the government and armed forces. [redacted]

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SSF ?

[redacted] army officers are leaning hard on Siad to commit additional troops in the Ogaden. Siad [redacted] may be unable to resist this pressure unless he can provide evidence that US military and economic assistance is forthcoming. Siad is increasingly bitter over what he perceives as the lack of supporters with influence in Washington; he claims that a strong pro-Ethiopian lobby is undermining the budding US-Somali military relationship. [redacted]

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Siad has been in difficult positions before and has proven himself a master in balancing competing interests. But he could well become the scapegoat at some point for Somalia's military reverses, particularly if the expectation of significant US military and economic assistance as a result of the facilities agreement is not realized. Many in the military hold inflated expectations of US assistance and are likely to blame Siad--and perhaps even attempt to oust him--if sufficient materiel is not forthcoming. Siad is banking on the US to come through, believing that Washington's need for Somali military facilities gives it a stake in his survival. [redacted]

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