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Intelligence Report

Office of African and Latin American Analysis

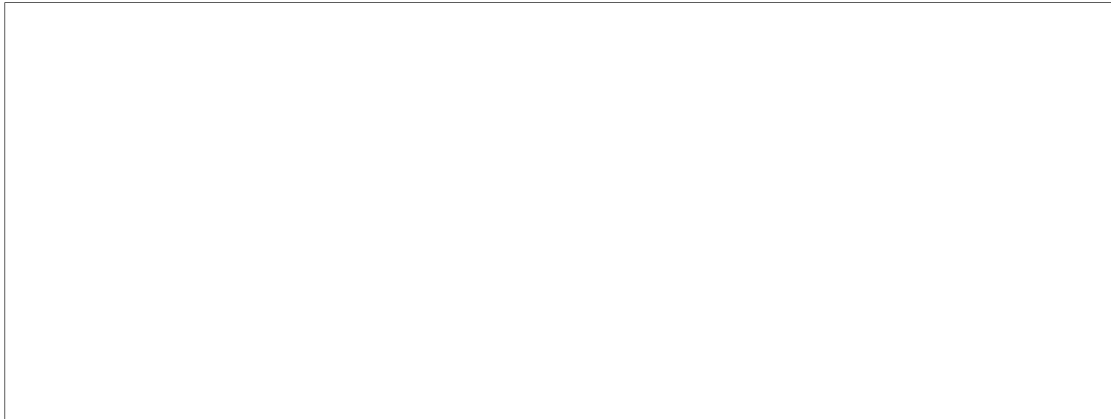
25 October 1994

Somalia: Ethiopia and Eritrea Tilting Toward General Aideed



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A growing body of reporting indicates that Ethiopian President Meles and Eritrean President Issaias have decided to help General Aideed establish a Somali government.



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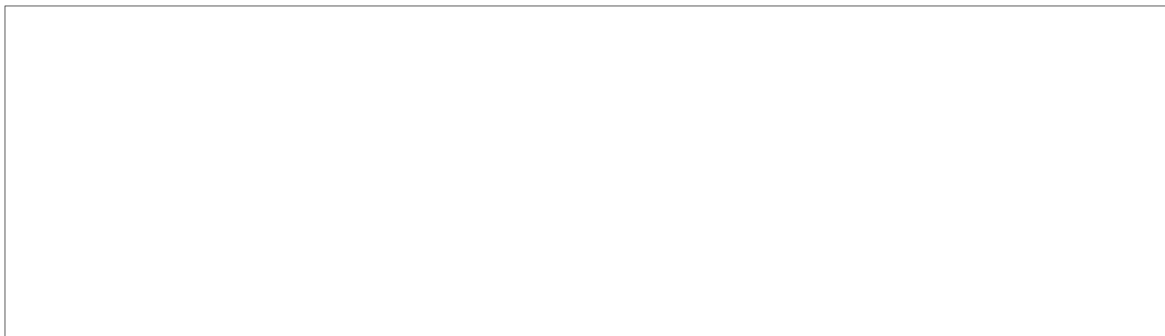
Support from Addis Ababa and Asmara will enhance Aideed's political stature, may provide him a significant military advantage over his rivals, and undoubtedly will further embolden Aideed and lessen any inclination he might have to compromise.



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An Increasingly Active Political Campaign

There is growing evidence that the governments of Ethiopia and Eritrea, which have closely coordinated their Somali policies since the start of the international intervention, have begun an active campaign to help General Aideed establish a national government in Somalia.



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Arms and Ammunition for the Warlord

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A number of reports from different sources [redacted] also suggest that, at a minimum, Addis Ababa has permitted Aideed's Somali National Alliance (SNA) representatives to purchase and ship arms and ammunition from Ethiopia to his forces in Somalia.

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- [redacted] agreed in late August to allow Aideed to remove weapons and ammunition from a major SNA stockpile in the Region 5 town of Shilabo, Ethiopia, [redacted]

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[redacted] shipments of ammunition for Aideed's faction arrived in Mogadishu from Ethiopia in mid and late September.

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- [redacted] SNA official [redacted] purchased [redacted] multiple rocket launchers, assault rifles, heavy machineguns, and [redacted] truck loads of ammunition from Ethiopia [redacted]

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This report was prepared by [redacted] Office of African and Latin American Analysis. Comments and queries are welcome and may be directed to Chief, Africa Division, [redacted]

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truckloads of arms, escorted by Ethiopian troops, recently crossed the Somali border destined for Aideed. [Redacted]

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[Large Redacted Block]

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- Addis Ababa also is increasingly concerned that instability in Somalia will prevent the repatriation of tens of thousands of Somali refugees still in Ethiopian camps and that a major resurgence of fighting may spark new refugee flows. Addis Ababa already faces a restive ethnic Somali population and organized resistance groups in its Region 5, and probably fears that new refugees from Somalia would support and provide recruits to such groups.
- Of lesser concern probably is a desire by both governments to counter what they perceive as continuing Egyptian support to Aideed's rival Ali Mahdi. [Redacted]

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Meles and Issaias appear to have decided that Aideed represents their best option for promoting political stability in Somalia. [Redacted]

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A Decisive Gain for Aideed?

[Redacted] Aideed recently appears to have scored some political gains against his rival Ali Mahdi, including winning the defection of several key Ali Mahdi allies to his camp. [Redacted] these political gains

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are not yet decisive, Aideed appears confident that he has acquired enough political and military support to proceed unilaterally with a "reconciliation" conference later this week that may result in his declaring a new Somali government.

[Redacted]

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Such a declaration, without the acquiescence of Ali Mahdi and his allies, is likely to lead to another round of fighting. Heavy fighting in June and July consumed much of the ammunition stocks in the capital, and both Aideed and Ali Mahdi have been scrambling to replenish their supplies. Aideed's acquisition of even limited amounts of arms and ammunition, including mortar and recoilless rifle rounds and rocket-propelled grenades, might be enough to give him an edge militarily over his less well-armed Mogadishu rivals. Eritrean and Ethiopian assistance will probably not enable Aideed to decisively defeat his Mogadishu rivals, but he could use his military advantage to bully marginal Ali Mahdi allies into accepting an Aideed-dominated government, further tilting the political balance in his favor.

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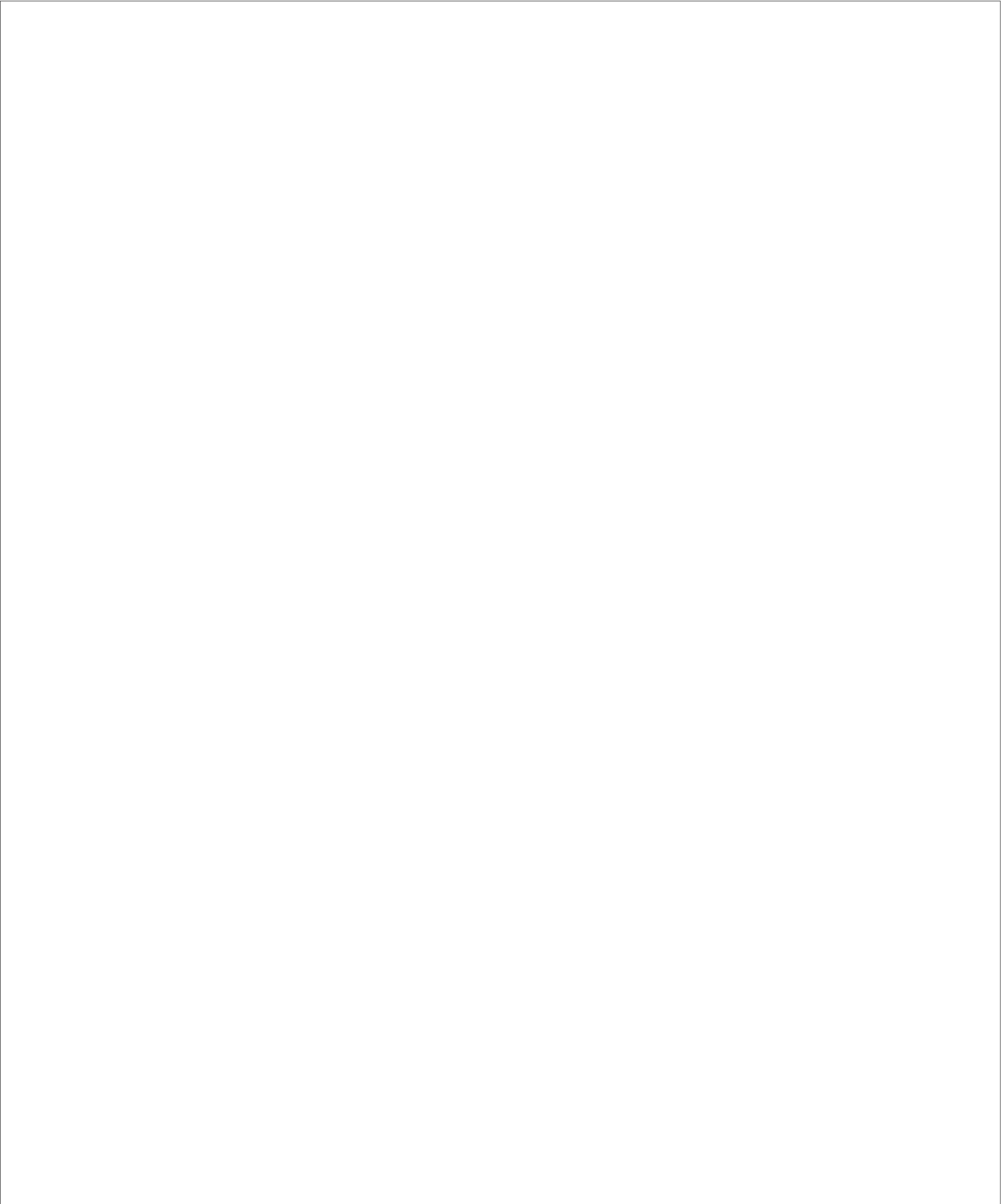
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