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By BT/VSW Date 6/23/88

MOGADISCIO A-11

I. SUMMARY

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The most important U.S. policy objectives in Somalia are 1) to support Somali efforts toward economic development and improvement of governmental efficiency; 2) to seek continuation of the detente in the Horn of Africa and encourage regional cooperation; 3) to support a policy of true non-alignment; and 4) to strengthen Somalia's ties with the West.

Since its establishment in October 1969, the Army-dominated revolutionary regime has firmly established itself in power but has not yet won the confidence of important segments of the population. The Supreme Revolutionary Council (SRC) has set reasonably sound goals for economic development and social reform and is attempting to achieve them by making maximum use of Somalia's own resources. However, as the Somali economy is depressed and resources scarce, the SRC will continue, in large measure, to be dependent on foreign aid to reach its long-range development objectives. Soviet influence is strong in Somalia, particularly in the Army, because of the presence of Soviet technical and military advisers, the number of which has increased over the past year. The SRC is seeking through various means -- including the establishment of "Scientific Socialism" as its ideology -- to win broad acceptance and to enlist the support and cooperation of the population as a whole in carrying out its plans.

In its foreign relations Somalia is non-aligned but leans toward the East. With the sharp decline of the U.S. presence over the past year Italy remains the most influential of the Western powers represented in Mogadiscio. The GSDR continues the detente with respect to Ethiopia, Kenya and the TFAI, strongly condemns the white-dominated regimes of southern Africa and is a vociferous champion of African independence. Somalia, as a Muslim country, maintains close ties with the key Arab states, particularly with the UAR.

Specific recommendations on U.S. policy under the present circumstances in which U.S. influence in Somalia is severely limited are briefly outlined in Section IV of this airgram.

[Omitted here is the body of the airgram.]

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