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RELEASE IN FULL

From: Sent: Mills, Cheryl D < MillsCD@state.gov> Tuesday, May 19, 2009 5:06 AM

To:

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Subject:

Fw: Crisis Hot Spots (05/18/2009) (SBU)

See first two

From: OpsAlert

Sent: Mon May 18 15:14:29 2009

Subject: Crisis Hot Spots (05/18/2009) (SBU)

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED

Crisis Hot Spots

Monday, May 18, 2009 1500 EDT

SRI LANKA: RAJAPAKSA TO DECLARE VICTORY, IDP NEEDS GROW

(SBU) The government and NGOs are struggling to respond to the needs of 60-80,000 civilians who fled the conflict zone since May 15 and are still arriving at IDP camps. Shelter, water, basic health care, and sanitation are the most urgent needs among the 280,000 civilians now in overcrowded camps. UNSYG Ban will travel to Sri Lanka May 22. The EU pushed for an independent investigation into alleged human rights violations in the war, mainly over reported civilian deaths. Czech FM Kohout said the inquiry should be carried out by Sri Lankan authorities, but could involve non-government and UN bodies. (Colombo 539, Reuters)

SOMALIA: ISLAMISTS CAPTURE PRESIDENT'S HOMETOWN

(SBU) Al-Shabaab seized the key town of Jowhar north of Mogadishu as pro-government militia deserted their positions near the capital, media report. The government has lost control of most of south and central Somalia; press report insurgents are heading toward the border town of Beledweyn near Ethiopia. The Transitional Federal Government (TFG) requested support from other armed factions in the fight against al-Shabaab. Embassy Nairobi comments the TFG plans to lobby Ethiopia for support at a May 20 regional ministerial meeting. (Nairobi 1010, Reuters)

MALAWI: MAY 19 ELECTIONS TOO CLOSE TO CALL

(SBU) Parties are skeptical of the integrity of the electoral process, although the U.S. embassy and international partners will deploy observers, Embassy Lilongwe reports. (Lilongwe 257)

PAPUA NEW GUINEA: VIOLENCE TARGETS ASIAN BUSINESSES

(SBU) Attacks against ethnic Chinese-owned businesses have spread throughout the country since May 12, with some localities reporting thousands of rioters, according to Embassy Port Moresby. Post adds the violence demonstrates growing resentment of ethnic Chinese economic influence. The disturbances caught authorities by surprise, and the government has not yet taken action against those involved, according to the Papua New Guinea desk. The embassy comments the racial basis of the attacks is a new phenomenon in the country, where the tribal fragmentation of society has kept such nationalist violence from occurring previously. (Ops/Papua New Guinea desk telcon, Port Moresby 88, 87)

Additional updates on events in MALAWI are available through our classified website at http://ses.state.sgov.gov.

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