## **RELEASE IN FULL**

From:

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Sent:

Wednesday, July 6, 2011 6:30 AM

To:

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**Subject:** 

Fw: Hunger in Somalia: Militants want aid groups back (AP)

Fyi

From: OpsNewsTicker

Sent: Wednesday, July 06, 2011 06:13 AM

To: NEWS-Mahogany

Cc: SES-O

Subject: Hunger in Somalia: Militants want aid groups back (AP)

MOGADISHU (AP) - Somalia's most dangerous militant group says it may allow aid agencies back into the territories it controls considering the region's crippling hunger and drought crisis.

A spokesman for al-Shabab, Sheik Ali Mohamud Rage, said late Tuesday that the group wants to open communication with aid agencies to negotiate their return. Rage said the aid groups' only objective can be to help the needy.

Al-Shabab in 2009 began to ban aid agencies, fearing the groups could host spies or promote an un-Islamic way of life.

But in recent weeks tens of thousands of Somalis have fled militant-controlled areas because of a lack of food. A severe drought is causing herds of animals to die, and aid agencies are warning of impending disaster.

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