

4 August 2006

## **Ethiopia Attacking Ogaden Rebels**

*Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi says his government has been conducting "military sweeps" against rebels in Ethiopia's Somali region.*

The push against Ogaden National Liberation Front rebels came after Somali elders had gone to Europe and the US to meet them, he said.

Mr. Meles said he endorsed the meetings to try to resolve the conflict in the region, but that the talks had failed.

He said the offensive was requested by elders after they returned to Ethiopia.

"I am not aware of innocent civilians being killed by our forces. I am aware of Somali people being killed by the ONLF because they are accused of supporting the government," he said.

Ethiopia's eastern Ogaden region shares a long and porous border with Somalia, and most of its people are of the Somali ethnic group.

Mr. Meles has also denied reports that Ethiopian soldiers have been sent into Somalia recently, in support of the fragile transitional government based in Baidoa.

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