

## A PASSAGE TO AFRICA

### GEORGE ALAGIAH

#### BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

George Alagiah was born in Sri Lanka, but when he was five years old his family moved to live in West Africa. He now lives in the United Kingdom and works as a newscaster for the BBC.

This passage comes from his book *A Passage to Africa*. In this autobiography, he writes about his life and experiences as a TV reporter working mainly across Africa. In this extract, he writes about a report he made when he was covering the civil war in Somalia for the BBC.



▲ BBC newscaster George Alagiah

#### BEFORE YOU START READING

- 1 Find some information about George Alagiah. You can look at the BBC website.
- 2 Find out something about the civil war in Somalia, which began in the 1990s.
- 3 In a small group or with a partner, share your ideas on the following questions.
  - ▶ Why do you think people watch news on television? Do you watch it? If you don't, why not?
  - ▶ Have you ever watched a news programme reporting a war or a humanitarian crisis, such as a famine or an earthquake? What do you remember about it and the effect it had on you?
  - ▶ Does television reporting of terrible events, such as floods or famines, help the people who are suffering?