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# Foreword

The International Peace Support Training Center (IPSTC) is a research and training institution focusing on capacity building at the strategic, operational and tactical levels within the framework of African Peace and Security Architecture and has developed to be the regional center of excellence for the African Standby Force (ASF) in Eastern Africa. The Centre addresses the complexities of contemporary UN/AU integrated Peace Support Operations through exposing actors to the multi-dimensional nature of these operations. The research conducted covers a broad spectrum ranging from conflict prevention, management, to post conflict reconstruction. The Centre has made considerable contribution in training and research on peace support issues in Somalia through design of training curriculum, field research and publication of Occasional Papers and Issue Briefs. The Occasional papers are produced annually, while the Issue Briefs are produced quarterly. The issue briefs are an important contribution to the vision and mission of IPSTC.

The fourth issue brief, second quarter, (2013), contains two titles on peace and security in Somalia: *State and Nation building in Somalia and The Role of Media in Stabilization of Somalia*. The Issue Briefs provides insight into pertinent peace and security issues in Somalia that are useful to policy makers and aims to contribute to the security debate and praxis in Somalia. The articles in the Issue Brief are also expected to inform the design of training modules at IPSTC.

The International Peace Support Training Center has made considerable contribution in research and training on peace support issues in the Great Lakes region and the Horn of Africa. The centre is a training and research institution focusing on capacity building at the strategic, operational and tactical levels within the framework of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA).

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**Brig. Robert G Kabage**  
**Director, IPSTC**

# Introduction to the Issue Briefs

The first issue brief, *State and Nation building in Somalia* evaluates the bumpy road to state and nation building in Somalia. Being a dynamic society, state and nation building in Somalia will be informed by the evolving traditional structures, Islamic systems and values, Western values and practices and external intervention.

The vexing question that may define the next phase of conflict in the country will be the nature of federalism – pitting the central government in Mogadishu against increasingly independent regions. While clan balkanization does not seem to be the best option, there must be practical guarantees for security and inclusion of minority clans in devolved government.

Much as the international community provides assistance to building capacity of the national government including the security sector, there should be parallel engagement with the regions, given the mistrust between them and central government. Sustainable peace and security in Somalia will be dependent on the alignment and fusion of the central government, the regional authorities, including deciding the fate of secessionist regions, traditional structures and the emerging civil society.

The African forces in AMISOM have made considerable sacrifice in Somalia, thereby winning hearts and minds of a large Somali constituency. This goodwill must not be wasted in the midst of international power politics and interests. The United Nations should support the work of the African Union rather than attempting to take its traditional role of the custodian of international post conflict reconstruction. The best strategy recommended in this study is creation of United Nations and African Union Mission in Somalia (UNASOM), to create synergy, reduce political risks/exposure of the UN and add value to AMISOM.

The leaders of Somalia and the international community cannot afford to lose this opportunity, a turning point in the two decades of chaos that has left behind many dead and maimed souls. The state and nation building approach must be dynamic to accommodate evolving power relations, support local capacity for state and nation building while deterring negative forces.

The second issue brief; *The Role of Media in Stabilization of Somalia* evaluates how media has contributed to peace and security stabilization in Somalia. It focuses on the role of media in peace support operations (PSO) in Somalia. In addition, it examines the nature of media and its influence in perpetuating conflict or peace building in Somalia. Equally important, it assesses the role of social media in Somalia and its potential to either escalate or de-escalate conflict. The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), a peace support operation will be analysed in the context of the objectives of this study. The research seeks, therefore, to understand the nexus of media-peace support operations and its role in the stabilization of Somalia.

The research argues that media is not an end in itself. Rather the media is means through which stabilization can be achieved. The paper further argues that, for stabilization to be realized, other factors need to be considered. It recognizes that Somalia has been entangled in civil war for over two decades even in spite of the numerous peace conferences and mediation.

# Acronyms

<b>AMISOM</b>	African Union Mission in Somalia
<b>AU</b>	African Union
<b>CDRD</b>	Community Driven Recovery and Development
<b>CONOPS</b>	Concept of Operations
<b>DPC</b>	District Peace Committee
<b>FGM</b>	Female Genital Mutilation
<b>IDP</b>	Internally Displaced Persons
<b>IGAD</b>	Inter Governmental Authority on Development
<b>NSSP</b>	National Security and Stabilization Plan (Somalia)
<b>NGO</b>	Non Governmental Organization
<b>OCVP</b>	Observatory of Conflict and Violence Prevention
<b>TNG</b>	Transitional National Government
<b>TFG</b>	Transitional Federal Government
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNOSOM</b>	United Nations Operations in Somalia
<b>UNSOM</b>	United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia
<b>USA</b>	United States of America
<b>UNTAC</b>	United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia

# State and Nation building in Somalia

*Joseph Kioi Mbugua*

## Introduction

The main objective of this study is to understand the nature of current state and nation building approaches in Somalia in a bid to establish the most effective policies, strategies and institutions of governance in the country. The study examines the interface between local initiatives and solutions proposed by foreigners including military intervention. This research is based on secondary data from reports, books and articles.

This paper is organized into four sections namely; introduction, theoretical framework, state and nation building in Somalia and the conclusion. The introduction provides a general overview of Somalia and its checkered journey to state and nationhood. The second section examines the literature that informs the study, challenging some commonly held positions while advocating for Somalia specific policy and practical approach. The third section an analysis of the nature of state and nation building in the country including the actors and assesses opportunities for sustainable state and nation building in Somalia. The last section provides the conclusion where the main message of this paper is reiterated.

Somalia is basically a Somali speaking nation with a large Muslim population. Somalia became independent in 1960 having been colonized by Italy to the South, British to the North and France to the North-

east. The British and Italian territories were joined at independence but the French territory transitioned as an independent state of Djibouti.<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to note that Djibouti has recorded a history of peace and former British Somaliland has also registered stability while the former Italian territory has remained fragile. This scenario has been partly attributed to the Italian policy of undermining traditional clan structures.<sup>2</sup>

Though the country began with a democratically elected leadership at independence, there were early signs of political instability which culminated into the military coup led by Siad Barre in 1969 and the assassination of the then president Ali Shamarke. Barre presided over a weakening state which often discriminated on clan basis and was embroiled in the cold war politics where he occasionally sided with the East and the West.<sup>3</sup>

Barre also took Somalia to a costly Ogaden war with Ethiopia (1977-9), which arguably planted the seeds for his own demise. The military rule of Siad Barre, often regarded as autocratic lasted until 1991 when rebels invaded Mogadishu and forced the president to flee. The United States intervened in 1992 to stem the humanitarian crisis, but failed and the United Nations took over in 1993 with UNOSOM I and II. The UN peace enforcement also failed and withdrew in 1995.<sup>4</sup>

Somalia did not have an effective central administration for over 20 years, until very recently when a president was democratically elected. The fragile administration is being supported by the African Union Mission in Somalia

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1 Matt B (1999), New Hope for Somalia; the Building Block Approach, *Review of African Political Economy*, Vol.26 No. 79, pp.134-140, 1999

2 Peter PJ (2012), the Somaliland Exception: Lessons on Post Conflict State Building from the Part of the Former Somalia that Works, *Marine Corps University Journal*, Vol.3, No.1, p.8

3 Ibid. p.10

4 John R.B (1194), Wrong Turn in Somalia, *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 73, No.1, pp.56-66, P.62

(AMISOM) and the international community is registering a number of measures to seize this turning point as an opportunity for sustainable state and nation building in Somalia. This is a critical period for transformation of the Somalia state. This study makes a contribution to this policy debate. The study examines opportunities for developing unique policy and strategic options, institutional design and contextualization of state and nation building theoretical models and practices in Somalia.

Although attempts by Kenya, Ethiopia and Djibouti to help state building in Somalia were earlier perceived as doomed to fail by some skeptics; the current political establishment in Somalia owes its existence to the peace process that began in Djibouti and was concluded in Kenya. The transformation of the Transitional National Government (TNG), formed during the Arta Peace Agreement in Djibouti in 2000, under the auspices of Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) transformed into the Eldoret conference born Transitional Federal Government (TFG) in 2004. This was the precursor to the current popularly elected government in Mogadishu.

Majority of Somalis practice a moderate version of Islam different from the one propagated by Al Shabaab. The conflict in Somalia today has two main protagonists; the government of Somalia and AMISOM on one side and the Al Shabaab. The latter projects itself as defender of Islam and independence of Somalia.<sup>5</sup> They however have not been able to find linkage with the clan structure and therefore their sustainability is questionable. Having been defeated by AMISOM, they have now been scattered and operates in small gang like bands. Somaliland and Puntland have had relative peace and stability while South Central Somalia has borne the larger impact of the conflict.<sup>6</sup>

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5 Ted D (2011), Somalia: *Current Conditions and Prospects for a Lasting Peace*, p.5,

6 This region comprises of; Banaadir, Lower Juba, Middle Juba, Gedo, Bay, Bakool, Lower Shabele, Middle Shabele, Hiraaan and Gulguduud

This study presents options for state and nation building in Somalia bearing in mind various global approaches, local cultural and religious dynamics and historical experience. State and nation building must go hand in hand to enhance peace and security across the country. Relations between the central government and the regions must be navigated carefully to prevent emergence of another fault line in Somalia's conflict. The international community must find a common approach to the reconstruction of Somalia to prevent negative effects of intervention and to enhance mutual cooperation and collaboration.

## **Objectives of the Study**

- i. To assess the nature of state and nation building in Somalia.
- ii. To assess the role of actors contributing to state and nation building in Somalia.
- iii. To establish the challenges/opportunities in state/nation building in Somalia

## **Statement and significance of the problem**

This section highlights why lack of a cohesive nation and a state capable of providing security in all regions of Somalia is a hindrance to sustainable peace and security in the country.

Having plunged into anarchy with the overthrow of Siad Barre in 1991, Somalia remained without a central government for over 20 years, prompting skeptics to classify it as a failed state.<sup>7</sup> Many futile attempts have been made by neighbouring countries and the international community to bring peace and security stabilization in Somalia.

State building in Somalia has not been achieved since 1991. Due to this

<sup>7</sup> Fund for Peace (2012), *Failed State Index*

failure Somali people have continued to bear the huge cost of insecurity, poverty, massive internal displacement and refugees.<sup>8</sup>

The absence of a central government has created insecurity to the neighbouring countries such as Kenya and Ethiopia through free flow of small arms and light weapons. If the state and nation building process is not supported adequately by the international community, power struggles may emerge among the new power barons. The relative stability may be undermined by insurgents or foreign agents, proliferation of arms may continue and citizens may lose confidence in the new administration. Those who are poised to lose from the changing political and security scenario may also undermine the peace building efforts.<sup>9</sup>

There is a deep seated Somali mistrust of a strong central government given the negative experience under Siad Barre. Many of the political elites that have emerged lack vision, leadership skills and are not committed to development agenda. The tension between central and local administration such as the one taking place between Kismayu and the government of Somalia mirrors this conflict.<sup>10</sup>

There have been divisions between regional and international powers as regards the future of Somalia with some parties promoting a more Islamic state and society (Turkey and Arabic countries) while Western powers and neighbouring countries prefer a secular state.<sup>11</sup> Therefore any regime in Somalia that appears to promote a radical Islamic agenda will be opposed by these parties.

Due to lack of stability Somalia registers low development indicators

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8 IDMC Report (2013): *New Displacement and Worsening Humanitarian and Protection Crisis for IDPs*

9 Republic of Somalia: *National Strategy for Reconciliation and Stabilization in the Newly Accessible Areas of South Central Somalia*, P.2

10 Daily Nation, Tension between Jubaland Government and the new Government of Somalia, June 12, 2013, p.35

11 Djorn M (2009), *the Somali Conflict: The Role of External Actors*, p.35

such as education (primary enrollment, 22%) and high drop-out rates. 43% of the people are said to be living on less than a dollar per day. Human rights violations and FGM rates are high.<sup>12</sup>

The Somali Transitional Federal Government (TFG) was restored in 2006 after Ethiopian forces defeated Islamic Courts Union (ICU). The UN Security Council (UNSC) authorized the African Union to create a peacekeeping mission for Somalia in February 2007 to support stabilization of the country as Ethiopia withdrew its forces from the country. Ethiopia and Kenya later joined the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and launched attacks on the insurgents from the west and the south respectively; capturing Al-Shabaab's last remaining strongholds in southern Somalia in 2012.

Despite the recent successes of combined international efforts, security remains a huge concern in Somalia. The continued presence of AMISOM is critical to the success of the Somali peace process and Somalia's new government, since the transfer of power from TFG to Somalia's current government in August 2012.

The recent democratic change of government is sending signals of a new order in the country. AMISOM has also provided the necessary ground for the relatively weak administration to operate. It is in light of this window of opportunity that members of the international community are providing various kinds of assistance to the country to support emerging pillars of peace and security consolidation in the country.

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<sup>12</sup> UNDP (2012), *UNDP Human and Development Index: Somalia Report*

# Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

This section examines the literature that informs the study on the nature, approaches and actors contributing to nation building in Somalia.

There has been a long debate on the best methods of state and nation building especially after the end of the cold war and subsequent emergence of civil wars in Eastern Europe and Africa. State building and nation building sometimes are wrongly used interchangeably.<sup>13</sup> Several scholars view state building as a process that involves external actors while nation building is largely a local phenomenon. The latter involves efforts to build national cultural values for cohesion and integration.<sup>14</sup>

Academic theories have been advanced on state building but sometimes there is no correlation between theoretical findings and practical application especially in post conflict state and nation building (Balthasar 2012, p.61, Boas 2010, p.12 p.26, Moller 2009, 85).

Some authors have identified certain characteristics among states as provided below (Ghani 2008, p.19, Menkaus 2011): *predatory state* where the state provides a minimum of public services and the elites use the state to derive personal advantages; *developmental state* on the other hand is exemplified by South Korea and Taiwan whereby the state is an agent of development through partnership with the private sector. In other words the state has capacity to provide public goods and services. The *intermediary state* on the other hand sometimes acts as an agent of transformation but also has some elements of elite's control. It does not have as much bureaucratic capacity as the developmental state.<sup>15</sup>

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13 Dominik B (2012), State Making in Somalia and Somaliland, Understanding War, Nationalism, and State Trajectories as Processes of Institutional and Socio-Cognitive Standardization, P.25

14 Ibid p.25

15 It is important to note that this is the Western or Eurocentric Weberian view of state and nation building. It uses the western state as a model to be followed by the developing countries. This position is untenable in the complex security situation context such as Somalia

Failed state is closer to the predatory state. According to this classification, Somalia is identified as both a failed and anarchic state since there was no effective central government control and there were armed groups fighting to control the state.

Some scholars have argued that the main purpose of a state is to deliver economic growth (Collier 2010, p.20, Menkhaus, 2007, p.29). The other functions of a state are to foster state, civil society and markets relations.<sup>16</sup> The functions of a state are regulated through the rule of law. Rules are resources that can be used to generate collective power. However without active citizens who reflect on and consent to these rules, there can be no legitimacy.<sup>17</sup>

The common functions of the state are; maintenance of law and order (rule of law), monopoly of violence, administrative control, sound public financial management, investment in human capital, advancement of citizen's rights through social policy, provision of infrastructural services, formation of markets, management of public assets and effective public borrowing.<sup>18</sup>

Maintenance of the rule of law is identified as the most important function in a failed state. The above proposition is based on the Western neo-liberal state building approach and does not consider the unique factors in protracted conflicts. This is a normative approach to state building and it requires adaptation to conflict or post conflict state building context.

Most of the authors reviewed provide useful descriptions of various models of state formation but do not build a coherent linkage between the state and conflict management and development. According to Collier (2003), war retards development and conversely development

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16 Ashraf G (2008) and Lockhart C., *Fixing Failed States: A Framework for Rebuilding Fractured World*, p.160

17 Ibid, P.121

18 Ibid. p.124

retards war. This situation creates a vicious circle where development fails and it increases the risk of conflicts.<sup>19</sup>

Collier (2004), maintains that democratisation is important for durable peace and security. This requires creating systems of accountability. Collier also advocates for military intervention to help countries in conflict to escape the conflict trap. He cites the example of British intervention in Sierra Leone and the intervention of Ethiopia and Kenya in Somalia as successful cases. This may come in form of a peace enforcement mission to support a democratically elected government or to prevent coup d'état, and to provide external guarantees of state protection.<sup>20</sup>

Collier's prescription mirrors the Washington Consensus and may be effective in crisis control but is lacking in long term political measures for stabilizing peace and security. Though external intervention has its value, it cannot on its own be a successful tool of conflict management. There must be a confluence between a number of local factors in the political and conflict context that makes it possible for external intervention to succeed. External intervention must gain or build legitimacy in the local polity for their success.

Galvan (2004) in his book, *'The State Must Be our Master of Fire'*, based on a case study in Senegal, introduces the concept of *'Institutional syncretism'*, which holds that the traditional values and mechanisms can be merged with formal institutions to achieve culturally sustainable development.<sup>21</sup>

There have also been efforts to delineate the dichotomy between exogenous and endogenous factors at play in the reconstruction of

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19 Collier P (2003) et al, in *Breaking the Conflict Trap*, a World Bank report

20 Collier P (2004) *Development and Conflict*, p.4

21 Galvan studied a development model in Senegal that was based on inappropriate Western approach and shows how more local sensitive approaches can be successful

failed states. The former seems to be the prerogative of state building while the latter seems to be the zone of nation building. However there are many areas of bonding between the two systems as this study will indicate. Building of formal institutions of governance appears to be the major concern of external parties. There are various arguments about which process should come first but as the Somalia case will demonstrate both approaches can go hand in hand.

Miller Benjamin (2005, p.230) makes a theoretical proposition that *State to nation balance or imbalance* causes conflict or war. This construct refers to the lack of compatibility between the existing territorial divisions of a state and the people inhabiting these regions.<sup>22</sup> Some regions of the country that may be culturally, historically or linguistically different from the rest of the country may feel unease with the rest. Often there emerges demand for secession among groups that feels marginalized by the central government. According to this analysis, the best strategy to bring peace in such a situation is to support the regional groups to challenge the central state level.

State and nation building in Somalia requires an innovative approach since presidential system as practiced in other countries is not preferred and federalism as practiced in most parts of the world is also detested by some clans in Somalia. A new imaginative formula must be devised for Somalia or the country risks disintegrating into smaller states beginning with Somaliland, Puntland, Bay and Bakool and Jubaland.

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22 Benjamin M (2005), *When and How Regions Become Peaceful: Potential Theoretical Pathway*, P.230

# State and Nation building in Somalia

This section presents analysis of the approaches and strategies for state and nation building in Somalia.

## Defining State building

State building refers to; ‘creation of new governmental institutions and the strengthening of existing ones.’<sup>23</sup> This definition belie a western approach to state building which may exclude vital state building structures that are traditional in Somalia. According to the 4.5 power sharing formula among clans in the Arta agreement achieved in Djibouti, power is shared among clans and minorities are taken care of.

Building or transforming state structures for increased stability and effectiveness is the main issue in state building for policy makers. The Western model envisages building of state institutions with capacity to make and implement policies at the national and local level. This approach also envisages participation of citizens and civil society. However participation of both formal and informal institutions is required for state building in Somalia.

## Approaches to State building

There are various methods of state building being implemented in Somalia today. Most of them are leaning towards Western systems partly due to the influence of development partners and members of the government who have come from the Diaspora (mostly from Europe and North America or their satellites). Given the experience of some regions making progress in the absence of the central government, some degree of autonomy must be granted to the regions.

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<sup>23</sup> Francis F (2004), The Imperative of State Building, *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 15. No.2, p.17-31

It is also important to understand where the question of federalism will be determined either from the grass root level or from Mogadishu. Though the current constitution recognizes federalism, in reality the parameters have not yet been defined on the ground. This is an issue on which violence has already been applied between local leaders and the central government, such as Kismayu. However this issue cannot be decided through force alone, it must be a mediated issue and it will eventually determine the fate of Somalia as a unitary state and inform the future relationship between Mogadishu and Somaliland, Galmadug and Puntland, among other emerging autonomous regions.

## **Consolidation of peace and security**

Peace and security stabilization is still the top priority for state building in Somalia. All other developments are dependent on the success of this top most agenda. Long term consolidation of peace and security requires continued dialogue between the government, traditional leaders, clan leaders, politicians, professionals, security agents, religious leaders, business people, women leaders, youth, sports groups, diaspora and media among others. Establishment and capacity building of Regional and District Peace Committees (DPC) is also vital to spearhead community based and inter clan reconciliation.<sup>24</sup>

Community Driven Recovery and Development (CDRD) approach has been adopted in order to strengthen capacity of local institutions and instill good governance practices such as accountability and transparency at the local level.<sup>25</sup> Recognition of traditional structures as local capacity for peace is vital in order to reinforce their potential and application in the modern governance sector.

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24 Republic of Somalia: *National Strategy for Reconciliation and Stabilization in the Newly Accessible Areas of South Central Somalia*, P.5

25 Ibid. p.9

## **New Constitution as a Pillar for the Rule of Law**

The Transitional Federal Government (TFG) made a new constitution with the support of the United Nations and other development partners. The new constitution was adopted by the National Assembly in 2012 and it set the stage for the election of a new government that is in place today. The constitution provides a framework for the rule of law, protecting human rights and establishing the basis for democratic governance.<sup>26</sup>

The constitution bans the widespread practice of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and also bans the use of children in armed conflicts. These lofty ideals however are not consistent with what is happening on the ground in most parts of the country. The relation between the center and the regions has not yet been well defined. Islam is declared to be the state religion and the only one allowed to be propagated. The country will have a federal system but the borders of regions and mechanism for implementation have not yet been defined.<sup>27</sup>

## **Nature of Federalism in Somalia**

A number of options have been put forward for the Somalia state building project. State building scholars and practitioners have advanced arguments in favour of a centralized state as a stabilizing factor in Somalia.<sup>28</sup> Other scholars have called for devolved units based on clan and regional distribution as building blocks for a stable state in Somalia.<sup>29</sup> Due to the perceived injustices committed during the reign of Siad Barre, many Somalis resent the idea of a strong central government that may be hijacked by some clans to advance their interests. Emergence

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26 The Federal Republic of Somalia (2012), *Draft Constitution*

27 The Federal Republic of Somalia (2012), *Draft Constitution*

28 Ken M (2011), *Somalia: State building as if People Mattered*, Washington DC: The Enough Project

29 Matt B (1999), *New Hope for Somalia; the Building Block Approach*, p. 136

of strong regional governments appears to be a necessary strategy for checking on the excesses of the central government.

The Somali constitution 2012 recognizes federalism as the preferred system of governance in Somalia.<sup>30</sup> However in practice, federalism is accepted by the weak clans occupying riverine territories such as Rahanweyn. It is also opposed by the bigger clans such as Hawiye and Haber Gedir who have occupied parts of the riverine South. Federalism is also rejected by Islamist groups who operate beyond clan divisions. The Digil-Mirifle clan opposes centralization for fear of domination and land grabbing by bigger clans.<sup>31</sup>

The issue of indigenous ownership of specific regions by some clans as opposed to encroachment of some clans to areas that did not belong to them before the war; will be a long term source of conflict. This scenario can be seen among the Marchan/Haber Gedir/Ayr occupation of Kismayu until very recently and other parts of the South Central Somalia.<sup>32</sup> There are fears that clan based federalism might ignite clan cleansing. The specter of occupation of some clans in other areas raises the danger of violence brought about by unmediated federalism.

Somalia today is effectively divided into a number of clan or regional fiefdoms. The Isaaq clan occupies Somaliland (North West Somalia), Mijeerten clan occupies North East Somalia such as Sool and Sanaag regions, Digil-Milfre occupy the Bay and Bakool region. Jubaland including Gedo region is occupied by several groups including the Haber Gedir. There is an elongated central territory occupied by the Hawiye and the capital Mogadishu is occupied by individuals from all the clans in Somalia.<sup>33</sup>

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30 The Federal Republic of Somalia (2012), *Draft Constitution*, p.18

31 Ken M (2007), Governance without Government in Somalia: Spoilers, State Building and the Politics of Coping, *International Security*, Vol. 31, No.3, p. 83

32 Ken M, *Somalia: State building as if People Mattered*, P.85

33 Matt B (1999), *New Hope for Somalia; the Building Block Approach*, p. 136

It is not the clan balkanization that will form the building blocks of the new Somalia state but a more creative edifice that makes use of the global democratic and human rights based values and recognize the long established cultural practices and values that affirm Somali identity. The structures of a new national government should not be confused with a national executive bent on using force to coerce the periphery to dance to the tune of the clan or a confederation of clans in power.

The local governments set up in most regions have undermined the power of warlords and organized armed groups. This is because they are democratic since they are formed through the consent of the governed in elections or traditional Xeer system.

## **Security Sector Development**

The security sector is a central pillar in the provision of security and administration services. This is the most visible face of government among the populace. Security sector development is one of the pillars identified by the international community for supporting stabilization of Somalia. AMISOM and the neighbouring countries have been providing training and capacity building of the military and police.

The government of Somalia has a policy paper for security sector development. The Somalia National Security and Stabilization Plan (NSSP) 2011-14 approved by the Council of Ministers in 2011 is the main document that harmonizes national and international efforts to streamline and prioritize a coherent approach for security, access to justice, and stabilization interventions in Somalia.<sup>34</sup> Security sector development plan involves military integration, improving policing capacity, enhancing access to justice/rule of law, establishing local security committees and integration of ex-combatants/youth at risk.

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<sup>34</sup> Republic of Somalia (2012): *National Strategy for Reconciliation and Stabilization in the Newly Accessible Areas of South Central Somalia*, P.8

The plan focuses on making graduated implementation in liberated areas that will be scaled up as security situation improves. This plan is dependent on the success of continued reconciliation and reconstruction activities and support from AMISOM and the international community.

A national army, police, correctional services and judiciary reform strategy is also in place.<sup>35</sup> For these reforms to be successful they will have to work with the existing protection mechanisms such as neighbourhood watch, clan militias, businessmen protection agencies and Sharia courts. The old system cannot be easily phased out; it has to be adapted to the new system for effective continuity and legitimacy.

## **The Military**

The TFG signed a Concept of Operations (CONOPS) strategy in 2012 for the integration of all Somalia Forces under a unified national command and control. This document lays out the process and rationale for the integration of all military forces into the Somali National Security Forces. The military is composed of the Somali National Security Force, militias allied to this force in the fight against Al Shabaab, Militias of Ahlu Sunna Wal Jamaah and Ras Kamboni and other groups of fighters. These forces require more equipments and capacity building for proper coordination and cohesion.<sup>36</sup>

The military needs to evolve into a unitary disciplined force under central command. This is important for security stabilization and to enable the rule of law to function. Reintegration of militias also removes elements that could be harmful to civilians or can be recruited by warlords to undermine security stabilization. The military reform plans are being supported by IGAD, AU and UN through funding and capacity building.<sup>37</sup>

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35 Ibid, p.9

36 Ibid, p.9

37 Ibid, p.9

The Somalia (NSSP) 2011-14 plan has a Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) plan for combatants. The government has made efforts to register the ex-combatants. With the help of United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) and International Organization of Migration (IOM), the government is developing standards of operations procedure to implement the program. However many of the projections of the plan have not yet been achieved given the prevailing insecurity situation. UNDP is also assisting in developing creative approaches to security provision, through building capacity of institutions, policies, management and training.<sup>38</sup>

## **The Somali Police Force**

Establishment and capacity building of a national police service is a priority in Somalia. The community view the presence of police as a signal that law and order is resuming in the country. The police are recruited among people who have served in the police before, new recruits trained by the national government, AMISOM and neighbouring countries.

The police respond to the local authorities such as District Commissioners and Governors. Many police stations are required but there are many stations already in place that require renovation only. The police also require vehicles, uniforms and other equipments which the national government cannot supply without outside assistance. AMISOM is poised to be a major partner in the reforms through the police unit.

## **The Judiciary and Rule of Law**

A number of reforms have been lined up for the Judiciary. These include plans to establish regional courts staffed with at least one judge per region establishment of mobile courts.<sup>39</sup> There is a need to link the justice system with the traditional and Sharia system especially in the rural areas where traditional structures have been more effective.

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38 UNDP Somalia Annual Report, 2011, p.10-17

39 Ibid. p.11

The judiciary in Somalia will take a long time to assume a modern national status. Majority of cases in Somalia are resolved through the traditional customary law and the Sharia courts. Academic and religious scholars have a long way to go in drafting a new legal dispensation that will accommodate the traditional and modern judicial services.

Plans are also under way for rehabilitation of the correctional services. There is a need to build capacity of this sector since the facilities were dilapidated.

## **Building Human Resource Capacity for Public Service**

A lot of efforts are required to build an effective Somalia civil service from the scratch. Most of the trained civil service in Somalia went into exile. There are a number of diaspora Somalis with the right skills who have returned to work for the government. Somalia requires a thin national government that will have to negotiate for space with the local actors. This approach will assuage opponents of a strong central government from armed rebellion.

The central government should begin by delivering services that are not being provided by the traditional structures and the business sector. An attempt to establish control over all local affairs may not be successful because the lack of government services was filled by other actors.

The state building approach in Somalia will require a lot of flexibility from the international community who are bent on implementing universal standards of state building. The state will have to establish an organ for negotiating state and local government's disputes which are bound to be enormous especially in immigrant clan occupied areas of Central and South Somalia.<sup>40</sup>

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40 Ken M (2007), *Governance without Government in Somalia: Spoilers, State Building and the Politics of Coping*, p. 105

## District and Regional Peace and Security Committees

The District Peace Committee (DPC) is a conflict resolution organ that has been tested in Kenya with considerable success. It has proved to be a useful forum for bringing together formal and informal security and administration structures including modern civil society. The government of Somalia has registered support for this model since Somalia has a well built traditional structure.

These organs serve as forums for information sharing on crime trends, identifying sources of violence within communities, monitoring human rights abuse and offering an inclusive and participatory process of conflict resolution that pre-empts conflicts through addressing community grievances. They also make good forums for gender mainstreaming in the evolving system of administration in Somalia. The regional peace committees also provide another level of information flow from and between the national and the grass root level. These structures also become sources of early warning and early response to forestall re-emergence of armed militias in liberated areas.

The peace committees require capacity building in leadership, administration, accounting, communication, fund raising, peace building and reconciliation. The DPC model has a huge potential for integrating traditional structures and the formal sector in the Somalia state building approach.

The government has developed a communication and coordination strategy to sensitise the public on security sector reforms and to facilitate sharing of information among the implementing partners.<sup>41</sup>

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41 Ibid. p. 13

## **External Military Intervention**

The invasion of Somalia by Ethiopia in 2006 in support of Transitional Federal Government (TFG), provided hope for the control of Al Shabaab militias. Ethiopia being predominantly a Christian nation and with perceived support from USA, provided adequate fodder for Al Shabaab to brand the intervention as foreign and anti-Islam. Ethiopians withdrew after pacifying a number of regions in the country. The rebels regrouped and took over the areas left by the retreating army. AMISOM came to take over from the Ethiopian army and to stop rebels from overrunning the TFG. The government of Somalia has continued to hang on AMISOM life support machine and it is not clear when this situation will come to an end.

AMISOM has militarily succeeded to remove Al Shabaab from the mainstream of Somalia politics but it's yet to build strong internal security sector capable of defending the government and the people of Somalia. The international community has a herculean task to build the capacity of the security sector that is professional and human rights respecting.

Foreign military intervention has had a checkered history in Somalia with the failure of the US and UN intervention in the early 1990s. However given the recent experience of AMISOM, it may not be the foreign intervention per se that is a problem but the strategic, operational and the tactical approach that could be an issue. In the absence of dominant hegemony among domestic actors in Somalia politics, external intervention can lend support to the group with legitimacy and the highest potential for success such as TFG. Left on their own, internal actors can fight for a long time before one group subdues the others as exemplified by rise and fall of warlords since 1991. However foreign intervention that is not well informed about the local political context is bound to fail given the Somali long established culture of independence,

sensitivity to foreign military intervention and devotion to their cultural and religious identity.

The Western culture of labeling freedom fighters or local armed groups with genuine grievances as terrorists does not always help in bringing an end to conflicts. Al Shabaab being an offshoot of the political Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) deserve a political not necessarily a one prong military approach. Avenues of political negotiations and accommodation should be explored to bring along moderate political leadership of Al Shabaab into a comprehensive pan Somalia peace agenda.

Foreign intervention of Djibouti is usually regarded positively in Somalia because the former is a Somali speaking nation and has been involved in finding a peaceful solution to the conflict in Somalia.

There are instances of development partners basing their intervention on research and Western established conceptions of state building that may not be in line with the most pressing priorities of the Somali people. External interventions must reinforce rather than undermine or compete with the local capacities for peace and development.

AMISOM must integrate the latest cutting edge knowledge and practices of peace support operations in order to put Somalia towards a democratic path with sustainable peace and security. The international community should support the vital structures that can build a foundation for peace. Post conflict reconstruction in Somalia is a herculean task and should assume unique approach informed by the current local actors in Somalia politics, the traditional structures, diaspora and the business community.

## Somaliland State building model

In Somaliland there is a bicameral parliament with an upper house consisting of clan elders that mediate differences between clans and a lower house composed of elected clan members that serve as the legislative body. This is a unique fusion of the modern state craft with traditional structures that can be replicated in Somalia.<sup>42</sup> In contrast the government of Somalia is based on the 4.5 formula where seats in parliament are distributed equally to the four major clans and the 0.5 seats to the minority groups. This formula gives limited guarantees to the minority.

Somalia can learn a lot from Somaliland through examining the role of clan elders as peace builders, role of government in demobilization of former armed militias and the political actions that have been taken to make the government look legitimate in the eyes of the public. It is also important to understand the contribution of distinguished leaders to peace making in the country such as former president Mohammed Egal. Somalia has not produced a leader who commands unquestionable loyalty across the country.

Leading Isaaq business people in Somaliland support to the government has also been identified as a source of strength. It is important to understand whether the business community also acts as a pillar for peace consolidation in Somalia today. Commitment of civil society to peace and the rule of law has also served as a deterrent to potential criminals, warlords and politicians bent on incitement in Somaliland. The citizens are also said to be tolerant even when there is perceived corruption in the public sector. It is important to understand whether there are some cultural factors that prevent peace consolidation.

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42 Matt B (1999), *New Hope for Somalia; the Building Block Approach*, p.4

## Nation building

Nation building refers to the process of national integration and consolidation of society to establish a modern democratic entity. It refers to eradication of ethnic or clan peculiarities in search of a larger identity.<sup>43</sup> Nation building has also been defined as a process of assisting dysfunctional/unstable or failed states to develop governmental infrastructure, civil society, dispute resolution mechanisms, as well as economic assistance to increase stability.<sup>44</sup> The first definition is more concerned with social integration and societal cohesion while the second definition includes aspects of state building. This paper takes nation building in Somalia as a process of creating national identity beyond clans to enhance national unity, peace and development.

## Traditional structures

Traditional structures form an important layer of governance in Somalia. Traditional societal structures in Somalia promote state and nation building activities. These structures require to be aligned to the new state and nation building policies and strategies in Somalia.

In precolonial Somalia there were a number of clan based traditional structures that performed the functions of a state. The two main institutions were; *Shir* (Political council) and *Xeerbeegti* (Law council). *Shir* could hold forums anywhere often under the shade of a tree. *Shir* was responsible for discussing peace treaties, declaration of war and appointing war leaders. The law council operated as a traditional judiciary dealing with cases such as murder, insult, divorce, inheritance, robbery and theft. The law council was made up of four individuals well schooled in the traditional legal system. The main base of decision making was based on consensus rather than creating winners and losers.<sup>45</sup>

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43 Deutsch K, Nation building and Social Integration Theory, [www.folk.uio.no/palk/ch.02htm](http://www.folk.uio.no/palk/ch.02htm)

44 Carol S (2005), Nation building, Beyond Intractability, p.1

45 Joakim G and Omar D (2006), the Predicament of the Oday: The Role of Traditional Structures in Security, Rights and Development in Somalia, p.7

The modern day traditional structures are expressed in three tiers: the social structures defined in the clan system, the judicial-cum political structures expressed in the elders and the traditional customary law as defined by the Xeer.<sup>46</sup> The Diya paying group unites groups that trace a long historical genealogy and they are defined by collective ownership of individual members' transgression against other groups.<sup>47</sup>

The traditional structure therefore has all the ingredients of a modern state with political and a judicial arm. It has been noted that this system is used to solve 80-90% of domestic cases.<sup>48</sup> The value of traditional structures still exists in Somalia today. Those who are knowledgeable in religious matters, intellectuals and the law still command considerable respect in Somalia society.

Traditional structures however did not accord women as equal rights as men. However this has been a notable feature of patriarchal societies in Africa, the West and Asia. And as can be seen in the new leadership dispensation in Somalia today women are occupying significant positions in government and civil society.<sup>49</sup> There are significant norms and values in the traditional Somali culture that are similar to modern day state building tenets of democratic participation, transparency and accountability in public governance.

Sustainable peace in Somalia will depend on creative adaptation of the formal global governance practices with the positive aspects of the traditional practices. It is important to note that the traditional leadership structure among the Somali did not have a king or supreme

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46 Ibid, p.5

47 Peter P.J (2012), *the Somaliland Exception: Lessons on Post Conflict State Building from the Part of the Former Somalia that Works*, p.6, Diya refers to groups that are united through commitment to pay for members transgressions especially during conflict between the group's clan and other clans

48 Joakim G, *Opp.cit.*, p. 7

49 For example the current Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation is a woman

leader. Decision making was based on consensus. This may explain the Somali aversion to a strong centralized government that may be hijacked by rival clans. The colonial system did not recognize this aspect and appointed colonial chiefs to preside over the clans.<sup>50</sup>

Unlike in Western classical democracy where the individual relates to the state directly, in Somalia the individual relates to the state through the clan. Therefore the state must recognize the clan structures in order to be recognized by the populace. Unlike the western jurisprudence, in most pastoralists' cultures such as Somalia, when an individual commits a crime, the clan takes responsibility. In other words there is no individual responsibility especially for crimes committed during conflicts. The democratic culture of decision making through consensus among clan elders is a positive value that the national government of Somalia can borrow.<sup>51</sup>

The clan structure has its own limitations and may have inherent weaknesses that might have been perpetuating conflict. Most clans are small and cannot provide all the services provided by the state. Most conflicts have been based on clan disputes. Sometimes when warlords acquire power, they nominate their own elders who may lack legitimacy. Therefore there is proliferation of elders and one might not be sure who the real representatives of the clan are. The customs on which most traditional structures depend for their operations are not written and these may inhibit use of a common rule of law. These structures also do not recognize or promote international standards of human rights and women are largely excluded.<sup>52</sup> These customs however are dynamic and change to accommodate new circumstances.

The traditional structures can be revised to accommodate progressive ideas such as mainstreaming women in post conflict reconstruction, observation of human rights and protection of minorities.

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50 Ibid, Gundel and Dharbaxo, p.8

51 Ibid.p.16

52 Ibid, p.21

The Somali culture has significant local capacity for peace in that the people speak the same language; share the same religion and a common historical background. There is also a lot of economic interdependence across regions including Somaliland. The business community also transcends clans and politics and therefore operates in major towns in the country. Civil society is also emerging as an alternative provider of social services in the absence of effective government services.

The international development partners should support democratic structures that are legitimate in the eyes of the local people both at the national and local level. State and nation building activities have to be implemented in the current uncertain situation. These activities must go in tandem for synergy and reinforcement of local capacity. For effective implementation there must be a comprehensive strategy that aligns government programs with the work of development partners, AMISOM, civil society and the traditional structures.

## **Hybrid structures**

Formal institutions must be well embedded in the local cultural context to gain local ownership and legitimacy. The use of hybrid structures in formulation of governance structures in Somaliland has been credited for the relative stability in that region. It is important to note that there was hardly any foreign intervention in Somaliland.

No Western style reconstruction paradigm or UN blue print is capable of replicating successes from other regions in Somalia. The strategies for state building in Somalia must be context specific and tailored to the unique socio-economic and political situation in the country. The long term trend of state building in Somalia seems to be assuming a combination of natural organic evolution of local institutions with external inorganic interventions.<sup>53</sup>

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53 Ken M (2006), *Governance without Government in Somalia: Spoilers, State Building and the Politics of Coping*, pp. 74-106

# Actors in State and Nation Building in Somalia

## *The Business/Private Sector*

The business sector in Somalia has been influential in nudging the warlords or whichever party is in control in Somalia to provide them with a predictable environment for business operations. They have been paying taxes to the powers of the day in order to facilitate their business operations. In spite of the protracted conflict in Somalia, there has emerged big businesses some of whom supply goods and services to far flung countries of Eastern Africa such as South Sudan and Burundi.

The telecommunication industry including money transfer has prospered in Somalia even during conflict. One of the favourable factors has been free competition and lack of bureaucratic governmental control in monopolies and licensing.<sup>54</sup> It has been claimed that in certain occasions, the Somalia economy has been growing faster than any other country in the Horn of Africa.<sup>55</sup> The business community mostly relies on Sharia courts to enforce contracts.

The clan structures and the traditional Somalia spirit of entrepreneurship have uniquely contributed to the flourishing of trade even in the wake of violence. However the clan structure acts as a safety net during conflicts and does not provide enough economies of scale as a national state would. Somalia businesses would inevitably thrive better with a stable government even with introduction of predictable tax regime.

Businessmen in Mogadishu organized private security companies that became important forces of the Sharia courts. The traders are said to have formed their own militias when the warlords levied taxes on

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54 Benjamin P, F. Ryan and N. Alex (2008), Somalia after State Collapse: Chaos or Improvement?, P.6

55 Ibid, p.7

them and did not provide security for their properties in return. The business people also supported the TNG and TFG governments for the protection of their assets.

The business sector took over most services that are provided by the government such as provision of electricity, water and education. The lack of central taxation has had negative effects on economies in East Africa where cheap goods from Somalia find entry. Sectors that are not deemed profitable such as road maintenance and public sanitation have subsequently been neglected. Most economic activities takes place in large cities where they are profitable thereby increasing the urban-rural income gap.<sup>56</sup> It is in the long term best interests of the business community for the Somalia state building project to succeed since business can thrive better in predictable security environment.

### *The Somali Diaspora*

Due to the protracted conflict, Somalis are found all over the world including neighbouring countries, Yemen, Southern Africa, Europe, USA and Canada. It is estimated that more than 15% of the former population in Somalia are now living abroad. They maintain a crucial economic lifeline in form of *hawala* Islamic fund remittances. The Somali diaspora is a crucial factor for or against state building.

Many members of the diaspora have returned to work in the new government and in international organizations, establish businesses or civil society. Though they are as divided along clan lines as the ones they left behind, they have access to more funds and have acquired the language to influence international communities' policies towards Somalia. Due to the modern information technology, members of the diaspora are well informed about what is happening in Somalia.

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid, p.5

A number of the diaspora are committed to reconstruction of their country and they possess considerable investment capital, leadership and technical skills. The diaspora is said to be contributing between US\$500-1000 Millions annually to the local economy.<sup>57</sup>

Since 2000 half of the members of parliament are people from the diaspora and for most of them their families are still living abroad. This factor makes their commitment and trust for long term stability of the country, be doubted in some quarters.<sup>58</sup>

### *Civil Society*

Civil society in Somalia is comprised of both traditional elders and the modern sector. NGOs are gradually emerging with funding from Western international organizations, United Nations system and Islamic countries and organizations. Professional organizations are also emerging but most of them are based at the clan level. Most of these organizations require capacity in leadership and management skills.<sup>59</sup>

Since it is hard for foreigners to work in some parts of crisis torn Somalia, civil society is highly necessary to act as mediator between the local people and international development partners. Programmes focusing on establishing democracy, rule of law and poverty alleviation are necessary to turn Somalia from a path of self destruction and a source of insecurity to the neighbouring states and beyond. The international development partners have supported surveys of civil society organizations and their activities in Somalia in a bid to build their capacity.<sup>60</sup>

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57 Ken M (2007), Governance without Government in Somalia: Spoilers, State Building and the Politics of Coping, p.90

58 Djorn M (2009), the Somali Conflict: The Role of External Actors, p.36

59 European Commission Somalia Unit; Updated Strategy for Peace building and Civil Society, p.8

60 Opp.cit, Djorn M, p.35

The media is also emerging as an important sector of national development. Though Somalia still remains the most unsafe place for journalists to operate, there are numerous electronic and print media outlets in the country. International development partners such as BBC, the United Nations and the European Commission have supported capacity building of journalists and media organizations.<sup>61</sup> Social media is also a popular mode of communication especially among the diaspora. The media has a big role to play as the medium through which debates on state and nation building affairs are discussed.

### *The United Nations*

The United Nations has not yet assumed the dominant role in state building in Somalia partly due to the failure of initial intervention in the early 1990s. However the UN humanitarian agencies such as UNDP, UNICEF, WHO, UNHCR, WFP, FAO and OCHA, have continued to play important role in mitigating the effects of the conflict on civilians. The UN Security Council (UNSC) imposed an arms embargo in 1992. The UNSC has also supported initiatives of the African Union and IGAD in bringing peace to Somalia.

The United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) is the new UNSC authorized mission in Somalia in 2013 replacing the Nairobi based United Nations Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS). UNSOM has a mandate to create a favourable environment for stabilization and peace building. The UN mission will support the work of the government, AU and IGAD in turning back Somalia to a path of peace and development through good governance and enhanced rule of law. UNSOM will build on previous UN assistance in Somalia that focused on security stabilization, improved social services and good governance. Other specific programs have focused on peace building, reconciliation

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61 INFOASAIID, Media Overview, [www.infosaid.org/guide/template-guide/media-overview](http://www.infosaid.org/guide/template-guide/media-overview) 1, accessed June 20th, 2013

and conflict prevention, capacity building and institutional development, gender and human rights.

The UN has also a department for specifically supporting AMISOM known as the United Nations Support Office for AMISOM (UNSOA). This organization supports training and capacity building of AMISOM in UN logistics and international standards of field operations.

The UN has a vital role to play in Somalia in the long run given the untenable situation of neighbouring countries playing a major role in peace and security stabilization in Somalia. The most feasible strategy for the UN seems to be the creation of a hybrid UN/AU mission (UNASOM). This will serve to shield the UN from negative effects of international intervention while reaping the goodwill of AMISOM and the benefits of African countries commitment to resolve the Somali conflict. The recent attack of UNDP offices in Somalia by suicide bombers should make the UN rethink its strategy.<sup>62</sup> The global Islamic perception of the UN as a lackey for the West/NATO as demonstrated in Libya and Syria is sending negative signals for the legitimacy of the global guarantor of peace. The UN cannot afford another debacle in Somalia. It must not give religious radicals an opportunity to turn the tides of peace and security stabilization in Somalia.

### *African Union*

The African Union (AU) has spearheaded a reformed Africa Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) that has potential for managing conflicts in the continent. The AU has been supporting IGAD and the Eastern African regional initiatives to stabilize Somalia. AU authorized the formation of AMISOM to provide protection and security in Somalia in 2006 after the departure of the Ethiopian forces. The services of the revitalized African Union Peace and Security Council and the

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62 Daily Nation, Nine Killed as Al Shabaab attack UN base in Mogadishu, June 20, 2013, P.

AU High Level Panel of Mediators will continue to be required for sustainable peace in Somalia.

## ***IGAD***

The Inter Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), spearheaded negotiations that produced the Transitional Federal Government (TFG). This is an important forum where Somalia can meet to negotiate its concerns with strong neighbouring countries, especially Kenya and Ethiopia. IGAD provides space for Kenya and Ethiopia to have a common policy towards Somalia. The support of local Somalia peace initiatives by immediate neighbours provide more effective positions of leverage on whose levers the international community can stand. Previous initiatives by the UN and USA did not have the benefit of understanding Somalia's political and cultural context that local players and neighbouring countries can comprehend.

## ***Ethiopia***

Ethiopia's main concern in Somalia is to protect its national security and the Ogaden territory.<sup>63</sup> Given the past war between Somalia and Ethiopia, the latter would not like to see the emergence of a strong expansionist neighbour.<sup>64</sup> This however does not work against peace and security stabilization in the country. It would be in Ethiopia's interests to see a friendly government in Mogadishu.

## ***Kenya***

Like Ethiopia, Kenya went to war with Kenyans of Somali origin supported by Somalia in the 1960s over Somalia's quest to re-unite the lost Somali territories in Ethiopia and Kenya. That conflict ended in

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63 The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia's Foreign Policy, *Security Policy and Strategy, 2004*, covers a wide range of issues, including Ethiopia's assessment of its relations with Somalia. The report states that Somalia attacked Ethiopia twice in pursuit of its Greater Somalia ambition. The report also notes that: 'at this time the Greater Somalia agenda has failed'.

64 Ted D, Somalia: Current Conditions and Prospects for a Lasting Peace, p.28

1967 and Kenya and Somalia co-existed as good neighbours a long time afterwards. The recent intervention of Kenya in Somalia is not informed by the past conflict but by the effects of Somalia's state failure that continued to produce terrorist's attacks on Kenya, escalated proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) and created avenues for untaxed goods entry into the Kenya economy.

Kenya has genuine interests in peace and security stabilization of Somalia given the support provided to the Eldoret and Mbagathi Somalia peace process and the Kenya Defence Forces intervention to oust Al Shabaab, but like Ethiopia, Kenya would like to see the emergence of a stable Somalia that is at peace with its neighbours.

### *The United States of America (USA)*

The United States understandably scaled down its activities in Somalia after the dark episode of the early 1990s. The US however resumed engagement with Somalia in 2006 amid fears of Somalia becoming a training ground for international terrorists. The US has continued to support covert operations against extremists terrorists suspected to have been involved in attacking American interest in Eastern Africa and found refuge in Somalia.<sup>65</sup> The US supported 2006 Ethiopia's intervention in Somalia. It has also supported UN, AU and IGAD initiatives to stabilize Somalia.<sup>66</sup>

There is a feeling among Somalia analysts that the US can play a much bigger role by marshalling international support for reconstruction in Somalia. This support however must continue to be given through a multi-lateral approach that incorporates many international and regional players to avoid backlash from the radical Islamic segments in Somalia.

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65 Johnny C (2009), Developing a Coordinated and Sustainable United States Strategy toward Somalia, Washington DC: Bureau of African Affairs, 2009, p.2

66 Ibid, p.4

# Challenges and Opportunities of State and Nation building

There is weak resource base in Somalia to provide adequate funds for national reconstruction. To establish structures for control of the whole Somalia territory will require enormous resources and will take a long time. Given the previously mentioned Somalis distaste for a strong central government, state building will be a slow and negotiated exercise between the center and periphery.

The international community has not provided assistance to the local and traditional structures of governance that emerged to fill the gaps left by the failed state.<sup>67</sup> These institutions must be recognized and given their rightful position in the new governance dispensation in Somalia.

There have been efforts to build capacity of civic and professional associations but these organizations are still weak and based in few urban centers. The *War Torn Societies Project – International* has supported collaboration between civil society and local authorities to shape reconstruction processes.<sup>68</sup>

There has emerged a war economy linked to drugs and arms trafficking and illegal printing of Somali bank notes.<sup>69</sup> Stabilization of the country may go against the interests of those who are benefiting from the current unregulated situation and absence of accountability.

There are still many actors in Somalia implementing their state and nation building projects that may not be informed by the right strategies for the country. They may also not be aligned with the activities of

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67 Ken M, *Governance without Government in Somalia (2007): Spoilers, State Building and the Politics of Coping*, P.10

68 Ibid, p.12

69 European Commission Somalia Unit; *Updated Strategy for Peace building and Civil Society*, p. 20

other organizations. Gender mainstreaming is yet to take place given the discriminatory nature of the traditional institutions such as Xeer.

There have been attempts at coordinating multi-lateral and development partners' support in Somalia. Two recent conferences have already been held in London to coordinate international peace and security agenda in Somalia.<sup>70</sup> This engagement is vital to create a coherent approach from the high international political level to the Eastern African region, national level and inter parties technical cooperation on the ground.

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70 The Standard, 'London conference backs Somalia's Stabilization Plan', PPS, May 8, 2013

## Conclusions

This study has surveyed the bumpy road to state and nation building in Somalia. There are no theoretical models for state and nation building that can be applied wholesome in the Somalia case. Being a dynamic society, state and nation building in Somalia will be informed by the evolving traditional structures, Islamic systems and values, Western values and practices and external intervention.

There are many competing ideological, theoretical and practical prescriptions to steer Somalia away from the failed state path. The liberal state and nation building approach will be in competition with cultural and Islamic based state and nation building value system. Given the dynamic nature of actors in Somalia and the diaspora it is possible to come up with a unique Somali state and nation building approach that takes the best of both worlds. This formula has eluded many actors before and it is uncertain how long and at what cost Somalia will finally settle its political question and define its political and governance trajectory for the future.

The vexing question that may define the next phase of conflict in the country will be the nature of federalism – pitting the central government in Mogadishu against increasingly independent regions. While clan balkanization does not seem to be the best option, there must be practical guarantees for security and inclusion of minority clans who know too well about their perils in clan based politics of Somalia.

Much as the international community provides assistance to building capacity of the national government including the security sector, there should be parallel engagement with the regions, given the mistrust between them and central government. Sustainable peace and security in Somalia will be dependent on the alignment and fusion of the

central government, the regional authorities, including deciding the fate of secessionist regions, traditional structures and the emerging civil society.

The leaders of Somalia and the international community cannot afford to lose this opportunity, a turning point in the two decades of chaos that has left behind many dead and maimed souls.

## Recommendations

- a) The international community must learn from past interventions in Somalia and get their feet right this time round. The African forces in AMISOM have made considerable sacrifice in Somalia, thereby winning hearts and minds of a large Somali constituency. This goodwill must not be wasted in the midst of international power politics and interests. The United Nations should support the work of the African Union rather than attempting to take its traditional role of the custodian of international post conflict reconstruction.
- b) The best strategy recommended in this study is creation of United Nations and African Union Mission in Somalia (UNASOM), to create synergy, reduce political risks/exposure and add value to AMISOM. The state and nation building approach must be dynamic to accommodate evolving power relations, support local capacity for state and nation building while deterring negative forces.
- c) Women should progressively be involved in the reconstruction of activities as postulated in UNSC Resolution 1325. This can be done through support of civil society, human rights awareness, sensitization on principles of good governance, local legislative and policy development.
- d) Given that the nature of state and nation building in Somali is a creative enterprise, the international community must provide assistance taking into cognizance the organic evolution of traditional structures and the emerging formal structures.
- e) In order to choose the appropriate approach to capacity building of the national government including the security sector, there should be consultative engagement with the regions,

given the mistrust between them and central government. Sustainable peace and security in Somalia will be dependent on the alignment and the stability of the central government, the regional authorities, traditional structures, and the emerging civil society.

- f) All the actors contributing to state/nation building should support democratic structures that are legitimate in the eyes of the local people both at the national and local level. State and nation building activities have to be implemented in the current uncertain situation. These activities must go in tandem for synergy and reinforcement of local capacity. For effective implementation there must be a comprehensive strategy that aligns government programs with the work of development actors and AMISOM.

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# The Role of Media in the Stabilization of Somalia

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## Introduction

The paper evaluates how media has contributed to peace and security stabilization in Somalia. The media in Somalia has been operating under the most difficult circumstances in the world. Many Somali journalists have been killed in the course of duty. This research focuses on the role of media in peace support operations (PSO) in Somalia. It examines the nature of media and its influence in perpetuating conflict or peace building in Somalia. Equally important, it assesses the role of social media in Somalia and its potential to either escalate or de-escalate conflict.

The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), a peace support operation will be analysed in the context of the objectives of this study. The research seeks, therefore, to understand the nexus of media-peace support operations and its role in the stabilization of Somalia. The research argues that media is not an end in itself. Rather the media is means through which stabilization can be achieved.

The paper further argues that, for stabilization to be realized, other factors need to be considered. It recognizes that Somalia has been entangled in civil war for over two decades even in spite of the numerous peace conferences and mediation. The study is organized into five sections: section one introduces the problem statement and the context of the study, section two examines the nature of news media and social media in Somalia, section three reflects on the role of AMISOM and UN, section four provides the conclusion and section five suggests the recommendations conclusion.

# The problem statement and the context of the study

The media in Somalia has been operating under the most difficult circumstances in the world. Many Somali journalists have been killed in the course of duty. According to Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), 50 journalists have been killed in Somalia since 1992,<sup>71</sup> 78 are in exile and 56 are in detention.<sup>72</sup> Media's role in reconstruction is important.

It can be a medium of enhancing national cohesion and reconciliation among former warring clans. At same time can be abused and used to serve partisan interests. The emergence and space of social media, especially among the Somali in the country and in the diaspora, needs to be understood for effective participation of the media in reconstruction and development of the Somali Federal Republic.

This research focuses on the role of media in peace support operations (PSO) in Somalia. It examines the nature of media and its influence in perpetuating conflict or peace building in Somalia. Equally important, it assesses the role of social media in Somalia and its potential to either escalate or de-escalate conflict. The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), a peace support operation will be analysed in the context of the objectives of this study.

This study uses secondary data for its analysis and draws its lessons from a growing body of literature that have examined media and peace support operations. A case study of the UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) will be highlighted.

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71 <http://cpj.org/killed/africa/somalia/> accessed 14th July 2013

72 <http://www.cpj.org/2013/02/attacks-on-the-press-in-2012-somalia.php/> accessed 14th July 2013

## **The historical context**

Somalia's woes have been traced to the collapse of the central government and fall of Siad Barre's dictatorial regime in 1991. During the collapse, an estimated 500,000 civilians died from 'violence, starvation and disease' (Dagne 2009:95). The deaths and displacements after the collapse led to the emergence of armed clan-based militia, dire humanitarian crisis and protracted civil war, an image used by the media to represent Somalia. Similarly the same images were highlighted by the Media in the United States which prompted their intervention in the 1990s (Mermin 1997:385, Muriithi 2008:79&80).

To date Somalia struggles to achieve peace. Its internal order has been chaotic with several actors controlling the state of affairs (Ibrahim 2010:283). The effects of the violent conflict have been adverse. In 2006, an estimated 16,000 deaths were reported; another 870,000 fled from Mogadishu and 400,000 joined nearby IDP camps (Omar 2012:4). In 2008, 80,000 civilians crossed to Dadaab refugee camps while 23,000 crossed to Gulf of Aden in Yemen (Omar 2012:4). These statistics show that the civil war has put Somali civilians in dire humanitarian crisis and destroyed their livelihoods. With Al-Shabaab and other armed groups at large, the stability of the Federal Government of Somalia is still under threat. The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), a peace support operation mandated by the African Union, has been actively engaged in efforts to stabilize Somalia.

## **Media and conflict**

Media has been defined as an instrument for disseminating news and information. It includes what has for long been known as traditional media such as radio, television and newspapers as well as what is

now known as new media such as the World Wide Web, social media and even the mobile telephone. News media refers to the actual information delivered to the various audiences while journalism refers to the process of gathering, analyzing, commentary, disseminating, and reporting the information (Ross 2002:4, Howard 2003:118).<sup>73</sup>

News media represents the reality of issues and informs how we order and construct the world. Equally important, is the media environment and political context under which media operates (Ersoy 2010:79). As it is, media cannot be divorced from its cultural, social and political environment. As mentioned earlier, the collapse of the central government in Somalia has shaped its media landscape. Thus, for stabilization to be achieved in Somalia, the influence of media will have to be considered.

Journalistic practice and routines, such as peace or war journalism, can influence how conflict is understood. Peace theorist Johan Galtung developed a model for conflict reporting in the 1970s in which he proposed the idea of peace journalism and how a value bias towards violence can be avoided when covering war and conflict. He criticized how war journalism presented issues of conflict. He viewed War journalism as more reactive, and disapproved of their view that peace was a result of victory or ceasefire. Conversely, Peace Journalism was more proactive and adopted a ‘win-win’ approach. In Peace journalism, peace could be realized through creativity or non-violence. On the other hand, conventional journalism was concerned more with the ‘visible effects of violence, tangible outcomes and institutions’ engaged in the conflict (Fawcet 2002:213).

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73 Howard, R. (2003) ‘The media’s role in war and peace-building’, *Postconflict development: Meeting new challenges*

Peace journalism is more analytical and assesses the role of social structures and cultures in a conflict (Fawcet 2002:213). It grants voice to all parties within a conflict, whilst contextualizing them (Keen 2000:1&2, Kempf 2007:1, Skjerdal 2012:27). In Somalia, for example, a radio station called “Horn Afrik” has been pivotal in advancing the peace building agenda despite challenges faced in broadcasting in Somalia. As a station, it contributed to the reconciliation and reconstruction process. The station has been lauded for its peace journalism practice and is a beacon of hope (Skjerdal 2012). Uniquely, Somalia’s case is quite peculiar given the presence of insurgents, Peace Support Operations (PSO) and a functioning media.

## **Role of Media in Peace Support Operations**

There exists a gap in literature looking into the role of media in peace support operations in Africa. Major studies have sought to understand the role of media in war and peace building. They examine the duality of media in wartime and transition to peace (Kempf 1999:1). A greater emphasis has been on its potential to either de-escalate or escalate a conflict. Holguin (1998:640) posits that media and peace support operations are interdependent; Media depends on Peace Support Operations for their stories, while PSO’s depend on the media to reach their audiences.

Although this may have been true during the cold war and post-cold war, modern technology has altered this interdependency. Peacekeeping operations operate in modern times where 24 hour news is on demand. New technology has necessitated real-time news consumption, driving PSO’s to produce their own news, as well as rely on the media (Holguin 1998:639). In Somalia, understanding how local and international media has covered issues is important and will be examined in this study.

# State of Media in Somalia

During Siad Barre's regime, media in Somalia was state owned and controlled by the Ministry of information. The Country had two radio stations (Radio Mogadishu and Hargeisa), one TV station and one daily newspaper '*Xidigta Oktoobar*'. The media functioned as mouthpiece of Siad Barre and his regime (Höhne 2008:96). Freedom of press was unheard of and those who criticized government were punished (Gaas et al 2012:9).

In the recent past, Somalia has recorded the highest deaths of journalists, with Mogadishu being marked as the most dangerous zone for journalists.<sup>74</sup> Many journalists are either serving jail terms or in exile. Foreign journalists have not been spared; in 1993 Reuters lost its Kenyan journalists Anthony Mcharia, Hos Maina and British journalist Don Eldon.<sup>75</sup> Between 2007 and 2012, Somalia lost 44 journalists. Local militias have posed a major threat as they are accused of targeting these journalists. In the recent past, detentions and deaths has become the order for journalists operating in Somalia.<sup>76</sup> This has not been helped by the fact that Al-Shabaab has closed down some radio stations. Despite all this, journalists in Somalia continue to work in such precarious conditions.

In terms of regulation, there are formal and informal laws that govern media in Somalia such as the provisional constitution of Somalia. Laws governing the freedom of speech, expression and press exist in paper but not in practice (Stremlau 2012:161). Recently, the Federal Government

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74 [http://www.nusoj.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/NUSOJ\\_Impunity\\_Final.pdf](http://www.nusoj.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/NUSOJ_Impunity_Final.pdf) accessed 14th July 2013

75 <http://www.thebaron.info/styled-41/styled-55/anthonymachariahoshmainadaneldon.html> accessed 14th July 2013

76 <http://www.cpj.org/2013/02/attacks-on-the-press-in-2012-somalia.php> accessed 26th June 2013

of Somalia raised the practicing age of journalists to a minimum of 40.<sup>77</sup> This new law has been criticized as draconian since it locks out many young journalists, who are the majority.

Journalists and media organizations have not been present in hostile regions in Somalia, as a result, PSO's have been under-covered and the public have been unaware of their roles and progress (IREX 2008:325).<sup>78</sup> Increasingly, Somali Politicians and Intellectuals have criticized journalists for failing to espouse value-based journalism. The journalists and media organizations have been accused of leaning towards clan interests, or that of Al Shabaab or the government. Partisanship has therefore been one of the impediments to their independence. In addition, they have also been accused of corruption by accepting payment for stories, locally termed as '*sbaruur*'.<sup>79</sup> Successful functioning of the media in Somalia would, therefore, require journalists and media houses to be protected. In addition, access to information in the field and the promotion of independence would be vital.

## Television

Somalia has one state owned television, Somali National TV (Omar 2012:11). This station functions to counter information spread by Al Shabaab (InfoAsaid 2012:58), who operate the Al Kataaib TV Station. The Al Shabaab group has banned the public from watching music, sports and other programmes at home and in video parlours (InfoAsaid 2012:54). Most TV Stations are owned by Somalis in Diaspora and they influence the agenda back at home (Skjerdal 2012:34). Other TV Stations in Somalia are contained in Table 1 below.

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<sup>77</sup> <http://www.theafricareport.com/East-Horn-Africa/somalia-raises-minimum-journalist-age-to-40.html> accessed 14th July 2013

<sup>78</sup> [http://www.irex.org/system/files/2-Africa\\_08\\_somalia.pdf](http://www.irex.org/system/files/2-Africa_08_somalia.pdf) accessed 14th July 2013

<sup>79</sup> <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2012/oct/11/somali-journalists-dying-corruption-conflict> accessed 20th July 2013

*Table 1: TV Stations in Somalia*

TV Stations	Ownership/Location	Content
Universal TV	Established in London in 2005 with correspondents in Somalia, Kenya, Europe, the United States and Canada	news, entertainment, social issues and peace-building campaigns
Somali Channel TV	Established in 2010 and based in London with correspondents in Somalia	Not listed, although one can stream its online TV channel
Somali National TV	State owned and was re-launched in 2011, it existed during Siad Barre's regime	24 hours broadcasts in Somali language exclusively
Royal TV	Based in London and Dubai	Not listed
Al Kataaib	Al Shabaab led and is hosted online	Al Shabaab ideology

Source (InfoAsaid 2012)<sup>80</sup>

## Mobile phones and Internet

Somalia has the lowest and cheapest international and local calls as well as fast internet connection. The lack of regulation within the telecoms sector has led to very low rates (Stremlau 2012:161). The mobile penetration within Somalia is between 25%-39%, which is low compared to other Africa countries. Despite the situation, the mobile has been pivotal in connecting people and in transfer of money (InfoAsaid 2012:10).<sup>81</sup> The internet has also necessitated locals to access Somali websites<sup>82</sup> which serve the purpose of advancing

80 Table developed by researcher using InfoAsaid content

81 <http://infoasaid.org/media-and-telecoms-landscape-guides> accessed 26th June 2013

82 Some of the Somali websites include Shabelle.net, Somaliareport.com, daynille.com, jowhar.com, Somaliweyn.com and Hiraan.com

Somali Culture, teaching religion and spreading propaganda. The websites are majorly owned by members of the diaspora and are hosted abroad. In addition, local media re-use the content produced in the Somali websites and as a result, re-produce the biases and ideology maintained by the diaspora (Gaas et al 2012:4).

## Radio

There are over twenty radio stations in Somalia. Radio is still the prevalent medium owing to its accessibility, cost and its suitability within the Somalia context. Culturally, the Somali have maintained their oral tradition, which explains their preference for radio (Skjerdal 2012:34). Other radio stations such as BBC, VOA and diaspora-led can be accessed through online channels or shortwave. Somalia has a wider reach of radio compared to its press. Also broadcasting in Somalia is Bar-Kulan,<sup>83</sup> a United Nations radio located in Nairobi (Omar 2012:11). The aim of the UN radio station has been to counter extremist's propaganda whilst promoting peace. Popular stations in Somalia include the state owned Radio Mogadishu and the privately owned Radio Shabelle associated with Somali-Canadians. Conversely, pro Al-Shabaab stations such as Al-Andalus and Al-Furqaan are also in operation. In total, there are 35 Fm stations in Somalia, most of which broadcast clan positions (Stremlau 2012:161 and Omar 2012 :11).

## Press

As of 2009, there were around 25 newspapers in Mogadishu and other parts of Southern Somalia.<sup>84</sup> Due to the instability and low literacy levels, print media has not been popular (Höhne 2008:97). Similarly, Al-Shabaab has stopped the printing of most papers in the South

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83 Describes itself as 'a public service radio station broadcasting non-partisan news, information, culture, entertainment and development programmes to Somalia and the Somali Diaspora'<http://www.bar-kulan.com/listen-live/> accessed 14th July 2013

84 According to InfoAsaid survey of 2012

Central Region (InfoAsaid 2008:54). Major papers prefer political content compared to other issues. In addition clan interests and political positions take the centerpiece of these papers (Skjerdal 2012:33). Table 2 below highlights the press in Somalia.

*Table 2 : The Press in Somalia*

<b>Press</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Content and Circulation</b>
Xog Ogaal	Mogadishu based and established in 1999.  Owned by Mohamed Aden Guled, who lives in the United Kingdom.	News and Current Affairs, published every day except on Fridays, and circulates 500-700 copies
Ogaal News	Established in 2005 with correspondents all over East Africa and Somaliland.  Owned by Muse Farah Jambuur, who lives in Norway.	Considered to be fairly independent and balanced.

Source (InfoAsaid 2012)85

## **Social Media in Somalia, the case of Twitter**

Social media is quite a new field and studies around it have mainly focused on access and use. In the conflict field, focus has been on its use and effectiveness during disasters or humanitarian response. The openness and decentralized nature of social media has broken barriers of communication. Like in Somalia, it enables journalists, insurgents, celebrities and governments to interact with each other. The accessibility of internet and user-friendly tools has made it easy for ordinary people to produce real-time news through blogs, videos

85 Table developed by researcher using InfoAsaid content

and pictures. Al Kataaib, an Al-Shabaab led online TV, is an example. This section examines how the Somalis in diaspora and Somalia engage with social media and its potential in the stabilization of Somalia. New ICT technology has interconnected nations more than any other tool, its potential and future is what this study attempts to understand.

Social media users in sites such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and other platforms pose major challenge to governments. The challenges arise from how to regulate and control what is posted online. There has been an emergence of abuse of these sites which has been used to advance bi-partisan agenda and violent ideology. Al-Shabaab fit into this category;<sup>86</sup> often they use their page as a platform to issue official statements to the press, announce attacks and issue threats as well as advance their ideology. Even in cases where their accounts are suspended, Al-Shabaab go ahead and open new accounts. This reveals the complexity of managing online content, especially now that these activities transcend state boundaries. These complexities pose a challenge, as well as an opportunity to peace support operations in Somalia to develop strategies to counter propaganda and advocate for the stabilization of the country.

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86 Al Shabaab also known as Harakat Al Shabaab Al Mujahideen has a twitter account which they describe as ‘the truth, the contextual truth’. They use the page to preach their ideology and release statements as well as re-create their identity. Severally, Al Shabaab has used its platform to issue threats and boast of their attacks and achievements. Their first twitter account @hsmmpress was shut down by who they claimed were their ‘enemies’. The group went ahead and reopened another account @hsmmpress1 which had 4486 followers and 362 tweets as per 13 June 2013. However, On 6th September 2013 they suffered another challenge when twitter account was suspended again. As of 9th September 2013, media reports indicate they are back again on twitter as @HSM\_Press.

# The role of Media in UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC)

The UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) had the mandate to administer state institutions and oversee free and fair elections. The operation lasted for 18 months running from March 1992 to September 1993 (Cain 2012:175). It consisted of 23,000 military personnel and civilians, costing \$2 billion. The operation was considered the most expensive (Cain 2012:176).

As an information operation,<sup>87</sup> UNTAC had its information unit divided into three sections. The first section, the (Production Unit) distributed information. The second section (Control Unit) was the intervening unit<sup>88</sup> and the third section (Analysis/Assessment Unit) evaluated and analyzed public views (Cain 2012:197). The information operation was well funded, strategic and tactful in its operation. Following 17 years of genocide and violence, UNTAC successfully organized free and fair elections in Cambodia.

It tactfully dealt with sectarian violence whilst reaching out to the poor and illiterate (Cain 2012:176). Through its information division it had radio programs which advocated against 'hate media' and developed conditions for independent press to operate (Cain 2012:175). UNTAC's Information Operations took control of bipartisan stations and therefore, created conditions for free and fair media (Cain 2012:176). The Control unit was credited for establishing an independent media. In addition, UNTAC undertook an information campaign that included the use of leaflets, radio, television and mobile operation teams. It garnered public support by creatively utilizing different forms of

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87 Information operations utilize all forms of media and communications to support a peace operation achieve its mandate (Cain 2012:183).

88 This unit was countered bi-partisan and hates media, and regulated the media environment.

media and communication to reach a wide audience (Cain 2012:175). Its mobile outreach units created radio plays and soap operas that encouraged the Cambodians to vote (Cain 2012:177).

However, UNTAC failed to consolidate civil society voices and other actors. Despite its shortcoming, several lessons learnt in UNTAC can be applied in Peace Support Operations in Somalia. UNTAC utilized media to rally support for the preparations of elections during Cambodia's transition. It also dealt with 'hate media' and established an environment for independent media to thrive. The success of UNTAC lies in its model, funding and strategy.

## **Role of Peace Support Operations: the case of African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM)**

After the end of the bi-polar war, there was a significant decline of interstate war and an increase of intrastate war. Peace support operations have become one of the interventions undertaken by the international community in promoting peace and security and addressing conflicts, often intrastate. Additionally, following the debates of the 1990s where UN peace keeping missions were perceived to have failed, the UN Security Council responded by encouraging regional bodies and agencies to play an active role in promoting peace and security. The African Union Mission in Somalia is such a case.

AMISOM was commissioned by the UN Security Council through resolution 1772 and 2036 in 2007 and 2012 respectively. AMISOM has been in Somalia since 2007. Its mandate is to stabilize the situation in Somalia and create conditions for humanitarian operations to thrive in

order to pave way for the United Nations to take over. In addition, AMISOM is mandated to ensure the protection of Transitional Institutions and personnel involved and reduce the threat caused by Al-Shabaab and other armed groups.<sup>89</sup>

AMISOM has been active in using different forms of online media to update and inform its audience of its operation. Apart from its website,<sup>90</sup> AMISOM maintains four social media platforms (twitter, YouTube, Facebook and flicker). Through these platforms, AMISOM develops its own content which it disseminates information through. Most of its updates focus on their stabilization efforts and strengthening of institutions in Somalia. AMISOM's presence online has made it possible for journalists, scholars and civilians to get in touch with the current events in the missions. However, AMISOM's media work has also countered some of the propaganda spread by Al-Shabaab.

AMISOM also runs a separate media monitoring site.<sup>91</sup> This site aggregates all news published about Somalia on a daily basis. It collects all information from Social media into one page. The simplicity of the monitoring site enables one to have an overview of Somalia news at a glance.

## **Summary on the Role of Media in the Stabilization of Somalia**

According to this study there is a weak link between media and peace support operations probably because there has not been much experience of relations between the two spheres especially in peace missions in Africa. The paper recommends that peace support operations should

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89 <http://amisom-au.org/about/amisom-mandate/> accessed 14th July 2013

90 See <http://amisom-au.org>

91 See <http://somaliamediamonitoring.org/>.

develop media strategy for both the production of news and engaging media. Since media is not an end in itself but rather a means, there is a need to consider how peace journalism can play role in the stabilization of Somalia. There is a need for supporting the development of a professional media in the country that can act as an effective partner to peace support operations in the current local and international efforts to turn the fate of Somalia around

## Conclusion

This paper began by seeking to understand the role of media in the stabilization of Somalia. It examined media in the context of Peace Support Operations in Somalia. It argued media was a means and not an end in itself in the stabilization of Somalia. It then established that media on its own could not stabilize Somalia, rather other factors needed to be considered. The media landscape in Somalia had been shaped by the collapse of the central government. The study established media and PSO were interdependent and each needed the other to contribute towards peace building.

The work of groups like Al-Shabaab had gone to show how destructive they were, offline and online. Offline, they have closed down some media stations and controlled media operations, a challenge that calls for strategy on the part of AMISOM. In addition, their presence online could be an opportunity to understand their ideology and engage them. This study also established that the Somali diaspora were critical to the stabilization of Somalia, despite some being divisive and partisan. Their contribution as media owners and content developers cannot be ignored. Their interest in issues going on in Somalia provides an opportunity for peace building.

The study highlighted how UNTAC creatively utilized media to gain public support, conduct free and fair elections and achieve its mandate. It recommended that AMISOM draw lessons from this case. AMISOM's strength lies in its quest to inform and respond in a timely fashion to issues. AMISOM should be a trend setter in Africa on how to engage with media to realize peace. However, much will need to be done.

## Recommendations

Media organizations and Journalists in Somalia require protection to be able to carry out their work effectively in the field. Reporting in hostile zones has been difficult for many. Access to the field and information has been one of the major challenges of media institutions. The government as well as PSOs have a responsibility to address these gaps. There is an opportunity for the PSOs to offer protection to these journalists. Laws providing for freedom of speech, expression and press need to be operationalized. For media to work effectively and undertake its tasks, more funding has to go into their protection, strengthening professional bodies and improving their working conditions.

Lessons from UNTAC reveal how the PSO undertook an information campaign to deal with bi-partisan media in a situation similar to Somalia. AMISOM could also set conditions in Somalia for an independent media to thrive. This could be done by setting up units similar to those of UNTAC, to deal with Al-Shabaab propaganda in the media and other bi-partisan media. In order to gain public support AMISOM needs to extend its monitoring site, to collect and analyze public information in order to understand their needs. AMISOM should reach out to civilians who have no access to the internet so as to counter Al-Shabaab and other bipartisan media.

UNTAC's success was also because of resources and strategies in reaching the disadvantaged Cambodians and dealing with sectarian violence. Likewise, AMISOM will require funds towards scaling up its information operations. Coming up with a tactful strategy will also be key, and they will need to factor in the culture and structure of the Somali terrain. The Success of AMISOM's social media platforms provide an opportunity for the diaspora to engage with the mission. However, despite AMISOM's efforts in updating its netizens<sup>92</sup> and rallying for the stabilization of Somalia, Al-Shabaab has also extended its territory to

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92 Word used to refer to citizens of the web

the internet where it spreads hate messages and propaganda. Addressing this kind of new phenomena is important as they could delegitimize the stabilization process.

The Somali in the diaspora have played a critical part in the development of online content and media in Somalia. Some have set up discussion forums others online radio stations. Online content developed by these groups reveal their interest in Somalia. This could be an opportunity for peace building although this has not been the case since some of the forums organize along clan groups (Shuji 2012).

The diaspora continue to maintain the status quo in Somalia and control the media agenda. In order to work with the diaspora, there needs to be a clear strategy developed by the actors in Somalia to engage with the community abroad. While they have made contributions through their remittances, in the same breadth they can play a role in the stabilization of Somalia. Currently, addressing this gap is fundamental to Somalia's stabilization. Similarly, media owners and those running online stations and forums can be vital in this process.

There is need to develop a strategy towards creating awareness to the diaspora as their engagement in the stabilization of Somalia is key. This can only happen if peace support operations deliberately seek out to engage with the diaspora. Additionally, the paper highlighted works of Horn Afrik as well as UN operated radio, which are now making efforts towards the stabilization of Somalia. More work has to be done in this direction and funding towards scaling up the work of these stations. In addition, capacity building for journalists will be core towards the reconstruction process in Somalia. Peace journalism does offer an opportunity through which issues can be represented and addressed. This paper recommends a deliberate effort be undertaken where the pros and cons of peace journalism as well as war journalism is re-taught to journalists so that media becomes an enabler in the reconstruction process and a key actor.

This study established that there was no clear linkage between the local and International media to PSO's, therefore, it is important for media to understand the work of PSO's and also PSO's to develop strategies on how to engage the media. The engagement of the media here involves media understanding the mandate of the PSO's and how they can also complement each other. Media's role in the stabilizing of Somalia has to be consciously planned.

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# Highlights of the Key Messages in the Issue Briefs

## State and Nation building in Somalia

- State and nation building in Somalia should be a creative enterprise that takes cognizance of organic evolution of traditional structures and the emerging formal structures
- There is a need to define federalism in Somalia in order to establish a united country while providing security to the regions
- The international community must find a common approach to the reconstruction of Somalia to prevent negative effects of intervention and to enhance mutual cooperation and collaboration
- The two processes of building the state and enhancing national cohesion and integration in Somalia should be implemented simultaneously to enhance synergy

# The Role of Media in the Stabilization of Somalia

- Media organizations and Journalists in Somalia require protection to be able to carry out their work effectively in the field.
- Access to the field and information has been one of the major challenges of media institutions. The government as well as PSOs have a responsibility to address these gaps.
- Laws providing for freedom of speech, expression and press need to be operationalized.
- For media to work effectively and undertake its tasks, more funding has to go into their protection, strengthening professional bodies and improving their working conditions.
- AMISOM could also set conditions in Somalia for an independent media to thrive.
- The Somali in the diaspora have played a critical part in the development of online content and media in Somalia. There is need to develop a strategy towards creating awareness to the diaspora as their engagement in the stabilization of Somalia is key.
- This study established that there was no clear linkage between the local and International media to PSO's, therefore, it is important for media to understand the work of PSO's and also PSO's to develop strategies on how to engage the media.

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