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Drivers of Insecurity in Somalia: Mapping Contours of Violence



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Drivers of Insecurity in Somalia: Mapping Contours of Violence

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Foreword

The International Peace Support Training Center (IPSTC) 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 African Peace and Security Architecture and has developed to be the regional center for the African Standby Force (ASF) in Eastern Africa. It 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, and post conflict reconstruction.

The Peace and Security Research Department (PSRD) of the IPSTC presents Occasional Paper Series 4 of (2013) on various themes on peace and conflict situation in Eastern Africa. IPSTC produced seven Occasional Papers in 2013. Five of them focused on Somalia while the others dealt with drivers of conflict and integration of child soldiers in eastern DRC. This publication titled: ***Drivers of Insecurity in Somalia: Mapping Contours of Violence***, traces the root causes and secondary drivers of conflict in Somalia.

These papers provide insight into pertinent peace and security issues in the region that are useful to policy makers. These publications also provide significant contribution to the security debate and praxis in the region. The research products from IPSTC have been developed by researchers from Kenya, Burundi and Uganda and will inform the design of training modules at IPSTC.

This Occasional Paper is an important contribution to the vision and mission of IPSTC. The research and publication of this Occasional Paper has been made possible by the support of the Government of Japan through UNDP and the European Union.

Brig. Robert Kabage
Director, IPSTC

International Peace Support Training Center (IPSTC)

The International Peace Support Training Centre (IPSTC) is an international center of excellence in peace support operations training and research focusing on capacity building at the strategic, operational and tactical levels within the African Peace and Security Architecture. IPSTC is the regional training center for the African Standby Force (ASF) in Eastern Africa. It addresses the complexities of contemporary UN/AU integrated Peace Support Operations through exposing actors to the multi-dimensional nature of these operations.

The Research Department of the IPSTC undertakes research for two main purposes: a) the design of training curricula to support peace operations, and b) to contribute to the debate towards the enhancement of regional peace and security.

The Peace and Security Research Department (PSRD) develops annual Occasional Papers and issue briefs covering diverse themes from the Great Lakes region and the Horn of Africa. The 2013 Occasional Papers cover diverse topics in regional peace and security including the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Somalia. PSRD's Research Agenda is traditionally comprehensive and addresses issues related to a variety of regional issues. The research conducted covers a broad spectrum of peace and security concerns ranging from conflict prevention, management, and post conflict reconstruction. IPSTC has made considerable contribution in research and training on peace support issues in the Great Lakes region and the Horn of Africa.

The Target audiences for our publications are the decision makers in key peace and security institutions in the Great Lakes region and the Horn of Africa. These include policy makers in national security sector such as internal security, defence, judiciary and parliament and regional institutions dealing with conflict prevention and management such as East African Community (EAC), Inter Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), International Conference of the Great Lakes region (ICGLR), Regional Center for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (RECSA), African Union, Embassies of key development partners with special interests in regional peace and security issues and the United Nations agencies in the Great Lakes region and the Horn of Africa.

Occasional Papers are an important contribution to the vision and mission of IPSTC. The research and publication of this Occasional Paper has been made possible by the support of the Government of Japan through UNDP and the European Union.

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Acronyms

AU	African Union
AMISOM	African Union Mission in Somalia
FGS	Federal Government of Somalia
ICU	Islamic Courts Union
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IOC	Indian Ocean Tuna Committee
IUCN	International Union of Conservation Networks
IUU	Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing
MPI	Multidimensional Poverty Index
NSP	National Security Policy
OAG	Organized Armed Groups
OCVP	Observatory for Conflict Prevention
ONLF	Ogaden National Liberation Front
SNA	Somali National Army
SNP	Somali National Police
TFG	Transitional Federal Government
TNG	Transitional National Government
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNSOM	United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republic

Abstract

Somalia remains a country in conflict informed by competition for scarce resources and power, state fragility, environmental degradation, lack of a common national vision and social cohesion, organized armed groups and proliferation of small arms and light weapons. This paper examines causes of the protracted chaos in Somalia, linking structural causes to the current drivers of the conflict.

Many conventional attempts have been made by the international community to bring back peace and security in the country. Though the conflict has defied these many conventional interventions, AMISOM has made some strides to liberate a number of areas under Al-Shabaab control, and trained new Somalia security forces. There are still many questions about whether the right diagnosis of the conflict has been made and corresponding solution to the conflict established. The UN has returned with the establishment of United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) in 2013.

Al Shabaab, though, still controls large swathes of Somali territory in spite of suffering defeats and internal leadership conflict. There is still hope of re-establishing a new Somali polity if the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) can reach out to Somaliland and Puntland; security stabilization in South-Central Somalia; and development of a professional and inclusive security sector. There is hope for a reborn Somalia that promises accountable leadership and human rights protection.

The international community, FGS and local peace building structures must develop coherent plans and actions to revitalize peace and development in the country through various pro-active and collaborative strategies outlined in this study.

1.0 Introduction

This paper focuses on establishing the root causes and drivers of conflict in Somalia. Focus will be placed on understanding current drivers of the conflict so as to inform the immediate policy options of actors in the Somalia reconstruction initiative. This paper is organized into five sections: the first section forms the introduction where the author describes the structure of the study, a brief background of Somalia, statement of the problem, objectives, scope of the study, research methodology and limitations; the second section reviews the literature on the conflict in Somalia; the third section identifies the root causes, drivers and triggers of conflict in Somalia; the fourth section provides analysis of the possible solutions for the conflict in Somalia based on the causes identified; and the last section provides conclusion and recommendations.

1.1 Background to the Conflict

Somalia has gone through an unprecedented protracted conflict since 1991. Somalia became independent in 1960 with a civilian administration. Though the leadership of first and the second presidents, Adan Abdulle Osman and Abdilrashid Ali Shama'arke respectively, was not without shortcomings. However, it was the reign of General Mohammed Siad Barre that planted the seeds of the current conflict.¹ Barre's rule was characterised by discrimination, violence and dictatorship. Many renegade armed groups began to challenge his rule in the 1980s and in 1991 Barre was ousted from power with no dominant group emerging to exert authority over the whole of Somalia. Consequently, in the last two decades Somalia has been engulfed by chaos without a central authority.

It is estimated that 15% of the former Somalia population now lives in exile, while many more are internally displaced. In 2012, the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) was elected into office replacing the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) that was established in 2004.

¹ Elmi, A.A and Barise A, The Somali Conflict: Root Causes, Obstacles and Peace building Strategies, 2006, p.6

The FGS is still a weak edifice with a number of challenges such as the Al-Shabaab and disagreements with regional governments. However, residents of Mogadishu do acknowledge improvements in security and infrastructure development due to the efforts of FGS.²

Somaliland presents a unique distinction in comparison to Puntland and South Central Somalia. Relative peace and stability has prevailed in the region as indicated by significantly lower levels of violent conflicts and comparatively more positive perceptions of the state of safety and security among the communities. Nonetheless, Somaliland is still a region in post conflict recovery, and to a large extent shares most of the contemporary challenges that Puntland and South Central Somalia grapple with as well.

This study exposes crisis of governance, competition for power and resources, lack of national cohesion and identity, environmental degradation, a culture of violence and militarism as the root causes of the conflict. Clan mobilization, ideological and religious fundamentalism, organized armed groups and youth unemployment have been isolated as the main drivers of the current conflict in Somalia.

This study supports the implementation of the federal system of government as provided in the Somalia constitution. This two-tier system recognizes the traditional structures and local governments that have emerged since the collapse of the central government. The country needs to establish multi-prong building blocks for peace and security including the establishment of (strong) national and local government institutions, traditional structures and a national dialogue process to determine the fate of break-away regions such as Somaliland and Puntland.

The international community must have a well coordinated and collaborative approach to provide support to the country. It is too early to think of a UN alternative to the African Union (AU) initiative given the past experience of the former in Somalia. Western countries should support African-led

2 Security improvement could be witnessed in security situation and development in the district and housing sectors as well as in infrastructure development in Mogadishu and Baidoa, Interview, Business Group, Mogadishu, OCPV, August, 2013

initiatives rather than establish parallel Somalia reconstruction projects. The dark pages of Somalia's history are coming to an end albeit slowly, and all actors must collectively push the wheel of peace forward to prevent relapse into violence.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The current drivers of the conflict in Somalia are not well understood. No effective strategies of intervention can be devised without a proper diagnosis of the conflict.

This conflict has defied international interventions for more than two decades. Though a lot of work has been done to find out the causes and possible solutions, peace and security is yet to be achieved in Somalia. Somaliland and Puntland, however, have established relative peace and security in their territories, but South Central Somalia has continued to wallow in conflict. The cost of the conflict in terms of loss of human lives and injuries, economic destruction, lost generations and lost opportunities is incredible. An estimated one (1) million people have died in the conflict so far.³

The international community has made many unsuccessful attempts at resolving the Somalia conflict. The current turning point which began with Arta peace conference in Djibouti (2000) culminated into the Eldoret and Mbagathi peace process (2004) that produced the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) in 2006.

Organized armed groups continue to pose a challenge to security in the country. Due to the protracted conflicts, majority of civilians are understandably armed to protect their properties. There are still many unresolved political questions as to the relationship between the new Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and autonomous regions of Somaliland and Puntland, and other emerging regional authorities such as Jubaland and Galmudug. Over the long period of the conflict, neighbouring countries and the international community have developed interests in the political trajectory of the country. Understanding and harmonizing interests of all these parties is crucial to deflect negative forces from affecting the peace building agenda.

³ Global Security, globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/Somalia.htm

1.3 Objectives of the Study

- Examine the underlying causes of the conflict in Somalia,
- Assess the various drivers and multipliers of conflict in Somalia,
- Evaluate possible options for sustainable peace and security stabilization.

1.4 Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study will focus on the root causes of the conflict in Somalia in a historical perspective and current drivers of the conflict, specifically in South-Central Somalia and also offer comparisons with Somaliland and Puntland. The study will identify the relevant solutions, strategies, concepts and tools of addressing the protracted conflict in Somalia. Due to the prevailing insecurity, some areas such as Jubaland could not be reached. However, information from other regions offers a fair glimpse of the conflict dynamics in the whole country.

1.5 Research Methodology

Field research was done by both the author and Observatory for Conflict and Violence Prevention (OCVP). The security situation in South Central region has often limited or otherwise hindered the conduct of extensive research activities within the region. Nonetheless, with local support, the OCVP team oversaw the collection of data in three regions; Somaliland, Puntland and South Central Somalia. The research collected mainly primary qualitative data through focused group discussions and key informant interviews. The author visited Mogadishu where he interviewed senior AMISOM officers, UN officials and civil society organizations.

The OCVP provided a comprehensive report which the author used to extract relevant facts and figures. The Data collected was mainly from the following regions: Somaliland – Hargeisa and Burao, Puntland - Garowe, Galkayo and Bosaaso, South-Central Somalia – Mogadishu, Baidoa and Baladweyne. The author carried out desk top research to supplement the field research.

2.0 Theoretical Framework

This section evaluates the various theories that have been put forward to explain the causes of conflict in general and Somalia in particular, in a bid to establish a conceptual framework for analysing the conflict.

A number of international and Somali scholars have examined the peace and conflict in Somalia (Menkaus, 2003, 2007, 2011; Lewis, 1994, 2008;; Rutherford, 2008; Moller, 2009; Elmi and Barisse, 2006; and Osman, 2007). The dominant position among most international scholars is that since Somalia is a failed state, the best solution is to reconstruct Somalia into a democratic and developmental state. Elmi associates the origin of the conflict in Somalia to oppression under the dictatorship of Siad Barre, corruption and clan discrimination. As the state infrastructure collapsed in 1991 after the fall of Barre, the society entered into a security dilemma where as each group organized its own security, other groups viewed it as a threat to their own.

The ‘Greed vs. Grievance’ theory of conflict explores existence of legitimate concerns among parties in conflict and also selfish control of resources. Greed refers to opportunistic and selfish appropriation of resources. Many conflicts in Africa are associated with expression of dissatisfaction with governance, corruption, nepotism and discrimination. Groups express political and economic grievances against the state or other parties. Some writers have also associated conflict with the insatiable need of some people to control or own resources.

The government as a major stakeholder in the distribution of resources is often required to be accountable and transparent in utilization of resources. The government of Siad Barre (1969-91) was perceived as corrupt and discriminatory, favouring clans to which the president was affiliated at the expense of others (Elmi and Barise, 2006; Osman, 2007).

Resource scarcity has been mentioned as a cause of conflict in Rwandan genocide (Baechler 1999; Ohlsson, 1999) and ethnic clashes in Kenya (Kahl,

1998). These conflicts are said to be precipitated by scarcity of renewable resources. Elbadawi and Sambanis (2002) observe that conflicts in Africa are caused by high levels of poverty, failed political institutions and dependence on natural resources. Armed groups emerge because of government's inability to address concerns of the people through democratic processes and institutions.

However, various researches have not proved direct and adequate linkage between resource conflict and internal conflict (Esty et al., 1998). Hauge and Ellingsen, 1998), found some linkages between resource scarcity and conflict. Questions have also been raised as to whether it is scarcity of resources per se that cause conflicts, or their distribution.⁴ It is argued that decreasing access to resources creates frustration and escalates grievances against the state thereby creating suitable conditions for insurrection. Ecological marginalization may occur when groups migrate in fragile ecosystems thereby causing conflicts with host communities.

Most countries that have internal conflicts were economically poorly performing before the onset of conflicts. Inversely those countries that have good economic growth records and where the proceeds are fairly distributed, have less internal conflicts.⁵ Baechler (1999) and Kahl (2006) argue that the extent to which scarcity will cause conflict is dependent on the coping capability such as state or institutional capacity. Resource scarcity theory is closely related to relative deprivation theory advanced by Ted Gurr (1970).

The systems theory attempts to offer holistic approach to conflict analysis. It takes into consideration multiple factors that come into play to produce conflict such as context, issues, relationships, processes and outcomes.⁶ Strategies of conflict resolution will therefore be multi-prong, multi-level

4 Ole Magnus Theissen, (2008), *Blood and Soil?, Resource Scarcity and Internal Armed Conflict Revisited*, Journal of Peace Research, Vol. 45, No.6, p.801-818, Los Angeles: Sage Publications, p.802

5 Stephen David, (1997), *Internal War: Causes and Cures*, Review of, 'The International Dimension of Internal Conflicts' by Michael Brown and 'How Civil Wars End' by Roy Licklider, Princeton: Cambridge University Press, p.564, the addition of fair distribution is my own qualifier to the author's proposition

6 Giorgio Gallo, *Conflict Theory, Complexity and Systems Approach*, Systems Research and Behavioral Science, Wiley Online Library, 2012

and will reinforce the positive value of each other to address the structural causes of conflict.⁷

All these theories cast some light into the labyrinth of the Somalia conflict. This study adopts a holistic approach that take cognisance of the state fragility, historical legacy – political, economic, cultural and religious, clan geography and politicisation, underdevelopment and poverty, internal, regional and global power dynamics, to accommodate different variables, and their evolving significance.

7 Peter T Coleman (2003) 'Characteristics of Protracted Intractable Conflicts: Towards the Development of a Meta-Framework – 1' Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology 9, No. 1, pp.1-37

3.0 Research Findings: Causes of Conflict in Somalia

This section provides an analysis of the layers that inform the conflict in Somalia. The section identifies the root causes and secondary factors that fuel the current conflict.

3.1 Root Causes

This section examines the pillars or structures that inform the conflict in Somalia. The root causes are the bedrock of the conflict that fuels the conflict on a long term basis.

3.2 Colonial Legacy, Cold War and September 11, 2001

The conflict in Somalia can be traced to the colonial administration that divided Somalia into British Somaliland, Italian Somaliland (South-Central region) and French Somaliland (Djibouti). This division not only planted seeds of clan divisions but also brought inequality among clans.⁸ The colonial enterprise was based on oppression and exploitation of the Somali citizens—a practice that subsequent regimes inherited. The ruling elites in Somalia since colonial times up to and after 1991 emerged from the Mudug and Majertinia clans. The colonial administration favoured clans that could deliver colonial interests and not necessarily the most capable individuals.⁹ This clan based nepotism would continue after independence. The existence of Somaliland territory that seeks autonomy from Somalia is a reflection of the colonial legacy.

During the Cold War, Somalia was at one time allied to the West and at another time to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR). Siad Barre played different powers to access resources that helped him build the largest army in Africa.¹⁰ The same army was later used to kill Somali citizens and

8 Ali Osman, A. *Cultural Diversity and the Somali Conflict: Myth or Reality*, African Studies Institute, University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia, 2007, p.99

9 Ibid. p.101

10 Jabril Ibrahim Abdulle and Abdulkadir, Yahya, Ali, *On the Path to Recovery*, in Osman Farah, Mammo Muchie and Joakim Gundel (ed.), *SOMALIA: Diaspora and State Reconstitution in the Horn of Africa*, London, Adonis and Abbey, 2007, p.136

commit human rights abuse in the late 1980s up to the fall of his regime in 1991. The post 9/11 global disposition towards international terrorism has put Somalia into the spotlight after the fatigue generated by international failures in Somalia and Rwanda in the 1990s. The presence of Al Qaeda elements in Somalia introduced an external dimension that is currently fused with internal conflict and political dynamics.

3.3 Crisis of Governance and State Fragility

The security sector is still very weak and cannot guarantee security to most of the citizens. According to Religious leaders in Baidoa, the government controlled the country during the day while the Al-Shabab controlled the country during the night.

“The police force is prone to corruption. The police accept bribes in order to release imprisoned offenders.”¹¹

Though South-Central Somalia has a new government and a popularly elected government, the people are still not convinced that the era of divisive and poor governance is over.

“The Somali people had positive expectations from the new president since he came from the civil society but he soon became clan-oriented and incompetent leader who proved beyond any reasonable doubt that his government could not restore peace in the country.”¹²

Access to justice is hindered by poor harmonization of the formal and informal judicial systems.

“Laws are out dated and lack capacity to handle modern disputes. There are inconsistencies between the dominant customary laws and the formal laws.”¹³
“Formal justice system has been unable to effectively settle land disputes. It is prone to corruption and lack professionalism.”¹⁴

11 Interview, Businessmen from Hargeisa, OCV, August, 2013

12 Interview, Women Group, (Bosaaso), OCV, August, 2013

13 Interview, Refugees and IDP's from Hargeisa, OCV, August, 2013

14 Interview, Refugees and IDP's from Burao (Somaliland), OCV, August, 2013

There has not been a system of government that ensures equity across clans and regions.

“The new government breached the federal constitution, failed to consult with the regional administrations. The competence of the government to restore security is doubtful as the government failed to stabilize the capital city of Mogadishu which is under the government control.”¹⁵

The national government has not replaced the clan as a source of security for individuals.

“Absence of law and order in the country and the fact that many people grew up in a turbulent and chaotic environment where impunity, oppression, and the use of gun was very common, made them unable to visualize a peaceful situation.”¹⁶

3.4 Competition for Power and Resources

Traditionally, clans competed over water, livestock, pasture and grazing land. After independence, many people moved to cities where the resources needed for survival were different. The new competition would be about access to government jobs, public service and control of foreign aid. Even before 1967, there were reports of corruption in the government and oppression of specific clans.¹⁷

It is on record that many clans fought over control of resources especially the port of Kismayo after the fall of Siad Barre in 1991. The warlords fought to control Mogadishu, Kismayo or Baidoa to access resources.¹⁸

“Administrations and clans in Somalia dispute over resources and control of land, while foreign companies fuel the disputes as they explore natural gas in disputed areas between regions, administrations and clans.”¹⁹

15 Interview, Business people, Garowe (Puntland), OCVF field researchers, August, 2013

16 Interview, Women Group, Bosaaso, OCVF field researchers, August, 2013

17 Ibid, p.3

18 Hawa Gidir Hawadle clans fought for control of Kismayo as well as Absame, Harti and Marehan. In Somaliland among the Isaaq clans in Buro and Hargeysa, in Bay and Bakool the Digil and Mirifle clans fought over resources (Elmi et al, 2006, p.4)

19 Interview, Youth Focus Group, Bosaaso, OCVF field researchers, August, 2013

The conflict over resources is epitomized by the conflict between the Hawiye and Darood over the control of Juba and Shabelle river valleys.²⁰ Economically, Somalia performs poorly due to effects of the long war. Resource exploitation has exacerbated the conflict.

“The new federal government has signed agreements with other foreign companies to explore gas and oil in Somalia. This move can cause conflict between the federal government and the autonomous regions.”²¹

There have been severe conflicts over land regulation and ownership. Siad Barre’s government designed oppressive land law that sought to appropriate idle and unregistered land.

“Clans from outside the river valleys region grabbed land in the 1990s and their children (were) born and grew up knowing this to be their land and can hardly accept that ‘their’ land is being claimed by its real owners. These issues were never addressed in any past conferences.”²²

Land still remains a major source of conflict and disputes in the country today.

“Land conflicts occur in both rural and urban areas. Though the land conflicts mainly involve individuals, they have the potential to evolve into clan conflict. Land conflicts are more in urban areas than in rural areas mainly due to the high value of land in urban areas.”²³

3.5 Resource Scarcity

Somalia economy collapsed even before the fall of the Siad Barre government in 1991. This meant loss of livelihoods to millions of people, neglect of infrastructure and breakdown of social services. There has been severe threat to food security with the recent famine taking place in 2011. There has not been any large scale and long term investment in infrastructure and

²⁰ Elmi, A.A and Barise A, 2006, p.12

²¹ Interview, Religious leaders, Galkayo (Puntland), OCPV field researchers, August, 2013

²² Interview, Women Group, Bosaaso (Puntland), OCPV field researchers, August, 2013

²³ Interview, Women from Hargeisa, OCPV field researchers, August, 2013

human development to revitalize the Somali economy. Inequality in group development among regions and clans has also exacerbated the conflict.²⁴

“Poverty makes people vulnerable and willing to fall into crime as a means of survival since they have nothing to survive on.”²⁵

Due to ecological degradation among other factors, there has been a decline in access to water and pasture during dry seasons in places such as Somalia.²⁶

3.6 Lack of National Integration and Social Cohesion

Lack of national vision and identity is one factor that prevents clans from identifying themselves with a national government. There is no shared common vision of Somalia beyond the clan. Clan divisions still remain obstacles to national integration and stabilization. The military rule of Siad Barre used excessive force and collective punishment for clans whose members defied his government.²⁷ Since the opposition movement against Siad Barre was also based on clans, the departure of Siad Barre did not herald an era of a better Somalia.

“The government authorities incited clanism as the conflict in Jubaland and lower Shabelle regions in June 2013 indicated. Pro government militias, which were mainly from the clan of the President, were involved in the conflict.”²⁸

Most of the fighting that has taken place in the country, apart from the one of Al Shabaab, has been organized along clan lines. The construction of national identity will be a long term nation building project for the new government.²⁹ The weak state has been unable to provide incentives

24 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Index (HDI) Somalia, 2012, p. 62

25 Vice Governor of Mudug Region, OCPV, August, 2013

26 Giordano and Wolf (2005), International Resource Conflict and Mitigation, Journal of Peace Research, Sage Publications, London

27 Barre's first cabinet consisted of 14 ministers, 7 (50%) of whom were from his Darood clan, Ali Osman (2007), p.5

28 Interview, Business people, Garowe (Puntland), OCPV, August, 2013

29 Ashley Johnson, Re-thinking Somali National Identity: Nationalism State Formation and Peace building in Somalia, in John Paul Lederach et al, Somalia: Creating Space for Fresh Approaches to Peace building, Life and Peace Institute, 2011, p.37

to regional elites to subscribe to the idea of homogeneous nation. Lack of national institutions and networks that run across clans or regions will continue to undermine the emergence of a strong national identity.³⁰

“Failure to address grievances and mistrust among clans as well as failure to restore trust among people is a major cause of conflict in Somalia.”³¹

3.7 Environmental degradation

There has been a growing acceptance among scientists, politicians and policy makers that climate change threatens to exacerbate existing drivers of conflict in a way that could roll back development across many countries.³²

Today, the most notable environmental security problems in Somalia include global warming leading to climate change, water pollution contributing to human health problems, deforestation resulting to desertification, destruction of species, ozone layer depletion, increasing urban and industrial wastes, among many others.

Since the onset of the Somali conflict in 1991, it is estimated that the country has lost about 14% of its forests, and about 87% of the people in Somalia depend on wood based fuel.³³ The number of land mines in Somaliland is estimated to be about 12 million and 25-50 000 in Puntland.³⁴ There are also many more mines planted during the Ogaden war along the Somali/Ethiopia border that have not been cleared.

It is estimated that in 2002 alone, fishing in Somali waters stood at 60 000 tonnes about half of which was taken by foreign fishing vessels.³⁵ A lot of hazardous waste has also been deposited along the Somali coastline. Most of these toxic waste materials originate from Western industrialized

30 Rhoda E. Howard, Civil conflict in Sub Saharan Africa: Internally Generated Causes, International Journal, Vol. 51, No.1 Africa's Prospects, 1996, p.7

31 Interview, Women Group, Bosaso and Galkayo, OCVF field researchers, August, 2013

32 International Conservation Union (IUCN), *Country Environmental Profile for Somalia*, Nairobi, The European Commission Somalia Office, p.7

33 *ibid.* p.47

34 Sebastian Taylor, Landmines and UXO in Somaliland, Puntland, Central & Southern Somalia: A Feasibility Study, UNICEF, 2000, p.5

35 Report of the University of British Columbia, available at <http://www.seaarounds.org/project/htm>

countries, some of whom took advantage of the collapse of government in Somalia to dump toxic waste.³⁶

The international development community has also not placed environment as a central pillar of sustainable peace and security in Somalia.³⁷ There is also a weak legislative and policy framework on environment, and enforcement of existing instruments is lacking.

3.8 Multipliers/Drivers of Conflict

There are a number of factors that continue to ride on the root causes to exacerbate the conflict in Somalia. These factors need to be identified and analysed in order to come up with appropriate remedial strategies.

3.8.1 Clan Politicization

The clan forms a major marker of identity and societal values. According to Abdullahi Osman;

*"The clan in Somalia is above everything else; above political parties, religion and any ideology. Most social problems are addressed through the clan system. The clan is both a uniting and dividing factor. Every Somali traces his origin to the family and sub-clan and clan. The clans are divided into four major groups: Hawiye, Darood, Dir/Isaaq and Digil-Mirifre also known as Rahanweyn."*³⁸

There are also two major societal divisions based on economic activities – pastoralists and sedentary farmers. The latter are weak and have often been (worse) victims of the conflict.

*"Clan and religious ideologies played a visible role in the Somali conflict. Somalia has a clan formula of 4.5 which stands for the four main clans (Dir, Darood, Digil-Mirifre and Hawiye) and 0.5 which stands for others (Somali Bantus, Somali Asians, Minority clans) who were marginalized from politics. Even main clans have their own rivalry. Therefore, politics based on clans is the worst ideology that created instability in Somalia."*³⁹

36 In 1992 Italian and Swiss firms were reported to be dumping waste in Somalia waters sometimes in collaboration with warlords, see Abdullahi E.M (2001), *Somalia's Degrading Environment, Causes and Effects of Deforestation and Hazardous Waste Dumping in Somalia*, p.14

37 IUCN, *Country Environmental Profile - Somalia*, 2006, p.8

38 UNDP Human Development Index Report, Somalia, 2012, p.47

39 Interview, Youth Focus Group, Bosaaso, OCPV, August, 2013

After an attempted coup against Siad Barre in 1978, he relied more on Marehaan-Ogadeen-Dulbahante (MOD) clan coalition at the expense of other clans. A situation that made other marginalized groups agitates for political change.⁴⁰

There are still no viable governance structures that can guarantee all the clans equal treatment. There is no viable federal administration that can ensure social justice among all the citizens and regions.

“Exclusion of traditional and clan elders from politics and security stabilization process in the country is an underlying cause of conflict.”⁴¹

3.8.2 Youth Unemployment and Vulnerability

The youth in Somalia are hindered from effective participation in peace building and development due to illiteracy, lack of economic opportunities, unemployment, breakdown of family and social ties and other cultural inhibitions. Over 70% of the youth in Somalia are under the age 30. The average unemployment rate for people aged 15-64 is 54% while the unemployment rate of youth aged 15-29 is 67% which is one of the highest in the world.⁴²

“These are mainly youth who grew up in the absence of a central government; they are illiterate and as a result have strong allegiance to their clans or religious groups. Such youth would do anything, including crime, to protect their clans or religious groups.”⁴³

Cases in other regions indicate that poor parts of society tend to turn towards criminal activities such as banditry, violence and other illegal activities when there is political instability.

“Youth from Burao mentioned that when their fellow youth fail to get employment they start viewing themselves as rejected members of the society, lacking place in the society, they feel as though they are weak, poor or unwanted and this draws them to other like-minded youth to form criminal gangs including organized armed groups.”⁴⁴

40 Ibid. p.31

41 Interview, Youth Focus Group and Women Group, Galkayo, OCV, August, 2013

42 UNDP Human Development Index Report, Somalia, 2012, p.xix

43 Interview, Women Group, Galkayo, OCV, August, 2013

44 Interview, Burao Community (Somaliland), OCV, August, 2012

3.9 War Economy

It has been argued that during conflicts there emerge groups that make profit from the conflict. These groups may not have any interest in seeing an end to the conflict since their lifeline might come to an end.⁴⁵ During the long conflict in Somalia, there emerged groups engaged in illicit trade of small arms and light weapons and smuggling goods into neighbouring countries.

“Foreign companies benefit from the absence of central government as they have an easy and uncontrolled access to Somali resources and never pay taxes; these companies are part of the problem as they always fund spoilers and regional administrations to rubber-stamp their selfish interests.”⁴⁶

For a long time, the Al Shabaab controlled the port of Kismayo. It took the military might of the Kenya Defence Forces to dislodge them after October 2011. These groups were certainly benefiting from the lawlessness in the country. Other international firms such as fishing and shipping vessels took advantage of uncontrolled territory.

“Businessmen/Individuals who benefited from the absence of a central government are drivers of conflict in Somalia. Some of these businessmen work in partnership with foreign countries to destabilise the country.”⁴⁷

The business sector in Somalia established its own security system of protecting property. If the new government does not provide adequate security to this sector, it will continue to operate a parallel security network. There are groups, too, across south-central Somalia sitting on illegal assets.

“People were displaced from their lands and those who displaced them are against the establishment of a central government since they could lose the land they illegally acquired.”⁴⁸

Piracy, too, has been a major threat to maritime security in Somalia. The governments in Puntland and South Central Somalia have not been able to

45 Chester Crocker, Hampson, F. and Aall, P. (2009), Why Mediation Matters: Ending Intractable Conflicts, in J. Bercovitch et al, The Sage Handbook of Conflict Resolution (pp.492-506), London, Sage Publications Ltd, p.495

46 Ibid.

47 Interview, Religious leaders, Galkayo, August, 2013

48 Interview, Business people, Garowe, OCPV, August, 2013

prevent pirates from operating within their territories. Piracy thus became a lucrative criminal enterprise supported by some clan leaders. This has raised the cost of maritime trade and security to an all time high.⁴⁹

3.9.1 Religious Fundamentalism

Islam is the main religion in Somalia and Islamic leaders are recognized for having contributed a lot to peace building and reconciliation efforts in the country. However, the existence of religious groups with competing ideologies is one of the contributing factors to conflict in Somalia today.⁵⁰

The Somalis subscribe to the Sunni Islam and follow the Shafii School (Mahdab) of religious interpretation which is relatively liberal.⁵¹ Radical Islam began to emerge in the 1980s and was accelerated by state failure in 1991 and external intervention from the UN, USA and Ethiopia. There have been reports of Al-Qaeda linkage to Al-Shabaab and conflicts over interpretation of Islam in Somalia.⁵²

These radical groups have tried to impose their radical religious ideology upon the society. Religious ideology in the Somali conflict is mainly dominant in areas where the Al-Shabab is dominant.

“Al-Shabaab and Al-Qaeda want to enforce foreign brand of Islam and to rule in our country.”⁵³

There are other Islamic groups operating in Somalia today such as Al-Sufiya, Al-tahad, Tabliiq, Al-Islah, Ahlu-Sunnah Wal jama and Al-ictism among others.⁵⁴ Hizbul Islam does not practice extremist religious ideology and the group is currently supporting the government. Due to application of Islamic law, areas that were governed by Islamic Courts Union (ICU) registered considerable improvement in security. Al-Shabaab, imposed

49 Martin N. Murphy, *Somalia: The New Barbary? Piracy and Islam in the Horn of Africa*, London, Hurst and Company, pp.163-180

50 Interview, Religious group leaders and Youth Group, Galkayo, OCV, August, 2013

51 Ioan, M. Lewis *Blood and Bone: The Call of Kingship in Somali Society* (Princeton, NJ, Red Sea Press, 1994, p.167

52 J.P Pham 2011, *Somalia: Where a State is not a State*, The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs, Vol. 35, 2011, p. 73

53 Interview, Business Group, Mogadishu, OCV field researchers, August, 2013

54 Interview, Women Group, Bosaaso (Puntland), OCV researchers, August, 2013

strict Islamic law on the population such as banning Western music, books, television and sports.⁵⁵

However, due to infiltration by foreign fighters, they attacked even fellow Muslims who were opposed to them. This alienated them from a large Somali population. It is important to note that suicide bombings and religious radicalization of the Somalia conflict began after the Ethiopian invasion in 2006. The Ethiopia incursion was viewed as a proxy war for the Christian West to fight Islamic influence in Somalia. Due to Somali sensitivity to foreign invasion and commitment to Islam, the Al-Shabaab witnessed burgeoning local support.

“Due to lack of alternative societal guiding principles and values in the country, religious fundamentalism has taken root in the country. These ideologies have connections with foreign actors in neighbouring, Western and Arabian countries. Religious ideologies were funded from the Middle East.”

Somali religious practices are highly influenced by the Somali culture. The goal of Al-Shabaab is to establish an Islamic state in Somalia and enforce Sharia law.⁵⁶ Religious conflict is exacerbated by the government’s attempts to impose democracy in the country which often is not in line with the different religious groups’ ideologies.⁵⁷

3.9.2 Organized Armed Groups (OAG)

There are many organized armed groups operating in Somalia. Many of these groups are sponsored by their clans to provide security. A number of OAG are aligned with the current government.

The Harakat Al-Shabaab Al Mujahideen (Movement of Youth Warriors) or Al- Shabaab is the main threat to security in Somalia today. Al Shabaab sprung up as the armed youth wing of the Islamic Courts Union (ICU). The group has since been operating as an independent movement. There

55 Heidi Elisabeth Petterson,, Intractability of Conflict: Causes, Drivers and Dynamics of the War in Somalia, MA Thesis, University of Stellenbosch, 2011, p.62

56 Gunaratna Rohan, ‘Al Qaeda’s Ideology’ and ‘The Ideology of Al Jama’ah Al Islamiya’ in *Current Trends in Islamist Ideology: Al-Qaeda’s Ideology*, Center on Islam Democracy and The Future of the Muslim World , Mac Vol.1, 2005, Washington D.C, Hudson Institute, p.72

57 Interview, Women Group, Bosaso, OCVF, August, 2013

are a number of regions in the rural areas that are controlled by the group, though its fortunes have dwindled after its sources of income such as the port of Kismayo were taken over by KDF/AMISOM and handed back to the local administration. Al-Shabaab has been weakened but is still executing guerrilla attacks in urban areas.

“The local community had seen a huge number of vehicles suspiciously parked in the rural areas. No one knew why the vehicles were parked there. Militant groups had been spotted crossing Burao district on their way to other parts of the region. Six Al-Shabaab members were captured on Eid Al-Fitr day in the district. Burao is a strategic town between Hargeisa and Mogadishu.”⁵⁸

Some leaders of Hizbul such as Hassan Dahir Aweys have also been leaders of Al-Shabaab.⁵⁹ Muaskar Ras Kamboni (Ras Kamboni Brigades) operates in Jubaland and supported (KDF)/AMISOM to fight against Al-Shabaab in South-Central Somalia.

Somali emerged as a militarized society during the reign of Siad Barre. During the 1980s, half of GDP was spent on defence and security.⁶⁰ Members of the armed forces sold their weapons to civilians during the economic hardships in the 1980s, and state armouries were looted after the collapse of the government in 1991. There are also weapons provided by Ethiopia in support of particular armed groups.⁶¹

In 1992 the UN Security Council passed Resolution 733 which called for an embargo on weapons and military equipment being sent to Somalia. This embargo has, however, been violated many times. The supply of weapons continued mainly from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Yemen, Djibouti, Egypt and Sudan.⁶² The UNSC lifted the embargo to allow for rebuilding of the security sector after election of a new government. Weapons under the custody of Local private security providers and the Sharia courts have not been registered and controlled by the government.⁶³

58 Interview, Elders and Religious Leaders from Burao district, Somaliland, OCPV, August, 2013

59 Somalia, American Foreign Policy, p.6

60 Ali Osman (2007)., p.110

61 Ibid,p.110

62 Hogendoorn et al, UN Panel of Experts on Somalia, UNSC Resolution 733 of 1992, 2003

63 Elmi et al, p.15

Al Shabaab has been conducting terrorist attacks across the body in Kenya, and most recently staged a deadly siege on a popular shopping mall in Nairobi.

3.9.3 External Involvement

Though external actors and factors are not the main cause of conflict in Somalia, they are often drivers of the conflict and as they form alliance with local actors, they inform the conflict trajectory. External actors and states have allied with actors in Somalia to perpetuate the conflict.

“Foreign actors fuel the conflict in order to realise their interests. Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, United Kingdom, United States and Emirates are key actors in the conflict.”⁶⁴

Some foreign countries have used Somalia as an ally due to its strategic location. Egypt wanted to use Somalia against Ethiopia, while USSR was mainly interested in Somalia’s strategic location. USA, Europe and Arab countries have replaced Egypt and USSR today.

“Foreign actors finance local actors in the conflict to guard their interests. Religious groups have connections with other religious groups in the Arab world and other Muslim countries. Politicians advance the interests of the countries they are allied to. Arab and Middle East countries fund religious groups.”⁶⁵

Different regions have welcomed external actors who are friendly to their cause such as Ethiopia in Putland and Somaliland and Kenya in Jubaland. These diverse relationships and antagonism affects the nature of political solution to the Somali conflict.

Genuine security threats inform Ethiopia and Kenya’s interests in Somalia. Ethiopia has been concerned about armed groups in Somalia which support the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) such as Al Ittihad Al Islamiya and the Al-Shabaab. Somalia has also become a playground for

64 Interview, Youth Group and Religious leaders, Galkayo, OCV, August, 2013

65 Interview, Business Group, Garowe, OCV, August, 2013

the proxy war between Eritrea and Ethiopia. Eritrea would like to exploit Somali discontent with Ethiopia over intervention in Somalia politics and occupation of Ogaden to its advantage. Eritrea would also like to maintain good relations with Somalia due to its border dispute with Djibouti.

3.10 Socio-economic and Political Impact of the Conflict

The impact of Somalia conflict is manifested in various ways including: breakdown of families, destruction of economies, erosion of culture, devastation of the community, poor hygiene and health sector, collapse of the economy, divisions within sub-clans, destruction of government institutions, lawlessness, religious divisions, division of Somalia into different regions and general uncertainty.

Civil strife in Somalia has been one of the most critical challenges to peace and security in the Horn of Africa.

“The prolonged insecurity in the country had countless negative impact on the economy, education, social services, infrastructure, and patriotism. In our view Somalia is the most corrupt country in the world, a country that has known lawlessness, piracy, poverty and illegal immigration for the better part of its’ existence as an independent country.”⁶⁶

Armed conflict in Somalia has crippled the prospects of a better life for over two decades through destruction of institutions, encouraging human and capital flight, undermining investors’ confidence, spreading disease and disrupting trade.

“Trust and confidence were damaged very heavily. An increasing number of the population see implementation of the federal system and movement or rotation of the capital city to other regions as one of the solution to the prolonged conflict in the country.”⁶⁷

⁶⁶ Interview, Youth Focus Group, Bosaaso, OCVF, August, 2013

⁶⁷ Ibid.

Somalia registers some of the lowest development indicators in the world. In this regard, Somalia was ranked 165 out of 170 countries covered in 2012.⁶⁸ Somalia's Gender Inequality Index (GII) is the fourth lowest in the world. Its Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) of 0.47% places it at position 94 out of 104 countries surveyed in 2010.

An estimated 82% of Somalis are considered poor. Also, 89% of the people in South-Central Somalia are considered poor compared to 75% in Puntland, and 72% in Somaliland.⁶⁹

There are very many cases of unaddressed war crimes, deep inter clan grievances over atrocities committed, massive levels of stolen property and occupied territory, unresolved property disputes, impunity, looting of all public goods and state properties.

*"Cultural and moral decay, hatred, clan which has replaced central government for average citizens, insecurity, unaccountable leaders who serve foreign actors, and widespread injustice and abuse of human rights are the hallmark of Somali today."*⁷⁰

Literacy level in Somalia is below 38%. Somalia is dependent on food aid for almost half of its population.⁷¹ About 27% of the total population or an estimated 2 million people faced acute food and livelihood crises in 2010. And over 1.5 million people were internally displaced by July 2010; Mogadishu alone had about 372,000 IDPs.⁷²

Somalia is also the largest source of refugees in the world after Afghanistan and Iraq. At the end of 2010 there were 600 000 Somali refugees in Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Yemen.⁷³ The refugees have been a source of insecurity to the neighbouring countries. Therefore, Somalia is a problem both to its citizens and the international community.

68 UNDP, HDI, 2012

69 UNDP Human Development Index Report, Somalia, 2012, p. xviii

70 Interview, Business People, Garowe, OCPV field researchers, August, 2013

71 Annete Weber and Anja Dargatz, *Sudan and Somalia – Linchpins on the Horn of Africa*, International Policy Analysis, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES), 2010, p.13

72 UNDP Human Development Index Report, Somalia, 2012, p.57

73 Ibid, p.58

4. Options and Strategies of Managing Insecurity in Somalia

Foremost among critical change agents in Somalia is governance. The political solution to the Somalia crisis points to creating a loose federal system where the central government is only the first among equals. This interpretation of federalism is critical for setting a sound footing of Somalia's political, economic and social transformation.

Apparently, this is not the road being taken by the current Federal Government of Somalia.⁷⁴ Real stabilization of the country is a gradual and multifaceted process which includes provision of security, rule of law, human rights protection, service delivery and economic recovery. The current government recognizes this approach and intends to establish administrations in secured areas.⁷⁵ The proposed reforms in the justice, police, military and correctional services will address critical areas in the security sector. Efforts must be made to ensure that the new institutions do not perpetuate the injustices of the past and exacerbate clan divisions. They must rest on a social contract enshrined in the constitution that grants equality of citizens in representation and provision of services.

Mediation remains the best tool of managing political differences in Somalia. Somalia began the road to political stabilization in 2000 when a successful peace conference was held in Arta, Djibouti. An interim president was elected under the Transitional National Government (TNG). TNG was replaced by Transitional Federal Government (TFG) in 2004, under whose authority Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed was elected president. The Transitional Federal Institutions (TFI) comprised of Transitional Federal Government (TFG), Transitional Federal Parliament and Transitional Federal Charter.

74 Matt Bryden, *Somalia – Assessing new Federal Government*, p. 8, IGAD Report, Braden, footnote no.34

75 Cabinet endorsed a document that defines this path in 2013, peace building and peace dividends, the document recognizes citizen participation, p.5

The TFG reign came to an end in 2012 when a new parliament was inaugurated and which subsequently elected the current president, Hassan Shiekh Mohamud. The presence of the new government and AMISOM offers opportunities for reconstruction of Somalia.

4.1 The Preventive Dimension

A preventive strategy entails establishing constitutional, legislative, policy and institutional framework that create conditions necessary to prevent emergence of conflict or violence at the national, regional or grass root level.

4.1.1 National Dialogue and Reconciliation

A political solution to the future of Somalia will have to be addressed as peace and security consolidation takes place in South-Central Somalia. There have been about 15 mediation efforts for Somalia since 1991. These peace efforts failed partly because they focused on warlords and top leaders, and not grassroots level.

“The fact that all past attempts to stabilize Somalia were foreign initiatives, held in foreign countries and funded by foreign countries, and the fact that traditional leaders, religious groups and other local stakeholders were excluded, and some handpicked politicians were included, made all past attempts futile. Some of the leaders elected could not get the allegiance of their own clans and were never seriously accepted by other countries.”⁷⁶

National dialogue must be broad based and address root causes of the conflict, nature of governance in Somalia, distribution of political power and resources.

“The biggest opportunity available for the Somali(a) reconciliation is that the new government, which has been recognized by the international community, can right track national dialogue, stay away from inciting inter clan conflicts and involve key stakeholders in the process of stabilization.”⁷⁷

⁷⁶ Interview, Business people, Garowe (Puntland) OCPV, August, 2013

⁷⁷ Interview, Business people, Bosaaso (Puntland) OCPV, August, 2013

The stage must be set for the establishment of local governments and a stable federal government that can oversee democratic free and fair elections in 2016. This observation is captured in the current government's pillar 3 of the 6 pillar policy; social reconciliation is considered a critical element of rebuilding the country.⁷⁸

There must be national mechanisms for re-enforcing the culture of negotiation and mediation in society while shunning recourse to violence as an alternative to conflict resolution.

*"The government has a chance to succeed if it collaborates with the regional administrations, calls for an all-inclusive national dialogue and remains neutral to win the trust of the Somali people. The Federal Government's initiative to start negotiations with the governments of Somaliland and Puntland were positive signs that the Federal Government could consolidate peace in Somalia."*⁷⁹

4.1.2 Strengthening National Governance

The Federal Government of Somalia should be a pillar for guaranteeing political rights, rights of property ownership, making institutions accountable to the people and creating conducive environment for peace and development. An inclusive state building and reconciliation process is necessary to create momentum for recovery. Decentralization of power and resources to the regions and district level is required to build capacity of local administrations. This would ensure security and participation of people at the grassroots level, and create space for civil society to contribute in national peace building and development.

The government has committed itself to providing rapid response infrastructure. This entails building of roads, police stations, courts, prisons, school, health facilities and local administration offices. Communities are

⁷⁸ Federal Government of the Somali Republic, Stabilization through Peace building and Peace Dividends: A Pathway to Local Governance, 2013, p.7, There are plans to establish a mediation team comprised of renowned Somali citizens such as Hadraawi (Poet), University lecturers and civil society activists, to provide their services where they have least or no partisan connections

⁷⁹ Interview, Youth Group, Garowe and Bosaso, OCPV, August, 2013

slated to be involved in procurement and monitoring development projects.⁸⁰ Laws governing the relationship between the Central Government and regions need to be put in place.

4.1.3 Security Sector Development

Amidst the conflict in Somalia, the new government is establishing building blocks of the security sector with UN and AMISOM support. Security sector development for Somalia is made up of legal, policy and institutional reforms at the top level, combined with parallel policy and institutional transformation at the grassroots level. The main objective is to build capacity and trust in the security sector, entrench civil society oversight and enhance access to justice.⁸¹

The National Security Vision of Somalia aims to achieve:

“A secure and enabled Somalia which is in lasting peace with itself and with its neighbours; capable of restoring and maintaining internal security, providing access to justice, dignity and the rule of law, upholding the human rights of its citizens and with all of its security sector adhering to International Humanitarian Law; and is accountable and able to defend its constitution, territorial unity and integrity.”⁸²

According to the current constitution, Somalia is a federal, democratic, sovereign republic founded upon the principles of power sharing in a federal system. In development of the security sector, the National Security Policy (NSP) will reflect Somalia’s territory as described in Article 7 of the Provisional Constitution, with an appropriate balance between centralised and decentralised forces.

The Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) has the National Security Stabilization Plan (NSSP) 2011-2014, which spells out the achievement of the security vision. The plan provides organs for ensuring militia integration into the armed forces, democratic oversight, human rights, international humanitarian law, development of maritime security strategy and civil control of armed forces.

80 Sally Healy, Interview with President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud of Somalia, New Internationalist, 2nd February, 2012

81 Federal Government of the Somali Republic (2013) Official Document of the Government of Somalia, Ministry of Justice, Religious Affairs, Constitution and Federal and Reconciliation , p.14

82 National Security Framework 2013, Mogadishu, April 2013, p.5

The Federal Government anticipates a future military that is small, professional and lightly armed, comprising a regenerated Somali National Army (SNA), complemented by modest maritime and air capabilities.⁸³

AMISOM is training and building capacity of SNA. Establishment of an all-inclusive army with fair clan representation is a pre-requisite for peace in the country. Training on Human Rights, Rule of Law and general capacity enhancement is required in the short and long run.⁸⁴ The FGS recognises the critical importance of effective policing in the overall process of re-establishing stability and the need for joint and co-ordinated action between police and Somali Armed Forces.

Under the authority of the Ministry of the Interior and National Security (MINS), a draft Strategic Action Plan 2013 – 17 has been prepared for the policing of Somalia and this will form a key element of the National Security Plan.⁸⁵

Traditional elders are recognized by majority of respondents as having played a vital role in providing security in the region. Formal justice, Sharia courts and traditional elders are recognized as the primary justice providers in some regions. However, respondents maintained that Sharia courts are more trusted, followed by traditional elders, and lastly formal justice system.⁸⁶

“Formal systems are ineffective, have taken too long and lack fairness in judgment while rulings made by traditional elders are fast and are based on the discretion of clan elders; Sharia courts are (equally) fair. Formal courts use out-dated legal provisions to litigate cases and are prone to corruption.”⁸⁷

The FGS has started creating a Justice Sector Strategic Action Plan. A draft action plan has been enriched by a ‘National Dialogue on Justice Reform’ that was undertaken in early April 2013. Co-ordination mechanisms are essential to ensure effective and efficient working relationships between

⁸³ Ibid.p.5

⁸⁴ Key Informant Interview with Legal Expert in Garowe, OCV, August, 2013

⁸⁵ National Security Framework 2013, Mogadishu, April 2013, p.5

⁸⁶ Head of the Regional Appellate Courts was aware of the role of elders and Sharia Courts in administering justice, he however insisted that all decisions made by the informal courts had to be certified by the regional courts for enforcement as these courts didn't have enforcement powers

⁸⁷ Interview, Focus Group Discussion, Garowe, OCV, August, 2013

police and prosecutors, as well as between the corrections staff and the courts.⁸⁸

The Ministry of Justice (MOJ) is set to establish a legal basis for restorative justice and a dual track system that combines formal and traditional justice systems. A Human Rights Commission is also set to be established by FGS.⁸⁹ Article 3 of the Somali constitution recognizes the need for an independent judiciary that is aligned with Sharia law.

Implementation of (Pre-1991) Prison Law which provides for parole would go a long to provide an efficient avenue for rehabilitation and prevent overcrowding in prisons. There are also measures for gender mainstreaming such as inclusion of women in traditional institutions such as Xeer, where they were hitherto not included.⁹⁰

4.1.4 Environmentally Sustainable Human Development

Environmental conservation in Somalia requires a broad political, social and economic approach that factors environmental contribution to the reconstruction of Somalia and setting a durable foundation for peace and security. Environmental management can form a critical pillar of national development plans to alleviate poverty, reduce conflicts and increase the rate of economic growth.⁹¹

Protection of Somalia's biodiversity entails making conservation part of community livelihood activities. Traditional mechanisms of resource control can be harmonized with formal laws to create synergy and a more effective regulatory environment.

Completion of the proposed National Environment Strategy and Action Plan (NEAP) and National Bio-diversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) will enhance national economic development and conservation. Conservation of water catchment areas, including management of river basins, is vital for water-scarce Somalia to improve water retention and vegetation cover.

88 Ibid.p.7

89 Ibid. p.13

90 Ibid. (Interview, August, 2013)

91 Joseph K. Mbugua, Environmental Security in Somalia, Issue Brief No.5, 2013, IPSTC

New international regulatory regimes have been put in place to prevent environmental degradation.⁹² Somalia can seek assistance from the United Nations and other partners to enhance capacity for environment management.

Somalia is a signatory to a number of international conventions that regulate use and management of natural resources, including International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).⁹³

Somalia is also a member of FAO's South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission, Global Task Force on Illegal Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing and the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC). These institutions can assist in preventing illegal exploitation of Somalia's marine resources, but there has to be domestic legal and institutional mechanisms to support their implementation.

Devolved land management empowers the traditional system that Somalis are more familiar with to resolve land disputes. It is important to bring on board women in environmental management, given their size in society and their engagement with the environment in the process of meeting family livelihood needs.

4.2 The Pre-emptive Dimension

This strategy aims at establishing legal, policy and administrative structures that pre-empt emergence of conflict and violence at the community level. There are mechanisms that can prevent onset of violence if specific measures are taken beforehand.

4.2.1 National Healing and Reconciliation

The question of transitional justice is yet to be tackled in Somalia, mainly because the country has not yet transitioned into post conflict status. Sooner, a decision will have to be made whether the warlords of the past will continue to hold public offices, be punished for their past human rights

92 American Environmental Peace Institute (AEPI), *Worldwide Emerging Environmental Issues Affecting the U.S. Military*, 2009, p.7

93 *ibid.* p.13

abuses or be granted amnesty.⁹⁴ There are people who are still holding onto other people's properties, and many victims of murder, rape, displacement are yet to see a glimpse of justice.

The government aims:

*"to build confidence, stability and security in newly liberated areas through the rapid establishment and operationalization of restorative justice processes based on traditional Somali practices that will compliment the broader judicial reform strategy."*⁹⁵

Peace education using Islam is appropriate for inter clan reconciliation in Somalia. Since the majority of Somalis are Muslims, the peace teachings of Islam will find receptive ears. According to the teachings of Islam;

*"A Muslim consciously submits to the will of God and subsequently gains internal and external harmony."*⁹⁶

Islam is one of the strongest common bonds that unite Somalis as it promotes brotherly values and behaviours such as mutual love, sympathy, assistance and caring for others.⁹⁷

Throughout Somalia, Somaliland and Puntland, the role of elders in solving societal problems is well recognized.

*"Community elders are the most sought-after in resettling disputes in the community. They are the only effective people in conflict resolution and the government supports them in doing this task. Elders use precedent setting cases in resolving inter clan disputes."*⁹⁸

94 Elmi, A.A and Barise A, 2006., p.18

95 Ibid. P.2

96 Ibid. p.19

97 Abdulrahman M. Abdullahi, Recovering the Somali State: The Islamic Factor, in Osman Farah, Mammo Muchie and Joakim Gundel (ed.), SOMALIA: *Diaspora and State Reconstitution in the Horn of Africa*, 2007, p. 210

98 Precedent case means clan decisions that may be used as a case law in subsequent similar events and cases between certain clans or sub clans

National healing and reconciliation necessitates existence of a grassroots based reconciliation process among communities and clans. This process should be accompanied by gradual expansion of government authority and services. The ground work must be laid for communities to develop their local structures. This will be achieved through community-driven activities such as civic education.

“Inclusive grassroots Somali-led reconciliation and national dialogue, addressing the issue of grabbed assets, strengthening justice delivery and ensuring equality of the Somali people are cardinal pillars of sustainable peace building.”⁹⁹

Local peace building initiatives led by key traditional and clan elders; all-inclusive grassroots reconciliation and national dialogue, going back to the Holy Book and Islamic teachings and Somali leaders’ willingness to compromise, would be a sure means to achieve peace in Somalia. Training and peace awareness programs are also necessary to build a critical mass for peace building and reconciliation.

Despite misgivings expressed about the new government, some respondents felt that there is some goodwill, both local and foreign, that the FGS can seize to promote peace in the country.

“District Safety Committees (DSC’s) are important structures for improving security through creating street youth rehabilitation centres. DSC’s bring together the government and community to improve security. Peace and security in Burao district is not provided by the government, but is a community-led initiative with support from Allah (Almighty). IDP committee structures play a major role in ensuring security and in solving problems in IDP camps by use of customary laws.”¹⁰⁰

Mainstreaming youth in peace building and development agenda is one of the crucial pillars of turning around cycles of conflict in Somalia. However, this must not be seen as an assault against the strong and respected

99 Interview, Women Group, Bosaaso (Puntland) OCV, August, 2013

100 Interview, Women, Elders and IDPs, Burao, OCV, August, 2013

institution of elders. The government of Somaliland and Puntland have developed youth policy and the FGS is also developing one.

“Thousands of students graduated from local universities while others have graduated from outside universities. These educated youth could be an opportunity for Somali peace building and social reconciliation.”¹⁰¹

Though disarmament cannot be easily carried out in Somalia, It is possible to establish clan leaders’ registration and control of arms within their communities. Heavy weapons can also be collected through this system. Warlords who are not affiliated to the government can also be disarmed using this approach.

“Better relationship between the government and community would significantly improve security and peace in the region. Establishment of an accountable and effective justice system is necessary to enhance peace.”¹⁰²

4.2.2 Civil Society

Civil society in Somali is made of the traditional structures and modern urban based non-governmental organizations. Traditional elders have continued to broker peace among clans and led in voluntary disarmament. Civil society was heavily involved in the Arta Peace process in Djibouti where gender representation in the assembly was 25%.¹⁰³

More than 750,000 Somalis live abroad - in South Africa, Europe and North America. The diaspora has been the backbone of the local economy through remittances with the World Bank estimating that about US\$750,000 are remitted annually using the Hawala system.¹⁰⁴ The diaspora does not only bring money but also work culture, knowledge and skills from abroad. The Somali diaspora has been a key element in formation of the new administrations in Puntland, Somaliland and South-Central Somalia.

101 Interview, Youth Focus Group, Bosaaso, OCVF, August, 2013

102 Ibid.

103 Fowsia Abdulkadir, The Role of Civil Society in Rebuilding Somalia, in Osman Farah, Mammo Muchie and Joakim Gundel (ed.), SOMALIA: *Diaspora and State Reconstitution in the Horn of Africa*, 2007, p.254

104 Opp.cit

Civil society in Somalia has an opportunity to provide transformative education that can bridge the gap between the personal and the public. It can build on traditional knowledge and experience while empowering women who can transcend clan boundaries.¹⁰⁵

4.2.3 External Actors

There are a number of external factors that have informed the Somalia conflict: relations with the neighbouring countries of Ethiopia and Kenya,¹⁰⁶ global Islamic Fundamentalism/terrorism, USA, Britain, France and Italy. The United States has been supporting the fight against armed groups such as Al Shabaab and Al Qaeda in its global war against terrorism.¹⁰⁷

“History records that Somalia had the dream to unite five regions of Somalia which caused conflict between Kenya and Somalia, and finally a war between Somalia and Ethiopia in the 1970s. These countries may expect a united Somalia to claim regions in Kenya and Ethiopia.”¹⁰⁸

External factors can play a more positive role if there is a common agenda between the AU and UN. This research established that AMISOM is well received in Baidoa and Mogadishu.¹⁰⁹ Somalis generally do not like foreign intervention in their country, though the Djibouti AMISOM contingent is also well regarded in Baladweyne.¹¹⁰

“Foreign countries should keep away from intervening in Somali local politics. Somaliland and Puntland have been able to sustain peace without the support of international community.”¹¹¹

¹⁰⁵ Opp.cit, Fowsia Abdulkadir, 2007, p.257

¹⁰⁶ “Neighbouring countries such as Kenya and Ethiopia have territorial interests in Somalia while Western countries have political and economic interests in the country.”

¹⁰⁷ Peter Halden, *Somalia: Failed State or Nascent State-System*, FOI Somalia Papers, Stockholm, Swedish Defence Research Agency, 2008, p.4

¹⁰⁸ Somaliland British protectorate, Somali Italian, NFD, Djibouti, and Ethiopian Zone 5, Interview, Youth Focus Group, Bosaaso, OCVF field researchers, August, 2013

¹⁰⁹ Out of a total of 10 FGDs and Key Informant Interviews in which the issue was covered in Mogadishu, only two (the religious leaders' FGD and the deputy prosecutor) were of the opinion that intervention is not needed

¹¹⁰ Majority of respondents including women from Baladweyne district attributed improvement in security in Baladweyne to the presence of the Djibouti AMISOM contingent in the region, Interview, OCVF, August, 2013

¹¹¹ Interview, Youth Focus Group, Bosaaso, OCVF, August, 2013

Therefore, external involvement must be well informed on local political and cultural dynamics. External parties must not exacerbate the current sources of conflict such as building capacity of one clan at the expense of others. Foreign actors must also have a common vision and agenda for Somalia so as to gain local political goodwill and legitimacy.

Local ownership of the peace and security stabilization process, availability of political will and long term commitment by international community is necessary for effective recovery.¹¹²

4.2.4 The African Union

The African Union has legitimate interests to stabilize Somalia while the Arab League may also have its own Islamic agenda. The AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) has done tremendous work to stabilize the country since its entry in 2007. For the first time, Somalia has an internationally recognized official government which was formed inside the country. Embassies have been reopened and AMISOM is in place to support the new government.

However, it is facing asymmetrical resistance from Al Shabaab who continue to operate mostly in rural areas. Continued collaboration between AMISOM and United Nations is critical in turning Somalia around. AMISOM must also understand perceptions of the Somali people towards their presence in Somalia so that they can respond appropriately.

4.2.5 The United Nations

The United Nations must identify a realistic intervention strategy. If the UN is perceived to be building capacity of some clans; this will alienate it from critical constituencies in Somaliland, Puntland and Jubaland.¹¹³ A strategic partnership with AU/AMISOM is necessary to compliment both organizations' resources and synergies.

112 Ibrahim Farah, 'No More Missed Opportunities', *New Routes*, Vol. 18, Nairobi, Life and Peace Institute, 2013, p.6

113 The field interview revealed that there is skepticism about the new government outside Mogadishu and Baidoa and there is strong support for the government within the said regions. These regions manifest clan differences and affiliations

UN Security Council Resolution 2093 aims to progressively put the United Nations in charge of peace and security stabilization in Somalia, and specifically building capacity of the security sector and establishing rule of law institutions. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) began to work in June, 2013. Strategic plans have been developed to achieve the goal of the organization but these strategies respond to technical rather than political problems. The New Deal, 'Compact Peace building and State building Goals (PSG-2)', is geared to capacity building of security sector.¹¹⁴

UNSOM is assisting FGS to design and build structures of the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and the Somali National Army (SNA). External actors must tread carefully as far as Somali politics are concerned. Providing assistance in humanitarian relief and development is acceptable, but reconstitution of Somali political system requires external actors to walk carefully in this complex minefield.

114 Somalia Defence Working Group (DWG) Plan 2013, p.2

5. Conclusion

This study has identified the critical factors that inform and drive conflict in Somalia. The study has also identified strategic response options for managing peace and security in the country. There are pillars and drivers of conflict in Somalia that require different strategies, prioritization and harmonization. Effective leadership and collaboration of Somali actors in South-central region, Somaliland and Puntland is essential in building a foundation for that elusive turning point.

Building the capacity of the state through a strong national army and police is necessary to guarantee security to the people and is seen as an important bulwark against foreign intervention. A broad and multifaceted strategy is required to handle political settlement, federal cooperation, build capacity of governance and define a framework for transitional justice. External actors must speak with one voice that the Somali can understand, and must support home grown solutions to the Somalia quagmire.

The field research findings clearly demonstrate the will of the Somali people to take the lead in stabilization and transformation of their country, with the international community only providing a helping hand.

5.1 Recommendations

- a) FGS/AMISOM/UNSOM should continue building capacity of the security sector through training and equipment to entrench the rule of law and human rights protection.
- b) FGS should ensure respect and support for traditional structures through promoting all inclusive grassroots reconciliation among the people and leaders and proactive engagement with community leadership structures such as elders, Heer and Sharia courts.
- c) FGS should borrow from traditional peace building approaches of Somaliland and Puntland which have incorporated aspects of traditional structures in their current formal administration.
- d) The FGS should recognize local elders as important stakeholders in all peace building efforts and reconciliation at the grass-roots. The elders

should be given training, awareness and skills that would enhance their understanding of laws, human rights and civic responsibilities.

- e) FGS should facilitate mutual cooperation between religious leaders, community and the government to enhance isolation of radical Islamic groups and social harmony.
- f) FGS and civil society should facilitate grassroots based sensitization among the community and training on the value of peace through civic education, community dialogue, outreach campaigns, youth clubs, women networks and religious forums.
- g) FGS should enhance creation of employment opportunities for the youth through pro-active factoring of their interests in development planning.
- h) FGS and civil society should establish systems and structures that ensure accountability to the people such as the Human Rights Commission, ADR, public complaints commission and M&E mechanisms in public service,
- i) FGS should decentralize administrative units through implementation of federal constitutional structures and devolution of power to the regions.
- j) The FGS should strive to gain community trust through inclusion of traditional leaders in deliberations and collaboration between the government and international community. This is a crucial strategy to remove suspicion of FGS/International community secret pacts and increase transparency in public affairs.
- k) FGS should implement strategic environmental management plan and the AU and UN should assist Somalia in environmental management through the various international, continental and regional environmental treaties and agreements.
- l) International community should continue to support long term reconstruction through health, education and infrastructural sectors. The rationale for development assistance should be geared towards building capacity of Somalis to take care of their problems rather than entrench dependency, and
- m) Further research on conflict dynamics in Somalia is required to inform current peace and security stabilization policies and strategies.

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Drivers of Insecurity in Somalia: *Mapping Contours of Violence*

This study has exposed crisis of governance, competition for power and resources, lack of national cohesion and identity, environmental degradation and culture of violence and militarism as the root causes of the conflict. Clan mobilization, ideology/religious fundamentalism, organized armed groups and youth unemployment have been isolated as the main drivers of the current conflict in Somalia.

The country need to establish multi-prong building blocks for peace and security ranging from establishment of national government institutions, local government, traditional structures, to national dialogue process to determine the fate of break-away regions such as Somaliland and Puntland.

The international community must have a well coordinated and collaborative approach to provide support to the country. The work of AMISOM should be rewarded with support and recognition. The dark pages of Somalia's history are coming to an end albeit grudgingly, both local and international actors must collectively push the wheel of peace forward to prevent relapse into the dark ages.

About the Author



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