



External Intervention in Somalia's civil war

Security promotion *and* national interests?

Mikael Eriksson (Editor)

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Titel	Extern intervention i Somalias inbördeskrig: Främjande av säkerhet <i>och</i> nationella intressen?
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Abstract

The present study examines external intervention in Somalia's civil war. The focus is on Ethiopia's, Kenya's and Uganda's military engagement in Somalia. The study also analyses the political and military interests of the intervening parties and how their respective interventions might affect each country's security posture and outlook. The aim of the study is to contribute to a more refined understanding of Somalia's conflict and its implications for the security landscape in the Horn of Africa. The study contains both theoretical chapters and three empirically grounded cases studies. The main finding of the report is that Somalia's neighbours are gradually entering into a more tense political relationship with the government of Somalia. This development is characterized by a tension between Somalia's quest for sovereignty and neighbouring states' visions of a decentralized Somali state-system capable of maintaining security across the country.

Keywords: Somalia, civil war, Horn of Africa, Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia, IGAD, African Peace and Security, APSA, external intervention, geopolitics, African security, Africa

Sammanfattning

Studien analyserar konfliktutvecklingen i Somalia med fokus på extern militär intervention. Särskilt undersöks Etiopiens, Kenyas och Ugandas politiska och militära intressen i landet. Syftet är att bättre förstå hur extern intervention kan komma att påverka maktbalansen i Somalia samt indirekt maktbalansen på Afrikas horn. Vidare undersöker studien vilka politiska intressen och utmaningar respektive land har i Somalia, samt hur dessa påverkar dess säkerhetspolitiska situation. Studien inkluderar dels teoretiska rön, dels tre empiriskt baserade fallstudier. Rapportens huvudsakliga slutsats är att Somalia efter årtionden av internt våld med regionala kopplingar är på väg in i en fas med tilltagande politisk spänning gentemot sina grannländer. Det militära stöd som staterna Etiopien, Kenya och Uganda hittills har gett Somalia kommer sannolikt att kompliceras under de närmsta åren då grannländerna har olika syn på hur Somalia utvecklar sig politiskt och administrativt. Denna spänning handlar i grunden om Somalias vilja att hävda sin suveränitet och grannländernas fortsatta vaksamhet för att skydda sina nationella intressen.

Nyckelord: Somalia, inbördeskrig, Afrikas horn, Uganda, Kenya, Etiopien, IGAD, Afrikanska freds- och säkerhetsarkitekturen, APSA, extern intervention, geopolitik, afrikansk säkerhet, Afrika

Executive summary

Somalia has experienced violent conflict and instability since 1991, when central authority broke down in the country. Jihadism has become increasingly prevalent as the civil war has dragged on. As a result of the severity of the conflict, including regional spillover, external actors, most notably Somalia's regional neighbours Ethiopia, Kenya and most recently, Uganda, have become entrenched in the conflict. In addition, a number of other actors such as the African Union (AU), the European Union (EU), the United Nations (UN) and the United States (US) have committed themselves to intervene in Somalia's statehood process. These actors have played the role of both secondary and third party actors.

External interventions in civil war-like situations continue to be practiced by states in the international system. Typically, in such circumstances, a party tends to intervene in another party's armed conflict in order to support one of the belligerents for their own interests. This can be done either directly or indirectly through military support of any kind. The intervening state can have several reasons for its decision to intervene: genuine altruism (benevolence), coercion, as a result of creeping involvement, or for the sake of other vested interests. Yet, military engagement need not be the only option. A turn to political dialogue, reconciliation and an effort to overcome ethnic- and clan-based security dilemmas could also be strategically fruitful. Although complicated to achieve without more forceful responses (i.e. continued military deployment), this is the path that both domestic and international actors eventually need to walk. However, for this to take place, parties to the conflict, including external actors, need to find comfort in such a decision. Experiences and lessons learned can be drawn from other civil wars (i.e. Bosnia-Herzegovina).

To initiate conflict resolution mechanisms that do not lean explicitly on armed force, but are rather coupled with such, regional trust needs to be built. Regrettably, there are signs that neighbouring relations are currently drifting away from such trust. The military involvement of Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia have so far been with the consent of the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS), but it is now on the brink of causing regional tensions as these states have different political visions for Somalia. A split in the political alignment poses a challenge for de-escalating the cycle of conflict.

Kampala has allowed itself to become one of the most influential regional actors in Somalia's civil war. As the largest troop contributor to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), Uganda has several stakes in the political and military process. Uganda is clearly pursuing a different strategy in Somalia than Kenya and Ethiopia. While Uganda is interested in a stable and strong state in Somalia, Kenya and Ethiopia have their own distinct agendas that are at odds with the political priorities of Kampala and the FGS. For example, there is clear empirical evidence that both Kenya and Ethiopia are trying to create buffer zones, and to increase their own influence over various regions of Somalia at Mogadishu's expense. A related issue is that the new Provisional Constitution is

viewed with some scepticism, as it calls for the formation of undetermined federal member states which could serve to undermine rather than support national unity in Somalia (the international community currently divides, for administrative purposes, Somalia in 3 de facto regions: Somaliland, Puntland and South-Central).

Kenya is critical to the future development of a stable Somalia. Nairobi's involvement in the regional dynamics of the Jubba regions (recognizing the sensitivity of this term, Jubba regions will hereafter be referred to "Jubbland", an area close to the Kenyan border) will have a decisive impact on Somalia's stability. Kenya's involvement in Jubbland was intended to create a 'buffer zone' against Al Shabaab's destabilizing activities. However, this strategy has been at odds with the wishes of the FGS as it would entail a further regionalization of Somalia. A development that the FGS does not want. As a consequence, it remains at the core of current tensions between Kenya and Somalia, together with the unauthorized operations by Kenyan air and naval units. It is also creating tensions with Ethiopia, as the groups Kenya supports have affiliations with the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF), with which Ethiopia is in armed conflict. Kenya has also played a key role in the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the regional block, and is the driving force behind some of its political initiatives in Somalia.

Like Kenya, Ethiopia's influence in Somalia is significant at both the political and the military levels. Apart from having an intimate unilateral military presence in Somalia, it also has strong relations with Somaliland, a region seeking independence from Somalia, and Puntland, semi-autonomous region. The Ethiopian intervention is unpopular among Somalis in general, and there is an impression among decision makers in Ethiopia that any action taken will be viewed with suspicion. While many observers argue that Ethiopia wants a weak and fractured Somalia, it has taken several steps to strengthen the legitimacy of the FGS in Somalia (i.e. training Somali security forces). Moving forward, the continued presence of Ethiopia in Somalia is complicated, especially due to both countries' poor economic situations. Nonetheless, the likelihood of Ethiopia joining AMISOM seems low, and if it did this would probably cause tensions with Kenya and Uganda.

The continued success and stability of the FGS is currently the most critical factor for a stable Somalia. This can only be achieved with continued international support. The study concludes that a further push for diplomacy and reconciliation is needed to get to grips with Somalia's civil war. Diplomacy is needed to help the actors in the region overcome their security dilemma, and reconciliation is needed to undermine the continued resistance of armed groups.

List of Acronyms

AMISOM	African Union Mission in Somalia
ANDM	Amhara National Democratic Movement
APF	African Peace Facility
ARS	Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia
ASWJ	Ahlu Sunna wal Jama'a
AU	African Union
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
EPRDF	The Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front
EU	European Union
EUCAP Nestor	Regional Maritime Capacity Building in the Horn of Africa and the Western Indian Ocean
EUTM	European Union Training Mission
FOI	Swedish Defence Research Agency
FGS	Federal Government of Somalia
ICG	International Contact Group
ICGLR	International Conference on the Great Lakes Region
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IISS	International Institute for Strategic Studies
ISS	Institute for Security Studies
KDF	Kenya Defence Forces
MONUSCO	United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
NSA	National Security Agency (Somalia's intelligence service)
NSC	National Security Council (Ethiopia)
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
ONLF	Ogaden National Liberation Front
OPDO	Oromo People's Democratic Organization
PIASF	Puntland Intelligence Agency-Security Force
SEPDM	Southern Ethiopian People's Democratic Movement
SNA	Somalia National Army
SNSF	Somalia National Security Force
SPF	Somalia Police Force
TFG	Transitional Federal Government
TFI	Transitional Federal Institutions
TFP	Transitional Federal Parliament
TPLF	Tigray People's Liberation Front

UIC	Union of Islamic Courts
UN	United Nations
UNAMID	African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNIFIL	United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon
UNITAF	Unified Task Force
UNMIS	United Nations Mission in Sudan
UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNPOS	United Nations Political Office for Somalia
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNSOA	United Nations Support Office for AMISOM
UNSOM	United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia
UPDF	Uganda People's Defence Forces
WFP	World Food Programme

Preface

This study was commissioned to the Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI) by the Swedish Ministry of Defence.¹ The project *Studies in African Security* was tasked with carrying out the research assignment. The Africa project at FOI has closely monitored security developments on the African continent since it was established in 2007. Over the years, much attention has been paid to the *African Peace and Security Architecture* as well as various peacekeeping missions – not least those in which Sweden has been an actor. In addition to thematic studies, the Africa project has studied many complex security clusters, such as those in the Horn of Africa.² The project will continue to monitor developments in the Horn of Africa. A number of other specific studies on Somalia are being undertaken in parallel with this report.³

This study examines Kenya's, Uganda's and Ethiopia's military engagement and political interests in Somalia's civil war. As the information landscape remains poor, in-depth studies have been subcontracted to a number of local experts with detailed knowledge of events on the ground. These studies are presented as stand-alone chapters attached as an Annex to this report. Hence, Kenya's, involvement in Somalia is authored by an independent academic consultant in Somalia; the chapter on Uganda is authored by Dr Kasaija Phillip Apuuli, currently a researcher at the Department of Political Science and Public Administration, *Makerere University*, Kampala; and the chapter on Ethiopia is authored by Berouk Mesfin, Senior Researcher at the Conflict Prevention and Risk Analysis Division (CPRA) at the *Institute for Security Studies* (ISS) in Addis Ababa. The three chapters are based on each author's analysis and do not represent the views of FOI.

The author wishes to acknowledge the valuable insights provided by Hassan Mahadallah, Department of Political Science, *Southern University at Baton Rouge*, Louisiana, USA; and Emma Skeppström and Magdalena Tham Lindell, who acted as in-house reviewers at the *Swedish Defence Research Agency*.

¹ The Swedish Defence Research Agency is a government agency operating under the Ministry of Defense. It conducts research on an independent basis.

² Additional studies and further information are located at: <http://www.foi.se/en/Our-Knowledge/Security-policy-studies/Africa/Africa1/>.

³ See Hull Wiklund (2013); Tejpar and Zetterlund (forthcoming latter part of 2013).

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1 Introduction

The federal government of Somalia (FGS) was established on 20 August 2012, following the termination of the interim mandate of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG).⁴ Since the installation of the new government, the security situation in Mogadishu and in several other parts of Somalia has improved. For the first time in decades, there have been glimpses of hope for a brighter and more peaceful future. With the backing of neighbouring states and the coalition of states supporting AMISOM, the authorities are gradually regaining lost statehood. Improvements, starting with the immediate withdrawal by Al Shabaab from Mogadishu, should mainly be credited to the FGS. Potent measures have been taken to reconstruct state institutions and viable governance structures. This is also reflected in a number of social indicators. Although hard to verify in figures, there are several accounts of an improved political, economic and social situation in various parts of Somalia. For example, there is talk of the economy growing by “10 per cent a year”, an increasingly “robust informal economy” and an “increase in remittances by 20 per cent since the establishment of the FGS”, while trade unions talk about a “...revival of agriculture, hotels and port activities”, an “upsurge in commercial flights”, “street lights bringing normality to Mogadishu”, and so on.⁵

There are also signs of an improved security situation. Most notably, the external military intervention by AMISOM has reduced the threat from armed opposition – at least in the short term. However, while Al Shabaab, Somalia’s main Jihadist group, has suffered severe military losses it is by no means defeated.⁶ Since the establishment of the FGS in Mogadishu, its attacks on politicians, government officials and members of the international community have increased. The group has also mobilized in neighbouring countries, such as Kenya.⁷

1.1 Structure vs. Agent

Despite the many positive signs of stabilization, Somalia faces considerable challenges before any form of durable security for the state and its citizens can be achieved. Many of the most urgent problems are well known. A broad distinction can be made between key structural factors and agent-based factors.⁸

⁴ Established in November 2004.

⁵ *The Financial Times* (31-05-2013) and *BBC Africa* (11-05-2013).

⁶ *Africa Research Bulletin* 2013: 19789.

⁷ Al Shabaab has allegedly carried out a number of attacks in Kenya over the years (e.g. the mall attack on 21-09-2013).

⁸ A distinction that could have been made in many different ways, i.e. based on agency, structure, context, time, environment, etc.

Structural factors. Somalia poses one of the toughest challenges for the international community in terms of peace-making and peace building. Despite the improving social indicators noted above, Somalia is currently near the bottom of all the political, economic and social indexes for peace and stability.

In 2000, there were 130 million people living in the wider Horn of Africa. By 2008 this figure had grown to nearly 170 million – an annual rate of population growth of nearly 3%.⁹ Most of the population is under 14 years of age. Poverty is endemic. Nearly 82% of the population is suffering from multidimensional poverty. Somalia's Gross Domestic Product per capita is among the lowest four in the world (USD 284).¹⁰ The health sector is still poorly maintained and was severely tested during 2013 by a Polio outbreak.

Somalia is faced with a structural economic problem. Like many other economies in the region, Somalia mainly bases its revenues on commodity exports. However, the commodities in this regard are mainly livestock (camels) exported to the Gulf, and charcoal (exported mainly from Kismayo). Revenues are in turn dependent on fluctuating global prices, which can easily cause uncertainty and vulnerability. Furthermore, Somalia is not involved in advanced technological industries or research and development. Closely connected to the structural economic problems is the challenge posed by endemic corruption, which has a long history in Somalia. Years of corruption and financial mismanagement still pose the chief concerns for the international donor community's long-term commitment to Somalia.¹¹ Without transparent and accountable economic and financial operations, other sectors in Somalia cannot work.¹² Checks and balances are needed, including strong financial control mechanisms. Hence, as much as short-term military interventions are considered, long-term strategies to combat corruption are vital for the security of the country.

On another level, Somalia is currently facing increasing structural administrative tensions between centralist and regionalist administrations (i.e. in Puntland, Somaliland and Jubbaland). Differing views pose fundamental challenges to the identity of Somalia. This question has attracted much academic attention.¹³ Beyond the social indicators that are illustrated here, there are also a number of structural challenges facing Somalia. These are addressed further in this chapter.

Agent-based challenges. In terms of military opposition, Al Shabaab continues to pose a fundamental threat to the viability of the FGS.

⁹ Mesfin (2011: 4).

¹⁰ See *Somalia Human Development Report* (2012).

¹¹ *The Financial Times* (06-09-2013).

¹² Corruption in Somalia, an aspect itself worthy a deeper analysis, poses a long-term security problem for a stable Somalia.

¹³ See for example Roble (2012).

Al Shabaab, which is not the focus of this study, is a mixture of nationalists, criminals, ideologists, religious extremists and mercenaries. Broadly, they could be categorized as Somalia-based nationalist insurgents, on the one hand, and as global jihadists, on the other. The latter category is likely to be linked to other jihadist movements such as the Al Qaeda (i.e. Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, Al Qaeda on the Arabian Peninsula, etc.).

As late as mid-2013, the *UN Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea* alleged that some senior Somali government officials were working with Al Shabaab militants.¹⁴ This does not look promising for an inclusive, peaceful and forward looking government. Commentators further note that, despite having suffered severe losses, Al Shabaab is still able to cause considerable damage. As of mid-2013, it is estimated that the group has 500 to 5000 committed fighters and a broadly based support network (previous estimates suggest that it had as many as 7000–10 000 fighters). However, figures like these should be treated with caution.

As of late 2013, Al Shabaab is thought to have withdrawn from its previous strongholds in Mogadishu, Kismayo, Merca, Baidoa, Beledweyne and Jowahar. In mid-2013 the group was strongest in the mainly rural areas of the south, as well as in central and in Puntland. Such relocations, however, are subject to constant change.

In terms of operations, direct confrontation has shifted to hit-and-run tactics. The President of Somalia, Hassan Sheikh Mohamoud, has described Al Shabaab as having been militarily defeated and, "...melted into society and begun a new phase of insurgency and a campaign of terror...".¹⁵ Yet, like most rebel groups, it is not so much its size but its capacity to instil fear and insecurity that is important. The security improvements in early 2013 suffered several setbacks in mid-2013 following attacks on both domestic and international actors.

In sum, the threat posed by Al Shabaab remains substantial. The group remains committed and its will to fight has not diminished. In addition, in the absence of food, security and a functioning welfare state, supporters of the federal government could switch loyalties in the near future. Al Shabaab may also find support in other parts of the Horn of Africa, most notably in Kenya. The Westgate attack illustrates that Al Shabaab has a strong presence there. On another note, however, Al Shabaab seems to have been plagued with internal rivalries.

Moreover, developments in Somalia cannot be understood without examining the security postures of its neighbouring states. As Sabala notes:

¹⁴ *Africa Research Bulletin* 2013: 19789. See also *United Nations Monitoring Report on Somalia and Eritrea S/2013/440* (2013).

¹⁵ *Shabelle Media/All Africa* (08-05-2013).

...regional as well as extra-regional players supporting different groups on both sides of the Somali political landscape raise critical questions around vested interests and pose serious challenges to the current effort in Somalia led by the United Nations (UN) and African Union (AU).¹⁶

Developments in Somalia are intimately linked to many other regional conflict clusters and actors in the Horn of Africa.¹⁷ Given that the FGS and its military forces are not fully capable of maintaining control over its territory, continued military support and capacity building programmes remains crucial. Neighbouring actors have many reasons to ensure their own survival and stability at the expense of collective regional cooperation. This has repercussions for Somalia's current transitional process. In essence, the problem facing Somalia's transition to peace and stability is that those actors which have so far supported the FGS militarily are now seeking to "collect" on their political and military investment. This obviously places the Somali authorities in a dilemma. Although it is important for the FGS to receive regional backing to deal with armed Islamist radicals, this comes at the expense of not being able to exercise full sovereignty over its territory without the involvement of external actors which have their own political agendas. This could also lead to more long-term tensions in the region (see the chapters in the Annex).

1.2 Research Design

The overall aim of this study is to contribute to a deeper understanding of contemporary security developments in Somalia and the broader balance of power in the Horn of Africa. This section provides an overview and outline of the structure of the study and its main methodological considerations.

1.2.1 Case Selection and Research Question

In terms of this study's delimitation, an examination is made of the engagement in Somalia by key regional states: Uganda, Kenya and Ethiopia. Case selection has been made on the basis that all three states have deployed military forces in the country and play a decisive role in the peace and security situation in Somalia.

Moreover, external actor involvement is considered an important explanatory element of the conflict dynamic in Somalia. Hence, Uganda, Kenya and Ethiopia were selected because of their active involvement in Somalia's civil war and their different military approaches to the conflict. Whereas Uganda opted for action under the AMISOM umbrella, Kenya engaged unilaterally and then later

¹⁶ Sabala 2011: 95.

¹⁷ Bereketeab 2013: 4.

as part of AMISOM (from June 2012). Ethiopia has chosen to remain outside AMISOM.

More precisely, the cases presented in this report analyse these neighbouring states' security policies on Somalia and the basis on which they are made. Two research questions are posed in this study: 1. *What key motivating factors persuaded Uganda, Kenya and Ethiopia, respectively, to engage militarily in Somalia?* 2. *What are the likely implications of these states' security postures for the stability of Somalia?*

The case selection in this report is not unproblematic. Their shared history, albeit with vastly diverse political and economic experiences, are likely to have considerable implications for how these countries manifest themselves politically in the contemporary security environment. Historical factors such as these are difficult to decipher in an analysis, especially given this study's focus on more contemporary events. Moreover, other state's roles in Somalia could have been included to better capture the dynamic of the civil war (e.g. by examining the role of Djibouti, Sudan and Eritrea). However, I have chosen to concentrate on those states which play a significant military role in Somalia's current conflict dynamic.

1.2.2 Research Method

The examination conducted in this study is based on conventional *conflict analysis*. This is done through a case-study approach in which key actors and structures are examined through a set of well-defined analytical aspects. In most cases, a process-tracing method is used. Instead of a conventional comparative case study, however, each state's involvement and relationship with Somalia is analysed in a standalone fashion.

1.2.3 Scope, Operationalization and Sources

The focus of this study is state security. More precisely, the scope is military and defence practices. This implies that the human security perspective of Somalia's civil war is not examined, despite its centrality to the wider context.

Before engaging these cases there are reasons to briefly operationalize three key conceptual aspects: *motives*, *implications* and *external interventions*. To begin with, the present study is primarily interested in the *motives* for each state's engagement, that is, with what main interests and policy rationale each state decided to engage in Somalia's civil war. This study is also interested in the *implications* of each state's military engagement, that is, the political and security repercussions for Somalia as a state. Finally, in terms of *external intervention*, as with any state that goes to war, there is a mission mandate and

objective. Generally, these are framed as peacekeeping, peace building or peace enforcement.¹⁸ For the three states under scrutiny, the latter category fits best.¹⁹

Another way of identifying the type of operation is to look at the mission context. Larsdotter notes that the way:

*...to distinguish between different kinds of peace operations is by separating peace operations with a more limited mandate on the one hand from more complex operations with the aim of state-building on the other.*²⁰

Finally, with regard to sources, this study primarily relies on primary and secondary sources (monographs, journal articles, policy documents and newspapers). While more general theoretical arguments are easily attributed in referencing, primary sources derived from any of the countries are more difficult to triangulate. For example, it is difficult to verify some of the material contained in some of the cases reviewed in this report. A notable limitation with the study is the lack of fully verifiable information on Ethiopia. This poses a challenge. However, the interviews carried out provide a fairly detailed account of Addis Ababa's attitude to Somalia. Despite the challenges of obtaining verifiable information, when read together, they highlight some interesting trends and patterns that can be distilled into grains of veracity. Similarly, while some of the interviews below do not always demonstrate objective views, subjective views can also add to the overall analysis. Suffice to say, FOI asked the individual authors to conduct their research to the best of their abilities. As is noted above, all the sources, transcripts, statements, and so on, referred to are attributed to each author and as such do not bind FOI to any stated position.

1.2.4 Structure of Study

The report is based on an introductory theoretical chapter that introduces ways to think about Somalia's civil war (chapter 2). The aim is to introduce theoretical background to the logic of external intervention. Chapter 3 analyses, draws conclusions and reflects on the observations and findings made in the country reviews in the *Annex* to the report.

All three cases can be read in a standalone fashion. Each case study was structured to include: 1. background to the conflict in Somalia; 2. Kenya's, Uganda's or Ethiopia's relationship with Somalia; 3. details of conflict structures in Somalia; 4. analysis of conflict dynamics in Somalia, and Kenya's, Uganda's

¹⁸ Larsdotter 2011: 7.

¹⁹ Perhaps an even more suitable category when analysing external interventions in the Somalia civil war is the conduct of counterinsurgency operations. Both Kenya and Ethiopia qualify for such mission objectives, less so Uganda.

²⁰ Larsdotter 2011: 10.

or Ethiopia's response to them; 5. analysis of the political power system in Somalia and its security consequences; 6. details of how does Kenya, Uganda or Ethiopia perceive these formal and informal power systems; 7. analysis of conflict dynamics and how Uganda's, Kenya's or Ethiopia's positions relate to them; 8. scenario analysis; and 9. strategies and options.

2 Conflict or Prelude to Peace?

The President of the Democratic Republic of Somalia, Siad Barre, was removed from power in 1991. The fall of his regime led to a breakdown of law and order in Somalia.²¹ The instability that followed provided a breathing space for various clan and militia movements to seek to fill the power vacuum. Several efforts were made to reinstate the regime, but these only led to large scale violence.

2.1 Key Dimensions of Somalia's Civil War

This section provides a brief overview and analysis of the key events in the civil war in Somalia and a discussion of the key challenges faced by the current government in the light of that civil war. The end of central authority in Somalia in the early 1990's brought previously hidden lines of conflict to light. These included armed conflicts between clans, militias and political fractions over various interests and incompatibilities. Often, the root causes were linked to the scarcity of natural resources, the rights and traditions of nomads in a changing political landscape, religion, ideology and identity.

As a result of the breakdown of the state, the multitude of armed groups or militias as well as a deepening clan-based security dilemma between various groups led to a longstanding stalemate in which no group had the capacity to take control of the country or impose themselves in government.²² As the Somali intra-state conflict has continued into the 21st century, the civil war has taken on an increasingly Islamist undercurrent.²³

Despite the severe military challenges, progress was made with stabilizing Somalia with the support of the international community, under the auspices of the United Nations (UN), the African Union (AU), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the United States (US), the United Kingdom (UK), Kenya and Djibouti. A more viable central administration was forged in 2000 (the Transitional National Government, TNG) and in 2004 (the Transitional Federal Government, TFG). Peace efforts in late 2004 in particular paved the way for a new phase in the Somali civil war. One consequence of the signs of growing unification was that various militias were co-opted into larger guerrilla coalitions.

Nonetheless, the TFG was never really able to establish itself and it split in 2005. The resulting crisis was exacerbated in late 2006 by new tactics by the besieged

²¹ Sabala 2011: 98.

²² Buzan (2007).

²³ See for example the Uppsala Conflict Data Programme/Somalia:
<http://www.ucdp.uu.se/gpdatabase/search.php> .

Union of Islamic Courts (UIC).²⁴ In early 2007, the UIC was partially defeated and scattered by Ethiopian forces (in part supported by US air strikes). A number of Jihadist cells allegedly regrouped in Eritrea and Yemen. In late 2007, the opposition reinvented itself as the *Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia* (ARS).²⁵

The AU deepened its engagement in Somalia in early 2007 to mid-2008, leading to a changed setting for the Somali conflict. In June 2008, the TFG signed a peace agreement with the ARS. This agreement was not fully inclusive, however, which led the Islamist rebel group Al Shabaab to reject it. As important in this context was that Hizb al-Islam also rejected the agreement.²⁶ This rejection partly explains why Hizb al-Islam and Al Shabaab at times combined operations, a combination that led to widespread violence in the years that followed.

2.2 Contemporary political developments

In September 2012, Members of Parliament in Somalia elected Hassan Sheikh Mohamud President.²⁷ Three key policy agenda items received much attention following his election: 1. The establishment of a new government of Somalia (FGS); 2. The presentation of a *National Stabilization Plan* (the '*Transition Roadmap*');²⁸ and 3. The planned handover and passage of a Provisional Constitution by the new parliament. However, the constitution remains *Provisional* pending forthcoming elections. (If adopted, Somalia would formally become a federation).

In May 2013, an UN-backed conference was held in London to identify some of the key challenges confronting Somalia. A principal target at this international conference was the 2016 deadline for the federal authorities to adopt basic constitutional laws and hold general elections. Four key priorities were set: security, the rule of law, coordination of international aid and the protection of citizens.²⁹ In addition, functioning and durable markets and financial management systems were seen as important to achieving a functioning Somali state (e.g. to provide basic social services and pay salaries). The meeting stressed

²⁴ The UIC had begun a guerrilla war against the TFG and the Ethiopian forces intervened in 2006.

²⁵ At the core of the group were Islamists, former TFG parliamentarians and Somalis in the diaspora. Sabala (2011: 101).

²⁶ The group was formed in January 2009 after four Islamist groups merged to fight the new Somali government of President Sheikh Sharif Ahmed.

²⁷ In August 2012, the inauguration of the Somali Federal Parliament took place with some 215 of the total number of 275 Members of Parliament are sworn in. This passed the benchmark of 185 which allows for the New Federal Parliament to convene with a functioning majority. See UNOP (United Nations Political Office for Somalia website: <http://unpos.unmissions.org>).

²⁸ This plan gave birth to the *Six Pillar Policy Framework* outlined the priorities for the FGS in the years to come.

²⁹ *UN News Service/All Africa* (08-05-2013).

the importance of an effective police force, court system and prison system to security and the rule of law. A parallel discussion raised the issue of special support to victims of war, most notably regarding sexual violence during conflict.³⁰

To further deal with Al Shabaab, Kenya suggested that the process of creating a Somali National Security Force:

*...must include the systematic and orderly integration of the various allied forces that are currently engaged in the anti-Al Shabaab war.*³¹

Kenya's proposal suggests that this should include the:

*...orderly reception of Al Shabaab deserters, their rehabilitation, retraining and integration into the security forces or any other institutions where they will perform productive civilian roles.*³²

In mid-September 2013, at a meeting in Brussels, the FGS launched the so-called *New Deal for Somalia* (Compact for Somalia).³³ The deal was presented as an agreement between the FGS and the international donor community to coordinate efforts in support of the state of Somalia in the years to come.³⁴ The New Deal is inspired by the so-called *New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States*, an initiative that led 40 states to sign a support agreement for Somalia in 2011. At the meeting, nearly USD 2.4bn in aid was pledged to support the adoption of a new constitution, a forthcoming general election to be held in 2016 and further security gains.

2.3 Other External Actors in Somalia's Conflict

Various actors have been intimately linked to Somalia's civil war for the past decade, and in some instances for much longer. Somalia's neighbours have had a huge interest in how the civil war developed, closely linked to their disputed territorial boundaries, differing ethnicities, ideology, and religious and cultural identity. This has had an important impact on these countries' state- and nation-building processes. However, there are also other external actors shaping the future of Somalia, each of them with their own vested interests. These actors can

³⁰ In another forum, the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Zainab Hawa Bangura, said a team of experts would be sent to Somalia to work with the Somali police and Military on training and providing support for prosecution. *Deutsche Welle/All Africa* (08-05-2013).

³¹ *Capital FM/All Africa* (08-05-2013).

³² *ibid.*

³³ The Compact is meant to be a living document, subject to constant adaptation as the political process evolves.

³⁴ E.g. the European Union has supported Somalia with nearly EUR 1bn since 2008 (European Commission. President of the European Union 2013).

be categorized as multilateral (the UN), regional (the AU, the EU) and sub-regional (IGAD) and other international players (e.g. the US).

In 1995 the UN established the United Nations Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS). Its main activities in recent years have been to provide room for mediation.³⁵ UNPOS was replaced on 3 June 2013, by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) on the basis of United Nations Security Council resolution 2102 (2013).³⁶ UNSOM is a political mission. In the near future, UNSOA will be integrated with UNSOM but will continue to report to the Department of Field Support. Its task is to provide AMISOM with “logistic capacity and support packages” to enhance its operational effectiveness.³⁷

UNSOM will support the FGS in three areas: peace, security and nation-building.³⁸ UNSOM will cooperate with the FGS, IGAD and the AU. It will be guided by the Six Pillar Policy and the so-called *Busan Principles for Aid Effectiveness*. In practice, UNSOM will support AMISOM.

Regional configurations such as the AU/AMISOM/IGAD have played an important role in the settlement of various disputes in Somalia over the past 10 years. While IGAD has provided a platform for dialogue and humanitarian assistance, the AU has led a number of Peace Support Operations (e.g. in Sudan and Comoros).³⁹

AMISOM is the third mission to be established by the AU.⁴⁰ It is a peacekeeping mission mandated by United Nations Security Council resolution 1744, which the AU was asked to implement. In September 2006 the AU agreed to deploy its peacekeeping mission, and AMISOM was deployed on 21 February 2007 for an initial period of six months.⁴¹ In essence, AMISOM was given four objectives: to support the Transitional Federal Institutions in their efforts to stabilize Somalia, to promote reconciliation, to facilitate humanitarian assistance and to create the conditions for long-term stabilization, reconstruction and development in

³⁵ UNPOS has worked to promote a “lasting peace and stability in Somalia through the implementation of the Djibouti Peace Agreement”. Notably, UNPOS was considered a special political mission, overseen by the United Nations Department of Political Affairs (DPA). UNPOS has supported various initiatives aimed at promoting peace and national reconciliation in Somalia, including efforts by the Government of Djibouti that led to the formation of the Transitional National Government (TNG) of Somalia in 2000.

³⁶ *UN News Service/All Africa* (05-08-2013).

³⁷ UNPOS official website ([Unpos.unmissions.org](http://unpos.unmissions.org)).

³⁸ In terms of security UNSOM will support rule of law and security sector reform, e.g. technical advice on SSR, rule of law (police, justice and corrections), disengagement of combatants, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (See also UNSOM website).

³⁹ IGAD’s role was to offer a platform rather than pursuing an active role as mediator/facilitator.

⁴⁰ Hull Wiklund and Svensson 2008: 10.

⁴¹ AMISOM has mainly relied on troops from Uganda and Burundi but is also supported by troops from Nigeria, Ghana, Malawi, Djibouti and Guinea. The training of AMISOM troops has been supported by Brazil, Djibouti, France, Sudan, Kenya, Uganda and Turkey (see Sabala 2011: 99-100).

Somalia.⁴² AMISOM is currently set to be reviewed again on 28 February 2014, following the stipulations of UNSCR 2093.

The *European Union* has a range of instruments available to it in its external relations with the Horn of Africa in general and Somalia in particular. Its main policy components are political dialogue, crisis management, development cooperation and humanitarian aid.⁴³ There is a realization within the EU that the various forms of aid efforts are insufficient, but must be seen in context.⁴⁴ Hagström Frisell et al. (2012) note that crisis management is the fastest growing area of the EU's engagement in both the Horn of Africa and Somalia. Such support includes operations under the Common Security and Defence Policy, the African Peace Facility (APF) and the Instrument for Stability.⁴⁵ The key cooperation missions in Somalia are: Operation Atalanta, the European Union Training Mission (EUTM) Somalia, European Union Capacity Programme (EUCAP) Nestor and the Stability Instrument.

In addition to multilateral arrangements, the US has long had a strategic interest in stabilizing Somalia. The US led an intervention force in 1993, under the Unified Task Force (UNITAF) – a force working in conjunction with the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM). The force stayed until 1995, when US soldiers came under fire from local militias leading to several casualties. The US has been an active, mostly covert, supporter of various armed groups and alliances in Somalia. It has repeatedly engaged in military attacks on various positions inside Somalia. Sabala notes that the US is currently opting for a:

*...policy of providing limited, indirect diplomatic and military support to the TFG in the hope that it will provide a bulwark against militant Islamist forces in Somalia.*⁴⁶

The current geostrategic interests in Somalia need to be seen in a wider context. Somalia has become an important battle ground in the framework of the so-called war on terror, which originated from the events of 11 September 2001. Stopping the spread of Jihadism in East Africa (and any spillover into the Gulf) has been a priority, in order to undermine any threats to US or Western vital interests. The US, as well as other actors such as the UK, Israel, Italy, Turkey and the Gulf states, are all important to an understanding of the political complexity of Somalia.

⁴² For more on AMISOM, see Hull Wiklund (2013).

⁴³ See Soliman, Vines and Mosley. EU Parliament (2012).

⁴⁴ Frisell, Tham Lindell and Skeppström 2012: pp. 19-20.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ 2011: 108.

2.4 Somalia's Conflict from a Theoretical Perspective

Somalia does not lend itself to an easy *definition of war*. Its complex history, the multitude of agents, the structural challenges and the vast range of interests inside and beyond Somalia make the armed conflict there an ongoing social process that is constantly changing. Hence, before discussing the specific cases attached in the Annex to this study, a discussion is worthwhile on the different ways of thinking about the conflict in Somalia. This may lead to a better understanding of the complexity of the situation in which external interventions take place.

A typology of the Somali conflict is set out below, followed by a discussion on how to think about the drivers of the current conflict and some options for ending the war.

2.4.1 A Typology for the Somalia Conflict

How best to define the conflict in Somalia?⁴⁷ Using the theoretical approach presented by Professor Mary Kaldor, the conflict in Somalia is best treated in the so-called *New War* debate. In line with her reasoning, Somalia neatly fits the criteria of a new war by its nature as a complex social mass embodying a multitude of social conflicts including war, organized crime and human rights violations against civilians, and being non-rules-based with blurred boundaries between private and stated-based armed groups, indistinct external-internal military engagements and unclear central-local boundaries.⁴⁸ Thus, from this viewpoint, the armed conflict in Somalia is first and foremost a complex civil war in which domestic parties fight each other to gain territorial advantage and control over governance.⁴⁹ This in turn suggest that a comprehensive approach is applied when dealing with the Somalia conflict.

Like many modern civil wars, Somalia is also a battleground where a number of *secondary* and *third-party* actors are actively engaged in the conflict. *Secondary* parties in this regard are external actors that side with the primary parties. For example, beside its open support for the FGS, Ethiopia supports groups such as Ahlu Sunna Wal Jamaa (ASWJ, the People of the Sunna and the Majority) and Marehan (Hirale) clan militias. Kenya, on the other hand, supports Ogaden-based actors (Madobe and Ghandi), the Ras Kamboni militia and the Isiolo militia, including the Azania regional administration. Typically, these secondary parties engage either actively as warring parties or through proxy support for various

⁴⁷ Although this question is not easily answered, it is worth the effort of asking (Vasques 1996: 14).

⁴⁸ See Kaldor 2000: 10.

⁴⁹ See also the UCDP definition of the Somalia conflict <http://www.ucdp.uu.se/gpdatabase/gpcountry.php?id=141#>.

local actors in the civil war. Secondary parties can sometimes shift to become primary or third parties, depending on their motives. *Third parties* are actors that have interests in the conflict, but which can act as impartial actors, e.g. mediators or facilitators, such as the UN or IGAD. The US can be considered both a primary and a secondary party, although judging from its own self-view (statements and behaviour) it can sometimes be understood as only a third party.

From a policy perspective a strategy to engage with Somalia could be to single out more clearly what role external interveners play. Are actors in Somalia for the sake of national interest or for the purpose of creating genuine peace? Another policy relevant aspect is that the donor community can signal their readiness to support intervening partners that can transcend their identities from being a secondary to a third party.

2.5 The Causes of War

What motivated states to enter the war in Somalia? The question is crucial because the involvement of external actors in Somalia is almost taken for granted, without much critical distance.

The research literature on the origins and *causes of war* has a rich tradition in this regard.⁵⁰ Several theories deal with motives and root causes, spanning from personal grievances among regime leaders to ethnic grievances among resource-poor communities. Similarly, much has been written about the causes of war in Somalia and the interplay with regional developments.⁵¹ A brief discussion of some conventional arguments is set out below.

Generally, the answer to the above-mentioned puzzle depends on the context, time, geographical location and character of the intervening actors. For example, having examined eight instances of war and what led states to enter them, Stoessinger stresses that *agency* matters a great deal. Accordingly, the personality of state leaders as well as these actors' understanding of their adversaries' states plays a powerful role in explaining many post-1945 armed conflicts.⁵² The role of strongman is also a contemporary feature in the Horn of Africa. For example, there is typically a strong leader culture in rebel groups. Sometimes, entire conflict dynamics evolve around a rebel leader's thinking and behaviour (compare for example the role played by John Garang of the Sudan People's Liberation Army in the Sudanese civil war).

In addition to the personalities of decision makers, branches of the causes of war literature place strong emphasis on group dynamics. In this vein, actors desire

⁵⁰ See for example Levy and Thompson (2010); Ohlson (2008).

⁵¹ See Bereketeab (2013); Haldén (2008); Woodward, and Forsyth (eds) (1994)

⁵² Stoessinger 2001.

resources and are willing to fight for them, or actors articulate a strong sense of grievance as a result of injustice, deprivation, repression or exclusion.⁵³ Such a perspective is particularly valuable when trying to understand security dynamics in the Horn of Africa, where there is a tradition of analysing conflicts in conjunction with how several of the states' autocracies in the region frequently rely on ethnic loyalties.⁵⁴ Several governments, as well as their respective military and security services, trace their roots back to liberation struggles.⁵⁵ A strong sense of political and ethnic affinity in combination with the considerable influence of "strongman culture" make informal power networks more important than the formal power structures of the state. One problem, however, is that those who carry out state responsibilities still have considerable political shortcomings, as Mesfin notes:

*...these states suffer from a lack of trained personnel who can muster a long-term vision and possess experience in security policy-making and management; such people prefer to go abroad in order to better their lives or escape systematic maltreatment.*⁵⁶

This combination of lack of trust, historical rivalry and excessive militarization to fend off competing groups and hostile external parties creates a vicious circle of the constant securitization of culture and politics. This securitization is further exacerbated by external actors' strategic interests in supporting or undermining leaders in the region. From a practitioner's point of view then it is essential that the international community engage informal groups in peace talks and other political processes given the informal power base they may have. Hence being as inclusive as possible is central.

Other scholars highlight more structural aspects of security. In this tradition, incompatibilities such as *territorial contiguity* and/or claims over *government* (i.e. power over the state) are often cited as explanatory factors for why states go to war.⁵⁷ These causes in turn are often intimately linked to "...resource scarcity, locational features, domestic politics, geopolitical competition and cultural/ethnic differences".⁵⁸ In more recent armed conflicts, such as Somalia, there has been an increasing tendency among decision-makers to call for *humanitarian* interventions. For example, Hehir suggests that motives for humanitarian intervention are often based on the notion of preventing widespread suffering, for altruistic purposes or "for many mixed reasons".⁵⁹ The humanitarian intervention

⁵³ See the *Greed and Grievance* literature (e.g. Collier and Hoeffler 2004).

⁵⁴ Mesfin 2011: 12.

⁵⁵ Sometimes simply explained by the fact that former rebel groups are now dressed as statesmen.

⁵⁶ Mesfin 2011: 12.

⁵⁷ Vasques 1996: pp. 125-152.

⁵⁸ Se Guo 2012: ch. 2.

⁵⁹ Hehir 2010: pp. 151-162.

framework has nowadays also been coupled with *responsibility to protect* principles.

From a policy perspective the international community should try to single out which rivalries in the Somalia conflict that are fought over power (i.e. pure power struggles), and which groups that are engaged in local rivalries due to resource scarcity and perceived marginalization. Doing so may solve elements of the conflict complexity.

Aside from the incompatibilities, the literature also offers theoretical and methodological lenses through which to interpret state actors' decisions to intervene in civil wars. More conventionally, theories on the causes of war tend to build on: paradigms with ideological underpinnings (i.e. Marxism, liberalism, etc.); paradigms that place particular emphasis on the structure of the international system and states' inherent behaviour to ensure survival (realism and neorealism); or reason (rationalist perspectives).⁶⁰

Given the long military rivalry in the Horn of Africa, defence analysts have been particularly attracted to a geopolitical lens, in particular alliance theory. Usually, states align themselves in defence configurations for material, ideational and domestic reasons.⁶¹ As Mesfin notes, alliance formation in the Horn of Africa has a long history.⁶² Typical for the region is that states and leaders formed themselves into military alliances between states, and into alliances between states and rebel movements. To this there were added alliances of a shifting character between various rebel movements as well as between global movements and local networks.⁶³ Such a geopolitical lens also incorporates external actors' interests in Somalia.

Further to the geopolitical lens, an explanatory dimension of the causes of war in Somalia is simply the role of the Horn of Africa as an important strategic node. There are both strategic and commercial activities off Somalia's coast that are vital to global trade. Economic activity includes, for example: oil and gas shipments and large cargo shipments. Furthermore, the Horn of Africa is a geostrategic location at the nexus between the African continent and the Arabian Peninsula. There are illicit flows of arms, resources and actors across the straits that all have a bearing on peace and stability in both regions. Finally, the centrality of the Horn of Africa was recognized during the Cold War superpower rivalry. Mesfin notes that the two:

...superpowers supported client states in the adjacent Horn of Africa primarily by injecting military aid, and undermined inimical states by

⁶⁰ Lebow 2010: 13-62.

⁶¹ He and Feng 2010: 228.

⁶² Mesfin 2011: 17.

⁶³ Mesfin provides an overview of alliance formation in the Horn of Africa in the period 1959-2008 (ibid. p. 18).

*supporting rebel movements and weaving unfriendly alliances and counter-alliances.*⁶⁴

In essence then, any conflict analysis seeking to disentangle the Somalia complex needs to look at the interaction between various systemic levels of the conflict, i.e. from individual-group-region- and systemic factors, etc.

More recently, some of these conventional lenses have been questioned both theoretically and methodologically by the English, Post-structuralist and Cosmopolitan schools.⁶⁵ These approaches have questioned some of the assumptions that the more traditional theories rest on or incorporated new perspectives, usually from the point of view of the weakest actors. For example, there is an interesting critical tradition in the post-colonial literature.⁶⁶ Mesfin, among many others, argues that the seeds of the current conflict to a large extent date back to the European colonial experience.⁶⁷ He notes for example:

*[that the] ...mis-drawn borders which were agreed upon by colonial powers...basically ignored ethnic, cultural, historical and religious groups' natural lines. As a consequence, this gave rise to intra-state conflicts (in particular, demands for autonomy from ethnic groups) and to the regimes of newly independent states lodging territorial claims, which, in turn, led to conflict with other states.*⁶⁸

Moreover, Mesfin notes that:

*...colonial laws and institutions had been designed to exploit local divisions rather than to overcome them. Colonialism also disrupted the political, social and economic lives of pastoral societies.*⁶⁹

For example, transport networks and physical infrastructure were developed to accommodate the needs of the colonial powers rather than the needs of the indigenous people. Another element that changed societies unfavourably was the colonial project of state centralization. Centralization was undertaken at the expense of local grievances and repression:

*Conflicts were also triggered by ethno-centrism arising from colonial rule, which favoured certain ethnic groups by according them access to education and economic privileges. This was at the expense of other ethnic groups in the context of the divide and rule tactics employed by colonial powers, and inflicted deep societal wounds in some states.*⁷⁰

⁶⁴ Ibid. p. 19.

⁶⁵ See Burchill and Linklater et. al. (2013).

⁶⁶ Samatar (2013).

⁶⁷ Mesfin 2011: 10.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid. p. 11.

Finally, there are scholars within the causes of war literature who see the causes of external intervention as arising from “the need to gain enduring prestige”, a “sense of vulnerability” or other “interests”. Lebow, for example, suggests that “fear, interests, standing (honour) and revenge” have historically led states to initiate war.⁷¹ Aggestam asserts in this context that such motivations can be subject to normative change over time. In other words, while the motivation for war was previously to demonstrate “courage, bravery and sacrifice”, today it is more likely to be seen, or framed, as a “responsibility to act”.⁷²

In sum, there are many different perspectives, methods and sources by which external interventions can be explained. Many of these may overlap in the context of Uganda’s, Kenya’s and Ethiopia’s decisions to intervene in Somalia. Their motives are explained further in the standalone chapters annexed to this report. It is safe to say that external interventions in civil war are increasingly visible phenomena. Typically, one party intervenes in another party’s civil war for the purpose of supporting one of the belligerent parties. This intervention can be carried out through either direct or indirect support. In Somalia, neighbouring actors have had a tendency to intervene to maintain or push their own strategic interests rather than for the good of the Somali people.

What is important for the international community then is to strike a balance on where most political, economic and military efforts should be pushed. Important from a policy perspective is that all conflict levels are brought into the analysis and that one to eagerly engage one level and dimension on the expense of another.

2.6 Conclusion

Having examined different ways to understand the conflict in Somalia, and outlined a number of theoretical references that may be useful in understanding the behaviour of key actors, the stand-alone chapters provide more in-depth empirical analysis of Kenya’s, Uganda’s and Ethiopia’s external involvement in Somalia.

⁷¹ Lebow (2010).

⁷² Aggestam 2012: 36.

3 Conclusion

Somalia has experienced armed conflict since its independence on 1 July 1960. In addition to a number of inter-state wars over the years, it has suffered immensely from military coups and gross human rights violations. Despite a number of attempts to end the violence in Somalia, including 15 peace processes (e.g. partial peace processes, roadmaps, etc.), the security challenges remain demanding and have prompted further external intervention. Following a visit to Somalia in mid fall 2013, UN Deputy Secretary Jan Eliasson expressed support for an African Union (AU) proposal to triple peacekeeping troops in Somalia to 45,000 from the current 17,551. Although there are challenges to such a large increase, the UN Security Council in mid-November 2012 authorized an increase of 4,000 peacekeepers. The increase of number of troops, suggests that the situation in Somalia is too vulnerable to lose sight of despite the political gains made in recent years.⁷³

What then explains the spirals of violence in Somalia? The country overview provided in the Annex to this study illustrates that Somalia and its neighbours, including a number of ethnic and clan-based structures, are caught in various security dilemmas. Over the years these security dilemmas have amplified. Today there are signs that these are somewhat decreasing. Negative spirals are becoming more positive. Yet, the overall challenges posed by these security dilemmas remain. Long-term security in Somalia is dependent on having these transcended.

As a result of these regional security puzzles, Uganda, Kenya and Ethiopia have had a historical security presence in Somalia. All three countries have supported or fought armed groups inside Somalia. Neighbouring states have also harboured groups that have rebelled against various rulers in Mogadishu. At times, external interventions in Somalia have been carried out due to a need to fight domestic groups harboured in Somalia. At other times external interventions have been conducted to steer dynamics inside Somalia in a neighbour-friendly direction. Thus, Somalia has been used as a proxy theatre. Over the years, Ethiopia has had the most immediate stakes in Somalia as a result of perceived threats. Kenya has had fewer stakes and Uganda the fewest. Dynamics in recent years have shifted somewhat in this regard. Kenya has been increasingly challenged by Al Shabaab. Uganda for its part may have regional interests to protect. For example, Uganda wants to maintain its influence in the Horn of Africa. As a result, Kampala cannot allow Ethiopia and Kenya to take a leadership role. Taking a role as regional actor, for instance, by supporting AMISOM, or mediating between Eritrea and Ethiopia, can strengthen its position, not least in IGAD. It is open to

⁷³ *Xinhua* (2013-10-29).

question, however, whether Uganda has the kind of local knowledge and regional conflict experience (based on both political and military intelligence) that Ethiopia and Kenya have to make a strong impact.

Today the conflict in Somalia is mainly about the domestic rebellion lead by Al Shabaab. In mid-2013, this armed Jihadist group conducted a number of seemingly well-planned attacks in Mogadishu. Despite months of security improvements, continued attacks signalled the movement's military presence and attempt to further foment discontent and undermine the Somali government. Instability in the capital and elsewhere in Somalia, including the inability of the government to prevent sustained attacks from armed groups, also means that external intervention in Somalia is likely to continue in the years to come. This view was exacerbated by the attack by Al Shabaab in Nairobi in late September 2013.

Henceforth, further efforts will be needed by the international community to bring domestic and regional actors together in a durable peace. The political framework that currently exists, regarding constitutional referendum and general elections, provides a platform for such prospects. Assisting the government in Somalia to provide stability and basic welfare will decrease support for armed groups in the long term. It is against this backdrop that it is important to consider what regional conditions and alternatives there are to tackle the conflict in Somalia.

At the outset of this study, a question was posed that dealt with regional initiatives to tackle the conflict in Somalia. Given the complex and violent history in the region and in Somalia in particular, were external interventions in Somalia by its neighbours the only option? Having outlined a number of explanations for why external interventions in Somalia have taken place, it is important to note that regional stakeholders could have chosen a different, less violent path. After all, a path more focused on diplomacy and peace negotiations is essential to resolve outstanding issues. Such talks need to be conditioned by far-reaching disarmament programmes and verification. How then could a political process more focused peace negotiations look like? Before, summarizing some of the key conclusions from the cases examined in this study, a brief recap of some theoretical insights could be valuable in this context.

Well-grounded research suggests that parties choose to end an armed conflict when the moment is ripe. The "ripe moment concept" was introduced by Professor William Zartman a few decades ago. It suggests that parties to a conflict occasionally find themselves with joint interests to end hostilities and engage in peace talks. Usually, a ripe moment comes about when there is a "hurting stalemate". Such a stalemate is likely to occur when parties to a conflict find themselves locked into conflict positions in which no one gains or loses

influence and the conflict becomes costly to both sides. In such a situation, both sides realize that the conflict is not likely to be won and therefore perceive an interest in trying to overcome their incompatibilities. Parties in such a situation are often helped by a third party mediator. Although a third party is neutral for the most part, it may also have its own interests in shaping the outcome to its advantage, and these cannot be disregarded.

Two main positions in the literature describe conflict resolution. On the one hand, a war can be resolved if one party is simply destroyed or eliminated. This suggests a situation of victory by one side. It is open to question whether such an outcome leads to a durable peace. On the other hand, the warring parties can transcend their destructive and violent behaviour and adopt more constructive activities. This outcome is more common and typically involves mediation and peace agreements.

In the case of Somalia, the complexity of actors makes it pertinent to include both domestic and external actors in negotiations if the peace agreement is to be just and durable. In recent years, key outside parties have not committed themselves to a viable Somali peace. A number of groups did not participate or were excluded from the peace talks. At the same time, a number of Islamists and other groups were left out of the political process or chose not to participate and grant the process legitimacy. Meanwhile, actors such as Uganda, Kenya and Ethiopia have pursued their own political interests in Somalia, which risk not only prolonging the conflict, but also becoming a problem for the FGS. Clearly, none of the parties perceive a ripe moment to resolve their incompatibilities by more peaceful means. Nor has any external group experienced a hurting stalemate.

Yet, various parties are experiencing a security dilemma. As a result, both domestic and external actors are caught in a negative security and armed conflict spiral. Security for one actor is simply leading to a perceived decrease in security for the opponent. This in turn prompts further security measures among the two. The security dilemma is found at many different levels: between states (e.g. Ethiopia and Eritrea including their engagement with Al Shabaab and thereby with consequences for Somalia), and between various clans and rebel groups. Given this security dilemma it seems crucial that all parties further engage in regional talks to settle their differences. Put differently, peace and stability for Somalia depend as much on the dynamics inside Somalia as on the dynamics in the region.

Having initially asked whether these states intervened out of an interest in promoting regional security or in defence of national interests, the chief conclusion of this study is that there is a clear mix of both these policies. However, each state reviewed has laid more or less weight on these strategic

goals. Some key observations are set out below based on the country case studies presented in the Annex to this report.

3.1.1 Kenya

Kenya is deeply embroiled in Somalia's politics. Aside from the military engagement in Somalia, there are a number of regular and shadow relations between the two states. This both enables and complicates the relationship between them (i.e. political, economic and social). Kenya shares a long border with Somalia and, unlike other states in the region, Kenya hosts a large number of Somali migrants and refugees. As is also highlighted in the Kenya case study, this link has given rise to the "Kenyan factor" in Somalia and equally a "Somalia factor" in Kenya. In this sense Kenya has for the past two decades been an "actively passive neighbour" of Somalia's armed conflict.⁷⁴ Rather than engaging itself militarily in Somalia, Kenya has made use of the instability in Somalia to establish itself as a politically pivotal state and an economic hub. In recent years this has changed as Kenya has become an active neighbour not least militarily. However, Kenya's engagement has come with a price of further spillover. Nairobi needs to consider whether its current military engagement in Somalia is viable in the long run.

Motives and triggers. An examination of Kenya's external intervention in Somalia provides a number of reasons for Nairobi's military engagement in Somalia. At least three principal concerns can be noted: (a) to end or minimize Al Shabaab's influence in Somalia; (b) to support AMISOM and restore stability in Somalia; and (c) a desire to play a more active regional role, not least within IGAD. This has all landed in the *Jubbaland Initiative* – a buffer zone inside Somalia that would protect Kenya from security threats. One question is whether this policy is about to erode. There are increasing signs of tension with the federal government of Somalia regarding Kenya's strategy. Unless the international community is to witness deepening tension between the two, a recalibration of Nairobi's strategic policy on Somalia is needed. After all, both Somalia and Kenya share a complex security neighbourhood. This neighbourhood can only be dealt with by joint government-to-government consent.

Opting for AMISOM. Despite its unilateral response to the security challenges emanating from Somalia, Kenya was eventually forced to join AMISOM. There were several reasons for this: the Jubbaland Initiative has been considered counterproductive by several external actors; financially, it was very costly for

⁷⁴ For example domestic politics in Kenya may have implications for Somalia. For example, in late 2013, the Kenya *National Alliance* party called on the government to withdraw its security troops from Somalia as a result of the UN Security Council's decision to keep Kenya within an International Criminal Court Process.

Kenya to act alone; and AMISOM needed to be strengthened. Perhaps most importantly, the Jubbaland Initiative has been seen as steering the Somali state-building process towards a federal arrangement, a development that is opposed in Mogadishu. As is noted below, however, the Somali authorities have become increasingly mistrustful of Kenya's attempts to influence governance structures in the key port town of Kismayo. In the light of Mogadishu's redefinition of its administrative structure, including Mogadishu's relationship with Somaliland and Puntland, neighbouring states' unilateral interests could undermine such a process. Given that the FGS is also engaged in constitutional work, Kenya may find an opportunity to reconsider its view on Somalia's political arrangements beyond its own national interest.

Pursuit of self-interest. Despite having joined AMISOM, Kenya remains keen to pursue its own national objectives. A number of observations in the case study below support this claim. For example, there are obvious tensions within AMISOM when the Kenyan Defence Force (KDF) fails to liaise sufficiently with AMISOM's military leadership. Furthermore, the KDF has unilaterally continued to freelance on maritime security affairs off the Somali Coast. Political tensions between Somalia and Kenya have at times even gone so far that the US has been forced to act as a go-between.

3.1.2 Uganda

Uganda has played an important role in Somalia, but currently needs to rethink its role in a "new", more stable Somalia. In this context, Uganda has an opportunity to support the government of Somalia in a non-biased way, that is, without such strong national interests as Kenya and Ethiopia currently have. Uganda has played a key role in Somalia since its first official military intervention on 1 March 2007. Uganda has been one of the largest troop-contributing states to AMISOM. In addition to actively pursuing operations inside Somalia, Uganda also hosts the EUTM of Somali National Forces at Bihanga.⁷⁵ Another important role Uganda played was to oversee the political process that led to the 2009 Kampala Accord. A similar facilitating role could be played in the future. Uganda, unlike Kenya and Ethiopia, does not have strong stakes in Somalia itself.

Motives and triggers Uganda has gradually been drawn into Somalia's civil war. As the security environment is changing, Uganda now has an opportunity to reconsider its policy agenda vis-à-vis Mogadishu, but also other neighbouring states' political visions for Somalia. Further support for Somalia's political vision of centralized government is likely to strengthen a sense of Somali governance ownership. Over the years, Kampala has sought to strengthen the

⁷⁵ Nilsson and Norberg (2013).

central government in Somalia at the expense of the regional distribution of power. Kenya and Ethiopia for their part favour stronger regionalization in Somalia (Kenya through Kismayo, and Ethiopia in Somaliland and Puntland as well as south-central parts of Somalia). However, unlike Kenya and Ethiopia, Uganda does not need a buffer zone against armed groups that threaten its position in the region – at least not in Somalia. The government in Somalia now wants to be considered both sovereign and capable of securing its own country. There are increasing examples of tensions between Somalia and its neighbours over issues of national interest and sovereignty. Based on these political developments it is likely that the ties between Mogadishu and Kampala will strengthen in the years to come.

Mission dynamic Uganda has had a number of strategic and foreign policy interests in Somalia. Until now the overarching goal has been a policy of containment, that is, to prevent the conflicts in Somalia from spilling across its own borders. However, the security situation today looks different from when it intervened, is partly explained by AMISOM's offensive mandate which has led to less exposure for Uganda. These aspects have affected Uganda's conduct of the mission as well as its political stake in Somalia. In the years to come, Uganda will have good reason to rethink its support for the government of Somalia.

Political and economic interests The Uganda case study suggests that intervention and engagement in Somalia are not only driven by humanitarian benevolence. For example, Uganda's economy has benefited from its military engagement in Somalia. In addition to economic gains and interests, Uganda also benefits politically through its backing for AMISOM. By supporting AMISOM and engaging in the fight against international terrorism, the top priority of the United States and the United Kingdom, Uganda has gained much political credibility. Finally, as is noted below, domestic political factors can explain Uganda's keen support of AMISOM. Uganda is now in a position to consider its role in Somalia. As there is now strong backing for the FGS and there are multiple actors on ground in Somalia, Kampala could consider becoming a more 'neutral' party. It seems likely that Kampala will be called on to help negotiate around regional tensions arising from external actors' involvement in Somalia's civil war and the political transition process.

3.1.3 Ethiopia

Little information is available about Ethiopia's military engagement in the Horn of Africa apart from the previous direct confrontation with Eritrea. Thus, little is known about Ethiopia's military engagement in Somalia. Nonetheless, Ethiopia, like Uganda and Kenya, has played a key role in Somalia's long civil war. Perhaps more than any other state in the region, Ethiopia's engagement in Somalia must be seen as part of a broader regional and historic conflict dynamic

that transcends both the wider Horn of Africa and the Middle East. Ethiopia is pivotal to the settlement of Somalia's civil war not because of its role as a security provider, but because of its national interests. Ethiopia's unilateral involvement in Somalia furthers calls for a regional political settlement. IGAD could well work as a conflict-diffusing platform under its role as a "regional arrangement" under chapter VIII of the UN Charter, was it not for Ethiopia's domination of the organization – a domination that is likely to make other members hesitant about giving the regional organization a strong political role in the region. At the moment, however, most parties are looking for strong AU engagement.

Long-term strategic motives Ethiopia has vast security interests in Somalia, some of which have led it into direct confrontation with Somalia (e.g. armed conflicts in 1964, 1977 and the intervention in 2006 and 2012). Its long-standing war with Eritrea (1961–1991, 1998–2000) for many years crossed national borders and was waged directly or in proxy conflicts on Somali soil. Moreover, a loose network of various Jihadist groups, especially Al Itihad, has on various occasions challenged Ethiopian forces using military attacks (e.g. in the period 1991–1996). As important for understanding Ethiopia's strategic interest in Somalia is the Somali inhabited region of Ogaden. This region has for a long time nurtured the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF). External mediation is therefore much needed to overcome this security dilemma.

Mistrust of Federal Government. As is illustrated in the case study, Ethiopia is mistrustful of a unitary Somali state where power is concentrated in Mogadishu. Hence, the intervention by Ethiopia should be seen as a wish to push the post-conflict political transition in Somalia towards a federal state. The many challenges that the federal government in Mogadishu is confronted with in securing its soil makes the strategic calculus easy from Ethiopia's point of view. In addition, a stronger grip on local rebel groups helps Ethiopia prevent cross-border attacks. Ethiopia needs to calibrate this view with Somalia, otherwise there could be more profound tension between the two states.

Long-term goals Ethiopia's motive for engagement in Somalia is mainly one of geopolitical self-interest rather than any deep benevolence towards Somalia. As a pivotal actor in the region, it currently finds itself with the political, military and intelligence capacity to prevent possible threats and contain regional spillover through offensive engagements in Somalia. Faced with a weak Somalia on several levels – political, economic, social and security – Ethiopia has the means to shape the conflict dynamic in Somalia to its own advantage. However, pursuing national interests *alone* cannot be a working formula for a stable Somalia. As the geopolitical landscape is reconfigured, such unilateral action risks undermining each-others interests.

3.2 Final reflection

After the withdrawal of the British from Somaliland in the 1960s and the Italian withdrawal thereafter, Somalia enjoyed a period of peace and stability. The experience and lessons from this time in history should be kept in constant memory in the light of the civil strife of recent years. International support, not least in the form of *The New Deal* (Compact), is essential to the pursuit of peace and security in Somalia.

In the decades to come, it will become increasingly important for Somalia to be given the chance to go through a process of reconciliation and national healing. Typically, such processes need to come from within and from the grass roots level. Support to such processes may also be needed from abroad. Experience from other civil war situations, such as Bosnia-Herzegovina, Iraq, Rwanda and Guatemala, suggests that a durable peace can be possible if local traditions and approaches to reconciliation are applied.⁷⁶ Top-down processes led by external parties could alienate Somalis and prevent such healing processes. For Somalia there may be a need for a so-called hybrid process, in which foreign and domestic actors jointly ensure that a process of national reconciliation can take place. However, for actors to come together, the parties to the conflict first need to end hostilities and engage in broad peace talks. This may require a ripe moment based on a “hurting stalemate”.⁷⁷ A hurting stalemate is only likely to occur when the parties to the conflict find themselves locked into conflict positions in which no one gains or loses influence, and the conflict becomes costly to both sides.

Inevitably, moderate elements of Al Shabaab will need a seat at the negotiation table if a durable peace is to be achieved. It is easy to forget this perspective in the heat of a conflict (not least with the Nairobi mall attack in 2013 in mind). Although it is impossible to force a party to the table, there may be elements of Al Shabaab that could be included in a political process and a national reconciliation process. Particularly if the group is split into different factions, which Al Shabaab currently appears to be. In this context it is essential not to dehumanize the group and its followers. Al Shabaab, after all, is neither weaker nor stronger than any other fighting parties that have previously been brought to the negotiation table in other conflict locations. Lessons could be learned from the talks with the Taliban of Afghanistan (albeit recognizing that a full comparison between Al Shabaab and the Taliban cannot be made because of the differences in composition and agenda). After all, the Taliban were a warring party and a pariah that for a long time were not an actor to talk to, but they are now being brought into political talks.

⁷⁶ See for example Bloomfield, Barnes, and Huyse (eds) (2004).

⁷⁷ Zartman (1989).

For a process of peace and reconciliation to take place, Somalia's neighbours will need to be actively engaged politically. Each country holds a key to Somalia's stability. At the moment, external intervention in Somalia is based on neighbouring states' interests and their desire to contain Somalia's civil war within Somalia. This in turn provides reasons for further violence inside Somalia as well as beyond its immediate borders.

Although there are several theoretical explanations for why external military interventions take place, it is not impossible to find common ground on the need to stabilize the wider Horn of Africa. This would begin with a long-term and politically inclusive strategy for Somalia. Thus, a starting point would be reassurance provided to Mogadishu by regional actors that they would refrain from engaging in Somalia without consent. Instead, there should be increased support to derive political solutions in which Somalia's government can better exercise control over its territory. Both Somalia and its neighbours need to offer assurances that they intend to monitor their borders to prevent cross-border raids.⁷⁸ Ensuring respect for border demarcations would be critical to overcoming security dilemmas. Technical know-how, such as satellite monitoring, monitoring missions, and so on, could prove valuable options. Facilitating these aspects should be the main role of the international community in the years to come.

⁷⁸ Though in this context recognizing that Somalia's borders are porous and that individuals, families, clans and communities tend to cross official demarcation periodically – and are likely to do so for many years to come.

ANNEX

Kenya: Getting the Somalia Conflict Wrong Could Benefit Al Shabaab⁷⁹

Introduction

For 20 years Kenya avoided any entanglement in Somalia's internal politics. As a result, Somalis of all political persuasions called Nairobi their "second home". This hands-off approach presented Kenya with a huge economic dividend as Nairobi became the hub of Somali business activities. The activities of Al Shabaab, however, ended Kenya's political non-involvement when escalating smuggling of small arms, kidnappings and violence in the form of border raids and bombings led it to invade southern Somalia. In addition, Al Shabaab's activities in Somalia spilled over into Kenya in the form of increased refugee flows. At the same time, Kenyan politicians of Somali extraction opted to actively influence the outcome of internal Somali politics. They openly took sides and used their connections and leverage within the Kenyan system to support particular causes, in particular the creation of a *Jubbaland State* in Somalia, in defiance of the wishes of the Somali government. These new realities have created a complicated Kenya-Somalia relationship. Because Kenya appears to have more leverage than the Somali government in the border regions of Somalia, if Kenya makes a misjudgement, Al Shabaab could be the biggest beneficiary. This chapter seeks to unpack the increasingly complicated "Kenyan factor" in Somalia.⁸⁰

In early August 2011, after months of offensive operations across Mogadishu, the forces of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) of Somalia succeeded in forcing Al Shabaab to withdraw its core fighters from the centre of the city, although fighting continued in the suburbs and outskirts of Mogadishu until May 2011 when the so-called *Afgoi corridor* was secured. Later, on 16 October 2011, Kenyan forces launched a unilateral military intervention codenamed Operation Linda Nchi or "Protect the Nation". The Kenyan government announced its intention to "weaken and incapacitate" Al Shabaab and:

⁷⁹ This chapter was written by an independent academic consultant in Somalia.

⁸⁰ All transcripts of all the interviews cited in this chapter were cleared and approved by the interviewees and remain with the authors.

...give the Somali government the ability to assume control of the country, and end two decades of instability that made it a safe haven for extremism.⁸¹

Shortly after the launch of this campaign, Ethiopian forces once again, and unilaterally, entered Somalia,⁸² advancing on Al Shabaab positions across the south-western regions of *Bay* and *Bakool*, and the central *Hiiraan* region.⁸³

By the end of 2011, the AU, the UN and their various partners, such as the US and the EU,⁸⁴ had developed a new *Concept of Operations* for AMISOM,⁸⁵ which took account of the ongoing presence of Ethiopian and Kenyan forces. The operations document envisaged an increase in AMISOM's strength to 17 731 personnel and mission forces deployed outside Mogadishu for the first time. This decision was endorsed by the AU Peace and Security Council and the United Nations Security Council in January and February 2012, respectively.

During the first half of 2012, the focus of international engagement in Somalia was bringing to an end the transitional processes and institutions that had been in place since 2004. In spite of considerable international and domestic scepticism, and with only slight slippage of the timetable, the transitional process was allowed to expire and a new Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) was formed in September, led by President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud.

The external military actors, however, arrived in a conflict zone in which the patterns of political violence are highly complex. There are at least 12 distinct forms of armed conflict dynamics in Somalia based on the scale of fighting and the actors involved: civil war, foreign forces, proxy wars, subnational polities (such as *Khaatumo State* and *Somaliland*), communal clashes (which often occur in the central regions), standing clan militias (as in *Galkacyo*), paramilitaries (most of Mogadishu's 60 recently dismantled checkpoints belonged to militia leaders), war economies (in which business actors use violence for economic gain, such as stealing World Food Programme (WFP) food aid), piracy, Islamist groups (such as the *Ahlu Sunna Wal Jamaa*, *ASWJ*, *Sufi* fighters), private militias and security forces, and armed criminal groups. This typology remains accurate at the close of 2013, although the extent to which some forms of violence are more prevalent than others varies across different parts of Somalia.

⁸¹ See the official government website of the *Republic of Kenya* (2013).

⁸² Ethiopia has entered Somalia on many occasions since the early 1990s, either to confront Islamist elements or to prop up allied faction leaders.

⁸³ An UN-brokered peace treaty allowed Ethiopia to withdraw from Somalia in 2009 after the Islamist insurgents and the Transitional Federal Government it backed agreed, after a devastating war fought to a stalemate, to form a government of national unity.

⁸⁴ Website of the *African Union Mission in Somalia* "AMISOM Partners Supports" (2013).

⁸⁵ *AU Peace and Security* "Communiqué of the 306th meeting" (2012).

Somalia's Impact on Kenya's National Security

Somalia's conflicts have affected Kenya in several different ways. Politically and diplomatically, Kenya took a huge risk by involving itself heavily in the stabilization of Somalia – long a tinderbox of international and regional rivalry. Between 2002 and 2004, Nairobi hosted and played a leading mediation role in the process that established Somalia's previous transitional government, following the Mbagathi Process, the Somali National Peace and Reconciliation Conference named after the Kenyan town where the actors met. The process began in December 2001 and was led by the *Intergovernmental Authority on Development* (IGAD), the regional body of the Horn of Africa. Despite Kenya's best efforts and investment, the Mbagathi Process was fraught with difficulties as members of the nascent Somali Parliament started fighting in Nairobi even before they returned to Somalia.⁸⁶ The result was a splintered parliament, disappointed donors, a rift between IGAD and the US, and eventually the Ethiopian invasion of December 2006.⁸⁷

Kenya has had to cope with a near constant stream of refugees from Somalia over the past two decades. Most have been housed in camps close to the Somali-Kenyan border, such as Dadaab, the world's largest refugee complex,⁸⁸ which houses over half a million refugees.⁸⁹ In the wake of a string of mysterious bombings in Nairobi in late 2012 early 2013, Somali refugees in Kenya have reportedly been targeted by Kenyan security forces.⁹⁰ According to a report by the *Heritage Institute for Policy Studies*, hundreds of Somali refugees have been rounded up in mass raids in recent months. This appears to have deepened pre-existing grievances among the Somali population in Kenya.⁹¹

Violence in Somalia has spilled over into Kenya in recent years. The north-east of Kenya in particular has witnessed an increase in violent episodes, including bombings and targeted assassinations that have been linked to Al Shabaab.⁹² This has increased domestic tensions in other parts of Kenya, most notably in the parts of Nairobi such as the Eastleigh district which contain large Somali populations.

Moreover, the worsening security situation in Somalia has led the Kenyan authorities to become even more embroiled in Somalia. The so-called Jubbaland

⁸⁶ *Irin News* (18-03-2005).

⁸⁷ *PanaPress* (17-03-2005).

⁸⁸ According to UNICEF, Dadaab could unofficially be described as Kenya's third-largest city (UNICEF 2013).

⁸⁹ "Hasty Repatriation" Heritage Institute for Policy Studies (February 2013).

⁹⁰ The bombings targeted the Somali-dominated section of Nairobi and there were no arrests. *BBC News Africa* (08-12-2012).

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁹² *Standard Digital* (19-04-2013).

Initiative – an attempt by the Kenyan government to create a buffer zone in southern Somalia – morphed into a fully-fledged unilateral invasion.⁹³ Since 2009, Kenya has provided military and financial assistance, weapons and training to 3000 militias in southern Somalia.⁹⁴ The strategic objective appears to have been an attempt to create a political entity – given different names such as Jubbaland State or *Azania* – which could control the *Gedo*, *Middle Jubba* and *Lower Jubba* regions, thereby acting as a buffer zone between Kenya and the conflict in Somalia. Kenya’s bold and intrusive schemes in southern Somalia have put it on a collision course with the Somali government. Privately, Mogadishu accuses Kenya of a blatant infringement of national sovereignty and the principles of good neighbourliness.⁹⁵

On 15 May, a hastily convened clan elders’ congress appointed Sheikh Ahmed Mohamed Islam “Madoobe”, a former Al Shabaab leader, president of Jubbaland. The Somali government and IGAD said the process was not inclusive and transparent.⁹⁶ Madoobe leads the Ras Kamboni militia.⁹⁷ Competing with him was Mohamed Abdi “Gandi”, a former defence minister in Somalia. According to *The East African* newspaper, Kenya’s intelligence establishment backed Mohamed “Gandi” but the military supported Sheikh Ahmed Madoobe.⁹⁸ The Jubbaland initiative has led Kenya to try to work with at least six Somali entities. Between 2009 and 2013, Kenya struggled to forge alliances with the Ras Kamboni militia; the Transitional Federal Government, and its successor the *Federal Government of Somalia*; the self-declared *Azania* regional administration led by Gandi; the *Isiolo militia*; the *ASWJ*, the Ethiopia backed Sufi militia; and various *Marehan* clan militias in Gedo region.⁹⁹ None of these groups was able – either separately or in unison – to dislodge Al Shabaab or defend this strategic and resource-rich region. However, they were all interested in controlling the strategic port city of Kismayo and the rest of the south.

⁹³ Kenya launched its military assault during the rainy season on 16 October 2011, but its tanks became stuck in the mud and it only finally reached Kismayo in September 2012. See *Times World* (19-10-2011).

⁹⁴ *Global Post* (20-07-2013).

⁹⁵ *Irin News Service* (04-16-2013).

⁹⁶ *Heritage Institute for Policy Studies* (01-06-2013).

⁹⁷ Ras Kamboni is a Somali militia that in 2006 was part of the Union of Islamic Courts in Mogadishu and later collaborated with Al Shabaab, before fighting them for control of Kismayo in 2009. Most of its members are from the Ogaden sub-clan of the Darod tribe. The ethnic Somalis in Kenya and Ethiopia are also of Ogaden extraction.

⁹⁸ Onyango-Obbo and Wachira (30-10-2011).

⁹⁹ Menkhaus 2013: 4.

Faced with serious difficulties with its Jubbaland initiative,¹⁰⁰ Kenya launched its military intervention in October 2011. Military and financial difficulties, however, led Kenyan forces to be “re-hatted” and integrated into the AMISOM force.¹⁰¹ Kenya signed a Memorandum of Understanding to this effect with the AU in June 2012.¹⁰² Increased piracy and the number of kidnappings of tourists, particularly in the coastal areas close to the Somali border, meant that Kenyan naval and air assets, not authorized by either the AU or the UN Security Council, continue to operate clandestinely in Somalia and its coastal waters. The Somali government considers such unilateral moves counterproductive on grounds of national sovereignty.¹⁰³

In humanitarian terms, although the famine that hit Somalia in 2011 has ended, the situation in most parts of the country remains desperate. In early January 2013, the UN’s Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) estimated that approximately 2.1 million people were living in a state of humanitarian emergency and crisis; 1.1 million of them were internally displaced, well over half in *Lower Shabelle*, which is adjacent to the *Banadir region* where Mogadishu is situated.¹⁰⁴ Access for the aid agencies involved in humanitarian relief throughout the country remains extremely difficult. Meanwhile, Somali refugees in Kenya were asked to return to Somalia and some were returned against their will.¹⁰⁵ In spite of these problems, the 2012 *Humanitarian Appeal for Somalia* received only USD 668 million of a requested USD 1.1 billion, or approximately 61 per cent. In 2013, OCHA is appealing for USD 1.3 billion to target some 3.8 million Somalis in need.

Kenya’s Relationship with Somalia: Cooperation and Conflict

From a long-term perspective, Kenya-Somalia security relations have generally been cooperative despite periods of conflict. The main bone of contention has been the *Northern Frontier District*, a Somali inhabited province annexed to Kenya at the time of Somalia’s independence from Italy and Britain. This resulted in a border war between the two newly independent states in 1963. A

¹⁰⁰ Both the new Somali government and influential donors such as the US deem Kenya’s schemes in Jubbaland counterproductive because they are seen as led by ethnic Somali Kenyans who are backing their compatriots inside Somalia, a move that is resented by other Somali clans.

¹⁰¹ *Economist blog* (02-11-2011).

¹⁰² *AU Press Release* (02-06-2012). The Memorandum of Understanding gives Kenyan troops access to the support that the UN and the EU provide to the other troop contributing countries, including funding for military equipment and salaries for its soldiers.

¹⁰³ *Saturday Nation* (15-02-2013).

¹⁰⁴ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (04-01-2013).

¹⁰⁵ *The Guardian* (25-01-2013).

further major source of tension was the relative marginalization of ethnic Somali populations in north-eastern Kenya – the most underdeveloped part of the country – during the 1970s and 1980s, when dictatorial regimes ran both countries. A low-level rebel movement, which Kenya referred as *shifita* or bandits, has further tested relations. It resorted to raids and acts of sabotage that Kenya punished harshly.

For the past 20 years Somalia has swung between a failed state and a fragile state, and Kenya's relationship with Somalia has fluctuated between cooperation and conflict. As the principal home for many Somali refugees, the key facilitator or interlocutor in many Somali reconciliation conferences and more recently a major troop contributing country to AMISOM in the fight against Al Shabaab, Kenya remains a crucial regional actor in the stabilization of Somalia. Kenya is also a key partner for the FGS within IGAD, from which both the AU and the UN Security Council take their cue before making any decisions concerning Somalia.

However, there are also sources of tension in the relationship. The Somali government suspects Kenya's motives in Jubbaland and its preferred approach to governance issues in southern Somalia, especially in the key port of Kismayo.¹⁰⁶ Kenya's maritime ambitions and operations are also a great source of concern to the Somali government. Kenya deployed its navy to Somalia, although this had not been authorized by the UN Security Council, and it has requested funding for its navy from the international community, ostensibly for its operations against Somali pirates and Al Shabaab. The Somali government has publicly called on international stakeholders not to support such Kenyan requests, instead requesting support for its own security apparatus to deal with the problem of piracy on land rather than at sea.¹⁰⁷

Kenyan-Somali relations were in flux at the beginning of 2013, due to the elections in Kenya. President Uhuru Kenyatta appears to continue with the status quo of his predecessor, Mwai Kibaki, whose defence minister, Yusuf Haji, and his son, who is a senior intelligence official, were seen as the key architects in the shaping of Kenya's Somalia policy, particularly on issues related to Jubbaland. Haji, who is now a Senator, is currently allied with Kenyatta as a member of the president's *National Alliance* bloc. Geopolitical interests, rapprochement with the Somali government and international pressure could

¹⁰⁶ Kenyan troops wearing an AU hat control Kismayo and, even though the mandate of AMISOM is to protect government institutions and leaders and to fight Al Shabaab, federal government officials have been refused entry to Kismayo. The government accuses Kenya of working with the Ras Kamboni militia and openly supporting schemes hatched by political actors to create a regional government against the wishes of the national government.

¹⁰⁷ *The Citizen* (16-02-2013).

compel Kenya to reconsider or reverse its Somalia or Jubbaland policies, but the views of Somali Kenyan politicians will always carry weight and cannot easily be ignored.

On 4 August 2013, leaders of the troop contributing countries to AMISOM called on Kenya to hand over the port city of Kismayo to the Somali government. Although President Uhuru Kenyatta signed the final communiqué, senior officials in his government appeared to be backtracking on this position.¹⁰⁸

Kenya is currently a key troop contributor to AMISOM, providing the third-largest contingent after Burundi and Uganda.¹⁰⁹ Kenyan forces run AMISOM Sector 2 in south Somalia, and AMISOM's Deputy Force Commander of Operations is a Kenyan Major General. As mentioned above, Kenya also has an unknown number of air and maritime assets which operate in Somalia or its territorial waters. The relative secrecy surrounding Kenya's military operations in Somalia makes it difficult to be ascertain the exact number of troops operating inside Somali territory at any given time.

National Security Interests and Regional Stability

Kenya's current political and military engagement in Somalia is motivated by several factors, including national security concerns related to border security, infiltration by Al Shabaab or activism by its local sympathizers, criminal threats to the country's USD 1 billion tourism industry,¹¹⁰ its political aims to support the newly created and internationally supported federal government, and the desire to be seen to be playing a collaborative role in the regional response to the Somalia crisis through IGAD.

Somalia's conflict has been part of Kenya's domestic political dynamics for decades. No Kenyan government could afford a policy of disengagement, as refugees, terrorists and small arms pass through the porous border between the two countries. Shortly after its military intervention in Somalia, Kenya responded to what it perceived as threats linked to Al Shabaab at home. Specifically, the Minister for Internal Security, the late George Saitoti, led an internal security crackdown on Kenya's Muslims – including the *Mombasa Republican Council*, a vehicle for the grievances held by a banned coastal separatist movement and

¹⁰⁸ *Daily Nation* (06-08-2013).

¹⁰⁹ The total authorized number of AMISOM troops in Somalia is 18,117; the largest contingent, 6223 soldiers, is from Uganda, Burundi has sent 5432 troops, Kenya's contribution is 4652 soldiers, followed by 960 from Djibouti and 850 from Sierra Leone.

¹¹⁰ *Xinhua News Service* (08-06-2012).

Somali populations – arresting suspected Al Shabaab sympathizers. This should be seen in the wider context of communal tensions that manifest themselves in the form of xenophobia, vigilantism and increased incidence of Islamophobia.¹¹¹

Engaging Somalia by Military Means

After more than four decades of a relatively passive military posture, Kenya changed its military strategy towards Somalia in 2011. The major change emerged on 16 October 2011 when Kenya launched *Operation Linda Nchi*. The famine-induced mass exodus of refugees streaming across the Somalia-Kenya border and the kidnapping of several foreign nationals along the same frontier led the Kenyan authorities to increase fortifications along the border and deploy troops to Somalia, with the stated short-term aim of preventing Al Shabaab operations in Kenya by creating a buffer-zone extending to the city of Afmadow, 115 kilometres from Kismayo. Critics argued that the operation was arranged in haste¹¹² and had little to do with an increased threat from Al Shabaab. Instead, it was suggested that the operations had more to do with the internal dynamics of Kenyan politics, in particular an emboldened military following its role in providing external assistance as part of the US-led “War on Terror”. As a result, Kenya had expanded its list of potential benefactors and sought help from Israel, the Arab League, Western countries and even China. Initial logistical aid from France, Israeli support with intelligence gathering and internal security capabilities, and drones from the US culminated in the eventual incorporation of Kenyan forces into AMISOM. Kenyan officials claimed that Operation Linda Nchi took place with the “concurrence” of the TFG.¹¹³ However, reports appear to suggest that the TFG President Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed was publicly critical of the Kenyan invasion.¹¹⁴

The Kenyan operation unfolded along three primary lines: (a) a push toward *Kismayo*; (b) from the border crossing at Liboi through the town of *Dhobley* and toward the Al Shabaab stronghold of *Afmadow*; and (c) from the northern Kenyan border town of *El Waq* into Somalia’s *Gedo region*. Estimates suggested that some 2400 Kenyan troops crossed into Somalia and that they met stiff local

¹¹¹ Speaking of the Somali-dominated district in Nairobi, the vice minister of internal security said in parliament that Al Shabaab was like “a snake with its tail in Somalia and its head in Eastleigh”. There have also been violent attacks, as the Al Jazeera headline “Kenyans riot against ethnic Somalis” shows.

¹¹² *International Crisis Group* (February 2012).

¹¹³ *New York Times publication* (2011) “A joint communiqué dated 2011-10-18 stated: ‘...cooperate in undertaking security and military operations, and to undertake coordinated pre-emptive action and the pursuit of any armed elements that continue to threaten and attack both countries’”.

¹¹⁴ *Agence France Press* (24-10-2011).

resistance, suffering an unknown number of fatalities. Their deployment cost approximately USD 180 million per month.¹¹⁵

In late October 2011, Kenya received considerable criticism when one of its aircraft bombed a refugee camp in the town of *Jilib*. Kenya claimed that the target of the attack was a nearby Al Shabaab base. On 25 November 2011, the IGAD Heads of State summit in Addis Ababa supported the Kenyan intervention in Somalia, encouraged Ethiopia to support the Kenyan Defence Force and called on Kenya to consider integrating its forces into AMISOM (which the Government of Kenya accepted on 7 December 2011).¹¹⁶ It is notable that the July 2012 report of the *United Nations Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea* declared the Kenyan operations which took place between 16 October 2011 and 2 June 2012 to be a breach of the general arms embargo on Somalia because they were not part of AMISOM. Eager to obtain not only legal cover but also access to resources, Kenya formally joined AMISOM on 6 July 2012, taking charge of Sector 2.¹¹⁷

In February 2012, United Nations Security Council resolution 2036 (2012) increased AMISOM's troop numbers from around 10 000 to an optimum strength of 17 700. This reflected AMISOM's new strategic and military operational concept, which had been developed in a collaborative process in December 2011–January 2012 involving representatives from the UN, the AU, IGAD, the TFG, Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, the UK and the US. The operational concept set out a new force posture for AMISOM based around four land sectors and a nominal maritime sector. Sector 1, Mogadishu, involved some 9500 troops from Uganda and Burundi; sector 2, in south-west Somalia, involved some 4200 troops from the rebranded Kenyan force.

Kenya and IGAD

Kenya has made considerable use of IGAD to conduct its diplomatic efforts in the region. Kenya's diplomatic power has been the central driving force behind the leading role played by IGAD in the peace processes of both Sudan and Somalia.¹¹⁸ Most recently, Kenya played a central role with Ethiopia in the signing, on 6 December 2012, of the *Memorandum of Understanding between the IGAD Joint committee for the Grand Stabilization of South Central Somalia*. This provides a framework for the implementation of the IGAD Grand Stabilization Plan, which calls for the creation of administrative arrangements for

¹¹⁵ Throup (16-02-2012).

¹¹⁶ The full communiqué is available at

http://igad.int/attachments/422_communique%20from%20IGAD.pdf.

¹¹⁷ *Capital News* (06-07-2012); UN Monitoring Group 13-07-2013, p. 229.

¹¹⁸ Healy 2011:114.

the areas liberated from Al Shabaab. The FGS sees itself as non-transitional and fully sovereign, and deems the notion of Ethiopia and Kenya “creating administrations” inside Somali territory an unacceptable proposition. The primary objective of the IGAD Memorandum is:

...to strengthen the implementation of the Grand Stabilization Plan by expanding the joint IGAD committee with the inclusion of the new committee members appointed by the federal government of Somalia (article 4).

The IGAD Joint Committee will also cooperate to facilitate stabilization and reconciliation, re-establish government institutions, including at the regional and district levels, and share information (article 5).

Kenya’s Military

Kenya’s military is entangled in a broader political system which has for decades been dominated by political patronage and corruption across the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government. This is reflected in the regular siphoning off by senior figures of funds supposedly earmarked for military equipment and in opaque procurement decisions which produce sub-standard equipment. Kenya’s military establishment has therefore tended to play a backseat role in domestic politics and has not threatened or carried out the type of coups d’état seen elsewhere on the African continent.

According to the latest data available from the *International Institute for Strategic Studies* (IISS), Kenya’s defence budget declined significantly between 2010 and 2011 from USD 689 million to USD 622 million. As of 2012, the Kenyan Defence Forces comprised 24 120 active personnel: 20 000 in the army, 1620 in the navy and 2500 in the air force. In addition there were 5000 paramilitaries including headquarters staff.¹¹⁹ Before the operations in Somalia, the Kenyan air force and navy were considered largely for show, with few serious operational roles. The intervention in Somalia, however, has given them a more prominent role.

Kenya’s current military organization is based on a Civilian Defence Council, which reports to the President. The Ministry of Defence is led by the Minister of State for Defence who is responsible to the President and the Commander-in-Chief for the formulation and conduct of defence policy. As is noted above, before the election the defence minister was Yusuf Haji, an ethnic Somali, whose clan (the *Ogaden*) are one of the main actors in the Kismayo contest. The Defence Ministry has two principal advisers: one military, the Chief of Defence

¹¹⁹ *International Institute for Strategic Studies* 2012: 439.

Forces (CDF), General Julius W Karangi, and one civilian, the Permanent Secretary, Ms Nancy Kirui. They share responsibility for much of the ministry's business "...reflecting the input that both military and civilian personnel make to policy, financial, administrative and operational matters".¹²⁰ Before Operation Linda Nchi, Kenya's military had no history of engaging in direct combat operations, particularly with an asymmetric enemy such as Al Shabaab. Its foreign deployments were mainly as part of UN peacekeeping operations. Since the late 2000s, however, the Kenya Defence Force (KDF) has undergone a comprehensive modernization programme, seeking partnerships in addition to its traditional Western allies with China, among others.¹²¹ This however does not appear to have prevented the Ugandan president from referring to the Kenyan army as "career soldiers" and questioning their competence to dislodge Al Shabaab from Somalia.¹²²

The Structure of the Conflicts in Somalia and Kenya's Role

Between 1991 and 2000, Somalia was in the unique position of having no central government. In such a situation, it is not surprising that various domestic and international actors promoted their own agendas within the country, either by stoking the flames of armed conflict or attempting to manage the conflict to their advantage. Today, Somali society suffers from various drivers of violence. Unfortunately, the potentially positive institutions capable of pushing in a more constructive direction have been diminished by two decades of violent crises and are struggling to rebuild themselves.

Somalia faces almost the entire list of generic drivers of armed conflict identified in the various indices of state weakness: corrupt governance, greedy warlords, ineffective security forces, endemic poverty and low levels of development, a lack of an independent judiciary, and a breakdown of the rule of law.¹²³

Key Conflict Drivers

The root causes of Somalia's conflict dynamics can be linked directly to issues of political governance and, specifically, the questions of who should rule the country, how they should rule, and how to constitute the Somali state. Somalia's conflict is rooted in a chronic contest among rival clans and groups for political

¹²⁰ Official website of the Government of Kenya (2013).

¹²¹ *African Press International* (20-11-2007).

¹²² *Saturday Nation* (09-09-2011).

¹²³ For example, the Fund for Peace/*Foreign Policy Magazine* State Failure Index and the Mohammed Ibrahim Index of African Governance.

control and resources. The former group, in which both Al Shabaab and the warlords could be included, has tended to look for external allies.¹²⁴ Over time, this has generated a situation where the processes of state building, far from calming the conflict dynamics in Somalia, has actually generated new conflicts as different groups support or resist it. An alternative view proposed by Professor Ken Menkhaus, a renowned expert on Somalia, suggests that the:

*...most promising formula for success in state building in Somalia in part because it is already practiced across much of the Horn is some form of "mediated states in which the government relies on partnership (or at least coexistence) with a diverse range of local intermediaries and rival sources of authority to provide core functions of public security, justice, and conflict management in much of the country."*¹²⁵

It remains to be seen whether the federal government and Somalia's new constitution will be able to overcome these governance challenges, in particular the tension between the centre and the periphery and proponents of a federal state or a centralized state.

A related factor is the place of clan loyalties and the dynamics that flow from them. Four major clan families and more than 100 sub-clans dominate the Somali region.¹²⁶ Largely impenetrable to most outsiders, these clans embody some of the positive and negative conflict dynamics facing the country. On the positive side, clans have long provided Somalis with a source of community, support and collective identity, and have developed numerous dispute resolution and coping mechanisms to deal with crises. However, under pressure from the social forces unleashed during periods of violent conflict, clans have also become a source of patronage and cronyism, and an obstacle to building a more democratic system of national governance based around cross-clan political parties operating on meritocratic principles.

Corruption and cronyism have become a central part of the problem. As the UN Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea claimed in mid-2012, there has been

*...pervasive corruption within the transitional federal institutions... Under the transitional federal institutions, the systematic misappropriation, embezzlement and outright theft of public resources have essentially become a system of governance, embodied in the popular Somali phrase "Maxaa igu jiraa?" ("What's in it for me?")."*¹²⁷

¹²⁴ *Journal of Modern African Studies* 2002: pp. 247-272.

¹²⁵ Menkhaus 2006-07: 78.

¹²⁶ Daarood, Dir, Digil and Mirifle, and Hawiye are the four main tribes but there are also a host of minority clans – hence the 4.5 power sharing formula – and within each tribe there are clans and sub-clans who often fight among themselves but can also join forces to repel a rival tribe.

¹²⁷ *United Nations Monitoring Group* 2012: 7.

According to the Monitoring Group's report, between 2009 and 2010, seven out of every USD 10 received by the TFG "never made it into the state coffers."¹²⁸ Beyond these structural factors, conflict dynamics have been intensified by additional problems of warlordism, banditry and transnational terror networks. Warlordism describes a phenomenon whereby charismatic individuals and their armed followers use violence as a business strategy. Widespread poverty and underdevelopment throughout the country interact with these criminal dynamics to produce a situation in which it is possible for warlords to recruit followers by expending relatively small sums of money. Criminal activity has been a significant factor in Kenya-Somalia relations. As Ken Menkhaus recently noted:

*[s]muggling of consumer goods across the poorly patrolled border is endemic and has undercut legitimate Kenyan businesses and deprived Kenya of customs revenue, while smuggling of people, small arms, and drugs has been a significant source of destabilization and has reinforced criminal networks and cartels that thrive in this corner of Africa. In addition, Somali piracy has raised shipping costs for Kenya.*¹²⁹

In relation to transnational terrorism, the principal actor has been Al Shabaab and the influx of foreign jihadists it attracted from Afghanistan and across the Arabian Peninsula.¹³⁰ Initially focused on assassinations and targeting symbols of US power in the region, the focus shifted in 2006 to resisting and expelling the invading Ethiopian forces from Somalia. After Ethiopia withdrew in 2009, radicalization continued and attention focused on dislodging the TFG and its AMISOM allies.

In addition, two largely external factors have negatively influenced the conflict dynamics in Somalia. The first is the willingness of several outside actors to use military force in Somalia, often without seeking the consent of the Somali authorities or the UN Security Council, to achieve their own agendas. These actors include foreign jihadists as well as the governments of Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, the United States and the EU member states. Second, the widespread prevalence of small arms and light weapons has intensified the frequent outbreaks of violence that have occurred.¹³¹ Warlords and factions dominated Somali politics from the mid-1980s, before the collapse of the Somali state, until 2000. Almost all of them were supplied by Ethiopia, while some were an

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Menkhaus, 2013:2.

¹³⁰ Reports state that over 400 foreign fighters reached Somalia, consisting of radicalized Arab, African, European and North American citizens *Agence France Press* (27-03-2007).

¹³¹ Arms dynamics across Somalia have been analyzed in considerable detail by the *UN Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea*. Its reports are available at <http://www.un.org/sc/committees/751/mongroup.shtml>.

Eritrean creation. In a very real sense, the two countries in the Horn of Africa were fighting a proxy war inside Somalia. The availability of guns further increased the prospect that disputes would be settled by violent means.

Unfortunately, over the past two decades, many of the positive sources of resilience and peace in Somali society and its polity have been weakened by the negative dynamics identified above. One dimension of the problem is that the Somali nation has been “diasporized” in the past 20 years as a huge proportion of the population has been forced to flee the country. Although this trend is now starting to reverse, Somalia’s society remains riven, with citizens scattered around the world. This brain-drain has negatively affected the ability of the country to generate an effective workforce and active civil society organizations.

Somalia faces huge challenges in the military sector specifically and continues to lack a unified, effective national security force to help maintain stability and protect Somali citizens from various threats. There was no genuinely “national” set of security forces to speak of before 2013. What did exist often posed a threat to their own people. As Dr Paul Williams of George Washington University recently summarized, in what is also a good way to conclude this section:

At present, among the long list of challenges facing the Somali army, perhaps the most severe and urgent are problems of command and control. These are at the level of senior officers, between clan leaders, warlords, and the official military commanders; they also involve an absence of collaboration between the existing SNA [Somali National Army] brigades. Different components of the army have had different types of training, mostly abroad, and there are poor levels of training for non-commissioned officers. Salaries are unreliable: most of these have been in the form of USD 100 per month stipends paid by the US and Italian governments to some but not all SNA soldiers. There is also a lack of modern weaponry – with many ostensibly SNA weapons belonging to warlords, clans, and individuals – and a major deficit of logistical and medical support capacity. Finally, there are problems with recruitment, created by this long list of issues.¹³²

Conflict Dynamics in Somalia and Kenya’s Response

The key domestic actors involved in the violent conflict in Somalia in 2013 are the FGS and its embryonic national security forces, local armed factions (primarily clan- and warlord-based militias) and Al Shabaab. The principal

¹³² Williams (February) 2013: 6.

external military actors are AMISOM and the Ethiopian troops deployed in support of AMISOM in Sectors 3 and 4. The US has also occasionally conducted military raids – using unmanned drones – to kill suspected terrorists. Off the coast of Somalia, a large international anti-piracy maritime coalition (e.g. Atalanta) including NATO, Russian and other forces has been assembled since late 2008. Although it has successfully halted the rise of maritime piracy,¹³³ it has had relatively little impact on the conflict dynamics on the Somali mainland. Politically, during the terms of the two transitional governments, the major external coordination mechanism for international responses to Somalia's conflict has been the informal *International Contact Group* (ICG), of which Kenya is a member.¹³⁴ With the ushering in of permanent governance structures and institutions, it is not clear what role, if any, a consultation mechanism such as the ICG will play.

All five troop contributing countries to AMISOM have a major stake in the outcome of Somalia's conflict. Kenya, as part of the AMISOM structure, is expected to act as a key ally of the national government. Because of its strategic objective to create a buffer zone in Jubbaland, however, it also works closely with local actors such as the Ras Kamboni militia in southern Somalia. Of the five troop contributing countries, only Kenya (aide from Djibouti) shares a border with Somalia and has what could be described as an ulterior motive. Consequently, the Kenyan Defence Force has been criticized within AMISOM for failing to liaise sufficiently with the Force Commander. Because AMISOM's deployment to Somalia is an AU mission authorized by the UN Security Council, it is difficult for Kenya to freelance and act as it wishes. The Somali government in Mogadishu has already accused Kenya of operating outside its mission mandate, such as by assisting logistically and security-wise, not to mention diplomatically, in the creation of a Jubbaland state against the express wishes of Somalia's new federal government.¹³⁵ Kenya has also given direct political, economic and military support to the Ras Kamboni. The principal reason given for this support was that both groups proved to be major allies in the struggle to eject Al Shabaab from southern Somalia in general, and Kismayo in particular. The Ras Kambon Brigade is dominated by Ogadeni Somalis, and members of the same clan are prominent in both Kenyan and Ethiopian Somali regions. The relationship between these two armed groups and the FGS is currently low. As is

¹³³ *Voice of America* (15-03-2013).

¹³⁴ By early 2012, the group had held 21 meetings. Its participants were Austria, Belgium, Canada, China, Denmark, Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, the Netherlands, Norway, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Uganda, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, the United States, the African Development Bank, the AU, the EU, the Islamic Development Bank, IGAD, the League of Arab States, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, NATO, the UN and the World Bank.

¹³⁵ *AllAfrica.com* (09-04-2013).

noted above, the leader of the Ras Kamboni militia, Sheikh Ahmed Madobe, a notorious warlord, has had himself anointed president of the Jubbaland State, but the Somali government and IGAD say the process that brought this about was neither inclusive nor transparent.

Kenya has also worked closely with Ethiopia within the IGAD framework. However, there have clearly been tensions between Ethiopia and Kenya with respect to Kismayo, where Kenya is seen as supporting the Ras Kamboni militia (Ogaden clan) in a way that Ethiopia sees as unhelpful given its ongoing armed conflict with the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF).¹³⁶ Sheikh Ahmed Madobe is an Islamist who was once allied with Al Shabaab. He was wounded in 2006 in a US commando attack near Kismayo, and was imprisoned in Ethiopia for two years following its invasion of Somalia in 2006.¹³⁷

Power Systems in Somalia

This section analyses key domestic and foreign power systems in Somalia. It examines both domestic and foreign actors.

Domestic political and military actors

The current political landscape in Somalia contains several distinct but interrelated power systems. Clear distinctions can be drawn between those power systems which support the current federal government, those which are explicitly hostile to it and those whose loyalties remain unclear.

In the hostile camp, the principal actor remains Al Shabaab, an *Al Qaeda*-affiliated radical jihadist group which, despite recent setbacks, is still the strongest anti-government force in Somalia. The movement still occupies large swathes of territory and, despite suffering some defections in recent years, it continues to recruit hundreds of supporters from inside and outside Somalia.¹³⁸ Having been ousted from many of its regional strongholds, including Kismayo and Baidoa, Al Shabaab forces are reported to be relocating to Puntland and Somaliland in northern Somalia, and to have resorted in the south and elsewhere to ruthless insurgency tactics such as targeted killings and acts of terror, particularly suicide bombings. Al Shabaab continues to pose a grave threat to Kenya's national security, in part because of explicit Al Shabaab threats to

¹³⁶ *Institute for Security Studies* (09-04-2009).

¹³⁷ *Africa Review* (12-06-2012).

¹³⁸ Al Shabaab is savvy in its use of strategic communications, using all platforms from social media, such as Paltalk, Twitter and Facebook, to sleek video productions, poetry and powerful sermons.

conduct more militant activity in Kenya and its ability to slip across the relatively porous Kenya-Somalia border to kill and kidnap Kenyan citizens and tourists.

A formerly hostile but now transformed power system revolves around the Ras Kamboni militia, which has a difficult relationship with the government in Mogadishu but has worked with it against Al Shabaab. It is a mainly Ogaden clan militia that first came to prominence in August 2008 during the battle for Kismayo, which it lost to Al Shabaab. It was the most organized Somali fighting force in October 2011, and helped Kenya/AMISOM to dislodge Al Shabaab from locations in Gedo and Lower Juba, and to secure Kismayo in late September 2012. The militia is said to have received training from the KDF before the assault on Kismayo. Its leader was a member of the now defunct *Union of Islamic Courts Union* (UIC) and was made interim governor of the Somali authority managing Kismayo from 2006 until Ethiopian troops overthrew the UIC. As is noted above, he is currently claiming to be the president of Jubbaland.

Another power faction aligned with the federal government forces is Ahlu Sunna Wal Jamaa (*The People of the Sunna and the Majority*). The ASWJ is a paramilitary group made up of Sufi adherents opposed to Al Shabaab, and their allies, some of whom are linked by family, kinship and clan ties. It maintains close links with Ethiopia, which was instrumental in its creation and remains so in its continued cohesion.¹³⁹ In June 2009, the ASWJ signed a cooperation agreement with the TFG in which the TFG agreed to provide military and logistical support to the ASWJ and consult the group on administrative issues concerning the areas under its control.¹⁴⁰ Since late 2010, discussions have been under way to integrate ASWJ forces into the TFG army. This has encountered many difficulties, particularly related to funding. During 2012, the ASWJ played an important role in ending Somalia's transitional governance arrangements as it was one of the six signatories to the Garowe Principles and the roadmap to end the transition. It has been engaged in a bitter war with Al Shabaab on many fronts, particularly in Gedo, near the Kenyan and Ethiopian borders, and central Somalia.

The major political change in Somalia's political landscape since mid-2012 is the establishment of the new FGS. President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud has insisted that it is the federal government's prerogative to determine the nature and timing of outside assistance, since his government is no longer a transitional mechanism but a sovereign government. The FGS has developed a six-pillar initial strategy, set out in a formal policy document which outlines the government's priorities as

¹³⁹ Ethiopia arms and continues to help the various factions of the ASWJ to work together.

Information obtained from the Stanford University "mapping militant organizations project". See

Ahlu Sunna Wal Jamaa.

¹⁴⁰ *Wikileaks.org* (18-02-2010).

stability, economic recovery, peace building, service delivery, international relations and unity. This document set out what the President has called “the foundations of a new beginning for Somalia”. President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud has since detailed his government’s top priorities in the areas of security, reform of the judicial system and reform of the management of the public finances.¹⁴¹

Foreign Military Actors in Somalia 2013

As of mid-2013, AMISOM, with its current mandated strength of just under 18 000 uniformed personnel, is the strongest military force in Somalia. A small civilian contingent of approximately 300 police officers from Nigeria has recently been added to the mission. Kenya is the key contingent in AMISOM’s Sector 2, which covers the south of Somalia. Kenya also holds the Deputy Force Commander position and supplies several officers to AMISOM headquarters. However, AMISOM’s new mandate, its practical relationship with the FGS and its emerging security forces are still a work in progress.¹⁴² What is clear, however, is that the relationship between the governments of Somalia and Kenya has been getting chillier as Kenya continues its unabated support for the creation of a separate state in Jubbaland. Their differences are an open secret and influential allies such as the US are acting as a go-between in an attempt to defuse the simmering rift.

The *Ethiopian National Defense Force* (ENDF) is also a significant source of military power in south and central Somalia. There are an unknown number of ENDF personnel in Somalia. They play a crucial role in providing support to AMISOM troops in Sectors 3 and 4, which are centred on the towns of *Baidoa* and *Beled Weyne*, respectively. Unlike Kenyan forces, ENDF troops have since the mid-1990s regularly undertaken cross-border campaigns to engage Islamist militants.¹⁴³ Although not part of AMISOM, the ENDF is widely regarded as the most effective foreign force in Somalia, as is testified by Al Shabaab’s hasty retreat from cities such as Baleweyne and Baidoa. The activities of the ENDF, however, have been criticized by human rights organizations. Ethiopia’s unannounced withdrawal from Hudur, the capital of Bakool region, in March 2013, which Al Shabaab immediately retook, has created worries on many fronts.¹⁴⁴ Ethiopia later stated that its Somalia incursions were always intended to

¹⁴¹ Mohamoud (17-01-2013).

¹⁴² Williams 2013: 6.

¹⁴³ Ethiopia has been crossing the Somali border since the early 1990s and it conducted a full scale invasion in 2006.

¹⁴⁴ The move energized Al Shabaab, which had been on the run and demoralized. The sudden retreat also terrified anti-Al Shabaab elements in the areas controlled by Ethiopian forces and triggered a mass exodus from Hudur of people afraid of ruthless reprisals. The move also worried the government of Somalia and took international partners by surprise *Voice of America* (19-03-2013).

be limited in scope, although other concerns such as a lack of resources, a desire to put pressure on the donor community and dissatisfaction with the Somali government might have prompted the sudden pull outs. Another significant development was the death of Meles Zenawi, the Prime Minister of Ethiopia, on 20 August 2012. He had been the architect of Ethiopian policy towards Somalia since early 1990s. It is likely that a power struggle within Ethiopia or a change of policy by his successor would have a negative impact on the situation in Somalia.

The final set of actors can be classified as regional, rather than foreign, entities. The two most prominent are the authorities in Somaliland and Puntland. Somaliland declared its independence from the rest of Somalia in 1991 on the basis that it was a former British colony which had voluntarily united with Somalia at independence on 1 July 1960. It has functioned effectively as a separate political entity since 1991. It has applied for AU membership on the basis of its legal and political claims to independence but is not currently recognized as an independent state.¹⁴⁵ The authorities in Somaliland have held a number of democratic elections during this period and for most of the past two decades the region has been the most stable part of Somalia. In the past five years, significant tensions and violent clashes have occurred between the government in Somaliland and pro-union regions within Somaliland, such as *Sool* in the east and *Awdal* in the west, over the question of the future status of the region and its quest for independence.¹⁴⁶

Puntland has not declared independence but has operated as an autonomous entity since at least 1998. Puntland was in a particularly important position during the period of the first TFG (2004–2009) when Colonel Abdulahi Yusuf, who hailed from Puntland and had previously been its president, was elected President of Somalia. He resigned in December 2008, paving the way for Ethiopia's withdrawal and the new TFG configuration led by Sheikh Sharif. The Puntland authorities were also significant players in the formation of the Garowe Principles and the Roadmap, which ended the transition process in 2012.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁵ The governments of Somaliland and the Somalia began direct talks in 2011, but Somaliland still insists on its independence. The three most recent meetings between the presidents of Somalia and Somaliland took place in London, the UAE and Istanbul.

¹⁴⁶ *Wardheernews.com* (03-01-2011).

¹⁴⁷ Garowe is the capital of the Puntland region. The Garowe Principles are a set of commitments agreed by the six Somali actors that represented most of the political groupings in 2011. The Principles agreed a way to end the failed transition and usher in a new, more legitimate and more representative political settlement.

Kenya's Treatment of the Somalia conflict

What is most likely to change the security situation in Somalia today? Looking one to five years ahead, Somalia's conflict dynamics are likely to hinge on four key factors.

First, will the Federal Government of Somalia make any real progress in establishing effective governance structures outside of Mogadishu? The FGS is clearly considered more legitimate than the former TFG but it remains uncertain how far the local authorities, clans and warlord factions will respond to attempts by the FGS to extend its authority beyond the capital. This will be particularly important in relation to the Somaliland and Puntland regions. One of the major headaches for the FGS remains its limited domestic sources of revenue.

In Kenya-Somalia relations, the key source of tension between President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud and the new Kenyatta administration will be over how the southern Somali region of Jubbaland should be governed. While many Western governments are sympathetic to President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud's position, they are equally sympathetic to the desire of local actors to create local institutions. More importantly, Western actors are often reluctant to publicly defy an important ally such as Kenya. The position of the international community has thus been to "encourage both sides to compromise". This enables Kenya and its allies, such as Sheikh Ahmed Madobe who physically controls the contested territory, in particular the port city of Kismayo, to use their leverage to the maximum. For instance, the Kenyan army has allowed Ahmed Madobe to run Kismayo port freely, allowing the export of UN banned charcoal in the face of the publicly stated opposition of Somalia's president. Ahmed Madobe even forced a visiting government delegation to return to the airport.¹⁴⁸ The proponent of a Jubbaland state convened a conference on Jubbaland in defiance of Mogadishu, and there have been reports of skirmishes between Madobe's troops and militias allied with the Somali National Army in Kismayo, in which a number of pro-government fighters died.¹⁴⁹

The second factor relates to Al Shabaab's capacity to sustain its war-fighting efforts. It continues to lose territory, fighters and popular support, and has switched to insurgency tactics. Al Shabaab has decided to protect its remaining assets by choosing when and how it engages its AMISOM-led adversaries. Terrorist bombings, suicide attacks, assassinations and daring raids have become the norm of late. The most recent was an attack on the seat of the judicial arm of

¹⁴⁸ *Al Jazeera* (08-11-2012).

¹⁴⁹ *Agence France Presse* (02-02-2013).

the government in which 35 people were killed and many more wounded.¹⁵⁰ The increase in AMISOM troop numbers, the partial lifting of the 20-year UN arms embargo,¹⁵¹ a new permanent government and the emergence of more direct support from international partners, such as the recently announced US military aid to Somalia,¹⁵² make it unlikely that Al Shabaab will be able to reverse current trends. On the other hand, given how slow and arduous establishing the Somali security apparatus has been in the past five years, Al Shabaab will probably not be totally eliminated. It will probably be able to maintain a presence in outlying regions and the countryside, as it is doing now. Terrorist bombings in urban centres may diminish but will not be eradicated.

The third factor relates to the sustainability of the AMISOM forces and the extent to which their mandate will alter over time. If the simmering tensions between Somalia and Kenya over the Jubbaland issue fissure into a fully blown diplomatic row, and the signs are there, this could negatively affect security in southern Somalia and the fortunes of Al Shabaab. The stakes are too high for the region and the international community for the governments of Somalia and Kenya to embark on a diplomatic entanglement that could derail the progress made thus far.

A fourth set of issues revolves around the level of international engagement with Somalia, and the extent to which the key international stakeholders continue to prioritize Somalia – or whether their focus drifts towards alternative priorities either in Africa (e.g. the Democratic Republic of the Congo or Mali) or elsewhere. The current level of international engagement and enthusiasm means that the pessimism that has long been a byword for Somalia has given way to a broad international consensus that believes Somalia has turned the corner. An indication of the positive views of the international community can be gleaned from the non-stop visits of Somalia's president to international capitals and international conferences on Somalia, focused on development rather than reconciliation.¹⁵³

In terms of Kenya's own military dynamics several factors are relevant. The first is the potential ethnicization/tribalization of the military. Kenya is a country of 42 ethnic groups. The dominant ethnic groups in Kenya are the Kikuyu, Luhya, Luo, Kalenjin and Kamba. By and large the Kenyan armed forces have not

¹⁵⁰ *Washington Post* (15-04-2013).

¹⁵¹ *Reuters* (06-03-2013).

¹⁵² *BBC News* (09-04-2013).

¹⁵³ During the first seven months of his presidency President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud visited all the sub regional capitals as well as Riyadh, Cairo, Doha, London and Washington, where he met President Obama. There was a major international conference in London on 7 May 2013, followed by one in Brussels in September 2013.

become openly tribal; however, a recent incident in which soldiers rampaged in Garissa county, which is predominantly Somali, is a cause for concern.¹⁵⁴ The KDF draw personnel from all over the country through relatively open recruitment procedures and advertising. Once recruited into the military, soldiers are discouraged from referring to individuals by their tribal identities and there have been punishments for breaking this norm. The official languages of the military are English and Kiswahili. Most rank and file soldiers join the military because it provides a decent salary and numerous benefits.¹⁵⁵ This was particularly so before the Somali campaign when, apart from deployments to UN peacekeeping operations, the KDF was not an active force abroad.

One question is whether Kenyan politicians are trying to shape informal power structures within the military along ethnic lines through procedures for recruitment or promotion. There has long been anecdotal evidence that some soldiers perceive favouritism towards Kikuyus in the officer corps. Nevertheless, the KDF has tried hard to ensure that promotion within its ranks is based on performance rather than ethnic patronage. When the 2007 elections turned violent, senior military personnel came under considerable pressure to align themselves with one or other of the political parties contesting the election. The military successfully resisted this pressure, although they did not play a particularly proactive role in quelling the violence.¹⁵⁶ A key role was played by the Chief of General Staff at the time, General Jeremiah Kianga, a member of the Kamba tribe. In July 2011, however, Julius W. Karangi was promoted to the rank of General and appointed the new Chief of Defence Forces, where he remains. Karangi is a member of the Kikuyu tribe, known as a hardliner and believed to be keener than his predecessor to become involved in the political process.¹⁵⁷ Critics are anxious that Kenya's military is becoming a stronger, more confident and aggressive voice in politics as a result of its increased role in external assistance as part of the US-led so-called War on Terror, and of the popularity of the deployment in Somalia.¹⁵⁸

Kenyan forces currently contribute troops to both UN and AU peacekeeping operations. As of 31 January 2013, Kenya deployed 846 uniformed peacekeepers to five UN peacekeeping missions (see table 1).

¹⁵⁴ *BBC News* (11-11-2012).

¹⁵⁵ A Kenyan corporal earns KES 32,250 per month, or about USD 400, whereas a Private earns KES 19,941 (about USD 240) and all military ranks are entitled to USD 150 to USD 500 in allowances, depending on years of service and qualifications. Information obtained from *The Star* (03-10-2011).

¹⁵⁶ *The Guardian* (27-02-2008).

¹⁵⁷ Website of the Government of Kenya (2013).

¹⁵⁸ *Branch* (15-11-2011).

Table 1: Kenyan Uniformed Personnel in UN Peacekeeping Operations, 31 January 2013

<i>Mission</i>	<i>Experts</i>	<i>Police</i>	<i>Troops</i>	<i>Total</i>
MONUSCO	23	0	0	23
UNAMID	3	0	75	78
UNIFIL	0	0	1	1
UNMIL	0	19	2	21
UNMISS	4	18	701	723

Source: *United Nations Peacekeeping. "UN Mission's Summary detailed by Country" (2013)*

As is noted above, the KDF also has approximately 4600 troops and headquarters staff deployed in AMISOM. Working with a newly deployed battalion from Sierra Leone, the KDF has principal responsibility for controlling AMISOM Sector 2 in southern Somalia. At the headquarters level, Major General Julius Karanja is the Deputy Force Commander of AMISOM and is widely credited with being the architect of the battle to liberate Kismayo from Al Shabaab in late 2012.¹⁵⁹

Scenario Analysis

Four scenarios for future security developments in Somalia are considered plausible:

Blue Helmets: The AU's inability to fund AMISOM combined with the EU's unwillingness to continue to pay troops' allowances could lead to a re-hatting of AMISOM as a UN peacekeeping operation. Kenya would probably welcome this scenario as it would provide its troops with sustainable funding and logistics support.

Turbulent relations: Conflict between Kenya and Somalia continues over governance questions in southern Somalia. The FGS explicitly rejects Kenya's preferred "friends" in southern Somalia and Nairobi's Jubbaland Initiative has geopolitical consequences. If the Mogadishu government wins widespread international support, Kenya will have to decide how to respond and devise an alternative strategy for engaging with Somalia. Potentially, the FGS could ask Kenya to withdraw its troops from AMISOM, possibly citing the original rationale behind the force – that neighbouring states are too partisan to act as peacekeepers. Given the relative levels of power between these two actors, it is unclear whether such a request could be enforced, but there would be substantial political pressure on Kenya to depart.

¹⁵⁹ *Daily Nation* (12-08-2012).

Smooth progress: The governance questions surrounding Kismayo and southern Somalia are worked out in a cooperative fashion, and the FGS and the new government in Kenya work well as partners in the rebuilding of Somalia. They also agree workable arrangements on the repatriation of Somali refugees.

War comes home: In the doomsday scenario for Kenya, Al Shabaab forces are resurgent within Somalia and/or stir up increased tensions within Kenya itself, launching larger scale attacks in Nairobi and throughout Kenya. These, in turn, generate greater tension between Kenya's Somali population and others as the former suffer oppression, increasing the risk of radicalization among Kenyan youths.

Strategies Going Forward

Given the current situation in Somalia, what options does Kenya's new government have and which strategies is it likely to adopt? Much hinges on the configuration of the new government in Kenya and the extent to which the KDF becomes politicized or tribalized as part of that process. However, Kenyan policy on Somalia has traditionally generated considerable support across the Kenyan political spectrum. Thus, the structural reasons for significant engagement are likely to persist regardless of which political party forms the government. There is consequently a high likelihood that continuity will be more evident than change in the foreseeable future.

Kenya is likely to continue to participate in AMISOM, as the principal military instrument for engaging in stabilization initiatives or counterinsurgency operations against Al Shabaab. It is also likely to continue to work within IGAD, as the primary political vehicle for engaging with Somalia through the Grand Plan. Kenya will continue to be a prominent voice in the various international forums organized to discuss the Somali situation, such as the forthcoming conferences in the United Kingdom and Turkey.

Finally, both Kenya and Somalia are aware that peaceful coexistence is much better than tension and potential conflict. The new leadership in Kenya under President Uhuru Kenyatta could forge a new way forward for the two neighbours. For nearly 20 years, Kenya, unlike Ethiopia, largely steered clear of meddling in Somalia's exceptionally complex political process. Kenya has now deployed troops inside Somalia, however, and it would also like to see a favourable outcome to the Jubbaland process. It has fully foisted itself on the Somali crisis. This comes with risks that could easily be exploited by groups such as Al Shabaab.

Uganda-Somalia Relations: Before and After the Transition

Author: PhD. Kasaija Phillip Apuuli¹⁶⁰

Introduction

Since 2011, when the *African Union Mission in Somalia* (AMISOM) started to extend its military operations beyond Mogadishu, the *Uganda Peoples' Defence Forces* (UPDF) have done most of the heavy fighting against Al Shabaab and its sympathizers.¹⁶¹ Uganda also played a mediating role in the extension of the life of the *Transitional Federal Government* (TFG) for a further year after its term ended in August 2011. The agreement between the President of the TFG and the Speaker of the *Transitional Federal Parliament* (TFP) of Somalia (also known as *The Kampala Accord*) was negotiated in Uganda in June 2011, and President Museveni became one of the guarantors of its implementation.¹⁶² In September 2012, at the end of the transition period, Hassan Sheikh Mohamud was elected President of the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) under a new constitution, the first President of Somalia to possess a full mandate.¹⁶³

UPDF troops were officially deployed to Somalia on 1 March 2007 to undertake a peacekeeping mission under AMISOM.¹⁶⁴ The mission was authorized by the African Union (AU) and the United Nations (UN).¹⁶⁵ Uganda's participation in AMISOM was authorized by the Ugandan Parliament on 13 February 2007.¹⁶⁶ Under the 2005 UPDF Act, the President can deploy troops outside Uganda for the purposes of peacekeeping or peace enforcement,¹⁶⁷ but parliamentary approval must be sought.¹⁶⁸

Outline of Chapter

¹⁶⁰ Apuuli is currently a researcher at the Department of Political Science and Public Administration, Makerere University, Kampala.

¹⁶¹ *International Crisis Group* 2012: 3.

¹⁶² See *The Kampala Accord* (2011).

¹⁶³ *Institute for Security Studies* "Peace and Security Council Report" October 2012: 4.

¹⁶⁴ Kiyonga (2007).

¹⁶⁵ *Uganda Parliament 2007*. See also AU Peace and Security Council Communiqué (19-01-2007); and UN Security Council Resolution 1744 (2007).

¹⁶⁶ *Uganda Parliament* (2007).

¹⁶⁷ Section 31(1) of the *Uganda Peoples' Defence Forces [UPDF] Act* 2005.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.* 39(2).

This chapter discusses Uganda-Somalia relations since the end of Somalia's transition in August 2012.¹⁶⁹ The chapter examines the current military situation in Somalia and discusses the way Uganda, through the UPDF's participation in AMISOM, has sought to influence the different political, military and civil actors in Somalia. It looks into the future and discusses the role that Uganda might play in Somalia in the years to come. The chapter seeks to answer two research questions. First, what possible role can Uganda play or continue to play after the end of transition and the establishment of a permanent government in Somalia? Second, in the light of the fact that new actors – political and military – have entered Somalia, what is the best and worst case scenario for Uganda's continued engagement in Somalia?¹⁷⁰

Methodologically, the chapter is a product of reviews of primary and secondary sources, including journal articles, books, newspapers, official reports, press releases, communiqués and the decisions of various bodies such as the Ugandan Parliament, the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the AU and the UN. The author has also conducted a number of interviews with high-level government officials in Uganda, including officials at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and senior officers of UPDF, who have been at the centre of formulating and executing Uganda's foreign policy on Somalia.¹⁷¹ The author has also used the inside knowledge of Somalia which he gathered while working as a senior official at IGAD's Facilitation Office for Somalia Peace and National Reconciliation in 2009.

Recent Events in Somalia-Uganda Relations

Uganda has been engaged in Somalia since 2007. Uganda's role as set out in the AMISOM mandate was to protect the TFG, led first by Colonel Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed and then by Sharif Sheikh Ahmed. When first deployed, Ugandan troops faced considerable security challenges and therefore limited their activities to patrolling parts of the city and assisting with the provision of humanitarian assistance. Relations between Uganda and the TFG soured on several occasions over accusations that AMISOM had targeted and killed civilians.¹⁷²

The conflict in Somalia gained great significance for Uganda in July 2010. On 11 July 2010, during the soccer World Cup final, bombs were detonated at two locations in Kampala, the Kyadondo Rugby Club at Lugogo and the Ethiopian Restaurant in Kabalagala, killing more than 70 people and wounding scores of

¹⁶⁹ The paper was completed in August 2013.

¹⁷⁰ All transcripts of all the interviews cited in this chapter were cleared and approved by the interviewees and remain with the authors.

¹⁷¹ The interviewees agreed to be quoted on the record using their full names and designations.

¹⁷² See for example *Mail & Guardian* (03-02-2009).

others.¹⁷³ A third bomb failed to go off and was found and defused by the security agencies. Prior to the attacks, Al Shabaab's media arm, *Al Kataib*, released an English language video directing "Mujahideen to make the Ugandans their priority for attacks".¹⁷⁴ The day after the attacks, Al Shabaab claimed responsibility for the blasts.¹⁷⁵ Nearly two weeks after the attacks, President Museveni issued a statement in which he declared that Al Shabaab had "committed aggression against [Uganda]" and "we now have a right of self-defence".¹⁷⁶ He argued that the attacks:

*[gave] Uganda's role in AMISOM the popular legitimacy it lacked and strengthened the country's resolve to emerge victorious in Somalia.*¹⁷⁷

The bombing resulted in Uganda calling for an increase in troop numbers in the AMISOM mission, and lobbying the AU and the UN to change the rules of engagement of the mission so that AMISOM troops could undertake offensive operations against Al Shabaab.¹⁷⁸ Before the attacks, the rules of engagement were such that AMISOM troops could only fire on insurgents after they had been fired on. President Museveni was so incensed that he announced that Uganda was ready to provide an extra 20 000 troops to the AMISOM mission.¹⁷⁹

Politically, Uganda brokered the *Kampala Accord*, extending the transition period in Somalia to August 2012. The context in which the agreement was concluded was a disagreement that emerged between the TFG President, Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, and the Speaker of the parliament, Sharif Hassan, over whether to hold presidential elections in August 2011 at the end of the transitional period as stipulated in the Djibouti Agreement of 2009. The Djibouti Agreement was the UN-led process, which had resulted in the election of Sharif Sheikh Ahmed in January 2009. President Sharif's TFG was to serve up to August 2011, when general elections were due to be held. Wrangles between the President, the Prime Minister and the Speaker characterized both Somali transitional governments.¹⁸⁰ For example, a rift between President Abdullahi Yusuf and Prime Minister Ali Ghedi resulted in a split in the TFG in 2004–2005. The Kampala Accord was concluded to resolve the differences between President Sheikh Ahmed Sharif and Speaker Sharif Hassan. Both were invited to Kampala in June 2011 and told to reach an agreement, which resulted in the extension of the transitional period to August 2012.¹⁸¹ It is reported that President Museveni played a direct role in the

¹⁷³ Harper 2012: 185; Dersso 2010: 2.

¹⁷⁴ Dersso 2012: 2.

¹⁷⁵ *Daily Nation on the Web* (12-07-2010).

¹⁷⁶ *Sunday Monitor* (25-07-2010).

¹⁷⁷ Asare (2010).

¹⁷⁸ Kasaija (b) 2011: 680.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁰ *International Crisis Group* 2012: 6.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid* p. 7.

conclusion of the agreement. When the talks appeared on the verge of collapse, Museveni, “barely concealed his anger and [spoke in] strong language, including an explicit threat to pull the UPDF out of the AMISOM mission”.¹⁸² President Museveni subsequently signed the agreement as one of the guarantors of its implementation.¹⁸³

In October 2011, AMISOM announced that it had taken full control of Mogadishu for the first time since its deployment in 2009.¹⁸⁴ Al Shabaab abandoned its occupation of the capital after coming under military pressure from AMISOM. Since 2009, AMISOM troops together with the Somalia National Security Force (SNSFs) have continued to expand their area of control as Al Shabaab has abandoned its positions. In mid-2013, Uganda had the largest contingent of troops in the AMISOM mission, with 6400 deployed mainly in the Banadir region (also known as Sector One).¹⁸⁵

Table 1 Number of Ugandan troops in Somalia, selected years¹⁸⁶

Year	Number of Troops
2007	1,500
2010	7,200
2011	5,160
2012	6,860
2013	6,400

Source: Various Internet sources. Note that these are estimated figures.¹⁸⁷

In addition, some of the elements of the nascent SNSF have been trained by the European Union Training Mission (EUTM) at the Bihanga Military Training School in western Uganda. About 3000 Somali soldiers have been trained by the EUTM since 2010.¹⁸⁸ Desertions from the SNSF have been rife in the past, however, and the limited ability of the TFG to pay its security forces has resulted in commanders and troops alike deserting and selling their arms and ammunition — sometimes even to their enemies.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ Article 9 of *The Kampala Accord*

¹⁸⁴ *Institute for Security Studies* “Peace and Security Council Report” November 2011: 10.

¹⁸⁵ Interview with Major General Nathan Mugish (18-02-2013).

¹⁸⁶ Note that these numbers are estimated.

¹⁸⁷ Uganda has been forced to decrease its contributions as more countries have contributed to AMISOM. Note that Uganda also has a contingent of 140 policemen serving as AMISOM Police.

¹⁸⁸ Baguma (a) (2013).

¹⁸⁹ *United Nations Security Council* (10-03-2010), p. 7.

Uganda and AMISOM: A Military Sector Analysis

Ugandan troops constitute the biggest contribution to the AMISOM, which has a total authorized force strength of 17 731 uniformed personnel, including police.¹⁹⁰ The AMISOM police component is made up of 363 police officers drawn from seven countries: Gambia, Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Uganda and Zimbabwe.^{191 192}

Under the strategic military concept worked out by the ministers of defence and the chiefs of defence of the AMISOM troop contributing countries, the uniformed personnel are deployed in four sectors.¹⁹³ According to the deployment plan, Ugandan troops are located in Sector One, comprised of Banadir (Mogadishu), and the Middle and Lower Shebelle regions; and Sector Three, comprised of Gedo, Bay and Bakool (Baidoa) and the western part of Hiraan region. The participation of Djibouti (December 2011) and Kenya (October 2011) expanded AMISOM's area of operation to include the regions of Galmudug, Mudug and the part of Hiraan (Beledweyne) controlled by Djiboutian troops; as well as the Middle and Lower Jubba regions (Kismaayo) controlled by Kenyan troops.

In mid-2013, AMISOM controlled the coast of Somalia from Kismaayo in the South to the port of Elmaan in the North.¹⁹⁴ The expansion of AMISOM's area of operation means that Ugandan troops are no longer a specific target for Al Shabaab.¹⁹⁵ In addition, the many fronts on which the group has had to fight have weakened it. Uganda has been at the forefront of calling on other countries to contribute to the AMISOM mission and the strategy appears to have worked.¹⁹⁶ Nonetheless, Al Shabaab continues to wage a violent campaign in the country.

Al Shabaab, which means "Youth", was founded by former members of *Al Itihad Al Islami*, a militant group active in Somalia between 1991 and 1997.¹⁹⁷ Elements of Al Shabaab appear have been independently active since

¹⁹⁰ *United Nations Security Council Resolution 2036* (2012).

¹⁹¹ A contingent of a battalion strong force of the Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF) will shortly be deploying as part of AMISOM. See AMISOM website (2013).

¹⁹² The seventh country not mentioned on the AMISOM website. See AMISOM website (2013).

¹⁹³ *United Nations Security Council* January 2012, p. 6.

¹⁹⁴ *Institute for Security Studies* "Peace and Security Council Report" October 2011: 10.

¹⁹⁵ Interview with Major General Nathan Mugisha (18-02-2013).

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁷ *UN Monitoring Group on Somalia* 2010: 14. See also Dersso (2010) arguing that Al Shabaab can be traced to the 1970s when militant Islamist groups emerged in opposition to Siad Barre's brutality against religious leaders in Somalia. Nevertheless, its immediate emergence is associated with the rise of the UIC to political prominence in 2006 (2010: 5).

approximately 2002, but the group first acquired a public profile in 2005 when it desecrated a former Italian cemetery in Mogadishu and established a base in the capital.¹⁹⁸ In 2006, the group emerged as the militant wing of the *Union of Islamic Courts* (UIC). The UIC originated out of a judicial system funded by the powerful business community to try to bring some semblance of law and order to a country without a government.¹⁹⁹ By June 2006 the UIC had managed to take power in Mogadishu by defeating and neutralizing the warlords. It then rapidly extended its influence to the south and central parts of the country.²⁰⁰ UIC rule in Somalia lasted only a short time. Ethiopia, fearing the radicals in the group's midst and the establishment of a strong Islamic state, invaded Somalia on Christmas Eve of 2006. By the end of 2007 it had expelled the UIC from Somalia.²⁰¹ Ethiopia's fear of the UIC was exacerbated by some of the leaders of the UIC raising the Greater Somalia policy, which would lead to Ethiopia's loss of the Ogaden region.²⁰²

Al Shabaab has increased the frequency of its suicide attacks and assassinations since it lost control of Mogadishu.²⁰³ In addition, the group has changed its style of operations, increasing its use of hit and run tactics, whereas previously it had engaged in more conventional war fighting tactics on defined fronts. This reversion to guerrilla tactics, including strategic withdrawals from the territory under its control and its fixed defensive positions, is its only means to ensure its survival. Military analysts believe that the tactics adopted by Al Shabaab will ensure that the group will live to fight another day.²⁰⁴ It is reported that elements of Al Shabaab are moving northwards into Puntland and the Golala Mountains west of Bossaso.²⁰⁵ Thus, while the group has been weakened by its loss of urban territory, it has not been decisively defeated.

In sum, militarily the balance of power seems to have tilted in favour of the AMISOM forces. Al Shabaab has lost a lot of ground but remains a potent force. In order to weaken it further and make the FGS more representative of a wider range of interests and actors, President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud has announced that the government is willing to negotiate with moderate elements of Al Shabaab.²⁰⁶

¹⁹⁸ *UN Monitoring Group on Somalia* 2010: 14.

¹⁹⁹ *BBC News* (06-06-2006).

²⁰⁰ Seifert 2008: 29.

²⁰¹ For details, see Kasaija 2010a: pp. 265-6.

²⁰² Seifert 2008: 35.

²⁰³ See for example Rawlinson (2013).

²⁰⁴ Interview with Major General Nathan Mugisha (18-02-2013).

²⁰⁵ Hammond 2013: 190.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

The End of Transition

As is noted above, the transition period ended with the establishment of the FGS in September 2012. A provisional federal constitution was adopted on 1 August 2012 and is subject to debate pending a constitutional referendum and general elections 2016. To ensure a fair representation of the different communities in the country, the constitution was formulated on clan-based lines with 135 delegates from all the Somali clans participating in a process that was characterized by confusion and disagreement.²⁰⁷ First, there was the issue of ownership. The constitution making process was dominated by international actors, such as the UN, the AU and IGAD, in alliance with some local and national forces.²⁰⁸ Some segments of Somali society, such as the diaspora, were not part of the process. In addition, discussion of some crucial issues, such as the question of minority rights and Somalia's borders, was postponed until a later date. It is therefore possible that, in the immediate future, the constitution could lead to divisions and polarization in Somali society.²⁰⁹

The political dispensation that resulted from the end of the transition has elicited "grievances arising from inherent imperfections in the whole transition process".²¹⁰ The grievances against the FGS arise from rampant corruption in Somalia's various administrations, difficulties in monitoring the use of financial resources and equipment, lack of governance capacity among civil servants, and allegations of seat-buying in the Federal Parliament. When he took office, President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud said that there was "not one penny" in the national treasury.²¹¹ During the transitional period, the systematic misappropriation, embezzlement and outright theft of public resources became a system of governance.²¹² Under the TFGs, nothing would get done without someone asking: "What is in it for me?" (*Maxaa igu jiraa?*).²¹³ A report commissioned by the *World Bank* and published in May 2012 found that 68 per cent of TFG revenues from the period 2009–2010 were unaccounted for.²¹⁴

The effect of the end of the political transition has been a shift in the focus of the population from the military aspects of the conflict to the political ones. The new government has become increasingly impatient with AMISOM. For example, attempts have been made by the FGS to push AMISOM out of Mogadishu.²¹⁵

²⁰⁷ *Institute for Security Studies* "Peace and Security Council Report" October 2012: 3.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.* p. 5.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹¹ Hammond 2013: 191.

²¹² *United Nations Security Council* July 2012: 12.

²¹³ *Ibid.*

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*

²¹⁵ Interview with Major General Nathan Mugisha (18-02-2013).

The government encouraged civilians to take over the national stadium in Mogadishu, which had been the mission's base of operations. The FGS argues that since there is now stability in Mogadishu, AMISOM should relocate to the periphery of the capital. This, according to Ugandan officials, is to take AMISOM for granted.²¹⁶

In sum, the end of the transition has heralded a new dawn for Somalia. The country now has a government with a fixed term of office. However, the process of constitution making and the election of the FGS have raised a number of challenges which will have to be dealt with before the government's term expires in 2016. Corruption was all-pervasive during the two TFGs (of Abdulahi Yusuf and Sheik Sharif), and the new FGS will have to deal with the issue. The end of the transition has given many Somalis a perception that peacekeeping forces are no longer required, especially in Mogadishu.

AMISOM's relations with the FGS: Funding and Implications

Increasingly, AMISOM's future is being shaped by the need to respond to important developments. Politically, the force has had to contend with the new FGS. President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud has insisted that it is his government's prerogative to determine the nature and timing of outside assistance.²¹⁷ As is noted above, the FGS has expressed its determination to assert its autonomy on the basis that it is no longer a transitional mechanism but a sovereign government. This possibly explains the attitude to the presence of AMISOM forces of sections of the population in Mogadishu.

The increase in the number of uniformed AMISOM personnel has had "significant resource implications".²¹⁸ By the end of 2011, the mission had cost USD 247 million, most of which was met by non-AU donors.²¹⁹ The increase in support costs for the mission has been driven by several factors: the larger geographic area of operations; climatic conditions; the lack of security; weak infrastructure; the mobility requirements of a dynamic combat force; and the difficulty of using civilian contractors in a war environment.²²⁰ Funding has not been a cause for concern for Uganda's component of AMISOM. One of the reasons given for Uganda's participation in the mission in the first place was that the operation would be budget neutral for the country, meaning that the funding would not come out of the country's budget.²²¹ As a result, the country's

²¹⁶ Ibid.

²¹⁷ Williams (2013).

²¹⁸ *United Nations Security Council* January 2012: 7.

²¹⁹ *International Crisis Group* 2012: 3.

²²⁰ *United Nations Security Council* January 2012: 7.

²²¹ Kasajja (a) 2010: 268.

economy is benefitting from the mission. According to UPDF commanders, the money earned by the UPDF soldiers in the AMISOM mission has supported Uganda's economy.²²² Uganda's AMISOM soldiers are engaged in the construction of houses and businesses back home, thereby contributing to the growth of the country's economy.

Humanitarian work

From the beginning, the UPDF component of AMISOM recognized that *winning the hearts and minds* of the local population would be crucial to bringing stability to Somalia. As a result, the UPDF has been engaged in extending the limited amount of humanitarian assistance provided to the local population. This has included the provision of healthcare and water to sections of the local population. It should be noted that the humanitarian situation in Somalia continues to be one of the worst in the world.²²³

Notably in this context, in early January 2013, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) estimated that approximately 2.1 million Somalis were living in a state of humanitarian emergency and crisis, while 1.1 million were internally displaced.²²⁴ It was in recognition of the dire humanitarian crisis facing the civilian population that UPDF/AMISOM started to undertake humanitarian work as part of the mandate given to it by United Nations Security Council resolution 1744 (2007).

According to Brigadier General Paul Lokech, at the risk of suffering attacks from Al Shabaab's suicide bombers, the UPDF started offering medical care to the Somali civilian population.²²⁵ Lokech disclosed that "in every detachment of the UPDF, we give the population free medical care, with 600 cases on average being handled per day".²²⁶ The UPDF has also been providing fresh water to the civilian population.²²⁷ UPDF civil-military relations have been criticized by the AU, which argues that the medicine and water is for AMISOM soldiers.²²⁸ One explanation for the AU's unhappiness could be that the AMISOM mission has largely been funded from donations and, as a result, its funding "remains unpredictable and unreliable".²²⁹ The AU therefore argues that money should be spent only on the most essential needs of the mission.

²²² Interview with Major General Nathan Mugisha (18-02-2013); Interview with Lieutenant Colonel Bahoku-Barigye (26-02-2013).

²²³ Dersso 2010: 3.

²²⁴ *Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)* (2013).

²²⁵ Interview with Brigadier General Paul Lokech (13-03-2013).

²²⁶ Cited in Mwenda 2012: 5.

²²⁷ Interview with Brigadier General Paul Lokech (13-03-2013).

²²⁸ *Ibid.*

²²⁹ *African Union* January 2013: D-6.

Relations between the FGS and AMISOM are increasingly defined by the former's wish to assert its sovereignty over Somalia. The FGS has argued that it is not a transitional government and should therefore decide what the AMISOM operation does on the ground. Financing the AMISOM operation also continues to be a source of concern. The mission's engagement in humanitarian work, which is part of its mandate, is unpopular with the AU.

Structural Causes

In 2011, for the fourth year running, Somalia topped the list of the world's failed states, scoring high on every social, economic and political indicator.²³⁰ The structural causes of violence in Somalia include clanism, corruption and weak institutions.²³¹

First, the existence of clan ties has been a formidable obstacle to the formation of a stable, modern nation state in Somalia. It helps to explain the failure of internal and external efforts to "unite" Somalia under the authority of a central government in Mogadishu.²³² The four main clans are: *Hawiye*, *Daarood*, *Digil-Rahanweyn*²³³ and *Dir*. Faction leaders have deliberately used clanism (genealogy) as a political weapon, and brutally ensured that other forms of identity cannot occupy political space.²³⁴ Over the years, Somalis have been divided between those who allege that their clan or sub-clan is under-represented in government, and those who believe that the existing government is maintaining a clan and regional balance.²³⁵ According to Brigadier General Lokech, when Uganda deployed troops in Somalia after the collapse of the state, it soon recognized the importance of clans in the provision of security to the population.²³⁶ The importance of clans was also recognized when successive transitional governments were constituted under the 4.5 formula for power sharing, by which political power was shared between the four main clans and the minority clans also participated as the equivalent of half of a major clan.

Second, corruption was endemic especially among the transitional federal institutions. In 2010, the *International Contact Group* on Somalia expressed deep concern about corruption in these institutions.²³⁷ The TFG acknowledged the existence of widespread mismanagement and corruption in its 2010 roadmap for

²³⁰ Harper 2012: 105.

²³¹ See for example Mengisteab 2013: pp. 26-36.

²³² Ibid: 36.

²³³ Others have called it Digil-Mirifle.

²³⁴ Little 2003: 12.

²³⁵ Kasaija (a) 2010: 275.

²³⁶ Interview with Brigadier General Paul Lokech (13-03-2013).

²³⁷ *International Crisis Group* 2012: 10.

building durable peace and a functioning state, by creating an Anti-corruption Commission.²³⁸ A Public Finance Management Unit headed by Abdirazak Fataag was established in the Prime Minister's Office in 2010. Its May 2011 report uncovered gross financial mismanagement, large scale misappropriation of public and donor funds, unethical and unacceptable professional behaviour, financial intimidation of the executive's office, which compromised transparency and accountability, and concealment of actual resource flows.²³⁹ The TFG called the report a work of fiction. A parliamentary motion to establish an ad hoc committee to investigate the corruption charges was not debated because the Speaker prevented parliament from holding official sessions.²⁴⁰ Accusations of corruption within the transitional federal institutions persisted. President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud has declared the reform of public finance one of his priorities.

Third, the long period of the transition has been characterized by weak institutions. For example, the TFP was too crisis ridden and factionalized to legislate effectively, and the administration was unwilling to share sufficient power and resources with regional governments. Matters were not helped by an executive that was badly divided between the president and the prime minister. The FGS also faces challenges in this area, the most fundamental being to ensure that its legitimacy and the effectiveness of its policies are felt beyond Mogadishu. President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud is making efforts to meet these challenges. He has been travelling to cities throughout the country to conduct consultations with the people on Somalia's future. This is something his predecessors never did – perhaps because most of the cities were never under government control.²⁴¹

Uganda's Responses

Uganda's response to the structural causes of conflict in Somalia has been to engage with the Federal Government institutions.²⁴² As one of the main troop contributing countries to AMISOM, Uganda sees the need to have the institutions of the Somali state in working order so that the mission can have reliable local partners in Somalia. In this regard, the Kampala Accord, which broke the stalemate between the transitional federal institutions in June 2011, called for the creation of an environment that was conducive to cooperative working relationships between the transitional federal institutions.²⁴³

²³⁸ Ibid.

²³⁹ See Fartaag May 2011.

²⁴⁰ *United States. State Department* 2011: 32.

²⁴¹ Hammond 2013: 188.

²⁴² Interview with Ambassador James Mugume (13-03-2013); Interview with Brigadier General Paul Lokech, (13-03-2013).

²⁴³ The Kampala Accord Article 4(j).

Multiplication of Players and Uganda's Response

Many more actors became engaged in Somalia in 2010, partly in anticipation of the end of the transition originally planned for August 2011. This renewed interest in Somalia brought with it increased jockeying for influence.²⁴⁴ The UN, the Arab League, the AU and IGAD all continued to be engaged in Somalia. Regional actors, such as Ethiopia and Kenya, and countries from beyond the region, some with profound security interests in the country, such as France, Turkey and the United Kingdom, became increasingly involved. Kenya unilaterally entered Somalia in October 2011 to “weaken and incapacitate” Al Shabaab and to:

*...give the Somali government the ability to assume control of the country, and end two decades of instability that made it a safe haven for extremism.*²⁴⁵

Shortly after the launch of Kenya's campaign, Ethiopian forces once again entered Somalia and advanced on Al Shabaab positions across the Bay, Bakool, and Hiiraan regions. Before the entry of Kenya, which subsequently became part of AMISOM, Uganda was the biggest troop contributing country and dominated the mission's command. However, once Kenya and Djibouti joined AMISOM, a new command structure was needed.²⁴⁶ Uganda was reluctant to relinquish its lead role.²⁴⁷

Of the non-regional countries, United Kingdom and Turkey should be noted as having been the most active in Somalia recently, but there are also others. The United Kingdom hosted the London conference on Somalia in February 2012, which resulted in the international community agreeing a common set of rules on engaging with Somalia, as well as an agreement on a timeframe for ending the transition.²⁴⁸ The most significant outcome of the London conference was an agreement that the transition in Somalia had to come to an end.

Turkey, seen as “an emergent actor”²⁴⁹ in Somalia, arrived in 2011 with noble, if possibly naive, intentions to end the famine and provide the necessary support

²⁴⁴ *International Crisis Group* 2012: 11.

²⁴⁵ See Kenya government website: “Kenyan-Somali Relations” (2013).

²⁴⁶ The force headquarters in Mogadishu was reconstituted with 85 military officers, of whom 16 are Kenyan. One of the posts that went to Djibouti was that of the mission spokesperson. Uganda retained the position of force commander.

²⁴⁷ ICG 2012: 11.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid*: 185. It hosted a further meeting on Somalia in May 2013.

²⁴⁹ Hammond (2013).

and guidance to make the TFG more effective and more popular.²⁵⁰ Turkey has impressed Somalis with its bilateral aid, the provision of scholarships for Somali students and its willingness to locate its own nationals in downtown Mogadishu. The Prime Minister of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, visited in 2011.²⁵¹ Turkey organized the Istanbul conference in May 2012, which brought together approximately 400 civil society leaders from Somalia and its diaspora to discuss the draft constitution.

Uganda's View of Somalia

Uganda has had to recognize the presence and efforts of new actors. A number of Ugandan officials feel that Uganda has lost its relevance due to the multiplication of actors in Somalia. According to Ugandan officials such as Major General Mugisha, after the transition period eventually came to an end in August 2012, Uganda's influence in Somalia was somewhat toned down.²⁵² Ugandan officials are increasingly speaking nostalgically about the TFG of Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, which took Uganda seriously. The current FGS is thought to be taking AMISOM, and by extension Uganda, for granted. The first trip abroad by President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, for instance, was to Uganda demonstrating the importance the FGS attaches to the country.²⁵³

Conflict Dynamics and Actors

The conflict in Somalia has at different times been at different levels and involved a multiplicity of players with varied interests. It has been described as "hybrid warfare"—a combination of conventional capabilities, irregular tactics and formations, and terrorist acts as well as indiscriminate violence, coercion and criminal disorder.²⁵⁴ At one level, the conflict represents a struggle between groups with competing political and ideological agendas. For example, Al Shabaab professes a Salafi version of Islam, while the TFG and the FGS have accommodated a range of views from all shades of opinion. At another level, the conflict is a product of the clan dynamics that continue to shape the civil war. For example, in central Somalia, the *Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a* (ASWJ) alliance of the Habar Gidir Ayr, Marehaan and Dir clan militias has been fighting against Al Shabaab militias drawn mainly from the Murusade and Duduble clans.²⁵⁵

²⁵⁰ *International Crisis Group* 2012: 11.

²⁵¹ Hammond 2013: 191.

²⁵² Interview Major General Nathan Mugisha (18-02-2013).

²⁵³ Hammond 2013: 187.

²⁵⁴ *UN Monitoring Group on Somalia* 2010: 10.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

AMISOM entered the conflict with Islamists who wanted to get rid of the transitional government. Its mandate was specifically to protect the TFG and its institutions.²⁵⁶ The attacks on Uganda of July 2010 led to a call to change the mandate of the mission. It was argued by Kenya's then Foreign Minister, Moses Wetangula, that:

*Peacekeeping [in Somalia] is a misnomer, we need a change in mandate for enforcing peace.*²⁵⁷

An expansion of the AMISOM mandate allowing it to launch offensives against Al Shabaab was not granted by the UN, but an understanding emerged that the rules of engagement could be formulated in such a way that would allow AMISOM to take pre-emptive action where it had credible information about an imminent attack by Al Shabaab or any other insurgent group.²⁵⁸ Thus, AMISOM was able to launch the attacks against Al Shabaab that eventually forced it to abandon its bases in Mogadishu.

There are several distinct forms of armed conflict in Somalia: religious conflict, a civil war and a war economy conflict. Some forms of violence are more prevalent than others across different parts of Somalia. Among the armed opposition groups that are or have been active in Somalia are Al Shabaab, Ras Kamboni and the ASWJ. These three are now the most active militia groups. Al Shabaab poses the most serious security threat to the FGS and AMISOM.²⁵⁹ While the FGS, with the support of AMISOM, is now in charge of all the major urban centres in Somalia, much of rural Somalia remains in the hands of Al Shabaab.²⁶⁰

²⁵⁶ United Nations Security Council resolution 1744 (2007) mandated AMISOM to: support dialogue and reconciliation in Somalia by assisting with the free movement, safe passage and protection of all those involved in the national reconciliation process; to provide, as appropriate, protection to the TFIs to help them carry out their functions of government, and security for key infrastructure; to assist, within its capabilities, and in coordination with other parties, with implementation of the National Security and Stabilization Plan, in particular the effective re-establishment and training of all-inclusive Somalia security forces; to contribute, as may be requested and within capabilities, to the creation of the necessary security conditions for the provision of humanitarian assistance; to protect its personnel, facilities, installations, equipment and mission, and to ensure the security and freedom of movement of its personnel.

²⁵⁷ Cited in Kazooba (2010).

²⁵⁸ Dersso 2010: 17.

²⁵⁹ Ibid. p. 5.

²⁶⁰ Hammond 2013: 189.

Actors

This section provides an overview of the key groups in the Somali civil war.

Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujahideen (Al Shabaab)

As of mid-2013, Al Shabaab had three main categories of fighters: a core force of fewer than an estimated 2500 Somalis and several hundred foreign fighters;²⁶¹ a large number of local clan militias aligned with the group but not readily deployable in operations outside their home areas; and irregular fighters engaged in specific operations on a pay-as-you-go basis.²⁶² The group compensates for its relatively small numbers, and the variable quality of its forces, by the mobility of its forces and its ability to concentrate them across considerable distances at short notice and to great effect.²⁶³ The military operations launched by AMISOM in the second half of 2011 degraded the group's forces through desertion, capture and casualties.

Al Shabaab has given the Somalia conflict a more global, jihadist dimension, through the rise of foreign fighters within the ranks of the organization and their subsequent assumption of key leadership roles. Al Shabaab has been responsible for introducing terrorist techniques to the Somalia conflict, such as suicide bombings, that were previously unknown. According to the AMISOM Force Commander, Lieutenant General Andrew Gutti:

*[the group] is now using ambushes, sniper attacks, roadside bombs and assassinations, which are more difficult to predict and counter.*²⁶⁴

Al Shabaab's strength has been degraded since it lost its basis of support in Mogadishu, but it has tried to compensate for this by adopting guerrilla tactics to ensure its survival. The group has also established links with other extremist groups in the Middle East and West Africa in pursuit of its goal of global jihad. The group has a declared ideological affinity with Al Qaeda, and in February 2010 it announced that it was forming an alliance with it.²⁶⁵ In addition, the

²⁶¹ Note that this figure has been changing over time. For example at one time it was estimated that the group's strength ranged from 3000 to 7000 fighters. In 2010 it was thought that the number of non-Somali Al-Shabaab fighters was between 200 and 300. Perhaps as many as 1000 ethnic Somalis from the diaspora and neighbouring countries have joined Al-Shabaab (Shinn 2010).

²⁶² *UN Monitoring Group on Somalia* 2010: 15.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁴ Cited in Kasasira 2013: 6.

²⁶⁵ Dersso 2010: 7.

group is believed to be linked to Al Huti in Yemen, the Al Quds Brigade in Palestine,²⁶⁶ and to Boko Haram in Nigeria.²⁶⁷

Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a

Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a (The People of Sunna and the Majority) was established with the support of General Mohamed Farah Aydiid in 1991, in the aftermath of the Siad Barre regime. Its aim was to counter the growing influence of militant reformist movements such as *Al Ittihad Al Islami*.²⁶⁸ ASWJ is currently led by Sheikh Ibrahim Sheikh Hassan. It promotes moderate Sufi Islamism and is an umbrella group for various local militia groups, clan interests, political opportunists and external agendas. The group operates in the western Galguduud region and is anchored mainly in the Habar Gidir Ayr, Dir and Marehaan clans of these regions. By 2009, the group had emerged as the largest and most effective government-aligned fighting force in southern Somalia.²⁶⁹ Its rise to prominence in the current conflict is attributable to its opposition to Al Shabaab's attacks on Somalia's traditional Sufi Islamic practices.²⁷⁰ The group receives support from Ethiopia in the form of training and weapons. It has in the past cooperated with the TFG and is now cooperating closely with the FGS, having signed a power-sharing agreement with the TFG in March 2010.²⁷¹ Recently, the group has been recognized by the international community as an important ally of the Somali government, and in April 2011 it was invited to attend the UN consultation meeting in Nairobi.²⁷² ASWJ is considered integral to the political and security situation in Somalia and has been visited by several international delegations. The group is now considered a legitimate local security sector institution, acknowledged and supported by AMISOM and the FGS. Its main goal has been to prevent Al Shabaab from overrunning the FGS and AMISOM.

Raas Kaamboni

Raas Kaamboni is a clan militia constituted mainly of fighters from the Mohamed Subeer sub-clan in the Ogaden.²⁷³ It was defeated in a battle with Al Shabaab for control of the lucrative port city of Kismayo in November 2009. However, after Kenyan forces took over Kismayo port in 2012, remnants of Raas

²⁶⁶ *UN General Assembly* 23 March 2010: 9.

²⁶⁷ Interview with Brigadier General Paul Lokech (13-03-2013).

²⁶⁸ *UN Monitoring Group on Somalia* 2010: 12.

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁰ Dersso 2010: 6.

²⁷¹ Relations between the group and the TFG have not always been close. The group signed an agreement formally allying it with the TFG in early 2009. However, in later September 2009 the group officially withdrew from cooperation with the government, which it accused along with the international community of "just watching the difficulties ASJW through [sic] in the battlefields in all these years". In addition, it noted that the TFG was 'not an honest neither [sic] in its dealing with ASJW nor with the battle against extremists' (See Kasajja 2011: 51).

²⁷² Stanford University (n-d).

²⁷³ *UN Monitoring Group on Somalia* 2010: 17.

Kaamboni emerged under the leadership of Ahmed Mohamed Islaan “Madoobe”. The group is said to have received training from the Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) before the assault on Kismayo, and it has since become one of Kenya’s local partners in the war against Al Shabaab. There is evidence to suggest that the group agreed to collaborate with the KDF in exchange for a guaranteed, if publicly unspecified, role in the future administration of Kismayo.²⁷⁴

Regional and Non-regional Actors in Somalia’s Conflict

AMISOM’s original mandate from the United Nations Security Council precluded the countries bordering Somalia from deploying troops in the country, possibly due to a fear that they would promote their own interests in Somalia.²⁷⁵ However, Somalia’s immediate neighbours have become engaged in the country unilaterally, citing reasons of national security. Kenya officially sent its troops into Somalia in October 2011 to “weaken and incapacitate” Al Shabaab, with the ultimate goal of giving the Somali government the ability to assume control of the country, and end two decades of instability that made it a safe haven for extremism, endangering the region, as well as the international community.

Kenyan forces made slow progress with *Operation Linda Nchi* (Operation Protect the Nation) because they entered Somalia during the rainy season, which usually lasts between October and December. The logistical challenges posed by the weather added to the cost of the intervention. Nonetheless, the KDF successfully captured Somalia’s port city of Kismayo in October 2012.²⁷⁶ The cost of the Somalia invasion was estimated at KES 210 million (USD 2.8 million) per month in personnel costs alone.²⁷⁷ Kenya called on the international community, in particular the UN and regional organizations such as IGAD and the AU, to support its invasion of Somalia in the hope that this would ease its financial burden. After AMISOM forces were increased to 17 700 uniformed personnel in February 2012, Kenya’s forces were integrated into AMISOM in March 2012. This meant that Kenya would receive financial compensation from the AU, and the UN would pay for services and hardware covered in UNSOAs mandate.

Of all the regional countries, Ethiopia in particular cannot be disentangled from the conflict in Somalia.²⁷⁸ The two countries have been uncomfortable neighbours for decades, with full-scale hostilities breaking out periodically. The

²⁷⁴ Hammond 2013: 188.

²⁷⁵ United Nations Security Council Resolution 1725 (para. 4). Note that United Nations Security Council resolution 1816 (2008), 2 June 2008, authorized willing states and regional bodies to join forces with the TFG to combat piracy. This authorization paved the way for Somalia’s immediate neighbours to intervene in the Somali conflict.

²⁷⁶ *Daily Times* 2 October 2012.

²⁷⁷ *International Crisis Group* (15-02-2012).

²⁷⁸ Harper 2012: 185.

presence of Ethiopian troops in Somalia is so frequently reported that it has ceased to be news.²⁷⁹ In more recent times, Ethiopian forces, and their proxies such as the ASWJ, have been active in fighting Al Shabaab in central Somalia. In December 2011, Ethiopian forces captured the strategic town of Beledweyne in Hiraaan region.²⁸⁰ Ethiopia is not formally part of AMISOM but it maintains contacts with it, for example, it deploys a staff officer at AMISOM headquarters.²⁸¹ It should be noted that Ethiopia is not legally precluded from deploying troops under AMISOM, but it has chosen not to do so for reasons best known to itself.

Historically, relations between Somalia and its neighbours, particularly Ethiopia and Kenya, have been riddled with mistrust and animosity.²⁸² The motives of the two countries for intervening in Somalia have increasingly displeased Uganda. According to senior Ugandan military officials, the activities of Kenya and Ethiopia seem to be at variance with the overall goal of stabilizing the whole of Somalia by establishing a strong federal government. Major General Mugisha alleges that Kenya and Ethiopia are trying to create buffer zones in Somalia at the expense of the creation of a strong central government in Mogadishu.²⁸³ Uganda would like to build strong central institutions as opposed to strong regions in Somalia. The FGS supports Uganda's view but the way in which Kenya and Ethiopia entered Somalia leaves the FGS powerless to act. An IGAD Memorandum of Understanding legitimizing the escalation of AMISOM and the presence of the two countries in Somalia continues to cause anxiety within the FGS.²⁸⁴ The Memorandum, among other things, legitimizes Kenya's and Ethiopia's plans to arrange local administrations in the areas they control. The FGS is particularly concerned about Kenya's motives in Jubbaland, as it feels the region may be carving out too much autonomy for itself to the exclusion of federal control.²⁸⁵ As the FGS becomes stronger, disagreements with Kenya and Ethiopia seem inevitable.²⁸⁶

A disagreement between the FGS and Kenya may already have occurred. Kenya tried to strengthen the maritime component of AMISOM to deal with Al Shabaab at sea.²⁸⁷ Kenya argued that a maritime component was needed to "...address the movement of Al Shabaab elements as well as their supplies [at sea]".²⁸⁸ Such a

²⁷⁹ Ibid: 185.

²⁸⁰ *International Crisis Group* 2012: 4.

²⁸¹ Interview with Eloi Yao (11-04-2013).

²⁸² Khayre 2012.

²⁸³ Interview with Major General Nathan Mugisha (18-02-2013).

²⁸⁴ See *Intergovernmental Authority on Development* (IGAD) (06-12-2012).

²⁸⁵ Hammond 2013: 188.

²⁸⁶ Interview with Major General Nathan Mugisha (18-02-2013).

²⁸⁷ See Kenya Government website (26-09-2012).

²⁸⁸ *Daily Nation* (15-02-2013).

maritime component would include the training and deployment of the vessel protection detachments, the specialist military detachments within AMISOM designed to provide security to its supply ships. These also provide security to ships waiting to dock at the Mogadishu and Kismayo seaports. It should be noted that Kenya deployed its navy as part of its unilateral intervention to ensure the security of Somalia's coastline, especially around the port of Kismayo. Kenya's argument for a maritime component was supported by the United Nations Secretary-General, who argued that naval forces are: "...critical to consolidate control over southern and central Somalia, in particular wresting control from Al Shabaab of the remaining coastal towns".²⁸⁹ However, the government of Somalia argued that:

*...there is no compelling reason to take the campaign against Al Shabaab to sea. Piracy, human trafficking and smuggling are important challenges, but they are not linked to the mandate of AMISOM. This is the [task of Somalia].*²⁹⁰

According to Major General Mugisha, this clash shows that Somalia wants to assert its sovereignty.²⁹¹ If a maritime component of AMISOM had been accepted, it would have meant strengthening the Kenyan navy at the expense of building a navy in Somalia. Future disagreements are likely between Kenya and the FGS, especially with regard to the administration of Kismayo. Nevertheless, a summit meeting of the AMISOM Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) held in Uganda at the start of August 2013 agreed that the FGS take control of Kismayo.²⁹²

In the case of Ethiopia, disagreements with the FGS are likely to stem from the administration of Jubbaland. Kenya has been backing the Ogaden clan leadership in the region because it provides the best buffer zone between its own borders.²⁹³ Ethiopia is engaged in an armed conflict in the Ogaden region of Ethiopia with the separatist *Ogaden National Liberation Front* (ONLF). If Ethiopia believes that the ONLF is receiving help from Ogaden clan elements in Jubbaland, this could lead to a new round of intervention by Ethiopia in Somalia.

The US has occasionally been involved in the Somalia conflict. It launched *Operation Restore Hope* to help deliver humanitarian assistance to Somalia in December 1992. It withdrew after losing 18 military rangers at the hands of Somali insurgents in October 1993, but this did not end its influence in the

²⁸⁹ Ibid.

²⁹⁰ UN SC 2013: 5.

²⁹¹ Interview with Major General Mugisha (18-02-2013).

²⁹² Baguma (b) (2013).

²⁹³ Hammond 2013: 188.

country. When the US was attacked by Al Qaeda on 11 September 2001, the US government was quick to link the attackers to Islamist elements in Somalia.²⁹⁴ Since then, Somalia has become one of the major theatres of the US fight against international terrorism.²⁹⁵

Political Power Structures

Uganda had to contend with the governance arrangements that it found when it intervened in the Somalia conflict. Before the establishment of the FGS, there had been 14 attempts to reconstitute the government of Somalia.²⁹⁶ Between 1991 and 2009, regional countries and international organizations organized 14 peace conferences for actors in Somalia, none of which resulted in the establishment of a stable government for the country.²⁹⁷ These attempts failed for various reasons: a failure to include all the stakeholders, such as political, traditional and religious leaders, warlords, the business sector and civil society; interventions from outside; and of course clanism.²⁹⁸ No transitional government in Somalia has been able to establish its authority over all the territory of the country. As a result, new centres of power emerged – especially at the regional and local levels. The Burco (1991) and Boramo (1993) conferences resulted in the “secession” of Somaliland, while the Garowe (1998) conference led to the establishment of Puntland. Uganda has had minimal contact with the autonomous regions because its main preoccupation is with south and central Somalia.

After its intervention in Somalia through AMISOM, Uganda worked with the first TFG, led by Abdullahi Yusuf. Then, when the TFG was reconstituted, Uganda threw its weight behind Sharif Ahmed. Since the end of the transition, Uganda has helped the FGS to extend its authority throughout south and central Somalia, which had long been under the control of Al Shabaab.

New Constitutional Dispensation

The constitution launched in August 2012 will be put before the Somali people for their approval in a national referendum at the national elections scheduled for 2016.²⁹⁹ The constitution envisages a federal, parliamentary system with a national assembly and an upper house. It is defined by the rule of law, must be compatible with Islam, and includes a fair representation of women, amounting

²⁹⁴ Kasaija (a) 2010: 277.

²⁹⁵ The US has deployed armed unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) in Ethiopia as part of the fight against Islamist militants in Somalia.

²⁹⁶ Kasaija (a) 2010: 275.

²⁹⁷ Ibid.

²⁹⁸ Ibid: 276.

²⁹⁹ *Institute for Security Studies* “Peace and Security Council Report” October 2012: 4.

to a minimum of 30 per cent of the representatives.³⁰⁰ However, the process of drafting the constitution marginalized many of the armed groups in the country.³⁰¹ The main participants in the process – apart from international actors such as the UN and the AU – were 135 clan representatives, also known as traditional elders, made up of 25 representatives from the four big clans and 35 from the remaining smaller ones.³⁰² The traditional elders selected an 825-member *National Constitutional Assembly*, which approved the provisional constitution. The draft constitution considers a partition of the country into a number of administrative regions, thereby weakening commonality and amplifying diversity among the Somali communities.³⁰³ Such discussions are yet to be determined but have led to discontent and raised the issue of ownership of the exercise. According to one observer:

*Somalia will be embroiled in chaos and dysfunctional governance arising from the [Provisional] Constitution ... in which Somaliland and Puntland will remain separate entities. The [Provisional] Constitution smashes Somalia rather than repairs it.*³⁰⁴

Somaliland declared its independence from Somalia in 1991. It has consistently reiterated that:

*...it desires to be an independent state and thus does not intend to initiate negotiations or advocate compromise with Somalia over its independence.*³⁰⁵

Somaliland was not part of the process that resulted in the drafting and adoption of the provisional constitution. Nor did the region participate in the process that led to the end of the transition in Somalia. During the London Conference, the President of Somaliland, Ahmed Mohamoud “Silanyo”, attended as an interested neighbour rather than a member of the Somali delegation.³⁰⁶ Relations between the governments in Mogadishu and Somaliland are likely to result in conflict, especially if the FGS tries to assert its sovereignty over the area.

During the conflict years, a civil society movement emerged in Somalia. This movement is comprised of academics, students, the business community, women’s organizations, traditional elders and religious leaders. However, the contribution of civil society organizations (CSOs) to the management of public

³⁰⁰ Ibid.

³⁰¹ *Institute for Security Studies* “Peace and Security Council Report” August 2012: 15.

³⁰² Ibid. October 2012: 4.

³⁰³ Uluo 2012b.

³⁰⁴ Ibid. 2012a.

³⁰⁵ *Institute for Security Studies* “Peace and Security Council Report” August 2012: 15.

³⁰⁶ Hammond 2013: 189.

affairs has been “...erratic and intermittent”.³⁰⁷ Civil society was embattled and hampered by insecurity during the conflict, and this situation continues today. Nonetheless, CSOs gained prominence in the governance of the country under Sharif Ahmed’s TFG.

The end of the transitional period in Somalia and the setting up of the FGS has marked a new chapter in Somalia’s history. Nonetheless, the process of drafting and adopting a new constitution has been contested by some sections of Somali society. There is a perception that the process was not transparent and was heavily influenced by foreign forces. Moreover, some regional states, such as Somaliland, were not part of the process. This puts in doubt the future unification of the country as a federal state.

Scenario Analysis

This section outlines two possible scenarios for Somalia, and Uganda’s involvement in Somalia.

The Preeminent Scenario

The end of the transitional period and the establishment of the FGS have ushered in new realities in Somalia. The dwindling fortunes of Al Shabaab mark a new phase in the conflict. According to Ugandan officials, the best case scenario for Uganda is that Al Shabaab is defeated and the whole of south and central Somalia is stabilized before the constitutional referendum and general elections that are expected to be held in 2016.³⁰⁸ This will enable UPDF forces to leave Somalia. However, this best case scenario is not likely in the short to medium term because the capacity of FGS forces is weak in terms of training, numbers and equipment. For example, the current strength of the Somali Police Force (SPF) is about 6000 personnel.³⁰⁹ However, a significant proportion of this figure is made up of officers with long service, many of whom are due for retirement. Even if the current figure is maintained, the SPF will need to recruit, train and equip 1000 new officers a year for the next four years to achieve the government’s target of 10 000 personnel by 2016.³¹⁰ Specialist courses will have to be organized for new officers as well as refresher courses for existing officers. AMISOM forces will have to remain on the ground to maintain security as the FGS security forces are built.³¹¹ According to the AU:

³⁰⁷ *Institute for Security Studies* “Peace and Security Council Report” October 2012: 5.

³⁰⁸ Interview with Ambassador James Mugume (13-03-2013).

³⁰⁹ *African Union* 2013-01-16: D-2.

³¹⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹¹ Interview with Ambassador James Mugume (13-03-2013); Interview with Brigadier General Lokech (13-03-2013).

*The withdrawal of AMISOM forces is closely tied to the development of the institutional capacity of the FGS so that its key institutions can ensure justice, the rule of law, effective governance and the provision of basic public services.*³¹²

The AU believes that 2020 is an optimistic timeframe for the withdrawal of AMISOM forces from Somalia.³¹³ As far as Uganda is concerned, the country is prepared to stay the course until that time.³¹⁴ When the Ugandan Parliament authorized the deployment of the UPDF as part of AMISOM, it did not provide an exit strategy for the force. Until recently, criticism of the UPDF deployment among Ugandans has been negligible. Ahead of the 2011 Presidential elections, for example, one of the candidates, Jaberi Bidandi Ssali, questioned the UPDF's deployment in Somalia,³¹⁵ but another, Olara Otunnu supported it, arguing that "...the terror threat presented by an unstable Somalia must be confronted".³¹⁶ More recently, a number of parliamentarians have reiterated their support for the deployment.³¹⁷ No official figure for UPDF troop casualties in Somalia has ever been published. Unofficially 2700 troops are thought to have died there since 2007.³¹⁸

The Reversal of AMISOM Gains Scenario

The worst case scenario would be if the security gains made by AMISOM against Al Shabaab were reversed. The possibility of a reversal is very real because Somalia does not yet have the forces to "dominate the ground that is being liberated by AMISOM from Al Shabaab".³¹⁹ As of March 2013, the *Somali National Army* (SNA) consisted of six trained brigades, two of which are currently deployed.³²⁰ Each brigade comprises three to six battalions of around 1000 soldiers each, or 18 000 to 36 000 troops in total. Of these, an estimated 6000 to 12 000 soldiers are currently serving.³²¹ Thus, as currently constituted, the SNA is simply not ready to take the leading role in the fight against Al Shabaab, let alone fight beyond AMISOM's Sector 1.³²² From a military

³¹² *African Union* 16-01-2013, p. 6.

³¹³ *Ibid.*

³¹⁴ Interview with Ambassador James Mugume (13-03-2013).

³¹⁵ Khisa (2010).

³¹⁶ *Ibid.*

³¹⁷ Sekanjako and Katamba (2012).

³¹⁸ Straziuso (2012).

³¹⁹ Interview with Brigadier General Paul Lokech (13-03-2013). This view is borne out by press reports that Al Shabaab retook the town of Hudur in Bakool on 18-03-2013 following the withdrawal of Somali and Ethiopian troops.

³²⁰ Cited in Kwayera (2013).

³²¹ *Ibid.*

³²² Williams (2013).

viewpoint, the SNA needs “...effective unified control, and the development of structures of oversight ...”.³²³

Another challenge that could lead to a reversal of the gains made by AMISOM is the “severe and urgent problems of command and control” in the SNA.³²⁴ These problems are obvious at the senior officer level but also involve an absence of collaboration between existing SNA brigades.³²⁵ Different components of the army have had different types of training, mostly abroad, and there are poor levels of training for non-commissioned officers. Salaries are unreliable, and payments amounting to USD 100 per month are made by the US and Italian governments to some but not all SNA soldiers.³²⁶ Inadequate salaries and their non-payment have in the past led to defections from the SNA to opposition forces.³²⁷

Third, the SNA suffers from major deficits in logistics and modern weaponry,³²⁸ although this may be resolved by the partial lifting of the arms embargo.³²⁹ This partial removal applies to deliveries of weapons or military equipment, or the provision of advice, assistance or training, intended solely for the development of the security forces of the FGS, and to provide security for the Somali people.³³⁰ Under the terms of resolution 2093, the partial lifting will last for 12 months. This is premised on concerns that Somalia’s military is an amalgam of former militiamen who currently lack the discipline to use weapons responsibly.³³¹ The resolution authorizes the government to import automatic assault rifles, rocket-propelled grenades and their launchers, and other firearms with calibres that do not exceed 12.7 mm. This will enable the FGS to reorganize its forces in readiness for the national elections in 2016.³³²

Uganda’s position is that whatever scenario unfolds in Somalia, the country will remain engaged.³³³ It is the view of Ugandan government officials that the UPDF will undertake a phased withdrawal as the capacity of Somalia’s security institutions is gradually built.³³⁴ The possible final withdrawal of the UPDF from

³²³ United Nations September-December 2012: 17.

³²⁴ Williams (2013).

³²⁵ Ibid.

³²⁶ Ibid.

³²⁷ See Kisiangani 2011: 8.

³²⁸ Williams (2013).

³²⁹ The embargo was imposed by United Nations Security Council resolution 733 (1992) and modified by United Nations Security Council resolution 2093 (2013).

³³⁰ Ibid: para. 33.

³³¹ Kwayera (2013).

³³² Cited in Kwayera (2013).

³³³ Interview with Major General Nathan Mugisha (18-02-2013); Interview with Ambassador James Mugume (13-03-2013).

³³⁴ Interview with Major General Nathan Mugisha (18-02-2013).

Somalia will only be undertaken within the framework of the AU's strategic review of AMISOM, which sets out that the final withdrawal of the peace support force is to take place in 2020.³³⁵ The review proposes a three-phase exit strategy for AMISOM.

Phase One (2013–2017) involves “territorial recovery and consolidation”, by which the mission will support the FGS to establish effective governance in those areas already recovered. It is projected that the SNSF and AMISOM will be in control of the whole of Somali territory by the end of 2015, before the planned general elections in 2016. AMISOM will start to hand over responsibility for security to the SNSF in certain areas as soon as the SNSF has developed the capacity to take it. AMISOM will retain the capacity to support the SNSF as necessary.

Phase Two (2016–2018) is handover and drawdown. This entails the handover of responsibility to the SNSF in a gradual and orderly manner until its forces have assumed primary responsibility for the security of the whole of Somalia by 2018, or earlier if conditions allow. The peace support operation will retain the capacity to support the SNSF throughout the country so that it can respond should the SNSF come under pressure in any location. As the SNSF assumes more responsibility, the peace support operation will start to scale down its forces and adjust its capabilities.

In *Phase Three* (2017–2020), drawdown and withdrawal, the peace support operation will continue to scale down until it finally leaves Somalia by 2020, or earlier if conditions allow.

Strategies for Uganda and the International Community

Uganda and the international community find themselves at a crossroads in Somalia. The end of the transition, an FGS that wants to assert its sovereignty, the retreat of Al Shabaab and tentative signs of a functioning Somali national security presence constitute a new set of circumstances to which Uganda and the international community must adapt. President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud has put AMISOM on notice by declaring that the provision of security is his government's priority.³³⁶ In this regard, the president has posed questions about how much longer AMISOM can remain in Somalia. In his opinion, “it is the prerogative of the FGS to determine the nature and timing of outside assistance”.³³⁷ The President has clearly demonstrated the determination of the

³³⁵ African Union (16-01-2013).

³³⁶ Williams (2013).

³³⁷ Ibid.

FGS to assert its autonomy on the basis that it is no longer a transitional arrangement but a sovereign government. Uganda and the entire international community must recognize this.

President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud has articulated a comprehensive policy framework for the stabilization and reconstruction of Somalia under six pillars. All the actors in Somalia must align their support to this strategy. The six pillars are: full stability, economic recovery, peace building, service delivery, international relations, and the unity and integrity of the country.³³⁸ One option for Uganda and the international community would be to shape a new mandate for AMISOM in support of the six-pillar strategy. This would entail a continuation of AMISOM's enforcement operations against Al Shabaab, as well as clarification of how the mission can best support the restructuring and empowerment of the SNSF, on which AMISOM's exit strategy depends.³³⁹ The main challenge to the successful implementation of such a strategy is that it is reliant on external support. According to a senior Ugandan military officer, Somalis must be prepared to take care of their own security.³⁴⁰ Unless the right political framework and incentives are created, however, the vacuum behind AMISOM's frontlines will be filled by the FGS's ineffective security forces and clan warlords.³⁴¹ It is this kind of environment that bred Islamic extremism and led many to embrace Al Shabaab.

AMISOM must be given the tools it needs to get the job done. These tools include predictable funding of key military enablers such as air assets, as well as enhanced capabilities for analysis, planning and management activities.³⁴² The future of AMISOM funding is currently uncertain beyond 2013. The European Union, which paid allowances for AMISOM's uniformed personnel which totalled EUR 163 million in 2012, has given notice that it can no longer fund all these allowances.³⁴³ It has indicated that it has funds available amounting to EUR 70 million in 2013 for the payment of troop allowances on the basis of the current UN-authorized strength of 17 731.³⁴⁴ Predictable future funding for AMISOM is a must.

The need for air assets has become even more urgent in recent times. The deployment of air assets suffered a setback on 12 August 2012, when four Ugandan military helicopters (three attack helicopters and one utility) that were being deployed in Somalia crashed in the vicinity of Mount Kenya with the loss

³³⁸ *African Union* (2013).

³³⁹ Williams (2013).

³⁴⁰ Interview with Brigadier General Paul Lokech (13-03-2013).

³⁴¹ *International Crisis Group* 2012: 12.

³⁴² Williams (2013).

³⁴³ *Ibid.*

³⁴⁴ *United Nations Security Council* 2012-10-12, p. 13.

of 28 crew members.³⁴⁵ Replacement air assets are yet to be deployed. As AMISOM forces move away from Mogadishu, supply lines become stretched and therefore vulnerable to attack by Al Shabaab. According to Lieutenant General Andrew Gutti, the AMISOM Force Commander, “the area of operation is expanding every day. ... We need the planes to ease the movement of supplies, reconnaissance and combat support”.³⁴⁶

Possible Intervening Factors for Uganda’s Continued Involvement in Somalia

Uganda’s continued engagement in Somalia is dependent on two factors: how the UPDF will be managed in the future and how the country runs its foreign policy towards countries such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). On the future management of the UPDF, there are reports that President Museveni is grooming his son, Brigadier General Muhoozi Kainerugaba, the current head of the elite Special Forces Command, to be the next head of the army or even to take over from him as president.³⁴⁷ Kainerugaba’s rise through the military ranks to that of a one-star general has been the subject of much debate in Uganda. His recruitment, training and promotion have been called irregular by some of Uganda’s political actors.³⁴⁸ The cohesiveness of the UPDF has been thrown into doubt as a result. According to Tangri and Mwenda:

*[T]he UPDF is run as a de facto personal army of President Museveni. Army appointments and promotions are made solely by Museveni. ... Museveni has kept the UPDF divided so that it is insufficiently coherent to confront or overthrow him.*³⁴⁹

The Minister of Defence, Crispus Kiyonga, recently stated that there is a possibility that the military will take political control once again if the politicians continue to fail to demonstrate that they can resolve the problems facing the country.³⁵⁰ This supported an earlier statement made by the President to the same effect. The current Chief of Defence Forces, General Aronda Nyakairima, also weighed in to observe that the army would not allow bad politics to send Uganda back into turmoil.³⁵¹ Needless to state, the cohesiveness of the UPDF at home is a prerequisite for its continued role in AMISOM.

³⁴⁵ Ibid: 7.

³⁴⁶ Cited in Kato 2013: 20.

³⁴⁷ Gyezaho (2012).

³⁴⁸ Wanambwa (2013).

³⁴⁹ Tangri and Mwenda 2010: 44.

³⁵⁰ Mpagi (2013).

³⁵¹ Mwanguhya and Kasasira (2013).

Linked to its cohesiveness is the prevalence of corruption in the UPDF. In the late 1990s, President Museveni pardoned his brother, General Caleb Akandwanaho (Salim Saleh), who had confessed to accepting a bribe of USD 800 000 linked to the purchase of defective army helicopters.³⁵² In 2008, a General Court Martial convicted Major General James Kazini, the one-time Army Commander, of maintaining fictitious names on the army payroll, and sentenced him to three years in prison.³⁵³ Corruption is one the biggest factors threatening the cohesiveness of the UPDF. It could also affect the continued existence of the UPDF in AMISOM.

In August 2013, the UPDF contingent commander in AMISOM together with a number of other officers was recalled to Uganda over allegations of mismanaging logistics.³⁵⁴ In a meeting with President Museveni, soldiers returning from Somalia detailed how:

*...commanders would requisition fuel for the tanks but sell it instead, and how they were given rotten or stale rations while their commanders sold the good food in the market...*³⁵⁵

The army has suspended 24 soldiers as investigation of the allegations continues.

In November 2012, Uganda was accused by a UN Panel of Experts of providing support in the form of direct troop reinforcements, weapons deliveries, technical assistance, joint planning and facilitation of external relations to the M23 rebel group fighting in eastern DRC.³⁵⁶ The government of Uganda reacted by threatening to "... completely withdraw from ... regional peace efforts [including] Somalia".³⁵⁷ The government set two conditions for reversing its decision: first, that the UN answers the maligning of Uganda by bringing out the truth about Uganda's role in current regional efforts; and, second, that the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) quickly respond to the allegations against Uganda.³⁵⁸ Nobody knows whether the UN and the ICGLR did what Uganda demanded of them, but the expert panel's report has not been heard of since.

Uganda has used the leverage of its participation in regional peacekeeping missions to get away with criticism from the UN in the past. In August 2010, the

³⁵² Tripp 2010: 132.

³⁵³ Ibid: 145.

³⁵⁴ See Mwanguhya Mpag (2013).

³⁵⁵ Obore (2013).

³⁵⁶ Mbabazi (2012).

³⁵⁷ Ibid.

³⁵⁸ Ibid.

United Nations published a report mapping the most serious human rights and international humanitarian law violations committed in the DRC in 1993–2003. The report alleged that countries in the Great Lakes Region, including Uganda, committed human rights violations during the successive DRC conflicts. Uganda reacted, inter alia, by stating that report was a sinister tactic to undermine Uganda’s resolve to continue contributing to and participating in various regional and international peacekeeping missions, such as AMISOM, the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) and the United Nations-African Union hybrid Mission in Darfur (UNAMID).³⁵⁹ The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sam Kuteesa, observed that the publication of the report “... may lead us to remove our troops from the chaotic country [Somalia]”.³⁶⁰ In the end, the report was not discussed at the UN and only remains on the website of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).³⁶¹

The UPDF’s continued engagement in AMISOM will be affected by its domestic cohesiveness as a professional force. The way the UPDF is managed today is a cause for concern. If President Museveni cannot manage the force as its Commander-in-Chief, nobody knows how it will behave. Corruption continues to be a serious problem, but allegations against the UPDF of human rights violations in the DRC do not seem to have dented its image as a regional peacekeeper or a professional force.

³⁵⁹ Official Website of the *Government of Uganda* (27-09-2010).

³⁶⁰ Kasaija 2010b: 680.

³⁶¹ *United Nations OHCHR* (2010).

Ethiopia-Somalia Relations after 2012

Author: Berouk Mesfin³⁶²

Introduction

This section analyses Somalia's political and security situation and its security relations with Ethiopia. It is sub-divided into four parts: the contemporary post-2012 political situation in Somalia; the role of the *African Union Mission in Somalia* (AMISOM) in Somalia; the Somali security forces; and the role of Al Shabaab.³⁶³

The Political Situation in Somalia Since 2012

Hassan Sheikh Mohamud was elected President of Somalia on 10 September 2012, following a vote in parliament. The initial signs were good as he seemed to provide the fresh start Somalia desperately needed. The President is a political activist and an academic who has continued to live and work in Mogadishu. He is neither a corrupt warlord nor a member of the out-of-touch and self-interested diaspora. One diplomat noted that Hassan Sheikh Mohamud was "an entirely different character than what we've had before".³⁶⁴

Hassan Sheikh Mohamud appointed Abdi Farah Shirdon as Prime Minister, who is considered to have management experience but seems to have become increasingly marginalized from decision-making.³⁶⁵ The President appears to have a vision of how to build a sustainable political system in Somalia but not to know how to operationalize this vision.³⁶⁶ In addition, he has not built up his own network and has failed to gain the political high ground. He seems to want to avoid antagonizing more powerful politicians inside and outside parliament.³⁶⁷

A pervasive culture of corruption has long existed in Somalia and has become the norm.³⁶⁸ This defies simplistic analysis. The structural problems which led to

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³⁶³ All transcripts of all the interviews cited in this chapter were cleared and approved by the interviewees and remain with the authors.

³⁶⁴ Interview with an EU Diplomat (22-02-2013).

³⁶⁵ *Heritage Institute for Policy Studies* 2013: 3.

³⁶⁶ Interview with a Somali Politician (03-03-2013).

³⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁸ Officials at the highest levels of Somali governments have embezzled eight out of every ten dollars. See *United Nations Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea* (2011).

the failure of earlier Somali administrations remain in place and could still derail the political process. First and foremost, the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) is a government on paper only, and it faces serious institutional and operational challenges in its working environment. It is totally reliant on unpredictable and unsustainable external support. The federal government has virtually no budget and most of its employees have either not been paid or are only paid intermittently. It also suffers from a poor legal and regulatory framework, virtually non-existent procedures and degraded infrastructure.

Although the amount of territory controlled by the FGS has been increasing in recent times, linked to military gains over Al Shabaab, effective governmental structures have not been established in the recaptured areas. There are currently numerous initiatives to re-establish local administrations in fragmented Somalia. The federal government is, for instance, attempting to re-establish local administrations in collaboration with local militias in the Galgaduud, Bay and Hiiraan regions.³⁶⁹ There is also an Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) initiative to establish a Jubbaland regional administration in the Middle Jubba, Lower Jubba and Gedo regions. Ethiopia, which supports the Ahlu Sunna Wal Jamaa, (ASWJ) militia in Galgaduud,³⁷⁰ is probably behind IGAD's initiative. An interim local administration has been established in Baidoa with the support of Ethiopia. Moreover, an agreement was signed in Ethiopia between the FGS and the Interim Jubba Administration in August 2013. The agreement ended months of stand-off over the future of Jubbaland and Kismayu. It recognized Jubbaland as another autonomous entity just like Puntland and Somaliland. It also formally recognizes Ahmed Mohamed Islam (known as *Madobe*), the leader of the *Ras Kamboni* militia that supported the Kenyan intervention in Somalia, as the leader of the Interim Jubba Administration.

The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM)³⁷¹

Lieutenant General Andre Gutti has been AMISOM's Force Commander since May 2012. The two Deputy Force Commanders are Major General Simon Karanja and Major General Salvator Harushima, who is in charge of support at mission headquarters. AMISOM's Chief-of-Staff is Major General Osman-Noor Subagle. The current AMISOM military force capacity stands at over 17 700. The peacekeeping mission is composed of troops from Uganda (5800 troops), Burundi (5432 troops), Kenya (4652 troops), Djibouti (960 troops) and Sierra Leone (850 troops). These troops have enormous administrative, operational and logistical needs and are deployed in four sectors, which cover south and central Somalia. Three of these sectors are based and operate outside of Mogadishu.

³⁶⁹ *Heritage Institute for Policy Studies* 2013:1-2.

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.* p. 2.

³⁷¹ Information obtained located at <http://amisom-au.org/>.

Sector 1 is centred on Mogadishu and comprises the regions of Banadir, and Lower and Middle Shabelle. Ugandan and Burundian troops are deployed in this sector, which is commanded by Brigadier General Michael Ondoga (a Ugandan).³⁷² Sector 2 has its headquarters in the port city of Kismayu. It comprises Gedo, and the Lower and Middle Jubba regions in south-west Somalia. This sector is commanded by Brigadier General Anthony Ngere (a Kenyan). Kenyan forces are primarily responsible for operations in this sector. An 850-strong Sierra Leonean battalion has also been deployed in Sector 2. It is commanded by Colonel Mamadi Mohamed Keita (a Sierra Leonean), who doubles as AMISOM's Chief Training Officer. This has enabled Kenya to withdraw a battalion from the sector. Sector 3 is based in Baidoa and covers the Bay and Bakool regions. It is commanded by Colonel Bigirimana Gerard (a Burundian) and manned primarily by the Burundian contingent. Sector 4 is based in Beledweyne and covers Hiiraan region. The Djiboutian contingent commanded by Colonel Osman Doubad is in charge of this sector.

AMISOM's deployment has so far made a significant difference to the tenuous political and security context in Somalia. In addition to significantly degrading the military capability of Al Shabaab,³⁷³ it has brought about some improvement in security for civilians and internally displaced persons. It is also providing the population with a sense of security and effectively preventing any relapse into violent conflict. However, an already overstretched AMISOM, which was initially only supposed to protect Mogadishu, would require additional reinforcements of up to 35 500 troops in order to continue protecting its areas of engagement and maintain operational momentum.³⁷⁴ According to the African Union, it would have been relieved of some responsibility for security in the recovered areas if the Somali National Security Forces had "...developed the necessary capacity" to effectively mount operations and then occupy and protect territory.³⁷⁵

Until recently, AMISOM did not have the required staff and resources to effectively build up this basic military and institutional capacity. In April 2013, however, instructors from Uganda and Burundi gave Platoon Commander and Non-Commissioned Officer training to 96 Somali soldiers at the Jazira Training camp in Mogadishu. Nearly 400 Somali troops have now been trained by AMISOM in Mogadishu or at Bihanga, a military camp in Uganda.

³⁷² Ondoga was recalled in September 2013 over alleged corrupt practices including the sale of food meant for soldiers

³⁷³ *United Nations Secretary-General* 2012: 8.

³⁷⁴ *Ibid.* p. 4.

³⁷⁵ *African Union* 2013:5.

AMISOM has been supported in its work through bilateral arrangements and by the United Nations.³⁷⁶ This support covers direct troop allowances as well as the mission headquarters operational costs in Mogadishu. These operational costs include international staff salaries, local staff salaries, official travel, ground transportation, office equipment, communications and medical support.

AMISOM faces key challenges that clearly inhibit its ability to carry out its politically sensitive mandate. First, it lacks the level of predictable funding required to finance a mission of such scope. In addition, there is a lack of accurate or current intelligence about Al Shabaab's bases of operations, movements, new tactics and defences, as well as knowledge of south and central Somalia's difficult terrain, which are required to plan and conduct counterinsurgency operations. Unreliable and poor communications links, a lack of specialist combat capability to address emerging threats such as Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and a lack of sufficient land, air and naval assets are all partially to blame for its inability to respond to attacks or protect its troops.³⁷⁷ Nonetheless, AMISOM remains key to Somalia's security situation and enjoys the demonstrable goodwill of the fragile FGS as well as much of the population.

Somalia's Military Security Institutions and the Management of Disengaged Soldiers

*The Somali National Security Force (SNSF) is made up of several structures, including the Somalia National Army (SNA) and the Somali Police Force (SPF). The security forces are estimated to number no more than 10 000 servicemen in total. They often incorporate militias of varying degrees of preparedness belonging to clans and warlords, which can lead to "competition between clan leaders, warlords and the official military commanders".*³⁷⁸

The leadership of the SNA comprises General Hadir Adan Elmi, the current Chief of Staff, and General Abdikarin Yusuf Dhega Badan, the Deputy Chief of Staff. The SNA operates without a basic command structure and its 4000 soldiers are not paid regularly, which contributes to the deteriorating morale that undoubtedly exacerbates the persistent desertions. Hassan Sheikh has acknowledged that the FGS is only able to pay the salaries of 1500 soldiers. Only USD 100 per month is paid to all soldiers regardless of their rank.³⁷⁹

³⁷⁶ *United Nations Secretary-General* 2012: pp. 9-10.

³⁷⁷ Interview with an African Union Official (13-03-2013).

³⁷⁸ Williams 2013: 5.

³⁷⁹ *Center for Strategic and International Studies* 2013: 20.

Some parts of the SNSF received training in Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia and Djibouti, both before and after the defeat of Al Shabaab. The EU has been involved in the training in Uganda since 2009, using military trainers from Sweden, Spain, France, Germany, Portugal and Italy. In order to strengthen the security forces, the United Nations Security Council recently passed resolution 2093 (2013) to partially lift the arms embargo imposed on Somalia since 1992. The resolution only allows the FGS to purchase small arms and light weapons, such as assault rifles, machine guns and rocket-propelled grenades.³⁸⁰ It should be noted however that the arms embargo is implemented under carefully negotiated out conditions.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is driving an ongoing process to reconstitute the SPF through training, regularizing the payment of salaries and the refurbishment of police training schools. (UNDP's activities are partly financed by the EU. Other actors include Turkey and Japan.) The SPF is mainly used to supplement the military and security forces in a counterinsurgency role in and around Mogadishu. It is unable to autonomously investigate attacks and murders or to make arrests, and it is not supported by an effective criminal justice system.

The SPF has around 6000 officers.³⁸¹ They currently work mainly in south and central Somalia. Exact police numbers are difficult to assess due to shifting loyalties and the shifting security situation. Police officers are paid stipends, which are provided by international donors. However, accounting discrepancies and chronic insecurity in Somalia have resulted in severe delays in serving police officers receiving their stipends. Poor working conditions have led to low morale and the defection of some police officers. Some 900 officers have been trained by the Ethiopian Federal Police and a significant number of managerial ranks and cadet officers have been trained by the Uganda Police Force. The SPF does not have the capacity, either professional or financial, to efficiently maintain and effectively operate its motor vehicles, its communications equipment or other essential logistics.³⁸²

Somalia's intelligence service, the National Security Agency (NSA), was established during the first Transitional Federal Government (TFG), led by President Abdullahi Yusuf. The NSA is still in its infancy and has an undefined number of personnel (see *UN Somalia monitoring report 2013*). It lacks appropriate facilities, office equipment and secure communications. The NSA Director General is accountable to the Minister of National Security. Logistical

³⁸⁰ *Reuters* 2013: 1.

³⁸¹ *African Union* 2013: 21.

³⁸² *United Nations Secretary-General* 2012: 2.

support to the NSA, “which is heavily bankrolled by the US and France”,³⁸³ is erratic. There is little or no equipment, no technical collection platforms and no money to recruit intelligence assets and solicit information. There are critical shortages in communications and transportation, and training is provided in an ad hoc and rudimentary manner. Insufficient equipment and resources limit operations and, ominously, the NSA does not have a system for vetting its staff and classifying information. The NSA displays an utter disdain for human rights and is accused of unlawfully imprisoning Somalis and putting political pressure on widely respected elders.

There is no military intelligence capability to support the military objectives of the FGS. In fact, there is no real military intelligence-gathering capability, including strategic intelligence, combat intelligence and counterintelligence, tasked with providing timely, relevant, accurate and synchronized intelligence and signals intelligence capability support to the tactical, operational, ministerial and presidential leadership.

The FGS is currently detaining an estimated 1500 former Al Shabaab members. It has made an effort to reintegrate some of these fighters into the SNSF with little individual vetting. Few studies have been made of the role of disengaged soldiers. Such disengaged soldiers include many able-bodied fighters from Al Shabaab who were captured in combat, individuals who have voluntarily surrendered and those who have returned to their homes of their own volition. Some reintegration efforts have backfired as some of these former Al Shabaab fighters and sympathizers have engaged in espionage activities within the SNSF, further complicating security coordination. In one prominent case a disengaged fighter who was recruited into the NSA passed on a great deal of information on both AMISOM and the SNSF to his Al Shabaab handlers.³⁸⁴ Beyond security considerations, the issue of disengaged soldiers offers an opportunity to help achieve a more secure environment in Somalia. Successful efforts to reintegrate former fighters could encourage more defections from Al Shabaab and deal the organization a fundamental blow.

Al Shabaab

It is difficult to obtain reliable information about the short-term and long-term objectives, personnel, organization and inner workings of Al Shabaab. Its relative strengths and weaknesses, level of military equipment and areas of operation are also opaque.³⁸⁵ It is impossible precisely to determine the key to Al Shabaab’s

³⁸³ Aynte 2012: 2.

³⁸⁴ Interview with a Somali Politician (03-03-2013).

³⁸⁵ Marchal 2009: pp. 383-385.

appeal or its success in penetrating certain sections of Somali society. At the same time, however, it is clear that it has been unable to challenge the clan-based factionalism in Somalia and has therefore experienced repeated military setbacks.

Al Shabaab is not a monolithic entity.³⁸⁶ It is a highly flexible organization with a decentralized leadership and multiple, disparate cells (see also UN Monitoring Reports). It has no specifically written or declared programme, other than to create and impose a strictly Salafist dogma in Somalia “that forbids soccer, TV and music”, with the express aim of expanding it to the rest of the Horn of Africa.³⁸⁷ It is currently thought to have approximately 500 committed fighters at its disposal.³⁸⁸ These fighters, whose loyalty is instilled through both fear and rewards, are rather poorly structured, armed and supplied. Some estimates put Al Shabaab’s strength at more than 2000, but it is only capable of deploying hundreds of active fighters.³⁸⁹ Nonetheless, Al Shabaab has twice this number of active supporters willing to offer safe houses, locations for arms caches and financial support.

Al Shabaab’s fighting capacity has been greatly diminished. Many of its field commanders and fighters have been killed.³⁹⁰ Its senior leaders, including Abdi Godane (Abu Zubair) and Sheikh Mukhtar Robow, have not, as of the end of 2013, been captured but remain in hiding. At the same time, however, a new stop-at-nothing breed of leadership is little by little coming to the fore. Al Shabaab has been put under pressure by its heavy losses, internal leadership wrangles and its inability to pay its fighters as a result of the loss of key revenue sources. As a result, it abandoned its key bases in Mogadishu, Kismayu, Merca, Baidoa, Beledweyne, Jowhar and other urban strongholds. Nonetheless, in mid-2013 it still controlled large tracts of south and central Somalia and had clearly regrouped. Al Shabaab launches suicide attacks and carries out roadside bombings as well as grenade ambushes on AMISOM and FGS convoys, and installations in Mogadishu and other towns. It is also carrying out targeted killings of military and police commanders, religious leaders, FGS officials, prominent businessmen and journalists. Al Shabaab’s new strategy includes deliberately attracting collateral damage and using hostile propaganda to exploit the misconduct of FGS troops.

Al Shabaab was forced to abandon the lucrative port of Kismayo in 2012. This was a strategic loss as it had been extracting approximately USD 1.4 million per month from the port. It has nonetheless established a constant supply of money

³⁸⁶ Aynte 2011: 7.

³⁸⁷ Gatsiounis 2012: 1.

³⁸⁸ Interview with an Ethiopian Intelligence Official (11-03-2013).

³⁸⁹ *Associated Press* 2012: 1.

³⁹⁰ Interview with an Ethiopian Intelligence Official (11-03-2013).

and maintains direct links with wealthy individuals, charitable organizations, relief organizations and other groups based in Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Pakistan. Moreover, despite the risks involved and the mechanisms put in place in Europe and the US, the Internet has proved a highly effective tool for reaching out to, recruiting and raising funds from the Somali diaspora. In 2011, before the loss of Kismayo, the United Nations Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea estimated that Al Shabaab generated “USD 70–100 million per year from duties and fees levied at airports and seaports, taxes on goods and services, taxes in kind on domestic produce, jihad contributions, checkpoints and various forms of extortion justified in terms of religious obligation, or zakat”.³⁹¹ The loss of Kismayo has also meant a loss of income from charcoal.

Al Shabaab still uses Yemen as a conduit for weapons and the United Arab Emirates, with its links to the large informal Somali economy, for money laundering.³⁹² Its disparate cells still operate in the mosques and Koranic schools in south and central Somalia. Eritrea, which since 2007 has provided logistics, training, weapons and financial support to Al Shabaab, has clearly reduced its support since the United Nations Security Council imposed targeted sanctions on its government’s leading officials. Nonetheless, there are indications that money is still being sent to Somalia through hand luggage, diplomatic channels and bank accounts.³⁹³

It is difficult to understand the exact nature of Al Shabaab’s connections with *Al Qaeda* (notably AQ East Africa). It has undoubtedly emulated its ideology and tactics, including the use of suicide bombers and mounting bombs on vehicles throughout Somalia. Some analysts argue that it has occasionally cooperated with Al Qaeda’s core group, although it only pledged its allegiance to it in September 2009.³⁹⁴ The capture and interrogation of a senior Al Shabaab operative by Ethiopian forces in mid-2012 revealed that Al Shabaab still gives the task of raising and managing its funds to trusted non-Somalis who trained and fought in Bosnia and Afghanistan.

Ethiopia’s Policy Towards Somalia

This section explores the structures and patterns of decision-making in Ethiopia’s foreign policy. It demonstrates that responsibility for foreign policy decision-making is concentrated in the Tigray People’s Liberation Front (TPLF), despite the existence of specialized government agencies such as the National Security Council. It also presents the strategies adopted to mitigate threats from Somalia,

³⁹¹ *United Nations Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea* 2011: 27.

³⁹² Interview with an Ethiopian Intelligence Official (11-03-2013).

³⁹³ *Ibid.*

³⁹⁴ *Oxford Analytica* (2012).

including the establishment and deployment of a *Somalia Task Force*. Moreover, it examines relations between Ethiopia and Somalia since 2012 and Ethiopia's overriding interest in and policy towards Somaliland and Puntland.

From the outset, it should be noted that the Somali crisis has had a negative impact on Ethiopia's internal security. Several terrorist attacks have been carried out in Ethiopia, including assassination attempts and hotel bombings.³⁹⁵ The Somali crisis also contributed to an escalation of tension in the large and loosely controlled Somali-inhabited region of Ethiopia, which is also rich in energy resources. The Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF),³⁹⁶ for instance, was able in 2007 to launch an attack on a Chinese oil exploration site which killed at least 74 people, including 65 Ethiopians and 9 Chinese nationals. This attack led the Ethiopian government to launch a series of counterinsurgency operations, accompanied by the imposition of a trade blockade to halt the flow of goods in areas seen as the rebel group's stronghold. These counterinsurgency operations put the Ogaden issue under considerable international scrutiny.³⁹⁷

Decision-Making in Ethiopia

Decision-making in today's Ethiopia is deliberately opaque and shrouded in secrecy. There are two explanatory levels: decision-making within the TPLF and decision-making in the Prime Minister's Office.

³⁹⁵ These attacks were carried out by Al Itihad, which was designated a terrorist organization by the United States after 11 September 2001. From 1991 to 1966, Al Itihad exercised control over the town of Luuq and its environs in the south-western region of Gedo, near the border with Ethiopia and Kenya. Al Itihad's control in Luuq was ended in 1996 by an assault by Ethiopian forces. The Ethiopian military offensive destroyed the military capacity of Al Itihad along the Ethiopia-Somalia border.

³⁹⁶ Eritrea hosts the leaders of the ONLF and provides it with training, and logistical and military support. It is widely claimed that fighters trained by Eritrea, and in Eritrean-style military dress, currently form the backbone of the rebel group's forces, which mostly rely on surprise attacks and guerrilla-style raids on Ethiopian military convoys, and avoid engaging in direct battles. The ONLF mainly operates in the Fiq, Korahe, Degehabour, Warder and Gode administrative zones of the Somali region, geographically half the region's zones, where travel is only possible with a military escort.

³⁹⁷ The issue of Ogaden has dominated the history of relations between Ethiopia and Somalia, regardless of which groups are in power in either state. Two major wars were fought over the Ogaden in 1964 and 1977, with Ethiopia managing to retain control of the area. Even though the Somali state collapsed in 1990, Ethiopia still believes that Al Itihad, the Union of Islamic Courts and Al Shabaab will continue its quest to recover the Ogaden. Moreover, it is impossible for the Ethiopian government to countenance Somali Islamists capturing Puntland and Somaliland, and then completing the unity of Somalia by including all the other Somali speaking areas of neighbouring Kenya, Ethiopia and Djibouti.

Decision-making within the TPLF

The Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) came to power in 1991. It is a coalition of four different parties: the TPLF, the Oromo People's Democratic Organization (OPDO), the Southern Ethiopian Peoples' Democratic Movement (SEPDM) and the Amhara National Democratic Movement (ANDM). With regard to decision-making, the TPLF retains the most important posts and influence within the EPRDF.

The TPLF was established in 1975, with the objective of liberating Tigray from the autocratic rule of the 1974–1991 military government. As the TPLF intensified its struggle against that government and its victory became reality, it established the EPRDF in 1989. It incorporated the ANDM and other formations in order to broaden its base of support and win over other ethnic groups. The ANDM, however, and especially the two other coalition parties, remain weak and are clearly dominated by the TPLF.³⁹⁸

The TPLF secured its dominance over the EPRDF by several different mechanisms, including the assignment of its members to government departments and by dispersing its members throughout the federal and regional administrations, and the military and security apparatus. All government institutions are used to consolidate the TPLF's hold on power. The party alone makes decisions on all foreign policy issues and implements these decisions, as exemplified by the Ethiopia-Eritrea war. It was only the central committee of the TPLF that discussed and took decisions on issues related to the conflict. Such decisions did not incorporate the concerns and ideas of the other parties to the coalition.

According to the TPLF's party directives, when the TPLF makes decisions, its members should participate and have an opportunity for sufficient discussion. Moreover, the leadership has an obligation to distribute agendas for the discussion beforehand to all participants. Decisions within the TPLF are made by a majority vote. If necessary, the party even has an obligation to review its original decision if it is requested to do so by two-thirds of its members. Any attempt to overturn a decision outside this avenue is strictly prohibited. There are also mechanisms used by the TPLF to ensure transparency and accountability within the party. These are best exemplified by *gimgema*, an evaluation process designed to critically assess, publicly and at great length, every aspect of the party's programme, the quality of its leadership and the personal conduct of all its members.³⁹⁹ This shows that decision-making within the TPLF has some democratic aspects and that collective decision-making is encouraged by the

³⁹⁸ Lyons 2013: 2.

³⁹⁹ Tadesse 2005: 57.

party. Decisions by party directive became the norm during the years of military struggle. However, since the party came to power in 1991, and especially since 2001, the practice has all but disappeared. In March 2001 a serious split occurred between members of the TPLF central committee. Two factions emerged, particularly divided over the policies adopted before, during and after the war with Eritrea. A scramble for power, ideological differences and personal differences also played a significant role in precipitating the leadership crisis.⁴⁰⁰

Prime Minister Meles Zenawi's faction managed to expel the members of the rival faction from the posts they held within the TPLF and in the federal and regional governments. They were replaced by individuals loyal to him. After the split, Meles assumed a dominant position within the TPLF and the EPRDF, becoming the unchallenged intellectual and ideological guide of both parties and as a result accumulating a disproportionate share of power in the Ethiopian government. This undermined the democratic aspects of the party, including collective decision-making and *gimgema*. His position as the chairman of the TPLF and the EPRDF, the Prime Minister of the Federal Government and the Commander-in-Chief of the Ethiopian National Defence Force allowed him to dominate not only the TPLF but the entire state decision-making process.⁴⁰¹

Decision-Making in the Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, the leader who governed Ethiopia for 21 years, died in August 2012. His successor as Prime Minister is Hailemariam Dessalegn, whose close proximity to Meles made him privy to Ethiopia's state affairs. Moreover, his appointment by Meles to posts in the Prime Minister's Office and the EPRDF meant that he witnessed the inner workings of the TPLF at first-hand, giving him valuable insights into future challenges.⁴⁰² He was primarily chosen by Meles as his successor because he was thought to lack the power and ruthlessness of his predecessor, who had a suspicious nature as well as raw cunning and an iron will.⁴⁰³

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid. 2005: pp. 64-65.

⁴⁰¹ Ibid. p. 64.

⁴⁰² Hailemariam is from the Wolayta ethnic group. He was born in the Boloso Sore District of southern Ethiopia's Wolayta Zone. Hailemariam served as Vice President (2000-2001) and then as President of the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region (2001-2005). He also worked as the Social Affairs Special Adviser to the Prime Minister and then as the Public Mobilization and Participation Special Adviser to the Prime Minister (2005-2008). He was a Government Chief Whip with a ministerial portfolio in 2008-2010. He was elected Deputy Chairman of the EPRDF at the party's eighth organizational conference in 2010. He was promoted to the strategic posts of Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs in the same year.

⁴⁰³ Meles had hinted that he might step down in 2015 and eventually hand power to Hailemariam.

Hailemariam does not want to bring about a fundamental shift in national goals or foreign policy,⁴⁰⁴ and has not tried to overhaul his national security team which is supposed to inform him of the latest political developments in and around Ethiopia. He may struggle to emerge from the legacy of his charismatic predecessor and chart his own course.

Hailemariam gets advice on security-related issues from the *National Security Council* (NSC), which was set up in 2001. The NSC coordinates the formulation and supervises the implementation of Ethiopia's national security policy. The members of the NSC are the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Defence, the head of the NISS, the Minister of Federal Affairs and the military's Chief-of-Staff. The head of the Office of the Prime Minister serves as the secretary to the NSC. The NSC advises the Prime Minister on the integration, follow up and proper implementation of domestic, foreign and defence policies related to national security. The NSC also assesses national security threats and makes recommendations to the Prime Minister on measures to be taken. Very little is known about the inner workings of the NSC except that it is staffed only by a rudimentary administrative section. It was originally intended that the NSC would coordinate the activities of all the security services. Tsegaye Berhe, the former president of the Tigray Regional State, has been the National Security Adviser to the Prime Minister since 2010.

Ethiopia's Post-2012 Strategic Interaction with Somalia

Ethiopia's Somalia Task Force

Based on the policy directives of the former Prime Minister, Meles Zenawi,⁴⁰⁵ the major responsibility for dealing with Somalia-related issues is entrusted to the military.⁴⁰⁶ As of 2013, the military's engagement with Somalia is led by General Samora, who takes operational decisions in collaboration with the Council of Generals. Moreover, a small group of officers is tasked with directing military operations in Somalia on a daily basis. This group includes Major General Abraha Wolde Mariam, the Commander of the Eastern Command.

⁴⁰⁴ *Los Angeles Times* 2012: pp. 1-2.

⁴⁰⁵ Former Prime Minister Meles Zenawi was "the architect of Ethiopia's Somalia policy". Hussein 2012:1.

⁴⁰⁶ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs serves only as a source of information and advice. It is used to implement and represent Ethiopia's Somalia policy rather than to formulate it. Its diplomats are usually ignorant of the major aspects of Ethiopia's policy towards Somalia.

In February 2012, Ethiopia's *Somalia Task Force* moved off from the town of Dollo, crossed the Dawa River which divides Dollo into its Ethiopian and Somali parts,⁴⁰⁷ and moved into south-western Somalia to unilaterally seize control of Baidoa and several nearby villages. The goals of the initial phase of the mission were: to physically eradicate or capture the local leadership of Al Shabaab, in part to gain knowledge about its current dynamics; to seize and hold Baidoa's airstrip; to attack the military capabilities and sanctuaries of Al Shabaab; to weaken Al Shabaab's ability to inflict political and psychological damage; and to prevent it from posing a continuing threat.

The advance was clear-cut and quick and achieved at the cost of only a small number of Ethiopian casualties. It was accomplished in a swift offensive that inflicted heavy losses on Al Shabaab. The Ethiopian contingent, which was accompanied by machine guns mounted on pickup trucks, heavy and light artillery pieces and tanks, displayed a high degree of combat capability. Intelligence was undoubtedly a key factor in the success, although not the only one. It has since become apparent from trusted anonymous sources that during the operation, the Ethiopian military successfully used extensive intelligence, going to ground, putting agents deep inside Somalia, recruiting malcontents and employing defectors-in-place. In Baidoa, the Ethiopian contingent has recently been replaced by Burundians who do not conduct patrols. The security situation in the area has markedly deteriorated. Ethiopian troops are still around Baidoa, monitoring the situation and maintaining communications with local elders.

Political Relations with Somalia, 2012–2013

In November 2012, President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud travelled to Ethiopia for what was his first presidential state visit.⁴⁰⁸ He was received at Addis Ababa airport with pomp and ceremony by Prime Minister Hailemariam. The red carpet rolled out for Hassan Sheikh Mohamud was very much appreciated by the Somalis. Ethiopia promised to support the re-establishment of Somalia's institutions and the training of its security forces.⁴⁰⁹

More than 2000 Somali recruits were given six months military training by the *Somalia Task Force* in three locations: Hudur, Dollo and Baidoa. The graduation ceremony took place in Baidoa in November 2012, and was attended by the commander of the task force, Major General Yohannes Wolde Giorgis. In

⁴⁰⁷ Interview with an Ethiopian Intelligence Official (11-03-2013).

⁴⁰⁸ This was preceded by a brief meeting in September 2012. Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn took part in the inauguration of Hassan Sheikh in Mogadishu. According to a Somali official present at the meeting, their personal relationship did not begin on the best footing as the two men "did not click".

⁴⁰⁹ Ethiopian News Agency 2012: 1; Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2012: 4.

January 2013, Ethiopia and Somalia signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the formation of a Joint Ministerial Commission.

Ethiopia's Relations with Somaliland and Puntland

Somaliland and Puntland continue to run their own affairs independently of Mogadishu and to be Ethiopia's most dependable allies. Somaliland entered Horn of Africa politics immediately after it declared its independence from Somalia in May 1991. The *Somali National Movement* had used Ethiopia as a sanctuary, as a source of food, recruits and medical treatment, and as a base from which to conduct military operations. Ethiopia established close and beneficial economic relations with Somaliland, making use of the port of Berbera to receive its imports,⁴¹⁰ establishing banks near the common border and in 2001 commencing regular Ethiopian Airlines flights between Addis Ababa and Hargeisa. It even established a diplomatic office in Hargeisa, a quasi-embassy with a staff of 12 which was upgraded in 2006 to the ambassadorial level.

Puntland has its own militias, which are neither structurally defined nor regularly paid. It also has a police force and an intelligence service, the *Puntland Intelligence Agency-Security Force* (PIASF). The PIASF is considered efficient but "it is easy to be efficient and there is no need for a sophisticated intelligence apparatus in a place where everybody knows everybody".⁴¹¹ Ethiopian involvement in Puntland is partly focused on gathering reliable information on the Ogaden National Liberation Front and preventing it from establishing a foothold there.⁴¹² Moreover, Puntland continues to serve as a springboard for lucrative piracy operations.

The conflict between Somaliland and Puntland is still unresolved. It arises out of the contested regions of Sool and Eastern Sannag. These areas are inhabited by people who tend to identify with Puntland, but territorially they fall within the borders of Somaliland. Thus, Ethiopia is forced to support two entities militarily and politically that are in conflict with each other. This is a delicate policy to pull off.

Scenario Analysis for the Period 2013–2015

It is inherently difficult to read the tea leaves and arrange scenarios in neat categories in the Horn of Africa. This may be linked to the burden of historical precedent, the artificiality of borders, the absence of a cohesive regional security

⁴¹⁰ Interview with a Senior Official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia (16-04-2013).

⁴¹¹ Interview with an Ethiopian Intelligence Official (11-03-2013).

⁴¹² Interview with Mohammed Aden Farah (23-04-2013).

system, the mystery surrounding military structures, the intricacies of local politics, uncertainties about political succession, clandestine political manoeuvres in security decision-making, contradictions in the regional economy or the disruption caused by competing foreign intrusions. Other factors, such as migration flows, remittances, the proliferation of informal and privately funded Islamist networks, including Madrasas, and uncertainty over the future of Yemen must also be taken into account.⁴¹³ Although not set in stone, it is possible, however, to put forward three plausible scenarios that range from the worst case to the most optimistic.

Scenario 1: Worst-case Scenario

2013 Disagreements lead to splits in the FGS. Reform of the SNSF is complicated by the defection of recruits. Al Shabaab is emboldened but remains divided, but the FGS becomes increasingly vulnerable to Al Shabaab attacks. There is an escalation in the clashes between Somaliland and Puntland in their disputed area. AMISOM attempts to avoid a security vacuum and Ethiopia mounts increasing incursions, either direct or via proxies with local backing such as from the ASWJ.

Although violence is reduced compared to recent years, it could escalate as Al Shabaab increasingly clashes with AMISOM. AMISOM takes on the clan and business interests that are seen as a source of support for Al Shabaab. The conflict spills over into Ethiopia with different insurgent groups attacking and clashing with the Ethiopian military. Stability in the south-eastern part of Ethiopia deteriorates, raising the need for greater military and humanitarian assistance to cope with refugees.

2014 AMISOM's position becomes increasingly untenable as its security is compromised. AMISOM troops are evacuated by international airlift following heavy Al Shabaab attacks. Somaliland and Puntland are undermined by intra-clan discontent, economic problems, border clashes, and emboldened Islamists. Piracy is resurgent. Ethiopia increases its involvement in south-central Somalia, Somaliland and Puntland through proxy support and direct intervention. This further fuels accusations of foreign interference.

2015 The FGS fractures because of political and clan divisions and collapses. Mogadishu reverts to pockets of warlordism along clan lines. Islamists again become a major force but Al Shabaab's dominance in Mogadishu is countered by other newer Islamist groups led by hard-nosed dogmatists. Terrorist threats to regional states increase. Somaliland's internal politics become unstable and

⁴¹³ See Mengisteab (2011); Williams (2011); Mesfin (2011); Atarodi (2010).

pockets of low-level urban and rural unrest emerge. Elections there are rigged and attract criticism from the international community. Puntland's internal security deteriorates and pirates and Islamists provide rival powerbases.

Scenario 2: A Mid-way Scenario

2013 Hassan Sheikh Mohamud remains in power but internal tensions result in an unstable government. AMISOM consolidates its area of control outside Mogadishu. There is continued instability in the Somaliland-Puntland border areas. Drought forces further displacement of thousands of Somalis. Ethiopia maintains its troops in Somalia.

2014 The FGS makes little progress with gaining popular legitimacy and maintaining internal cohesion. AMISOM continues to provide security in Mogadishu and south-central Somalia, but Al Shabaab remains entrenched in strategic areas of south and central Somalia. Somaliland and Puntland face an increasing threat from Al Shabaab infiltrations. No progress is made in resolving their border dispute. Ethiopia maintains its support for friendly militias. This feeds Al Shabaab's propaganda on foreign interference and maintains the level of popular support for its actions.

2015 Despite its continuing poor performance, the FGS endures. Al Shabaab loses its coherence, and abandons its hit-and-run insurgency for increasing use of bombings and assassinations. Somaliland increasingly focuses on its narrative of independence. Successful elections add weight to its cause. Ethiopia simultaneously supports the federal government, Somaliland and Puntland.

Scenario 3: Best-case Scenario

2013 The FGS is committed to serious reform and engages in a broadly based dialogue with different regional entities inside and outside south and central Somalia, including Somaliland and Puntland. A muscular AMISOM ensures that daily clashes are contained and coordinates its operations with the FGS. Al Shabaab is increasingly divided and the more inclusive FGS reduces its appeal and financial flows. Ethiopia is prepared to give the government time to deliver but continues proxy support to allied militias.

2014 The FGS makes progress in its negotiations with different regional entities and political groups. These are fully integrated into the reform process. Better armed and equipped Somali security forces deploy effectively alongside AMISOM in and beyond Mogadishu. Investment is made in the public health and education systems, ensuring that the basic needs of the population are met. Somaliland and Puntland hold direct talks on their border dispute. Ethiopia

unreservedly and in good faith cooperates with the FGS on its political and security agendas, and continues to train Somali security personnel.

2015 Regional entities and political groups, including Al Shabaab malcontents, are integrated into the FGS. The FGS begins to reap the rewards of reconciliation and the area under its control expands. Al Shabaab is completely dislodged from its remaining enclaves, and even disarmed. Splinter elements continue to pose a threat and recurring violence continues in isolated areas. Security conditions improve and international agencies can reach the weakest and most vulnerable populations.

Somaliland and Puntland agree to submit their border claims to arbitration. They both receive international assistance from a wide variety of donors. Somaliland is accepted as an IGAD observer. Ethiopia is more relaxed about Somalia and intervenes less, switching from an overt interventionist strategy to a strategy of containment and strengthening its military presence close to its borders with Somalia.

Policy Options for Ethiopia

Two decades of conflict between the various actors has left Somalia deeply divided, which makes dealing with such a failed state a difficult task. It follows that, as of the close of 2013, Ethiopia's policy options for dealing with the conflict in Somalia are very limited.

Maintenance of a Unilateral Military Presence

Ethiopia's intervention in early 2012 made a difference by pushing Al Shabaab out of its major strongholds in south and central Somalia. Logically, a hasty withdrawal by Ethiopia could create an unexpected security vacuum and opportunities for Al Shabaab to regain control, as it did when Ethiopia withdrew its troops in 2009. Ethiopia's unilateral presence in Somalia enables it to closely follow political and security developments there and gives it greater freedom of action.⁴¹⁴

Joining AMISOM

Ethiopia has been unilaterally militarily engaged in Somalia for a long time. Troops from other states in the region have since joined the battle and demonstrated strong commitment to stay the course despite severe casualties.

⁴¹⁴ Interview with a Senior Official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia (16-04-2013).

Ethiopia has more military experience and better intelligence on Somalia.⁴¹⁵ AMISOM currently covers a much wider area than originally anticipated and its fortunes would be greatly enhanced if Ethiopia's battle-hardened troops were placed at its disposal.

Such a policy option might also lead to greater security cooperation among the regional states. There is already some close intelligence sharing among them.⁴¹⁶ The economic burden of maintaining troops in Somalia is enormous, especially as Ethiopia faces an acute shortage of foreign currency. By joining AMISOM, Ethiopia could shift the financial burden to the international community.

On the other hand, competition might inadvertently arise for AMISOM's military leadership and deepen regional disagreements. Until now, AMISOM has mainly been under Ugandan leadership and guidance. There might be an attempt by either Ethiopia or Kenya to assume military leadership of AMISOM in order to gain leverage over the operational, logistical and intelligence aspects of the mission. Even if such an attempt did not materialize, Uganda would always suspect that Kenya and Ethiopia might want to place their officers in strategic positions in order to neutralize its dominance over the mission.⁴¹⁷

Withdrawal of Troops

Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda hold divergent views on the FGS and other political players in Somalia. Ethiopia is no longer the only military actor in Somalia, even if it remains the most dominant. Kenya has shown clear aspirations to become a major security player since it deployed its military forces in Somalia. There has already been tension between Ethiopia and Kenya over the latter's plan to establish a separate regional administration in Jubbaland, an area dominated by the Ogadeni clan which dominates the south-eastern part of Ethiopia.

At the same time, Ethiopia has expended considerable resources, both financial⁴¹⁸ and logistical, on sustaining its prolonged military presence in Somalia. Although Ethiopia's intervention is less controversial and seems to underpin Somalia's security, Somalis are deeply suspicious of Ethiopia's intentions due to the historical animosities between the two countries. These animosities date back to Imam Ahmad's invasion of Ethiopia and include the

⁴¹⁵ A seasoned French intelligence officer said that almost all Western intelligence services "agree that Ethiopians are masters of secret intelligence on Somalia". He added that "Ethiopians are good at anticipating with sound judgment certain developments, even when good intelligence is lacking". Interview with a French Intelligence Officer (10-04-2013).

⁴¹⁶ The East African 2012:1-2.

⁴¹⁷ Interview with an official of the African Union (13-03-2013).

⁴¹⁸ Berhane 2012: 1.

1964 border clash, the 1977 war and Ethiopia's 2006 intervention in Somalia.⁴¹⁹ Hence, the probability that Ethiopian troops will continue to be targeted by Al Shabaab is very high. Moreover, while the Ethiopian military is overstretched deep in Somalia, this could create a security vacuum inside Ethiopia. Between 2006 and 2008, Ethiopia's intervention in Somalia was exploited by the Ogaden National Liberation Front to launch highly publicized attacks on vital targets in south-eastern Ethiopia.

Ethiopian troops suddenly withdrew from around the town of Hudur in March 2013, which was subsequently reoccupied by Al Shabaab. Numerous possible reasons were advanced to justify the unexpected withdrawal from the town. Given that information is very tightly controlled, it is impossible to verify the validity of these reasons, which must include the demoralization of Ethiopian troops, among whom tension is running high, and Ethiopia's emerging disillusionment with Somalia's president since February-March 2013. One possible cause is that Hassan Sheikh Mohamud is trying to become more independent of the regional states, which seem set on continuing old practices of interference. The withdrawal was possibly to demonstrate the strength and usefulness of Ethiopia's presence and how much it would be missed. There may also be some fiscal considerations. It is becoming more and more difficult for the Ethiopian government to foot the bill but the government does not want its contingent to become part of AMISOM, which would mean that it would become accountable for all its operations and intelligence sources.

It is difficult to second-guess the detailed military considerations behind the withdrawal.⁴²⁰ There are theories that it may be part of a disinformation campaign intended to test Al Shabaab or lure it into a trap. It is hard to imagine that junior commanders acted on their own or on the orders of their immediate superiors. Such a withdrawal, or any drawdown, would be interpreted as a sign of weakness or a loss of nerve and could critically upset Somalia's fragile balance of power. Moreover, it does not make sense to give up Hudur, which is a strategic town between Baidoa and Beledweyne, at a time when the road between Baidoa and Mogadishu has just reopened.

Conclusions

Many Somalis argue that Ethiopia desires only a weak and disunited Somalia that will not pose a security threat to it at any point in the future. This view is shared by numerous non-Somali analysts and commentators, who strongly believe that Ethiopia will never accept a strong, united and potentially hostile Somalia. Yet,

⁴¹⁹ Plaut 2013: pp. 1-2.

⁴²⁰ Reuters (2013); Agence France Presse (2013b).

after its 2006 and 2012 interventions, which primarily aimed to prevent local and foreign Islamists from establishing a terrorist stronghold in Somalia and organizing terrorist attacks against Ethiopia, the Ethiopian government genuinely tried to create a viable and responsible government that could achieve some level of stability in Somalia. It initiated a variety of projects to strengthen the capacity of the relevant administrative institutions, law enforcement institutions and police forces of the different Somali administrations. Despite all the risks involved, Ethiopia even trained thousands of police officers and civilian security officers to enable them to undertake counterterrorism, criminal investigation and counterinsurgency operations.

Overall, Ethiopia's interference in Somalia's internal affairs since 1991 has been highly unpopular with many Somalis, who view Somaliland and Puntland as Ethiopian creations intended to divide Somalia. Ethiopia's provision of assistance to militias in order to fight Al Shabaab forces and its occasional military incursions have strengthened this image. The federal orientation of recent Somali administrations is also seen as an Ethiopian strategy to weaken the Somali state. These perceptions were further exacerbated by the undermining role played by states such as Egypt and Eritrea, which have continually acted as spoilers in Ethiopia's constructive attempts to bring peace and stability to Somalia. Whatever Ethiopia does in Somalia, the bulk of Somalis will simply interpret it as an attempt to divide and weaken the country. The predominant impression in Ethiopian decision-making circles is that most Somalis will always be suspicious of any action taken by Ethiopia even when the latter is acting in good faith.



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European Union Diplomat based in Nairobi, Kenya, Interview conducted (22-02-2013)

The present study examines external intervention in Somalia's civil war. The focus is on Ethiopia's, Kenya's and Uganda's military engagement in Somalia. The study also analyses the political and military interests of the intervening parties and how their respective interventions might affect each country's security posture and outlook.

The aim of the study is to contribute to a more refined understanding of Somalia's conflict and its implications for the security landscape in the Horn of Africa. The study contains both theoretical chapters and three empirically grounded cases studies.

The main finding of the report is that Somalia's neighbours are gradually entering into a more tense political relationship with the government of Somalia. This development is characterized by a tension between Somalia's quest for sovereignty and neighbouring states' visions of a decentralized Somali state-system capable of maintaining security across the country.