FOREIGN POLICY AND CONFLICT IN SOMALIA, 1960-1990

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DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been submitted for a degree to any other university.

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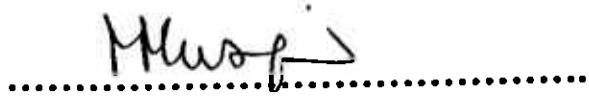

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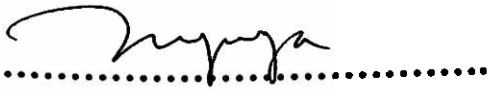

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DEDICATION

To my family and to the Somali people in the Horn of Africa region and beyond ...with the hope that they will one day enjoy the benefit of peaceful, constructive, and cooperative foreign policies in the same region.

Acknowledgements

First of all, I thank Allah (SWT) for everything! This thesis work would have not been completed without the guidance and assistance of Prof. Makumi Mwagiru and Prof. J. D. Olewe Nyunya whose timely supervision and attention to detail helped me to develop the best of my potential as a scholar of international studies, particularly foreign policy and conflict; I salute them and thank them so much. In particular, I owe the greatest intellectual debt for this study to Prof. Makumi Mwagiru. I am also very grateful to the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) for the scholarship opportunities both for my masters and Ph.D. degrees at a time when most of my fellow Somalis were not fortunate enough and not in a position to study further. In particular, I am deeply indebted to Ms. Katarina Burr and Ms. Jutta Quade. Also, G. K. Ikiara, Dr. Mustafa Hassouna, Dr. Cirino Hiteng, Ms. Ngoloma, and Dr. Nyinguro have all contributed to this work in one way or the other. A number of Somali diplomats deserve my thanks more than anybody else: Ambassador Hussein Ali Duale, the late Abdulkadir Yahya and Mohammed Haji. Similarly, special thanks go to Jibril Warsame, Abdulfatah Nero, Matt Bryden, Ken Menkhaus, Pat Johnson, Jerry McCann, Miles Henderson, and Michael Zorick for their support, insights and discussions on Somalia. And, most important of all, my family, my parents, brothers and sisters, and the many others who are very central to my life: Delta, Ramla, Shukriya, Miski, Aisha, Bahja, Mohammed-Amin, Adnan, Yahya, Sadiya, Ishraq, and Faduma-Ilwad have all contributed to the successful completion of this work. In addition to their unwavering support, my family was indeed an inspiration and my greatest source of motivation. I thank them for everything. Special thanks also go to Halwo and Delta for everything since the late 1980s!

Abstract

The study provides an overview of pre-1991 Somali foreign policy and conflict. It examines the extent to which the foreign policies of Somalia, regional states and other key external actors were a contributory factor to armed conflict in Somalia. By doing this, the study explores the theoretical linkages of foreign policy and conflict as it examines the role of foreign policy as a potential driver of conflict in Somalia and in the Horn of Africa. The study answers the question of the extent to which the international and internal conflicts involving Somalia during 1960 to 1990 are a function of foreign policy choices, behaviour, and orientation on the part of Somalia, regional states, and major powers. The theoretical framework for this thesis is derived from the works of Graham Allison as this provides a deeper insight into pre-1991 Somali foreign policy and conflict. The analysis of this framework suggests three different and complementary ways of understanding decision-making during the times of crisis: a 'rational actor' model, an 'organisational process' model, and a 'bureaucratic politics' model. Both primary and secondary sources of data were used to carry out the study. Primary data was collected through unstructured interviews. This study argues that Somali foreign policy, and those of regional states and other key external actors, during the study period, promoted armed conflict in Somalia by accident or design. The study also contends that while Somali foreign policy was a manifestation of its orientation towards a 'Greater Somalia,' other external factors like colonial legacy, Somali nationalism and Cold War politics and rivalry also contributed to the escalation of armed conflict. The study also finds that Somali irredentism had a selective impact, producing both warfare and subsequent skirmishes with Ethiopia but relatively stable relations with Kenya and Djibouti.

List of Abbreviations

AU	African Union
DAAD	German Academic Exchange Service
EAC	East African Community
EAF	Ethiopian Air Force
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
ELF	Eritrean Liberation Front
FLCS	*Front de Libération de la Conte des Somalis*
HDM	Hisbia Digil Mirifle
ICG	International Crisis Group
IGAD	Inter-Governmental Authority on Development
IGAD	Inter-Governmental Authority on Drought and Development
KADU	Kenya African Democratic Union
KANU	Kenya African National Union
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
NFD	Northern Frontier District
NFDLF	NFD Liberation Front
NIEO	New International Economic Order
NRC	National Refugee Council
NSS	National Security Service
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
RDF	Rapid Deployment Force
SAF	Somali Air Force
SDA	Somali Democratic Action
SDM	Somali Democratic Movement
SDR	Somali Democratic Republic
SNA	Somali National Alliance
SNC	Somali National Congress
SNL	Somali National League
SNM	Somali National Movement
SNRC	Somali National Reconciliation Conference
SPM	Somali Patriotic Movement
SRSP	Somali Revolutionary Socialist Party
SSDF	Somali Salvation Democratic Front
SSF	Somali Salvation Front
SRRC	Somali Reconciliation and Restoration Council
SYC	Somali Youth Club
SYL	Somali Youth League
TNA	Transitional National Assembly
TFG	Transitional Federal Government
TNG	Transitional National Government
TFIs	Transitional Federal Institutions
TFP	Transitional Federal Parliament
UN	United Nations

UNDP	UN Development Programme
UNHCR	UN High Commissioner for Refugees
UNITAF	Unified Task Force
UNPOS	UN Political Office for Somalia
USA	United States of America
USAID	US Agency for International Development
USC	United Somali Congress
USMAAG	US Military Assistance Advisory Group
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WSLF	Western Somali Liberation Front
WSLG	Western Somali Liberation Group

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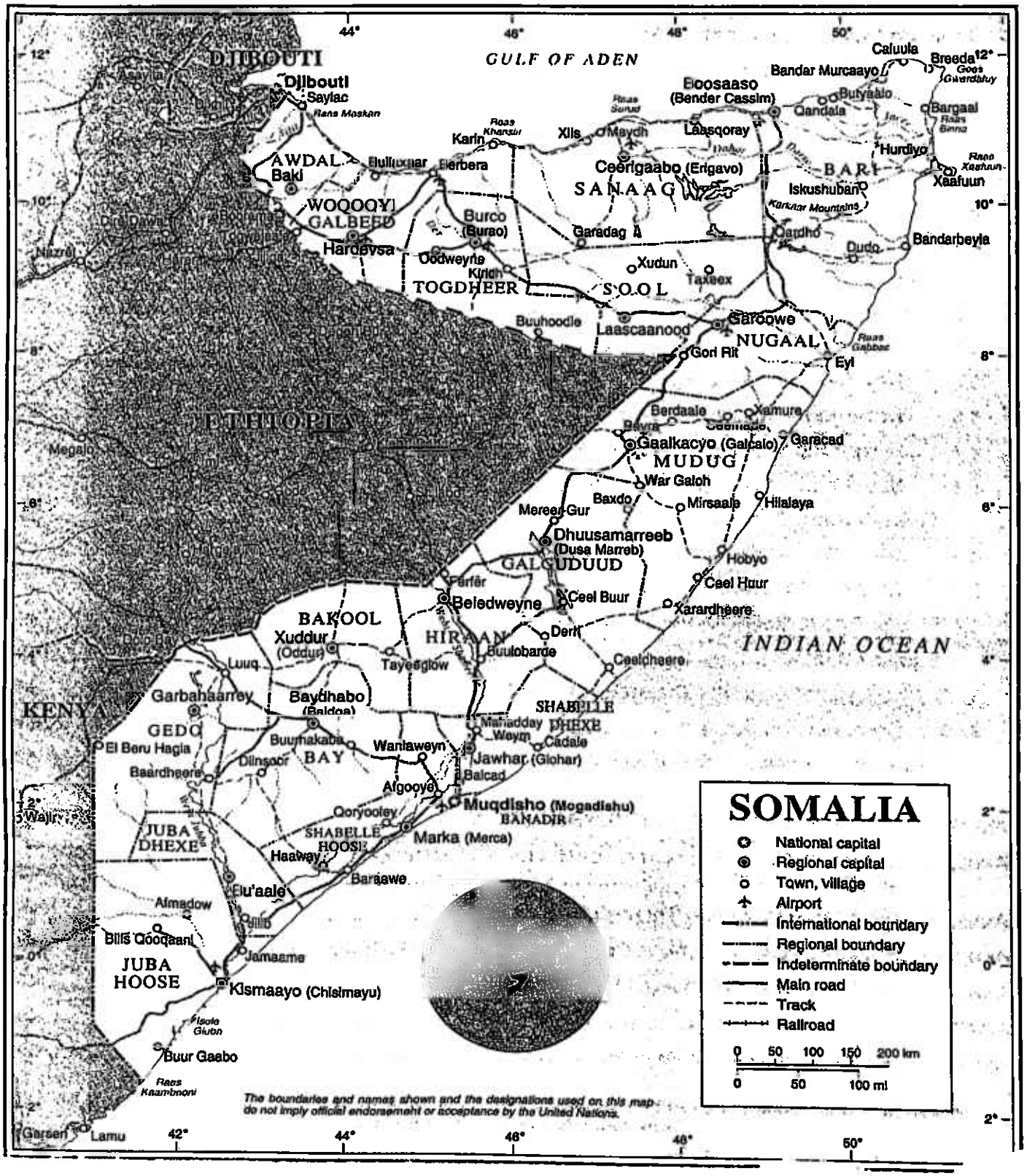
Map: Pre-1991 Somalia
Modified from the United Nations' Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO)
Cartographic Section, January 2007



CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Introduction

The colonial partition of Africa divided the greater Somali nomadic community into five countries: French Somaliland (now Djibouti), British Somaliland (now the secessionist "Republic of Somaliland"), Northeast Kenya, Italian Somaliland (now Somalia), and the Ethiopian Ogaden.[1] In 1960, the French, Ethiopian and Kenyan-British Somali populations remained outside the new state which was created by the union of Italian and British Somali colonies: the Somali Republic.[2] This colonial legacy of division gave rise to a central pillar of Somali foreign policy, its irredentist claim to Somali-inhabited portions of Ethiopia, Kenya, and the whole of Djibouti. This irredentist policy helped, among other things, to give rise to the Somali-Kenyan insurgency in north-eastern Kenya known as the *Shifta* wars in the mid-1960s. The Kenyan military effectively put down the movement, imposing a state of emergency and military administration over north-eastern Kenya that was only lifted in the early 1990s.

Somalia's first decade of independence was characterized by a vibrant but increasingly dysfunctional and corrupt multi-party democracy.[3] Between 1960 and 1969, the country underwent two civilian administrations led first, from 1960 to 1967, by President Adan Abdulle Osman "Aden Adde," and then, between 1967 and 1969, by

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[1] Jos van Buerden, "Somalia in a State of Permanent Conflict" in Mekenkamp, M. et al, *Searching Peace in Africa: An Overview of Conflict Prevention and Management Activities* (Utrecht: European Platform for Conflict Prevention, 1999), p.157.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Interview with Ambassador Hussein Ali Dualeh, former Somali ambassador to Kenya and to Uganda, Nairobi, September 11, 2001.

President Abdirashid Ali Sharma'arke.[4] In 1969, a bloodless military coup led by General Mohammed Siyad Barre toppled Somalia's parliamentary democracy, banned all political parties, dismantled the national assembly and placed the country under military rule.

Barre's coming to power, for example, was preceded by intense criticism launched against the prior civilian governments resulting from widespread dissatisfaction with the policies and conduct of these regimes.[5] Barre introduced a new and totally different type of political system in Somalia known as "Scientific Socialism," a combination of various ideas borrowed from the Islamic *Sharia* law, Somali customary law and ideas of community development based on the principle of self-reliance and from Marxist ideology. In practice, this ideology was applied as a political principle and served mainly to justify state repression and monopoly of national resources.

Throughout history, Somali governments, including Barre's and the colonialists, have been characterized by the practice of nepotism, corruption and general political and administrative inefficiencies. In addition, the Barre regime concentrated much of Somalia's economic activity, development work and political control in the Somali capital, Mogadishu, ignoring the rest of the country. This imbalance, coupled with the effects of the Cold War and Barre's brutal repression of political opponents, eventually gave rise to several clan-based liberation movements in the late 1970s and early 1980s, including the Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF), a Majerten sub-clan movement led by Abdullahi Yusuf, and the Somali National Movement (SNM), a mainly Isaq sub-

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[4] Some of the most comprehensive accounts of politics and development in independent Somalia include the works of D. Laitin and S. Samatar, *Somalia: Nation in Search of a State* (Boulder: Westview, 1987); A. Metz, (ed.), *Somalia: A Country Study* (Washington: Library of Congress, 1992); I. Lewis, *Modern History of Somalia* (London: Zed, 1988); and A. I. Samatar, *Socialist Somalia: Rhetoric and Reality* (London: Zed, 1988).

[5] A. J. Ahmed, *Daybreak is Near: Literature, Clans and the Nation-State in Somalia* (Lawrenceville, NJ: The Red Sea Press, Inc., 1996), p.154.

clan front in northern Somalia. Both insurgencies used Somalia's neighbour and rival Ethiopia as a base of operations, and enjoyed support from the Ethiopian government.

Some of the chief legacies of the all the past regimes in Somalia included the *Shifta* war with Kenya in the 1960s and the 1977-78 Ogaden war with Ethiopia, in which the latter Somali forces intervened in Ethiopia in support of Somali rebel fighters in a bid to liberate the Somali-inhabited region of the Ogaden. Somalia suffered around 25,000 casualties at the hands of Soviet-backed Ethiopia.[6] Another major armed conflict in Somalia, especially during the military regime, was the war between the Somali military and the SNM for control over northwest Somalia. SNM grievances were initially fuelled by the conduct of the Ogaden War, but worsened over the course of the 1980s when the Barre regime placed the northwest under military control, used the military administration to crack down on the Isaq and dispossess them of their businesses, and introduced large numbers of mainly Ogaden clan refugees into north-western Somalia.[7]

The civil war mounted by the SNM began in May 1988 and has had devastating impacts. In northwest, the government forces committed atrocities against civilians (an estimated 50,000 to 60,000 Somalis died) including an estimated influx of 400,000 refugees into Ethiopia and a similar number of displacement.[8] These atrocities were a factor in 'Somaliland's' subsequent bid for secession in May 1991. Somaliland's claim of sovereign independence has yet to receive external recognition from the UN, the AU or any state. In 1991, civil war erupted in Somalia leading to the total collapse of the Somali state. Since then, the country is divided into three parts: 'Somaliland,' in the northwest,

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[6] Ahmed, I. Samatar, *Socialist Somalia: Rhetoric and Reality,* op cit., p. 137.
[7] World Bank, *Somalia Conflict Analysis: Synthesis Report*, (Nairobi: World Bank, 2004), p. 9.
[8] Africa Watch, *Somalia: A Government at War with its Own People* (New York: Africa Watch, 1990), p. 10.

'Puntland,' in the northeast and South-central. In the north, there are functioning regional governments while in the south there is more lawlessness.

Statement of the Research Problem

Somalia, located in the Horn of Africa along the Gulf of Aden and Indian Ocean and bordering on Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya, is a largely culturally homogenous society. Unlike any of its neighbours, its people share a common language (Somali), Muslim religion, ethnic origin and a pastoral nomadic tradition. Once one of the strongest countries in the Horn of Africa with the third largest military force in sub-Saharan Africa during the 1977/78 Ogaden War with Ethiopia, the need for a balance of power among the countries in the Horn of Africa was of paramount importance.[9]

Foreign policy has also always been a major factor for Somalia and its neighbours in the achievement of peaceful co-existence. Despite this, Somalia had territorial problems with some of its neighbours and was at war with Kenya and Ethiopia in the early 1960s and again with Ethiopia over the Ogaden in the late 1970s. This changed the attitude not only of Ethiopia, but also of Kenya towards Somalia.

In recent research on conflict drivers, foreign policy behaviour has generally been given less systematic attention than other factors often cited as underlying causes of conflict in the region. These include environmental degradation, resource wars, ethno-politics, struggles for political power, warlordism, land, state collapse, and small arms proliferation. Due to the new 'conflict sensitivity' of foreign aid programmes, conflict analysis and the identification of conflict drivers has produced a plethora of new research on the issue. A review of conflict assessment frameworks developed by different donors

[9] Interview with Ambassador Hussein Ali Dualeh, former Somali ambassador to Kenya and to Uganda, Nairobi, September 11, 2001.

– the World Bank, the Department for International Development (DFID), Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), US Agency for International Development (USAID), and others – underscores the fact that foreign policy receives little attention as a potential conflict driver.[10] In a recent USAID report, an inventory of causes of conflict privileges internal drivers – environmental scarcity, political competition, greed and grievance. Only one section is devoted to "bad neighbourhoods" which can create conflict spill over from adjacent countries.[11]

When foreign policy is cited, it is often presumed to be a force for conflict management and resolution. This has especially been the case in the Horn of Africa since the reorientation of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) into an agency for regional conflict resolution and prevention. The member states of IGAD have made diplomatic efforts to mediate peace in Sudan and Somalia. That does not, however, preclude the possibility that, in other instances, the foreign policy orientation of regional states can promote – by accident or design – armed conflict.

The case of Somalia is especially important, as the country has been embroiled in some of the worst inter-state conflicts and civil wars in the region since 1960, and because spill-over from Somalia's crises have had such profound negative effects on security in neighbouring states. Most studies of conflict in Somalia understandably focus on the extraordinary period of state collapse and war since 1991. Increasingly overlooked, however, is the fact that Somalia was involved in three wars in the pre-1990 period: the so-called "*Shifta* wars" in northern Kenya in the 1960s; the Ogaden War with Ethiopia in 1977-78; and the civil war in northern Somalia in 1988-90. These three cases

[10] See USAID *Conducting a Conflict Assessment: A Framework for Strategy and Program Development* (Nairobi: April 2005).
[11] Ibid.

– discussed throughout the study – are the focus of this research. The question to investigate at this point, therefore, is re the consequences of Somalia's foreign policy choices in the Horn of Africa region, East Africa, Africa and the Arab world during the Cold War era.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are to:

- Provide an overview of pre-1991 Somali foreign policy and conflict.
- Examine the extent to which the foreign policies of Somalia, regional states, and major powers were a contributory factor to armed conflict in Somalia.
- Explore the theoretical linkages of foreign policy and conflict.

Literature Review

The literature review is classified under five sub-headings: literature on foreign policy in general; approaches to foreign policy analysis; levels of analysis; literature on Somali foreign policy from 1960 to 1990; and finally literature on inter- and intra-state conflicts. It is essential to look into this literature to establish trends in foreign policy formulation in states and its impact on external relations. This time period is specifically noted as a time when Somalia had a functional government and foreign policy making structures in place. After 1990, the last Somali government was overthrown and there have since been no operational state (or foreign policy-making) structures in place.

The literature review will help to situate this study within existing research on foreign policy and help to show if, and how, the debate on foreign policy and conflict are

correlated. The overview of the literature in the field of conflict will also be contextualised in relation to foreign policy and a coherent framework for analysis established for the study.

Foreign Policy

The term "foreign policy" defies a clear-cut and widely agreed definition. There is nonetheless general agreement regarding some of its definitive attributes. Foreign policy refers to the actions and declarations that affect the external milieu that is the arena beyond a state's borders. It is goal-oriented and can be described as "a strategy or planned course of action ... aimed at achieving specific goals ..."[12] Also, foreign policy can be seen as an instrument through which a state seeks to "influence the activities of another country."[13] Like any other policy, it also consists of the means and methods chosen to pursue specific goals, which may be economic, cultural, social, political, military and psychological.[14] Taking all of these attributes into consideration, foreign policy may be comprehensively defined as "... a combination of aims and interests pursued and defined by the given state...in its relations with other states and the methods and means used by it for the achievement and defence of these purposes and interests."[15]

Various other definitions of foreign policy are used in the many other disciplines or sub-fields of international studies. For example, Reynolds argues that foreign policy

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[12] See J. C. Plano and R. Olton, *The International Relations Dictionary* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1969), p.127.
[13] See Z. Mwamba, *Tanzania: Foreign Policy and International Politics* (Washington: University Press of America, 1978), p.iv.
[14] See R. B. Farrell (ed.), *Approaches to Comparative and International Politics* (Evanston: North Western University Press, 1966), p.213.
[15] Ibid.

consists of a range of actions taken by varying sections of a state's government.[16] The actions are taken with reference to other bodies acting on the international stage, of which usually the most important are other states, but which include international organisations, supranational and transnational groups, and, to some extent, individuals.

To Reynolds, foreign policy is not limited to the Westphalian state system and its relations with the outside world, but it encompasses other actors in the international system. Similarly, foreign policy has also been defined as a set of guides or choices being made about people, places and things beyond the boundaries of the state.[17] Modelski, on the other hand, views foreign policy as the process where a state adjusts its actions to those of other states so as to minimize adverse actions and maximize the favourable actions of foreign states.[18] Foreign policy is seen not as actions based on some grand design, but as a continuous process of pragmatic adjustments to the actions of others in the external environment.[19]

An important question, as far as foreign policy is concerned, is that of motivation. While, it has been highlighted that foreign policy could be formally conceptualized by a given state, it can also take place on an *ad hoc* basis and therefore be extremely flexible and dependent on the actions, actual or planned, of other actors in the international system. Reynolds also posits that states primarily seek to advance their national interests.[20] This means that each state in the international system has certain goals that it

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[16] See P. A., Reynolds, *An Introduction to International Relations* 3rd Edition (London and New York: Longman, 1994), p.38.
[17] See B. Russet and H., Starr, *World Politics: The Menu for Choice* (New York: W. H. Freeman and Company, 1989), p.187.
[18] See G. Modelski, *A Theory of Foreign Policy* (London: Pall Mall, 1962), p.3.
[19] See C.M.B, Utete 'Foreign Policy and the Developing State,' in Olatunde Ojo et al., *African International Relations* (Lagos: Longman Group, 1985), pp. 43-51:43.
[20] See P. A. Reynolds, *An Introduction to International Relations* 3rd Edition, (London and New York: Longman, 1994), p.39.

aims to achieve and, since no state is self-sufficient, foreign policy is not conceived in a vacuum. According to the proponents of Realism, the chief aim of the state is security, which includes securing the country's sovereignty, its territorial integrity and political independence.

Utete argues that in numerous circumstances foreign policy reflects class interests of the ruling elite, which might be ideologically rationalized as the interests of the entire state.[21] This fact stems from the existence of middle range objectives, within countries' foreign policies, such as inter-state economic, commercial and political relations including the attempts to influence the behaviour of other states.

Hillal et al observe that the study of foreign policies of developing countries has often been "underdeveloped" or "undeveloped."[22] The authors analyze three dominant approaches to the study and understanding of developing countries' foreign policies including: the psychologistic approach; the great powers approach; and the reductionist or model builders approach. The psychologistic approach views foreign policy as a function of the impulse and idiosyncrancies of a single leader; the great powers approach views foreign policy as a function of East–West conflict, hence lacking autonomy; while the reductionist or model builders approach views the foreign policies of developing countries as determined by the same process and decisional calculi that shape the foreign policy of developed countries.

The authors also assert the emergence of a new body of literature on what can be called the foreign policy of development and the domestic social structure or domestic

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[21] See C. M. B, Utete, "Foreign Policy and the Development State," in Ojo, O et al., African International Relations (Lagos: Longman Group, 1985), pp.43-51:43.
[22] See A. E. Hillal, and B. Korany, "A Literature Survey and a Framework for Analysis," in Korany, B. and Dessouki, A., The Foreign Policies of Arab States (London: Westview Press, 1984), pp.5-18:5.

political process. Whatever the source of foreign policy and the range of national interests, this study assumes that these countries have a policy that they wish to pursue in their relations with other states in the international system whether it is formally articulated in their constitutions or not.

Approaches to Foreign Policy Analysis

The study of developing countries' foreign policies can be done based on various models whose respective values are argued by different authors. On the one hand, the behaviour of developing countries can be analysed through the lens of psychological worldview.[23] Here, foreign policy is viewed as a function of the impulses and idiosyncrasies of a single leader. Individual state or government leaders are therefore seen as a source of foreign policy in developing countries who determine the issues of war and peace. The activities of a leader therefore are not designed to achieve societal goals, but are rather a function of public relations whose objectives are to improve the image of a state, enhance the popularity of a leader and divert attention from domestic upheavals through deceptive external victories.[24]

This view, however, is faulted on three levels. First, it makes foreign policy appear to be an erratic, irrational activity not subject to systematic analysis where a single leader is assumed to shoulder the making of external decisions. Secondly, the model ignores the domestic, regional and global contexts within which foreign policy is made and implemented. Indeed, there are constraints emanating from these contexts that a leader cannot ignore or surmount while making decisions that have an impact on the

[23] See B. Korany, "Foreign Policy Models and their Empirical Relevance to Third World Actors: A Critique and Alternative, "*International Science Journal* No. 26, 1974, pp.70-94.
[24] See F. Weinstein, *Indonesian Foreign Policy and the Dilemma of Dependence*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1976), p.21.

state's external behaviour. Finally, it ignores the fact that because of their interest in political survival, most leaders downplay eccentricities that run counter to dominant attitudes, public mood, and political realities.

The realist approach,[25] for its part, assumes that foreign policies of developing states are seen as lacking autonomy since they are weak and affected by external stimuli and therefore reactive to initiatives and situations created by external forces. This approach links the foreign policy of developing countries to the former East-West rivalry that prevailed during the Cold War. There is, however, a weakness to this assertion. It indeed overlooks the ability of weak states to bargain and manipulate stronger patrons in order to exercise constrained autonomy over their foreign policy.[26] Furthermore, it ignores domestic sources of foreign policy and implies that developing countries lack a purposeful foreign policy of their own making.

It also tends to presume that the foreign policies of developing countries are determined by the same processes and decisional calculi that inform the foreign policies of developed countries.[27] As such, the differences that emerge from their foreign policy behaviours are seen as founded on the resources and capabilities they possess. This view is predicated on the assumption that the behaviour of all states follows a rational actor model of decision making as they seek to enhance their power and advance their national interest.[28] Therefore, the foreign policies of developing countries are perceived to be of the same nature as those of developed countries, taking place, however, at a lower level

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[25] See H. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: Struggle for Power and Peace*, (New York: Knopf, 1973), p.72.
[26] See K. Menkhaus, and C. W. Kegley, Jr., "The Compliant Foreign Policy of the Dependent State Revisited: Empirical Linkages and Lessons from the Case of Somalia," *Comparative Political Studies*, vol. 21, no. 3 (October 1988), pp. 315-46.
[27] See J. Rosenau, *The Scientific Study of Foreign Policy*, 2nd Ed., (London: Frances Printer, 1980).
[28] See M. Nicholson, *Rationality and Analysis of International Conflict*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

of conduct due to the lower level of material resources possessed by developing countries. The weakness emerging from this approach lies in its inability to account for specific features of developing countries, such as modernisation, low levels of political institutionalisation, dependency status in the global system, and political culture, that have an impact on the shaping of their foreign policies.

The above arguments aside, in addition to Graham Allison's models, there are over five key approaches to foreign policy analysis: the traditional approach; comparative foreign policy; cognitive processes and psychology; 'multilevel, multidimensional' and the constructivist turn approach.[29] More on Graham Allison's models are discussed in the theoretical framework section.

Levels of Analysis

An enduring concern in research on foreign policy lies in the selection of the appropriate 'level of analysis.' In other words, the question of who are the actors that shape a state's foreign policy. In his seminal work, on a 'pre-theory' of foreign policy, James Rosenau identifies five different levels of analysis, each suggesting a different set of categories of actors making or shaping foreign policy, which are used to frame this section of the literature review.[30]

For political realists, the state is the appropriate unit of analysis and is seen as pursuing foreign policy to advance national interest. According to this view, a state's capacity or power is central to shaping its foreign policy strategies. For Rourke, the state's capability enables it to achieve its goals even when they clash with those of other

[29] Jackson, R., and Sorensen, G., *Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp.222-224.
[30] See J. Rosenau, "Pre-Theories and Theories of Foreign Policy," in I. Barry Farrell (ed.), *Approaches to Comparative and International Politics* (Evanston, Ill: Northwestern University Press, 1966), pp. 27-93.

states.[31] This observation can be applied to Somalia where the state's goal to unify the Somali population and the land they occupy in Ethiopia, Kenya, and the whole of Djibouti led to hostilities with these countries. Somali governments were willing to absorb the costs of this irredentist policy in the belief that they possessed a strong military capability which would allow them to succeed.

Rourke's position begs the question of what precisely state capability is and how it is acquired. Goldstein, for example, observes that a state's capability to influence another is based on its possessions.[32] These include the size of the country, levels of income, armed forces and population. However, the ability to use these possessions to influence another actor will depend on the sum total of the possessions vis-à-vis the national will. Somalia viewed itself as possessing adequate capability to influence its neighbours to surrender the Somali population and the territory they occupy. In practice, however, this was not the case. While the Somali state had a large territory and medium population levels, it did not have high enough levels of income to replenish its military needs in order to sustainably fight its neighbouring countries. Its efforts to acquire territory from Kenya and Ethiopia were thwarted as a result.

Rothgeb observes that despite a state's possession of power, this does not in itself always guarantee that it will prevail in conflicts.[33] This is based on the fact that power, if taken out of context, only provides a general understanding of typical outcomes. The relative power among states can indeed rise or decline depending on states ability to use it in order to achieve desired goals. Power is indeed not absolute and must be analysed in

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[31] See T. J. Rourke, *International Politics on the World Stage*, (Englewood, Cliffs, NJ.: Prentice Hall, 1996), p.230.
[32] See J. S. Goldstein, *International Relations*, 4th Ed., (New York: Priscilla McGeehan, 2001).
[33] See J. M. Rothgeb, *Defining Power: Influence and Force in the Contemporary International System*, (New York, St. Martin's Press, 1992).

relation to others. In Somalia, for example, the quest for 'Greater Somalia' by its leaders was based on an estimate of the number of troops at their disposal at the time. Yet, despite the available manpower, the state did not realise any of the irredentist ambitions.

An interesting sub-set of the realist theory of foreign policy is the mid-level theory of small or weak state foreign policy.[34] A number of researchers have sought to demonstrate that weak states seek to maximize their constrained autonomy by bargaining with stronger states, seeking principally to avoid total dependence or dominance by stronger states. Somalia's robust bargaining with the two superpowers during the Cold War is illustrative of this theory.[35]

The realist focus on states as units of analysis leaves no room for the role of individuals. Indeed, states are seen as unitary, and individuals are only perceived to work towards attaining state goals. For realists, the only element that shows prominent impact on foreign policy apart from state capability is the nature of leadership. At this level, one should evaluate the input of leadership in formulating foreign policy.

In contrast, Goldgeier demonstrates that individual leaders in states can be substituted as units of analysis without changing the way states behave.[36] States share common interests from time to time and their differences in behaviour are pegged to state resources, geography and national interests. Individual leaders are assumed to be rational when making decisions in the national interest and are thus expected to conform to state-rationality. In practice, however states can at times filter irrational decisions taken by

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[34] See for instance R. L. Rothstein, *The Weak in the World of the Strong: The Developing Countries in the International System* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977).
[35] See K. Menkhaus, K., and C. W. Kegley, Jr., "The Compliant Foreign Policy of the Dependent State Revisited: Empirical Linkages and Lessons from the Case of Somalia." *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 21, no. 3 (October 1988), pp.315-46.
[36] See J. N. Goldgeier, *Leadership Style and Soviet Foreign Policy: Stalin, Khrushchev, Gorbachev*, (Baltimore, John Hopkins University Press, 1994), p.43.

individual leaders to reach rational decisions, or vice versa. When such a situation occurs, it leads to a gap in harmonising individual and state rationality. The extrapolation of this gap is reflected in the three regimes that dominated Somalia's post-independence period.

The leaders of these regimes suffered from misperceptions and selective perceptions in their decision making processes.[37] Highly personalized explanations of foreign policy decisions, focusing on the inclinations and belief systems of top leaders, is of particular relevance to governments such as Somalia's during the 1969-1990 period when Siyad Barre dominated Somali politics and the country was characterized by the politics of personal rule.

Alternatively, another school of thought focuses on bureaucratic politics as a driver of foreign policy decisions. Welch observes that apart from rational models of foreign policy formulation, bureaucratic politics can affect outcomes in state's decision-making.[38] From this perspective, foreign policy decisions result from bargaining exercises among various government agencies that have somewhat divergent interests and desired outcomes. This argument presents a challenge to the rational actor approach[39] since the decisions made by different state agencies are not reflective of what states desire, but rather what state departments aspire to achieve.

Group decision-making dynamics can also be a decisive factor in the shaping of foreign policy decisions, and help to explain otherwise irrational – even disastrous –

[37] See R. Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), p.7.
[38] See D. A. Welch, "The Organisational Process and Bureaucratic Politics Paradigms: Retrospect and Prospect" in *International Security* 17 (2), 1992, pp.112-146.
[39] This is made clear in the seminal work by G. Allison, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* (New York: HarperCollins, 1971).

decisions by states, such as going to war.[40] Groupthink exerts influence on decision-making through emphasis on issues that would have been given a blind eye or bias by an individual leader. This concept serves to explain how individual leaders can be prevailed upon in decision-making if a majority of the group members opposes or supports an idea. It also illustrates how the pressure to conform to group consensus works against careful consideration of policy choices. Groupthink is said to be especially common when the leadership is autocratic and dictatorial, as was the case in Somalia, resulting in subordinates fearing to raise objections to the leader's decisions.

Somali Foreign Policy

The literature on Somali foreign policy focuses on several key features of Somalia: its status as a poor and weak third world state; its strategic position on the Horn of Africa, which gave it some bargaining leverage during the Cold War; and its dual membership and identity in both the OAU and the League of Arab States.[41] The history of Somalia itself can also provide a basis to analyse its foreign policy. As such, the Somali state is an amalgam of two different colonial entities: the former British protectorate, "Somaliland", and Italian Somalia.[42] Both territories joined in June 1960 to establish the Somali Republic which remained intact until January 1991. At independence, the Somali Republic was conscious of its colonial inheritance in terms of the frontier demarcations that placed some of the Somali people and territories in

[40] See I. L. Janis, *Victims of Groupthink: A Psychological Study of Foreign-Policy Decisions and Fiascos*, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1972), p.94.
[41] See B. Korany, B. and A. E. H., Dessouki, *The Foreign Policies of Arab States*, (Boulder & London: Westview Press, 1984), p.1.
[42] See for example K. Menkhaus, "Somali: Civil War, Intervention and Withdrawal 1990-1995," in Writenet Country Papers, UNHCR Writenet project.

Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya.[43] After the first two entities united, the Somali Republic sought to reunite the other three parts: this became a national goal. It was also reflected in the initial refusal of the Somali Republic to sign the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) Charter in 1963 because of a clause that stated that member states should respect the borders inherited at independence.[44]

Immediately after independence, the Somali Republic adopted the policy of irredentism,[45] setting an agenda to redeem the territories it felt rightfully belonging to it due to their pre-colonial claims in addition to the fact that those territories were partly inhabited by members of the Somali ethnic group. This quest for territories in Somalia's neighbours bred interstate conflicts, pitting Somalia against Ethiopia, Kenya and Djibouti.

Jama observes that in defining Africa's borders, no specific criteria were used with regard to geographical, ethnic, religious or linguistic divisions.[46] The Somali Republic found this to be unreasonable as local circumstances were disregarded; splitting the Somali speaking people across four distinct states. As a result, the Somali Republic felt it had the responsibility to remedy the situation by acquiring those territories unjustifiably placed in Kenya's former Northern Frontier District (NFD), Ethiopia's Ogaden, and the whole of coastal Djibouti, then under France's authority. The question that arises in this context is why the Somali Republic had these strong nationalist tendencies and not any other country in the Horn of Africa which faced similar arbitrary demarcation of borders during the colonial period.

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[43] Ibid.
[44] Ibid.
[45] See J. S. Goldstein, *International Relations*, 4th Ed., (New York: Priscilla McGeehan, 2001), pp.203-204.
[46] See A. A. Jama, *Basis of the Conflict in the Horn of Africa*, (Mogadishu: NPA, 1978), p.35.

In that respect, Touval argues that state policies can be attributed to a boundary's interference on economic activities and communication lines.[47] The location of borders, together with the combination of ecological factors of economic and human geography, represents a major factor in the formulation of national interest. In turn, nationalism is perceived as a strong basis for pursuing economic goals, and observing 'national' borders is pertinent to having peace or conflict. In Somalia, it was believed that the economic empowerment of the Somali people – locally and in the diaspora – would be achieved if they were united. In this case, it is clear that Somalia pegged its national interest on territory and population to acquire more power.

Somalia's external behaviour regarding borders is a reflection of the county's questioning of the legitimacy of the states occupying the Somali-claimed areas.[48] The Somali Republic, for example, felt it was particularly wrong for Ethiopia to occupy the Ogaden region.[49] The disputed territory between Somalia and Ethiopia known as 'Ogaden region' includes the *Haud* and *Reserve Area* presently also under Ethiopian rule.[50] Somalia indeed perceived Ethiopia to have held an expansionist policy in the 1890s and therefore felt justified, during the study period, to help the Somalis in Ethiopia to secede. Somalia extended a similar struggle with regard to Djibouti that culminated in independence from France in 1977. Although Djibouti decided to stand on its own after independence, the Somali republic used this successful endeavour to examine how the

[47] See S. Touval, *The Boundary Politics of Independent Africa*, (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1972), p.25.
[48] Ibid
[49] Ibid.
[50] Ibid.

principle of self-determination could be applied to other Somali territories in the Horn of Africa.[51]

The desire by the Somali Republic to reunite all Somali people engendered an aggressive foreign policy towards Kenya, Ethiopia and France, which then colonised Djibouti.[52] During the 30-year independence period, the Somali Republic indeed spent a large proportion of its budget on military expenditure.[53] The agenda behind the purchase of this military equipment was to strengthen the Republic's position in fighting opponents who obstructed its perceived national interest.

Cold War politics had a significant impact on Somalia's foreign policy. Having had neighbours whose tilt was either pro-east or pro-west, Somalia had no means of remaining neutral in conducting its foreign relations.[54] During this time, the superpowers sought to strengthen their positions in the Horn of Africa through militarily supporting any regime that ascribed to their respective ideals. As a result, the Somali republic attracted the USSR's attention and would not identify with any of its neighbours due to ideological differences and territorial perceptions. During that same period, Somali–Ethiopian relations were volatile and the Somali support for insurgency in the Ogaden region led, among other things, to a large refugee influx into Somalia in 1978. The Somali republic in turn used the presence of these Ogaden Somali on its territory to solicit international support for their upkeep: the refugees hence became an economic asset to be exploited.

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[51] Ibid.
[52] See S. Touval, *The Boundary Politics of Independent Africa*, (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1972), p.25.
[53] See for example J. D. Singer, and M. Small, *Resort to Arms* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1982).
[54] Ibid.

In the 1980s, the Somali government realised its inability to recapture any of the Somali territories from its neighbours as then President Siyad Barre realised the limits of his regime and its sponsors in fighting successful wars in the region. This led to a major shift in the clamour to acquire any territory in Kenya or Djibouti.[55] The foreign policy of Somalia towards Kenya and Djibouti therefore changed from that of confrontation to one of *rapprochement*. This shift was later extended to Ethiopia following the intervention of Kenyan and Djiboutian leaders. The literature on Somali foreign policy during the 1980s stresses that Barre's regime came to be highly dependent, and focused on foreign aid,[56] and that its acquisition of arms as a result of Cold War clientelism contributed to a climate of militarization in the Horn of Africa.[57]

Somalia's efforts to maximize its autonomy within the constraints of its status as a weak state have also been documented. It was, for example, no coincidence that Somalia sought membership in the Arab League in 1973 at precisely the moment when the OPEC cartel produced massive new wealth in the Gulf States. Somalia – at the time a newly-declared Soviet ally and self-declared scientific socialist government – hoped to gain access to Saudi Arabia's foreign aid and thereby increase its leverage with the Soviet Union.[58] Somalia's relations with Arab countries, however, are characterised by a strong dichotomy. First, Somalia is the only non-Arab member of the Arab League. In addition, its dealing with Arab States has been marked by ambiguity. For example, Somalia supported members of the Arab League, such as Iraq, Algeria and Libya, who historically

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[55] Ibid.
[56] See P. Henze, *The Horn of Africa* (London: McMillan, 1991); David Rawson, *Somalia and Foreign Aid* (Washington: Foreign Service Institute, 1994); K. Menkhaus, "US Foreign Assistance to Somalia: Phoenix from the Ashes?" *Middle East Policy* vol. 5, no. 1 (January 1997), pp. 124-149.
[57] See J. Lefevre, *Arms for the Horn* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986).
[58] See K. Menkhaus, and J. Creed, "The Rise of Saudi Regional Power and the Foreign Policies of Northeast African States," Northeast *African Studies*, vol. 8, nos. 2-3 (1987), pp. 1-22.

opposed US foreign policy in the Middle East. However, after its defeat in the Ogaden war in 1978, it aligned itself with Egypt and Saudi Arabia when the need arose for military aid. This indicates that Somalia did not have a specific approach in determining its external relations with the Arab world, but rather that it weighed the issue at hand and chose allies that would help it achieve a particular goal. The dependence on Arab states for economic gain, however, led to its weakened foreign policy in the Middle East.

Relations between Somalia and the superpowers during the Cold War period were not stable either.[59] At the onset of Barre's regime, the Somali government ascribed to the tenets of "scientific socialist" and, as a result, won the support of the Soviet Union which it enjoyed until the outbreak of the Ogaden War in 1977. At that point, the Soviet Union changed its foreign policy, withdrew its support to Somalia and instead supported Ethiopia.

Somali-US relations warmed up at this time and Somalia became a recipient of US military and economic aid. The agenda for this shift of foreign relations from pro-Soviet to pro-US is based on national goals aspired to by Somalia. As the country and its leadership wanted to achieve victory in redeeming Somali-claimed territories from its neighbours, whoever supported this cause was accommodated as a friendly ally. For their part, the superpowers calculated the geo-strategic position of whoever they supported. For example, the US was ready to support Somalia in order to access its military bases and use these to launch US operations off the Somalia coast along the Gulf.[60]

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[59] See the US Department of State, *Background Notes: Somalia*, (Washington, D.C.: Office of East African Affairs, Bureau of African Affairs, July 1998).
[60] Ibid.

Ample literature exists documenting the extent to which Somali foreign policy degenerated over time into one driven mainly by regime survival. After the disastrous defeat in the Ogaden War, the Barre government was threatened by several armed insurgencies and serious unrest in its own ranks. Much of its subsequent foreign policy, argue analysts such as Abdi Samatar, Laitin and Samatar, and Hussein Adam can be understood as efforts to shore up the failing regime and ward off internal opposition.[61]

Inter- and Intra-State Conflicts

Because the Horn of Africa has been the site of multiple, protracted conflicts, a growing literature focusing on the regional dimensions of both conflict and foreign policy is available. The latter emphasises on proxy wars waged by regional rivals; small arms proliferation; and the cross-border nature of many regional conflicts.

Inter-state conflicts in the Horn of Africa are driven mainly by border disputes and trans-boundary-shared resources.[62] To analyse the basis of conflict between states, one therefore needs to look at colonial legacies, Cold War politics and the type of regimes found in states in the region. Apart from conflicts between states, internal conflicts in the Horn of Africa are also prevalent. For example, notable intra-state conflicts in the region include that of Somalia, Sudan, Ethiopia, and Uganda, while inter-state conflicts that have been discussed at length include those between Kenya and Somalia, Ethiopia and Somalia, Ethiopia and Eritrea and Somalia and Djibouti.

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[61] See A. I. Samatar, *Socialist Somalia: Rhetoric and Reality* (London: Zed, 1986); David Laitin and Said Samatar, *Somalia: Nation in Search of a State* (Boulder: Westview, 1986); and Africa Watch, *Somalia: A Government at War with Its Own People* (New York: Africa Watch, January 1990); See also H. M. Adam, "Somalia: Personal Rule, Military Rule and Militarism," in Eboe Hutchful and Abdoulaye Bathily, *Military and Militarism in Africa* (Dakar: CODESERIA, 1998), p.377.

[62] See G. P. Okoth, and B. A. Ogot, *Conflict in Cotemporary Africa*, (Nairobi: Jomo Kenyatta Foundation 2002), p.7.

As mentioned earlier, the Horn of Africa, in the Cold War era, attracted attention from the superpowers that helped regimes to militarise.[63] Their agenda was not to help states stabilise, but to carry forward their Cold War rivalries. This situation illustrates how conflicts in the Horn of Africa become globalised even when they were internal or interstate. However, in terms of isolating the factors that lead to conflict situations, case studies from the Horn of Africa delineate different causes that are uniquely linked to the regimes in place. For example, the Ethiopia-Somalia conflict emerged from Somalia's ambition to establish a "Greater Somalia" in the Horn of Africa.[64]

The issue of sovereignty and the sanctity of a state's territorial integrity formed the basis for other states harbouring Somali populations to put up resistance against Somali irredentism.[65] While the first two Somali civilian administrations chose to diplomatically fight for these Somali peoples in international fora, Barre went further and chose to build up the country's military to achieve domestic and international survival. In addition, he chose to support insurgents within Ethiopian territory, intensifying conflict within that country besides engaging it in direct confrontation.

Nationalism is another key contributor to conflicts in the Horn of Africa.[66] Countries in the region are composed of communities of diverse cultures lumped up in the same territory and the contribution to conflict of ethnic or nationalist affiliations is evident in both intra- and inter-state conflicts.

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[63] See C. H. Ofuho, "Security Concerns in the Horn of Africa," in Makumi Mwagiru, *African Regional Security in the Age of Globalisation* (Nairobi: HBF, 2004), pp.7-17:11.
[64] See I. W. Zartman, *Ripe for Resolution: Conflict and Intervention in Africa*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), p.124.
[65] Ibid., p.88.
[66] Ibid.

From another perspective, conflicts also emerge within a state due to bad political and economic governance.[67] Regimes that are in power often seek to perpetuate themselves and preserve elitist values at the expense of social development. According to the World Bank, for example, the regimes witnessed in Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan and Djibouti have demonstrated inadequacy in equitably propagating social, political and economic values to their people while government structures imposed economic decisions on people without offering services in return. For example, Ethiopia's imperial regime taxed people heavily but, due to the existing weak government machinery, the regional government became too exploitative and Ethiopians sought an alternative centre of power, leading to the coming into force of Haile Selassie's overseer.

Clapham observes that the emergence of radical militarism also contributed to a rise of conflict in the Horn of Africa.[68] Both Somalia and Ethiopia demonstrate the eventuality of militarism, particularly from 1969 in Somalia and from 1974 in Ethiopia. The regimes in the two countries during that time came into power through military *coups d'etat*: they were also overthrown through the same means. This situation triggered civil wars and, in the case of Somalia, it has taken a long time - and it still remains a challenge - to put up a government with effective control. The situations in Somalia and in Ethiopia are illustrative of the level of violence that emerges from poor state structures and repression of the people. They also highlight the impact of individual leaders' failure to recognise the shortcomings of their poor decisions in the territories they ruled.

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[67] See World Bank, *World Development Report*, (Washington: World Bank, 1991), p.5.
[68] See C. Clapham, 'The Horn of Africa: Conflict Zone,' in Furley, O. (ed.), *Conflict in Africa*, (London: Tauris Academic Studies, 1992), pp.72-91.

Henze remarks that the war and violence witnessed in the Horn of Africa is also a result of the exportation of arms to the region by major powers.[69] The Horn of Africa region does not possess the capacity to reduce the current stock, and the inflow of weapons that have served to sustain the magnitude of war witnessed from the early 1960s onwards. During the Cold War, the superpowers provided weapons to states in the region to strengthen their governments, or individual leaders. These weapons later found their way into the hands of insurgents who either captured them or were supplied by governments which sought to destabilise their regional rivals. Somalia and Ethiopia were both supplied arms by the US and USSR, with the deliberate intention of warding off each other's influence in the region.[70] In line with Cold War rivalry, Ethiopia ended up supporting insurgency in Somalia which Somalia reciprocated in Ethiopia, eventually fuelling the toppling of both Siyad Barre and Mengistu Haile Mariam. Arms meant to strengthen Somalia and Ethiopia, in advancing the interests of eastern communism or western democracy, in effect ended up destroying their regimes.

Clapham also demonstrates the impact of ideology in the politics of the Horn of Africa.[71] In his analysis of new regimes in Ethiopia and Eritrea, he postulates that the Mengistu regime fought for all those objectives that made Marxism-Leninism attractive to third world countries. This Marxist-Leninist political thought espoused national unity, economic development and social transformation created through state power. Eritrea sought to separate from the central Ethiopian regime in 1991 as a result of economic

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[69] P. Henze, *The Horn of Africa: From War to Peace*, (London: Macmillan, 1991), p.138.

70 See for example J. G. Hershberg, "U.S.-Soviet Relations and the Turn toward Confrontation, 1977-1980: New Russian & East German Documents," *Cold War International History Project*, Bulletin 8/9, Winter 1996, p.130; See also See P. Woodward, *The Horn of Africa: State Politics and International Relations*, (London: Tauris, 1996), p.74.

[71] See C. Clapham, 'The Horn of Africa: Conflict Zone,' in O. Furley, (ed.), *Conflict in Africa*, (New York: Taurius Academic Studies, 1995), p.84.

decay and absence of meaningful political representation. The country sought allies to support its cause by renouncing Soviet ideology and thus attracting western sympathy. The Eritrean success shows the extent to which ideology can drive states into anarchy and secession.

From these observations, no single factor can be attributed to the causes of violence and conflict in the Horn of Africa. Instead, it is clear that a combination of factors subtly interplays and leads to escalated violence. The views represented here illustrate how domestic decision-making structures and the role played by individual leaders contribute to the failure of states to protect their people from violence and insecurity. Regimes, therefore, often engineer and replenish violence in order to fulfil witness of external actors who offer free arms, development aid packages, and technical military assistance.

There is a large pool of published and unpublished articles, chapters in books and unpublished reports most of which were written on Somalia. Some of the notable works are those of Lewis which give a deeper understanding of Somali politics;[72] Lee Cassanelli's works on Somali history;[73] David Latin, and Said Samatar's which provide a good insight into Siyad Barre's political style, the formation of opposition movements and the conduct of foreign relations;[74] and those of Ahmed Samatar's which covers the impact of the Ogaden war on the country's foreign relations.[75] There is, however, a lack

72 See I. M. Lewis, *A Pastoral Democracy: A Study of Pastoralism and Politics among the Northern Somali of the Horn of Africa*, (London: James Curry, 1999).
73 See L. V. Cassanelli, *The Shaping of Somali Society: Reconstructing the History of a Pastoral People, 1600-1900*, (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania University Press, 1982).
74 See D. Laitin and S. S. Samatar, *Somalia: Nation in Search of a State*, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1987)
75 See A. I. Samatar, *Socialist Somalia: Rhetoric and Reality*, (London: Zed Books, 1988).

of any major academic work on Somali foreign policy and conflict particularly during the thirty years of the country's independence.

As was mentioned earlier, most studies of conflict in Somalia understandably focus on the extraordinary period of state collapse and war since 1991. Increasingly overlooked, however, is the fact that Somalia was involved in three wars in the pre-1991 period which was the result of its foreign policies and those of key external actors during the study period. Similarly, when foreign policy is cited, it is often presumed to be a force for conflict management and resolution thus ignoring the fact that foreign policy orientation can promote – by accident or design – armed conflict as well. This study fills this gap by contributing a great deal to research on the causes of war in the Horn of Africa by focusing on conflicts involving Somalia and by exploring the role of the foreign policies of both Somalia and key external actors.

Justification for the Study

Somalia is one of the most homogenous countries in Africa, yet it is the only one that has been without a functional government for over nineteen years. The causes of the Somali civil war which broke out in early 1991 are wide and varied. These range from the country's colonial legacy, Somali nationalism, clan politics, and Cold War politics and rivalry, to structural conflict. Over the first 30-year after independence, the country experienced some semblance of central governance and functional administrations despite regional tensions. Since the war broke out, there have been fifteen peace and reconciliation attempts, both official and non-official. However, the country has yet to enjoy peace or a return to normalcy and an opportunity to reclaim its place in the community of states.

The Somali conflict is one of the protracted conflicts in the Horn of Africa that has had severe consequences not only for the country itself but also for the stability and development of the entire region. Since the 1960s, the Horn of Africa has been a microcosm of the tensions that beset the world. As a result of the Cold War, "domestic, regional and global forces have impinged on the Horn's international politics."[76] Somalia is no exception, especially since the conflict has to do with the structure of the country's past and even more so with its conflict-oriented foreign policy in the turbulent Horn of Africa region.

The Somali conflict can moreover be traced back to pre-civil war Somali foreign policy (and that of other countries in the region and other major players) both at the regional and international levels (This will be dealt with in detail in Chapter Three and Four). For example, all past Somali government's pan-Somalism tendency and the whole idea of "Greater Somalia" was not received well in the Horn of Africa region and beyond for various reasons.[77]

The fact that issues like foreign policy behaviour have generally been given less systematic attention than other factors often cited as underlying causes of conflict in the region and particularly in Somalia calls for such a study and therefore justifies this study both on academic and policy grounds. A study on Somali foreign policy and conflict poses a unique academic and policy opportunity not only for the future of Somalia but also for the long term stability and development of the Horn of Africa. Since this study contributes to research on the causes of war in the Horn of Africa by focusing on

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[76] S. M. Makinda, *Superpower Diplomacy in the Horn of Africa* (London & Sydney: Croom Helm, 1987), p.1.

[77] Interview with Ambassador Abdullahi Ahmed Addou, former Somali ambassador to the United States, Nairobi, August 7, 2004.

conflicts involving one country – Somalia – and by exploring the role of one potential driver of conflict: the foreign policies of both Somalia and key external actors, it is also essential for policy-makers, especially those in regional governments and international organisations who seek to promote peace-building in the Horn of Africa region.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study is based on Graham Allison's models whose analysis suggests three different and complimentary ways of understanding decision-making during the times of crisis.[78] With a case study of the Cuban missile crisis which pissed the United States against the Soviets, Allison came up with three approaches: a 'rational actor approach' that provides models for answering the question: with that information what would be the best decision to move towards one's goal? The assumption is that governments are unified and rational, wanting to achieve well-defined foreign policy goals; an 'organisational process' model, according to which concrete foreign policy emerges from clusters of governmental organisations that look after their own best interests and follow 'standard operating procedures (SOPs); and a 'bureaucratic politics model' where individual decision-makers at different levels (each with their own particular goals in mind) bargain and compete for influence.[79]

This study develops the thesis that Somali foreign policy, and those of regional states and other key external actors, during the study period, promoted armed conflict in Somalia by accident or design. This proposition is based on Graham Allison's models. In the models, which compliment each other, Allison constructs three different ways or

78 See G. Allison, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* (New York: HarperColins, 1971).

79 R. Jackson and G. Sorensen, *Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp.222-224.

lenses through which analysts can examine events.[80] Under the rational actor model (RAM), Allison observes that governments are treated as the primary actor and it examines a set of goals, evaluates them according to their utility and then picks the one that has the highest 'payoff.' Under the organisational process, Allison argues that, when faced with crisis, government leaders do not look at it as a whole, but break it down and assign it according to pre-established organisational lines and that, because of time and resource limitations, rather than evaluating all possible course of action to see which one is most likely to work, leaders settle on the first proposal that adequately addresses the issue.[81] In this case, leaders gravitate towards solutions that limit short-term uncertainty while organisations follow set "repertoires" and procedures when taking actions. Because of the large resources and time required to fully plan and mobilise actions within a government, leaders are therefore effectively limited to pre-existing plans.

Under the governmental politics model, Allison observes that a nation's actions are best understood as the result of politicking and negotiation by its top leaders. In this case, even if they share a goal, leaders differ in how to achieve it because of such factors as personal interests and background. If a leader holds absolute power (for example the President who is technically the commander-in-chief), the leader must gain a consensus with his underlings or risk having his order misunderstood, or in some cases, ignored. In this model, Allison observes that the make up of a leader's entourage will have a large effect on the final decision (for example a group of advisors of 'yes men' vs. advisors who are willing to voice disagreement) and that leaders have different levels of power

[80] See G. Allison, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*, op. cit.
[81] Ibid.

based on charisma, personality, skills of persuasion, and personal ties to decision-makers within the government.[82]

Allison further argues that, in the governmental politics model, if a leader is certain enough, he will not seek input from his advisors, but rather, approval and that if a leader is already implicitly decided on a particular course of action, ad advisor wishing to have influence must work within the framework of the decision the leader has already made and that if a leader fails to reach a consensus with his inner circle opponents may take advantage of these disagreements hence emphasising the need for effective leaders to make a consensus. Because of the possibilities of miscommunication, misunderstandings, and downright disagreements, different leaders may take actions that the group as a whole would not approve of.[83]

Since the 1970s, Graham Allison's models became the founding study of foreign policy scholarship and in doing so revolutionised the field of international studies, and more so in foreign policy analysis. In explaining the actions of states -- as rational actors -- and the internal organisational processes and governmental politics, therefore, Allison's models best capture the link between foreign policy and conflict through his explanations of decision-making hence making the case for a multiple, overlapping competing conceptual models as the best that the current understanding of foreign policy provides. In this case, explaining the Somali crisis – and more so foreign policy and conflict – can be best pursued by using Allison's models.

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[82] Ibid.
[83] Ibid.

Hypotheses

The study tested the following hypotheses:

- Foreign policy served as a driver of conflict in Somalia and in the Horn of Africa region.
- Pan-Somalism has been a key determinant in Somali foreign policy during the study period
- Somalia's irredentist policies led to inter-state and internal armed conflict in Somalia and in the Horn of Africa region.

Research Methodology

The study relied on both primary and secondary data.

Primary Data

The primary data was derived mainly from unstructured interviews the researcher conducted with (current and former) officials from the Horn of Africa region, including Somalia, Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya. A total of twenty officials were interviewed by the researcher during the study period. This included a sample of eleven (11) officials from the region who played and are still playing a role in aspects of foreign-policy making in the Horn of Africa and nine (9) other individuals who have been following Somali affairs in the Horn of Africa for a long time: some of them historians, Islamist scholars, diplomats and political analysts and observers.

The sample of these twenty interviewees was carefully selected so as to obtain a diversity of views on foreign policy and conflict in Somalia and in the Horn of African regional context. The sampling also attempted to ensure a diversity of the nationalities and professional backgrounds in order to obtain a balance of views. The questions

covered both foreign policy and conflict and, while the focus was more on Somalia, the discussions placed Somalia in the Horn of Africa context. Depending on the interviewees' backgrounds, the questions asked -- although unstructured -- were also often slightly different for each interviewee in order to obtain more detailed information on areas of specialisation and expertise.

The researcher probed the interviewees after asking the broader question and continued with a list of specific questions out of the discussions. Also, the researcher administered the primary data instruments himself and did not make use of research assistants for the purpose of this study. This was meant to ensure that the objectives of the study were adequately achieved especially in the administration of the research instruments.

Secondary Data

Secondary data also formed a key aspect of the research methodology for this study. Secondary sources included relevant journal articles, books, reports and updates and newspapers. Secondary data sources were especially useful in guiding the theoretical foundations of the study – Graham Allison's models – but also in tracing the historical development of key issues that inform the study: foreign policy and conflict in Somalia and in the Horn of Africa region during the study period.

Data Analysis

The data analysis of this study was qualitative in nature. Thematic analysis was used in the study, as key themes were identified, particularly for the data chapters, such as domestic environment; foreign policy orientation; decision-making process; and

foreign policy behaviour.[84] In this case, logical inferences were made from both primary and secondary sources of data as information provided through the unstructured interviews by respondents in the study was incorporated into the study based on the theme that it fitted under. Quantitative measures of data analysis were therefore not utilised in the study because the attributes studied were not quantitative in nature.

Limitations and Scope of the Study

The study focused on foreign policy as a driver of conflict and looked at Somali foreign policy within a Horn of Africa regional context. The study did not focus on other drivers and causes of conflict in Somalia. Although the discussions on some of these drivers have yielded some insights of their own they are largely beyond the scope of the study. There was, however, an interdisciplinary overlap between foreign policy and other drivers of conflict in Somalia, for example clan politics, land issues, the constitutional debate among others. This was one major limitation.

In addition, due to the sensitivity of the issue, some of the interviewees requested anonymity and this was another major limitation. One other limitation was the lack of primary documentary sources from Somalia's key ministries and departments due to the ongoing civil war in the country. Also, access to primary documentary sources in some of the other countries under study was also difficult.

Originality of the Study

Originality of the study derives from providing a deeper understanding of and insights into the Somali conflict from a foreign policy perspective both in Somalia and in the Horn of Africa regional context. The study was motivated by the works of Korwa

[84] This 'four-fold scheme' is adopted from B. Korany and A. E. Hillal, *The Foreign Policies of Arab States* (Boulder & London: Westview Press, 1984).

Adar whose thesis discussed Kenya's foreign policy behaviour towards Somalia, 1963 - 1983.[85] The fact that Somalia was the epicentre of the foreign policy crisis in the Horn of Africa and the resultant regional tension between Somalia and its neighbours, there was a need to study the problem further and broaden the focus and include other external actors including other neighbouring countries like Ethiopia and Djibouti. This study, therefore, extends the focus and covers thirty years of Somali foreign policy bringing in issues of foreign policy and conflict in Somalia during the early years of Somalia's independence and the period of the Cold war. In addition to broadening the focus, it also provides a detailed analysis of foreign policy and conflict in Somalia (1960 – 1990) and from both a Somali and regional perspective.

Structure of the Study

The study consists of seven chapters: Chapter One, which is the introduction to the study, includes the problem statement, objectives, hypothesis, justification, literature review, framework for analysis, methodology and the structure of the study. Chapter Two examines regional foreign policy and conflict in the Horn of Africa and discusses the regional environment in which Somali foreign policy operated during the study period. Chapter Three analyses conflict in Somalia -- both inter-state and intra-state -- including the 1963 proxy-type *Shifta* war with Kenya and the 1963 and 1977-78 Ogaden War with Ethiopia. The chapter will also examine the historical background, causes and issues of these wars and the subsequent civil war.

Chapter Four discusses the major themes and approaches of Somali foreign policy from 1960 to 1969 by examining foreign policy decision-making processes and focusing

[85] See K. G. Adar, *Kenya's Foreign Policy Behaviour towards Somalia, 1963 – 1983* (Lanham, New York and London: University Press of America, 1994).

on the outputs of Somalia's foreign policy and its aspects both internally and in the region. Chapter Five covers the major themes and approaches of Somali foreign policy from 1969 to 1990. As with the previous chapter, it examines foreign policy decision-making processes and focuses on the outputs of Somalia's foreign policy and its aspects both internally and in the region. Chapter Six provides a critical examination of the key issues raised in the study, by providing a second look at the thesis from a critical and scholarly perspective while Chapter Seven presents a summary and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER TWO
REGIONAL FOREIGN POLICY AND CONFLICT

Introduction

This chapter analyses the regional environment within which Somali foreign policy operated from 1960–1990. The chapter will provide an overview of the global, regional and national developments that underlay Somalia's foreign policy. It observes that Somali foreign policy decisions and actions had significant implications not only in the country but also in the Horn of Africa region. During this period, foreign policy was central both to the cause and the management of the wars fought between Somalia and its neighbours.

The Global and Regional Environment

The foreign policy of states is shaped by domestic conditions, the values and perceptions of policy makers and by the global and regional environment in which they exist. National concerns influence what governments would like to do, while the environment in which they operate determines what they are able to do.[1] Here, the state as a social institution exists in two environments: the internal and the external. The former is influenced by all the institutions located in the territory of the state and their interactions with the state and with each other, while the latter is composed of all other states and organisations and their interactions with the state and with each other. Conventionally, the realist theory of international relations assumes that the state is

[1] See P. C. Noble, "The Arab System Opportunities Constraints and Pressures" in B. Korany, (ed.), *The Foreign Policies of Arab States* (Boulder and London: West View Press, 1984), pp.41-78:41.

constantly involved in attempts to intervene in both environments, that is, to engage in domestic and foreign policy.[2]

In the case of domestic policy, the state is in principle capable of getting its way once it has decided on a course of action; it possesses both the authority to act and the means to do so. As far as foreign policy is concerned, this is not generally the case. The final results of policy decisions – or the outcomes – are the product of interdependent decision-making. Since the state cannot expect that other states will respect its authority, whether or not the state has the means to get its way is a contingent matter as no state has the ultimate authority.[3]

Consequently, systemic conditions have great influence in foreign policy formulation. This is the recognition and articulation of national interest in as far as it affects a particular issue. Noble, for example, asserts that there are two ways in which systemic conditions shape state behaviour.[4] In the first place, they either provide a set of opportunities, or more commonly serve as a set of constraints, permitting states a certain range of possible actions. Secondly, systemic conditions generate forces that push or pull states in certain directions. Furthermore, even if the system does not have a significant impact on the initial formation of a state's policies, it has a decisive say in whether those policies succeed or fail. These results are generally not lost on policy-makers, but instead they help shape their subsequent behaviour. Somali foreign policy from 1960-1990 is not an exception to this and was shaped by these systemic forces, both in shaping its objectives and methods of implementation.

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[2] See C. Brown, *Understanding International Relations* (London: Macmillan Press, 1997), p 73.
[3] Ibid.
[4] See P. C. Noble, "The Arab System Opportunities Constraints and Pressures," op. cit., pp.41-78:41.

The Global System

According to Korany, the global system refers to the pattern of interactions among international actors which takes place according to an identifiable set of rules.[5] These actors include both state and non-state actors and the regular patterns of international conflict and cooperation are usually governed by international law. In the wake of World War II, major changes took place in the nature and operation of the world political system. One of these was the collapse of the mostly European-based multipolar system which was replaced by a bi-polar system dominated by the USA and the USSR.

In this bi-polar system, military power and diplomatic authority centred around two bloc leaders which dominated or led lesser units by combining rewards – such as providing security and economic assistance – with implicit or explicit threats of punishment against recalcitrant states. Interaction and communication therefore seemed to take place between two antagonistic block leaders and their respective clients[6] organised according to an east–west axis. Rourke observes that the causes of the confrontation are complex and controversial, but that varying economic and political interests and the collapse of the old balance of power structure created a system in which a great deal of world politics was centred on the confrontation between these two powers.[7]

This confrontation, commonly known as the Cold War, is normally taken to have begun in 1947 and concluded in 1989 with the collapse of the Soviet Union and its allies

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[5] See B. Korany, et al., "The Global System and Arab Foreign Policies: The Primacy of Constraints," in B. Korany, et al., *The Foreign Policies of Arab States*, (Boulder and London: West View Press, 1984), pp.19-39:20.

[6] See T. A. Couloumbis and J. H. Wolf, *Introduction to International Relations: Power and Justice* 4th Edition (Englewood Cliffs.: Prentice Hall, 1988), p.87.

[7] See T. J. Rourke, *International Politics on the World Stage*, 4th Edition (Connecticut: Dushkin Publishing Group, 1993), p.43.

in Eastern Europe. The term 'Cold War,' at least in terms of international relations, has been used to describe the strained, uneasy and generally hostile relations between the two superpowers – the United States and the Soviet Union – in the post World War II era and was thus a function of the fury and hostility that characterized American-Soviet relationships during that period.[8] It was composed of five different levels of reality: a strategic confrontation between the USSR and the USA; an ideological standoff between communism and capitalism; a geographical and military confrontation that kept Europe and Germany divided for the best part of 40 years; an on-going struggle for the future control of the third world; and, finally a wider opposition between two material civilizations where each claimed and insisted that they alone were the wave of the future.[9]

The Cold War had a significant impact in different spheres of life in those two countries and in the international system as a whole. This is attributed to the foreign policies adopted by the antagonistic countries. For example, USA foreign policy changed from that of pre-World War II isolationism, or political-military non-engagement with other great powers, to one of containment.[10] This shift took place in reaction to the perceived Soviet threat and led to a policy of internationalism where the USA opposed the Soviet Union (and later on China) both diplomatically and militarily. While this does not mean that every adverse situation was contained, each was scrutinized to determine whether or not acting would cause the USA general world position to deteriorate.

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[8] See P. O. Nyinguro, "The Impact of the Cold War in Regional Security: The Case of Africa," in M. Munene et al., (eds.) *The United States and Africa: From Independence to the End of the Cold War*, (Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers, 1995), pp.65-83:66.

[9] See M. Cox, "From the Cold War to the War on Terror" in John Baylis and Steve Smith (eds.), *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations* 3rd Edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p.133.

[10] See R. J. Art, "America's Foreign Policy" in C. M. Roy, *Foreign Policy in World Politics* 6th Edition (New Jersey: Prentice Hall Inc, 1985), p.11.

Containment, in terms of a conceptual approach to events and not in terms of omnipresent interventionism, was the essence of USA global policy.

This USA policy furthermore led to involvement in Vietnam, bringing about significant changes in American attitudes about international relations. For example, there was increased resistance to the Cold War urge to fight communism everywhere, leading to détente with adversaries and retrenchment. This meant that instead of expanding its commitments, the USA consolidated its positions and withdrew from areas where it was weaker as a new means of reaching an old goal. This was especially the case under Richard Nixon's administration. This policy was also informed by the rise of China and the subsequent fragmentation of alliances around the two poles.

The Soviet Union's foreign policy was, on the other hand, informed by the Leninist–Stalinist thesis that the destruction of capitalism, its dangers and related interventions are possible only through successful proletarian revolution, at least in several large states.[11] Although the Soviets never matched the USA economically, they possessed a huge conventional armed force, a seemingly threatening ideology, and, by 1949, atomic weapons. This encouraged the Soviets to pursue an expansionist agenda; the essence of the Soviet Union's national interest can therefore be argued to have been one of world revolution.[12]

These two states vied for power in the developing countries and consequently supplied arms to governments and rebel groups in order to win their favour. In Africa, the decade of the 1960s witnessed an era of superpower intrusion. For example, Somalia's geographic position on the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean was viewed as being of

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[11] See C. M. Roy, *Foreign Policy in World Politics* 6th Ed., (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1976), p.184.
[12] Ibid.

strategic importance,[13] hence inviting active involvement of the two superpowers. Although, Somalia followed a foreign policy of non-alignment for a brief period after independence, it later allied to the east with Siyad Barre declaring a national ideology of "scientific socialism." In the 1980s, Somalia shifted its alignment to the west after the Soviet Union supported Ethiopia during the Ogaden war of 1977-78. Somalia, therefore, played the Cold War rivalries to secure arms and other benefits, and this led to the development of a huge and sophisticated military.[14]

The Cold War was therefore a cause of tension within the Horn of Africa. The policies pursued by the superpowers encouraged and supported Somalia in its pursuit of irredentist policies, hence bringing about the 1963 and 1977-78 wars with Ethiopia and the 1963 *Shifta* proxy war with Kenya. During that time, it is likely that Somali leaders grew overconfident due to the huge military capabilities at their disposal. This is highlighted in the appeal made by Kenya's then Vice President Daniel arap Moi to US President Jimmy Carter, urging western countries not to sell arms to Somalia.[15]

The superpowers precipitated arms races between already hostile neighbours by supporting opposing sides according to their own needs. They also supplied more and better military equipment, hence infusing the potential for conflict. As a result, the conflicts in the Horn of Africa region were internationalised.

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[13] See H. M. Adam, "Somalia: A Terrible Beauty Being Born" in I. W. Zartman (ed.) *Collapsed State: The Disintegration of Legitimate Authority* (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1994), p.75.
[14] See A. J. Ahmed, *Daybreak is Near: Literature Clans and the Ethiopia Nation–State in Somalia* (Asmara Red Sea Press Inc, 1996), p.102; See also *Somalia: Background Note*, Bureau of African affairs; US Department of State, March, 2006.; See also N. A. Hashi, *Weapons and Clan Politics in Somalia* (Mogadishu: Horn of Africa Printing Press, 1999), p.63.
[15] See J. M. Ghalib, *The Cost of Dictatorship: The Somali Experience* (New York: Lilian Barber Press Inc, 1995), p.111.

The Regional Environment

The concept of conflict system advances that every conflict has a regional dimension and as a result even "what might at first appear as individualised conflicts in fact are parts of wider pattern of conflict regionally."[16] This concept "rejects the idea that conflicts do not have transborder realities, and instead perceives individual conflicts as an integral part of a wider conflict system."[17] In terms of conflict management, what this entails is that systemic realities and other actors within the conflict system must be taken into account when addressing a specific conflict. This idea, however, negates theory-building as it concentrates only on one dimension of the conflict in the belief that each conflict is unique.

Traditionally, conflicts in the Horn of Africa were studied and managed individually and on an *ad hoc* basis.[18] There are five states that are often referred to as constituting the Horn namely: Ethiopia, Sudan, Somalia, Djibouti and Eritrea.[19] However, due to the spill over of conflicts in Ethiopia, Sudan, and Somalia, and the workings of the IGAD leadership and its change of focus from general drought to issues of development and conflict management, the Horn of Africa has been extended to include Kenya and Uganda. This concept of conflict system is important in the analysis of systemic forces that either provide opportunities or constraints, and hence influence the foreign policies of individual states and impact on conflicts in the region and their management processes.

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[16] See M. Mwagiru, *The Greater Horn of Africa Conflict System: Conflict Patterns, Strategies and Management Practices* (Paper prepared for the USAID project on Conflict and Conflict Management in the Greater Horn of Africa, April 1997, Revised September 1997), p.4.
[17] Ibid.
[18] See M. Mwagiru, *Conflict: Theory, Processes and Institutions of Management* (Nairobi: Watermark Publishers, 2000), p.79.
[19] See C. H. Ofuho, Security Concerns in the Horn of Africa" in M. Mwagiru (ed.) *African Regional Security in the Age Globalization* (Nairobi: Heinrich Boll Foundation, 2004), pp.7-17:11.

At the regional level, several systemic forces informed Somali foreign policy and led to hostile relations with its immediate neighbours, but also to friendly relations with others. Firstly, the creation of a non-aligned movement with Egypt with President Nasser and Yugoslavia under Tito, in the forefront of its leadership, institutionalized collaboration between Africa and other developing countries.[20] This was essentially the reflection of an awareness that these countries' foreign policy objectives could not be achieved through individual efforts,[21] hence the need to craft cooperative foreign policies among developing countries. Somalia pursued non-alignment as a core component of its foreign policy for a brief period after independence. This will be discussed more in Chapter four.

Secondly, all newly-independent African countries joined the UN. The international organisation's development of international law, especially principles such as sovereign equality, territorial integrity, political independence, non-interference in the internal affairs of other states and the fundamental right to self defence, have all impacted on the foreign policy of many African states.[22] Somalia's neighbours, Kenya and Ethiopia, aligned their foreign policies with these principles.

Thirdly, decolonization and the creation of the OAU was a significant milestone in Africa in the early 1960s when most of Africa was gaining independence from European colonizers.[23] Decolonization whetted Somalia's appetite for Kenya's Northern Frontier District (NFD) and France's coastal Djibouti; in effect, the Somali constitution

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[20] See S. L. Spiegel, *World Politics in a New Era* (Los Angels: Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1994), p.155.
[21] See C. M. B. Utete, "Foreign Policy and The Developing State" in O. Ojo, et al., *African International Relations*, (Lagos: Longman Group, 1985), 43-51:48.
[22] See S. L. Spiegel, *World Politics in a New Era* (Los Angels: Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1994), p.155.
[23] Ibid.

explicitly challenged the borders with Ethiopia, Kenya and coastal Djibouti. Right after independence, these three territories indeed became the main target of Somali foreign policy. From the perspective of Somalia, however, this was not so much seen as a foreign policy but rather as a means to complete the independence of 'Greater Somalia.'[24] This philosophy demanded that the various Somalias, under British, Italian, French, Ethiopian and Kenyan leadership, be merged into one country with a strong central government.

Colonial powers partitioned Africa into territorial units, kingdoms, and states and, as some communities in Africa were arbitrarily divided, unrelated areas and people were also arbitrarily joined together.[25] In the 1960s, the newly-independent African states inherited those colonial boundaries together with the challenges this legacy posed to their territorial integrity and to their attempts to achieve national unity. Examples include Nigeria's Biafra State; Southern Sudan and the Moroccan Sahara. The challenge Annan posits is compounded by the fact that the framework of colonial laws and institutions, which some new states inherited, had been designed to exploit them and not to overcome them.[26]

Territorial or boundary disputes are the most explosive conflicts in African states.[27] Broadly speaking, territorial disputes apply to claims involving large areas of another state's territory. Beyond territory, however, Somali foreign policy was motivated by irredentism which emerged because when boundaries were drawn, historical relationships were ignored and the outcome did not reflect the existing ethnic divisions.

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[24] Interview with Amb. Hussein Ali Dualleh, March 7, 2004, Hargeisa.
25 See K. Annan, "The Causes of Conflict and the Promotion of Durable Peace and Sustainable Development in Africa," Secretary General's Report to the UN Security Council, 16 April 1998, p.107.
[26] Ibid.
[27] See D. K. Orwa, "Causes of Conflict in the Relations of African States," in O. Ojo, et al., *African International Relations*, (London: Longman, 1985), pp.129-141:135.

The Somali people were effectively divided among four countries even though the people residing in the disputed areas share the same culture, language and religion with those in Somalia.

Based on this argument, Somali leaders believed that while it was much easier to govern them under one administration, the attainment of a united Somalia would be better off compared to other African countries. This not only motivated Somali leaders to take action both politically and militarily, but it also promoted Somali nationalism or pan-Somalism. In this regard, and under the pan-Somali banner, Somalia encouraged Djibouti's decolonization, to Ethiopia's discontent. The country's leadership under Barre also sought to use force, rather than international diplomacy, to try and recapture Ogaden and the NFD from Ethiopia and Kenya respectively.[28] Although Barre fought Ethiopia militarily, he did not fight Kenya despite the fact that the military option was not off the table.[29]

Kenyas's Foreign Policy

In contrast, Somalia's neighbours pursued policies that were an antithesis to its own. For example, Kenya's foreign policy, as guided by the election manifestos of the Kenya African National Union (KANU) in 1961 and 1963, stated that it would vigilantly safeguard national interests, including the protection of the security of its people by maintaining necessary military forces and by seeking cooperation and defence agreements. Under this policy, Kenya and Ethiopia concluded a defence pact.[30] Kenya's foreign policy focused on the preservation of its national integrity while joining

[28] Interview with Amb. Hussein Ali Dualleh, March 7, 2004, Hargeisa.
[29] Ibid.
[30] See for example, K. G. Adar, *Kenya's Foreign Policy Behaviour towards Somalia, 1963 – 1983* (Lanham, New York and London: University Press of America, 1994), p.131.

democratic movements in Africa to eradicate imperialism, racism and all forms of oppression.[31]

The KANU manifestos indeed called for collaboration with African countries to foster and promote African "unity of action". The manifestos also stated the need for Kenya to work for international peace and peaceful settlement of international disputes through the framework of the UN. Among other objectives, the manifestos entailed respect for existing boundaries, a call for the observance of the status quo as the only sure way to maintain the pre-independence equilibrium.[32]

The two documents largely informed Kenya's foreign policy behaviour, that is the concrete actions, positions and decisions that the state adopted in the conduct of its foreign policy. As a result, Kenya resisted and defended itself against Somali irredentism, in spite of the wishes of the Kenyan-Somalis to secede.[33] Despite the fact that the existing secessionist movement -- widely known as the *Shifta* -- was a crucial factor in the country's foreign policy, Kenya's foreign policy during Kenyatta's time was largely indifferent and unconcerned with painting it in large strategic strokes. Instead, its image was one of a reactionary state. As the Moi regime changed this state of affairs and started to articulate a clean and conceptually complex foreign policy founded on concerns for regional peace and security, the country started to play a regional leadership role.[34]

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[31] See P. K. Kurgat, "Kenya's Foreign Policy and African Conflict Management," in G. P. Okoth and B. A. Ogot, *Conflict in Contemporary Africa* (Nairobi: Jomo Kenyatta Foundation, 2000), pp.117-126:118.
[32] See for example M. Mwagiru, "The Elusive Quest: Conflict, Diplomacy and Foreign Policy in Kenya," in Okoth, G. P., and Ogot, B. A., (eds.), *Conflict in Contemporary Africa*, (Nairobi: Jomo Kenyatta Foundation, 2000), pp.117-140.
[33] See W. I. Zartman, *Ripe for Resolution: Conflict and Intervention in Africa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), p.91.
[34] Interview with Ambassador Bethwell Kiplagat, April 22, 2008, Nairobi.

Ethiopia's Foreign Policy

The tone of Ethiopia's international relations was set by Emperor Haile Selassie who was involved in foreign policy making as early as 1923 when Ethiopia became a member of the League of Nations. The country pursued foreign policy objectives that had numerous implications for its relationship with Somalia and its neighbours. For a time, Ethiopia was significantly allied to the west from which it received both military and economic assistance. Several factors have been highlighted to account for the close relationship between Ethiopia and the USA, including the decline of the UK with which Ethiopia had a long-standing historical link. For example, the UK had conditioned Ethiopia's international relations in the 1940s after the liberation campaign that drove the Italians out of Ethiopia.[35]

In the early 1940s, the heavy-handed British military administration in Ethiopia and the British diplomatic stand concerning the future of Ogaden and that of Eritrea served to heighten the emperor's suspicions about British motives in his country. In turn, the USA was sympathetic to the Ethiopian plight under the British and revealed interest in preserving the country's independence. Emperor Haile Selassie played a central role in the country's foreign affairs due to his position as the leader of one of the oldest independent nations in the world. Ethiopia sought to play the role of strategic partner

[35] See M. Wubneh and Y. Abate, *Ethiopia: Transition and Development in the Horn of Africa* (Colorado: Westview Press, 1988), p.162.; See also A. Jalata, *Oromia and Ethiopia: State Formation and Ethnonational Conflict, 1868-1992* (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1993), p.88.; See also A. Jalata, *Fighting Against the Injustice of the State and Globalization: Comparing the Africa America and Oromo Movements* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), p.90.

while at the same time back tracking from the Anglo-Ethiopia Agreement of 1942 which virtually placed it under British military administration.[36]

The other concern for Ethiopia was to gain direct access to the sea by preventing foreign control of coastal areas. It therefore made claims to both Eritrea and Somaliland based on historical, ethnic and geopolitical grounds.[37] It also supported continued French presence and control of coastal Djibouti and made a territorial claim on it, perhaps in fear of it being claimed by Somalia.[38] Ethiopia's third foreign policy objective was to minimize the impact of Arab nationalism on Ethiopian foreign and domestic affairs. As the only non-Arab and non-Islamic nation in the region, Ethiopia has often been the target of pan-Arab movements. For example, the 1952 Egyptian revolution under Nasser, the 1956 Sudan independence, the 1962 Yemeni revolution, and Somali claims to the Ogaden all revived Ethiopian anxiety of Muslim radicalism. Its fear of Muslim "encirclement" led the emperor to maintain friendly contacts with Arab leaders, perhaps to mute Arab propaganda for the secession of Eritrea and for a 'Greater Somalia.'[39]

Ethiopia's last foreign policy objective was to be active in African affairs and, as a result, the emperor championed African independence and the creation of the OAU, the headquarters of which Ethiopia still hosts. As a result, Ethiopia also gained a lot of influence and hence received strong support from sub-Saharan African countries in order to contain Somali irredentism and Eritrean secession.[40] After the September 12, 1974

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[36] See B. Zewde, *A History of Modern Ethiopia 1855–1974* (Addis Ababa: Addis Ababa University Press, 1991), p.179.
[37] See M. Wubneh, and Y. Abate, *Ethiopia: Transition and Development in the Horn of Africa,* op. cit., p.164.
[38] See J. M. Ghalib, *The Cost of Dictatorship: The Somali Experience,* (New York: Lilian Barber Press Inc., 1995), p.91.
[39] See M. Wubneh and Y. Abate, *Ethiopia: Transition and Development in the Horn of Africa* (Colorado: Westview Press, 1988), p.164.
[40] Ibid.

revolution, the new regime proclaimed its intention to pursue a non-aligned foreign policy, respect Ethiopia's international obligations and to strengthen its ties with all African countries. Since 1977, Mengistu's Ethiopia has conducted its international relations in close cooperation with the Soviet Union, Cuba and Eastern Europe, while respecting the principle of "territorial integrity."[41]

Djibouti's Foreign Policy

Due to clan cleavages, Djibouti's 1977 independence had to be guaranteed by Ethiopia and Somalia and by the French military presence. Indeed, the Issa, who constituted about 60 per cent of the Djiboutian population, have had ties to Somalia while the 40 per cent Afar members favoured political association with the Afar in Ethiopia, where the majority of this clan lives. At the same time, Djibouti's foreign policy was constrained by its domestic environment, especially its small size, population, economy and its military-strategic situation. Its first president, Hassan Guled Abtidon, wished to maintain stability in the midst of the political turmoil that surrounded the country.[42] In addition, President Abtidon harboured no ambition for the "Greater Somalia" project, hence avoiding the possible provocation of enmity. Instead, Abtidon sought to avoid confrontation in Djibouti's dealing with all other states.[43]

Over the period under study, Djibouti maintained neutrality by diplomatically playing off claims by Ethiopia and Somalia to its territory, thus maintaining friendly relations with both countries. Djibouti benefited from its strategic location and deep-water port, which made the country France's key, and the biggest, military base in Africa

[41] Interview with Ambassador Bethwell Kiplagat, April 22, 2008, Nairobi.
[42] Interview with Ambassador Mohamed Siyad Dualeh, November 9, 2007, Djibouti.
[43] See P. Woodward, *The Horn of Africa: Politics and International Relations* (London and New York: Tauris Academic Studies, 1996), p.135.

along the Indian Ocean. It was also an important port of call for USA warships, ensuring it of enormous military support. Djibouti also provided important trade links in the Horn of Africa region. Combined, these elements resulted in a strengthening of the country's position in its relations with its neighbours and allowed it to play the role of a mediator. For example, Djibouti's Abtidon facilitated a meeting between the Somali and Ethiopian leaders after the bitter 1977-78 Ogaden War between their two countries.[44]

The OAU principles also had an underlying influence on the foreign policy of countries in the Horn of Africa. For example, article 3(3) of the OAU Charter and the 1964 OAU Cairo Resolution conferred legality, legitimacy and sanctity on existing inter-state boundaries. In effect, this hampered Somalia's irredentist efforts as it guaranteed respect for other states' sovereignty and non-interference in their internal affairs. In 1981, the OAU Summit adopted a ministerial report reaffirming Ethiopia's sovereignty over Ogaden. However, due to the fact that this was an issue of contention between the two states, it led to serious exchanges in multilateral forums at the level of the OAU and the UN.[45]

Regional integration -- and the creation of regional economic communities, for example the East African Community (EAC) -- in the idealist and liberalist framework, was an important highlight at this time. The presence of such organisations may have influenced Somalia's Prime Minister, Mohammed Ibrahim Egal, to soften his stance on the issue of a 'Greater Somalia' in the hope of achieving favourable concessions within the regional community. IGAD's formation in 1986 under Djibouti's leadership in turn

[44] Interview with Ambassador Mohamed Siyad Dualeh, November 9, 2007, Djibouti.
[45] See J. M. Ghalib, *The Cost of Dictatorship: The Somali Experience,* op. cit., p.114.

provided opportunities for conciliation and led to a reorientation of foreign policy on the part of Somalia and Ethiopia.

In the wider international system, there was an increased appeal for Arab nationalism and calls for Arab unity. These brought about fundamental changes to the Horn of Africa conflict system. According to this pan–Arab ideology, the Arab world is viewed as one nation and its division into separate states is seen as an aberration resulting from "foreign designs."[46] This perceived homogeneity has led to occasional confrontation with non-Arab major powers, in line with the Huntingtonian model of the clash of civilizations, whereby global Islam and Arabism is viewed as being a cultural threat to the west.[47]

In the Horn of Africa, Djibouti and Somalia joined the Arab League and profited immensely. Somalia's membership in the Arab League in 1979 was accepted by the Arab League unanimously. Ghalib, however, argues that this did not reflect a sense of Arabism on the part of Somalis, but rather a reflection of a common destiny of two peoples as a result of historical bonds, geographical proximity, trade connections and the bond of Islam.[48] As a direct outcome of that membership, the central government received military and financial aid from several Arab countries that enthusiastically adopted and sustained the totalitarian regime. For its part, Somalia gave support to Eritreans in an effort to please its newfound friends, but also to use Eritrea as part of its fight against rival Ethiopia. Siyad Barre's major concern at the time was security, underlined by his massive building of instruments of coercion. For example, he created

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[46] See B. Korany, et al., "The Global System and Arab Foreign Policies: The Primacy of Constraints," in Bahgat Korany et al., *The Foreign Policies of Arab States*, (Boulder and London: West View Press, 1984), pp.19-39:27.

[47] See S. P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs*, 1993.

[48] See J. M. Ghalib, *The Cost of Dictatorship: The Somali Experience*, op. cit., p.143.

one of the most powerful armies in sub-Saharan Africa.[49] This, it appears, was envisaged as a necessary tool to implement Somali foreign policy, hence inviting hostility from Somalia's immediate neighbours.

The foreign policies of countries in the Horn of Africa were also largely influenced by their dependence on the developed world which at times prevented them from acting rationally and choosing the course of action which would maximize their gains and minimize their loses. According to dependency theorists, having been an appendage of the western economic system – which forms the core – was also the cause of underdevelopment in African countries.[50] As they were part of the periphery, these countries' foreign policy decisions were made in other capital cities like London, Paris, Washington, Rome, and Lisbon, among others.[51]

In the Horn of Africa, classical examples of such dependence include Abtidon's heavy reliance on France and Kenya's political and/or ideological proximity to the UK. Many observers argue that Britain, which had sent a survey commission to the former NFD in 1962, ignored the overwhelming support for unification with Somalia. Instead, it granted Kenya independence in line with colonial boundaries, leading to the breaking of diplomatic relations with Somalia.[52] The motivation behind this unilateral decision arose from Britain's massive interest in Kenya, especially settlers and business.[53]

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[49] See M. H. Mukhtar, *Historical Dictionary of Somalia:* African Historical Dictionary Series No. 87, (Lanham, Maryland and Oxford: Scarecrow Press, 2003), p.159.
[50] See for example T. Dos Santos, "The Structure of Dependence," in K. T. Fann and D. C. Hodges, (eds.), *Readings in U.S. Imperialism* (Boston: Porter Sargent, 1971), pp. 225-236:226.
[51] See A. E. Hillal, et al., "A Literature Survey and a Framework for Analysis," in Bahgat Korany et al., *The Foreign Policies of Arab States*, (Boulder and London: West View Press, 1984), pp.5-18:15.
[52] See W. I. Zartman, *Ripe for Resolution: Conflict and Intervention in Africa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), p.91.
[53] Ibid.

Most states in Africa, during the period under study, were politically and economically weak and their populations had high expectations for their leaders whose support was sometimes based on clan, ethnic or regional fragmentation, resulting in insecurity among leaders.[54] This problem of insecurity among the African leadership affected the foreign policy decision-making process. Some leaders identified their personal interests with those of the country they led and, as a result, some of the decisions they made were not based on wide consensus, but rather on personal preference. This is highlighted for instance by Siyad Barre's decision to join the Arab League as this issue fractured his government. The same case applies to Haile Selassie's quest to play a dominant role in the OAU. The regional foreign policy environment therefore lacked institutional frameworks and focused more on individual leaders' personal gain at the expense of the institutions they claimed to represent.

The period 1960 to 1990 was one during which significant changes took place both in world politics – in terms of the Cold War rivalry between the former USSR and USA – but also in the Horn of Africa where countries became pawns in the hands of the Superpowers. The foreign policy implications of this state of affairs were countless and were shaped by the existing opportunities and constraints. In the Horn of Africa, foreign policy was informed also by location, geography, arrangement of neighbours, population and social structure, economic capability, and military and political structure.

Furthermore, the foreign policies of the countries in the region, notably Somalia and its three immediate neighbours, were interdependent by way of rivalry. This also impacted on the available options: for example whether to be an ally or not; whether to

[54] See D. L. Gordon, "African Politics," in A. A. Gordon and D. L. Gordon (eds.) *Understanding Contemporary Africa* 3rd Ed., (London and New York: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001), pp.55-99:58.

cooperate, adopt containment, become an isolationist, or stay in the middle and as a result become non-aligned or a coalition-builder. Furthermore, this systemic interrelationship influenced the choice of means and methods, for example the use of military force or diplomacy, for achieving their objectives. It is within this context that the 1963/64 Somali-Ethiopian War; the 1963 Shifta War with Kenya; and the Somali civil war broke out first in the northwestern part of the country.

Foreign Policy and Conflict in Somalia: An Overview

Historical legacy

History has an important role to play in the making and conduct of Somali foreign policy. Somalia is historically as ancient as countries such as Egypt, Greece, Persia and China, the Somali nation therefore existed long before European colonialism.[55] At that time, the Somalis constituted a unique but largely homogeneous society who occupied the same terrain, spoke the same language, and shared the same Islamic religion and the same culture and traditions. The European scramble for Africa and its aftermath divided the country and its people into five jurisdictions: two under UK, one under Italy, one under France and the other one under Ethiopia. The Northern Frontier District (NFD) and 'Somaliland' were under UK's rule; Southern Somalia, south-central and north-eastern, was under Italy; while coastal Djibouti was under France.

In Somalia, this was met with resistance by Sayid Mohammed Abdulle Hassan, the *Dervish* or the Mad Mullah, who in 1899 called for an anti-foreigner insurgence. The *Dervish*, a well educated Islamic scholar and a militant proto-nationalist from the

[55] See S. M. Mousa, *Recolonization Beyond Somalia* (Mogadishu: Somali Printing Agency, 1998), p.xiii.

Ogaden/Darod sub-clan,[56] a rebel group which was the first in Africa to be fought by the British air force through the use of warplanes. His resistance was couched predominantly in a religious idiom. This is where he got the popularly known names of the '*Dervish*', given to him by the Somali people, and 'the Mad Mullah' given by British colonialists after he organized his followers into a religious nationalistic movement known as the *Dervishes* (or *Daraawiishta* in Somali).

This movement had three major accomplishments: firstly, it set the stage for Somali consciousness against colonial rule; secondly, by attracting large followers who supported his religious teaching and holy wars, Sayid Mohammed established what became known as pan-Somalism; and finally, the *Dervish* was seen by Somalis as a natural figure who appealed to the patriotic sentiments of both Somalis and Muslims, irrespective of their clan or lineage allegiance.[57] After Sayid Mohammed's death in December 1920, his campaign for Somali unification was taken over by various political parties.

After existing under various titles, the Somali National League (SNL) was founded in British Somaliland in 1935 and pledged, in its programmes, to work for the unification of all Somali territories; for the advancement of the Somali race by abolishing clan fanaticism and encouraging brotherly relations among Somalis, the spread of education, and the economic and political development of the country; and to cooperate with the British government or any other local body whose aims were the welfare of the

[56] See J. Abbink, "Dervishes, Moryaan and Freedom Fighters: Cycles of Rebellion and The Fragmentation of Somalia Society 1900-2000," in J. Abbink, et al, (eds.) *Rethinking Resistances: Revolt and Violence in African History* (Brill, Leiden and Boston: Tuta Sud Aegide Pallas, 2003), pp.328-365: 341.
[57] See K. G. Adar, Kenyan *Foreign Policy Behaviour towards Somalia: 1963–1983* (Lanham, New York and London: University Press of America, 1994), p.87.

inhabitants of the country.[58] Hence, it carried on with the pan-Somalism policy established by the *Dervish*. Following Italy's declaration of war on the United Kingdom in June 1940, Italian troops overran British Somaliland and drove out the British Garrison in 1941.[59] Subsequently, British forces began operations against the Italian East Africa Empire and quickly brought the greater part of Italian Somaliland under British control placing the country under British military administration from 1941 to 1950.[60]

The Impact of the Second World War

In the Horn of Africa, the principal impetus behind the emergence of nationalism as the most important political force was external.[61] For example, instead of evolving from internal events, Somali nationalism sprang mainly from the global wars and their aftermath. He further asserts that participation in World War II, service in the armed forces, war propaganda and the UN's ideals influenced development in most African territories. The Horn of Africa, however, underwent experiences unequalled elsewhere in Africa south of the Sahara.[62]

The Horn of Africa became a major theatre of foreign operations and portions of it changed hands more than once. Moreover, after World War II, the future disposition of the former Italian colony of Somaliland became the subject of political struggle and extensive debate, in the course of which the opinions of the population were sought. This solicitation of the wishes of the inhabitants became an especially powerful stimulus to the

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[58] See I. M. Lewis, "Modern Political Movements in Somaliland: Part 1," *Africa London*, 28(3), July 1958, p.255., quoted in K. G. Adar, *Kenyan Foreign Policy Behaviour Towards Somalia: 1963-1983* (Lanham, New York and London: University Press of America, 1994), p.88.
[59] See Somalia: Background Note, US Department of State, Bureau of African Affairs, March 2006.
[60] Ibid.
[61] See S. Touval, *Somali Nationalism: International Politics and the Drive for Unity in the Horn of Africa* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1963), p.76.
[62] Ibid, p.77.

formation of a nationalist movement. The four power commission which visited Mogadishu in January 1948 is one such example.

The centrality of the 'Greater Somalia' concept was evident in a memorandum presented to the four powers commission by the Somali Youth League (SYL) spokesman, Abdullahi Isse, which concluded:

> "we do not pretend that we can stand on our own feet at the moment, but ask the UN Trusteeship council to decide questions relating to the formation, boundaries and administration of Somali territory to be known as Somalia, this territory to consist of all areas at present predominantly populated by Somalis."[63]

Furthermore, it stated that the union of Italian Somaliland with other Somali territories was their primary objective, for which they were prepared to sacrifice any other demand standing in the way of the achievement of 'Greater Somalia.'[64]

In 1948 and 1954, opposition to territorial changes culminated in the establishment of the Somali National League (SNL) and the National United Front (NUF) in the British-administered areas in the north.[65] In 1948, for example, the UK turned the Ogaden and neighbouring Somali territories over to Ethiopia.[66] On the eve of the final transfer of some of the British Somaliland rangelands to Ethiopia, the nationalist movements first sought the reintegration of territories ceded from the British and Italian

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[63] See J. Drysdale, *Stoics Without Pillows: A Way Forward for the Somaliland*, op. cit, p.63.
[64] See S. Heally, "The Changing Idiom of Self Determination in the Horn of Africa," in I. M. Lewis, (ed.) *Nationalism and Self Determination in the Horn of Africa*, (London; Ithaca Press,1983) pp.93-109, quoted in K. G. Adar, *Kenya's Foreign Policy Behaviour Towards Somalia: 1963-1983* (Lanham, New York and London: University Press of America, 1994), p.89.
[65] See A. M. Jama, "The Destruction the Somali State: Causes, Costs and Lessons," in H. M. Adam and R. Ford, *Mending Rips in the Sky: Options for Somali Communities in the 21st Century* (Asmara: Red Sea Press Inc, 1997), pp.237-254:240.
[66] Ibid.

territories, but later on expanded their demands to independence and unification with the rest of the country.[67]

According to Article 23 of the 1947 Peace Treaty, which was negotiated by the victorious wartime Allied powers, Italy had to renounce all rights and titles to Italian Somaliland. On September 15 1948, however, the four powers commission referred the question of disposal of former Italian colonies to the UN General Assembly and, on November 12, 1949, it adopted a resolution recommending that Italian Somaliland be placed under an international trusteeship system for 10 years with Italy as the administering authority. This was to be followed by independence for Italian Somaliland. In 1959, at the request of the Somali government, the UN General Assembly advanced the date of independence from December 2nd to July 1st 1960. One of the many side-effects of World War II was therefore to stimulate a new conception of Somali nationalism: to foster the nationalist agenda of unifying all Somali territories and at the same time provide conditions to achieve this goal.

Independence and its implications for Somali foreign policy

In the 1950s, the preparations for the independence of British Somaliland and Italian Somaliland were underway. The 'Bevin Plan,' a British-proposed plan which aimed at the lumping together all Somali inhabited territories in the form of a British-administered trusteeship, had earlier been rejected. This, in turn, is what led to the referral of the matter to the UN General Assembly. Progress was somehow made in British Somaliland towards self-governance and, as the clock ticked towards independence, the few political leaders who had emerged were absorbed by a single issue: the question of

[67] Ibid.

unity with their neighbour to the south of the United Nations Trust Territory of Somalia.[68]

The politics of independence led to the mushrooming of political parties in the closing years of the 1950s particularly in response to the overarching need of that particular moment in Somali history. The protectorate became independent on June 26, 1960, and five days later on July 1st 1960 it joined Italian Somaliland to form the Somali Republic. Almost a year later, by June 1961, Somalia adopted its first national constitution in a country-wide referendum; this provided for the creation of a democratic state with a parliamentary form of government. At this moment, those who advised caution were overwhelmed by the nationalist call for unification in the quest for a Pan–Somali state: in this case 'Greater Somalia' would include Somaliland, *Somali Cote Francais de Somaliens* (Djibouti) and Kenya's NFD.[69]

Somalia and the Horn of Africa: Foreign Policy vs. Conflict

Since its inception, the Somali republic has pursued a foreign policy committed to the idea of 'Greater Somalia' that is, the liberation and voluntary union of all five 'Somalias' divided into alien administrations during and after the European scramble for Africa. From independence in 1960, this idea was at the core of Somalia's relationships with its neighbours and interactions with other actors in the international system. In addition to indirect military involvement in the struggle against the French over coastal Djibouti, Somali diplomats' call for 'the direct decolonization of the Ethiopian-held but

[68] See War-torn Societies Project International, *Rebuilding Somalia: Issues and Possibilities for Puntland* (London: HAAN Associates, 2001), pp.7-30:9.
[69] Ibid.

Somali inhabited Ogaden territory and the self determination for the Somali people in the former NFD' was an open secret.

The actions of the Somali leadership were however constrained and sometimes promoted by the environment in which it operated. For example, by playing as a client state in the Cold War, Somalia acquired the means to use force, in spite of the inflexibility of the bipolar system, and engaged in coalition building without creating permanent antipathies, using Superpower support to its advantage.

Although Somalia also utilized the loophole in the UN which offered support to self-determination by supporting rebel and guerrilla movements such as the NFD *Shifta* in Kenya, its activities were constrained by the OAU Charter. For example, Article III (3) of the OAU Charter calls upon all states to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each state.[70] In addition, the fact that the Ethiopian leadership hosted the OAU, and as a result developed a good relationship with other sub-Saharan countries, allowed it to gain strong support for its resistance to Somali irredentism. This is because most African leaders believed that successful ethnic-based movements in one African country could encourage others on the continent and produce destabilizing effects.

The creation of Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) facilitated negotiations between Somalia and Ethiopia. This led to a shifting of goals from military takeover of the Ogaden to opening of its frontiers to population migration and refugees movements. The catalyst in this case was the increasing refugee burden; weakened by drought, the government opted to utilize the army in other priority areas.

Somali claims, though historically justified, operated in the realm of high politics where security is a major issue based on realist ideals. These impacted on the country's

[70] See Article III (3) of the OAU Charter.

relationship with its neighbours as they had to be prepared for possible attacks and threats to their national security. This balance of power also constrained Somali foreign policy despite its attraction of huge funding from sympathizing states, mainly from the Arab/Muslim world. Somali foreign policy's disregard for low politics – in other words for economic development and democratization – was a key characteristic of dictatorial leadership. As a result, while there was much focus on the pan-Somalism project, domestic politics suffered from neglect. For example, resources intended for development had to be diverted to sustain the 'Greater Somalia' project, leading to poverty, disease, and ignorance; as a result, anarchy erupted throughout the country.

By antagonizing its neighbours, Somalia not only planted the seeds of suspicion but it also reduced its avenues for leverage and influence. For example, the conclusion of a defence agreement between Kenya and Ethiopia was mainly aimed at countering Somali manoeuvres. If its policies had succeeded, Somalia would have been playing a dominant role in the Horn of Africa by now; its failure, however, had the opposite effect as it encouraged rebel incursions from Ethiopia into Somalia and from Somalia into Ethiopia, leading to the overthrow of Siyad Barre and Mengistu.

Conclusions

There are a number of lessons that one can draw from the foregoing discussion that illustrate how the foreign policy a country pursues has implications on conflict. Firstly, it determines whether a country is aggressive or conciliatory towards its neighbours and the international community as a whole. While Somalia adopted a coercive attitude, Djibouti was not reactionary as opposed to Kenya and Ethiopia. The two countries made foreign policy choices based on who they were dealing with: a

friendly country or an enemy. Secondly, foreign policy considerations are important in determining the type, range and number of weapons acquired by a country. Due to its policy that predisposed it to war with its neighbours, Somalia not only bought a high number of weapons but it also kept a huge and well-trained armed force. This, in turn, invited the same reaction from Somalia's neighbours, allowing them to counter Somalia's actions if the need were to arise.

Under such conditions, wars can easily break out as each party in a dispute feels it has what it takes militarily to impose its wishes on the other. Finally, foreign policy plays an important role in conflict escalation or de-escalation. In their desire to achieve their foreign policy objectives, states with a coercive approach will be more likely to escalate a conflict faster than others. This is based on the notion that unilateral decisions can lead to war. Somalia's claim to NFD and the Ogaden region and its attempts to reclaim, and at the same time militarily support the NFDLF in Kenya and the WSLF in Ethiopia without due regard to the use of international diplomacy, were crucial to the *Shifta* and the Ogaden wars.

CHAPTER THREE
CONFLICT IN SOMALIA

Introduction

Chapter Two analyzed the regional environment within which Somali foreign policy operated in the period 1960–1990 and discussed regional foreign policy and conflict in Somalia. This chapter will analyze conflict in Somalia – both inter-state and intra-state – including the 1963 proxy-type *Shifta* war with Kenya and the 1963 and 1977-78 Ogaden war with Ethiopia. The chapter will also look at the historical background, causes and issues of these wars and the subsequent Somali civil war. The chapter will finally try to show the linkages between foreign policy and conflict.

Background to the conflict

Somalia's long history of migration, conquest and assimilation, coupled with the colonially imported 'nation-state' system, has had a serious impact on the political and administrative health of the nation; so much so that conflict has become almost a recognized part of daily life. The rootless 'pastoralist' nature of the majority of Somali people has even further exacerbated the already difficult situation.

A pertinent illustration of this premise lies in the works of two Africanist scholars, Richard Burton and Ian Lewis, both of whom carried out extensive research on Somalia. The conclusions they drew from their studies, though in apparent contradiction, clearly illustrate the contradictory and conflicting nature of the Somali psyche. Richard Burton characterized the Somali people as 'fierce republicans;' Ian Lewis, meanwhile, dubbed them 'pastoral democrats.' Both are correct.

Somalia may have achieved independence, but the country continued being administered through a combination of colonial ideals and political concepts. In actuality, the dawn of independence brought little that was new. On the contrary, the country's new leaders merely made slight modifications to the colonial systems already in place and no significant attention was paid to the escalating levels of corruption, nepotism and political and administrative inefficiency. The result was the worst of state of collapse experienced in post-colonial Africa. Its repercussions were devastating, including: mass displacement, large numbers of refugees, regional and international interference, and the total disintegration of administrative control and the social fabric of the nation.

An arid to semi-arid country with seasonally erratic rainfall, over 13 percent of Somalia's land area is devoted to arable cultivation. A further 45 percent is devoted to the rearing of livestock; and the vast majority of Somalis depend for their livelihood upon livestock, farming, or a combination of the two. Since the outbreak of war, Somalia's non agro-pastoral productive assets have suffered massive losses due to the population's limited access to the scarce resources of the country, coupled with the ever-widening divisions opening within the Horn of Africa region and, along clan lines, within the country. Both of which have fuelled escalating internal conflicts. Today, most of Somalia is structurally food-insecure and internally displaced, and the concept of 'development' remains a closed book. The country has bourne the brunt of what one Rahanweyn traditional elder called 'a national curse.'[1]

Somalia has experienced three main types of wars: traditional wars between clans and sub-clans which were triggered by confrontation over wells, camel and women; national wars which involved external actors, and which were fought during the colonial,

[1] Interview with Malaq Moktar, Nairobi, September 11, 2003.

post-colonial or independence era in Somalia;[2] and a civil war which broke out from the late 1980s and continues to this day.

Pre-colonial Somalia

In pre-colonial Somalia, clans represented primordial cleavages and cultural fragmentation, making conflicts and violence a common feature of life in pre-colonial Somali society[3] as the idiom of kin, clanship and segmentation formed the structural basis of competition. The competition for resources implied that, in a zero-sum game of sub-clan power, one group's gain was at the expense of another. In harsh times, the circle of trust contracted, excluding those who were genealogically distant.[4] Sub-clan unity was maintained by respecting equality among members who gained equal access to the means of livelihood by which justice was measured. Somali customary law, or *Xeer*, was very important in managing violence.[5] The *Diya* system or blood compensation was negotiated and members of the group that committed the crime had to pay what was agreed with the other group. In Islamic *Sharia* law, the *diya* is 100 camels for men and 50 for women. This is paid to the aggrieved clan as compensation. Presently, due to the Somali customary law, *Xeer*, clans pay what they agree which also becomes another *Xeer* which is binding to them when the same is done to any of their members. *Xeer*, on the other hand, is the Somali traditional or customary law, which relates mainly to social

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[2] See S. Hussein, "Somalia: A Destroyed Country and a Defeated Nation," in H. M. Adam and R. Ford, (eds.) *Mending Rips in the Sky: Options for Somali Communities in the 21st Century* (Asmara: The Red Sea Press, inc, 1997), pp.165-192:170.

[3] See J. Abbink, "Dervishes, Moryaan and Freedom Fighters: Cycles of Rebellion and The Fragmentation of Somalia Society 1900-2000," in J. Abbink, et al, (eds.) *Rethinking Resistances: Revolt and Violence in African History* (Brill, Leiden and Boston; Tuta Sud Aegide Pallas, 2003), pp.328-365:333.

[4] See C. Geshekter, "The Death of Somalia in Historic Perspective," in Hussein M. Adam and Richard Ford, *Mending Rips in the Sky: Options for Somali Communities in the 21st Century* (Asmara: Red Sea Press Inc, 1997), pp.65-98:69.

[5] See I. M. Lewis, *A Pastoral Democracy*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1961).

conventions/contracts. It serves very important roles in managing not only social life but also Somali politics in this new era of statelessness and anarchy.[6]

Therefore, pre-colonial Somalia was characterised by a culture of violence, violent strategies were part and parcel of the harsh way of life and competition was necessarily fierce.[7] Geshekter notes that Somali nomads could be notoriously prejudiced against darker skinned people.[8] They would therefore often invoke inter-clan stereotypes and assert hierarchies of nobility against the "Bantu" Somali communities of south-western Somalia, some of whom descended from the liberated East Africa slaves from the 19th century.

Moreover, clan distinctions also reflected historical experiences and social differences. The latter can be observed in the traditional society of Somalia, which imposed a ranked dimension to a minority of Somali groups who are considered to exist beyond the clan system. One such group consists of those who have paradoxically managed to master rudimentary rural technologies – tool, weaponry, and utensil making, leather craftsmanship and herbal medicine. A caste like oppression has been imposed on them.[9]

Furthermore, there was a distinction between the four pastoral clan-families which tend to view the agro-pastoralists as somewhat "backward" who in turn considered

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[6] Ibid.

[7] See J. Abbink, "Dervishes, Moryaan and Freedom Fighters: Cycles of Rebellion and The Fragmentation of Somalia Society 1900-2000," in J. Abbink, et al, (eds.) *Rethinking Resistances: Revolt and Violence in African History* (Brill, Leiden and Boston: Tuta Sud Aegide Pallas, 2003), p.328-365:338.

[8] See C. Geshekter, "The Death of Somalia in Historic Perspective," in Hussein M. Adam and Richard Ford, *Mending Rips in the Sky: Options for Somali Communities in the 21st Century*, (Asmara: The Red Sea Press, Inc., 1997), pp.65-98:68.

[9] See H. M. Adam, "Clan Conflicts and Democratization in Somalia," in O. Nnoli, *Government and Politics in Africa: A Reader*, (Harare: AAPS, 2000), p.853.

the nomads to be "anarchists."[10] There was therefore substantial diversify in lifestyle and prestige. Ultimately unsettled disputes were left to be resolved through military means and, hence, wars and feuds occurred constantly.[11] The idea of nationalism therefore did not exist in the pre-colonial period and there only existed a vague and decentralized notion of cultural and religious identity. Consequently, violence as in so many pre-industrial societies was part of the accepted relations between groups.

Colonial Somalia: Conflict as a way of life

Somalia has always been considered an exception with regard to the rest of Africa on account of its extraordinary (largely) ethnic, cultural, religion and linguistic homogeneity; it is for this reason that Somalia, prior to its independence, was referred to as the nation without a state.[12] In the light of this reality, questions later arose as to how a people seemingly much more coherent and cohesive than others could descend into such chaos and to forms of behaviour that are to outsiders inexplicable. While some of the causes are historical, others are more recent and they have to do with the country's external relations and conflicts with its neighbours.

The modern history of the internal Somali conflict and that between Somalia and its neighbours began in the late 19th century when various European powers began to trade and establish themselves in the area. Gordon, for example, discussing the effects of the 1884-1885 Berlin Conference which initiated the European Scramble for Africa, notes that in that relatively short period, massive changes took place on the continent that

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[10] Ibid.
[11] See I. M. Lewis, *A Pastoral Democracy* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), p.27.
[12] See A. A. Botan, "Somalia: Regional State or Cantonization of Clans," in H. M. Adam and R. Ford, *Mending Rips in the sky: Options for Somali Communities in the 21st Century*, (Asmara: The Red Sea Press, 2000), pp.255-270:255.

not only established the immediate context for African politics but also continue to constrain and shape its future.[13] The political map inherited by the new African states was based largely on the expedient economic and political strategies of imperial Europe. These not only led to highly divergent and artificial geographical forms but also distorted traditional social and economic patterns.[14]

In Somalia, the British East India Company's desire for unrestricted harbour facilities led to the conclusion of treaties with the Sultan of Tajurs as early as 1840. It was not until 1886, however, that the British gained control over northern Somalia through treaties with various Somali chiefs who were guaranteed British protection. British objectives centred on the safeguarding of trade links to the east and securing local sources of food and provisions for its station in Aden.[15]

In 1897, the three rival powers in the Red Sea and Aden Gulf, namely France, Britain, and Italy, sent their representatives to Addis Ababa, within a few days of each other, in order to squeeze concessions out of Ethiopia's Menelik II who had become a formidable figure. It had become apparent to them that they should at least obtain Menelik's formal recognition of their neighbouring acquisition and of their mysterious frontiers with Ethiopia.[16] This second scramble was to be the forerunner of endless strife on the Somali plateau. Furthermore, observes Drysdale, the present frontier between the Somali Republic and Kenya was a historical accident dating from Britain's treaty with

[13] See D. L. Gordon, "African Politics," in A. A. Gordon and D. L. Gordon, (eds.), *Understanding Contemporary Africa* 3rd Ed., (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001), pp.55-99:58.
[14] Ibid.
[15] See "Somalia: Background Note," US Department of State, Bureau of African Affairs, March 2006, p.3.
[16] See J. Drysdale, *The Somalia Dispute* (London and Dunmow: Pallmall Press, 1994), p.3.

Italy in 1895 which partitioned the Sudan and East Africa respectively to become zones of British and Italian influences.[17]

This historical background has many implications for the Somali conflict.[18] First, it created tensions between an ancient pastoral culture and the demands of modern statehood. Somalis were lovers of animals in pre-colonial times and were, according to Mazrui, usually members of stateless societies. They had ordered anarchy and ruled through consensus rather than coercion as opposed to lovers of land who had experienced statehood since pre-colonial times and therefore experienced elaborate political and social hierarchal structures even before the impact of the modern state. The European colonization and with it the idea of state, which includes concepts such as territorial sovereignty and consciousness of frontiers and borders, was often a severe constraint for the nomadic section of the Somali people. The Somali people as a whole found themselves split in five different areas by the Scramble for Africa. Second, in addition to fragmenting the Somali people, colonialism led them to become more conscious of themselves as one Somali family instead of as individual clans. Thus, colonial partition both divided and united Somalia, bringing about the paradox of high emotions of nationalism combined with a low sense of nationality.

In the colonial period, this brought about resistance and the revolt known as the 1900-1920 *Dervish* rebellion led by Sayyid Mohammed Abdulle Hassan. After the British Consul-General for the coast received a letter accusing the British of oppressing Islam and denouncing those who obeyed or co-operated with the administration as liars

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[17] Ibid.
[18] See A. Mazrui, "Crisis in Somalia: From Tyranny to Anarchy," in H. M. Adam and R. Ford, *Mending Rips in the Sky: Options for Somali Communities in the 21st Century*, (Asmara: The Red Sea Press, 2000), pp.5-11:8.

and slanders, he denounced him as a rebel and urged his government in London to prepare an expedition against the *Dervishes.*[19] Although Sayyid Mohammed was defeated both by rival Somali factions and by the British, he was lauded as a popular hero and still stands as a major figure of national identity to many Somalis. To his credit, the Somali historian aw Jama Isse argued that, the *Dervish* movement was the first in the history of colonial Africa which the British used its air force to attack and defeat.[20]

Independent Somalia: Wars with neighbours, causes and issues

Somalia has engaged in border hostilities with Kenya and Ethiopia in the mid 1960s and again with Ethiopia in 1977-78 during the Ogaden War. Various reasons underlie these wars. Among these is the issue of Somali nationalism. According to Lewis, the first stirrings of nationalism occurred in the 1930s and 1940s in urban centres, especially in Mogadishu.[21] In this rapidly growing urban centre, the impact of Western influence was experienced most keenly and the collective indemnification of wrongs was now less necessary than in the nomadic world of the interior. Amongst merchants and traders, especially, there arose a new feeling of dissatisfaction with the particularism of the past. This, together with the experience of Italian patriotic fervour presented in a new light and the long suppressed reaction to alien rule, provided conditions favourable to the emergence of new aspirations. Thus, in the last few years of the short-lived Italian East African Empire, the first definite steps towards the creation of a modern nationalist movement began to be taken in Somalia.

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[19] See I. M. Lewis, *A Modern History of the Somalia: Nation and State in the Horn of Africa* 4th Ed (Hargeisa: Btec Books, 2002), p.70.
[20] Interview with Aw Jama Omar Isse, Somali Historian, Eldoret, December 12, 2002.
[21] See I. M. Lewis, *A Modern History of the Somalia: Nation and State in the Horn of Africa,* op. cit., p.113.

Following the Italian defeat, the whole of the Somali Peninsula (with the exception of French Somaliland) came under British military administration and continued for almost a decade.[22] The most notable development under British military rule was the growth of a new and fervent sense of national awareness. A number of factors helped foster this new attitude. The memory of the *Dervish* nationalist resistance, the unification of the country and the spectre of another dismemberment, the public humiliation of colonial masters (first by the British then by the Italians) hitherto presumed invincible, the progression in education and in economic complexity, the growth of an articulate elite, and the lifting of the ban on open political debate by the new administration were some of the forces that served to give rise to the new nationalist climate.[23] The other reasons were the proposal for eventual independence – since the country was placed under UN trusteeship – and Britain's project for a "Greater Somalia" and its encouragement of political parties and, eventually, the country's repartition.[24]

The Somali Youth League (SYL) promoted the idea of Somali unity with neighbouring African territories, namely: French Somaliland, the Ogaden under Ethiopian rule, the NFD in Kenya and British Somaliland. SYL activists carried flags and banners depicting a white five-pointed star on a blue sky.[25] This idea of "Greater Somalia" was at the core of Somali foreign policy, leading to wars with Ethiopia and Kenya. As the people in the disputed areas shared the same culture, language and

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[22] See D. D. Laitin, and S. S. Samatar, *Somalia: Nation in Search of a State* (Colorado: Westview Press, 1987), p.763.
[23] Ibid.
[24] See R. Adloff, and V. Thompson, *Djibouti and the Horn of Africa* (California: Stanford University press, 1968), p.119.
[25] See J. Drysdale, *Stoics Without Pillows: A Way Forward for the Somalilands* (London: HAAN Associates Publishing, 2000), p.71.

religion, Somali leaders believed that by merging them into one country under a strong central government, Somalis would be better off.

Attempts to unify all the Somali people in the 1960s did not succeed as the French, Ethiopian and Kenyan British segments could not join with the two larger groupings – Italian in the south and British in the north – to form a new state. Despite independence of the Somali Republic in 1960, the Somali nationalist dream remained unfilled.[26] Because of this Pan-Somali nationalism, Somalia's relations with its neighbours became sticky, and even belligerent, with Somalia supporting a proxy-type guerrilla war in northern Kenya (usually referred to as *Shifta*) between 1963-67 and conflict with Ethiopia both in 1963, and later on in 1977-78 by militarily supporting the Western Somali Liberation Front (WSLF) liberation movement in Ethiopia.

Apart from Somalia, its neighbours also precipitated the wars. On Ethiopia's eastern flank, its 19th century acquisition of territory brought it into conflict with Somalia's claims.[27] As an independent state at the time the Somali-Ethiopian border had been established, Ethiopia was a participant in the negotiations. In other words, the country had not been a helpless victim of the dealings of European colonial powers, but rather a party to the conquest of the Horn of Africa. Most of the Ogaden was annexed to Ethiopia only in the 1890s and the contested borders were simply variants of those established in treaties between Ethiopia and Britain in 1897 and between Ethiopia and Italy in 1908. The problem was further complicated by the fact that Somalia demanded not minor boundary adjustments but a drastic change, one which would have resulted in

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[26] See H. M. Adam, et al, *Removing Barricades in Somalia: Options for Peace and Rehabilitation* (Washington United State Institute For Peace, 1998), p.2.
[27] See P. Woodward, *The Horn of Africa: Politics and International Relations* (London and New York: Tauris Academic Publishers, 1996), p.125.

its annexation of about one third of the present Ethiopian territory, including the major towns of Harar and Dire Dawa.[28]

To date, there is not an internationally recognized border, only a provisional administrative line.[29] It is typically colonial, a line arbitrarily drawn on the map without regard for ethnic and cultural or economic factors, a situation which currently remains a problem. As a result, the two states engaged in hostilities, with the Ethiopian army proving its superiority in 1963 in a matter of days. Ethiopia's motivation being the protection of its national interest, the country resisted ceding a part of its territory to Somalia as this would mean that it would loose status and prestige, territory being a major variable of power in international politics. Ethiopia also had the concern of being land-locked. Due to his imperial inclinations, the Emperor was not satisfied with the 1950 UN resolution to federate Eritrea into Ethiopia, granting it greater freedom and self governance.[30] This again meant that Ethiopia would be reduced to a land-locked state. Therefore, it abrogated the federation in 1962, annexed Eritrea and fought rebel forces such as Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF).

This had several implications for the conflict with Somalia: it deepened the suspicions between the two states over their respective intentions; it prompted clientilism in order to acquire weapons; and it brought about proxy wars in each other's country. Somalia indeed supported Eritrean liberation movements while Ethiopia supported Somali rebel groups. Somalia's concerns lied both in the quest to open different fronts of

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[28] See E. J. Keller, *Revolutionary Ethiopia: From Empire to Peoples Republic* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1988), p.162.
[29] See M. H. Mukhtar, "Historical Dictionary of Somalia," *African Historical Dictionary Series* No. 87 (Maryland and Oxford: Scarecrow Press, 2003), p.176.
[30] See for example, M. Ottaway, *Soviet and American Influence in the Horn of Africa* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).

war to wear out the Ethiopian army and in its pan-Arab nationalism sympathy, while Ethiopia's lay in the Eritrean port which was an important economic asset and was strategic for the supply of weapons. This Ethiopian concern to gain direct access to the sea by preventing control of coastal areas from foreigners led it to claim both Eritrea and Somaliland, precipitating war in the Horn of Africa.[31]

As far as Kenya is concerned, Somali nationalism constituted a challenge to its territorial integrity as Somali nationalists claimed that the eastern portion of northern Kenya should be detached from Kenya and annexed to the Somali Republic. The area in question covers some 45,000 square miles and comprises one fifth of the total territory of Kenya.[32]

During independence, United Kingdom had a certain level of sympathy towards Somalia's dilemma. However, British diplomats were guilty of double-dealing in the 19th century. Having signed treaties of protection with Somali leaders, they then signed a treaty with Menelik. Putting their "protected" peoples under the jurisdiction of the Ethiopian emperor, to expiate this British sin, Lord Bevin attempted to fashion a united Somali colony in the wake of World War II at a time when the British military administration had control of virtually all Somali lands with the exception of the French colony (today known as Djibouti). This proposal, however, failed amid considerable opposition in the UN, especially by Soviets who saw in the plan another British attempt to expand its empire.

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[31] See M. Wubneh and Y. Abate, *Ethiopia: Transition and Development in the Horn of Africa* (Colorado: Westview Press, 1988), p.164.

[32] See S. Touval, *Somalia Nationalism: International Policy and the Drive for Unity in the Horn of Africa* (Cambridge and Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1963), p.147.

The British promised the Somalis that the popular will in Kenya's NFD would determine whether it became part of Kenya or Somalia. When a British team travelled to the NFD, it reported an overwhelming desire of the people to join with the Somali Republic.[33] The Somalis of Kenya have sympathized with the Somali nationalist movement since its inception. However, Somali nationalists were increasingly concerned that Kenya's constitutional progress might frustrate their hopes for ultimate unification with the Somali Republic and were reluctant to become subject to an African government when Kenya attained independence.[34] For their part, the Kenya African nationalists were determined to safeguard the country's territorial integrity and oppose the secession of territory to the Somali Republic. At this time, British double-dealings resurfaced. In order to make peace with the Kenyan nationalists, seen as essential to an orderly transition of agricultural ownership in the white highlands, the British agreed to keep the NFD as a part of Kenya notwithstanding the desires of Kenyan Somalis.

This intervention prompted secessionist feelings among some Somalis in the Northern Frontier District (NFD).[35] In reaction to Kenyan nationalists' refusal to entertain any territorial adjustments in their final negotiations with the British before independence, the Somali government invited Jomo Kenyatta and Ronald Ngala to Mogadishu and showered them with Somali hospitality in order to support the NFD people's right to self-determination. In March 1963, when the British announced on Kenyan radio that the NFD would become an integral part of Kenya, it provoked riots in

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[33] See D. D. Laitin and S. S. Samatar, *Somalia: Nation in Search of a State*, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1987), p.133.
[34] See S. Touval, *Somalia Nationalism: International Policy and the Drive for Unity in the Horn of Africa*, (Cambridge and Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1963), p.150.
[35] Interview with Ambassador Hussein Ali Dualeh, former Somali ambassador to Kenya and to Uganda, Nairobi, September 11, 2001.

Somalia and in the NFD. As a result, Kenyan authorities dubbed the Somali nationalists *Shiftas*, or bandits, while their kin in the Somali Republic characterized them as freedom fighters. This led Kenya to fight its own citizens in the short *Shifta* war. As the Kenyan army was well trained in insurgency warfare during the Mau Mau insurgency, it put down the rebellion quickly.

A key element in the relationship between Kenya and Ethiopia was Somalia's territorial claims in both Kenya and Ethiopia, which made them targets of Somali guerrilla insurrection. The countries signed an agreement of cooperation and mutual defence assistance in 1964 in order to contain the pan-Somali claims. The agreement resulted in the Ethiopian-Kenyan border administration commission, which met annually. In its January 1983 meeting, the commission condemned Somalia's expansionist ambitions and urged all countries to refrain from arming the Somali regime.

Several events point to the strong ties between Ethiopia and Kenya. During the 1977-78 drought in Ethiopia, Kenya provided food grains to its ally. When Sudan and Somalia supported the Eritrean and Somali guerrillas that attacked and disrupted Ethiopia' s access to the Red Sea ports, Kenya came to Ethiopia's help and offered its embattled neighbour the use of the Kenyan port of Mombassa. This offer also made the completion of the Addis Ababa-Nairobi highway possible.[36]

In addition, during the Somali invasion of the Ogaden, Kenya detained aircrafts carrying arms from Egypt to Somalia to the detriment of its relations with Egypt. Kenya was also partly instrumental in preventing Somalia from enlisting US and Western military aid after its losses in the 1977-78 Ogaden War. Kenya, which was also a close

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[36] See M. Wubneh and Y. Abate, *Ethiopia: Transition and Development in the Horn of Africa*, op. cit., p.165.

ally of the US at the time, was indeed opposed to any US military assistance to Somalia as it was concerned that such arms may be used to invade NFD. As a result, in 1978, Kenya warned that its Indian Ocean ports may be closed to US warships if Washington sent arms to Somalia.[37]

Cold War Somalia

Copson observes that international factors played a role in each of Africa's wars.[38] These factors operated on one or more of three levels: with neighbouring states; with African regional actors; and with powers from outside Africa. Foltz, on the other hand, argues that Africa has a way of periodically phasing in and out of Western consciousness, each time to reappear in a different guise, stimulating a different concern and intrigue or agitating a different set of Western interests and a different set of Westerners.[39] This is derived from the enduring structures governing Africa's interactions with the rest of the world, notably Africa's geographical position and the military and economic weakness of its people in comparison with distinct nations able to reach Africa's shares. He further argues that Africa has historically been allotted five roles in great power strategic calculations: the physical obstacle or resting point on the way to some place of importance; the defensive bastion to protect sea lanes heading elsewhere; the launching pad of attack against other territories; the source of military supplies; and finally, the surrogate terrain where great powers could compete symbolically without bearing the full costs of destruction.

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[37] Ibid.
[38] See R. C. Copson, *African Wars and Prospects for Peace* (New York and London: M. E. Sharpe Inc., 1994), p.103.
[39] See W. J. Foltz, "Africa in Great Power Strategy," in W. J. Foltz and H. H. Biennen (eds.) *Arms and Africa* (New haven and London: Yale University Press, 1985), p.1.

The emergence, after World War II, of a global international system dominated by two Superpowers increasingly affected even such poor and peripheral states as those in the Horn of Africa. Unfortunately, the processes of superpower investments were both uneven and sporadic, being driven sometimes by changing perceptions and priorities in Washington and Moscow, including concerns for the other's actions, and at other times by developments within the Horn of Africa itself.[40] The initial rivalry between the US and the Soviet Union in the 1940s and early 1950s centred primarily on Europe, at least until the iron curtain had been effectively lowered across the continent. At that time, Africa was still overwhelmingly the preserve of the colonial powers and, in the Middle East, the US was more concerned with Britain's deteriorating position then with the potential of the Soviet Union. The Suez crisis of 1956 was to jolt that perception severely, because of both the Soviet's approval of Czech arms sale to Egypt and that fact that the concluding events of the crisis demonstrated the shift in the balance of power in the region away from Britain.[41]

Lederach asserts that, during much of the Cold War, the superpowers were never directly engaged in armed conflict in their own territories.[42] Instead, most wars (well over a hundred in the last fifteen years of the Cold War) were fought through, in or over client states. One of the effects of this bipolar context, Lederach posits, was an increase in the volatility, and an exacerbation of conflicts in the developing world, as was the case in the Horn of Africa and Central America.[43] In this case, it created a dominant frame of

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[40] See P. Woodward, *The Horn of Africa: Politics and International Relations*, (London and New York: Tauris Academic Studies, 1996), p.133.
[41] Ibid.
[42] See J. P. Lederach, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* (Washington D.C.: USIP, 1997), p.5.
[43] Ibid.

reference in which the primary explanation for armed conflicts was an ideological struggle between East and West. Lederach further highlights that geographically, the vast majority of wars fought during the Cold War were fought in territories of the periphery; what is variously termed the "South", the developing world and the third world: Africa, South Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America.[44]

Having gained independence during the peak of the Cold War, Somalia, together with Ethiopia, was a perfect ground for the period's rivalries. As the Superpowers competed with each other, they fuelled inter-state conflict between the two client states. Prior to the shift of alliance in 1977, the Soviet Union used Somalia to fight Ethiopia while the US used the latter to fight the former, and vice versa after the shift of alliances. Copson concurs that the two powers' foreign policy ambitions and designs could be pursued more easily in Africa [and more so in the Horn of Africa] than in many other parts of the world.[45] Here, the risk of dangerous reactions was small and affordable commitments of power could have a great impact. The USSR's Cold War involvement in Africa, for its part, was probably due to the fact that it valued the continent more for its symbolic usefulness in world politics than for its intrinsic value. On the Somalia front, the US military assistance programme was motivated by the Cold War and US strategic interests in the Indian Ocean, the Persian Gulf and the approaches to the Suez Canal.[46]

In addition to fuelling other tensions, the Cold War also triggered the Ogaden war of 1977-78. Among other things, the two superpowers poured armaments into both states. Lederach further posits that the reality of the Cold War meant that weapons and the loans

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[44] Ibid.
[45] See R. C. Copson, *African Wars and Prospects for Peace*, (New York and London: ME Sharpe, Inc., 1994), p.112.
[46] Ibid.

needed to finance their purchase as well as ideologies came from the north while the south contributed its environment: mainly people and national economies.[47] During this period, more than 95 percent of arms exports came from five countries, all located in the global north, and were destined to countries located in territories housing the most fragile populations.

Cold War Somalia initiated the Ogaden War on July 13, 1977 with a strong WSLF drive towards Godey in the southern part of Ethiopia. The Somali decision to invade Ogaden may in part be explained by the Somali government's miscalculation. The Somali leadership believed that the Soviets were treaty-bound to Somalia and that they would not provide aid to its adversaries, notably Ethiopia. In addition, they could not see why the Soviets would risk what was at the time a secure position in Somalia to support the unstable Ethiopian regime.

It also appeared that Somalis had tacit encouragement and support from the Carter administration for their planned invasion of Ogaden.[48] Barre took advantage of the internal problems Ethiopia was experiencing, especially the change of guard coupled with the turmoil arising from the nationalist movements in Eritrea who had launched an attack in the provincial capital of Asmara in January 1975. In 1974-75, massive drought had also weakened Ethiopia and pushed Emperor Haile Selassie's government to a state of collapse. Therefore, Somalia launched an offensive to liberate the Somali people in Ethiopia on the basis that war with weak Ethiopia was winnable.[49]

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[47] See J. P. Lederach, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*, (Washington D.C.: USIP, 1997), p.7.
[48] See M. Wubneh and Y. Abate, *Ethiopia: Transition and Development in the Horn of Africa*, (Colorado: Westview Press, 1988), p.165.
[49] See A. Simons, "Somalia: A Regional Security Dilemma," in E. J. Keller and D. Rothschild, (eds.) *Africa in the New International Order* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1996), p.76.

However, as Somalia was on the verge of victory, Cuba and the Soviet Union came to the rescue of Ethiopia. With the help of thousands of Cuban troops operating sophisticated Soviet Union weapons, the Soviet Union, nursing an opportunistic Cold War strategy, ruptured its long-term relations with Somalia to give full political, diplomatic and military backing to its new Ethiopian ally. Hence, the Ethiopians were able to eject the Somali army from the disputed territories.[50] It is estimated that the offensive destroyed over 75 percent of the Somali tanks, and 50 percent of its combat air force while about 800 of its best troops were also killed. It is against this background that the Somali civil war broke out.[51]

The Aftermath of the Ogaden War

There are four main sets of underlying factors driving civil wars: political factors; economic and social factors; cultural and perceptional factors; and structural factors.[52] Some of the causes of internal conflicts include the nature of political power in many African states. [53] Together with the real and perceived consequences of capturing and maintaining power, this is a key source of conflict across the continent. It is indeed frequently the case that political victory assumes "a winner-takes-it- all" form with respect to wealth and resources. The African situation aside, Somalia had a number of problems: the defeat of the Ogaden war led to the disintegrating of the Somali army;

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[50] See H. M. Adam, et al., *Removing Barricades in Somalia Option for Peace and Rehabilitation*, (Washington, D.C.: USIP, 1998), p.3.
[51] See M. Robbins, "The Soviet-Cuban Relationship," in R. R. Kanet, (ed.) *Soviet Foreign Policy in the 1980s* (New York: Praegar, 1982), p.161.
[52] See M. E. Brown, "The Causes and Regional Dimensions of Internal Conflict," in M. E. Brown, (ed.), *The International Dimensions of Internal Conflicts* (Cambridge and Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1996), pp.1-31; and pp.571-601.
[53] See K. Annan, "*The Causes of Conflict and the Promotion of Durable Peace and Sustainable Development in Africa*," Secretary General's Report to the UN Security Council, 16 April 1998, p.108.

there were issues of identity and recognition, participation, marginalisation, and foreign-supported armed opposition.

Somalia's descent into chaotic lawlessness did not occur overnight and could have long been predicted.[54] The civilian administration that assumed power after independence became hopelessly corrupt and incompetent and was overthrown by Siyad Barre in a bloodless coup. In an attempt to regain popularity and legitimacy, Barre turned to pan-Somali nationalism, leading to the Ogaden War with Ethiopia, as highlighted above. The defeat of Somali forces in the Ogaden in turn brought to the surface opposition elements within the Somali armed forces. These elements failed in an attempt to overthrow the Barre regime in April 1978.[55] These were mainly officers from the Majerten sub-clan, some of whom consequently escaped and fled abroad, especially to Ethiopia, and played a major role in forming the Somali Salvation Front (SSF), later the Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF) after merger with the Somali Democratic Action (SDA) in October 1981.[56] The SSDF soon began to launch guerrilla raids on Somali army basis and civilian targets across the Ethiopian-Somali border.

Following the Ogaden War, the Barre regime violently suppressed opposition movements and ethnic groups, particularly the Isaq sub-clan in the northern region using the military and elite security forces to quash any hint of rebellion.[57] Another consequence of the Ogaden debacle was the arrival, from Ethiopia, of more than one million refugees, most of who settled in the north, which further increased the sense of

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[54] See G. B. N. Ayyitey, "The Somalia Crisis: Time for an African Solution," *Policy Analysis* No. 205, March 28, 1994, p.3.
[55] See M. Wubneh and Y. Abate, *Ethiopia: Transition and Development in the Horn of Africa*, op. cit., p.166.
[56] See "Analysis of Somalia," US Department of the Army, December 1993, p.2.
[57] See "Somalia: Background Note," US Department of State, Bureau of African Affairs, March 2006, p.5.

alienation among the Isaq.[58] This, compounded with their perception of inadequate representation in Barre's government, led to Isaq dissidents living in London forming the second armed Somali rebel group, the Somali National Movement (SNM), with the aim of toppling the regime and it moved its headquarters to Addis Ababa in 1982. The SNM organized and directed its first military operations against Barre from Ethiopian basis.

However, it was only in July 1984 that the movement became a serious threat to the Somali government. During this period, the SNM strengthened its relations with other insurgent movements such as the SSDF since both groups had political and military wings. Proclaiming itself as a nationwide opposition movement, the SNM developed alliances with other sub-clans in the north as well as with non-Isaq sub-clans in the south.[59]

The Somali government's response to the guerrilla movements included increased nationwide repression of suspected political dissent and brutal collective punishments in the Majerten and Isaq regions. These measures only intensified the opposition to the regime. The government further prevented the opposition from forming a unified front, a situation which had the effect of intensifying both inter- and intra-clan antagonisms. For example, in 1989, the Hawiye leaders who had previously cooperated with the SNM decided to form their own clan-based opposition movement, the United Somali Congress (USC), in Rome, Italy. Almost immediately after its formation, the USC split along sub-clan lines within the Hawiye and between Ali Mahdi and the late Gen. Aideed. The latter later received weapons from the SNM with which it became allied. Barre's uneven

[58] See R. Cornwell, "Somalia fourteenth time lucky?" *Occasional paper* 87, Institute for Security Studies, April 2004, p.2.
[59] See for example, M. H. Mukhtar, "Historical Dictionary of Somalia," *African Historical Dictionary*, (Maryland Oxford: Scarecrow Press, 2003), p.25.

persecutions and strategies, therefore, forced the opposition to utilize its own clans [structures] as organized armed forces.[60]

The divisions within the opposition, however, did not work to the government's advantage in the long term as it was gradually alienating an increasing number of the country's clans and sub-clans, including the very lineage of the Dhulbahante and Ogaden sub-clans that had provided the government's most loyal support. In particular, the Ogaden sub-clan living in both Somalia's neighbouring countries Ethiopia and Kenya and which was strongly interested in pan-Somali issues tended to blame the Somali government for the country's defeat in the Ogaden War. The deteriorating relations between Siyad Barre and former Ogaden supporters climaxed in 1990 with a mass desertion of Ogaden officers from the army leading to the formation of a new opposition movement: the Somali Patriotic Movement (SPM).[61] Finally, in 1990, the Digil-Mirifle, in the Bay and Bakol region, formed their own rebel group known as the Somali Democratic Movement (SDM). Motivated by the Isaq domination of areas captured from government forces, the SDM aimed to essentially protect the unarmed and defenceless Digil-Mirifle peasants in the inter-riverine region from the violence of the warring factions.[62]

Triggers of the civil war

The operation of these opposition groups forced the Somali government to mount an international effort to cut off foreign aid to the rebels. As a result, Siyad Barre

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[60] See H. M. Adam, et al., *Removing Barricades in Somalia: Options for Peace and Rehabilitation*, (Washington, D.C.: USIP, 1998), p.4.; See also R. Cornwell, "Somalia fourteenth time lucky?" *Occasional paper* 87, Institute for Security Studies, April 2004, p.2.

[61] Ibid.

[62] See M. H. Mukhtar, "Historical Dictionary of Somalia," *African Historical Dictionary*, (Maryland Oxford: Scarecrow Press, 2003), p.226.

established diplomatic relations with both Libya (in 1987) and Ethiopia in exchange for the withdrawal of their military support to the opposition groups, especially the SNM, which Ethiopia had allegedly sheltered, armed and trained.[63] In retrospect, the peace accord signed by the Ethiopian and Somali heads of state in April 1988 – obliging each party to terminate support for the other's dissidents, to halt subversion, to prevent acts of destabilization and calling for troop withdrawal from their common border – could be seen as the final precipitant of the (Somali civil) war.[64]

Although one of the intentions of Mengistu was to redeploy troops from the Somali border to the north, it had unintended consequences.[65] Faced with the sudden withdrawal of support by their Ethiopian sponsors in May 1988, the SNM launched an offensive from Ethiopia against the Somali government. Government reprisals had the perverse effect of drawing over larger numbers of Isaq to the rebellion, including deserters from the army, thus leading to the withdrawal of external support from the donor community.[66] During the final three years of Siyad Barre's rule, there was relatively intense fighting throughout the country as the opposition groups wrested control of extensive areas, with the SNM in the northwest, the SSDF in the northeast, the USC in central Somalia and the SPM in the south.[67] Not only did they establish close relations after a series of informal talks, but the SNM, the USC and the SPM also agreed

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[63] Ibid, p.252; See also R. W. Copson, *African Wars and Prospects for Peace*, (New York and London: ME Sharpe, Inc., 1994), p.141.
[64] I. M. Lewis, *A Modern History of Somalia: Nation and State in the Horn of Africa* 4th ed., (Hargeisa: Btec Books, 2002), p.231.
[65] See R. W. Copson, *African Wars and Prospects for Peace*, (New York and London: ME Sharpe, Inc., 1994), p.130.
[66] See R. Cornwell, "Somalia fourteenth time lucky?" *Occasional paper* 87, Institute for Security Studies, April 2004, p.3.
[67] See "Analysis of Somalia," US Department of the Army, December 1993, p.2.

to pursue a common military strategy against the government and to a adopt a united internal and external political front in an agreement signed in September1990.[68]

The inability of the Somali opposition fronts to offer any viable political formula after ousting Siyad Barre was rooted in the organisation and strategy that they adopted while fighting the regime, the underlying weaknesses of which became dramatically evident with the total collapse of the Somali state and the subsequent disintegration of the various fronts into clan-based armed factions.[69]

Conclusions

Somalia's thirty years of independence were riddled with conflict, first with Kenya and Ethiopia in the mid 1960s and later on with Ethiopia in the 1977-78 Ogaden war, the latter leading to an internal conflict and a subsequent collapse of the Somali state. Some of the key underlying causes lie in the inter-play of foreign policy and conflict: for example, the rise of Somali 'nationalism' in Somali-populated areas in the Horn of Africa region. The configuration of colonial borders which divided Somalia into five territories in turn laid the foundation for the irredentism leading to Somalia's aggressive, conflict-oriented foreign policy and wars with its neighbours.

Along this line, the foreign policies pursued by Somalia and its neighbours -- and other major players in the Horn of African politics -- were also a contributory factor to the war in Somalia and in the Horn of Africa region. On the one hand, independent Somalia's foreign policy towards the region, based on the idea of a 'Greater Somalia,' triggered hostile reactions from its neighbours and their backers. This also led to a

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[68] See M. H. Mukhtar, "Historical Dictionary of Somalia," *African Historical Dictionary*, (Maryland Oxford: Scarecrow Press, 2003), p.233.
[69] See D. Compagnon, "Somalia Armed Movements," in C. Clapham, *African Guerillas* (Kampala: Fountain Publishers, 1998), p.75.

defence pact between Kenya and Ethiopia in addition to a regional suspicion against Somalia's future intentions. Although both Somalia and Ethiopia fell into anarchy, Somalia disintegrated and has had no effective central government since 1991.

CHAPTER FOUR
SOMALI FOREIGN POLICY, 1960-1969

Introduction

Chapter Three analyzed conflict in Somalia – both inter-state and intra-state, structural or violent – including the 1963 proxy-type *Shifta* war with Kenya and the 1963 and 1977-78 Ogaden war with Ethiopia. The chapter also examined the historical background, causes and issues of these wars and the subsequent civil war. This chapter will examine Somali foreign policy from 1960 to 1969, a period which covers the two post-independence Somali civilian administrations. It will also examine the role of Somali foreign policy in its conflicts with Kenya and Ethiopia, observing that Somali foreign policy indeed played a fundamental role in the conflicts.

Domestic Environment

This section analyses Somalia's domestic environment as it provides both constraints and opportunities in the pursuit of the country's foreign policy. It is important, however, to recall that the Somali Republic – since its inception in 1960 – had pursued a foreign policy committed to the creation of a 'Greater Somalia.' It is in this context that Somali foreign policy and engagement with other actors in the international system is analyzed.

Geography

A state's geography obviously has a major impact on its relations with its neighbours and on its actions and influence in the global political arena.[1] This is reflected

[1] See S. L. Spiegel, *World Politics in a New Era* (Los Angels: Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1994), p.20.

in the use of the term 'geopolitics' to describe the effect of geographic factors in international affairs. As such, the geographic position of Somalia in the Horn of Africa had important implications for its foreign policy. Somalia lies in the Horn of Africa where the African continent stretches towards the Arab world. Somalia therefore has strategic control over access to the Red Sea and is closely linked to the Arabian Peninsula and the Gulf.

Somalia has an area of some 640,000 Km and is the size of France and Italy put together. Its 3300 km coastline runs from Bab-Al-Mandab, known as the southern gate of the Red Sea, to Ras Kiamboni at the border with Kenya.[2] Its strategic value was, however, relatively unimportant over the course of the past century due to its lack of physical and economic resources.[3] This situation changed with the opening of the Suez Canal in 1867 when Somalia became strategically important, providing harbours in Mogadishu, Berbera, and Kismayo.

The artificial boundaries drawn by colonial powers have a particular importance for developing countries as the colonialists failed to take into account geographic, ethnic, and economic considerations. A second issue of importance is the proliferation of mini-states that lack the ingredients that would ensure their independent existence. This has resulted in their continued dependence on larger countries for economic, political support and military assistance.

In this context, the influence of geography on Somali foreign policy is necessarily linked to its strategic location and its artificial boundaries. Its location not only attracted the attention of a number of colonial powers, but, in the period under study, attracted the

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[2] See S. M. Mousa, *Recolonization Beyond Somalia*, (Mogadishu: Horn of Africa Printing Press, 1992), p. xiii.
[3] See C. Legum and B. Lee, *Conflict in the Horn of Africa* (London: Rex Collings, 1977), p.31.

interest of great powers such as Britain, France, and Italy who all sought to provide aid to Somalia and at the same time benefit from it. Consequently, its geography underlined Somalia's rapprochement with the West and the Soviet Union, respectively. The division of the Somali people due to territorial decisions taken by colonial powers was also an important geographical issue as Somalia pursued the return of the ceded territories as its principal foreign policy objective, especially in the period immediately after independence.

Population

The size, composition and geographic distribution of a country's population are factors in the calculus of national power.[4] After the union of the two Somali territories, the new Republic had 2.7 million inhabitants.[5] These inhabitants had one considerable advantage: the homogeneity of the Somali as all the people who lived within the boundaries of Somalia shared a common language, religion, social structure and historical identity. Unlike other African countries in which nationalist elites focused primarily on the problem of cultural unity, Somali leaders faced a different kind of problem.[6] This was based on the fact that the Somali nation did not need any kind of "homogenization" of cultures within the borders of the state in order to develop a political will to maintain national unity.[7]

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[4] See A. E. H. Dessouki and B. Korany, "A Literature Survey and a Framework for Analysis," in B. Korany and A. E. H. Dessouki, *The Foreign Policies of Arab States*, (Boulder and London: Westview Press, 1984), pp.5-18:14.
[5] See C. Legum and B. Lee, *Conflict in the Horn of Africa,* (London: Rex Collings, 1977), p.31.
[6] See D. D. Laitin and S. S. Samatar, *Somalia: Nation in Search of a State* (Colorado: Westview Press, 1987), p.129.
[7] See L. Laakso and A. O. Olukoshi, "The Crisis of The Post Colonial Nation State in Africa," in A. O. Olukoshi and L. Laakso, *Challenges to the Nation State in Africa* (Uppsala: Nordiska Africa Institute, 1996), p.99.

As a result, the appeal of pan-Somalism became infectious, making inroads throughout the peninsula and there was consequently deep popular support for the unity of all other Somali areas in Ethiopia, Kenya, and all of coastal Djibouti (then French Somaliland) under a single Somali flag. Popular support for Somalia's foreign policy at the time galvanized the Somali people, leading to the formation of the Northern Frontier District Liberation Front (NFDLF) in Kenya, the Western Somalia Liberation Front (WSLF) in the Ogaden region in Ethiopia and the *Front de Liberation de la Cote des Somalis (FLCS)* in Djibouti.

Apart from the social cohesiveness and national integration that informed Somalia's foreign policy, one other important element is the size of its population. By reclaiming the territories held by their neighbours, Somalia would have been larger and hence would have played a more dominant role in the Horn of Africa. For example, Touval estimated the number of the Somali population in Ethiopia to be between 850,000 and 1,000,000, while the 1962 Kenya census in the Northern Frontier District (NFD) estimates the number of Somalis in that region as being just under 400,000. Whether these figures are true or not, "this, in turn, played a crucial role in Somali foreign policy."[8] In addition, Ethiopia and Kenya hosted a large Muslim population which would at least sympathize with the Somali cause.

[8] See S. Touval, *Somali Nationalism: International Politics and The Drive for Unity in the Horn of Africa* (Cambridge and Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1963), p.132. See also, *Kenya Population Census*, 1962, Kenya Statistics Division.

Economic and military capability

Just like population and geography, foreign policy is also determined by a country's economic and military capabilities.[9] Somalia's lack of physical and natural resources, as most of its land was a desert area and had little exploitable wealth, was a constraint on both its foreign policy objectives and its means of implementing these. This explains Somalia's search for external aid to build its economy and military capability in order to promote the country's national ambition for unification. Due to such external support, Somalia's military, after independence, grew steadily despite the country's status as one of the poorest states in sub-Saharan Africa. Initially, the weakness of the Somali army was exposed in the wars of the 1960s with Kenya and Ethiopia. During that time, western economic aid was sparse; military support was still not forthcoming and political commitments were largely on the side of Somalia's rivals: Ethiopia, Kenya and French-controlled Djibouti.

This hostility to Somali designs was clearly shown when Britain supported Kenya against Somali irredentists in the NFD in the early 1960s and when the USA strongly supported Ethiopia whose forces, in 1963-1964, came into military conflict with the poorly equipped Somali army, leading to the defeat of Somalia by both countries. This laid the foundation for Somalia's reorientation towards Soviet Union. During this period, the signing of the defence agreement between Kenya and Ethiopia to counter the

[9] See W. I. Zartman and A. G. Kluge, "Heroic Politics: The Foreign Policy of Libya," in B. Korany and A. E. H. Dessouki, *The Foreign Policies of Arab States*, (Boulder and London: Westview Press, 1984), p.175-196:179.

perceived Somali aggressiveness further undermined Somalia's capability and hence constrained Somalia's ability to achieve its foreign policy objectives.[10]

Political structure

Political structures provide opportunities and impose constraints on decision-makers. In line with this, when the two colonial territories were merged into one state, President Aden Abdulle Osman (Adan Adde) became the first civilian president, with Abdirashid Ali Sharma'arke as the Prime Minister; both were from the south region of the country. In the parliamentary elections of 1964, Aden Abdulle Osman was elected president for a second term. During that time, Aden Adde dropped Sharma'arke as Prime Minister and appointed Abdirizak Haji Hussein as his replacement.[11]

Later, in the 1967 elections, Sharma'arke teamed up with Mohammed Ibrahim Egal, from the north, to defeat the Osman-Abdirizak political partnership as the duo won the elections with Sharma'arke as President and Egal as Prime Minister. Aden Abdulle Osman handed over power peacefully and Somalia became the first African country whose power was transferred from one group to the other without political violence.[12]

In the nine years that followed its independence, Somalia practiced an electoral parliamentary system of government made up of three branches: the legislature, the executive, and an independent judiciary. The vibrant democracy practiced in those formative early years of independence – along with the remarkable cultural and economic

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[10] See for example K. G. Adar, "Kenya-US Relations: A Recapitulation of the Patterns of Paradigmatic Conceptualization, 1960s-1990s," in M. Munene, et al., (eds.), *The United States and Africa: From Independence to the End of the Cold War* (Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers Ltd., 1995), pp.89-104:98.

[11] See for example A. Y. Farah, "Somalia: Modern History and the End of 1990s" in WSP International, *Rebuilding Somalia: Issues and Possibilities for Puntland* (London: HAAN Associates, 2001), pp.6-29:7.

[12] See also W. Katambo, *Coup d etats: Revolutions and Power Struggles in Post Independence Africa* (Nairobi: Afriscript Publishers, 1985), p.261; See also IRIN Reports, *Somalia: A Chronology of Events Leading to the Interim Government* (Nairobi: IRIN).

cohesion of Somali society – impressed critical observers and raised premature hopes that Somalia would become a model democracy in Africa.[13]

However, this experiment with western democracy soon disintegrated. Firstly, Somaliland, which had entered the union at a disadvantage, immediately showed discontent. For example, the SNL boycotted the June 1961 referendum held to approve the new joint constitution. Seen as a vote of confidence to unity with the south, Somaliland gave it a resounding negative verdict. While the vote was nevertheless carried by a southern majority,[14] the referendum's expression of northern discontent was echoed in popular plays and songs critical of unification. Only six months later, a group of Sandhurst-trained military officers staged an unsuccessful *coup d'etat* in Hargeisa.[15] This rebellion, which was poorly organized, was quickly suppressed.

The civilian government quickly became corrupt and incompetent.[16] Its democratic experiment soon faltered and it transformed itself into a predatory state-controlled by corrupt elite who abused power for personal gain and political advantage. Similarly, during the parliamentary era, the civilian elites manipulated clanism to win elections, leading to the chaotic proliferation of largely clan-based political parties towards the end of the 1960s, thus heralding a general disintegration of political institutions and government departments.[17]

The political disintegration, rampant corruption, and embezzlement of public funds not only impeded social and economic progress and squandered foreign aid

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[13] See A. Y. Farah, "Somalia: Modern History and the End of 1990s," in WSP International, *Rebuilding Somalia: Issues and Possibilities for Puntland* (London: HAAN Associates, 2001), p.6-29:7.
[14] See WSP International, *Rebuilding Somaliland: Issues and Possibilities* (Asmara: The Red Sea Press, Inc, 2005), p.10.
[15] Ibid.
[16] See H. M. Adam, "Clan Conflicts and Democratization in Somalia," in N. O. Nnoli. (ed.), *Government and Politics in Africa: A Reader,* (Harare: AAPS, 2000), p.860.
[17] Ibid.

resources, but also led to public disillusionment with the civilian leadership.[18] Although the two civilian regimes were riddled with *kleptocracy* and inefficiency and underwent major changes in their governments, the basic national objective – unity with other Somali territories – never faltered. The only changes that took place in that respect were related to government tactics and alliance formation as each subsequent leader had his own strategy. This problem also affected the decision-making process in the pursuit of foreign policy. Furthermore, this political discontent became a big blow to the popular support governments enjoyed in the early days of Somali independence while the political factionalisation diminished the cohesiveness of purpose.

Foreign policy orientation

Pan-Somalism (Greater Somalia)

Somalia's foreign policy orientation in the period 1960 to 1969 can be discerned from its historical legacy, but also from the statements and actions of its leaders immediately after independence. In this period, as is seen from the preoccupation of most of Somali leaders, the main foreign policy orientation was one of 'Greater Somalia.' The creation of the Somali Republic did not include those Somali nationals living in French Somaliland, Ogaden, Eastern Ethiopia and the NFD of Kenya. The situation thus confronting the newly-formed Republic in 1960 was described by Prime Minister Abdirashid Ali Sharma'arke as "Our Misfortune." Prime Minister Sharma'arke wrote:

> "Our neighbouring countries, with whom, like the rest of Africa, we seek to promote constructive and harmonious relations, are not our neighbours. Our neighbours are our

[18] Ibid., See also, G. B. N. Ayyitey, *The Somalia Crisis: Time for An African Solution*, Policy Analysis, No. 205, March 28, 1994, p.3.; See also A. Y. Farah, "Somalia: Modern History and the End of the 1990s," in WSP International, *Rebuilding Somalia: Issues and Possibilities for Puntland*, (London: HAAN Publishers, 2001), p.7-30:8.

> Somali kinsmen whose citizenship has been falsified by indiscriminate boundary 'arrangements.' They have to move across artificial frontiers to their pasturelands. They occupy the same terrain and pursue the same pastoral economy as ourselves, we speak the same language, we share the same creed, the same culture and the same traditions. How can we regard our brothers as foreigners? Of course, we all have a very natural desire to be united. The first step was taken in 1960 when the Somaliland protectorate was united with Somalia. This act was not an act of 'colonialism' or 'expansion' or 'annexation', it was a positive contribution to peace and unity in Africa."[19]

The election of the Somali Youth League (SYL), which had long advocated for the union of all Somalis in the Horn of Africa under one government, led to the adoption of the new state's emblem of a five-horned white star on a blue background, symbolizing the potential unification of the five Somali groupings living under five different administrations. In that respect, Somalia's frontier disputes are not essentially about land but rather about people and more so about nomadic people.[20] It may therefore be agued that the Somali policy was basically about nationalism. The term 'nationalism' emerged from 18th and 19th century political movements in Europe in which groups of people with a common culture, language and historical traditions claimed the right to self determination. Examples of early nationalistic movements include the French Revolution and the conquests of Napoleon Bonaparte.

Despite their considerable cultural history and sense of national affinity, Somalis had never before been united in a state of their own. Experience under colonial rule, both local and foreign, bred into them a sense of Somali nationalism[21] which became the chief determinant of the goals set by their new republic. Independence was celebrated only a partial victory on the road to full nationhood and whose independence constitution

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[19] See I. M. Lewis, *A Modern History of the Somali; Nation and State in the Horn of Africa* 4th Ed., (Hargeisa: Btec Books, 2002), p.179.
[20] See J. Drysdale, *The Djibouti Dispute* (London and Dunmow: Pallmall Press, 1994), p.7.
[21] See C. Legum and B. Lee, *Conflict in the Horn of Africa*, (Londo: Rex Collings, 1977), p.31.

committed the republic to retrieve the three 'lost hands:' coastal Djibouti; the Ogaden region in Ethiopia; and the NFD in Kenya.

Another factor responsible for the development of nationalism was Islamic religious antagonism to Christian rule.[22] Islam fosters the belief in its superiority over other religions, superiority not only spiritual, but also one to be effected in the field of battle. In Islam, there is in fact no separation between religious and secular matters, as is the case in Christianity. It is exceedingly difficult for a Muslim society to accept non-Muslim rule,[23] as became evident during the *Dervish* rebellion discussed earlier.

The issue of Greater Somalia seemed clear to all Somalis and many of those who lived in Somalia's neighbouring countries wanted to live under the jurisdiction of the Somali state. Since the boundaries were arbitrarily created by colonial powers, they questioned why there should not be boundary readjustments based on the popular will of the residents. To Somalis, the issue was simply one of the self-determination of subject peoples.[24] The Somali peoples living in Ethiopia and Kenya, however, were considered by their governments as just one of the many other minority communities living within their borders and they regarded any desire by the Somalis to break away and unite with the Somali republic as seditious.

The struggle to achieve this national goal informed the foreign policy orientation of Somalia from 1960-1969 and the two leaders in this period followed this path, albeit with different strategies. The new Somali republic assumed the responsibility, as an independent state, to pursue the goal of self-determination of all the Somali people.

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[22] See S. Touval, *Somali Nationalism: International Politics and the Drive for Unity in the Horn of Africa*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1963), p.62.
[23] Interview with Sheikh Ismail Moallim Hamud, March 21, 2007, Nairobi.
[24] See D. D. Laitin, and S. S. Samatar, *Somalia: Nation in Search of a State*, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1987), p.130.

Cold War clientilism

One other important Somali foreign policy orientation is related to Cold War clientelism. This orientation emanates from the first one because support from outside powers was necessary in order to achieve the goal of uniting all the Somali-speaking population. To achieve this goal, Somalia needed a strong army and sophisticated weaponry. While it had in the past attracted international interests due to its strategic location, at independence the configuration of the international political system had changed significantly. Not only did new world powers emerge, but these also became engaged in a Cold War.

During the Cold War, the superpowers fought proxy wars in other states and in turn many of the small and emerging states negotiated alliances with one of the superpowers. Some, like Somalia, were in a position to play on one of the superpowers' fears of the other to extract sizeable grants of military, economic and technological assistance.

Initially, after independence, the issue facing the civilian government was how to win African and world opinion on the issue of pan-Somalism. To begin with, Somalia followed the general Afro-Asian pattern of non-alignment within the UN and in its dealings with the two world power block.[25] This balance was, however, tilted in favour of the west; hence, it was to Italy, Britain and the US that the Somali government first looked for aid.[26] Several occurrences, however, precipitated the country's re-orientation towards Soviet Union and China. By late 1964, for example, it had become obvious that the initial campaign to unify all Somalia under a 'Greater Somalia" project had failed.

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[25] See I. M. Lewis, *A Modern History of the Somali: Nation and State in the Horn of Africa* 4th Ed., (Hargeisa: Btec Books, 20020), p.200.
[26] See C. Legum and B. Lee, *Conflict in the Horn of* Africa (London: Rex Collings, 1977), p.31.

During that same period, Ethiopian forces had established superiority over the Somalis in the Ogaden region and, in Kenya, the government relied on assistance from British counter insurgency experts to control the Somali insurgency in what was then the NFD. As a result, Kenya's President Jomo Kenyatta and Ethiopia's Emperor Haile Selassie signed a mutual defence agreement aimed at containing Somali aggression.[27] Ethiopia and Kenya's victories -- over the Ogaden War and the *Shifta* War respectively -- were achieved due to support from the west, which did not support or encourage the idea of "Greater Somalia." One of the explanations for this was because the west did not want to antagonize Christian Ethiopia, which was its long and trusted ally in the Horn of Africa.

The issue of the NFD, on the other hand, was critical to Somalia's foreign policy re-orientation. Initially, Britain changed its policy with regards to Kenya's independence: from proposing and supporting the idea of "Greater Somalia" to making a complete turnaround when it granted Kenya's independence and included the NFD as part of Kenya. In Somalia, popular indignation against Britain and her allies in the west found much resonance with the long history of Britain's conduct with regards to the country's affairs.

On the Somali side of the border, the SYL government, accused of not providing sufficiently strong leadership on the NFD issue and increasingly becoming unpopular for its management of home affairs, searched anxiously for some dramatic action which might restore its popularity and enhance its position in the lead-up to the upcoming

[27] See for example K. G. Adar, "Kenya-US Relations: A Recapitulation of the Patterns of Paradigmatic Conceptualization, 1960s-1990s," in M. Munene, et al., (eds.), *The United States and Africa: From Independence to the End of the Cold War* (Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers Ltd., 1995), pp.89-104:98.

elections.[28] These conditions of despair led Somalia to conclude that it could expect little from the west. The Soviet Union, for its part, was quite prepared to take advantage of such an opportunity, especially since 1961 when it granted Somalia a credit of US$53 million.[29] Without ever completely breaking its ties with the west, the SYL government re-oriented its foreign policy, leading to the official announcement in November 1963 that the Somali Republic had refused an offer of western military assistance in favour of Soviet military aid.[30] A third element of Somalia's foreign policy orientation was the conflict between pan-Africanism and pan-Arabism.

Pan-Africanism vs. Pan-Arabism

Initially, Somalia's orientation was towards black Africa.[31] Within the pan-Africanist movement, Somalia had generally found itself aligned with that group of African states which included Ethiopia, notwithstanding the serious local difficulties of the two neighbouring states. This is because although the pan-Somalia issue was clearly vital to Somali national sentiments, it could not be allowed to override the republic's other interests, especially national development. In the OAU, Somalis formulated their foreign policy in terms of their desire for self-determination. For example, President Osman's statement at the 1963 OAU Summit was a clear indication of his administration's determination to pursue self-determination for all Somalis in the Horn of

[28] See I. M. Lewis, *A Modern History of the Somali Nation and State in the Horn of Africa* 4th Ed., (Hargeisa: Btec Books, 2002), p.200.
[29] See C. Legum and B. Lee, *Conflict in the Horn of Africa*,(Rex Collings, 1977), p.32.
[30] See I. M. Lewis, *A Modern History of the Somali Nation and State in the Horn of Africa* 4th Ed., (Hargeisa: Btec Books, 2002), p.201.
[31] See C. Legum and B. Lee, *Conflict in the Horn of Africa*, (London: Rex Collings, 1977), p.31.

Africa.[32] The original 1960 Somali constitution proclaimed that the country would promote, by legal and peaceful means, the union of all Somali territories.[33]

This foreign policy orientation marooned Somalia from mainstream African politics. The OAU's principles also proved to be one of the greatest setbacks to the Somali cause as the newly independent African states strongly supported the OAU. This position was also reflected in the OAU Charter and this principle was considered sacred by most African states. As a result, Somalia's diplomatic efforts aimed at bringing the complexities of their dilemma to the world's attention were drowned by the battles in the Horn of Africa region, leading to the country's diplomatic isolation.

This was all the more apparent within the OAU,[34] since the organisation's position was upheld by countries like Britain. The Somali republic was therefore, by the end of 1963, cast as the odd man out in African affairs.[35] These occurrences were compounded by other factors which also served to reorient Somalia's foreign policy toward the Arab world.

Somalia has a long history of cultural, religious and trade ties with the Arab world – particularly the Arabian Peninsula – which lies across the Gulf of Aden. Although Somalis are not Arabs by ethnicity, they identify more with the Arabs than with their fellow Africans.[36] This identity was propelled by the pan-Arabism movement

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[32] See K. G. Adar, *Kenyan Foreign Policy Behaviour towards Somalia: 1963-1983*, Lanham, New York and London: University Press of America, 1994), p.98.
[33] See C. Geshekter, "The Death of Somalia in Historic Perspective," in H. M. Adam and R. Ford, *Mending Rips in the Sky: Options for Somali Communities in the 21st Century*, (Asmara: The Red Sea Press, Inc., 1997), pp.65-98:74.
[34] See D. D. Laitin and S. S. Samatar, *Somalia: Nation in Search of a State*, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1987), p.138.
[35] See I. M. Lewis, *A Modern History of the Somali Nation and State in the Horn of Africa* 4th Ed., (Hargeisa: Btec Books, 2002), p.199.
[36] Interview with Abdulkadir Yahya, Co-Director, Centre for Research & Dialogue (CRD), Nairobi, June 26, 2005. The late Yahya argued that the Somalis are neither Arabs nor Africans but Somalis.

championed by Egypt's Nasser, whose dream was to establish an Arab-Islamic empire whose power base would be Egypt.[37] This philosophy therefore courted Somalia to be oriented more towards the Muslim/Arab world.

Foreign policy decision-making

Among the objectives of developing states foreign policies is the desire to maintain the existence of the state, which usually entails the maintenance of the primary elite in positions of power.[38] Furthermore, in developing countries, the number and the relative influence of participants in the decision-making process vary according to the type of political regime and issue area. These differences, however, do not affect the general decision-making pattern which is dominated by executive power.[39] Somali foreign policy decision-making processes from 1960 to 1969 were dominated by the ideals of the SYL and its elites. As a result, the national assembly was very influential in decision- making mainly because it could elect the president and, by using the Assembly's secret voting system, constrain the prime minister's actions.

In order to perpetuate itself in power, the SYL tried to assuage the deep wound to Somalia pride caused by British actions and therefore sent the prime minister for a visit to India and China, which resulted in the signing of trade and aid agreements with both countries and further aligned Somalia towards Soviet Union. This action enabled the government party to increase its popularity and to win a majority of the seats in the

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[37] See J. Gabriel, "The Consequences of Nasser's Futile Dream of an Arab-Islamic Empire," *African Foreign Policy Review*, Vol. 1, No. 2., pp.43-52.
[38] See M. R. Singer, "The Foreign Policies of Small Developing States," in J. N. Rosenau, et al (eds.) World *Politics: An Introduction,* (New York: The Free Press, 1972), p.289.
[39] See A. E. Hillal and B. Korany, "A Literature Survey and a Framework for Analysis," in B. Korany and A. E. H Dessouki, *The Foreign Policies of Arab States*, (Boulder and London: Westview Press, 1984), p.5-18:16.

National Assembly elections held in March 1964.[40] The executive, on the other hand, played a crucial role in foreign policy decision- making. Mohammed Egal – with his charismatic appeal and undoubted charm – managed to assuage the deeply hostile anti-Somali sentiments of Ethiopian officials, on the one hand, and those of President Jomo Kenyatta, on the other. He thereby brought *détente* with Somalia's neighbours and with the UK.[41]

Although the patriotic favour affected the formation of the republic, the most important of all pervasive elements in Somali politics remained loyalty of the individual to his kin and clan.[42] Furthermore, by the mid 1960s, politics in the Somali republic were becoming affected by the growing fragmentation of clans and clan alliances, which led to a massive proliferation of political parties. During the competition for parliamentary seats in the 1969 election, for example, the number of parties has dramatically multiplied to more than 60, with 1,002 candidates in the running. [43] However, in spite of the fact that governmental elites had the capacity to make authoritative decisions, the government maintained consistency, especially with regards to the "Greater Somalia" issue.[44] This emanated from the views of many Somalis and the participation of the masses, including the intellectual elites, students, workers and bureaucrats, in decision-making. The fact that many Somalis were ready to sacrifice other interests for the sake of unification must therefore have led to the Somali government's decision to go to war with its neighbours.

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[40] See I. M. Lewis, *A Modern History of the Somali Nation and State in the Horn of Africa* 4th Ed., (Hargeisa: Btec Books, 2002), p.201.
[41] See J. Drysdale, *Stoics Without Pillows: A Way Forward for the Somaliland* (London: HAAN Associates Publishing, 2000), p.81.
[42] See I. M. Lewis, *A Modern History of the Somali Nation and State in the Horn of Africa* 4th Ed., (Hargeisa: Btec Books, 2002), p.166.
[43] See A. Y. Farah, "Somalia: Modern History and the End of the 1990s," in WSP International, *Rebuilding Somalia: issues and Possibilities for Puntland*, (London: HAAN Publishers, 2001), p.7-30:8.
[44] See R. Cornwell, *Somalia fourteenth time lucky?*, Occasional paper 87, Institute for Security Studies, April 2004.

Foreign Policy Behaviour

Somalia and the West (Italy and Somalia)

One of the most important western countries which Somalia interacted with was Italy, which had occupied southern Somalia as a colonial power until 1941. Although, in the 1947 peace treaty, Italy formerly renounced "all rights and title to the Italian territorial possessions in Africa"[45] it nonetheless returned in 1950, this time under a UN mandate to prepare Somalia for independence. After Somalia attained its independence in 1960, Italy retained its interest in the territory. In addition to the colonial ties, some of the factors explaining Somali-Italian relations can be traced back to this UN trusteeship relationship. Having prepared the country for independence, Italy considered itself as having a special responsibility for the future of the territory.[46] The severing of diplomatic relations between Somalia and Britain further opened up the opportunity for Italy to play a dominant role in the former's political life.[47]

Furthermore, Italy still had the prompting to play the role of a great power and this was compounded by sentimental attachment to the territory and to a desire to protect its own economic investments in the country. Even during the Cold War period, Italy was Somalia's closest ally after the USSR. This relationship was reflected in the provision of financial and technical aid, training and educational scholarships.

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[45] See S. Touval, *Somali Nationalism: International Politics and the Drive for Unity in the Horn of Africa*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1963), p.171.
[46] Ibid.
[47] See A. Q. Ali, "The Foreign Factor in the Somali Tragedy," in H. M. Adam and R. Ford, *Mending Rips in the Sky; Options for Somali Communities in the 21st Century*, (Asmara: The Red Sea Press, Inc., 1997), pp.534-563:542.

Somalia and the UK

Britain was one of the countries engaged in defending and expanding their spheres of influences in Somalia. Consequently, after Britain defeated Italy in the Horn of Africa from 1941 to 1950 and retook the previously lost territory, all Somali areas of the Horn of Africa came under the British military administration based in Mogadishu. The UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 289 on November 21, 1949, placing the former Italian colony of Somaliland under the UN Trusteeship Council.[48] Britain was left to administer British Somaliland which later merged with the former – the southern part of the country -- to form a new state: the Somali Republic.

Prior to independence, two occurrences laid the foundation for Somalia's subsequent foreign policy behaviour towards Britain. First, Britain under the Bevin proposals, had called for the formation of "Greater Somalia," hence stoking the initial fires of Pan-Somalism. In addition, it was Britain which in turn signed treaties with Ethiopia, surrendering to it the Ogaden, Haud and Reserve Area in 1948 and 1954–1955, respectively.[49] These actions not only brought about a huge outcry throughout Somalia, but also strengthened the Somali sense of unity. British-Somali relations after independence were therefore influenced by Britain's desire to maintain some dominance in the republic.

Afterwards, Britain not only provided financial assistance, but it further provided an aid mission to staff certain civil service posts and with a military mission to remain with the Somaliland scouts for a transitional period of six months. In cooperation with

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[48] See I. M. Lewis, *A Modern History of the Somali Nation and State in the Horn of Africa* 4th Ed., (Hargeisa: Btec Books, 2002), p.37.
[49] Ibid.

Italy, Britain also provided military assistance to Somalia.[50] However, Somali foreign policy behaviour towards Britain changed significantly, partly because of the NFD problem in Kenya, especially after 1962 when the special British NFD Commission determined that, despite the fact that the majority of Somalis in this region wished to join the Somali Republic, Britain should grant Kenya independence and announced that Kenya would decide on the matter.

In reaction to such a decision, the Somali National Assembly, in a vote of 74 to 14, approved a motion allowing the Somali government to break diplomatic relations with Britain. The motion stated that "the National Assembly of the Somali Republic, noting with deep regret that the foreign policy conducted by the United Kingdom damages the interests of the Somali nation, supports the decision of the government to break diplomatic relations with the United Kingdom."[51] As a result of this decision, it was estimated that Somalia lost about $3.6 million worth of aid from Britain.[52]

The break in diplomatic relations with Britain was then regarded by the world press as quite sensational as a newly-independent African state had had the gall to break relations with a former metropolitan power, also a member of the UN Security Council.[53] In effect, however, this decision led to the *Shifta* war between Kenya and Somalia. Britain's role at this time was consequently confined to training and supplying the Kenya army in its confrontation with Somalia until Prime Minister Egal's *détente* and restoration of diplomatic relations with Britain in 1967.

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[50] See S. Touval, *Somali Nationalism: International Politics and the Drive for Unity in the Horn of Africa*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1963), p.162.
[51] See K. G. Adar, *Kenya's Foreign Policy Behaviour towards Somalia: 1963-1983*, (Lanham, New York and London: University Press of America, 1994), p.97.
[52] Ibid.
[53] See J. Drysdale, *Stoics Without Pillows: A Way Forward for the Somaliland*, (London: HAAN Associates Publishing, 2000), p.81.

Somalia and the United States

Since the founding of the country in 1789 to the end of the Cold War, USA foreign policy towards Africa was marked by indifference, at worst, and neglect at best.[54] Accordingly, a consistent axiom of US foreign policy has been that the country has had no permanent friends or enemies, but only permanent interests – a line of argument that is supported by the evolution of US policy towards the Horn of Africa. In this case, when the USA could benefit geo-strategically by engaging or disengaging with one or another country, it took necessary steps to do so. Moreover, US engagement in the region was dependent largely on its foreign policy needs with countries outside of Africa.

Somali-American relations have their foundations in the fact that the US participated, after World War II, in the deliberations on the future of the former Italian colonies. During this period, the USA, in its attitude toward Somali nationalists, was consistently friendly. In the late 1940s, this was clearly reflected in the general tenor of the remarks of the USA representatives on the four-power commission conducting the investigation for the former Italian colonies.[55] Subsequently, during the ten-year period when Somalia was under trusteeship, American goodwill showed itself in the provision of various assistance programmes. For example, American aid was increased after the attainment of independence and the creation of the Somali Republic.[56] The Americans furthermore briefly attempted, from 1960 to 1964, to buttress western presence by

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[54] See R. Lyob and E. I. Keller, "US Policy in the Horn," in D. A. Bekoe, (ed.) *Grappling with a Difficult Legacy in East Africa and the Horn: Confronting Challenges to Good Governance* (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2006), pp.101-125:101.

[55] Ibid.

[56] See S. Touval, *Somali Nationalism: International Politics and the Drive for Unity in the Horn of Africa*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1963), p.172.

helping to train and equip the Somali police force.[57] The USA was also the largest source of non-military aid to Somalia.[58]

This relationship of alignment with the west, however, came at odds due to several reasons. First, while developing friendly relations with Somalia, the US also maintained close relations with Ethiopia, a country that was the cornerstone of US foreign policy towards the Horn of Africa. Although the USA and Ethiopia had diplomatic relations since 1903, and as a result concluded treaties of arbitration and conciliation as far back as 1929, a close relationship between the two countries did not emerge until after World War II. At that time, the Ethiopian emperor had determined that events like the Italian occupation should not be repeated and did his best to secure the close support of the USA. A rising superpower, the USA, since the early 1940s, coveted a base at Asmara in Eritrea, the Kagnew Station along the Red Sea, where it could establish a link for a worldwide radio communications network.[59]

This partnership was formalized when the US and Ethiopia signed a treaty of friendship and economic relations. Two years later, May 1953, the two countries signed two additional agreements: the Mutual Defense Assistance Agreement and the Agreement for the Utilization of Defense Installations within the Empire of Ethiopia. Following these agreements, the US in effect guaranteed Ethiopia security and assistance in military equipment, training and communication at a facility in Asmara. Ethiopia also benefited from the presence and activity of the US Military Assistance Advisory Group

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[57] See C. Legum and B. Lee, *Conflict in the Horn of Africa,*(London: Rex Collings, 1977), p.9.
[58] See M. H. Mukhtar, *Historical Dictionary of Somalia: African Historical Series*, (Maryland Oxford: Scarecrow Press, 2003), p.253.
[59] See R. Lyob and E. J. Keller, "US Policy in the Horn," in D. A. Bekoe, (ed.) *Grappling with a Difficult Legacy in East Africa and the Horn: Confronting Challenges to Good Governance,* (Boulder and London: Lynne Reinner Publishers, 2006), 101-125:102.

(MAAG) established in 1954 to work with the Ethiopian military which was then down to the battalion level.[60]

Furthermore, from 1960 to 1964, a series of secret agreements between the two governments resulted in the modernization and dramatic expansion of the Ethiopian military.[61] The USA assistance helped Ethiopia advance its military and political influences in the Horn of Africa region. In fact, one of the stated purposes of this assistance was to prepare Ethiopia's defences for the assumed Somali threat, especially since Somalia had raised its irredentist claims.[62]

A second factor that altered Somali-American relations is that, while it was considerably arming Ethiopia, the US was reluctant to do the same in Somalia. While the Somalia was concerned about its military weakness relative to its principal adversary, Ethiopia, its appeal for American assistance in establishing and equipping an army did not bear fruit. This was largely due to the adamant objections of Haile Selassie to any such deal. Somalia's disappointment was greatly augmented by the knowledge that Ethiopia had received substantial American military assistance.

The third factor precipitating coldness of foreign policy relations was that Somalia did not gain western support for its "Greater Somalia" ideal. These various factors not only led to anti-American demonstrations in Somalia, but also bred disastrous results when Ethiopian forces clashed with Somalia's, leading the latter to turn to Soviet Union for help. As a result, Somalia lost western military assistance valued at US$6.5

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[60] Ibid.
[61] Ibid, p.103.
[62] Ibid.

million in favour of Soviet military aid to the tune of US$11 million, as announced by Prime Minister Sharma'arke in November 1963.[63]

Somalia and the Soviet Union

The Soviet Union's attitude toward Somali nationalism was not marked at first by friendliness. As a result, the Soviets had reservations towards the four power commission's report which criticized the SYL's political programme, especially after the Soviet Union was friendly toward Somalia but made no special effort to court Somali nationalism.[64] Close relations with the Soviet Union, however, began after Somalia gained independence. Despite Somalia's diminished size and virtual absence of worthwhile economic resources or even a good port, the Soviet Union granted Somalia the largest per capita credit given to a foreign state: a total of US$53 million.

After that point, Soviet interest in Somalia intensified. For example, a Soviet governmental delegation visited Somalia in April 1961 and, in May Prime Minister Sharma'arke travelled to Soviet Union accompanied by several members of the cabinet and senior officials. The result of such visits was an agreement under which Somalia was to receive loans and credits amounting to US$50 million, and agreements concerning Soviet technical assistance, commercial relations, and cultural cooperation.[65]

Furthermore, Somalia received a US$32 million loan, which was later increased to US$55 million, to equip its army. In 1963, after Somalia approached it for military aid, the Soviet Union became the country's leading military patron. During the civilian

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[63] See I. M. Lewis, *A Modern History of the Somali: Nation and State in the Horn of Africa* 4th Ed., (Hargeisa: Btect Books, 2002), p.201.
[64] See S. Touval, *Somali Nationalism: International Politics and the Drive for Unity in the Horn of Africa*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1963), p.175.
[65] See *New York Times*, June 17, 1961 quoted in S. Touval, *Somali Nationalism: International Politics and the Drive for Unity in the Horn of Africa*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1963), p.176.

regimes, the Soviet Union furnished light arms, artillery tanks, armoured personnel carriers, and MIG-15 and MIG-17 fighter jets. In addition, the Soviets provided thousands of Somali students, pilots, officers and technicians with training and ideological instruction in Soviet universities and military academies. The Soviets also helped to build factories, such as a meat processing plant in Mogadishu and a fish tannery in Las Qoray.[66]

There are various factors explaining these warm relations and alignment. First, Somalia was faced with a security dilemma because of the balance of power that was tilted in favour of its erstwhile enemy, Ethiopia. Alignment with the Soviet Union was therefore seen as necessary to ensure the country's security. Second, the Soviet Union was interested in the strategic location of Somalia in the Horn of Africa as this would give it the upper hand over its enemy in naval warfare. Third, the civilian administration was desperate to pacify domestic anti-western sentiments. Fourth, the Soviet Union outsmarted western powers by offering the highest amount of military aid in order to entice Somalia. Finally, Somalia's rapprochement with the Soviet Union was due to its disappointment with the USA which refused to supply arms to Somalia while supporting Ethiopia. Consequently, the quick response to Somalia's dilemma was received favourably by the Soviet Union.[67] Prior to the Soviet's clever move from 1962 to 1963, several US-led Western powers had offered Somalia packages for arms but the Somali leadership declined.

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[66] See M. H. Mukhtar, *Historical Dictionary of Somalia: African Historical Series*, (Maryland Oxford: Scarecrow Press, 2003), p.241.
[67] See for example S. Touval, *Somali Nationalism: International Politics and the Drive for Unity in the Horn of Africa*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1963).

Somalia and Its Neighbours

The Somali constitution explicitly challenged the existence of its borders with Ethiopia and Kenya, and the whole of coastal Djibouti. The foreign policy behaviour of Somali governments towards countries in the Horn of Africa is therefore analysed in the context of its 'Greater Somalia' policy which led to hostile and belligerent relations with its neighbours.

Somalia and Kenya

Although Somalia contended for control of the NFD, an area covering 102,000 square miles, its foreign policy behaviour prior to Kenya's independence was one of negotiation. At that time, Kenya's nationalists were opposed to any adjustment of borders. Somali diplomats therefore felt that if they offered Kenya's nationalist leaders reason and hospitality, it would earn the people of the NFD the right to self-determination.[68] Frequent delegations of clan elders visited Mogadishu to seek support before the National Assembly responded to the requests for help by passing a motion, in November 1961, welcoming the union of the NFD with the Republic of Somalia and urging the government to press for this by all possible means. Subsequently, the government strongly backed the NFD delegation attending the Kenya constitutional conference held at Lancaster House in February 1962.[69]

Further negotiations were arranged by the UK government at a conference held in Rome, on August 25, 1963, between the governments of Britain, Kenya and Somalia where Somalia proposed that the NFD area should be placed under a special

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[68] See D. D. Laitin and S. S. Samatar, *Somalia: Nation in Search of a State*, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1987), p.134.
[69] See I. M. Lewis, *A Modern History of the Somali Nation and State in the Horn of Africa* 4th Ed., op. cit., p.180.

administration.[70] The same issue was also discussed at the UN General Assembly where the Somali delegate reaffirmed his government's position on the issue of the NFD, stating that since it was the United Kingdom that had annexed the NFD to Kenya, there was an inescapable obligation for that government to reverse the unlawful usurpation of territory of the NFD.[71] In July 1962, the Somali government also invited leading members of Kenya's two African nationalist parties, Jomo Kenyatta from KANU and Ronald Ngala from KADU, to Mogadishu for informal talks.

Although this pursuit of peaceful diplomacy with Kenya can be linked to the desire to adhere to the Somali constitution which advocated for the achievement of the unification of the Somali territories by legal and pacific means, the relations between the two countries worsened when Kenya gained independence and the NFD became the country's North Eastern Province. Immediately after independence, hostilities between the two countries escalated, with Mogadishu indirectly supporting Somali guerrillas that were dubbed *Shiftas,* or bandits, by the Kenyan government and at the same time containing them with help from the UK.

The Osman-Hussein administration of 1964-1967 continued with the "Greater Somalia" policy and, as a result, pursued the NFD issue through the platforms provided by the OAU and the non-aligned movement (NAM). The OAU rejected such a policy through a 1964 OAU Resolution, adopted in Cairo, which explicitly reaffirmed the maintenance of borders as acquired at independence. Similarly, the NAM Conference

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[70] See "Final Communiqué of the British Delegation," quoted in K. G. Adar, *Kenya's Foreign Policy Behaviour towards Somalia: 1963-1983,*(Lanham, New York and London: University Press of America, 1994), p.154.

[71] See 1237th Plenary Meeting, Eighteenth Session, General Debates, United Nations General Assembly, UN Doc APV.1237, 1963, p.6.; quoted in K. G. Adar, *Kenyan Foreign Policy Behaviour Towards Somalia: 1963-1983,* (Lanham, New York and London: University Press of America, 1994), p.101.

held in Cairo in October 1964 reinforced the OAU's decision – a move that was strongly opposed by Somalis since it jeopardized Somalia's legitimate right to seek self-determination for all Somalis.[72]

However, when Mohammed Haji Ibrahim Egal became Prime Minister a change of policy occurred as he pursued *détente* with Somalia's neighbours.[73] At an OAU Summit in Kinshasa, from 11 to 14 September 1967, Kenya and Somalia signed an agreement to honour the OAU ideals and respect each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity.[74] This was followed by the October 28, 1967 Arusha Agreement signed by the two countries which led to the normalization of relations between Kenya and Somalia after the latter renounced its claims over the NFD.[75]

Somalia and Ethiopia

In spite of the similarities between the Ogaden region and the NFD, several reasons explain the exertion of special energy by successive governments of the Somali Republic to help liberate the Ogaden.[76] First, the border between Ethiopia and Somalia was not delineated clearly; second, if there was any delineation of the border between the two countries, it could change the clan configuration of domestic power; and, finally, the Somalis in the Ogaden region had been constantly humiliated by successive Ethiopian governments Hostilities, therefore, occurred between Ethiopia and Somalia at an early

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[72] See K. G. Adar, *Kenyan Foreign Policy Behaviour towards Somalia: 1963-1983*, (Lanham, New York and London: University Press of America, 1994), p.106.
[73] See P. Woodward, *The Horn of Africa: Politics and International Relations*, (London and New York: Tauris Academic Studies, 1996), p.126; See also Somalia: Background Note, US Department of State, Bureau of African Affairs, March 2006, p.4.
[74] Ibid.
[75] Ibid.
[76] See D. D. Laitin and S. S. Samatar, *Somalia: Nation in Search of a State*, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1987), p.136.

stage and led to the formation of the Western Somalia Liberation Group (WSLG) in the Ogaden in 1961.

The Somalia-backed WSLG aimed at seizing Ogaden from Ethiopia and open hostilities escalated into an all-out war in 1964 in the Ogaden. At the same time, Ethiopia's other rebel leaders lived in Mogadishu while Somalis did nothing to root them out.[77] Serious diplomatic clashes also occurred between Ethiopia's Haile Selassie and Aden Abdullahi of Somalia when the OAU was formed and its Charter signed in Addis Ababa on May 25, 1963.[78] When the war broke out, the OAU tried to create a climate conducive to peaceful negotiation, but it failed.

In its last year, however, the Somali civilian government (although disputed) renounced its claims to previously contested regions of Ethiopia, just as it did with Kenya.[79] With so little to show as a result of the bold pursuit of the Somali cause by his predecessors, Prime Minister Egal decided to see what might be achieved through the use of more conciliatory diplomacy, which included halting support for guerrillas and their encouragement through radio propaganda.[80]

Consequences of Détente

While not completely abandoning the cause of self determination for Somalis, the government's policy of *détente* with Kenya and Ethiopia was a positive step towards peaceful resolution of conflicts. The other positive result, emerging from the Kenyan and Ethiopian side, was that the two countries explicitly recognized the existence of a

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[77] See J. M. Ghalib, *The Cost of Dictatorship; The Somali Experience*, op. cit., p.109.; See also D. Ottaway and M. Ottaway, *Ethiopia: Empire in Revolution* (New York and London: African Publishing Company, 1978), p.163.
[78] See J. M. Ghalib, J. M., The *Cost of Dictatorship: The Somali Experience*, op. cit., p.106.
[79] See "Somalia: Background Note," US Department of State, Bureau of African Affairs, March 2006, p.4.
[80] Ibid.

territorial dispute with Somalia and, as a result, expressed their willingness to try to find ways of solving it.[81] It also gave Somalis hope for a better deal in an expanded East African Community (EAC).[82] These developments led to resumption of diplomatic relations with Kenya and with Britain. Finally, the three countries' diplomatic visits began in order to consolidate the peaceful environment created by Somalia's new policy.

The *détente* policy, however, also had its negative consequences. For example, although Prime Minister Egal claimed that his government's new diplomacy did not make any concessions to Ethiopia or Kenya, it indeed represented a new understanding of the Somali point of view, particularly in Addis Ababa and in Nairobi, where it was tempting to interpret the new Somali policy as one of capitulation. This view was also adopted by the Somali premier's opponents in Mogadishu, where demonstrators accused him of being a sell-out.[83] Similarly, the move towards reconciliation with Ethiopia made many Somalis – including the army – furious. Prime Minister Egal's reconciliation efforts toward the region, particularly Ethiopia, are argued to be part of the principal factors that provoked the October 21st 1969 bloodless coup d'etat.[84]

Somalia and Djibouti

Prior to its independence, two referendums, one in 1958 and the other in 1967, were organised by the French to determine the future of the colony. In the hope of incorporating this territory into a "Greater Somalia," Somali foreign policy behaviour

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[81] See K. G. Adar, *Kenya's Foreign Policy Behaviour towards Somalia: 1963-1983,* (Lanham, New York and London: University of America, 1994), p.122.
[82] See P. Woodward, *The Horn of Africa: Politics and International Relations,* (London and New York: Tauris Academic Studies, 1996), p.126.
[83] See I. M. Lewis, *A Modern History of the Somali Nation and State in the Horn of Africa* 4th Ed., (Hargeisa: Btec Books, 2002), p.203.
[84] Interview with Ambassador Hussein Ali Dualeh, former Somali ambassador to Kenya and to Uganda, Nairobi, September 11, 2001.

towards the colony was one of involvement in, and support for its struggle for independence.[85] In the May 1967 referendum, for example, fearful of French interference, the Somali Republic called upon the UN to provide observers for the referendum.[86] The Somali government also used its media outlets, both print and electronic, mainly the radio, to point out French atrocities and irregularities and to influence the residents of the French colony to vote for independence.[87] The French conducted an unsupervised election and used the tactics of divide and rule to orchestrate an endorsement of French continuance of control and rejection of outright independence before 1977.

Somalia in the OAU and the Arab world

In June 1961, Prime Minister Sharma'arke told parliament that:

> "while acknowledging its traditional friendly ties, the Somali Republic wished to establish relations with the largest possible number of independent countries and to remain outside any bloc or political coalition, thus confirming as the goals of its international activity the maintenance of peace and respect for the neutrality principle, co-operation and solidarity among countries, and in particular among the African and Muslim nations."[88]

He further said that the new government placed above anything else, not only in thought but also in action, the intention of achieving the unification of the Somali territories by legal and pacific means.[89] This set the pace for Somalia's pan-African

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[85] See J. M. Ghalib, *The Cost of Dictatorship: The Somali Experience,* (New York: Lilian Barber Press Inc., 1995), p.114.
[86] See M. H. Mukhtar, *Historical Dictionary of Somalia: African Historical Series,* (Maryland Oxford: Scarecrow Press, 2003), p.76.
[87] See S. Touval, *Somali Nationalism: International Politics and the Drive for Unity in the Horn of Africa,* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1963), p.138.
[88] See *The Somali* News, 25 August 1961.
[89] Ibid.

endeavours and as a result, it was represented at the signing of the Charter in Addis Ababa on May 25, 1963.

In the period 1960-1967, Somalia used the OAU as an arena for the pursuit of its "Greater Somalia" policy, as was evident from statements by President Osman and the Somali minister for foreign affairs. The OAU, however, firmly held the principle of respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each state, denying, for example, Somalia's claims for control of the NFD.

Following the *Shifta* war of 1963, a cease-fire agreement between Somalia and Kenya was finally reached in Khartoum, Sudan, on March 30, 1964. Again, when border disputes flared up between Somalia and Ethiopia in 1968, Somalia appealed to the OAU to send a fact finding mission, but Ethiopia denied the Somali claims. Similarly, the OAU Council of Ministers meeting in Lagos, Nigeria, adopted a resolution which called for negotiations between Kenya and Somali due to the *Shifta* activities.[90] At the July 1964 OAU conference in Cairo, the OAU reaffirmed the strict respect by all members of the organisation to the principles laid down in paragraph 3 of the OAU Charter. In practice, the OAU therefore continued to be an impediment to Somalia's ambitions.

Indeed, the Somali national assembly subsequently passed a motion rejecting the 1964 OAU decision. The motion stated that the OAU resolution regarding the borders was in no way binding on the Somali Republic or applicable to the disputes which the Somali Republic had with Kenya and Ethiopia. Somalia indeed claimed that such

[90] See Resolutions and Recommendations of the Second Extra Ordinary Session of the Council of Ministers, Organization of African Unity, Dar e Salaam, 12-15 February 1964, OAU Mimeographed Texts, February 1964, OAU Doc Ecm/Res3(11) quoted in K. G. Adar, *Kenya's Foreign Policy Behaviour Towards Somalia: 1963-1983*, (Lanham, New York and London: University of America, 1994), p.101.

disputes could only be satisfactorily settled by recognition of the right to self determination of the Somali people and the denunciation of all forms of colonialism.[91] The result of the Somali claims vis-à-vis the OAU's position led to Somalia's diplomatic isolation.[92] The OAU mechanism was, however, crucial during the Egal era of détente, since it was under its ambit that the Arusha Declaration was negotiated and signed.

On the Arab front, Somalia, which was firmly part of Nasser's agenda of expansionism, received considerable aid from Egypt, which viewed it as an Islamic ally. Along with Egypt, other Arab and Muslim countries like Syria and Iraq also provided scholarships to pre- and post-independence Somalia. Egypt also established schools in Somalia from primary to secondary levels during the Italian-administered UN trusteeship period. After independence, therefore, Somalia looked to the Arab world for diplomatic and economic support.[93] However, Pan-Somalism tended to undermine support for Pan-Arabism, often rendering Somalia moderate in its stand on Arab nationalism. Egypt was also placed in a difficult position by pan-Somalism, as it was forced, for instance at OAU conferences, to adopt a position of uneasy neutrality as it did not want to commit itself on the Somali side.[94]

Conclusions

It is evident that Somalia was active in the foreign policy arena during the civilian regimes by pursuing a foreign policy of 'Greater Somalia,' which consequently led to

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[91] See "Somalia to Ignore OAU Frontiers" *East African Standard*, Nairobi, October 1964, quoted in K. G. Adar, *Kenyan Foreign Policy Behaviour Towards Somalia:,1963-1983,* (Lanham, New York and London: University of America, 1994), p.106.

[92] See D. D. Laitin and S. S. Samatar, *Somalia: Nation in Search of a State,*(Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1987), p.199.

[93] See M. H. Mukhtar, *Historical Dictionary of Somalia: African Historical Series*, (Maryland Oxford: Scarecrow Press, 2003), p.40.

[94] See I. M. Lewis, *A Modern History of the Somali Nation and State in the Horn of Africa* 4th Ed., (Hargeisa: Btec Books, 2002), p.199.

hostilities between the country and its neighbours: Kenya and Ethiopia. This policy was also pursued within the OAU, leading to Somalia's diplomatic isolation. Somali foreign policy was also externally-oriented in order to attract military and economic aid from the west, Soviet Union and from the Arab/Muslim world. These external actors also had various motives and intentions in their interaction with Somalia and hence contributed – in one way or the other – to escalation and de-escalation of the conflicts in the Horn of Africa region.

CHAPTER FIVE
SOMALI FOREIGN POLICY, 1969-1990

Introduction

The previous chapter discussed Somali foreign policy from 1960 to 1969, the period from independence until the end of the two civilian regimes. In this period, Somalia's foreign policy orientation was basically influenced by its historical legacy, including Pan-Somali nationalism and Cold War politics. In turn, the relationships between Somalia and its neighbours were hostile due to the former's aggressiveness in attempting to reclaim 'lost' territories. As a result, Somalia was isolated in the African continent.

Initially, Somalia was allied to the west due to colonial ties, but leaned towards the east in the latter years of the civilian administrations. The last civilian regime had, however, improved its diplomatic relations with its neighbours through a policy of *détente*. This chapter will discuss Somali foreign policy from 1969 to 1990, the period of the 21-year military rule.

Background

In the 1968 national assembly elections, Abdirashid Ali Sharma'arke's party won an overwhelming majority. There were allegations, however, that the elections were rigged and, as a result, he became very unpopular. President Sharma'arke appointed Mohammed Ibrahim Egal as the Prime Minister whose government took a peaceful approach to solving crises with its neighbours. Based on the reality on the ground at the time, particularly the superiority of Somalia's antagonists – notably Kenya and Ethiopia who had recently signed a defence pact – and the country's isolation from most African

countries, the Somali government also sought a policy of *détente* with Ethiopia and Kenya. This approach was, however, not well received at home and President Sharma'arke was assassinated on October 15, 1969. On October 21, 1969, a bloodless *coup d'etat* led to the formation of a military government under a Supreme Revolutionary Council (SRC) chaired by Siyad Barre. Although few Somalis relished the prospect of military rule, this development was received as a welcome alternative to the disappointments of civilian rule, particularly their pacifist foreign policy which many Somalis interpreted as unpatriotic.

The first phase of Gen. Barre's military rule, roughly up to 1974, was characterized as a period of concentration on internal problems: namely the focus of local development and the consolidation of the regime's authority.[1] During that period, Barre's authoritarian regime enjoyed a degree of popular support largely because it acted with a degree of decisiveness not displayed by the civilian governments of the 1960s. Even the 1970 coup attempt failed to affect the stability of the government.[2]

The fact that Barre's military coup was bloodless demonstrated the lack of support for the previous regime. There was no shortage of areas to be capitalized on as far as the misdeeds of that regime were concerned. Unlike the previous civilian regime, Barre's first government consisted of experienced men of integrity and intellectuals, whose careful appointment immediately paved the way for the restoration of public confidence in the day to day handling of national issues. Barre vowed to eliminate rampant corruption and to restore security and stability and, on this basis, called for

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[1] See M. H. Mukhtar, *Historical Dictionary of Somalia: African Historical Dictionary Series*, No. 87 (Maryland Oxford: Scarecrow Press, 2003), p.226.
[2] Interview with Ambassador Hussein Ali Dualeh, former Somali ambassador to Kenya and Uganda, Hargeisa, 'Somaliland,' March 7, 2004.

public support for a wide range of programmes of reconstruction based on self-reliance in order to solve the country's socio-economic ills. There was a genuine and positive spontaneous response across the country which consolidated his power base for increasingly totalitarian rule.[3] This background laid the foundation for Barre's foreign policy orientation and decision-making process – which included making Somalia a socialist country with personalized decision-making processes.

Domestic Environment

Geography and Population

Under the military regime, the superpowers continued to show interest in the country as they considered it to be of great strategic value. Similarly, as Somalia still had few natural resources to use for its socio-economic growth and military development, its foreign policy was at times tailored to attract foreign aid. Its location also affected its relations with its neighbours. For example, Ethiopia and Somalia's respective interests in colonial Djibouti had an impact on that country, on Somalia and on the Horn of Africa as a whole. As a result, the two countries had a difficult relationship which led to an arms race, prompting dependence on external actors for armaments and military training.

Prior to the civil war, Somalia had an estimated population of about eight to ten million people. Since, this population was considerably small; the country could not produce enough wealth to generate power capabilities, which reinforced its external orientation and quest for external support. In turn, the size of the Somali population and its effect on its foreign policy also had an impact in terms of public opinion: for example,

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[3] See J. M. Ghalib, *The Cost of Dictatorship: The Somali Experience* (New York: Lillian Barber Press Inc, 1995), p.120.

there was a long suppressed public antagonism and resentment felt towards Somalia's official friends. This brought about an anticipated breach with the Soviet Union and her satellites, especially Cuba, riding on a wave of popularity for the Mogadishu government.[4]

On the other hand, the Somali public still had a desire to be united with their brothers in the Ogaden and NFD regions, and this was stimulated to a large extent by Somali literacy. This led to Gen. Barre's decision to invade Ogaden in order to regain popularity and legitimacy.[5] The anticipated support that such a course of action would gather was a factor in Barre's decision to employ all available capabilities in order to gain credibility in the eyes of other states.

Economic and military capabilities

Somalia is a land of sparse rainfall where more than half of the population consists of pastoralists and agro pastoralists who raise camels, cattle, sheep and goats. A small number relies on fishing, while the rest are urban dwellers. As such, livestock exports to neighbouring Arab countries and to Italy have provided the mainstay of the modern Somali economy. Banana plantations established around the two main southern rivers, the Shabelle and the Jubba, have provided the second important export to those same states. In 1990, agriculture contributed about 65 per cent of the country's GDP, of which livestock was responsible for just over 50 per cent, crops for 38 percent and

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[4] See I. M. Lewis, *Modern History of the Somali: Nation and State in the Horn of Africa* 4th Ed., (Hargeisa: Btec Books, 2002), p.235.
[5] See H. M. Adam, et al, *Removing Barricades in Somalia: Option for Peace and Rehabilitation* (Washington, DC.: USIP, 1998), p.3.

forestry and fisheries for about 1 per cent.[6] The country's poor economic performance is attributable to the nationalization of the commercial sector and military commandism in a socialist fashion.

The implications of this weak economy were numerous. First, the economic infrastructure was incapable of satisfying the economic needs of the population, thus increasing the need for foreign aid.[7] The desire to satisfy individual and group needs indeed generated pressures on political leaders to look outside their borders to obtain the means to do so. Consequently, the country's foreign policy was tailored to achieve this, mainly through reliance on the Soviet Union, Italy and various Arab/Muslim states, among others. Secondly, as the economy of a state is fundamental to its capability,[8] that of the Somali state was limited.

After Somalia gained independence in 1960, its military was 5,000 troops strong, largely under Soviet patronage, but later expanded to around 23,000, and then to 37,000 on the eve of the Ogaden war. Similarly, the country's army swelled from about 32,000 in 1977 to 65,000 in 1987[9] and as Siyad Barre continued to increase the strength of the army reached a staggering 65,000 by 1990.[10] Observers argue that it had increased to 120,000 in 1982; this is larger than the Nigerian army, a country of over 100 million people. Barre therefore built an army which his neighbours had to reckon with. As a

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[6] See H. M. Adam, "Somalia: Personal Rule, Military Rule and Militarism," in E. Hutchful and A. Bathily, *Military and Militarism in Africa*, (Dakar: CODESERIA, 1998), p.359.
[7] See A. E. H. Dessouki and B. Korany, "A Literature Survey and a Framework for Analysis," in B. Korany and A. E. H. Dessouki, *The Foreign Policies of Arab States* (Boulder and London: Westview Press, 1984), pp.5-18:14.
[8] See K. R. Legg and J. F. Morrisson, "The Formulation of Foreign Policy Objectives," in R. Little, and M. Smith, Perspectives *in World Politics* (eds.) 2nd Edition (London and New York: Routledge, 1991), p.62.
[9] See R. Lyob and E. J. Keller, "US Policy in the Horn," in D. A. Bekoe, *Grappling with a Difficult Legacy in East Africa and the Horn: Confronting Challenges to Good Governance* (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2006), pp.101-125:101.
[10] Interview with Abdirahman Moallim Abdullahi, former colonel in the Somali National Army, Nairobi, April 22, 2005.

result, it was no longer possible for the Ethiopians to boast, as the late Gen. Aman Andom once did, that they could march to Mogadishu in a day.[11]

Policies of arms acquisition have a great influence on foreign policies, often leading to war as militarization can entail an offensive external doctrine.[12] The existence of large armies may entice decision-makers to use the military as a predominant component of their foreign policy.[13] In the case of Somalia, this large army was a potential instrument to achieve the government's objectives of Somali nationalism. It not only led to the increased strength of Somalia relative to the rest of the countries in the Horn of Africa, but it also led to an increased arms race with its main adversary, Ethiopia, leading to a balance of power in its favour. Somali analysts argue that this must have influenced the Somali government's decision to attack Ethiopia in 1977.[14]

However, the Somali army was not only intended to shield the country against external threats and to protect its territorial integrity; it was also a symbol of national independence – as is the case of many developing countries[15] – and an embodiment of the nation's dignity. Although the Somali government failed in its attempts to win the Ogaden war with Ethiopia, there was a feeling that the country could still field one of the

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[11] See C. Legum and B. Lee, *Conflict in the Horn of Africa* (London: Rex Collings, 1977), p.32.
[12] See J. D. Fearon, "Domestic Policies, Foreign Policy, and The Theories of International Relations," *Annual Review of Political Science*, 1998, pp.289-313:302.
[13] See A. E. H. Dessouki and B. Korany, "A Literature Survey and a Framework for Analysis," in B. Korany and A. E. H. Dessouki, *The Foreign Policies of Arab State,* (Boulder and London: Westview Press, 1984), pp. 5-18:14.
[14] Interview with Ambassador Hussein Ali Duale, former Somali Ambassador to Kenya and Uganda, Nairobi, September 11, 2001. Amb. Duale argues that he wrote a confidential policy cable back to Mogadishu advising the government against the Ogaden war and that he was recalled back to Mogadishu, the capital where he was re-deployed to the battlefront in the Ogaden region.
[15] Ibid.

best armies in Africa.[16] Furthermore, the army was also used to maintain the country's internal security, by waging war against armed rebel groups challenging the military rule.

Political structure

The first few years of military rule in Somalia were as charged as the period before and immediately after independence. General Barre and the Supreme Revolutionary Council (SRC) – which originally consisted of 25 members – received a tumultuous welcome. The Council members, and the entire army, were seen as heroes who had left the barracks to save the nation. This feeling was reinforced by the trials of civilian politicians, by the new and inflated rhetoric of nationalistic statism, by the selection of an official orthography for the Somali language, and the subsequent massive campaign of adult literacy.[17]

The SRC banned political parties, abolished parliament and suspended the constitution in the name of radical change, according to Marxist precepts. As such, the SRC adopted, in October 1970, what it referred to as "scientific socialism" and declared Somalia a socialist country. The First Charter of the Revolution vested the SRC with all the functions previously performed by the President of the Republic, the Parliament, the Council of Ministers and the Supreme Court combined. Though several key ministries were held by military officers who were members of the SRC, there were also "civilian secretaries of state" who formed a cabinet of ministers called the Council of the

[16] See for example, H. M. Adam, et al, *Removing Barricades in Somalia: Options for Peace and Rehabilitation*, (Washington, D.C.: USIP, 1998), p.4.
[17] See A. I. Samatar, "Under Siege: Blood, Power and the Somali State," in P. Anyang Nyong'o, *Arms and Daggers in the Heart of Africa: Studies on Internal Conflicts* (Nairobi: African Academy of Sciences, 1993), pp.67-100: 85.

Secretaries of State (CSS), which also reported to the SRC.[18] Although the SRC-led government promised to end corruption, eliminate clanism, eradicate hunger and provide an efficient government, the euphoria of the military coup began to wane in the mid-1970s. By then, it had become obvious that the SRC was not intent on restoring democracy as they promised, but would instead give themselves more concrete powers and privileges.

In 1976, Gen. Barre formed a Soviet-style single party, the Somali Revolutionary Socialist Party (SRSP), and assumed the title of Secretary-General of the party and Chairman of the *Politburo* of the party composed of five members. As a result, the SRC dissolved itself and handed its powers to the SRSP. In 1979, the Somali government introduced a draft constitution which institutionalized both the military junta's apparatus and practices and the SRSP as the only legitimate party in the country. The draft constitution was approved in a referendum in which the government claimed to have received more than 99 per cent approval rate from the electorate. This was followed by parliamentary elections where members were nominated by the *Politburo*, approved by the SRSP's Central Committee and elected as a single list of uncontested candidates. The National Assembly, in turn, elected Gen. Barre as President and this process was repeated every four years.[19]

This government structure in Somalia implied a number of foreign policy constraints and opportunities. Personalized rule was crucial in decisions such as going to war with Ethiopia in 1977, joining the Arab League and engaging in a policy of *détente*

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[18] See M. H. Mukhtar, *Historical Dictionary of Somalia: African Historical Dictionary*, (Maryland Oxford: Scarecrow Press, 2003), p.243.

[19] Ibid, p.237, See also M. A. Jama, "The Destruction of the Somali State: Causes, Costs and Lessons," in H. M. Adam and R. Ford, *Mending Rips in the Sky: Options for Somalia Communities in the 21st Century* (Asmara: Red Sea Press Inc, 1997), pp.237-254:240.

with neighbours. The military regime was also grappling with the issue of legitimacy and lack of public support. The link between foreign policy and domestic policy was therefore glaring as the government conducted its foreign policy for the achievement of its domestic objectives. It indeed invaded Ogaden in an attempt to mobilize popular support through manipulating the surviving elements of the military regime's version of pan-Somali nationalism.[20]

Foreign policy orientation

Since foreign policy decisions do not seem to change much when the national leadership shifts to the hands of the military,[21] military officers appear to set their nation's international course according to much the same criteria of national interest as civilians. The SRC pledged to maintain pan-Somalism and to follow a non-aligned foreign policy.[22] Non-alignment, as a concept, was originally adopted by countries whose governments did not feel that the conflict between the Soviet Union and the west concerned them and as a result refused to take sides. In that sense, this course of action was merely a slightly different version of classical neutrality.[23] Non-alignment was, however, mere rhetoric in most African countries as the Barre regime aligned itself first with the Soviet Union and then with the USA. It was able to switch from one to the other rival power as a way of maintaining itself. This mainly arose because, during the Cold

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[20] See for example, WSP International, *Rebuilding Somaliland: Issues and Possibilities* (Asmara: The Red Sea Press, Inc., 2005), p.11.
[21] See H. S. Biennen, "The Role of The Military in Foreign Policy," in J. F. William and H. H. Biennen (eds.), *Arms and Africa* (New haven and London: Yale University Press, 1985), p.157.
[22] See M. H. Mukhtar, *Historical Dictionary of Somalia: African Historical Dictionary*, (Maryland Oxford: Scarecrow Press, 2003), p.243.
[23] See T. W. Scott, "The Third World and the Conflict of Ideologies," in T. W. Scott, (ed.) *The Third World Premises of US Policy* (San Francisco: ICS, 1978), p.13.

War, both the US and the Soviet Union vied for influence and control over the country in the light of its strategic location along oil routes from the Persian Gulf.[24]

Pan-Somalism

When Siyad Barre came to power, he declared that his government would pursue a policy of détente. Referring to Somalia's relations with its neighbours, the leader once said in a speech: "we are determined as ever to come together with our friends at the round table to reach solutions honourable and satisfactory for all."[25] Although, in theory, this meant that Somalia was to pursue a policy of *détente* with its neighbours, mainly Kenya and Ethiopia, this was contradicted by two factors. First, the SRC had pledged to maintain pan-Somalism as a central ideological tenet in its international relations and diplomacy; and, second, Somalia under Barre was virtually preparing for war by assembling one of the largest and best equipped armies in Africa.

This inconsistency of foreign policy is not only highlighted by the fact that Barre was initially relatively cautious with regard to the country's neighbours, but also by the regime's eventual foreign policy behaviour towards Djibouti, Kenya and Ethiopia. These decisions were not only erratic, but were also a betrayal of pan-Somali objectives.

There are several ways of understanding Somalia's foreign policy. First, Somali foreign policy, just like that of many other states, is related to the core objective of state survival. This includes protection of the lives of the people, territorial integrity, sovereignty, and political independence. Addressing the issue of self-determination for "lost" territories was "core" to Somalia's quest to build its military capability in order to

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[24] See for example M. Bezboruah, *US Strategy in the Indian Ocean: The International Response* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1977).
[25] See M. Wubneh and Y. Abate, *Ethiopia: Transition and Development in the Horn of Africa*, (Colorado: Westview Press, 1988), p.166.

give it the upper hand in its dealings with neighbouring countries. In Somalia, efforts to identify with ethnic kin led to Barre's support for the Western Somali Liberation Front (WSLF) incursion in Ethiopia. Since its assumption of power in 1969, the military had frequently acknowledged their abiding commitment to the liberation of those parts of the Somali nation which still languished under foreign rule: the French territory of the Afars and Issas (Djibouti), the Ogaden and the NFD.[26]

Siyad Barre's approach to pan-Somalism was also based on opportunism. He, for example, gave up attempting to conquer Djibouti after being assured that the Issas would not be discriminated against in the referendum and after Djibouti's declaration of intention to remain independent. Similarly, he gave up claims to the NFD after President Moi's proactive approach to Kenyan-Somalis had made them feel part of mainstream Kenya.[27] It was, therefore, no longer feasible for Somalis in capitalist Kenya to rejoin socialist Somalia. Although Ogaden was a major stake, Barre knew that he stood no chance of success without making a significant concession elsewhere.[28] As Somalia was surrounded with enemies, not only in Africa but also across its northern waters with Marxist South Yemen, it conceded to the desires of regional leaders out of fear of further weakening its own position.

When conquest of the Ogaden region re-emerged as a feasible option, Barre sought to recapture it out of sheer opportunism. As the flush of enthusiasm for Barre's "revolution" began to fade in the mid 1970s, he turned to the pan-Somali dream to

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[26] See for example, I. M. Lewis, *A Modern History of the Somali Nation and State in the Horn of Africa* 4th Ed., (Hargeisa: Btec Books, 2002), p.227.
[27] Interview with Ambassador Hussein Ali Dualeh, former Somali ambassador to Kenya and to Uganda, Nairobi, September 11, 2001.
[28] See J. M. Ghalib, *The Cost of Dictatorship: The Somali Experience* (New York: Lilian Barber Press Inc, 1995), p.112.

reinvigorate his flagging support base.[29] Somalia's defeat in the Ogaden war with Ethiopia, however, decisively buried the dream of a pan-Somali state. This was underscored by Somalia's signing in, 1984, of an official agreement with Kenya relinquishing the idea of "Greater Somalia."

Somalia and the latter part of the Cold War

Both Superpowers wanted to expand their influence in strategic locations around the world. On the one hand, the Soviet Union and its allies, notably Cuba, persistently attempted to keep both Ethiopia and Somalia within the socialist camp. This, in practice, meant trying to dampen Ethiopian-Somali hostilities, in particular the territorial ambitions of Barre.

Prior to the onset of the Cold War, the only significant American presence in the Horn of Africa was found in Ethiopia. At the height of the Cold War, however, and as US interests shifted toward countering the Soviet Union's efforts at securing a physical presence in the region, its key allies shifted to the countries surrounding pro-Soviet Ethiopia, such as Sudan and Somalia.[30] This was termed as the policy of encirclement. The two superpowers, therefore, played off the opposing clients at different times, realigning themselves either as strategic friends or enemies.

This posturing of the superpowers had a number of effects. First, it sparked an arms race between Ethiopia and Somalia. For example, the size of the Ethiopian army grew from 54,000 in 1977 to more than 300,000 a decade later while Somalia's army

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[29] See WSP International, *Rebuilding Somaliland: Issues and Possibilities* (Asmara: The Red Sea Press, Inc, 2005), p11.

[30] See R. Lyob and E. J. Keller, "US Policy in the Horn," in D. A. Bekoe, *Grappling with a Difficult Legacy in East Africa and the Horn: Confronting Challenges to Good Governance* (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2006), pp.101-125:101.

swelled from about 32,000 in 1977 to 65,000 in 1987. Their defence expenditures in the same period (1977-1987), also grew from $103 million to $134 million respectively.[31] This level and pattern of growth in military expenditures could not have taken place if the countries of the Horn of Africa had not been able to rely on superpower patrons who provided them with increasing levels of military assistance.

Secondly, the superpowers actions not only fanned hostility among the two neighbours, but also led to a full-blown proxy war pitting Somalia against Ethiopia.[32] In addition to fuelling instability in the region due to an ideological struggle for supremacy, it also exacerbated the degree and intensity of the conflict between the two countries. On the one hand, Barre believed that the Soviets were bound by treaty to Somalia and that they should not provide aid to its adversaries, while on the other he evidently believed that Washington had flashed him at least a dim green-light to attack Ethiopia. This idea of tacit encouragement and support has been denied by USA officials as a misperception of their country's position.[33] It can nonetheless be argued that this foreign policy orientation facilitated inter-state war between Somalia and Ethiopia.

Foreign policy decision-making

The foreign policy decision-making process under Barre was one that placed primacy on the executive. Decisions were therefore dominated by the president himself. This is attributed to several factors, the first being the country's low level of political institutionalization. For example, following the elections in the "people's parliament"

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[31] Ibid, p.106.
[32] See J. G. Hershberg, "Anatomy of Third World Crisis: New East Bloc Evidence on the Horn of Africa 1977-1978," *Cold War International History Project*, CWIHP Bulletin 8/9, Winter 1996, p.1.
[33] Ibid; See also M. Wubneh and Y. Abate, *Ethiopia Transition and Development in the Horn of Africa*, (Colorado: Westview Press, 1998), p.166.

where all members belonged to one party, the SRSP, Barre reshuffled the cabinet, abolishing the positions of the three vice presidents. This was followed by another reshuffle in October 1980 in which the old SRC was revived. This particular move resulted in three parallel and overlapping bureaucratic structures within one administration: the party's *politburo*, which exercised executive powers through its central committee; the Council of Ministers; and the SRC. The resulting confusion of functions within the administration left decision-making solely in the president's hand.[34]

This situation was further entrenched by censorship of the press and the lack of an opposition. Using dictatorial methods based on personal rule, the government made it a capital offence for anybody to become a member of the opposition. It also ruled without any serious attempt to encourage the opposition either to talk to the government or to join them. Power was also centralized and Mogadishu became the nerve centre of the whole country.[35] Within the capital itself, power and authority were centralized in the president's political office and extended down to the regional and district level with a formidable array of subordinate organisations, each with its own power base ultimately connected to the president either directly or via members of the SRC.[36] Barre effectively shifted the responsibility of the state organs and national institutions in favour of his office, and as a result, the foreign policy decision-making process was also affected.

Another main factor is that, as the chief of state, a leader embodies the national interest more than anyone else. He is at the top of the political pyramid and responsible

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[34] Interview with Ambassador Hussein Ali Duale, former Somali ambassador to Kenya and Uganda, Nairobi, September 11, 2001.
[35] See J. G. N. Yoh, "Peace Processes and Conflict Resolution in the Horn of Africa," *African Security Review*, 12 (3) 2003.
[36] See WSP International, *Rebuilding Somalia Issues and Possibilities for Puntland* (London: HAAN Associates, 2001), p.9.

for somehow bringing together all the separate individual and group interests.[37] This is highlighted by the fact that a leader may take a hawkish or poor decision and initiative and, with the authority and respect he/she commands, still be backed by a substantial portion of the population as Barre was by his clan and by his cronies in the *politburo*. At the same time, however, for example with regard to membership of the Arab League, another of Siyad's innovations – many Somalis questioned whether it was at all necessary to join. Ghalib, for example, poses the question whether the Arabs themselves ever accepted the Somalis as genuine Arabs.[38]

The decision-making process was therefore not rational; rather, it was informed by Barre's idiosyncrasies, one being his jealousy. This indeed appears to have prompted him to replace Omar Arte who was a formidable and influential foreign affairs minister with his own cousin, Abdulrahman Jama Barre, who was known for his incompetence, hence leading to the ineffectiveness of the ministry in terms of foreign policy decision-making.[39]

At the same time, the diplomats entrusted with conducting Somalia's foreign relations and representing the state abroad were chosen from Barre's entourage and among his clansmen, regardless of their acquaintance with diplomacy and foreign policy.[40] This further entrenched his unaccountability to the people, making him the only one responsible for foreign policy.

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[37] See B. Russet, and H. Starr, *World Politics: The Menu for Choice*, (New York: W. H. Freeman and Company, 1989), p.241.
[38] See J. M. Ghalib, *The Cost of Dictatorship: The Somali Experience*, (New York: Lilian Barber Press Inc., 1995), p.142.
[39] Ibid, p.110.
[40] Ibid, p.114.; See also A. Q. Ali, "The Foreign Factor in the Somali Tragedy," in H. M. Adam and R. Ford, *Mending Rips in the Sky: Options for Somali Communities in the 21st Century*, (Asmara: The Red Sea Press, Inc., 1997), pp.537-563:540.

Siyad Barre's decision-making process did not occur in a vacuum. He used his solid base within the army, together with controlling other state actors and civil society through institutions and organisations such as security, paramilitary, an elitist vanguard party, and so called mass organisations, which as a personal ruler he had the autonomy to operate.[41] The decision making process behind Somali foreign policy therefore relied on Barre's personality and perceptions and the competition between various cronies and groups which had an influence on him and on each other; this has been branded the psychological model of decision making.[42]

An analysis of the Somali foreign policy decision-making process, under Barre, would be incomplete without highlighting the influence of external actors which penetrated the leader's decision-making and consequently participated authoritatively in the allocation of resources and the determination of national goals. For example, the US appealed for Somalia's withdrawal from the Ogaden in exchange for aid and pressured him to renounce the "Greater Somalia" ambitions by withholding military aid.[43]

Foreign policy behaviour

Somalia and the East (the Soviet Union)

When, in October 1970, the Somali government declared Somalia to be a socialist country, the Soviet Union recognized it as part of the socialist bloc. To the Somali government, the aim of this new political concept of "scientific socialism" was to correct

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[41] See H. M. Adam, "Somalia: A Terrible Beauty being Born," in W. I. Zartman, *Collapsed State: The Disintegration of Legitimate Authority* (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1994), pp.69-89:71.

[42] For more on this see, for example, T. L. Brewer, *American Foreign Policy: A Contemporary Introduction* 3rd Ed (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1980), p.29.

[43] See for example, D. D. Laitin and S. S. Samatar, *Somalia: Nation in Search of a State* (Colorado: Westview Press, 1987), p.143.

the errors of the past and place the country's fortunes on a firm footing, based on this ideological orientation. This choice of direction, already foreshadowed in the retrospective transformation of the *coup de'tat* into a revolution, included mass organisation based on togetherness and a national campaign against clanism.[44]

Siyad Barre eloquently preached "scientific socialism" out of sheer expediency without much knowledge or personal commitment.[45] This was due to Somalia's increasing dependence on Soviet aid but not to any ideological conviction.[46] In other words, it reflected the army's growing dependence on Soviet equipment and advisers in contrast to the complementary connection of the police force with America and the west.

One of the reasons for this is that the new Somali leader, who was a product of the former Italian army, a man of old-fashioned virtues and a staunch Muslim, had been "converted" to Marxism because of his disillusionment with the west, mainly over its "hostility" to Somalia's aspirations. Siyad Barre, like other Somali leaders, had lost his faith in the earlier policy of trying to befriend the "hostile alliance" of Ethiopia, Kenya, USA, the UK, France and Israel.[47] This fact was highlighted in the early years of Barre's revolution through foreign policy pronouncements that emphasized the evils of USA imperialism in Southeast Asia and the zionist imperialism in the Middle East. It was also natural that the idealistic young intellectuals associated with the new regime should look to the Soviet bloc for inspiration, since the previous civilian governments had on the

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[44] See I. M. Lewis, *A Modern History of the Somali: Nation and State in the Horn of Africa* 4th Ed., (Hargeisa: Btec Books, 2002), p.209.
[45] See J. M. Ghalib, *The Cost of Dictatorship: The Somali Experience,* (New York: Lilian Barber Press Inc., 1995), p.126.
[46] See R. Cornwell, "*Somalia fourteenth time lucky?*" *Occasional paper* 87, Institute for Security Studies, April 2004, p.2.
[47] See C. Legum and B. Lee, *Conflict in the Horn of Africa,* (London: Red Collings, 1977), p.32.

whole been inclined towards the west despite the military aid agreement of 1963 with the Soviet Union.

Dependency was also key to the relationship between Somalia and the Soviet Union. Somalia, as the periphery state, depended on the latter for arms and training while the Soviet Union, as the core, was interested in expanding and improving its naval capabilities. This was evident in the agreement to build the Port of Berbera which became an important Soviet military base to counter the USA bases in the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea.

In its desire to reduce vulnerabilities and diminishing threats, Somalia therefore entered into an alliance with the Soviet Union. This relationship reached a peak with the 1974 treaty of friendship and co-operation with the Soviet Union. Through it, Somalia upgraded its fighting potential, building up a substantial armed force.[48] The Somalis got training in the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe and Cuba, and the country acquired advanced military hardware that included 150- T-35 and 100 T-54 tanks mostly fitted with 105mm guns.[49] The Soviets also supplied the Somali army with more than 300 armed personnel carriers, 200 coastal batteries, 50 MIG fighters and supersonic jet fighters, a squadron of II-28 bombers, a SAM-2 ground-to-air missile complex, a SAM-2 missile defence system for the capital Mogadishu and modern torpedo and other advanced landing crafts for the navy.[50] The number of Soviet advisers was also

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[48] See D. D. Laitin and S. S. Samatar, *Somalia: Nation in Search of a State*, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1987), p.139.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Ibid.

increased.[51] Finally, the Soviets agreed to write off Somalia's arms debts and set up the Somali army intelligence apparatus and the National Security Service (NSS).

In spite of these developments, which ensured that Somalia would be more prepared in case of war, a lot of discontent began to emerge among the Somali public, especially since "the Soviet Union was not eager to finance development projects unless they fit its plans of exploitation; this culminated in 1974 with the making out of the national territory a large military facility for the superpowers."[52] Furthermore, major ideologies are themselves products of the conditions and mental attitudes of the advanced world. As such, Somalia's "scientific socialism" and its misuse brought about resentment towards the Soviet Union as it was viewed as perpetuating the violence and oppression against Somalis.

Somalia and the West - the USA and the European Union (EU)

Somali-American relations constantly fluctuated in response to evolving Somali foreign policies and American interests in the volatile Horn of Africa. Indeed, there was lack of a consistent (foreign) policy, or diplomacy, on both sides.[53] For example, the relationship between the USA and Somalia deteriorated after the installation of the military regime in 1969. For a decade, this relationship was reduced to the formal presence of diplomatic missions in Mogadishu and Washington and the Somali military regime participated in the Cold War in full swing on behalf of the Kremlin.

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[51] Ibid, p.140; See also M. H. Mukhtar, *Historical Dictionary of Somalia: African Historical Dictionary*, (Maryland Oxford: Scarecrow Press, 2003), p.241.

[52] See A. Q. Ali, "The Foreign Factor in the Somali Tragedy," in H. M. Adam and R. Ford, *Mending Rips in the Sky: Options for Somali Communities in the 21st Century*, (Asmara: The Red Sea Press, Inc., 1997), pp.534-563:539.

[53] See M. H. Mukhtar, *Historical Dictionary of Somalia: African Historical Dictionary*, (Maryland Oxford: Scarecrow Press, 2003), p.253.

In the early 1970s, the military regime, dizzied by Soviet generosity in arms and military advisors, undertook an anti-American rhetoric which echoed in Somalia and in all forums to which the regime had access. Somali citizens were in danger as long as they had any sort of ties, even genuine, with the USA. Unless they publicly repudiated their country, US officials and citizens had their freedom and contacts restricted in Somalia, and obtaining a Somali visa became arduous for USA passport holders.[54]

Siyad Barre's friendship with the USA began with the Carter administration when the former was planning his war with Ethiopia and the military regime approached Washington in the hope of obtaining backing.[55] However, it was not until 1977 that USA-Somali rapprochement actually began. One of the events leading to this was the change in USA-Ethiopia relations when the Mengistu-led *Derg* movement overthrew Emperor Haile Selassie in a bloody *coup d'etat* on February 3, 1974, leading to Mengistu's accession to power. The first leader from the communist states to meet the new leader was Cuba's Fidel Castro. The *Derg* immediately embraced socialism; leading to USA discontent. Gradually, Washington reduced its foreign aid to Ethiopia, beginning on February 25, 1977 when US Secretary of State Cyrus Vance announced that USA foreign aid was being reduced in three countries – Ethiopia, Argentina and Uruguay – due to human rights violations.[56]

Although USA arms supplies to Ethiopia continued on an irregular basis for the first three years of the *Derg* revolution, they did not match the dramatic increase in Soviet

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[54] See A. Q. Ali, "The Foreign Factor in the Somali Tragedy," in H. M. Adam and R. Ford, *Mending Rips in the Sky: Options for Somali Communities in the 21st Century*, (Asmara: the Red Sea Press, Inc., 1997), pp. 534-563:544.

[55] Ibid, p.545; See also A. Mazrui, "Crisis in Somalia: From Tyranny to Anarchy," in H. M. Adam and R. Ford (eds.), *Mending Rips in the Sky: Options for Somali Communities in the 21st Century* (Asmara: The Red Sea Press, 1997), pp.5-11:8.

[56] See M. Ottaway, *Soviet and American Influence in the Horn of Africa* (New York: Praeger, 1982), p.142; See also C. Legum and B. Lee, *Conflict in the Horn of Africa*,(London: Rex Collings, 1977), p.69.

shipments to Somalia which took off after 1974 and reached their peak in 1976-77 when the danger of American retaliation had virtually disappeared.[57] In spite of this support, the Soviet Union lacked sympathy for Somalia's Ogaden aspirations; it not only counselled patience to Barre but also attempted to fashion a socialist alliance among South Yemen, Ethiopia and Somalia.[58] Barre, however, attempted to take advantage of the temporary balance of power, which favoured his country at the time, and invaded Ogaden. This was the genesis of the rupture of the country's relationship with the Soviet Union.

The diplomatic relationship between the two countries was already rather grim when Barre visited Moscow shortly before the 1977-78 Ogaden war. Not only did Brezhnev have little time for Barre during his visit, making it rather fruitless, but encouraged by the increasingly socialist rhetoric and policies of the Ethiopian revolutionaries, the Soviets felt that they had greater affinities with that country.[59] They were consequently true to their word and abandoned Somalia after mediation efforts failed, in August 1977. Subsequently, the Soviet Union suspended arms shipments to Barre's regime and accelerated military deliveries to Ethiopia. Three months later, Somalia renounced the treaty of friendship and cooperation, expelled all Soviet advisors and personnel from Somalia and at the same time broke diplomatic relations with Cuba.[60]

Therefore, not only did the Ogaden war cement Somalia's defection from the Soviet bloc and its defeat, but it also elevated the conflict to a superpower crisis, as

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[57] See C. Clapham, "The Horn of Africa: A Conflict Zone," in O. Furley, (ed.), *Conflict in Africa* (London and New York: Tauris Academic Publishers, 1995), pp.72-91:78.

[58] See D. D. Laitin and S. S. Samatar, *Somalia: Nation in Search of a State*, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1987), p.142.; See also G. B. N. Ayyitey, "The Somalia Crisis: Time for An African Solution," *Policy Analysis*, No. 205, March 28, 1994, p.3.

[59] See for example, M. Ottaway, *Soviet and American Influence in the Horn of Africa*, (New York: Praeger, 1982).

[60] Interview with Mohammed Haji, former Assistant Minister, Nairobi, April 22, 2005.

Washington accused Moscow of employing Cuban proxy forces to expand its influence in Africa. Moscow and Havana, for their part, maintained that they had only helped Ethiopia defend itself from a USA-backed assault from Somalia, with the additional support of various reactionary Arab countries.[61]

Following the Ogaden war, Barre was desperate to find a strong alliance to replace the Soviet Union. His main card was the strategic value of the port of Berbera, which was capable of handling large bombers. When the Shah of Iran fell in 1979, the USA lost its closest ally in the Gulf, and its strategic planners felt that the country could no longer adequately protect western oil interests. President Carter deemed it unwise to rely on any single country in that region and therefore plotted to build up a Rapid Deployment Force (RDF) capable of a quick response to any emergency situation in the Middle East. With the Soviet Union out of Somalia, Berbera became a possible facility for the RDF.[62]

Ronald Reagan came to office and, persuaded that his predecessor had failed to stand up for his friends and ensure that the country was respected by its adversaries,[63] accelerated USA-Somali *rapprochement*. This culminated in a 1980 agreement allowing the USA access to, and use of ports and airfields in Berbera, Mogadishu and Kismayo for which Somalia received in exchange US$40 million in military aid and US$53 million in economic assistance.[64]

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61 See for example, J. G. Hershberg, "Anatomy of Third World Crisis: New East Bloc Evidence on the Horn of Africa 1977-1978," *Cold War International History Project*, CWIHP Bulletin 8/9, Winter 1996.

62 See D. D. Laitin and S. S. Samatar, *Somalia; Nation in Search of a State*, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1987), p.144.

63 See A. Q. Ali, "The Foreign Factor in the Somali Tragedy," in H. M. Adam and R. Ford, *Mending Rips in the Sky: Options for Somali Communities in the 21st Century*, (Asmara: The Red Sea Press, Inc., 1997), pp.534-563:545.

64 Ibid.

In the summer of 1982, Ethiopian forces invaded Somalia along the central border and the USA provided two emergency airlifts to help the country defend its territorial integrity. From 1982 to 1988, the USA viewed Somalia as a defence partner in the context of the Cold War and Somali officers of the national armed forces were trained in USA military schools, in civilian and military subjects.[65] Somalia also received considerable refugee aid, with USAID funding projects in agriculture, livestock, and other sectors. Military aid totalled more than US$200 million in the 1980s, whereby the USA was able to counter the Soviet presence in Ethiopia and as a result obtained a strategic foothold at a crossroad with the Middle East.[66]

This *rapprochement* was, however, cautious because Somalia still had ambitions to retake Ogaden and could use USA arms to achieve that aim, thereby prompting a massive counterattack by Ethiopia. In addition, the relationship was riddled with controversy due to the Somali government's human rights policies. The policy of repression of both individual rights and opposition groups in the north indeed aroused criticism of the regime in the US Congress.[67] This strained relations to the extent that, in 1989, under Congressional pressure, the USA terminated its military aid to Somalia although it continued to provide economic and food assistance.[68]

In 1990, Washington revealed that Mogadishu had been defaulting on loan repayment for more than a year. This, under the terms of the Brooks Amendment, meant that Somalia was ineligible to receive any further USA aid. Relations between the two

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[65] See "Somalia: Background Note," US Department of State, Bureau of African Affairs, March 2006.
[66] See for example, A. Q. Ali "The Foreign Factor in the Somali Tragedy," in H. M. Adam and R. Ford, *Mending Rips in the Sky: Options for Somali Communities in the 21st Century*, (Asmara: The Red Sea Press, Inc., 1997), pp. 534-563:546.
[67] See "Somalia: Background Note," US Department of State, Bureau of African Affairs, March 2006.
[68] Ibid.

countries further deteriorated when, during the height of the fighting in Mogadishu in January 1991, the USA closed its embassy and evacuated all its personnel from the country.[69]

On the other hand, the military regime maintained its relations with the European Commission (EC), an important ally which never encouraged its member states to suspend their aid to the regime, even after it had come to wage an open war against its people and human rights organisations and the European media had denounced its atrocities. Chief among these countries was Italy which spent, between 1980 and 1990, more than US$1 billion to sponsor 114 projects. For example, US$20 million was spent on the Garowe-Bosaso road that stretches 450 kilometres across barren desert.[70]

Regional goals

Barre envisioned Somalia being simultaneously at the centre of African and Arab relations. In the African context, the Somali government, for example, successfully played a mediation role in the confrontation between Uganda and Tanzania in 1972. Having joined the Arab League as the only non Arabic-speaking member state, this dual policy assumed much greater prominence when, in 1974, Somalia also hosted the OAU summit in Mogadishu.

No expense was spared to take this opportunity to promote the image of Somalia in the eyes of the African, Arab and international community as a proudly independent, progressive, socialist state. In seeking a more prominent and forceful role in African

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[69] See M. H. Mukhtar, *Historical Dictionary of Somalia: African Historical Dictionary*, (Maryland Oxford: Scarecrow Press, 2003), p.245.

[70] See A. Q. Ali, "The Foreign Factor in the Somali Tragedy," in Hussein M. Adam and Richard Ford, *Mending Rips in the Sky: Options for Somali Communities in the 21st Century*,(Asmara: the Red Sea Press, Inc., 1997), 534-563:543; G. B. N. Ayyitey, "The Somalia Crisis: Time for an African Solution," *Policy Analysis* No. 205, March 28, 1994, p.4.; A. Wolfgang, "The Italian Connection: How Rome Helped Ruin Somalia," *The Washington Post*, January 24, 1993, p.1.

affairs, the regime stressed how well placed geographically Somalia was to act as a natural mediator between the Islamic world and sub-Saharan Africa.[71]

Somalia and the Arab/Muslim World

Several reasons explain why, notwithstanding Somalis' reluctance to be called Arabs, it joined the Arab League. First, the regime paid lip service to the Arab and Palestinian cause, to care about Arab problems. Second, these were the years of petro-dollars and the rich Arab Gulf countries had given employment opportunities to Somali workers and economic assistance to the regime.[72] Third, most of the young officers who participated in the 1969 military coup were graduates from Egyptian and Iraqi military academies, as were a number of civilians in the military regime machine such as Omar Arte Ghalib (foreign minister, 1970-1975) and were favourable to the Arab League. Arte engineered Somalia's entry into the Arab League following a long standing invitation, declaring that Somalia was ready to play its role fully in the service of the great Arab cause.[73]

Finally, Barre sought to gain geopolitical advantages by strengthening the country's alliance system and tapping into Arab funds. Joining the Arab League was

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[71] See I. M. Lewis, *A Modern History of the Somali Nation and State in the Horn of Africa*, 4th Ed., (Hargeisa: Btec Books, 2002), p.227.

[72] See A. Q. Ali, "The Foreign Factor in the Somali Tragedy," in H. M. Adam and R. Ford, *Mending Rips in the Sky: Options for Somali Communities in the 21st Century*, (Asmara: The Red Sea Press, Inc., 1997), 534-563:547.

[73] Ibid, p.546,; See also D. D. Laitin and S. S. Samatar, *Somalia: Nation in Search of a State*, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1987), p.145.; H. M. Adam, "Somalia: Personal Rule, Military Rule and Militarism," in E. Hutchful and A. Bathily, *Military and Militarism in Africa*,(Dakar: CODESERIA, 1998), p.367.

intended to diversify Barre's diplomatic and foreign aid options, particularly in light of the shift in global power and resources brought about by the oil shock of 1973.[74]

While Somalia provided the rich Arab countries with a cheap vote in international foras, it was also at times at crossroads with some Arab countries. For example, Somalia broke its diplomatic relations with Libya from 1981 to 1985, accusing the country of having supported Somali dissident groups.[75] Furthermore, there were conflicts with the wealthier and conservative Arab states, especially Saudi Arabia, over the adoption of Marxism-Leninism rather than Islam. Arab states also insisted that if Somalia was truly an Arab state, it should have placed less emphasis on the development of the Somali language.

In response to this, the Somali government put more efforts into having many officials in the Ministry of Education re-assigned to enhance the Arabic language curriculum. Finally, Barre also shocked orthodox Arab states by executing ten Imams who preached against his secularism in 1975,[76] especially the issue of equality in the family law section of the government's penal code which provided for equality between men and women.

All together throughout the 1980s, Somalia became increasingly dependent on economic aid from Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. This dependence was a crucial factor in the regime's decision to side with the US-led coalition of Arab states that opposed Iraq following its invasion of Kuwait in 1990. Although

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[74] See H. M. Adam, "Somalia: Personal Rule, Military Rule and Militarism," in E. Hutchful and A. Bathily, *Military and Militarism in Africa,*(Dakar: CODESERIA, 1998), p.368; See also C. Legum and B. Lee, *Conflict in the Horn of Africa* (London: Red Collings, 1977), p.32.

[75] Interview with Matt Bryden, ICG regional analyst, Nairobi, April 22, 2005.

[76] See M. H. Mukhtar, *Historical Dictionary of Somalia: African Historical Dictionary,* (Maryland Oxford: Scarecrow Press, 2003), p.40; See also H. M. Adam, "Somalia: Personal Rule, Military Rule and Militarism," in E. Hutchful and A. Bathily, *Military and Militarism in Africa,* (Dakar: CODESERIA, 1998), p.368.

Somalia supported Iraq in the initial stages of the Gulf crisis, it switched at the last minute to support the US-led coalition. In return, this support for the coalition brought economic dividends. Qatar, for example, cancelled further repayment of all principal and interest payments on outstanding loans, while Saudi Arabia offered Somalia a US$70 million grant and promised to sell it oil below prevailing international market prices.[77]

Prior to this, Somalia had also benefited from Arab military assistance. From 1979 to 1983, the military regime purchased about US$500 million in arms with the help of Arab petro-dollars, becoming the third most important client of the Italian arms industry.[78] Economically, it also benefited a lot. For example, from 1975 to 1978 Somalia received US$361.1 million in OPEC development aid, which constituted about 14 per cent of the total Sub-Saharan African outlay in the OPEC development programme.[79]

Somalia and the OAU

Initially, the military regime's African policy focused on the OAU, where a mediation endeavour by presidents Gowon of Nigeria and Numeiri of Sudan to solve the issue of Somali irredentism failed to produce an agreement. Barre then concentrated on relations with northern African states, and later joined the Arab League.[80] The main reason for Somalia's initial setback in the OAU was Haile Selassie's influence which ensured the OAU's support for Ethiopia as opposed to Somalia.

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[77] See A. Metz, *Somalia: A Country Study*, (Washington, D.C.: US Library of Congress, 1993).
[78] See A. Q. Ali, "The Foreign Factor in the Somali Tragedy," in Hussein M. Adam and Richard Ford, *Mending Rips in the Sky: Options for Somalia Communities in the 21st Century*, (Asmara: The Red Sea Press, Inc., 1997), 534-563:547.
[79] See D. D. Laitin and S. S. Samatar, *Somalia: Nation in Search of a State*, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1987), p.145.
[80] See P. Woodward, *The Horn of Africa: Politics and International Relations*, (London and New York: Tauris Academic Studies, 1996), p.126.

However, Somalia's hosting of the 12th OAU Summit in Mogadishu and the deposition of Haile Selassie changed the situation dramatically. During the Summit, Barre was elected as the OAU chairman and it is in this wider African context that his regime again considered the perennial issue of pan-Somali nationalism. Prior to this, the military regime had shown moderation in the pursuit of that objective. Haile Selassie was prepared to symbolically concede a strip of territory to Somalia, as a border readjustment arrangement, without acknowledging further Somali claims. This was only offered, however, to buy the Somali government's agreement for a permanent boundary demarcation line along the still unmarked former Italian Somaliland border.[81]

When talks on the issue finally failed, Somalia took the case to the OAU Summit held in Addis Ababa in 1973. To the credit of then Somali Foreign Minister, Omar Arte Ghalib, and due to his popularity following the mediation efforts between Tanzania and Uganda, this was the first time ever that Somalia was able to secure consensus in the OAU for any discussion on the Somali-Ethiopian dispute.[82] Before that, Ethiopia, which dominated the OAU Secretariat, had been capable of ensuring the total exclusion of the issue from the agenda. This resulted in the appointment of a committee of eight member states to mediate between Ethiopia and Somalia and who would then report its findings back to the heads of state and government.

The opportunity which the OAU chairmanship provided and the constraints imposed suggested that if this nationalist issue was now to be rigorously revived, the

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[81] Ibid.
[82] See J. M. Ghalib, *The Cost of Dictatorship: The Somali Experience*, (New York: Lilian Barber Press Inc., 1995), p.110.

anachrostic persistence of French rule in Djibouti should be the first target.[83] However, the military regime's ambitions to incorporate Djibouti into a "Greater Somalia" were also shattered in 1977 after the Djiboutians overwhelmingly voted against the amalgamation of their territory into Somalia. Consequently, when Djibouti gained independence as a separate state, the military regime relinquished its claims on Djibouti.[84] This occurrence prompted a more focused approach towards Ethiopia and, as a result, the Somali government adopted a policy of aggressiveness towards the country. On the Ethiopian side, not only had oil and natural gas deposits been discovered in the Ogaden, but Ethiopia was also facing domestic disarray and military difficulties (given the termination of US military aid).[85] This combination of factors led to the invasion of the Ogaden which both the Somalia-backed WSLF forces and the Somali army lost to Ethiopia.

In the OAU, Somalia eventually received the wrath of members as it was viewed as an aggressor. Further adding to such perceptions, Somalia's minister of foreign affairs, Abdulrahman Jama Barre, walked out of the OAU good offices committee meeting held in Gabon from August 5-8, 1977, perhaps blinded by the early success on the war front. As a result, in one of its subsequent meetings at the foreign ministerial level held in Lagos, Nigeria from August 18-20, 1977, the OAU good offices committee advised that the Ogaden region was an integral part of Ethiopia.[86] Similarly, in June 1981, the OAU

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[83] See I. M. Lewis, *A Modern History of the Somali Nation and State in the Horn of Africa, 4th* Ed., (Hargeisa: Btec Books, 2002), p.228.
[84] Ibid, p.230; See also M. H. Mukhtar, *Historical Dictionary of Somalia: African Historical Dictionary,* (Maryland Oxford: Scarecrow Press, 2003), p.182.
[85] See M. Wubneh and Y. Abate, *Ethiopia; Transition and Development in the Horn of Africa,* (Colorado: Westview Press, 1988), p.166; See also M. H. Mukhtar, *Historical Dictionary of Somalia. African Historical Dictionary,* (Maryland Oxford: Scarecrow Press, 2003), p.180.
[86] See J. M. Ghalib, *The Cost of Dictatorship: The Somali Experience,* (New York: Lilian Barber Press Inc., 1995), p.112.

Summit held in Nairobi adopted the ministerial report reaffirming Ethiopia's sovereignty over the Ogaden.

Some of the consequences of the Ogaden war included the shift of Somalia's clientilism to US patronage and a change in its foreign policy behaviour towards Kenya. Prior to this, the relationship between the two countries was peaceful, although Kenya accused Somalia of attacking a border post in the NFD. On the other hand, Kenya also signed a treaty of friendship and cooperation with Ethiopia and, as a result, the two countries issued a joint *communiqué* during the Ogaden war condemning Somalia's action. Although Kenya's involvement was limited to denouncing acts of aggression, the actions of the two leaders of Kenya and Ethiopia were strongly attacked by Somalia as a threat to peace and security in the Horn of Africa.[87]

The initial rapprochement between Kenya and Somalia was initiated in 1979-80 by the government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia which offered to mediate over the latter's territorial claims.[88] Somalia's participation in this effort is mainly attributable to the Somali government's fear of Ethiopia's military power.[89] Following a 1981 summit meeting with Kenyan President Daniel Arap Moi in Nairobi, Barre publicly denounced any Somali territorial claims on Kenya, stating that:

> "Somalia does not have any acute disputes with Kenya whatsoever but all are images and reflections of the past European colonialism. Ethiopia tried many

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[87] See K. G. Adar, *Kenya's Foreign Policy Behaviour towards Somalia, 1963 – 1983* (Lanham, New York and London: University Press of America, 1994), p.131.
[88] J. M. Ghalib, *The Cost of Dictatorship: The Somali Experience*,(New York: Lilian Barber Press Inc., 1995), p.112.
[89] *Somalia: Somalia's Arab, African and International Role* (Mogadishu: State Print Agency, 1980), p.17, quoted in K. G. Adar, *Kenyan Foreign Policy Behaviour towards Somalia, 1963 – 1983,* (Lanham, New York and London: University Press of America, 1994), p.132.

times to deteriorate the good friendly relations between Somalia and Kenya by false and cheap propaganda."[90]

This had the affect of reducing mistrust and improving relations between the two states. Consequently, Somali foreign policy behaviour changed to one of cooperation and good neighbourliness, at least with Kenya and Djibouti.[91]

Apparently encouraged by Barre's stated willingness to hold direct talks with Mengistu,[92] both Kenya and Djibouti mediated between Ethiopia and Somalia. Mediated by Djiboutian President Hassan Abtidon, the two had their first meeting in Djibouti while attending a six-nation conference to establish the Inter-Governmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD). The meeting may have signalled a shift from military confrontation to negotiation, hence setting off a gradual process of *rapprochement*.

Several reasons informed this decision. First, the loss of the Ogaden war not only produced a national mood of depression, as did the influx of a large number of refugees into Somalia.[93] In addition to the drought that ravaged the country in the 1980s, there was also an enormous economic burden on the country's meagre resources; it was thought that peace with Ethiopia could lead to their repatriation.[94] Secondly, Barre was facing escalating guerrilla activity, especially from armed opposition groups formed after the Ogaden war. Finally, Somalia was militarily at a disadvantage because it was grossly

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[90] Ibid.
[91] W. I. Zartman, *Ripe for Resolution: Conflict and Intervention in Africa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), p.122.
[92] Ibid.
[93] Ibid.
[94] Ibid.

inferior in troops, aircrafts, armour, artillery and supplies, with no prospect of matching Ethiopia's strength, which had made overt military threats on Somalia.[95]

For Ethiopia, a *rapprochement* with Somalia would permit it to concentrate its resources on rebuilding its economy and focus its military on separatist guerrilla groups in Tigray and Eritrea.[96] As a result, economic and military factors in both countries dictated peace talks and negotiations. Furthermore, the "Greater Somalia" dream had been upset by Djibouti's independence and renouncement of the NFD by Barre. This was followed by Barre and Mengistu holding their second meeting in April 1988, in Djibouti, where they signed a peace agreement and formally re-established diplomatic relations. The two leaders agreed to withdraw their troops from their mutual borders and cease support for armed dissident groups trying to overthrow their respective governments. This foreign policy decision, however, had the unintended consequence of precipitating Barre's – and later on Mengistu's – overthrow from power.

Conclusions

The initial focus of the Somali government, under Siyad Barre, was mainly on the consolidation of power and containment of internal problems. This was, however, to change from 1974 onwards, leading Somalia to play a bigger role both in the African continent and the Arab/Muslim world. In addition, the Somali government took advantage of the Cold War superpower rivalry – and the two actors' subsequent contradictory interests – to obtain both military and economic aid. Barre's approach to the issue of pan-Somalism was both inconsistent and based on opportunism and

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[95] Ibid.
[96] See M. Wubneh and Y. Abate, *Ethiopia: Transition and Development in the Horn of Africa*, (Colorado: Westview Press, 1988), p.168.

disappointing to Somalis who still held on to the idea of 'Greater Somalia.' It is also evident that while the two pre-Barre civilian administrations held the 'Greater Somalia' concept using international diplomacy, the military regime used military force in order to pursue the same national interest.

CHAPTER SIX

FOREIGN POLICY AND CONFLICT IN SOMALIA, 1960-1990: A CRITIQUE

Introduction

This study has analyzed the Somali conflict and its relations with foreign policy. It has assessed the foreign policy environment, both regionally and internationally, within which Somali foreign policy operated during the study period. The study also discussed conflict in Somalia and with its neighbours particularly with Ethiopia and Kenya. In addition, it examined the foreign policies of the two civilian administrations and the military regime in Somalia's first thirty years of independence. This chapter critically analyses the issues that have emerged in the previous five chapters, and focuses on foreign policy and conflict in Somalia. The chapter is divided into two sections. The first section will give a critical review of Somalia's domestic environment, foreign policy orientation and foreign policy decision-making during the study period while the second section critically looks at the three critical issues that emerged from the study, namely colonial legacy, Somali nationalism, and Cold War politics and rivalry.

The theoretical framework used for this study is based on Graham Allison's models whose analysis suggests three different and complementary ways of understanding decision-making during the times of crisis. As was earlier mentioned, this study develops the thesis that Somali foreign policy, and those of regional states and other key external actors, during the study period, promoted armed conflict in Somalia by accident or design. This proposition, and the overall theoretical framework, which is based on Allison's models, will enhance the analysis of these critical issues. In explaining the actions of states -- as rational actors -- and the internal organisational processes and

governmental politics, Allison's models best capture the link between foreign policy and conflict and in this context the three emerging critical issues from the study: colonial legacy, Somali nationalism, and Cold War politics and rivalry.

Domestic Environment

The fact that, since its inception in 1960, the Somali republic had pursued a foreign policy of 'Greater Somalia,' makes it important to analyse the domestic environment since it provides both constraints and opportunities in the pursuit of a country's foreign policy. The country has an area of some 640,000 km square with a 3,300 km coastline which runs from *Bab-al-Mandab* all the way to the border with Kenya.[1] Geographically, Somalia lies in the Horn of Africa where the African continent stretches towards the Arab world thus giving it strategic control over access to the Red Sea and close links with the Arabian Peninsular and the Gulf of Aden. Apart from this, Somalia also claimed all Somali-populated territories in the Horn of Africa including the Ogaden region, NFD and pre-independent coastal Djibouti.

In this context, the influence of geography on Somali foreign policy is necessarily linked to this strategic location and claims over 'lost' territories. Similarly, the country's geo-strategic location attracted foreign interests. It also underlines its *rapprochement* with the west and the Soviet Union during the Cold War. The division of the Somali people, for example, due to territorial decisions taken by colonial powers was an important geographical issue as Somalia pursued the return of the 'lost' territories as its principal foreign policy objective. It is these claims and counter-claims that led to conflict with Somalia's neighbours, notably Kenya and Ethiopia: for example the 1963/64

[1] See S. M. Mousa, *Recolonization Beyond Somalia*, (Mogadishu: Somali Printing Agency, 1998), p.xiii.

conflict and the 1977-78 Ogaden war between Somalia and Ethiopia and the early 1960s *Shifta* war with Kenya. It is the consequence of these conflicts between Somalia and its neighbours in terms of military support to armed opposition which also led to the break up of the Somali civil war first in northern Somalia in 1988 and later on to the rest of the country in 1991.

In line with this, apart from the social cohesiveness and national integration that informed Somali foreign policy, one other important element is the size of its population. In terms of population size, the Somali people make one of the biggest communities in the Horn of Africa region and they have one considerable advantage: the large homogeneity of the Somali as they share a common language, religion, social structure and historical identity. Therefore, by reclaiming the territories held by neighbouring countries, the country would have been larger and hence would have played a dominant role in the Horn of Africa. This feeling of Somali nationalism, '*pan-Somalism*,' became infectious making inroads throughout the Horn of Africa and beyond generating popular support for unity among all Somali areas in Ethiopia, Kenya and all of pre-independent coastal Djibouti. The same led to the formation of Northern Frontier District Liberation front (NFDLF) in Kenya; the Western Somalia Liberation Front (WSLF) in the Ogaden and the Front de Liberation de la Conte des Somalis (FLCS) in Djibouti.

In terms of economic and military capabilities, Somalia's lack of physical and natural resources was a constraint on its foreign policy objectives. This explains the country's search for external aid to build both its economic and military capability. For example, Samatar argues that one "salient issue of Somali foreign policy was the

designing of strategies for the retrieval of the three other Somali lands."[2] To Samatar, when such retrieval of missing parts of the Somali nation through peaceful means became impossible due to the intransigence of "...the elites in Kenya [and] Ethiopia,"[3] the Somali leadership began to forge close [military] ties with the Soviet Union which in turn:

> "... had an impact on the area in two ways: it set the stage for a close relationship between the embryonic Somali military forces and the Soviet Union; and it inaugurated an ominous arms race, replete with economic and social ramifications in the region... through acknowledging the working parliamentary democracy in Somalia, the United States reacted coldly to the Somali-Soviet agreement...underscoring the arrival of the Cold War politics in the Horn."[4]

Due to such external support, Somalia's military grew steadily despite the country's status as one of the poorest in sub-Saharan Africa at the time. This also led to Somalia's increased strength relative to its neighbours and increased arms race in the Horn of Africa particularly with its main adversary, Ethiopia, leading to a balance of power in its favour. Somali analysts, for example, argue that this must have influenced the Somali government's decision on the Ogaden war.[5]

Political structures, on the other hand, provided opportunities and imposed constraints on Somalia's decision-makers. Following independence, the country experienced a 9-year parliamentary democracy, an electoral system of government made up of three branches: the legislative, the executive and an independent judiciary. Despite clan politics and other anomalies, this vibrant democracy practiced in those formative years, for example, along with the remarkable cultural and economic cohesion of the Somali society, impressed critical observers and led to the thinking that Somalia could

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[2] See A. I. Samatar, *Socialist Somalia: Rhetoric and Reality*, (London: Zed Books Ltd., 1988), p.65.
[3] Ibid, p.66.
[4] Ibid.
[5] These include Ken Menkhaus, Matt Bryden, Abdulkadir Yahya, and Roland Marchal among others, interview with Ambassador Hussein Ali Dualeh, former Somali Ambassador to Kenya and Uganda, Nairobi, September 11, 2001.

become a model for democracy in Africa.[6] Siyad Barre, on the other hand, developed a central political organ made up of military officers to run the country. Although there was corruption, nepotism and political and administrative inefficiencies throughout the Somali regimes during the study period, the basic national objective -- unity with other Somali territories -- never altered.

Foreign policy orientation

Somalia's foreign policy orientation in the period 1960-1990 can be discerned from its historical legacy notably pan-Somalism (Greater Somalia); Cold War clientelism; and the opposition between pan-Africanism and pan-Arabism. In Colonial Somalia, the Somali Youth League (SYL) had long advocated for the union of all Somalis in the Horn of Africa under one government. Also, in the early 1990s, Somali foreign policy orientation was formed by what former Somali Prime Minister Sharma'arke called 'our misfortune.' This is a situation where he likens Somalia's neighbouring communities as "...Somali kinsmen whose citizenship has been falsified by indiscriminate boundary 'arrangements."[7]

Islam, on the other hand, played a major role in the pan-Somali movement in the Horn of Africa. Religious antagonism contributed to the national consciousness since alien non-Somali governments outside the Somali borders represented alien Christian infidel.[8] While the civilian regimes in Somalia from 1960 to 1969 assumed the

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[6] See for example, A. Y. Farah, "Somalia: Modern History and the End of the 1990s," in WSP International, *Rebuilding Somalia: Issues and Possibilities for Puntland*, (London: HAAN Associates, 2001).

[7] See I. M. Lewis, *A Modern History of the Somali: Nation and State in the Horn of Africa*, 4th Ed., (Hargeisa: Btec Books, 2002), p.197.

[8] See more on this in S. Touval. *Somali Nationalism: International Politics and the Drive for Unity in the Horn of Africa*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1963), p.62.

responsibility to pursue the goal of self-determination of all the Somali people in the Horn of Africa region, Siyad Barre's military regime initially chose selective military options as opposed to dialogue thus leading to the Ogaden war and the subsequent civil war which resulted the collapse of the Somali state.

The Cold War clientelism policy orientation emanates from the earlier pan-Somalist thinking since support from outside powers was necessary in order to achieve the 'Greater Somalia' project. Initially after independence, the issue facing the civilian governments in Somalia was how to win both African and world opinion on the issue of *pan-Somalism*. First, the joining of the general Afro-Asian non-alignment movement within the UN was a major step forward. Somalia's turning to the west first to Italy, then the UK and the United States was another good step. It was only after the west differed with Somalia's project that the country turned to the east: the Soviet Union and China. Military superiority by Ethiopia and the UK's counter-insurgency support for Kenya slowed any progress Somalia would have made in the early 1960s.

Soviet assistance was, on the other hand, not enough and, when the Soviet Union differed with Somalia on its *pan-Somalism* project, it also shifted loyalty and support to rival-Ethiopia in the late 1970s. The Cold War rivalry in the Horn of Africa had a number of effects: it sparked an arms race in the region and between Somalia and Ethiopia; and it also pitted a proxy war between the two countries.[9] This level and pattern of growth in military expenditure could not have taken place if the countries of the Horn of Africa had not been able to rely on superpower patrons who provided them with increasing levels of military assistance.

[9] See R. Lyob and E. J. Keller, "US Policy in the Horn," in D. A. Bekoe, *Grappling with a Difficult Legacy in East Africa and the Horn: Confronting Challenges to Good Governance* (Boulder and London: Lynne Reinner Publishers, 2006), pp.101-125:101.

The third component of Somalia's foreign policy orientation was to be found in the opposition between pan-Africanism and pan-Arabism. Somalia's orientation was initially towards black Africa[10] as the vital *pan-Somalism* project was not to block other interests, for example development. Instead, the country developed its foreign policy towards *pan-Somalism* in terms of its desire for self-determination for all Somalis in the Horn of Africa.[11] The OAU's principles, on the other hand, also proved to be one of the greatest setbacks to the Somali cause. As a result, the country's diplomatic efforts aimed at bringing the complexities of their dilemma to the world's attention were drowned by the battles in the Horn of Africa region, leading to diplomatic isolation.

These occurrences were compounded by other factors which served to reorient Somalia's foreign policy towards the Arab world. Somalia's long history of cultural, religious and trade ties with the Arab world and their identification more with the Arabs than black Africa, especially during the military regime, was in opposition to the pan-Africanist thinking. This identity, fuelled more by the country's Arab-oriented *pan-Somalism*, was propelled by the Nasserist pan-Arabism movement. Egypt's Nasser dreamed of the establishment of an Arab-Islamic empire whose power base would be Egypt,[12] a philosophy which courted Somalia to be oriented towards the Muslim/Arab world. Since the two schools could not work hand in hand for Somalia, the country's leadership was left with a complex dilemma: choosing between the pan-African and pan-Arab movements in which it played its cards but opted for the latter.[13] This, however, did

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[10] See C. Legum and B. Lee, *Conflict in the Horn of Africa*, (London: Rex Collings, 1977), p.31.
[11] See K. G. Adar, *Kenyan Foreign Policy Behavior towards Somalia: 1963-1983*, (Lanham, New York and London: University Press of America, 1994), p.98.
[12] See J. Gabriel, "The Consequences of Nasser's Futile Dream of an Arab-Islamic Empire," *African Foreign Policy Review*, Vol. 1, No. 2., pp.43-52.
[13] Interview with Yusuf Hassan Ibrahim (Dheg), former Somali Foreign Minister, Djibouti, February 21, 2007.

not help with easing the tension but instead contributed to the continuation of war and strained and suspicious post-war relations with Somalia's neighbours.[14]

Foreign policy decision-making

Somali foreign policy decision-making processes from 1960-1969 were dominated by the ideals of the SYL and its elites, notably the old guard: Abdullahi Isse, Aden Adde and Sharma'arke. As a result, the national assembly was equally influential basically because it could elect the president and through the assembly's secret voting system could constrain the prime minister's actions. The executive, on the other hand, played a crucial role in foreign policy decision-making. For example, Mohammed Ibrahim Egal, managed to assuage the deeply hostile anti-Somali sentiments of Ethiopian officials, on the one hand, and those of Jomo Kenyatta, on the other, hence, bringing about *détente* with Somalia's neighbours and with Britain.[15]

The foreign policy decision-making process under the military regime was one that placed primacy on the executive and decisions were therefore dominated by the president himself. For example, following the elections in the 'people's parliament' where all members belonged to one party, Siyad Barre reshuffled the cabinet, abolishing the positions of the three vice president. This was followed by another reshuffle in October 1980 in which the old Supreme Revolutionary Council (SRC) was revived. This particular move resulted in three parallel and overlapping bureaucratic structures within one administration: the party's *Politburo* which exercised executive powers through its

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[14] Ibid.
[15] See for example J. Drysdale, *Stoics Without Pillows: A Way Forward for the Somaliland* (London: HAAN Associates Publishing, 2000), p.81.

central committees; the council of ministers; and the SRC leaving decision-making solely in the president's hand.[16]

While party interest lines and clan, sub-clan and sub sub-clan affiliations were central to the inner workings of the Somali regimes respectively, the decision-making process behind Somali foreign policy relied on the leaders' personalities and perceptions and the competition between various cronies and groups which had an influence on the leaders and on each other. Despite the fact that the Somali leadership had the capacity to make authoritative decisions, all the three governments under study maintained consistency with the 'Greater Somalia' issue be it in their foreign policy orientation or decision-making processes. And this is what led to conflict with the country's neighbours.

Foreign policy behaviour

Salient issues in Somalia's foreign policy behaviour

Somalia's foreign policy behaviour was a manifestation of its orientation towards the 'Greater Somalia' project. This section will analyse three key salient issues which are also the key issues emerging from the study: a) colonial legacy; b) Somali nationalism; and c) Cold war politics and rivalry

a) Colonial Legacy

Somalia's colonial legacy had fundamental implications for its foreign policy as well as for conflict with its neighbours. The colonisation of Africa, which affected most countries on the continent, was initially institutionalised by the 1884 Treaty of Berlin.

[16] Interview with Amb. Hussein Ali Dualeh, former Somali ambassador to Kenya and Uganda, Nairobi, September 11, 2001.

The heightened interest of colonial powers in the region brought about the creation of spheres of influence, either in the form of colonies or protectorates. At that time, and contrary to other African countries, Ethiopia took part in the imperial partition of the continent. As a result, the roots of the present turmoil in the Horn of Africa date back to this period when Menelik II took advantage of a number of propitious events and extended Ethiopian authority in Somali, Oromo and Afar land, thus quadrupling the Ethiopian empire by exploiting European imperial rivalry.[17]

As a result of the imperialistic expansion, Somalis lived under British, French, and Italian colonial administrations. In addition, the northern region of British colonial Kenya was mostly inhabited by Somalis, while Ethiopia claimed the traditional Somali grazing lands of the Ogaden, the Haud and the Reserve Area. Colonialism therefore had several implications for Somali foreign policy during independence. For example, Somalis' resistance to colonialism, which took the form of the *Dervish* rebellion, can strongly be argued to have laid the foundation of modern Somali nationalism. This rebellion indeed set the stage for the Somali consciousness against colonial rule and attracted large followers, especially due to Sayid Mohammed Abdulle Hassan's religious teachings which helped establish *pan-Somalism* by appealing to patriotic sentiments of Somalis as Muslims irrespective of their clan or lineage allegiance.[18] These efforts were taken over by the Somali political parties from the 1930s onwards.

Colonial legacy was also at the root of Somalia's "Greater Somalia"-based foreign policy. On this account, the constitution of independent Somalia explicitly

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[17] See D. D. Laitin and S. S. Samatar, *Somalia: Nation in Search of a State* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1987), p.52.

[18] See for example, K. G. Adar, *Kenya's Foreign Policy Behavior towards Somalia, 1963–1983* (Lanham, New York and London: University Press of America, 1994), p.87.

challenged the borders with Ethiopia, Djibouti and Kenya and these countries became the main targets of Somali foreign policy from 1960 onwards. For example, Article VI, Section 4, of the Somali Constitution (1960) reads: "The Somali Republic shall promote, by legal and peaceful means, the Union of Somali territories and encourage solidarity among the peoples of the world, and in particular among African and Islamic peoples," i.e. the 'Greater Somalia' idea.[19] Many of the problems faced by post-colonial Somali society were set in motion by the peculiar character of colonial occupation and by the nature of the resistance that it provoked.[20] European colonialism can therefore be said to have aroused Somali nationalism, one of the main reasons behind this being territorial claims.

For example, prior to the advent of colonialism in the region, the Somali people were organized in encompassing national political and judicial systems comprising of a number of semi-independent political units.[21] Some parts of Somalia did at different points in history sustain Sultanates or quasi-state polities.[22] Therefore, it was not open to effective occupation. Somalia was, however, later divided into mini-lands.

In view of this background, the regimes that came after independence argued for the adherence to the principle of self-determination. The Ogaden region, the NFD, and Djibouti were seen as units of self-determination as stipulated in Principal IV of the Annex to the UN General Assembly Resolution 1541 (XV). To the Somali government,

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[19] See the 1960 Constitution of the Somali Republic.
[20] See D. D. Laitin and S. S. Samatar, *Somalia: Nation in Search of a State*, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1987), p.53.
[21] See Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Salient Aspects of Somalia's Foreign Policy: Selected Speeches of Dr. Abdurrahman Jama Barre, Minister of Foreign Affairs – Somali Democratic Republic, in 1978.* (Mogadishu: November 1978), p.6.
[22] See R. Marchal, "A Few Provocative Remarks on Governance in Somalia," Nairobi, UNDOS Discussion paper, November 1997; See also L. Cassanelli, *The Shaping of Somali Society* (Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 1982).

this criterion may be formulated as follows: non-self governing person is the permanent population of a territory which is geographically separate and is distinct ethnically and/or culturally from the country administrating it.[23]

With regard to the UN Charter, provisions in this respect were stipulated in the preamble, guaranteeing the right of peoples to self-determination. Consequently, it can be argued that colonialism laid the foundation for a struggle for self-determination by Somalis living in other territories. Similarly, it has been argued that the "Greater Somalia" concept was never a Somali invention, but rather a British one.[24] In 1941, the British army under the East African command defeated the Italian forces in both Italian Somaliland and Ethiopia and these came under the British military administration. Except for Djibouti, this was the first time in history that all Somali-speaking populations in the Horn of Africa became subject to one colonial power.[25]

The UK foreign secretary Ernest Bevin, giving a speech at the UN in 1946, requested from the Security Council that the UK be allowed to administer all territories inhabited by the Somali-speaking people.[26] This was immediately vetoed by the Soviet delegate who accused the UK of trying to expand their colonial territories. Bevin's speech and the proposal he made before the Security Council, however, culminated in the sending of the four-power commission comprising of the US, Britain, France and the Soviet Union to ascertain the wishes of the Somali people.[27] This did not achieve the desired ends of Somalis' nor did it satisfy UK's desire for a "Greater Somalia."

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[23] See Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Salient Aspects of Somalia's Foreign Policy: Selected Speeches of Dr. Abdurrahman Jama Barre, Minister of Foreign Affairs – Somali Democratic Republic, in 1978,* (Mogadishu: November 1978), p.7.

[24] See H. A. Dualeh, *Search for a New Somali Identity* (Nairobi, 2002), p.39.

[25] Ibid.

[26] See more discussions on the Bevin Agreement in G. Ware, *Somalia: From Trust Territory to Nation, 1950-1960,* Vol. 26, No. 2 (2nd Qtr., 1965), pp. 173-185.

[27] Ibid.

Consequently, it becomes evident that the UK suggestion sparked the imagination of the Somali people, fuelling their sense of nationhood at a time when there was a lack of agreement among colonial powers which were jostling for continued influence in the Horn of Africa. These wrangles left a legacy of unmet desires and ambitions that would lay the foundation for conflict in the Horn of Africa.[28]

Prior to this, in 1936, after the conquest of Ethiopia, Italy created a "Greater Somalia" – the *Governo della Somalia* – that included the Ethiopian Ogaden and, briefly, British Somaliland. Italy thus also created the basis of *pan-Somali* nationalism or as Italians called it, *le Grande Somalia*.[29] These together with the Bevin plan, therefore, encouraged Somalis to fight for a *pan-Somali* state that transcended colonial borders.[30] The important role played by the colonial legacy in Somalia's subsequent foreign policy is hence evidenced by the development of Somali nationalism. The fact that Somalis generally regard themselves as members of a single nation, united by a common language, culture, and religion was not only a strong unifying influence, but posed challenges to the concepts of sovereignty, territorial integrity, and political independence in the Horn of Africa region. This was the root cause of conflicts and tensions between Somalia and its neighbours, mainly arising from ethnic sympathy.

Furthermore, after Italian conquest and its expulsion by Britain, the Ethiopian emperor on reclaiming his throne "set about creating and supporting an irredentist movement for the incorporation of Eritrea and Italian Somaliland into the Ethiopian

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[28] Ibid.
[29] See M. H. Mukhtar, *Historical Dictionary of Somalia: African Historical Dictionary*, (Maryland and Oxford: Scarecrow Press, 2003), p.4.
[30] See S. E. Prankhurst, *Ex-Italian Somaliland*, (New York: Philosophical Library, 1951), pp.218-260.

state."[31] In addition, Ethiopia was granted both the Ogaden and Haud regions. The Ogaden was annexed not only in the 1890s but also returned to Ethiopian administration in 1948. The area of Haud was returned to Ethiopia in February 1955 after negotiations led to the Anglo- Ethiopian Agreement in 1954.[32] Both of these incidents were accompanied by riots and inter-clan violence. This led to a foreign policy based on hostility between the two states as the Somalis were resentful for the occupation of these areas. Although Ethiopia was spared incurring the loss of Ogaden and Haud, it can be argued that the resentment that these actions arose played a crucial role in awakening political interest in the protectorate and stimulating the growth of the nationalist movement. This legacy underlies the inevitability as well as the intractability of conflict between Somalia and Ethiopia.

The impact of the colonial legacy is also evident in the relations between the two countries in terms of the question of boundary lines, which are not only a colonial construct but are also arbitrary. Somalia's approach to the border problem is conditioned by its commitment to the principle that all Somali inhabited territory ought to be placed under one Somali government. The Ethiopians, on the other hand, tended to view the disputes not as isolated cases of unfortunate misunderstanding but as manifestations of Somalia's expansionist ambitions. The boundary problem, however, seems to have been influenced more by the rivalries among the European powers than by local conditions in the Horn of Africa.[33]

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[31] See L. Lata, "Extra Regional Inputs in Promoting Regional Security in the Horn of Africa," *Amani Africa, The Journal of Africa Peace Forum*, Vol. 1, Issue 2, pp.7-33:15.

[32] See D. Ottaway and M. Ottaway, *Ethiopia: Empire in Revolution*, (New York and London: African Publishing Company, 1978), p.162; See also S. Touval, *Somalia Nationalism: International Policy and the Drive for Unity in the Horn of Africa*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1963), p.157.

[33] Ibid, p.155.

The hostility between Somalia and Ethiopia was also exacerbated by Somali claims to the French territory of the Afars and Issas (TFAI) which was a direct source of conflict between them as the port of Djibouti was the terminus of the only rail link between Addis Ababa and the Red Sea. Similarly, Ethiopia claimed both Eritrea and Somaliland on historical, ethnic and geographical grounds.[34] In reality, however, it mainly wanted to prevent foreign control of the coastal areas due to its desire to maintain direct access to the sea. This legacy tended to bring about hatred towards the Amhara rule in Ethiopia and their historical expansionist policies that were evident even in the late 1950s in the emperor's effort to fight irredentism with counter-irredentism, thus dismissing the viability of a "Greater Somalia" and advising Somalis to emulate the Eritreans by "rejoining their mother country."[35]

The consequence of this legacy was that the two states not only sought to increase their preparedness for war, but also engaged in war, both in 1963-64 and in 1977-78. Furthermore, this also led the Ogaden dissidents to become attracted to the idea of an independent and united Somalia. This was also the case with the adjacent Oromos, whose struggle became intertwined with that of the Ogaden, leading early on to the creation of the WSLF movement. Moreover, independent Somalia became the most consistent supporter of the Eritrean movements who were determined to undo the annexation of their country by the Ethiopian empire. Therefore, the two countries fought proxy wars by supporting insurgent groups against each other. This colonial legacy also influenced the

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[34] See M. Wubneh and Y. Abate, *Ethiopia: Transition and Development in the Horn of Africa*, (Colorado: Westview Press, 1988), p.164.

[35] See L. Lata, "*Extra Regional Inputs in Promoting Regional Security in the Horn of Africa*," *Amani Africa*, The Journal of Africa Peace Forum, Vol. 1, Issue 2, pp.7-33:18.

foreign policy orientation of both countries. It also made the Horn of Africa a cluster of dangerous conflicts.

b) Somali Nationalism

Somalia's proclamation of its intention to reclaim "unredeemed territories" became a major determinant of the country's foreign policy orientation. It also had a major impact on the type of relations it had with its neighbours as well as on the general course of events in the Somali republic. Presiding over a society where agro-pastoralists ignored fixed boundaries and whose traditional political economy depended on a dispersion of resources, Somali leaders became obsessed with changing the existing boundaries of northeast Africa to concentrate Somalis under a single government.[36]

As a result, unification into an even "Greater Somalia" remained the central moral pillar of the country's national consciousness. To non-Somalis, however, the unification dream seemed unjustified and led to the alienation of Somalia from the rest of the continent. Somalia's irredentist claims, to a large extent, also informed its foreign policy of bonding with superpowers whom Somalia could use – due to its leverage as a strategically important country in the Horn of Africa – to obtain the weaponry it felt it needed to achieve its aims.

Alliances with the Soviet Union and later on with the US became a means to an end for Somalia, allowing it to gain a military advantage over its neighbours. It follows that Somalia's pre-eminent position in the region allowed the country to sidestep the inhibitions of obeying the do's and don'ts of territorial integrity in pursuing its foreign

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[36] See C. Geshekter, "The Death of Somalia in Historical Perspective," in H. M. Adam and R. Ford, (eds.), in *Mending the Rips in the Sky: Options for Somali Communities in the 21st Century*, (Asmara: The Red Sea Press, Inc., 1997), pp.65-98:74.

policy and relations. To Somalia, establishing a long-lost territorial identity was more important than allowing part of her people to be incorporated into other non-Muslim countries.[37] Efforts in obtaining armaments were thus a realization that the destiny of a "Greater Somalia" lay in the country's, and its leadership's, own hands. The implications of this was increased militarization of the Somali state and the Horn of Africa region; and the subjugation of the Somali economy to the attainment of this ultimate goal.

As more arms flowed into the country, the confidence of the Somali leadership was bolstered and the resolve to forge ahead meant that little would be spared in achieving this goal. Viewed from a different angle, Somalia became increasingly predisposed towards a conflict-oriented foreign policy behaviour. It deviated from the normal pattern of behaviour to assume patterns that did not go unnoticed in the Kenyan and Ethiopian capitals. In the eyes of Somalia, it had identified what the Somali leadership saw as a colonial injustice for which the rest of the world showed little concern, but which was fundamental to the country's own existence.[38]

Pan-Somalism and conflict in the Horn of Africa

Bolstered by overwhelming popular support, the Somali government achieved the legitimacy needed to forge ahead with its irredentist proclamations. This three-decade period witnessed unwavering support for *pan-Somalism* whose double-edged sword claimed two Somali governments that were eventually perceived as selling out to the ideal of a unified Somalia.[39] The rigidity of the Somali position and its subsequent militarization put the country on the path towards conflict with Kenya and Ethiopia. The

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[37] Ibid.
[38] See for example, A. Kinfe, *Somalia Calling: The Crisis of Statehood and the Quest for Peace*, (Addis Ababa: EIIPD, 2002), p.12.
[39] Ibid, pp.15-27.

possibilities of conflict became more likely as communication failures and mutually felt fear and misperceptions combined to create a state of tension between Ethiopia and Kenya on the one hand and Somalia on the other.

As a result, what had initially been a Somali expression of its intention to reunite the Somali nation under one Somali flag turned out to be an agent of internationalisation of conflict. It became increasingly difficult to isolate the internal Somali conflict from the wider conflict with its neighbours. Attempts to resolve the Kenya-Somalia and the Ethiopia-Somalia conflicts should have conclusively ended with the tackling of the causes of the economic decline and declining levels of political accountability in Somalia. Instead, the interdependence of the Somali situation with the prevailing conditions in the international system further contributed to the intensification of conflict in the Horn of Africa conflict system, whose epicentre was in Somalia.[40]

Somali nationalism – or irredentism – left few options for dialogue for the three conflicting countries, thereby preventing them from making concessions without appearing to jeopardize their overall respective positions. The persistence of the conflict effectively attests to this as Somalia's policy of non-compromise on the issue dealt a blow to any OAU mediation efforts and the only real "ripe moment" for negotiations came with her crushing defeat by Ethiopia in 1977.[41]

It has been observed that *pan-Somalism* impacted negatively on the conflict situation in the region. The country's belligerent stance indeed won it little support across the region and dampened any efforts at seeking a solution to this attempted radical re-

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[40] See A. I. Samatar, "Under Siege: Blood, Power and the Somali State," in P. Anyang Nyong'o, *Arms and Daggers in the Heart of Africa: Studies on Internal Conflicts* (Nairobi: African Academy of Sciences, 1993), p.82-85.

[41] See J. M. Ghalib, *The Cost of Dictatorship: The Somali Experience* (New York: Lilian Barber Press Inc, 1995), p.112.

ordering of the political map of the Horn of Africa. The irredentist pronouncements also thrust onto the international stage the then delicate issue of self-determination at a time when many African states had just achieved independence and were intent on protecting it, along with the inherited vestige of colonialism that was the colonial boundaries. What had been initially a Somali pronouncement sucked in its neighbours and became the central issue in the conflict that opposed them to Somalia.

Subsequently, this foreign policy of annexation triggered a response from Somalia's perceived enemies, notably Ethiopia and Kenya. The foreign policy processes in the Horn of Africa, particularly by Ethiopia and Kenya, had to react to this threat to their territorial integrity. There was a deliberate attempt both in Kenya and Ethiopia to isolate Somalia as the two not only united to sign a defence treaty but also sold their ideas to the OAU, NATO and even to the superpowers.[42] As a result, Somalia engaged in at least four "wars of liberation," in addition to numerous border clashes, which all failed and eventually caused the dissolution of the state itself, so that there came to be no sense of Somalism, let alone *pan-Somalism.*[43]

Pan-Somalism and the internal conflict situation

In addition to creating external conflicts, the national preoccupation with Somali nationalism, or irredentism and the subsequent search for national reunification claimed an undue portion of the nation's attention, thereby draining energies and resources badly needed for internal development into fruitless external ventures. The *pan-Somali* sentiments eventually became the country's nemesis when attempts to hold the Somali

[42] See I. M. Lewis, *A Modern History of Somalia: Nation and State in the Horn of Africa*, 4th Ed., (Hargeisa: Btec Books, 2002), pp.236-239.
[43] See M. H. Mukhtar, "Historical Dictionary of Somalia," *African Historical Dictionary Series*, (Maryland Oxford: Scarecrow Press, 2003), p.182.

state together failed as the different clans became absorbed into bitter rivalries which culminated in the collapse of the state.

Efforts allegedly aimed at uniting the Somali people under one territory were never complemented by a domestic policy that would seek to create a single Somali identity devoid of clan rivalries. For example, Siyad Barre's policy of *nomenklatura* politicized institutions that would have functioned best under the leadership of professionals.[44] Instead, positions in public institutions were determined by clan allegiances, perpetuating corruption, economic mismanagement and nepotism. The mirage of a united Somalia that spoke one language, shared one history, and professed one religion soon became but a shattered dream. The civilian administrations' nepotism, widespread corruption, and political and administrative inefficiencies and the military regime's manipulation of the clan divisions within Somali society negated the desire to unite the country under a "Greater Somalia."

Pan-Somalism, originally being the major determinant of foreign policy, was abused by Barre to clamp down on domestic detractors and hence prolong the stranglehold on state power. The chief foreign policy instrument of the military regime was a state policy of premeditated repression to stifle any internal dissent.[45] Furthermore, Siyad Barre's regime used pan-Somali pronouncements to direct Somali attention away from the internal demands and problems plaguing the country.[46] With the same master stroke, Barre intended to regain the popularity and legitimacy which were declining as a

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[44] See H. M. Adam, "Somalia: Personal Rule, Military Rule and Militarism," in E. Hutchful and A. Bathily, *Military and Militarism in Africa* (Dakar: CODESRIA, 1998), p.378.

[45] See for example, A. I. Samatar, "Under Siege: Blood, Power and the Somali State," in P. Anyang Nyong'o, *Arms and Daggers in the Heart of Africa: Studies on Internal Conflicts* (Nairobi: African Academy of Sciences, 1993), pp.67-100:86.

[46] See H. M. Adam, et al, *Removing Barricades in Somalia: Options for Peace and Rehabilitation* (Washington: USIP Press, 1998), p.3.

result of the dismal performance of Somali forces on the warfront, the widespread belief that Barre's *détente* with Ethiopia and Kenya was betraying the pan-Somalism cause and the increasingly repressive nature of the regime.

The Somali people were denied the chance to influence the decisions of the government and they generally became frustrated in their attempts to change this situation. The power to decide over the distribution of resources within Somalia solely lay with the government who manipulated this prerogative to further instigate structural violence through selective appointments, not only in the public sector but also in the military.[47]

The military regime's policy of instigating divisions among the people, and the employment of the military to instil fear and subjugate the populace, combined with indirect violence – insofar as decision-making and resource distribution were concerned – brought the structural violence closer to the level of manifest violence. In effect, this led to direct violence becoming institutionalized. Also, the Somali government came up with vendetta-like attempts to induce loyalty towards the military regime, moving away from tackling the simmering discontent.

Somalia's frontier disputes were, on the other hand, monopolising a huge chunk of the country's national wealth and foreign infusions of aid were not effectively devoted to improving the country's economic welfare.[48] Poverty bred further discontent, which was not tackled by the government as the *pan-Somalism* drive had become an obsession

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[47] See K. Abraham, *Somalia Calling: The Crisis of Statehood and the Quest for Peace*, (Addis Ababa: EIIPD, 2002), pp.15-27.

[48] See for example, H. M. Adam, "Somalia: Personal Rule, Military Rule and Militarism," in E. Hutchful and A. Bathily, *Military and Militarism in Africa* (Dakar: CODESERIA, 1998), p.376; See also C. Geshekter, "The Death of Somalia in Historical Perspective," in H. M. Adam and R. Ford, (eds.), in *Mending the Rips in the Sky: Options for Somali Communities in the 21st Century*, (Asmara: The Red Sea Press, Inc., 1997), pp.65-98:78.

and an excuse to demand total and undivided support from all Somalis. As a result, conflict became widespread as clan divisions, coupled with poor economic conditions, and the repressiveness of the regime meant that few attempts were made to tackle these problems. Similarly, clan animosity intersected with class antagonisms to accentuate divisions within Somali society. They were also taken advantage of by the military regime in its campaigns to pacify any opposition. The lack of accountability and the expendability of military careers contributed, to a certain extent, to the proliferation of arms and ammunition in the Somali state. The process of militarization had also instituted a culture of approaching internal and state affairs through the use of force in disregard of peaceful and diplomatic solutions.

Eventually, and with the help of easily available weaponry, this militaristic style of operation eventually led to the widespread violence meted out by the government and reciprocated by opposition movements that turned into rebel movements[49] and as earlier observed, the Somali national state was poorly grounded in the sentiments of the general population, except with regards to external threats. The militarization of the Somali republic, combined with the government's crushing military attacks on opponents, over time turned the national psyche into one of violence. It became established that force was the only solution to problems ailing the country. The domestic political structure advanced the position of the Somali leadership, particularly Barre's position as pre-eminent and unchallenged. As discontentment and demands on the regime were met with hostility, the spiral of violence only added to the downward slide towards conflict and war.

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[49] See for example, I. M. Lewis, *A Modern History of the Somali: Nation and State in the Horn of Africa*, 4th Ed., (Hargeisa: Btec Books, 2002), p.252.

The impact of the Ogaden War on conflict in Somalia

The Ogaden war had far-reaching implications on Somalia's irredentist claims. First of all, the military debacle shattered all hopes of achieving a "Greater Somalia" and instead signalled the demise of *pan-Somalism*.[50] The defeat led to widespread disillusionment and discontent over the Somali government's failure to realize the Somali dream. The government's attempt to save face by signing treaties with Kenya and Ethiopia, renouncing Somalia's irredentist claims, though effectively ending conflict with its neighbours, triggered Siyad Barre's downfall. Disconnect between Barre's foreign policy and the public mood was demonstrated in the intensification of armed opposition movements, as was witnessed in the latter years of the military regime.

The colossal amount spent on the war effort and other internal military adventures indirectly led to the impoverishment of the people.[51] This conflict scenario of structural violence became complicated further by the new phenomenon of Ogadeni refugees from Ethiopia. In northern Somalia, grazing disputes between the Ogadeni and the Isaq herders boiled over into antagonisms over rural and urban lifestyle differences. There was also tension over the issue of loyalty vs. opposition to the government. Inter-clan conflict was thus promoted by the government. Throughout the 1980s, the government's base of support narrowed severely as Somalia's death spasms intensified.[52] The manipulation of clan differences and the repression of "dissident" clans backfired with the rise of clan-based opposition movements. Taking advantage of the militarization of the Somali society by the government, these opposition movements became, in turn, increasingly

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[50] See C. Geshekter, "The Death of Somalia in Historical Perspective," in H. M. Adam and R. Ford, (eds.), in *Mending the Rips in the Sky: Options for Somali Communities in the 21st Century*, (Asmara: The Red Sea Press, Inc., 1997), p.65-98:75.
[51] Ibid.
[52] Ibid.

armed and militarized. Clan resistance fused with the popular warrior traditions of the Somali people to dampen the prospects of peace in Somalia.[53]

The weakening of the military regime became conspicuous with the disappearance of Soviet economic aid and technical assistance. This led to a rethinking of the "Greater Somalia"-based foreign policy. Confronted with the increasing number of insurgencies, coupled with the Somali government's weakening military capabilities *vis-à-vis* Ethiopia and the OAU's opposition to Somali irredentist claims, the Somali government was finally forced to reconsider its territorial ambitions.[54] This also had implications for conflict in the Horn of Africa. The *détente* with Somalia's neighbours de-escalated the inter-state conflict, but opened and at the same time heightened the intra-state conflicts as the entire Somali leadership were branded as "traitors." The economic squalor brought about by the over-expenditure on military expeditions also heightened tensions within Somalia.

c) Cold War politics and rivalry

Somalia's foreign policy decision-making during the Cold War was to a large extent affected by developments in the international system. The period 1960-1990 witnessed important milestones in the evolution of superpower rivalry that sucked in this nascent independent African state.[55] The events on the international arena had a major bearing on conflicts in Africa. During the Cold War, both the US and the Soviet Union vied for influence and control over Somalia. Their actions were also influenced by the

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[53] See H. M. Adam, "Somalia: Personal Rule, Military Rule and Militarism," in E. Hutchful and A. Bathily, *Military and Militarism in Africa* (Dakar: CODESERIA, 1998), p.388.
[54] Interview with Matt Bryden, ICG regional analyst, Nairobi, April 22, 2005.
[55] See R. W. Copson, *African Wars and Prospects for Peace* (New York and London: ME Sharpe, Inc., 1994), p.103.

desire by these rivals to minimize each other's influence across the region and avoid any subsequent unchallenged marches into neighbouring countries.

In turn, the strategic concerns of the superpowers effectively determined Somalia's position as a subservient, client state and Somalia's foreign policy decision-making process was subsequently affected by the geopolitics of the Cold War that centred on its strategic value.[56] To Somalia's long-term disadvantage, this was at the expense of her economic prosperity. The country had gained independence against the backdrop of the Cold War rivalry and the initial lukewarm relationship between Somalia and the superpowers would later change to one of symbiotic acquiescence.[57]

Somalia's absorption into Cold War geopolitics had significant ramifications for its foreign policy decision-making. First of all, systemic variables became increasingly crucial in determining the country's foreign policy inclinations. For instance, Somalia's adoption of "scientific socialism" as its professed national ideology was out of sheer expediency meant to get Soviet approval and support, and thus attract more armaments. In addition, Somalia's instruments of foreign policy became rank-ordered, with the military's position being accentuated. The inflow of armaments was meant to prop up the ruling class and cushion it from any internal or external threats to its stability as well as ensure its continued subservience to the Superpowers. In addition to the Cold War rivalry and its politics, the Somali people found in Kenya, Ethiopia and Djibouti, therefore also had a bearing on Somalia's foreign policy.

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[56] Ibid.
[57] See C. M. B. Utete, "Foreign Policy and the Developing State," in O. Ojo et al., *African International Relations* (Lagos: Longman Group, 1985), pp.43-51.

Somalia sought to upset the regional *status quo* by attempting to create a "Greater Somalia" that would see it become arguably the largest country in Africa.[58] This was a threat not only to Somalia's neighbours but also to the OAU principles of territorial integrity, sovereignty and political independence of its member states. It can therefore be surmised that Somali foreign policy was, as a result of the Cold War, belligerent, to say the least and its on this basis that it therefore became imperative that Somalia build a strong military in order to be successful in any military adventure; thus the importance of the Superpowers.[59] Public opinion, in turn, bolstered this drive for a "Greater Somalia" and the whole nation was in unison in demanding a purposive and deliberate effort to bring the Somali "Diaspora" under one independent state. For example, the SYL leadership galvanized the nation into supporting the drive for a territorially larger Somalia. The political structure of the Somali Republic, especially after the 1969 military coup, also gave the executive immense powers in foreign policy decision-making.

The thirst for a "Greater Somalia" would become subsumed in the clientele relationship between Somalia and her superpower allies. This period therefore saw the international system play an important role in determining Somalia's foreign policy. It became necessary for Somalia to seek alliances from states from which it would expand its military and economic power in its desire for a new territorial identity. Barre, however, sought to diversify his diplomatic and foreign aid options by allying himself with the Arab League.[60]

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[58] See J. M. Ghalib, *The Cost of Dictatorship: The Somali Experience*, (New York: Lilian Barber Press Inc., 1995), p.126.
[59] See H. M. Adam, "Somalia: Personal Rule, Military Rule and Militarism," in E. Hutchful and A. Bathily, *Military and Militarism in Africa* (Dakar: CODESERIA, 1998), p.379.
[60] Ibid, p.368.

The resultant foreign policy during this thirty-year period had a profound effect on conflict within Somalia and with its neighbours. The scale of warfare experienced over this thirty-year period in Somalia and the Horn of Africa region would have been unsustainable without an arms inflow measurable in millions of small arms, thousands of tanks and other heavy weapons and thousands of sophisticated aircraft.[61] The Ogaden war, for example, was fought between two states that were both, at different points in time, overwhelmingly armed by the Soviet Union.[62]

Somalia's constitution effectively transformed Somali nationalism from an expression of solidarity with the post-colonial independent state to a foreign policy of annexation that would only stoke the fire of conflict with its neighbours.[63] The desire to create a "Greater Somalia" was by extension an expression of the country's intent to challenge Ethiopia's hegemonic role and dwarf her western neighbour.[64] This could only be achieved through manipulating interested superpowers, an art that Ethiopia had perfected, to the extent of being on the ascendancy militarily in the region. This state of antagonism did little to promote good neighbourliness and eroded any willingness to co-operate in economic or social spheres. For instance Somalia's support for the *Shifta* placed the country in conflict with Kenya,[65] which received help from the UK rather than being involved in Cold War rivals.

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[61] See P. Heinze, *The Horn of Africa: From War to Peace*, (London: Macmillan, 1991).
[62] See for example, R. G. Patman, *The Soviet Union in the Horn of Africa*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp.573-579.
[63] See D. D. Laitin and S. S. Samatar, *Somalia: Nation in Search of a State*, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1987), p.134.
[64] See C. Clapham, "The Horn of Africa: A Conflict Zone," in O. Furley, (ed.), *Conflict in Africa*, (New York: Taurius Academic Studies, 1995), pp.72-91:78.
[65] See for example, A. Simons, "Somalia: A Regional Security Dilemma," in E. J. Keller and D. Rothchild, (eds.), *Africa in the New International Order: Rethinking State Sovereignty and Regional Security*, (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1996), pp.71-84.

Conclusions

Despite the fact that the objective of a state's foreign policy is to advance its national interest – and by extension its domestic policy – in the case of Somalia, this policy was overtly belligerent and could not promote peaceful co-existence with its neighbours. Not only did this policy put Somalia at loggerheads with her neighbours, it also challenged the OAU and other international institutions that would have been useful in mediating and preventing the subsequent intra and inter-state conflict. Somalia's irredentist claims, its support for rebel movements and active role in the militarization of the Horn of Africa region jeopardized the country's standing within the OAU. The failed efforts at mediating Somalia's conflict with Ethiopia, for example, were a result of the mistrust held by other states.

It took a catastrophic loss to Ethiopia in the Ogaden War before Somalia could gradually adopt a policy of rapprochement with her neighbours. The result was a thaw in relations between Somalia and its erstwhile enemies, Kenya and Ethiopia. This conciliatory policy of détente gave room for Somalia to engage in diplomatic exchanges that had been previously impossible since Somalia had failed to acknowledge the positions of its neighbours. While this contributed to lessening tension between states, this Somali overture and the resultant peace agreement with its two neighbours were rejected by the people, especially by armed groupings.

This rejection demonstrated the disconnect between the leadership of the military regime and the public as far as foreign policy decision-making is concerned. Somalia's foreign policy – together with those of other key major players – can be judged to have promoted the simmering conflict situation between Somalia and its neighbours; these

foreign policies became drivers of conflict and added to the foundation laid by the historical legacy and other key factors such as Cold War politics.

CHAPTER SEVEN
CONCLUSIONS

The study has made a number of conclusions. At the most general level, the study has shown that foreign policy orientations are important influences on armed conflict. The 'Greater Somalia' oriented foreign policy of Somalia led to preparations for war, primarily with Ethiopia but also with Kenya. Indirectly, it contributed to militarization which also increased the likelihood that the militarized state would seek recourse to war as a means of achieving its objectives. The observation that foreign policy orientation can produce conflict is not only self-evident, but it is often overlooked in current research on the sources of armed conflict in the Horn of Africa and elsewhere.

Somalia's foreign policy orientation also led to a security dilemma in the Horn of Africa which continues into the present. Somalia's claim to the NFD, the Ogaden and the whole of coastal Djibouti (before it became independent) sowed the seeds of suspicion between the country and its neighbours.[1] Consequently, it exacerbated a regional arms race and dependence on external actors to ensure their own security. For example, Djibouti depended heavily on France to protect itself from external aggression, especially from Somalia and Ethiopia.[2] As part of this, France has its largest overseas contingent of military forces positioned in Djibouti, by virtue of a cooperation agreement signed with Djiboutian authorities on the day it achieved independence, in 1977. Close to three thousand troops, together with the Djiboutian armed forces, ensure the security of the

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[1] See for example I. M. Lewis, *A Modern History of Somalia: Nation and State in the Horn of Africa* (London and New York: Longman, 1980): See also I. M. Lewis, "The Dynamics of Nomadism: Prospects for Sedentarization and Social Change," in T. Monot (ed.), *Pastoralism in Tropical Africa* (London: 1975).

2 Interview with Amb. Ismail Goulal, Djibouti's Special Envoy to the Somali peace process, Nairobi, September 11, 2003. See also the *Framework Partnership Document: France - Djibouti (2006-2010).*

country.[3] Ethiopia for its part looked for help from the US and later from the Soviet Union; Kenya depended on Britain for military assistance; while Somalia depended first on the US, then on the Soviet Union before it later on switched to the US again.[4]

Interestingly, Somali irredentism in the 1970s and 1980s did not produce armed conflict with Kenya and Djibouti, but only with Ethiopia.[5] Why Somali irredentism would have this selective impact, producing both warfare and subsequent skirmishes with one neighbour but relatively stable relations with two others, may be best answered with reference to domestic political calculations. For Kenya, one possible explanation is that following the failed *Shifta* war of the mid-1960s, and the Egal administration's pursuit of *détente* with Kenya, the portion of the Somali Kenyan population which had supported the *Shifta* war and Somali irredentism subsequently felt betrayed by the Somali government, believing they had borne all of the costs of an adventurist foreign policy which was abandoned when pressure on Somalia grew.[6] Thereafter, Somali Kenyans grew disenchanted with Somali irredentism and, without a strong local base, Somali irredentist claims on Kenyan territory were pointless.

Likewise, in the micro-state of Djibouti, local enthusiasm for Somali irredentism among the portion of the Djiboutian population which is Somali (the Issa sub-clan) was likely muted, as they had more to gain by sharing or controlling power in their own state than in becoming a small fraction of the population in a 'Greater Somalia.' By contrast, Barre's government was heavily populated by Somalis of Ethiopian origin, most of whom fled to Somalia in search of education and jobs in the 1960s. This has also

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[3] Ibid.
[4] See M. Ottaway, *Soviet and American Influence in the Horn of Africa* (New York: Praeger, 1982), p.119.
[5] See J. Drysdale, *The Somalia Dispute* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1964), p.122.
[6] Interview with Deqow Sanbul, former NFDLF leader, Garissa, October 21, 2004.

produced a much stronger internal constituency in Somalia for military incursion into the Ogaden region in 1977-78 when the local Somali resistance forces appeared poised to win liberation from a temporarily weakened Ethiopian government.[7]

In the longer term, region-wide suspicion of the Somali state's ambitions – especially on the part of the Ethiopian government – led Ethiopia to embrace a policy which either undermines promising attempts at state revival (i.e. the former TNG of 2000-2002) or seeks to tightly control transitional governments which emerge (i.e. the current TFG). Ethiopia's reluctance to allow a strong, autonomous Somali state to re-emerge is in some measure due to its fear that a revived irredentist agenda will accompany the revived state. This is a significant finding. It also suggests that irredentist foreign policies can have long-lasting impact on regional state behaviour, contributing to the perpetuation of a regional security dilemma even when the irredentist policy is dormant and the state making that claim – Somalia -- is in a condition of complete collapse. For example, on September 2003, former Kenyan President Daniel arap Moi said one of the drawbacks in the Somali peace process was the regional suspicion that a united Somalia might pursue its 'expansionist dreams.' Speaking at the American National Defense University in Washington, D.C., President Moi said some of the countries neighbouring Somalia feared that a re-united and prosperous Somalia might resurrect its early claims.[8] In addition, the sensitive issue of unsettled border areas (particularly between Somalia and Ethiopia) and irredentist and counter-irredentism

7 See M. Ottaway, *Soviet and American Influence in the Horn of Africa* (New York: Praeger, 1982), p.119.
8 Interview with Ambassador Bethwell Kiplagat, April 22, 2008, Nairobi.

policies of neighbouring governments not only led to frequent clashes, but also to militarization in the Horn of Africa region.[9]

Furthermore, the foreign policy of pan-Arabism that led Somalia to join the Arab League influenced conflict, especially with Ethiopia. This is due to the fact that Somalia benefited from Arab military aid, and because Somalia's pro-Arab policies aroused Ethiopia's historic fear of Islamic encirclement. Though this fear was misplaced – Somalia's principal Arab patron in the 1980s, Saudi Arabia, was more interested in weaning Somalia away from the Soviet camp than in pursuing an Islamist foreign policy[10] – it nonetheless heightened Ethiopian fears about the security threat Somalia might pose both at the time and in the future.

Islam, on the other hand, has had an important role in forging nationhood among Somalis who are Muslims.[11] The Cold War, on the other hand, also influenced regional conflict in several ways: it provided the hostile states with arms, weapons and military training; it provided an ideological justification and a geo-political logic for war (with both superpowers concerned to prove to clients worldwide that they were a reliable source of support); and, it led to proxy wars that also included foreign armed forces, for instance, Soviet Union, Cuban, Yemeni and Libyan forces during the Ogaden War.[12]

The study demonstrates the impact of organisations such as the former OAU and the UN in deterring armed conflict. The former OAU's position safeguarding the sanctity of colonial borders and rejecting irredentist claims isolated Somalia diplomatically within

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[9] Ethiopia's security concerns in Somalia are spelt out well in its foreign policy and strategy towards Somalia. See "Ethiopia's Foreign Policy Towards Somalia," *Foreign Affairs and National Security Policy and Strategy*, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa at http://www.mfa.gov.et

[10] See M. Ottaway, *Soviet and American Influence in the Horn of Africa* (New York: Praeger, 1982), p.119.

[11] Interview with Aw Jama Omar Isse, Somali historian, Eldoret, December 12, 2002.

[12] See J. Drysdale, *The Somalia Dispute* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1964), p.122.; See also A. I. Samatar, "Ethiopian Federalism: Autonomy versus Control in the Somali Region," *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 25, No. 6, 2004., pp.1131-1154:1136.

the continent and greatly hampered its efforts to reclaim Somali-inhabited territories. The study also demonstrates that global geopolitics feature prominently in the shaping of Somali foreign policy -- and those of other major players -- as a result of Somalia's strategic position.[13] Somalia is placed at a geo-strategically important position between the Horn of Africa and the Arab peninsula. Historically this needle eye meant good trade connections and relative prosperity.[14] It is also clear that Somalia's foreign policy was not shaped by ideology – its rhetorical commitment to 'scientific socialism' should in theory have made it an ally of the revolutionary Marxist government in Ethiopia, a scenario that the Soviet Union sought in vain to promote among the two 'fraternal socialist brothers.' Instead, nationalist-inspired irredentism prevailed, even at the cost of Somalia's loss of Soviet patronage, a loss which eventually led to Somalia's devastating defeat in the 1977-1978 Ogaden war.[15]

Though this study focuses on pre-1991 foreign policy and conflict in Somalia, it is impossible not to consider the implications of these findings on the current, prolonged crisis that the country continues to undergo. Despite all the commonalities which bound the Somali people together – a shared national and ethnic identity, language, religion, and pastoral culture – Somalia has been wracked by civil war and division for over nineteen years. The general findings from this study suggest that -- in addition to foreign policy as a driver of conflict -- some causes of previous conflicts, including colonial legacy, the legacy of the Cold War politics, regional rivalries and proxy wars, and the politics of

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[13] See A. Weber, "Islam and Symbolic Politics in Somalia," in M. Asseburg and D. Brumberg (eds.), *The Challenge of Islamists for EU and US Policies: Conflict, Stability and Reform*, (Berlin: SWP and USIP, 2007), pp.37-43:41; See also UNDP and UNESCO, *An Atlas for Somalis*, UNDP and UNESCO Somalia, First Edition, 2004.

[14] Ibid.

[15] See for example I. M. Lewis, *A Pastoral Democracy: A Study of Pastoralism and Politics among the Northern Somali of the Horn of Africa*, (London: James Curry, 1999).

regime survival and personal rule of authoritarian leaders and warlords in both Somalia and the region, may also all serve as useful points of departure for assessing the current conflict in Somalia.

The fires of nationalism were constantly fuelled throughout the colonial period, not only by Somali nationalists, but also by various colonial powers who, through words and deeds, came to legitimize the concept of 'Greater Somalia.' Colonial Italy's Mussolini, for example, saw *Le Grande Somalo* as the jewel of Italian East Africa, hence justifying Italy's invasion of Ethiopia and the liberation of Somalia.[16] The same applies with Colonial Britain as was clearly seen in the Bevin Agreement which advocated for the formation of a 'Greater Somalia.' Similarly, as the Somali diplomat-turned-scholar Osman argued Somalis, just like Germans, Vietnamese and Yemenis, have dreams of unification of the territories where their people reside in order to ensure integrated livelihood (pastures) of these people.[17] The current Somali conflict therefore presents a complex web of issues, interests and concerns that should inform a refocus of foreign policy priorities and preventive diplomatic measures in the Horn of Africa.[18]

Furthermore, current political developments in Somalia and in the Horn of Africa sub-region provide the best background to understand the complexity of the situation in Somalia and its effects on the region's stability and development. It is also best to explain the relationship between foreign policy and conflict in Somalia in the Horn of Africa context. Similarly, the present regional picture, even after almost nineteen years of state collapse in Somalia, is one that forces regional foreign policy and conflict concerns to

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[16] See E. J. Keller, *Revolutionary Ethiopia: From Empire to People's Republic*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988). p.156.

[17] See M. O. Omar, *Somalia: Nation Driven to Despair* (New Delhi: Somali Publications Ltd, 1990), p.26.

[18] For more on preventive diplomacy see B. Boutros-Ghali, *An Agenda for Peace*, (New York: United Nations, 1992).

continue to play themselves out – often violently – within Somalia.[19] Such regional tensions have often been essentially replicated by political cleavages inside the country and the tendency of regional – and of late international – powers to use local militias to advance their goals.[20] While it can be tempting to portray some of these tensions as a 'clash of civilizations' between a highland, Christian Ethiopian leadership and a lowland Muslim bloc that combines Somalis, Arabs and other ethnic groups, the reality is more complex.[21] Somalia's relationship with Ethiopia is very uneven today, with some areas reviling their neighbour and others looking to it for support. The roles of the Arab states are diverse, while those of Djibouti, Kenya, and Eritrea do not fit easily into the Ethiopian-Arab dispute over Somalia.

Despite the *Shifta* war and the 'Greater Somalia' notion, the Ogaden war has been the epicentre of the conflicts in the Horn of Africa during the study period. In this context, the study contends that the conflicts between Ethiopia and Somalia were perpetuated by the contradictory bases of the two countries' statehood. This is because Ethiopia is an ethnically mixed, multi-national state, while Somalia is largely homogeneous nation-state.[22] The struggle (therefore) to achieve independence for, and potentially union with, the remaining Somali communities, especially those under Ethiopian rule, remains an abiding national interest for Somalia.[23]

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[19] See "Somalia: Countering Terrorism in a Failed State," Nairobi/Brussels, *ICG Africa Report* No. 45, 23 May 2002., p.8.
[20] Ibid.
21 Ibid; See also more about the Huntingtonian theory in S. P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs*, 1993.
[22] See for example I. M. Lewis, *A Modern History of Somalia: Nation and State in the Horn of Africa* (London and New York: Longman, 1980).
[23] Ibid.

While "the ineluctable decline of Somalia over the latter half of the 20th century, the failure of UN-sanctioned interventions and the unsuccessful attempts at reconstituting a centralized state could have been written in stone,"[24] the foreign policies of the region, particularly those of Somalia, Ethiopia and Kenya, bear their share of the blame for what has happened in Somalia. And in line with this, in the long run, one of the main drivers of conflict in the pre-1990 period – Somali irredentism – may continue to fester as a region-wide source of tensions. Even as Somalia's efforts to gain control of Somali-inhabited zones of Kenya and Ethiopia failed entirely, the basic principle on which the OAU and the rest of the world objected to Somali irredentism is increasingly being eroded. More specifically, the colonially-imposed boundaries are no longer sacrosanct, either in theory or practice. In theory, a growing number of policy-makers and academics are questioning whether the redrawing of certain colonial boundaries – either to break up unworkable states into smaller governments, or to absorb nonviable states into larger federal or confederal states – are justifiable.[25]

In practice, colonial boundaries in Africa are already being challenged, for example in Eritrea, which earned independence from Ethiopia in 1992, and possibly in Sudan, where in the next few years the south will enjoy the right to a referendum to decide whether to remain within a united Sudan or secede. In theory, the Ethiopian constitution in the new ethno-federal system of government allows regional states the

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[24] To paraphrase Ahmed Ismael, "Understanding Conflict in Somalia and Somaliland" in A. Adedeji (ed.), *Comprehending and Mastering African Conflicts: The Search for Sustainable Peace & Good Governance* (London & New York: Zed Books, 1999), pp.236-256:251.

[25] See for instance M. Ottaway, J. Herbst, and G. Mills, "Africa's Big States: Toward a New Realism," *Policy Outlook*, Carnegie Endowment, Democracy and Rule of Law Project (February 2004); See also L. Lawson and D. Rothchild, "Sovereignty Reconsidered," *Current History* (May 2005). Eminent Kenyan scholar Ali Mazrui has also voiced similar positions with regard to the selective redrawing of Africa's borders.

right to secede as well. Though in practice this will be strongly resisted and blocked by the federal government, in the long run it may offer a peaceful, constitutional means for Somalis in the Ogaden region either to unite with Somalia or form their own state. And although, in that event, the very state boundaries which created so much conflict in the Horn of Africa in the first decades of independence could someday, ironically, be redrawn without a shot fired; it is therefore high time for Somalia and its neighbours to work out new ways that can contribute to the making and conduct of peaceful, constructive, and cooperative foreign policies that can and will provide the essential tools for peaceful co-existence, regional stability and development for the countries and the people of the Horn of Africa.

In conclusion, this study argues that Somali foreign policy, and those of regional states and other key external actors, during the study period, promoted armed conflict in Somalia by accident or design. The study also contends that while Somali foreign policy was a manifestation of its orientation towards a 'Greater Somalia,' other external factors like colonial legacy, Somali nationalism and Cold War politics and rivalry also contributed to the escalation of armed conflict. The study also finds that Somali irredentism had selective impact, producing both warfare and subsequent skirmishes with Ethiopia but relatively stable relations with Kenya and Djibouti.

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List of Interviewees:
Abdirahman Moallim Abdullahi, former colonel, Somali army
Abdulkadir Yahya, former Co-Director, Centre for Research & Dialogue (CRD)
Amb. Abdullahi Ahmed Addou, Somali former Ambassador to the US
Amb. Bethwell KIplagat, former Kenya's Special Envoy to the Somalia peace process
Amb. Hussein Ali Dualeh, former Somali Ambassador to Kenya and Uganda
Amb. Ismail Goulal, former Djibouti's Special Envoy to the Somali peace process
Amb. Mohammed Abdi Affey, former Kenya Ambassador to Somalia
Amb. Mohammed Siyad Duale, former Djibouti Ambassador to the Somali peace process
Amb. Yusuf Hassan Ibrahim (Dheg), former Somali Foreign Minister
Aw Jama Omar Isse, Somali Historian
Deqow Sanbul, former NFDLF leader
Mohammed Haji, former Assistant Minister, Somalia
Matt Bryden, ICG Analyst
Sheikh Ismail Moallim Hamud, Islamic Scholar
Malaq Moktar, Traditional Elder