

**UN INTERVENTION IN INTRA-STATE CONFLICTS:
THE CASE OF SOMALIA (1992-1993)**

BY

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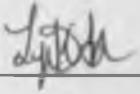


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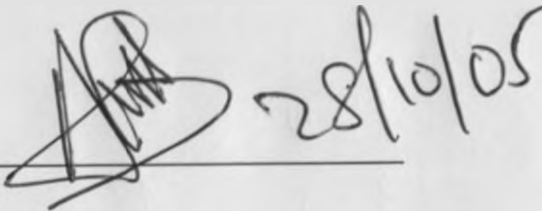
DECLARATION

This Thesis is my original work and has never been submitted by anybody for examination at any University.



OKOTH LILLIAN ACHIENG'

This Thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as the Candidate's Supervisor.



DR. PHILIP NYINGURO

DEDICATION

This Thesis is dedicated to my mother Mrs. Grace Okoth and my father, the late Mr. Joseph Okoth who died on 14/9/1997. I thank God for my parents for they have been a source of inspiration and encouragement in my life.

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ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| AFL | Armed Forces of Liberia. |
| A.N.C | Armee National Congolaise. |
| D.R.C. | Democratic Republic of Congo |
| ECOWAS | Economic Community of West African States |
| ECOMOG | Ecogas Cease-fire Monitoring Group |
| ICRC | International Community of the Red Cross |
| ONUC | United Nations Operation in the Congo |
| O.A.U. | Organization of African Unity |
| NFD | Northern Frontier District |
| NPFL | National Patriotic Front of Liberia |
| ORH | Operation Restore Hope |
| SDM | Somali Democratic Movement |
| SNA | Somali National Alliance |
| SPM | Somali Patriotic Movement |
| SSDF | Somalia Salvation Democratic Front. |
| UN | United Nations |
| UMANIR | United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda |
| UNITAF | United Task Force |
| UNOMIL | United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia |
| UNPROFOR | United Nations Protection Force |
| UNOSOM | United Nations Operation in Somalia |
| USC | United Somalia Congress |
| USA | United States of America |

ABSTRACT

This study examines the UN intervention in Somalia from 1992 to the end of 1993. The main research question addressed is why the UN intervention in Somalia failed. It relies on data from official UN documents and interviews to understand the reasons behind the failure of the intervention. The study hypothesizes that a successful intervention requires the political participation of those involved in the conflict.

Attempts by regional organizations to manage conflicts in the post-Cold War era in places like Somalia, former Yugoslavia and Rwanda met with failure. There has therefore been a re-emphasis on the role of global organizations, especially the UN, in containing these wars. In 1992, the UN with the full support of the United States (U.S) went into Somalia with the aim of creating an environment that would ensure that food reached the millions of starving Somali people. The operation started with the UN – sanctioned and US – led Unified Task Force (UNITAF) which was to hand over to the United Nations Operations in Somalia (UNOSOM II).

After a critical and extensive review of the intervention, the study concludes with the observation that the UN through UNITAF succeeded in ensuring that food got to the many starving Somalis. However, its lack of focus and impartiality after the killings of the UN troops led to conflict between the organization and General Aideed's troops and to the subsequent failure of the operation. The study also observes that the dictates of national interest of participating countries led to the decisions to intervene and subsequently to withdraw. The failure of the UN intervention in Somalia revealed the limitations of the UN in dealing with intra-state conflicts in light of the fact that it is composed of member States with sometimes-divergent national interests.

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Although the League of Nations was discredited and subsequently killed by the Second World War, its legacy as an international organization lives on in the United Nations. Like the League of Nations, which was in operation between 1919 and 1945, the UN embodies the idea that the community of nations has both the moral right and the legal competence to discuss and judge the international conduct of its members. Both organizations embodied the idea that aggressive war is a crime against humanity, which every state has the right and duty to collaborate in preventing.

The closeness with which the UN was modeled along the League of Nations was testament that people still had faith in the idea of an umbrella International Organization to oversee world peace and co-operation. The Constitution of the League of Nations called for collective security and peaceful settlement of disputes by arbitration and indeed the organization had no armed forces but relied on sanctions to control the behavior of member states. At its founding, one of the UN's most publicized advantages over its predecessor was that it was a peace organization with teeth. This was in reference to Chapter VII of the UN Charter which stated that if the Security Council found the measures provided for in other Articles to be inadequate, "it may take such action by air, sea or land forces as may be necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security".

From the beginning, the establishment of a framework for maintaining international peace and security was seen as the main task of the UN. The UN Charter essentially contemplated threats to security as emanating only from inter-state wars. During the Cold War, peacekeeping proved to be the UN's most important tool in contributing to the establishment

and maintenance of peace and security in troubled spots in the world. The post – Cold War era has however, witnessed the proliferation of intra-state conflicts which in turn pose great challenges to the UN peacekeeping operations. The traditional nation-state structures are weakening and the long suppressed cultural and ethnic tensions are resurgent. The resultant intra- state conflicts have challenged the earlier contention that threats to international security can emanate only from inter-state conflicts. The UN is faced with the reality that no conflict is completely internal. Its causes may be internal and the protagonists nationals of the same state but the consequences of their conflict invariably spread beyond the state's borders.

Despite UN's intervention in various intra-state conflicts, its performance in the management of these conflicts has arguably been below expectations. It is evident that traditional peacekeeping operations have been inadequate in managing conflicts especially in Africa. In 1992, the UN unsuccessfully attempted a new form of intervention- a multifunctional peace keeping, with elements of Peace Enforcement in Somalia. The main aim of this study is to find out why this UN operation failed.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

During the Cold War, most conflicts in which the UN intervened were inter-state rather than intra-state. These included the conflict between India and Pakistan in 1949, between Cyprus and Turkey in 1964 and between Egypt and Israel in 1973. Since the end of the Cold War, many conflicts, especially in Africa, have been within sovereign states. These internal conflicts have proved to be much harder for the UN and other international actors to prevent, manage and resolve. In Inter-state conflicts, attaining the necessary consent required for the establishment of peacekeeping operations was less difficult since states were viewed as rational actors. Chronic internal conflicts, as in the cases of Liberia, Yugoslavia and Somalia, often result in the disintegration of state institutions and the breakdown of law and order. Under such conditions, it becomes difficult to establish order through peacekeeping based on consent of

disputants. The UN's image as a world peacekeeper was tarnished in some areas such as Somalia. Conflicts within states often involve many groups and this makes it difficult to get the consent necessary for the establishment of a peacekeeping operation. In Rwanda the consent was given but later undermined as the will to peace was subverted by some of the political parties. In Somalia, the warlords undermined the cease-fire agreement. These cases reveal the need for a different approach to intervention by the UN, which does not depend on consent of the parties involved in the conflict. The study looks at Peace Enforcement as a viable mode of intervention. The original form of this intervention was used in Somalia.

This inquiry attempts to analyze the intervention with a view to finding out why it failed. Thus, the major research question addressed in this study is:

Why did the UN intervention in Somalia fail?

1.3 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

The justification for this study lies in the search for new approaches to multilateral intervention in intra-state conflicts. The literature review in the next chapter has revealed that the traditional peacekeeping approach, on which the UN has previously anchored its interventions, has yielded dismal results, if any. There has often been the need for more forceful means of intervention, but the organization has been reluctant to change with the times. The need for "peace enforcement" was ignored not only by the UN but by scholars as well. Thus by focusing on peace enforcement, this study seeks to redress the current state of imbalance in the body of literature.

The end of the cold War has been accompanied by the proliferation of intricate and violent conflicts in many parts of the world, especially Africa. From Sierra Leon to Sudan to Algeria, Angola to the Congo, Rwanda to Burundi and many other African states we have seen the flare of conflicts of varied nature, some of which began and indeed flourished during the

Cold War. Viable conflict management strategies are needed to make the world a better place to live in. Peacekeeping has certainly played an important role but it has been incapacitated by lack of enforceable political agreements. The result of this is that conflict situations have heightened and hundred of lives have been lost and continue to be lost within the international system. Other methods of intervention in conflict therefore become imperative. It is in this context that a study of peace enforcement as an alternative approach becomes significant.

Peace-keeping, with its ban on the use of force except in self-defense and its reliance on prior agreements for a cease-fire and co-operation with the conflicting parties did not prove to be a suitable technique for breaking the cycle of violence in places like Yugoslavia and Somali. This is because pockets of unconventional armies, which were not part of the cease-fire agreement, caused much of the disorder. The proliferation of unconventional armed 'bands' epitomizes conflicts in many areas. In such situations, peace enforcement with its emphasis on the use of force if necessary to achieve compliance to peace deals becomes a desirable approach. In Africa, the African Union (A.U) lacks the expertise and resources to mount effective intervention as exhibited in Rwanda, Congo and Somalia. Many states have an ethnic configuration in their background and are, therefore, reluctant to intervene on the same issue in other countries. The responsibility of trying to quell the wave of violence devolves on the UN.

The UN member states are reluctant to commit their troops to peacekeeping operations in Africa citing insecurity of 'unarmed' peacekeepers. This phenomenon was witnessed in conflicts in the DRC, Rwanda, Ethiopia and Eritrea. It is clear that the UN must come up with new and better strategies of managing conflicts. It is in line with this that this study exploits peace enforcement as a step towards this end. The aim is to examine its viability and find ways of nourishing it. Somalia was one of only two cases where the UN intervened forcefully in this post-Cold War era. The former Yugoslavia was the only other case. The UN itself can benefit from this study as study of Somalia may shed some light on how the UN can change its

strategies to better cope with scenarios where it is forced to intervene without the invitation of a host government.

1.4 OBJECTIVES

The main objective of the study is to examine the reasons why the UN intervention in Somalia failed.

1.5 HYPOTHESIS

For an intervention to be successful, it requires the participation of those involve in the conflict.

1.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Although there are various theories, which would explain the UN intervention in Somalia between 1992 and 1993, this study is grounded on the Interdependence theory and Chapter 1 of The UN Charter.

Article 1(1) of the UN Charter states that the purposes of the United Nations are to maintain international peace and security and to that end: to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace and to bring about by peaceful means, and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, adjustments or settlements of international disputes or situations which might lead to a breach of the peace.

The UN was obligated to intervene in Somalia because the heavy influx of Somali refugees in neighbouring countries like Kenya was a threat to peace and stability in those countries and so the conflict could not be ignored.

The study is also grounded on the Interdependence theory as put forward by Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye¹. Keohane and Nye argue that the balance of Power theory no longer defines world politics as we now live in an era of inter-dependence. These two scholars argue that,

“Dependence means a state of being determined or significantly affected by external forces and interdependence means mutual dependence. Interdependence in world politics refers to situations characterized by reciprocal effects among countries or among actors in different countries.”²

In their analysis, interdependence governs world politics and the behavior of states but at the same time, governmental actions also influence patterns of interdependence. Keohane and Nye introduced the term 'Complex interdependence' in reference to the various complex transnational connections (interdependencies) between states and societies.

Interdependence theorists noted that such relations; especially economic ones were increasing while the use of military force and power balancing were decreasing (but remained important). Reflecting on these developments, they argued that the decline of military force as a policy tool and the increase in economic and other forms of interdependence should increase the probability of cooperation among states. The interdependence framework has been seen as an attempt to synthesize elements of realist and liberal thought.

Finally, anticipating problems of cheating and relative gains raised by realists, interdependence theorists introduce the concept of 'regimes' to mitigate anarchy and facilitate cooperation. Certain international regimes often have notable effects on interdependence relationships that involve a few countries or involve many countries on a given issue. As Susan Strange postulates, “The rules of the game include some national rules, some international rules, some private rules – and large areas of no rules at all”³ According to Alex Inkels⁴ over the

¹ Robert O. Keohane, Joseph Nye : Politics and Interdependence – World Politics in Transition (Little Brown, Boston, 1977)

² Op.Cit. pp. 8

³ Susan Strange “*What is Economic Power and who has it?* In International Journal 30 (Spring 1975) pp. 219

last few decades there has been a general tendency for many forms of human interconnectedness across boundaries to be doubling every ten years.

The interdependence theory undoubtedly has its weaknesses. It can be argued that its proponents consider the future only within their own ideological pre-suppositions, instead of formulating a dynamic perspective of how a state will incorporate its future environment into the choice between war and peace. For instance, a high level of interdependence can be peace inducing if states expect future trade levels to remain the same.

Events leading to the two world wars amply illustrate the weakness of the interdependence theory. Although a high level of interdependence preceded the First World War, such a position had been prevailing for at least the best part of the previous 30 years without causing any major conflict. It can therefore be argued that interdependence was a necessary but not sufficient condition for the war.

In recent years, globalization has further heightened the level of interdependence between states, so much that the present trend towards ever-greater interdependence is probably irreversible. At the same time, the costs of war have also been proportionately rising with the development of increasingly sophisticated and destructive weapons and munitions.

⁴ Alex Inkels *The emerging Social Structure of the world* in World Politics 27 (July 1975) pp. 479

1.7 METHODOLOGY

Data for this study was drawn mainly from interviews/discussions and documentary sources. Interviews and discussions were held with respondents in various categories. These included officials from the United Nations offices based here in Kenya. Views of foreign based UN officials were sought through written interviews. I also managed to interview some officials dealing with Somali affairs at the US embassy in Kenya. Respondents also included Somali nationals who had taken refuge here in Kenya as well as Kenyan officials dealing with Somali affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Primary documents for this study included UN accounts of various interventions as well as the resolutions passed by the Security Council. They also included letters by the UN Secretary General to the Security Council, relevant publications and reports made to the UN by various international bodies and speeches and statements made by senior UN officials. Daily and weekly newspapers and other periodicals and magazines were also used.

1.8 RESEARCH PROBLEMS AND LIMITATIONS

One of the greatest problems of any empirical study is the availability and reliability of data. This was a problem throughout this study. There were different views depending on the person giving the information. Each person or organization sort only to justify that they acted in the only manner conceivable at that time. This meant that the probability of bias was very high. To safeguard against this, different methods of data collection were used. Interviews and discussion were held but at the same time primary and secondary documents were used.

Different documents were consulted to bring about some degree of accuracy in the information received. Newspapers and magazines were of great importance because they reported or commented on different interventions by the UN. It was difficult to access official information as a lot of information is considered classified and very sensitive and so many

officials in the UN were very reluctant to divulge any information, which they thought sensitive. Secondary as well as primary documents were able to fill in the gaps left by these interviews.

1.9 CHAPTER OUTLINE

This study has five Chapters.

Chapter One Constitutes the introductory part of the whole thesis as well as the Problem Statement, Justification, Objectives, the Theoretical Framework and the Methodology adopted by the study

Chapter 2 deals with the literature of the UN interventions in various places. This chapter is an attempt to put the case of Somalia in a wider theoretical perspective. It focuses on what led to the failures/successes of UN interventions and the lessons these cases had for Somalia.

Chapter 3 presents a background to the Somalia conflict and the events, which led to state demise. It gives a historical perspective with a view to detailing the factors, which led to the UN intervention.

Chapter Four examines the intervention more clearly and an attempt is made to look at the resolutions which were passed before and during the operation and also the roles played by UNOSOM I, UNITAF and finally UNOSOM II. The Chapter brings out the reasons for the UN failure in Somalia

In Chapter 5 the main arguments in the preceding Chapters are summarized against the general propositions derived from the literature on UN interventions in general. The Chapter also makes suggestions for further research in this area.

CHAPTER TWO

UN INTERVENTION IN PERSPECTIVE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Many scholars have evaluated UN interventions in intra-state conflicts.⁵ Key studies reflect the argument that for almost three decades now, Africa has been the arena of most of the world's most destructive conflicts. Most of these conflicts have been within states but have had adverse effects on neighboring countries, sub-regions and the continent as a whole. A close look at civil wars in Africa – especially those in Chad, Angola, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Rwanda, Somalia and Uganda – reveal that between 500,000 and 1,000,000 lives have been lost either on the battle field or through war induced famine and disease. Two other conflicts in Burundi and Liberia took over 1,000,000 lives each.⁶

This chapter seeks to put UN interventions into a historical and wider perspective. An attempt is made to bring out some of their salient features. There have been attempts by various actors in the international arena to find ways of resolving intra-state conflicts to prevent their recurrence and the emergence of new ones. The UN is an important actor in world politics and its interventions have had an important impact. The experiences generated from these interventions have heard a bearing on the direction the UN has taken when called upon to intervene. It is important to look at different cases of UN intervention because no two cases are similar and, in many cases, the response is different. There are cases when the UN was seen

⁵ These scholars include Walter Clarke and Jeffrey Herbs in *Learning from, Somalia*, Gunnar Sorbo and Peter Vale in *Out of Conflict: From War to Peace in Africa* and even United Nations documents.

⁶ Sorbo Gunnar, M. Peter Vale (eds.) *Out of Conflict: From War to Peace in Africa* (Bergen, Norway: Nordiska Afrikainstitut, 1997) p.1

to have achieved what it set out to do and there were times when the interventions were viewed by many as a failure.

2.2 BACKGROUND

The name United Nations was first coined by the then US President Franklin D. Roosevelt. It was used for the first time in the Declaration by the United Nations of 1 January 1942 during the Second World War when representatives of 26 nations pledged their Governments to continue fighting together against the Axis powers. The UN Charter was drawn up by representatives of fifty countries at the United Nations Conference on International Organizations, which met at San Francisco from 25 April to 26 June 1945. It was signed by representatives of the 50 countries although Poland, which had not been represented at this Conference later, signed it and become one of the original 51-member states. The UN officially came into existence on 24 October 1945 when the Charter was ratified by China, France, Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, The United States and by a majority of other signatories.⁷

Maintenance of peace and security has been the primary responsibility of the UN since its conception. To fulfill this mission, the UN has developed various instruments for controlling and resolving conflicts between and within states. The most important instruments have been preventive diplomacy, peacekeeping, peace building, disarmament, sanctions and peace enforcement. According to Boutros Boutros-Ghali, 'the first three can be employed only with the consent of the parties to the conflict. Sanctions and peace enforcement, on the other hand, are coercive measures and do not, by definition, require the consent of the parties. Disarmament can take place on an agreed basis or in the context of coercive action under Chapter VII'.⁸

Although these instruments can also be employed by regional organizations, ad hoc groups of states or by individual states, it is to the UN that the international community has turned increasingly since the end of the Cold War. This is because the organization has

⁷ Basic Facts About the UN (New York: UN Department of Public Information, 1989) p.1

immense experience in this area and its system is also better equipped than regional organizations or individual member states to develop and apply the comprehensive long-term approach needed to ensure a lasting solution to these conflicts.

This study lays emphasis on two main ways of maintaining peace and security, namely: pacific settlement of disputes as envisaged in Chapter VI of the UN Charter and collective enforcement against threats to or breaches of the peace as laid down in Chapter VII. Peacekeeping falls somewhere between these two chapters leading many scholars to refer to it as Chapter 6½.

Peace-keeping, with its principal tenets of neutrality in conflict and consent from those in dispute, is limited as a means of intervening in complex internal conflicts since it can only be effected in situations where political agreements have been reached. The deep-seated and complex obstacles faced by peacekeepers in Africa clearly depict the need for supplementary mechanisms to UN intervention in Africa's conflict. In some instances there has been a need to resort to new strategies which have involved the use of force, generally known as "peace enforcement."

Peace enforcement refers to the external imposition of solutions even the absence of the consent of the parties involved in the conflict. Peace enforcement is a relatively new concept, which lies in the gray area between the logic of peace and the logic of war. Despite the lack of well established peace enforcement doctrine, the international community has increasingly turned to peace enforcement as a mode of intervention in its efforts to maintain world peace and security in the post- Cold war environment.

Lessons learned from many conflict areas in Africa such as Somalia, Liberia, Rwanda, Congo, Sierra Leon, Yugoslavia and Cambodia show that international interventions in certain conflict areas where intense violence is likely to erupt, should be accompanied by a force to

^a Boutros Boutros-Ghali An Agenda for Peace (New York: UN Department of Public Information, 1995) p.12

counteract such threats. Peacekeeping operations, however, are focused on non-coercive and facilitative activities rather than repelling aggression. The goal of peacekeeping units is not the creation of peace but rather the containment of war so that others can search for peace in stable conditions. Peacekeeping is a creation of the UN and was devised in response to Cold War constraints that prevented the more forceful actions originally envisioned by those who drafted the Charter.

Endemic violence and 'new' wars in Africa since 1990 not only differ in character from 'old' wars but also have proved more difficult to resolve. Attempts to bring about the end of the conflict, achieve lasting peace, establish sound basis for economic and social reconstruction and begin processes of reconciliation have yielded little. The Security Council has occasionally shifted its approach from peacekeeping to peace enforcement when faced with practical realities as in the Somali and Yugoslavian Conflicts. Many peacekeeping operations have also increasingly involved the use of force comparable to peace enforcement.

Peacekeeping is not mentioned in the UN charter and was developed from UN practice. The Secretary General Dag Hammarskjold authorized the first peacekeeping operation in 1956. It was unique and was created for the Suez crisis when France, the United Kingdom and Israel attacked Egypt.⁹ Terence Lyons and Ahmed I. Samatar argue that "peace-keeping is an innovation of the UN improvised in response to the Cold War constraints that prevented the more forceful actions originally envisioned in Chapter VII."¹⁰ The UN elaborates that peace-keeping was pioneered and developed by it as one of the means of maintaining international peace and security,¹¹ while Paul F. Diehl defines peace-keeping as,

⁹ Hussein Adam M. Richard Ford (eds.) Mending Rips in the Sky. Options for Somalia Communities in the 21st Century (Asmara: The Red Sea Press Inc;1997) p 2

¹⁰ Terrence Lyons and Ahmed I. Samatar Somalia: State Collapse, Multilateral Intervention and Strategies for Political Reconstruction

¹¹ UN Peace-Keeping 1993 (New York: UN Department of Public Information) p.6.

"The imposition of neutral and lightly armed interposition forces following a cessation of armed hostilities and with the permission of the state on whose territory these forces are deployed in order to discourage a renewal of military conflict and promote an environment in which the underlying dispute can be resolved."¹²

Between 1945 and 1988, the UN undertook 13 peacekeeping operations and gradually developed accepted principles. Due to its focus on neutrality and consent of the parties in conflict, peacekeeping can be said to be an action aimed at preserving the status quo by calling for cease-fire. Of the 32 UN peacekeeping operations launched since 1989, 13 were in Africa, more than in any other region in the world. The UN documents that, since 1948, over 750,000 military and civilian police personnel and thousands of other civilians served in UN peacekeeping operations. More than 1,450 have died while supervising peace agreements, monitoring cease-fires, patrolling demilitarized zones, creating buffers between opposing forces and diffusing local conflict that risk wider war.¹³

The fall of the Berlin Wall more than a decade ago marked the end of the Cold War. There was much enthusiasm because the world conflicts would extinguish quickly since they were no longer funneled by military assistance provided by rival super powers. This was, however, not the case because the end of the competition for influence by the super powers in Africa saw the escalation of conflicts. Although there had been some instances of civil wars attracting international attention or intervention during the Cold War, the end of the Cold, the collapse of the Soviet Union, the emergence of a unipolar world have created a new and very different setting.

Instead of the expected peace and tranquility the world continued to experience political turmoil and violence. Old conflicts have resurfaced and become even more destructive and intractable, with more of them occurring within rather than between states. Under these

¹² Paul F. Diehl International Peace-Keeping (John Hopkins University Press, 1993) p. 13

circumstances the role of peacemakers and peacekeepers has undergone some change. The post – Cold War era called for more UN intervention but it is note worthy that even during the Cold War the UN intervened in various places.

2.3 EARLY UN INTERVENTIONS

One of the early UN interventions with regard to intra-state conflict was in Lebanon and Cyprus. According to UN documents,¹⁴ trouble in Lebanon started in 1958 when the government of the day tried to change the constitution to enable the then president seek a second term. The conflict took an international dimension when Lebanon wrote a letter to the UN Security Council accusing the United Arab Republic (Egypt) of interfering in its internal affairs. In 1960, the UN intervened in Cyprus to bring an end to the conflict that erupted between the Greek and Turkish Cypriots. The conflict arose as a result of disagreements over territorial integrity between the two parties. The UN intervened by sending an observer mission to the area.

In both Lebanon and Cyprus, the UN intervened to stop the spread of violence into neighboring areas. There were accusations of external interference. In Lebanon it was against the United Arab Republic and Cyprus accused Turkey of the same. The conflicts in both countries had an internal dimension but had the potential of spreading to the neighboring regions. The UN intervened to stop these conflicts from turning into inter-state conflicts. In both interventions, the UN acted only after a formal complaint was made by the two Governments.

During this Cold War period, the UN again found itself intervening in a conflict of a different magnitude. This time the venue was the Congo and again it was at the formal request of a legitimate Government. The United Nations Operation in the Congo (ONUC) took place from July 1960 to June 1964 and it was one of the largest peace-keeping operations ever

¹³ UN Peace-Keeping 1996 (New York: UN Department of Public Information, 1996) p. 13

established by the UN in terms of operation and the manpower involved. According to Ernest W. Lefever,¹⁵ Congo had very little preparations for independence and it had been a synonym for chaos and confusion ever since Belgian authority was abruptly withdrawn in the summer of 1960. Joel Larus¹⁶ argues that trouble in Congo came only a week after independence when the Force Publique mutinied in early July and arrested or chased away all of its Belgian Officers, which at that time meant all of its officers. Belgian authorities tried to persuade Lumumba to allow Belgian Metropolitan troops, which were stationed in Congo to restore order. When they did not succeed, Brussels flew in an additional 2½ companies of paratroopers from Belgium to reinforce its troops. The Congolese government saw this as a violation of the treaty of friendship which has been signed to the effect that Belgium was to intervene militarily only at the request of the Congolese Government.¹⁷

The situation worsened when Moise Tshombe of Katanga proclaimed his province an Independent State. This was on July 11 1960. Tshombe appealed for Belgian military aid to uphold his regime. In response to Tshombe's actions, Lumumba on the advice of American Ambassador-designate – Clare H. Timberlake made an oral request for UN assistance to restore discipline in the Armee Nationale Congolaise (ANC). On 12 July 1960, President Kasavumbi and Lumumba sent a formally written cable to the Secretary General soliciting for urgent UN military assistance because of Belgian aggression and Belgian support of the Katanga secession.

According to George Abi-Saab,¹⁸ the decision to bring the UN into the Congo was taken formally by the Security Council did no more than authorize the Secretary General to execute

¹⁴ The Blue Helmets: A Review of UN Peace-Keeping (New York: UN Department of Public Information, 1996).

¹⁵ Ernest W. Lefever Crisis in the Congo: A United Nations Force in Action (Washington D, C.: The Brookings, 1965) p. 3.

¹⁶ Joel Larus (Ed) From Collective Security to Preventive Diplomacy (New York: John Wiley and Sons Inc., 1965) p. 411.

¹⁷ Patrice Lumumba (London: Panaf Books, 1973) p 134.

the plan that he had submitted. Collin Hoskyns¹⁸ argues that by 1960, the UN was to a large extent prepared for an appeal of this kind. Not only because the Charter provided for UN intervention in this sort of dispute but also because a series of actions in the Middle East had built up a body of experience which seemed relevant. The steady increase in the number of Asian and African members of the UN had made the organization particularly conscious of the needs and problems of countries emerging from colonial status to full independence.

Kasavumbi and Lumumba made it clear in their appeal that their main reason for requesting aid was to prevent aggression and not to restore the internal situation. They wanted a force of contingents from neutral nations but not from the United States. Hammarskjöld recommended the establishment of a UN peacekeeping force to assist the Congolese Government in maintaining law and order. He assumed that if the UN was to do this, the Belgian Government would withdraw its forces from Congo.

The Security Council adopted Resolution 143 (1960) by which it called upon the Government of Belgium to withdraw its troops from the territory of Congo and decided to authorize the Secretary General to take the necessary steps in consultation with the Government of the Republic of the Congo, to provide the Government with such military assistance as might be necessary.

Lincoln P. Bloomfield²⁰ argues that there was an ambiguity about the authority and objectives of ONUC right from the beginning. Its role was a dual one – the provision of both internal and external security.

UN objectives were not the same as those Lumumba had envisaged. Preventing a great power confrontation and preserving the UN structures took precedence over any mission set by

¹⁸ George Abi-Saab The United Nations Operation in the Congo 1960-1964 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978) p. 1

¹⁹ Colin Hoskyns The Congo Since Independence (London: Oxford University Press, 1965) p.105.

the Congolese government. For the UN, the objective was first of all to prevent the Congo crisis from becoming a larger world conflict. Crawford Young²¹ analyzing this operation contends that it rapidly became clear to the Prime Minister that the UN had no intention of taking decisive action to quell the Katanga secession. The UN retreated to a position of neutrality with regard to the Katanga secession although it had initially given support to Kasavubu. The organization reacted in this way because large blocks of states were coming up in support of the two contenders.

The UN attempted to resume its operation in September with the aim of bringing an end to the secession. It was, however, surprised when Katanga resisted. In December, a second round of fighting took place between the Katanga gendarmes and the UN. This time, the UN was more prepared and a number of key installations in Elizabethville were seized. The UN suffered humiliating reverses in Katanga. To withdraw from the Congo without having assured the re-unification of the country would have been to concede complete failure, especially considering the fact that many members believe the UN had made the initial consolidation of the secession possible.²² By December 1962, tension was growing in the south Katanga cities and expectations grew that a final trial of force with the UN was growing near. On 28 December the third round began and this time the UN was ready with enough air and ground strength to conclude the operation. By 3 January 1963, UN forces had occupied Jadotville.

The late Daniel Katete Orwa, a renowned political scientist²³ attributed many of the problems faced by UNUC to the fact that the UN was at this time inexperienced in peace-keeping and it had not faced a situation in which it had to confront armed forces as it sought to defend a weak state's territorial integrity. Although the UN had engaged in previous

²⁰ Lincoln P. Bloomfield (ed) International Organization (Boston: World Peace Foundation Spring 1963) p. 329.

²¹ Crawford Young Politics in the Congo: Decolonization and Independence (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1965) p. 322.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 341

peacekeeping efforts in the Suez crisis of 1956 and in Lebanon in 1958, it lacked the experience needed to deal with the complex situation it faced in Congo. The UN experience in Congo exposed the serious difficulties that would be encountered by a UN peace force if it did not have clear, precise and full directives about its functions and authority.²⁴ As Collin Hoskyns²⁵ postulates, the Congo crisis was the product of the clash between Belgium and the Congo which affected the interests of the West, the Soviet bloc and the African states and which involved the UN in the most complex operation of its history. The operation was a success because the worst forms of great power confrontation was avoided and also because external aid to the Katanga regime was stopped.

As the case of ONUC has demonstrated, peacekeeping is a technique that expands the possibilities for both the prevention of conflict and the making of peace. Since the end of this operation, UN peacekeeping activities increased dramatically. UN operations have evolved over the years as flexible, internationally acceptable way of controlling conflicts and promoting peaceful settlement of disputes. This technique – born of necessity, largely improvised and used as practical response to a problem requiring action – partly compensated for the impaired ability of the Security Council to function fully during the Cold War. Since the Cold War tensions eased, peace has been threatened by resurgent ethnic and nationalist conflicts in many regions. Consequently, UN peacekeeping operations have grown rapidly in number and complexity in recent years.

One of the states in which the UN intervened in the post – Cold War era was Liberia. Liberia's agony can be traced to 12 April 1980 when a group of lower ranks soldiers led by Sergeant Samuel Doe seized power in a coup. The civil war itself may be dated 24th December 1989 when 100 or more fighters claiming allegiance to the National Patriotic Front of Liberia

²³ Daniel Katete Orwa The Response of the UN and the US to the Congo Crisis: Events and Issues (PH. D. Thesis , 1979)p. 100

²⁴ Joel Larus From Collective Security to Preventive Diplomacy (New York: John Wiley and Sons Inc., 1965) p. 108

(NPFL) led by Charles Taylor advanced over the border from Cote d'Ivoire to attack the town of Butuo in Nimba County.²⁶

There were many calls for international intervention to stabilize the situation. Many people had expected the US to intervene in what had long been regarded as an unofficial US colony. In June 1990, US warships with 2,000 marines on board anchored off the coast of Liberia but all they did was to evacuate US nationals. President Bush declared that Liberia was not worth the life of a single US marine. It is, however, important to note that there was another event, which took place and in effect took up all of America's attention. This was the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq and it ruled out any possibility of US intervention in Liberia.²⁷

Africa, however, could not afford to ignore what was happening in Liberia. The West African countries especially felt obliged to intervene in this conflict; the fighting had resulted in the loss of many lives and destruction of so much property. While a reluctant Security Council took its time deciding what to do the Economic Community Of West African States (ECOWAS) had no option. ECOWAS created a Military Observer Group, ECOWAS Cease-fire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) and tried to initiate a cease-fire. The NPFL rejected both the call for a cease-fire and the deployment of ECOMOG, arguing that the force was not an impartial peacekeeping force. Liberia's embattled President Samuel Doe also accused ECOWAS leadership of meddling in Liberia's internal affairs by trying to up an interim government.²⁸ It was evident that a confrontation between ECOWAS and the Liberian factions was brewing.

The UN was invited to step into the Liberian crisis because of the politico-military stalemate encountered by ECOWAS. On 22 September 1993, the Security Council, by Resolution 866 (1993), established the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL)

²⁵ Colin Hoskyns Op. Cit. p. 468.
²⁶ Ibid, p. 167.
²⁷ The Guardian (Lagos) 21st August 199, p. 1.
²⁸ The United Nations Peace-Keeping (New York: UN Department of Public Information, 1994) p. 175.

for initial period of seven months. UNOMIL was to work as a team with ECOMOG. The UN dragged its feet because of the reluctance of many of the member states outside Africa to be involved in an internal conflict in which they had little interest.

In the Liberian case, the issue of national interest comes to the fore when the member states in the UN chose to intervene more rigorously in the Gulf rather than in this West African State. The issue of oil in Kuwait was more important than the loss of lives in Liberia. This goes to show that the national interests of the member states determine where the UN intervenes and how. After all, UN operations depend on member states contribution in terms of finances, manpower and equipment.

Clement E. Adibe²⁹ sums up UN's performance in Liberia as 'indifferent and purposeless'. With the majority of its forces 'stranded' in their home countries because of logistical lapses. UNOMIL relied too heavily on ECOMOG forces even for the most basic tasks. Many Liberians were unaware of UN presence in their country. The issue of peace still remains fragile in Liberia but, as Adibe argues, the UN should re-evaluate the wisdom of authorizing missions simply to create the impression that something significant is being done in a desperate environment.³⁰

In Liberia, as in Lebanon and Cyprus, the UN had employed traditional peacekeeping methods. The UN forces were only mandated to supervise and help maintain a cease-fire to assist troop withdrawal and to provide a buffer between opposing forces. Of the 13 operations set up during the Cold War, almost all were traditional peace-keeping in the sense that they were largely military in composition and in function, entrusted to maintain calm on the frontlines while giving peace-makers time to negotiate a settlement. Over the past years, a new political climate emerging from the end of the Cold War has led to an increase in demand for UN peace-keeping. The nature of peacekeeping operations is undergoing some profound changes as a different type of peacekeeping is emerging in response to intense intra-state conflicts. The new

²⁹ Clement Adibe Op Cit. p. 84

³⁰ Collin Hoskyns Op.Cit. p. 105.

breed of intra-state conflicts has certain characteristics that present UN peacekeepers with challenges not encountered since the Congo operation of the 1960's. They are usually fought not only by regular armies, but also by militia and armed civilians with little discipline and defined chains of command.

The main responsibility for safeguarding international peace is given to the Security Council. Faced with a dispute, which is a threat or breach of the peace, the Security Council under Chapter VII (articles 39-51) can take a series of actions. Under Article 40, it can call on member states to apply sanctions. Under Article 42, it can intervene militarily.³¹ During the Cold War, it was easier to set up peacekeeping operations without the use of force. In the post-Cold War era, however, it has proved difficult to send UN peace-keeping forces into civil war situations in which no government has invited them, the fighting factions are unwilling to cooperate with the UN forces, and where there is little possibility of bringing political or other pressures to bear on those factions. Humanitarian emergencies are rampant and the collapse of state institutions, especially the police and judiciary, with resulting paralysis of governance, a breakdown of law and order and general banditry and chaos are usually the resulting features of these conflicts. This led to a new kind of UN operation: peace enforcement.

Ramesh Thakur³² argues that

“Peace-keeping is distinct from peace enforcement in the sense that peace-keepers should not have the obligation, the soldiers or the equipment to engage violators in hostilities. International peace-keeping forces express and facilitate the disputants' will to live in peace they cannot supervise in conditions of war”

There are times when the UN has intervened in this new way in this post-Cold War era. One of the places where it did was Yugoslavia. Serious fighting in Croatia began in June 1991 when

³¹ Brian Urquhart *Who Can Police the World?* In *New York Review Books* May 12, 1994, p. 25

³² Ramesh Thakur *From peace-Keeping to Peace Enforcement: The United Nations Operation in Somalia* in the *Journal of Modern African Studies* 32, 3 P.385

Croatia and its northern neighbor Slovenia declared themselves independent from Yugoslavia. Serbs living in Croatia, supported by the Yugoslav People's Army (JNA), opposed this move. Efforts by the European Community to resolve the crisis in mid-1991 within the framework of a Conference on Yugoslavia proved unsuccessful.

The establishment of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) was initially intended to contribute to the implementation of a peace plan for Croatia. UNPROFOR gradually expanded its mandate in terms of its area of operation (from Croatia to Bosnia – Herzegovina and Macedonia) and tasks. The number of troops increased from an initial 10,000 troops to a force of 52,000. UNPROFOR was deployed in certain areas designated as United Nations Protected Areas (UNPAs) in which the UN Security Council judged that special interim arrangements were required to ensure a lasting cease-fire.

The UN, however, ran into many obstacles. For three years, the UN attempted a diplomatic end to the Balkan crisis. The UN operation was considered an abject failure. NATO took over the peacekeepers who were withdrawn from the 'safe areas,' leaving only a few observers in the enclaves without any actual or implied commitment to use force during attacks against them. This was, in a way, giving the UN a more realistic mandate. UNPROFOR found itself unable to undertake its relief efforts and other humanitarian activities. It had to focus on trying to protect itself. NATO became active at different levels; the enforcement of a maritime embargo, the enforcement of the no-fly zone over Bosnia – Herzegovina, and contingency plans to prevent the spillover of the conflict, and eventually the UN and NATO hoped to avoid – a widening Balkan war. To curb the situation, NATO mounted a 14-day bombing campaign to halt the advancement by Serb forces.

There are times when UN interventions have been seen as a failure, and if there is a place where UN peacekeeping has a history of failure the place is Rwanda. One of the most important aspects of UN involvement in Rwanda is related to the peacekeeping operation of United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) I and II. The Arusha Peace

Agreement of 4 April 1993 was supposed to end the three years of civil war. The UN was to play a major role in the implementation of this Accord.³³ The organization failed to take seriously the allegations that plans were being made to eliminate Tutsi minority and enemies of the regime of Juvenal Habyarimana. When the massacre began, the Security Council responded by withdrawing most of the peacekeeping forces that had been deployed to help implement the Arusha Peace Accords. A month later, the Security Council realized that it had an obligation to protect civilians who were being killed at the rate of thousands a day. It authorized a 5,500 peacekeeping force (UNAMIR II). UNAMIR II, however, did not arrive in Rwanda until late July, when the killings were almost over.

In concluding this Chapter, it can be said that although the UN has intervened in a number of intra-state conflicts, it has suffered setbacks in a number of occasions. The overview of UN interventions has shown how the organization often found itself in very difficult circumstances. In Rwanda, UNAMIR was reduced to a very low level at the outbreak of the civil war in 1994 only to be expanded when the situation degenerated into genocide. In Liberia, the ECOWAS monitoring group, the ECOMOG, was established without the UN's approval. This was because the ECOWAS Heads of State could not ignore Liberia when the UN was slow in initiating the required action in that country. The UN consists of member states, and many times, interventions are hindered by the interests of the member states.

The cases of Liberia and Rwanda are distinct from the other cases, which have been highlighted. The UN did not have second thought about intervening in Lebanon and Cyprus. In both instances, the Security Council acted promptly and sent UN forces to these areas. It was however, the Yugoslav intervention that held the UN's attention for long. Unlike Rwanda and Liberia which had little economic significance, the war in Yugoslavia threatened the stability of Europe and so held huge implications for the countries in that region.

³³ Time Magazine August 7th 1995.

For three years, the UN sort to bring an end to the conflict but its performance was at best, dismal. It was not until NATO mounted a bombing campaign aimed at halting the advancement by Serb forces that the situation was finally brought under control.

When world stability was threatened by superpower rivalry in the Congo, the UN intervened in a big way and was even ready to use force when necessary. This was again the case when the stability of Europe was threatened by the Yugoslav crisis. Member states were unwilling to commit their troops to use forced and yet they were not willing to do the same in Rwanda. Financial commitments and the power of veto mean that UN interventions are driven by the economic and political concerns of the member states involved. Often times member states are not willing to expose their troops to danger if they have little interest in the state in question.

The most recent UN peacekeeping operations in Africa have also had difficulties. As these operations continue to suffer setbacks, many nations in Africa are lost in protracted conflicts that may necessitate the employment of UN peacekeeping forces. Sierra Leone and Burundi already have representatives of the UN Secretary General. Sudan has been engulfed in a civil war for decades and settlement was only reached recently. Most of Africa seems overwhelmed by the suffering of its people. It is for this reason that the Chapters that follow tackle the case of the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM). An attempt is made to bring out some of the ways of improving such operations so as to bring an end to the ever-increasing number of intra-state conflicts.

CHAPTER THREE

BACKGROUND TO THE SOMALI CONFLICT

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This Chapter looks at the Somali conflict with the aim of bringing to light the events, which led to a catastrophe of the magnitude that required the intervention of the UN. Somali is probably the one country in Africa where the people can justifiably claim to be of the same origin. The various clan groupings notwithstanding, there is a remarkable degree of homogeneity in the origin of the Somali people.³⁴ This is because almost everyone within is of Somali origin, speaks the same language, adheres to the same religion – Islam and follows similar cultural traditions. This was completely different from virtually all other African countries which have societies composed of multiple linguistic groups.

As Mohammed Osman³⁵ puts it, “it is an irony of fate that this country which had an enviable advantage over the other African countries having an ethnically homogenous population has now become a mere geographic expression”. There has been no other time in the recorded history of Somalia when nearly one-third to one-half of the population died or was in danger of perishing as a result of famine caused by civil war. The Somalia conflict, which led to the collapse of the state, is of a greater magnitude than all previous ones. The terrible tragedy, which befell the Somalia people and especially those in the southern region, was the result of the collapse of national institutions and the state. The ferocity of the civil war and the magnitude of state destruction calls for an analysis of what went wrong and why a society which was seen by many as homogenous could disintegrate into a dark hole of despair.

³⁴ Martin Dournbos et al (ed): Beyond Conflict in the Horn of Africa (The Hague: Institute of Social Studies, 1992) p. 7

³⁵ Mohammed Osman Omar: Somalis: A Nation Driven to Despair (New Delhi: Somali Publication Co. 1996) p. x.

Ahmed Samatar³⁶ postulates that the

“Fullness of understanding a given situation is looking beyond the immediate and experiential because any visible elements of a particular reality are usually signals that other more discreet factors could be at work”

This chapter therefore seeks to go beyond merely looking at the immediate causes of the Somali conflict and looks at the various issues that led to the collapse of the Somali State.

3.2 THE CONFLICT

In 1991 the Somali Democratic Republic ceased to exist. The government fell the state collapsed and a brutal civil war and famine gripped the general population. Many refugees fled the country and a decade of bloodshed, chaos and human suffering ensued.³⁷ The problems of Somalia, however, are traceable to the colonial period.

Between 1884 and 1908, the colonial powers, France, Britain and Italy, parceled out the long coast, splitting the country into five parts; British Somaliland, Italian Somaliland, French Somaliland (now Djibouti), the Ogaden region in Ethiopia and the Northern Frontier District (NFD) of Kenya. The unification of Somaliland and Somalia had been predicated not on the promise of a bilateral treaty, but rather a multi-lateral one in which the three remaining Somali territories would ultimately be incorporated.³⁸ This, however, was not to be because in 1963, the British granted independence to Kenya including the mainly Somali inhabited NFD disregarding their pledge to respect the findings of an independent commission that an overwhelmingly majority of the people in NFD sought unity with Somalia.

³⁶ Ahmed I. Samatar: The Curse of Allah: Civil Disembowelment and the Collapse of State in Somalia, Conference on the Somali Challenge: Peace Resources and Reconstruction, Geneva 10-14th July 1992.

³⁷ Somali centre for Peace and Development: A self-portrait of Somaliland: rebuilding from the Ruins (Hargeusa: 1999) p. 15

³⁸ Ibid. p. 5.

The first nine years of Somalia's independence was characterized by a parliamentary system. During this brief period of parliamentary civilian rule (1960-1969) the country's experiment with Western democracy proved poorly adapted to the clan-based nature of Somali politics. There were very many political parties, sometimes up to sixty, violence was rampant, and this era witnessed the assassinations of public officials and candidates.³⁹

The realities of the Somali social structure contributed to this instability. Beneath the apparent homogeneity at the national level, the Somali society was divided not only by social and occupational stratification and differences between urban and rural sectors, but also by the clan forms of social organization to which most Somalis belonged. The Somalis are made up of five major clans: Hawiye, Darodi, Isaq Dir and Digil-Mirifle. Each of these clans is sub-divided into six more clans, which in turn are sub-divided into sub-clans stretching down to lineage and extended families. The most stable sub-unit is the lineage segment. In the Somali nomadic and other cultural concentrations, clan parochialism had historically guided group interest. As a result, their communion language, religion, physical characteristics, customs and tradition, had not united them as closely as would have otherwise been expected.⁴⁰

The clans are composed of aggregations, which trace their relations back many generations and traditionally claim specific territories. Considerable authority rests with elders and chiefs who continued to wield influence after independence. With the establishment of a central state, competition for political positions and state resources became a new element affecting inter-clan relations. In the parliamentary period of the 1960s for instance, clan tensions were reflected, to some extent, in the divisions among the various political parties. Some national leaders attempt to contain and regulate this clan competition by emphasizing Somali nationalism.

³⁹ The United Nations and Somalia (1992-1996) (New York: UN Department of Public Information, 1996) p. 9.

⁴⁰ Hussein M. Adam: *Somali: A Terrible Beauty Been Born* (SAIS) African Studies Library, 1993).

Against this background of growing populace discontent, President Cali Cabadirashiid Cali Sharmaarke was assassinated by one of his bodyguards while touring the Lass Carnood area and, one week later, on October 21st 1996, the army commander General Mohamed Siad Barre seized power in a bloodless coup.

Siad Barre's 'Supreme Revolutionary Council' was widely received as a welcome alternative to the disappointment of civilian rule even though few Somalis wanted military rule. The regime's popularity was, however, short-lived because Siad Barre's vision called for the dismantling of the traditional clan based social order, economic networks and political institutions upon which the majority of the Somali depended.

No aspect of Somali private and public identity was spared the government's zeal for command and control: culture, family life, nomadism, traditional authority, social organizations and even religious beliefs were all denounced as anachronistic or subversive and targeted for reform. Felix Moshia⁴¹ argues that

"In an attempt to consolidate personal power, Barre blocked all avenues of non-violent dissent, instituted repressive measures and started carrying out executions by targeting those he considered his opponents particularly from clans other than his own. He then substituted clanism for ideology in favour of his own clan, the, the Marehan of the Daron clan-whom he placed in key positions."

Corruption at all levels of the state fuelled by massive Cold War funds became widespread. With these developments, the process of instability in Somali had begun.

When Siad Barre realized the enthusiasm for his 'Revolution' was beginning to fade, he turned to the pan-Somali drama to reinvigorate his rapidly declining support base. In the mid-seventies, with the help of the Soviet Union, General Barre built the Somali army to become one

⁴¹ Felix G. N. Moshia: Lessons Learned from Experiences in Conflict Resolution and Peace Making in Africa-with Special Reference to Somalia 21 – 23 January 1998: Arusha, Tanzania p. 15.

of the largest and best equipped in Sub-Saharan Africa. From an army that numbered 3,000 at independence in 1960, the Somali army grew to 12,000 in 1982.

By 1975, clandestine units were operating across the border in Ethiopia's Somali region, and in 1977 a full scale war broke out as Barre launched his forces in a dramatic offensive across the border. Initially, the Somali force made rapid gains but when the Soviet Union withdrew its support and instead gave support to the Ethiopian side, the tide turned. The Somali army was defeated and it suffered huge losses.

The 1977/78 Somali-Ethiopian war marked a turning point for the Barre regime, for the Somali people, and the state they had established less than two decades previously. Somalia's defeat led to the collapse of pan-Somali dream. Even Djibouti chose to remain independent rather than unite with the Somali Republic. The defeat also planted the seeds of mistrust between the north and south.

Northern officers who had been at the fore-front felt not only that they had borne the brunt of the campaign but that they had also been undermined by the mechanization of the southern military hierarchy. Northern civilians who had backed the war enthusiastically also felt that they had been subtly manipulated by rival southern interest and had suffered the most as a result of the conflict.

The massive influx of refugees to Somali also had a far-reaching impact on the relations between the North and South. More than one thousand refugees a day poured into Somali – most of them ethnic Somali although a large number of Oromo minority joined them in their exodus. By 1981, refugees constituted about forty percent of the national population, about 400,000 of them in north.⁴² Although the refugees were settled throughout Somalia, their arrival in the North created considerable tension. Most of the refugees were Ogaden Somalis, a group

⁴² Lewis IM: Understanding Somalia: Guide to culture, History and Social Institution (London: Haan Associates, 1993) p. 61.

non-resident in the North and whose political leadership was closely associated with the Barre regime.

Local inhabitants felt overwhelmed by the sheer numbers of the refugees, who overflowed from the designated camps and began to settle in major towns. Aid resources earmarked to settle and care for the refugees who, by virtue of their clan-origin were favoured by the regime for posts in local government and in the military garrisons of the area. With time, the refugees also received preferential treatment in terms of businesses, licenses, contracts and other commercial benefits.

As the rift between the refugees and their hosts widened, refugee militias were established and this worsened the situation. Tension between them increased, as the government continued to manipulate kinship divisions within the Somali society for the purposes of "divide and rule". Shattered by its defeat in the Somali-Ethiopian war and by an attempted Coup d'etat by military officers in Mogadishu in April 1978, the regime had concentrated the economic resources of the country in its hands and was using their selective redistribution to ensure loyalty to the regime.

A lot of foreign aid was diverted and misappropriated by the regime and hence very little of the assistance ever reached the north except that which was destined for the refugees whose allegiance was important to the ruling clique. In contrast to the treatment the government accorded the refugees during the 1980s, it was clear that the Isaq Clan had been singled out as a target for political economic social and cultural oppression.⁴³

At the national level, the Isaq were discriminated against in terms of public employment, international appointments and even business opportunities. In the North, government crackdown manifested itself in a variety of ways. Restrictions were placed selectively on the livestock export trade, making it increasingly difficult for Isaq exporters to acquire licenses and

⁴³ Samatar A. I. : Under Siege: Blood, Power and the Somali State in Anyang' Nyong'o (ed) Arms and Daggers in the Heart of Africa (Nairobi: Academy Science publishers, 1993) p. 87.

open letters of credit to transport livestock to Berbera for export, while their competitors from other clans were relatively unaffected.

Taxation was also quite high and many people had to really struggle to make ends meet. The following tax rates were enacted:

| Income in Somali Shillings | Taxation Rate. |
|----------------------------|----------------|
| Upto 200 Som Shs. | 5% |
| 201 to 300 Som. Shs. | 10% |
| 301 to 600 Som. Shs. | 15% |
| 601 to 800 Som. Shs. | 30% |
| 801 to 1,500 Som. Shs. | 30% |
| 1,501 to 1,800 Som. Shs. | 35% |
| 1,801 and above Som. Shs. | 40% |

Source: Rehula S.P.: Mohammed Farah Aideed and his Vision of Somali (New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 1994) p. 72.

In 1981, the pent-up frustration within the Isaq community was explosively triggered by the government's arrest of a group of Hargeisa whose only crime was to have organized self-help programmes. They were accused of distributing anti-government propaganda and sentences ranging from death to long-term prison sentences were imposed. Their detention and torture attracted national and international condemnation.

This policy of provoking the Isaq Clan is what finally led to Barre's downfall. This provocation was strange, in light of the fact that the authors of the 1969 coup were young Isaq officers who were graduates of prestigious military academies. They had chosen and made

Barre their leader, because of his seniority and age. Hussein Ali Dualeh⁴⁴ argues that, "these young officers had a nationalistic agenda to remedy the political and economic ills of the country." It is not very evident why Siad Barre had an inveterate hatred for Isaq Clan but it has been suggested by Dualeh that the fact that this clan was the most Arabised of all Somali clans and was close to the Arab Peninsula meant that they had trade and cultural links with the Arabs. When Barre came to power, his first declaration was that scientific socialism be the ideology of the country. He knew that the West and the Arab countries, would not allow Somalia to be a communist state and the Isaq clan being traditionally pro-Arab and pro-Western were a threat to his socialist regime and hence the animosity towards them.

Consultations among the Isaq, Both the Somali and in the Diaspora, especially those in the Gulf, Saudi Arabia and United Kingdom culminated in the formation in London, of the rebel Somali National Movement (SNM). By 1982, SNM had established bases in Ethiopia from where it waged an armed struggle against the régime in the North, initially in the form of clandestine cross-border incursions.

In response, the government doubled its campaign of brutal repression. In urban centres, arbitrary arrests, detentions and executions accelerated while in the rural areas the regime sought to undermine the SNM's support among nomads by destroying their livelihoods. In May 1988, following a peace accord between Ethiopia and Somalia that threatened to terminate their campaign, the SNM launched an all out offensive against government forces in Hargeisa and Burao. Caught off-guard, the government responded with brutal ground and aerial bombardment. Government forces systematically destroyed what remained of northern towns and villages. From its bases in Ethiopia, the SNM offered a springboard for newly established guerilla groups in the South and continued its campaign in the north.

⁴⁴ Hussein Ali Dualeh: *Barre versus the Isaq Clan* in Weekly review October 1st 1993,p.37.

The movements that fought the Bare regime were all clan based. The Marjerteen of the Darod Clan had organized their Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF) since 1978 although they were used at intervals by Barre against the Isaqs. The Isaqa in turn established their Somali National Movement (SNM) in 1981. The Hawiyes formed their United Somali Congress (USC) in 1989. In the same year the Ogaden established their Somali Patriotic Movement (SPM). At the same time, the Rahanwiin of the Digil-Mirifle formed the Somali Democratic Movement (SDM) In effect every clan, sub-clan or lineage started seeing virtue in forming a movement as a way of defending group interests and benefit.

3.3 THE DESCENT INTO CIVIL WAR

Ahmaed Qassim Al⁴⁵ postulates that from 1989 Barre's army continued its devastation in the central region's stronghold of USC. The army destroyed villages, livestock and water points in the hopes of undermining the support of the armed struggle. This devastation caused a mass exodus to the south, especially to Mogadishu. Thousands of displaced youth joined USC militia or just formed groups following the fighters in the hope of getting arms from defeated soldiers.

Throughout this period, external aid had served as a factor, which held the Somali clans together, and Barre has succeeded in using the massive aid funds to maintain a fragile peace between him and different clans. In 1990, following congressional criticism of Barre's human rights abuses, the US suspended its military assistance to Somali. The suspension of economic aid followed soon after. Other countries and international organizations followed suit. In the end, as economic and security conditions worsened Barre's ability to play one clan against the other ended. A determined armed opposition with which he was not prepared to seriously negotiate was getting stronger.

⁴⁵ Ahmed Quassim Al: *The Foreign Factor in the Somali Tragedy* in Adam H. M. and Ford R. (ed) *Mending Rips in the Sky: Options for Somali Communities in the 21st Century* (Asamar: Red Sea Press,1997) p. 547.

Meanwhile, fighting had increased dramatically in 1988 when the SNM attacked Burao and Hargeisa. The city was in turn destroyed by government aircraft and artillery. It has been estimated that as many as fifty thousand people lost their lives in the fighting and about half a million were driven from their homes. Three hundred and seventy thousand Somalis fled to Ethiopia.⁴⁶ As a result of the bombardment of Hargeisa, most of Northern Somalia became a lawless territory. The regime continued to control the destroyed cities and continue to terrorize what was left of the urban areas while the SNM roamed the countryside. The already brittle nomadic life was adversely affected.

The spread of resistance to the south meant that the civil strife had assumed a new dimension in the sense that it became national in scope. The economic base in the north-livestock trading had been severely disrupted. The spread of anarchy to the south, the most fertile and productive part of the country, further weakened the economy. Barre responded by employing the same punitive tactics that he had used in the north.

The regime resorted to slaughtering civilians who opposed it. By the end of 1990, anarchy and lawlessness had spread to most parts of the country. Faced by the increasing hunger, repression and the collapse of order the residents of Mogadishu rose up in arms against the Barre regime in early January 1991. Four weeks of mutual pounding and slaughter ensued and on January 27 1991 amidst the carnage, Siad Barre's twenty one-year military and personal dictatorship came to an end.

The complete collapse of the Somali State following Siad Barre's overthrow in January 1991 created a vacuum of legitimate institution that was filled by different actors in different regions.⁴⁷ Famine, lawlessness and anarchy were most profound in the south in the area

⁴⁶ Ghallib M. J.: The Cost of Dictatorship: The Somalia experience (New York: Lillian Barber Press, 1995) p. 183.

⁴⁷ Terrence Lyons, Ahmed I Samatar; Somalia: state Collapse, Multi-Lateral Intervention and Strategies for Political Reconstruction (Washington D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1995) p. 21

between the Juba and Shebele rivers and in the capital of Mogadishu where not a single building could be found standing.

The Somalia Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF) had a stronghold in Central Somalia and in North Western, the SNM gained control and proclaimed the former British Colony the Independent Somaliland republic and continues to insist on independence despite lack of international recognition. The most dramatic violence and the source of the images that later came to international attention occurred in the area between Kismayu, Mogadishu and Belet Weyn.

Violence took place on two levels. The primary conflict was between militias, pitting clan and sub-clan organized in rival organizations against one another for control of territory and resources. Beneath this factional strife was the looting and banditry carried out by armed teenage gangs known as 'Mooryaan.' These gangs terrorized the countryside and urban centres. They were primarily motivated by the desire to gain access to war booty and were not attached to any group politically. After Siad Barre fled members of his immediate clan, the Bardera fled to the Ethiopian border.

The USC, which took control of Mogadishu, was further divided into rival factions based on the different sub-clans of the Hawiye. One faction was headed by General Mohammed Farah Aideed of the Habr Gedir Sub-Clan. Aideed had led USC's military operations against Barre's Government and had been elected chairman of the USC at a congress held near the Ethiopia – Somali border in 1990. General Aideed's election had not, however, been recognized by a Mogadishu – based faction of the USC, which proclaimed Mr. Ali Mahdi Mohamed, a member of the Abgal sun-clan, as the interim President of January 29 1991. Aideed and several faction leaders opposed this.

The November 17, 1991 fighting was triggered off by the refusal by Aideed's forces, to let a plane carrying an official Italian delegate to land at Mogadishu Airport. This delegation was supposed to discuss with Ali Mahdi and his government how the Italian government could best

help Somalia rehabilitate the essential services that had been totally destroyed. Aideed's refusal was an attempt to make sure that Mahdi did not consolidate his power.⁴⁸ Ali Mahdi and his government decided to move against Aideed and his supporters because they felt this was the only way to maintain their credibility. The war lasted five months. Over 300,000 civilians died in the crossfire between the two opposing factions. Either side showed no mercy. What remained of the population in Mogadishu fled for their lives, leaving the city empty.

It became very difficult to find a political solution to the deep crisis and struggle for power. For the USC factions, the only way to keep the militias mobilized was to close one eye to looting. Looting became the means of getting paid and it soon became a way of life and later, a business. No faction was immune to it and the situation got worse as the power struggle inside USC got polarized and led to continuous armed confrontations.⁴⁹

Meanwhile, the port of Mogadishu had been rendered inoperative due to the factional conflicts and uncontrolled clan thugs. The control of food lines was essential due to the scarcity of food and relief from outside. After the conflict of November 1991 between USC factions, the situation got totally out of control, resulting in a great tragedy.

Although Ali Mahdi's Abgal Clan was predominant in Mogadishu and the adjacent districts, it failed to dislodge Aideed and his Haber Gedir clan from Mogadishu because Aideed was better armed. In addition, the majority of the Hawiye supported Aideed against Mahdi. It was this support that tilted victory in favour of Aideed who took over control of the southern part of Mogadishu, the most important part of the city. Mahdi was left with the less important northern port.

The rest of the south had also become a battleground. In March – April 1991, there was heavy fighting between USC forces from Mogadishu and the forces of a new movement- the Somali national Front (SNF) constituted by remnants of ex-President Barres's army. The SNF

⁴⁸ Hussein Ali Dualeh: From Siad Biarre of Farah Aideed in Weekly Review September 3 1993, p. 33.

⁴⁹ Ahmed Qassim Al: Op. Cit p. 548.

lost control of Kismayu, Somali's second largest city and retreated to Bardera and parts of the Gedo region, which borders Kenya.

There were unsuccessful attempts by elders from neutral clans to mediate a cease-fire. In addition to the fighting within Mogadishu the factions also fought one another across southern Somalia. Different factions controlled the city of Kismayu at different times as the SMS led by Colonel Omar Jess fought with another faction led by General Morgan. These factional fights put hundreds of thousands of civilians at risk of starvation.

The ouster of Siad Barre also affected northern Somalia in the sense that, once the center collapsed, provincial authorities gave up or were overwhelmed. The SNM, which fought vigorously against Barre's regime, defined itself as the new and rightful regime in northern Somalia. Its armed wing soon began to harass non-Isaq areas in an attempt to pressurize them to accept SNM political authority. Fighting broke out in several localities and, in the end, the SNM achieved at least some degree of allegiance from most residents of Northern Somalia.

In May 1991, with its dominance established and the south in complete disarray, the SNM's leadership declared independence of the north as the new Somaliland Republic. Many Somalis were, however, disappointed by the failure SNM to lead the whole country toward a new political order and saw its rejection of the south as a betrayal of principles that had been articulated during years of fighting to liberate the Somali people as a whole. These critics now believed that the SNM was essentially another clanistic and sessionist group. The SNM's action contributed to the dissolution of Somalia as a nation – state and the destruction of pan-Somalism.⁵⁰

According to Charles Gasheker,⁵¹ the conflict between the East and West and Siad Barre's domestic manipulation of clan configuration contributed to the durability of his regime.

⁵⁰ Terence Lyons, Ahmed Samatar: Op. 23.

Because he could exploit Cold War rivalries, Siad Barre managed to acquire the capacity for repressive action but was unable to manage social forces or bring about economic development. The destructive consequences of the Cold War remained visible everywhere in immense stockpiles of weapons available at bargain prices.

The final disintegration of Somalia coincided with the end of the Cold War. The country ceased to function once the West, no longer needing to compete diplomatically with a defunct Communist block, grew tired of supporting a government which was unable to maintain itself. Somalia became a violent crucible where disorder at the centre compelled people to construct decentralized policies on its peripheries. Barre was a long time beneficiary of the 'Superpowers' Cold War attempt to win over leaders of Africa's strategic nations. In the Ethiopian – Somali war, the US backed Barre whose country was seen as crucial to the control of the narrow eastern access to the Red Sea. This interest in Barre waned as the Cold War rivalries diminished and opposition to his often-brutal rule grew.⁵²

Barre's long reign in Somalia was an ill wind that blew no Somali any good. In his twenty-one years as President, Barre completely personalized power, appointing people and throwing them out at will and destroying the social fabric and the cohesion of the Somali people by arming each clan against the other.

The imbalance of clan power-sharing created the initial inter-clan tension and hostility. Barre's twenty-one years of despotic rule and the ensuing clan fighting in Somalia after he fled and the carnage that took place in Somalia could have been avoided if for instance the situation had been arrested much earlier. Violence in the southern agricultural regions, which are Somalia's most productive areas, resulted in the plundering of grain stores and the uprooting of local farming populations. This was the single most important direct cause of the famine, which was to grip southern Somalia in 1992 – 1993.

⁵¹ Charles Gachekter: the Death of Somalia in Historical perspective in Adam H. M., Ford R. (eds.) Mending Rips in the Sky Op. Cit. p. 80.

The difficult natural environment together with the nation's poverty made Somalia more susceptible to the humanitarian crises in times of drought or other natural calamities but it was warfare that ultimately drove Somalia into famine. The warring factions hindered deliveries of food and other humanitarian relief supplies by the UN and bilateral aid agencies as well as by NGOs. In the coastal cities like Mogadishu and Kismayu, as well as the interior, the factions saw the control of food as a military asset and a source of power to be guarded and denied to opponents. The way in which Somalis were recruited into the various clan militias contributed to the looting that kept food from reaching people. Instead of paying their soldiers in cash, the militia leaders promised recruits a share of the loot captured from rival factions.

Militiamen and bandits alike survived and in some cases flourished by terrorizing civilians and aid workers, stealing food from aid delivering food to the needy. By November 1991, the International Community of the Red Cross (ICRC) found that in southern Somalia, forty percent of the people were severely malnourished and another fifty percent malnourished. In effect, a majority of the population in the south was at risk of starvation. The situation in the north was more stable but there too, pockets of malnutrition could be found.⁵³

According to Jama Mohammed Ghalib, Somalia affairs made little impact on world consciousness until the unprecedented suffering that accompanied the famine of early 1990s was featured on television screens throughout the world.⁵⁴ The U.S. media projected images of the Somali as the victims of famine, denied relief by the warlords.⁵⁵ It was indeed these horrifying images of starving Somalis that brought in external actors and eventually led to the UN intervention.

The whole world expressed shock and sympathy at the plight of the Somalis when the international media showed thousands of dead bodies as well as dying children, women and

⁵² Daily Nation 3 January 1995.

⁵³ The United Nations in Somalia 1992-1996 Op. Cit. p. 14

⁵⁴ Jama Mohamed Ghallib: The Cost of Dictatorship: The Somali Experience Op Cit. p.1

elderly in Mogadishu, Baidoa and other places. The different factions fought for the so-called liberation of Somalia from the oppression of dictatorship but in the end, they too brought untold suffering to the people of Somalia. Today, as Ali Dualeh⁵⁶ rightfully puts it,

"The Somali people re-traumatized, splintered, broken into hundreds of pieces like a broken glass, a nation that has descended into a black bottomless pit of its own making."

The UN intervened to try and save the Somali people. It especially wanted to ensure that food got to the millions of starving Somalis.

⁵⁵ Woodward P.: The Horn of Africa: State Politics and International Relations (London: I.B. Taurus Publishes, 1996

⁵⁶ Hussein Ali Dualeh Op. Cit p. 35

CHAPTER FOUR

UN INTERVENTION IN SOMALIA (UNOSOM)

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines the intervention by the UN in Somalia. An attempt is made to bring out some of the issues that arose and also to analyze what led to the failure. The main focus is on the events that took place during the civil war following the collapse of the Barre government. Although the UN had evacuated at the start of the civil war, it could not continue to ignore the resulting famine. Hundreds of Somalis faced starvation since they could not get access to food.

The UN intervened mainly, to create some semblance of peace so that the millions of starving Somalis faced starvation since they could not get access to food. The chaos had created a situation where bandits stole food being transported to the starving population. The intervention however, failed and the UN withdrew without restoring peace.

4.2 DIVERSTATING EFFECTS OF THE CONFLICT

In 1992, prolonged civil war and drought in Somalia led to a catastrophe that resulted in the death of an estimated 300,000.00 people. Civilians were hit by severe drought, the effects of which were aggravated by the civil war, preventing agricultural activity in the normally productive areas of southern Somalia. The tragedy was internationalized with the outflow of some 800,000 refugees into neighboring countries.⁵⁷

Barre's retreat from Mogadishu marked the formal end of a difficult era but did not usher in a new one. The Somali State, always a fragile artificial creation, dependent on external

⁵⁷ Ramesh Thukur *From Peace-keeping to Peace enforcement : The U.N Operation in Somalia in The Journal Of Modern African Studies. 32,3*

resources and suspended above a decentralized and factious society had collapsed. Consequently, competing factions and anarchy filled the resulting vacuum.⁵⁸

Power and leadership drifted to local communities and sub-clan – level leadership. The two Somalia militia leaders best known to the world in 1992, represented ethno-geographical interest areas; There was Mohamed Farah Aideed whose irregular forces were primarily composed of Hawiye Habr Gedr nomadic groups from the Mudug region north and west of Mogadishu; and there was also Ali Mahdi Mohammed who was not a military leader but was spokesman for traders and native Hawiye Abagal who were the majority population in the pre-civil war Mogadishu region.⁵⁹

The internal population movements triggered by the civil war led to a number of humanitarian disasters. To begin with, the displaced city dwellers and native rural agriculturalists who congregated in the Mogadishu – Baidoa – Bardera area became hostage to militia leaders who established and maintained control of ports and highways. Secondly, refugees and internally displaced persons were blocked by the warlords from returning to their places of residence, which were controlled by victorious non-local clan groups. Although the UN has been deeply involved in Somalia before the civil war, it closed its offices along with other diplomatic missions and international organizations and evacuated its personnel from the country when the civil war swept into Mogadishu in December 1990 – January 1991.

During 1991 many individuals' voices were raised calling attention to Somalia's plight, declaring it to be both a humanitarian tragedy and a threat to stability and security to the entire Horn of Africa. It is noteworthy, however, that the Somali crisis was occurring at roughly the same time as the break-up of the Soviet Union and the beginning of the war in the former

(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994) p. 388.

⁵⁸ Terrence Lyons, Ahmed I. Samatar Somalia: State collapse Multilateral Intervention and Strategies for Political Reconstruction.

(Washington D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1995) p. 7.

⁵⁹ Walter Clarke and Jeffrey Herbst Learning from Somalia: The Lessons of Armed Humanitarian Intervention (Boulder: West View Press, 1997) p.vii

Yugoslavia. These two events occupied much of the international community's attention. Moreover, there were no functioning embassies in Mogadishu to send diplomatic cables to alert the outside world to the impending disasters.⁶⁰

Somali affairs made little impact on world consciousness until the unprecedented suffering that accompanied the famine of the early 1990s was featured on television screens throughout the world. The U.S. Congress and public put a lot of pressure on the administration to do something about the deplorable situation in Somalia.⁶¹ When the international community finally did begin to intervene in early 1992, hundreds of thousands of lives had already been lost.

4.3 EARLY UN INVOLMENT IN THE SOMALI CONFLICT

As the Secretary General, Javier Perez de Cuellar was nearing the completion of his term on December 27 1991; he expressed shock and concern over the deteriorating situation in Somalia. As Mohammed Osman Omar⁶² postulates,

“Upto 20,000 people, the majority of who were women and children had been killed since heavy fighting began and many thousands fled the city while large numbers of displaced people were without access to food, medical supplies, shelter or water.”

Javier Perez de Cuellar informed the President of the Security Council that he intended to take an initiative in an attempt to restore peace in Somalia. The first Resolution adopted by the Security Council after the deepening of the crisis was *Resolution 733 (1992)* of 23 January 1992, which urged all parties to the conflict to cease hostilities and decided that all states should

⁶⁰ The United Nations and Somalia, 1992-1996. (New York: UN Department of Public Information, 1996) p. 16

⁶¹ Walter Clarke and Jeffrey Herbst Op. Cit. p. 8

⁶² Mohammed Osama Omar Somali: A Nation Driven to Despair (New Delhi: Somali Publications Co. Ltd., 1996).p.19.

immediately implement a general and complete embargo on all deliveries of weapons and military equipment to Somalia.⁶³

At first, the UN attempted to deploy a small number of cease-fire observers and a small force of security personnel for the protection of humanitarian relief operations in the capital, based on traditional peace-keeping premises, including consent of the parties. Failure by the different factions to co-operate with each other led to long delays in the development of these units. As the famine toll rose, it became clear that a much larger force was needed to protect relief supplies and it had to be deployed quickly; with or without the consent of the faction leaders.

In an effort to encourage political reconciliation, the Secretary General invited Ali Mahdi and Mohamed Farah Aideed, the USC factional leaders who controlled sections of Mogadishu to New York in February 1992 where they signed a vague cease-fire document on March 3, 1992. The UN concentrated on the peace talks among the factions most active war in the thereby marginalizing those leaders and clans that had remained neutral.⁶⁴

As the situation in Somalia continued to deteriorate, the UN Security Council adopted *Resolution 751 (1992)* by which it established a United Nations Operation in Somalia (USOSOM) on 24 April 1992. On 28 April the UN nominated the Algerian Diplomat, Mohamed Sahnoun as Special representative of the Secretary General UNOSOM was later labeled UNOSOM I.

4.4 UNOSOM I

The UN evacuated during the fighting that broke out in Mogadishu in January 1991 and returned to Somalia only after the tragedy had reached alarming proportions. When the UN

⁶³ Ahmed Qassim Al The Foreign Factor in the Somali Tragedy in Hussein M. Adam and Richard Ford (ed), Mending Rips the Sky: Options for Somalia communities in the 21st Century (Asmara: The Red Sea Press, Inc., 1997) p. 557.

delegation arrived in Mogadishu in March 1992, the city was nearly deserted. There was chaos everywhere, the total collapse of all administrative structures and, even more important, there was the horrendous humanitarian disaster. As far as the Somali people were concerned, the arrival of the first UN team was a sign that their cries had been heard although they could not understand why the UN had been keeping a distant and suspicious stance towards Somalia.⁶⁵ Despite deep-seated grievances and distrust of the UN, the Somali people decided to deal with the organization. When UNOSOM I was established in April 1992, its greatest challenge was not so much preventing the outbreak of the famine as containing it as quickly as possible to save the millions of people at risk of death.⁶⁶ For over a year, the civil war had torn across the countryside especially in the south and much of the population had been displaced and the towns were full of people fleeing the violence or searching for food. In the north, the drought had hit several regions. Almost everywhere, food stocks were exhausted and food prices were rising sharply. Water and sanitation systems had been destroyed. All this meant that food as well as basic health services was desperately needed. In spite of this, it was impossible to deliver food aid to the capital by sea because of the fighting in Mogadishu. The UN after securing agreement from the two factions fighting for power in Mogadishu decided to deploy 500 "security personnel" contributed by Pakistan. The 'security personnel's' job was limited to guarding the airport in Mogadishu.⁶⁷ The Political office of the UN was run by the Algerian Diplomat Mohamed Sahnoun whose duty was to create a peaceful environment so that humanitarian assistance could reach the needy people and bring Somalia back to normalcy. This was however a fallacy because of the ensuing anarchy. Since there was no peaceful environment, it was impossible to get food to the millions of starving people.

⁶⁴ Rakiya Omar Somalia: A Fight to the Death in News from Africa Watch (New York: February 13, 1992), pp.7-10.

⁶⁵ Mohamed M. Sahnoun. The U.N intervention in Somalia in Adam H.M., ford R. (ed): Mending Rips in the Sky: Options for Somali Communities in the 21st Century.

⁶⁶ The United Nations and Somalia 1992-1996 Op. Cit. p. 20.

⁶⁷ Mohamed Osman Omar Op. Cit. p. 21.

UNOSOM I was viewed as peacekeeping mission even though for the first time in the history of UN peacekeeping, one of its primary purposes was to make possible the delivery of emergency assistance to a civilian population. The security force sent to Somalia under *Resolution 751 (1992)* was intended to help deter armed attacks on humanitarian relief operations and was to use its weapons only in self-defense. UNSOM I, however, ran into problems. One of these was as a result of the fact that the 3 March 1992 cease-fire involved only two parties in Mogadishu the SNF and SNM factions allied to Aideed. In the inter-riverine areas of the south however, intense fighting continued between the SNF of ex-President Barre and factions allied to General Aideed. The SNF forces were defeated in a series of battles between April and June 1992 and then retreated across the southern border into Kenya.⁶⁸ Shifting alliances among the different factions also hampered the UN's efforts. The fighting in the south laid the foundation for the creation in August 1992 of the Somali National Alliance (SNA) a loose coalition including General Aideed's faction of the USC and several other factions. Mr. Ali Mahdi's USC faction later joined a rival alliance known initially as the Group of 11 and later as the Group of 12. The tensions in Mogadishu between the factions of General Aideed and of Ali Mahdi became intertwined with many localized power struggles in other cities and regions, creating a complex and highly unstable mix of alliances and divisions.

It took a lot of time and difficult negotiations for the UN team to reach an agreement to send the five hundred Pakistan troops to Somalia and these troops had not even arrived when an announcement that over 3,800 troops would be sent to Somalia was made in New York. This announcement was made without informing the UNOSOM 1 delegation in Mogadishu, the leaders of neighboring countries and worse, without consulting the Somali leaders and community elders as they had done before.⁶⁹ These troops were, however, not deployed and

⁶⁸ Peter Woodward *The Horn of Africa: State Politics and International Relations* (London: I.B. Taurus Publishers, 1996) p. 74.

⁶⁹ Professor Abdinur Hashi *Weapons and Clan Politics in Somalia* (Mogadishu: Horn of Africa Printing Press, 1996) p. 68.

UNOSOM I never extended its reach beyond Mogadishu because some faction leaders refused to approve its deployment. This hampered the efforts to provide adequate security for the distribution of famine relief assistance.

4.5 SOMALI RESISTANCE TO UNOSOM 1

The resistance by the factions grew immensely, especially that of General Aideed. The hostilities were triggered off by the fact that a Russian plane chartered, with UN markings, by a UN agency, had delivered currency and military equipment to troops supporting interim President Ali Mahdi.⁷⁰ This angered his archrival Aideed. Much of the trust, which the UN had built over the months, was seriously eroded. Suspicion against all UN personnel in Mogadishu was spreading, rekindling an old perception by many Somalis that the UN and some countries were biased in favour of the acting President. The untimely announcement by the Secretary General that the UN would send additional reinforcements without proper consultation led to a rapid deterioration of the security situation in Mogadishu and elsewhere. General Aideed who had previously agreed to the deployment of Pakistani troops raised new objections, declaring that the contingents would no longer be tolerated on the streets of Mogadishu. He went further to expel UNOSOM's co-coordinator for humanitarian assistance on the grounds that his activities were counter to the interest of the Somali people and therefore his security could no longer be guaranteed.⁷¹

In October 1992, the UN special representative, Mr. Sahnoun, publicly criticized the way in which the UN carried out its affairs in Somalia and demanded that the organization clarify its political objectives, Sahnoun also complained about the lack of support from New York, saying that at least 300,000 Somali children may have died while the UN and most of the international

⁷⁰ Walter Clarke *Failed visions and Uncertain Mandates in Somalia* in Walter Clarke and Jeffrey Herbst (ed)

community watched. When he in turn was criticized by the Secretary General he resigned and was replaced by Mr. Ismat Kittani. Mr. Kittani arrived in Mogadishu on 8th November 1992 amidst tension and in the face of demands by Aideed that UNOSOM I troops leave the airport where they had taken up positions two days earlier. Mr. Kittani, acting on the Secretary General's orders, refused to withdraw the troops. One day later, the battalion came under heavy fire. Mr. Mahdi's faction also threatened to shell any ship attempting to dock at Mogadishu because they believed that food cargoes were being diverted for the benefit of General Aideed's factions. Mr. Mahdi also urged UNOSOM I to take control of the port.

By mid-1992 as a result of immense media coverage aroused by angry humanitarian groups that highlighted the starvation in central Somalia, the drastic humanitarian problems of Somalia were well known. A sense of urgency about Somalia within the U.S. Congress and among the America public raised the pressures on the U.S administration. As Peter Woodward⁷² argues, Boutros-Boutros Ghali's views coincided with those held by President Bush. America was on the brink of its Presidential election and Bush wished to go out with a final flourish.

UNOSOM I, largely a humanitarian assistance mission, had failed to contain the civil war and drought in Somalia which had led to the death of an estimated 300,000 people. Consequently, as Robert G. Patman⁷³ contends, the UN opted for direct intervention. As the cease-fire collapsed, banditry had increased making it difficult to transport relief supplies to the famine zone in the south.

⁷¹ Letter date 24th November 1992 from the Secretary General to the President of the Security Council S/24859, 27 November 1992.

⁷² Peter Woodward Op. Cit. p. 74.

4.6 INITIAL US ATTEMPTS TO END THE HUMANITARIAN CRISIS

President George Bush announced that he would assign U.S. military aircraft to transport food relief. This was aimed at speeding deliveries to remote towns in the interior and avoiding Mogadishu's bandit-infested harbor. However, as Paul Lewis discerns neither this initiative nor a parallel attempt to auction some food relief to merchants in Mogadishu at reduced prices succeeded in overcoming the fundamental problem of insecurity and looting.⁷⁴ The airlift succeeded in providing the needed food but looters captured much of the relief and conflict worsened around Bardhere especially as militias fought for the valuable supplies.

On 24 November 1992, President Bush announced that U.S. forces would be deployed on behalf of the UN in Mogadishu. On the eve of the arrival of the US forces capital, the situation elsewhere in the country was more stable. The absence of any government or quasi-governmental structure meant that the UN operation was going to be mounted, without the consent of the parties involved in the conflict. In spite of the voices of caution, the UN decision to intervene won the day. Boutros-Boutros Ghali was keen for action to demonstrate a new capacity of the UN for peace enforcement rather than simply peacekeeping. For Bush, it was an opportunity to go out in a blaze of glory comparable to the one he had enjoyed in the Gulf.

As Woodward claims, the Europeans may have failed to act with sufficient decisiveness on Bosnia, but the U.S. would show how it could be done with a swift large-scale intervention in Somalia. The pentagon gave assurances that it would be 'do-able' and would not involve significant loss of U.S. troops.⁷⁵

In December 1992, the Security Council authorized and the U.S agreed to lead a precedent-setting peace enforcement operation to provide a secure environment for

⁷³ Robert G. Patman *Disarming Somalia: the Contrasting Fortunes of United States and Australian peace-keepers during United Nations Intervention in Africa Affairs* (1997) 96, p. 509.

⁷⁴ Paul Lewis *U.S Offering Plan for Somalia relief in New York Times*, September 18, 1992 p. A10.

⁷⁵ Peter Woodward *Op. Cit.* p.76

humanitarian relief.⁷⁶ Earlier on, on November 25 1992, the Security Council had, at an informal meeting agreed that the situation in Somalia was becoming intolerable and that none of the methods put in place by the UN as of that time were enough to end the suffering of the people in that country. Several members of the Security Council were of the view that it had reached a point where the more forceful measures under Chapter VII that permitted the Council to authorize military action to restore peace and security had to be evoked. On 29 November 1992, the Secretary General put forward five options open to the Security Council. Under the first option, UNOSOM I would have continued its efforts to reach an agreement with the faction leaders on the deployment of the full complement of about 4,200 peace-keepers in the four operational zones authorized by the Security Council in August 1992. This option was seen to be unrealistic in the face of lack of co-operation from the faction leaders.

The second option was to abandon the idea of using peace-keepers to protect humanitarian activities in Somalia, withdraw the military elements of UNOSOM I and leave the humanitarian agencies to negotiate the best protection deals they could with local faction and clan leaders. This option was withdrawn because the military personnel were not enough and they did not have the right mandate.⁷⁷ The last three options were based on the need for more forceful measures to secure the humanitarian operations in Somalia. Since no Government existed in Somalia that could request the UN to intervene, all three options would require the Security Council to evoke Chapter VII of the Charter on grounds that the Somali crisis posed a threat to international peace and security. It could then adopt military action under Article 42 which states in part: Should the Security Council consider that measures (not involving the use of armed force) would be inadequate it, may take such action by air, sea or land forces as may be necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security.

⁷⁶ The United Nations and Somalia 1992-1996 Op. Cit. p. 30

⁷⁷ Letter dated 29 November 1992 from the Secretary General to the President of the Security Council – S/24868 30 November 1992

The Secretary General's third option was for UNOSOM I to undertake a show of force in Mogadishu to create safe conditions for the delivery of humanitarian relief and to deter the factions from withholding co-operation with UNOSOM. The fourth option called for a countrywide enforcement operation empowered by the Security Council but undertaken by a group of member states. As mentioned earlier, the U.S. had already offered to lead in organizing and commanding such an operation. The main goal of the operation was to resolve the immediate security problems in Somalia. The fifth option called for the carrying out of a countrywide enforcement mission in Somalia under the auspices of the UN. Troops were to be provided by the member states and they were to divert from traditional peacekeeping in the sense that they had the authority to use force to accomplish their mission. This option could only be feasible if the member states provided personnel not only for headquarters in the field but also in New York where considerable additional staff would be required.

The Security Council decided to adopt the fourth option. In *Resolution 794 (1992)* which was adopted on 3rd December 1992, the Council determined that the conflict in Somali did indeed constitute a "threat to international peace and security" and endorsed the Secretary General's recommendation that action under Chapter VII of the UN Charter should be taken in order to establish a secure environment for humanitarian relief operations in Somalia within the shortest time possible. The council welcomed the offer of the U.S. to lead such an operation and welcomed as well offers by other member states to participate. Acting under Chapter VII, the council authorized the Secretary General and Member States to use "all necessary means to establish as soon as possible a secure environment for humanitarian relief operations in Somalia."⁷⁸

On 9 December 1992, a Unified Task Force headed by the U.S. command was deployed in Mogadishu. Within weeks, the U.S. forces were joined by military units from Australia, Belgium, Canada, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, India, Italy, Kuwait, Morocco, New Zealand,

Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia Sweden, Tunisia, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom and Zimbabwe.⁷⁸ This direct intervention which the UN opted for was to consist of two phases: Unified Task Force (UNITAF), a U.S.-led humanitarian intervention with limited enforcement duties and UNOSOM II, a UN-led humanitarian operation with extensive enforcement function.

4.7 UNITAF

On 9 December 1992, the first of 30,000 U.S troops, the major part of a Unified Task Force (UNITAF) landed in Mogadishu. The aim was to take control of the ports of Mogadishu and Kismayu to ensure the passage of relief supplies to the food distribution centres and then to prepare a hand over to UNOSOM II. UNITAF's mandate focused on deploying thousands of troops, securing airports and other transportation facilities, moving tones of equipment in support of the troops and distributing large quantities of relief food to remote villages and other famine locations. This prevented massive starvation and clearly represented a major achievement of international intervention.

Terrance Lyons and Ahamed I Samatar⁸⁰ posit that Aideed welcomed the introduction of UN forces because he recognized the futility of resisting such a powerful force and also because he believed that the Americans would put a halt to any idea by the UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros – Ghali to deploy UN troops and impose a UN trusteeship. UNITAF's area of operation was confined to the southern one third of Somalia. The northwestern region which was controlled by SNM and the northeastern region controlled by SSDF were not affected by the violence and anarchy as much as the south. The U.S. and the UN paid very little attention to the relatively peaceful regions and did not even provide significant assistance to encourage the maintenance of stability. The main reason for this was that the U.S. was

⁷⁸ The United Nations and Somalia Op. Cit. p. 32

⁷⁹ Mohammed Osman Omar Op. Cit. p. 49.

determined to avoid political involvement. Initially, there was comparative success as far as the delivery of relief was concerned but political problems soon surfaced.

Robert G. Patman⁸¹ argues that within a week of a launching the Operation Restore Hope (ORH), the U.S and the UN publicly clashed over whether the mandate for the operation included the disarming of Somali militias. Boutros Boutros – Ghali anxious to have U.S. forces take on as much as possible while the force was large and popular pushed for greater involvement in disarmament while Washington repeatedly refused. This in essence emphasized the role of the UN in an operation funded by individual countries. In the beginning, U.S. forces made great effort to avoid disarmament insisting that such actions lay outside their missions. With time, U.S. forces became more involved partly because of the need to create Zones of security around the parameter of U.S. facilities. In order to achieve the mission of humanitarian relief while deploying many thousands of U.S. troops, the operation required involvement in disarmament. At first, Aideed and Mahdi had welcomed the UNITAF intervention but thoughts of disarming them brought maneuvers to avoid such action. By February 1993, Aideed was of the view that the UN's action in the port of Kismayu showed clear favoritism towards one of his rivals, Hirsi Morgan, and against his ally Omer Jess. He was also concerned that Mahdi was stealing the limelight from him and there was the danger that Mahdi's claim to head an interim government could be recognized.

Due to the narrow intervention of the UN mandate, UNTAF adopted a consensual approach to security management in Mogadishu. Two days later, after the launch of the U.S-led intervention on 11th December 1992, Robert Oakley, U.S. Special Envoy to Somalia secured a fresh cease-fire agreement between the two main protagonists in Mogadishu, Mahdi and Aideed.⁸² This agreement, however, made little progress. Many Somalis and Foreign aid workers were dismayed and shocked by Oakley's immediate dialogue with two of the key

⁸⁰ Terrene Lyons, Ahmed I. Samatar Op. Cit.39.

⁸¹ Robert G. Patman Op. Cit. p. 511.

warlords who they viewed as war criminals who plunged Somalia into chaos and famine. According to them, the U.S had treated the warlords as legitimate political players instead of arresting them. This involvement of the faction leaders later proved to be a severe handicap to the UN's freedom of action in searching for political solution.

On January 1993, UN Secretary General opened a peace conference of 14 Somali faction leaders in Addis Ababa. A formal cease-fire and disarmament agreement was signed on 8th and 5th January respectively. Under the accords, the factions agreed to draw up a national charter and discuss forming a new interim government at a reconciliation conference in Addis Ababa on 15th March. It was agreed that UNITAF/UNOSOM I immediately establish a cease-fire-monitoring group, which would take possession of heavy weapons under the control of these movements until a legitimate Somali government could take them over. It was also agreed that the militias should be encamped, all weapons be registered and all property which had been unlawfully taken from civilians during previous hostilities returned.⁸³ The agreement, as mentioned earlier, did not make much progress. The warlords were unwilling or unable to comply with the agreement that their armed followers register their weapons with the UNITAF authorities for eventual disarmament. The warlords benefited financially from the criminal activities of their supporters and so they had little incentive to order the registration of machine guns, especially since it could involve a test of their leadership control. As a result, many Somalis in Mogadishu remained armed.

Lorenz FM⁸⁴ posits that "the initial American focus on voluntary disarmament in Mogadishu brought out several small-scale weapons incentive programmes." In January 1993, UNITAF Marine Forces (MARFOR) began issuing receipts for weapons handed over. These

⁸² The Guardian, 12 December 1992 in ; Africa Research Bulletin (ARB) 1-31 December 1992,p. 10834

⁸³ Report of the Commission of Inquiry Established Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 885 (1993) to investigate Armed Attacks on UNOSOM II Personnel which led to Casualties Among them, Security Council Document S/1994/653 p. 13

⁸⁴ FM Lorenz *Weapons Confiscation Policy During the First Phases of Operation Restore Hope in Small Wars and Insurgencies* 5, 3 (1994) pp.414-415.

receipts could then be exchanged for food provided by the humanitarian relief organizations. This, however, did not have much impact not only because the general food situation in Somalia had begun to improve by early 1993, but also because many Somalis believed that they would be risking their lives by surrendering their weapons since they still lived in an insecure environment.

The poor results of voluntary disarmament coincided with a steady deterioration in Mogadishu's security situation. After an initial decrease in hostilities, fighting between rival militias escalated from mid-December. President George Bush's visit to the city over the New Year was marked by sustained artillery, mortar and machine-gun exchanges just three miles northeast of the American Embassy.⁸⁵

The crime rate in Mogadishu increased tremendously especially since it became clear to the bandits that they could keep their guns if they did not directly threaten UNITAF's operations. Relief aid workers and foreign journalists become favorite targets as the gunmen resumed control of large areas of the city. Increasing attacks on aid organizations like the Save the Children Fund forced these organizations to spend nearly US \$ 10,000 per week to hire local gunmen to provide them with the much-needed security.⁸⁶ The escalating crime rate forced UNITAF forces to undertake periodic weapon searches and confiscation independent of the disarmament agreements signed by the warring factions. This, however, did not form part of a comprehensive disarmament plan nor was it considered by the U.S. as a central feature of the UN mandate. In spite of the obstacles faced by UNITAF, it did try to arrest the problem of insecurity in Mogadishu. In December 1992, on the eve of a visit by President Bush, U.S. forces seized arms, missiles and battlewagons in northwest Mogadishu and the contents of a small arsenal from a building opposite the U.S. Embassy compound in South Mogadishu. On 7th and 8th January 1993, 900 U.S. marines stormed weapons compounds belonging to Aideed.

⁸⁵ The Sunday Times, 3 January 1993.

⁸⁶ The Sunday Times 3 January 1993.

Tanks, anti-aircraft guns, mortars and battlewagons were seized. On 11th January 1993, 900 U.S. marines occupied Mogadishu's main arms market at Bakara and confiscated five truckloads of arms and ammunition.⁸⁷

The strife for quick-fix solutions to Somalia's security problems reflected UNITAF's determination to withdraw from Somalia and hand over responsibility to the UN. President Bush even spoke about getting out of Somalia by January 1993. Bush's successor, Bill Clinton, also shared the view that the U.S. should not stay any longer than was necessary. In spite of four days of riots and gun battles in Mogadishu in late February, the U.S. military announced it was pressing ahead with plans to withdraw 3,000 troops from Somalia. Therefore, although the position remained tense, the withdrawal of the majority of U.S. troops did take place by 1 May when as planned, a new UN force (UNOSOM II) took over.⁸⁸

4.8 UNOSOM II

UNOSOM II, created by the Security Council Resolution 814, went into Somalia on 1 May 1993 and it was comprised of forces from a number of countries. Its mandate was expanded not only to include the protection of humanitarian relief supplies and personnel and the disarmament of Somali militias. The new UN mission – UNOSOM II – was mandated to disarm Somali militias under Chapter VII of the Charter to create conditions for political settlement.⁸⁹ A UN sponsored Conference on National Reconciliation was held in March 1993. After 13 days of bargaining, the 15 faction leaders signed a peace accord on 27th March committing the parties to complete disarmament within 90 days.⁹⁰ The agreement called on the multi-national forces to apply strong effective sanctions against violators of the cease-fire. On 4th May 1993, UNOSOM II formally took over from UNITAF.

⁸⁷ The Guardian, 12 January 1993.

⁸⁸ Peter Woodward Op. Cit. p. 78

⁸⁹ Bruce London *Somalia Intervention in a Failed State* in Kevin Clements and Robin Ward (ed) Building International Community (Canberra: Allen and Unwin 1994).

There was no precedent for the UN to follow as it set out on this new mission but it was determined to set one. Thirty countries eventually contributed troop contingents to UNOSOM II. Among them for the first time in the history of UN peacekeeping operations was Germany, which despite its constitutional limitations contributed a contingent for non-combat duties. The U.S. also positioned a Joint Task Force off the Somalia Coast under a separate command structure reporting directly to the U.S. Government. This in itself created a problem because it hampered the UN's independence to operate. US also provided a small Quick Reaction Force consisting of a light United States Army battalion with helicopter support which was originally conceived as a mobile back up or reserve force for rapid deployment in special circumstances. Just like the Joint Task Force, the Quick Reaction Force was also deployed in support of UNOSOM II but was not part of the UN Force and instead reported directly to the Government of the United States.⁹¹ Right from the start, the hastily assembled UNOSOM II Force was over stretched. The initial contingent of 16,000 UN troops drawn for a large number of countries struggled to fill the vacuum left by the 37,000 strong UNITAF force. Although UNOSOM II was desperately short of operational hardwares it was expected to disarm the warlord militias and take charge of the sixty percent of Somalia territory previously outside international control.⁹²

Between April and June 1993, UNOSOM II began implementing resolution 814 (1993) which authorized all necessary measures against armed attacks on UN personnel including the arrest, detention, trial and punishment of perpetrators. Tensions increased with USC/SNA accusing UNOSOM II of partiality in the implementation of both the political and military components of its mandate. USC/SNA claimed that UNOSM II had interfered in the talks among the factions, and was angered when Belgian forces of UNOSOM II under the enforcement mandate bestowed by Resolution 814, barred the Darod Ogaden SPM/SNA faction

⁹⁰ Mohammed Osman Omar Somalia: A Nation driven to Despair, Op. Cit. pp. 35-40

⁹¹ The UN and Somalia Op. Cit. p. 44.

⁹² Martin R. Ganglass *The Restoration of the Somali Justice system* in Walter Clarke and Jeffrey Herbst *Learning from Somalia* Op. Cit.p. 29.

of Colonel Omar Jess, one of USC/SNA's allies, from retaking Kismayu on 9th and 7th May 1993. The USC/SNA was also opposed to the efforts made by UNOSOM II to establish police and judicial authorities as well as district councils. They voiced discontent through Radio Mogadishu and this displeased the eleven faction leaders who were not allied with General Aideed and they therefore urged UNOSOM II to take over the Radio Station. There were also problems with regard to the deployment of UNOSOM II's forces. Due to administrative, financial and logistical problems many of the contingents promised by member states had not arrived by the time of the formal departure of UNITAF on 4th May 1993. There were also countries, which were unable to provide their troops with the required weapons and equipment. Consequently, UNOSOM II had only 17,000 troops in Somali in early May 1993 another 1,100 in the US's – Command Quick Reaction Force.⁹³

Despite the fact that the UNOSOM II forces were below their authorized strength, they tried to carry out an inspection of five of the USC/SNA's weapon storage facilities in and around Mogadishu on 5th June 1993. These were storage sites for heavy weapons set up under agreements with the factions in Mogadishu early in the year and previously inspected in February 1993. One of the sites was situated on the premises of Radio Mogadishu. To ensure that there would be no misunderstanding UNOSOM II had formally notified the USC/SNA of the impending inspection to which one of the faction's security officers objected strongly. The inspection went ahead all the same. During the inspection, Pakistani troops were ambushed. Twenty-four killed and an additional fifty-six were wounded.⁹⁴ This attack triggered off a politically disastrous military reaction. Although the timing and magnitude of the assault surprised U.S. officials and the UN, the U.S. Liaison Office had issued a warning in mid-May that gunmen reportedly aligned with Aideed had threatened to murder Americans. The Security Council strongly condemned the "unprovoked armed attacks" and adopted Resolutions 837 that

⁹³ The United Nations and Somalia 1992-1996 Op. Cit. 50

⁹⁴ Keith B. Richburg Mogadishu Erupts in Violence in Washington Post, June 6 1993 p. A29

authorized all necessary measures against all those responsible. The resolution went on to state that the attacks had been "launched by forces apparently belonging to USC/SNA led by Aideed."⁹⁵ The Council stressed the importance of early disarmament of all Somali factions and the neutralization of Radio broadcasting systems that contributed to the violence against the UN.

Professor Tom Farer of American University in Washington D.C. was engaged to carry out an investigation into the June 5th incident. Farer in his report, tabled on 12th August 1993, submitted that the simultaneous attacks on UNOSOM II troops in different parts of the South Mogadishu could only have been carried out by the USC/SNA faction. It must have been premeditated and would only have executed on General Aideed's instructions.⁹⁶

The weak, incomplete and inconsistent U.S/UN political strategy, which had been aimed at encouraging political reconciliation, became irrelevant in the aftermath of the attack on the Pakistani. On 12th June 1993, UNOSOM II forces began a systematic drive to restore law and order in south Mogadishu by destroying or confiscating USC/SNA's weapons stock and by neutralizing its broadcasting facilities. The offensive continued for several days with aerial bombardments and ground assaults on 2weapon sites as well as on the broadcast and relay facilities of Radio Mogadishu. Units from UNOSOM II and the Quick Reaction Forces of the U.S. either destroyed or seized large quantities of heavy weapons and ammunition and disabled Radio Mogadishu. Admiral Howe publicly called for the arrest and detention of General Aideed and shocked the U.S. and UN military commander in Mogadishu by placing a public price on Aideed's head. U.S. Ambassador to the UN Madeleine K. Albright⁹⁷ branded Aideed a 'thug'. Aideed, once courted by the U.S. and UN and treated as a major player in internationally sanctioned conferences on political reconciliation, was now demonized and made a pariah.

⁹⁵ UNOSOM II Takes Decisive Action to Restore Peace in UN Chronicle, Vol. 30 September 1993 pp. 4-7

⁹⁶ Report of an Investigation into the 5 June 1993 attack on United Nations Forces in Somalia by Professor Tom Farer.

UNOSOM II and the Quick Reaction Force attempted to forcibly disarm the militia in south Mogadishu. The USC/SNA resorted to urban guerilla tactics and also mobilized crowds of civilians, some of them armed, in a bid to stop these operations. On many occasions, gunmen mingled with crowds of women and children, making it very difficult of UNOSOM II and Quick Reactions Force troops to defend themselves without endangering the lives of civilians. In one such incident on June 17th, five Moroccan soldiers were killed. Two Pakistanis lost their lives on 28th June and on 2nd July three Italians died. Attacks and ambushes of UN personnel and facilities also increased during this period and resulted in the death of a number of Somali employees of UNOSOM II. Since UNOSOM II's operations were taking place in the urban centers, the number of civilian casualties was high.

On 12th July 1993, the Quick Reaction Force bombed a compound in South Mogadishu. This was done at the request of UNOSOM II, which believed the compound was being used by USC/SNA to plan its operations. Many people died and shortly after this, UNOSOM II ground troops went into the area to confiscate weapons documents and communication equipment. They withdrew journalists from the international press who were in Somali to cover the events. A large crowd of Somalis carrying weapons surrounded the journalists and attacked them. Four journalists were murdered during the attack. As the standoff between UNOSOM II and rebel fighters of the renegade warlord General Aideed continued the number of casualties increased. Seven Nigerian soldiers were killed in an ambush staged by the Somalis who apparently resented the Nigerian's presence in their quarter of the Somalis who apparently resented the Nigerian's presence in their quarter of the Somali Capital; Mogadishu thought to be under Aideed's control.⁹⁸

⁹⁷ Madeleine K. Albright *Yes, There is a Reason to be in Somalia* in New York Times, August 10 1993, p. A19.

⁹⁸ *More UN Troops Casualties* in The Weekly Review September 10, 1993, p. 47

4.9 US WITHDRAWAL FROM SOMALIA

By early August 1993, UNOSOM II still had fewer troops than had originally been envisioned. To strengthen the international force this comprised of around 21,000 troops from twenty-seven countries and 1,000 troops from the Quick Reaction Force, the US sent an elite force of United States Army Rangers and other specially trained commandos to Somalia.⁹⁹ In an apparent show of solidarity, the Security Council, in its *Resolution 865 (1993)*, expressed its unanimous support for UNOSOM II. The US provided most of the forces used in the manhunt for General Aideed. In a brutal operation in 1993, the U.S. helicopters destroyed a building identified as one of Aideed's headquarters. As a result, many Somalis were killed.¹⁰⁰ Dissent against the Clinton Administration grew with the mounting U.S. casualties. Democratic Senator Robert C. Byrd called for the remaining U.S. forces to 'pack-up and go home.'¹⁰¹ While the debate on whether the U.S. should continue its operations in Somalia raged on in Washington D.C., the U.S. Commander in Mogadishu got wind of the information that top Aideed Lieutenants would be at the Olympic Hotel. On October 3 1993, U.S. Army Rangers conducted a daylight helicopter raid. The U.S. forces were surrounded and in the ensuing firefight suffered terrible casualties – 18 dead, 84 wounded, and one helicopter pilot captured. One Malaysian peacekeeper was also killed and seven wounded. Somali leaders estimated their casualties at 312 killed and 814 wounded.¹⁰² The deaths of 18 U.S. soldiers proved to be a turning point in the international community's involvement in Somalia. In the U.S., television news broadcasts which had earlier aroused such great public sympathy around the world for the famine victims, now broadcast a distressing video recording of a captured helicopter pilot and footage of a dead American being dragged through the streets of Mogadishu by a jeering mob.

⁹⁹ The United Nations and Somalia Op. Cit. 53.

¹⁰⁰ Robert M.. *Press Continued Assault on Somalia Warlord may Backfire on UN* in Christian Science Monitor, June 18, 1993, p. 7

¹⁰¹ Keith B. Richburg *Criticism Mounts over Somalia Raid* in Washington Post, July 15 1993, p. A21.

In an account of the events that followed this attack, Terrence Lyons and Ahamed I Samatar¹⁰³ argue that the U.S. public had been given no explanation as to why their troops were in Somali other than to feed the poor so these pictures generated a powerful reaction among Americans. Panic swept Capital Hill and the poorly received briefing by the Secretary of Defense, Les Aspin, and Secretary of State Warren Christopher, on October 5th only served to increase the anxiety. To curtail the growing agitation for withdrawal, President Clinton announced on 7th October 1993 that he was sending more troops in the short run but promised complete withdrawal by 31st March 1994. He warned that the credibility of the U.S. with friends and allies would be severely damaged if the U.S. left before then.¹⁰⁴ Several European and other governments subsequently decided to pull out their troops as well. On 7th October 1993, President Clinton announced that he would send Ambassador Oakley back to Somali as a special envoy to negotiate with the captors of the U.S. helicopter pilot. The USC/SNA reacted to this development by declaring a unilateral cease-fire in Mogadishu on 9th October. The Somali factions met at UN- sponsored talks in Addis Ababa in November-December 1993. Aideed boycotted the talks until December 2nd when the U.S. transported him directly to Addis Ababa in a military aircraft. No agreement was reached during their talks. Despite the failure of political reconciliation talks, the U.S. and most European states withdrew their forces in early 1994.[†] Forces from India, Pakistan, Egypt and Malaysia replaced these troops. In May 1994 there were again attempts by the UN to get the major militia leaders to sign paper commitments to begin political reconciliation but again this failed. By mid-1994, UNOSOM had largely abandoned any underlying political or security objectives. The foreign troops rarely left their bases, gunmen went back to the streets where they looted and kidnapped for ransom. General insecurity led many international non-governmental organizations to withdraw again. UNOSOM

¹⁰² Rick Atkinson *The Raid that went Wrong: How an Elite US Force Failed in Somalia* in Washington Post, January 30 1994, p. A1

¹⁰³ Terrence Lyons and Ahmed I. Samatar Op. Cit. p. 59.

¹⁰⁴ Sidney Blumenthal *Why are we in Somalia?* in New York Times October 25, 1993, p. 51.

II lost most of its best-equipped troops when more than 9,000 troops were withdrawn along with the 17,700 troops who had served temporarily under the reinforced Joint task Force and the 1,350 troops in the Quick Reaction Force. This reduction in strength seriously impaired UNOSOM II's capability to carry out its mandate long before the UN set *Resolution 865 (1993)* for the completion of the UNOSOM II mission. The U.S. and the UN took control of the operation from Washington in May 1993 but failed to broker peace between Somali's clan factions in a bloody and expensive two-year mission.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁵ Focus on Somalia Daily Nation 1 March 1995, p. 9.

CHAPTER 5

THE UN INTERVENTION IN PERSPECTIVE

In December 1992, the U.S. Government launched a massive humanitarian operation in Somali after nearly 300,000 people had either starved to death or died from the effect of clan warfare. The U.S. poured into Somali some 28,000 men in a move that was seen as timely. The relation between the U.S. forces and the Somali people at that time was cordial and for a time, the operation went on well. However, by the time the U.S. was handing over the Operation Restore Hope to UNOSOM II the relations between the U.S. forces and the Somali militiamen was at best strained.

When American marines first landed on the beaches of Mogadishu, thousand of ordinary Somalis welcomed them enthusiastically. The Americans of the Operation Restore Hope came with a brief to restore peace in Somali to enable relief agencies assist the starving Somalis. For sometime, there was some semblance of peace and security. Americans convinced that they had pacified Mogadishu handed over the operation to the UN. They were however, mistaken as the events, which followed this transition, were later to reveal. The resulting military engagement significantly altered the terms and raised the stakes of American involvement in Somali.

Various scholars have attempted to analyze why the UN failed to accomplish its mission in Somali. In line with this, different schools of thought have been developed to try and explain why the UN intervened in Somali. One school of thought suggests that the intervention was not a pre-meditated act but that it was as a result of Bush's presidential campaign and was really meant for the American audience.¹⁰⁶ Another school of thought posits that it was because of the oil potential on the red Sea coast of Somali that U.S. oil companies were encouraging their

¹⁰⁶ Shamis Hussein Somalia: A Destroyed Country and Defeated Nation in Mending Rips in the Sky: Options for Somalia Communities in the 21st Century, p. 106.

government to rebuild Somalia and bring in a government of their own choice.¹⁰⁷ A third school of thought argues that because of the end of Cold War, humanitarian intervention with a hidden agenda of colonization was now seen as the new doctrine for a potential intervener. Since the opportunity presented itself, Somali became a testing ground. Whatever school of thought one might ascribe to, it is obvious that the UN was overly ambitious as an intervener in the Somali crisis. Mogadishu became a more slippery ground than the UN contemplated.

Mohammed Sahnoun, in looking at the reason why the UN failed, posits that several serious problems created by wrong and unjustified moves of the UN management both at the headquarters and by some representatives in the field hindered its efforts.¹⁰⁸ Because of this most UN agencies were not able to fulfill their pledges and organize a massive emergency relief operation. They could hardly leave Mogadishu and there was a tendency to centralize everything in Mogadishu. Most agencies were reluctant to co-ordinate their activities with the UN even though this would have helped to enhance the security measures.

The bureaucratic approach at the UN headquarters in New York tended to ignore the advice of its personnel in Somali. It took much time and difficult negotiations for the UN team in Somali to reach an agreement for the deployment of five hundred troops for the security of humanitarian assistance. The bureaucratic delays and the skirmishes at the headquarters between different departments led to total confusion as to priorities. The first hundred troops had not even arrived when an announcement that over 3,800 troops would be sent to Somali was made in New York. This statement was made without informing the UNOSOM delegation in Mogadishu, the leaders of neighboring countries and, worse still, made without consulting the Somali leaders and community elders.

¹⁰⁷ Mousa Sheik Mohammed Recolonization Beyond Somalia (Mogadishu: Self Publication, 1998).

¹⁰⁸ Mohammed M. Sahnoun Prevention In Conflict Resolution: The case of Somalia in Mending Rips in the Sky: Op. Cit p. 306.

Maria Brons Bongartz¹⁰⁹ argues that "the failures on the UN mission have to be looked at in light of the UN's approach to the Somali problem." Even though there was no central government authority, there was no political vacuum in the sense that the warlords had become figures to reckon with. The other factor is that the Somali crisis was narrowly defined by *Resolution 794* as purely humanitarian problem and so the mandate did not address in detail other complementary objectives for successful intervention or appropriate means for achieving these objectives. Abdirnur Hashi concurs with this when he states that the problem with the UN is that its intervention in Somali was piece meal with no clear objectives or principles.¹¹⁰

Peter Woodward¹¹¹ suggests that "the international composition of the force was itself a problem in terms of overall co-ordination." There were also accusations of conflicting national interests leveled particularly against Italy and the U.S which provided a separate Rapid Reaction Force under U.S. command which was largely used in conflict with Aideed.

Charles Gachekler¹¹² on his part feels that although the UN spent about four billions U.S dollars between 1993 and 1995 trying to rescue Somali from the carnage of clan war peacekeeping initiatives and large-scale humanitarian intervention were futile. Without properly laid down objectives or a unified command timetable for it to exist, the UN forces at times devastated Mogadishu even more.

5.1 FACTORS THAT LED TO THE INTERVENTION'S FAILURE

UNITAF and UNOSOM II filled the Somali power vacuum by suddenly pouring in a lot of financial aid and many troops. Because the UN did not have a consensus on what to do, it

¹⁰⁹ Maria Brons Bongartz *The UN Intervention in Somalia* in Adam H. M., Ford R. (ed) in Mending Rips in the Sky: Options for Somali Communities in the 21st Century Op. Cit. p. 685.

¹¹⁰ Professor Abdirnur Nur Hashi Weapons and Clan Politics in Somalia (Mogadishu: Horn of Africa Printing Press, 1996) p. 38.

¹¹¹ Peter Woodward The Horn of Africa: State Politics and International Relations (London: I. B. Tauris Publishers, 1996) p. 78.

¹¹² Charles Gashekler the Death of Somalia in Historical Perspective in Richard Ford and Adam N.M. Op. Cit. 65.

had allowed many Somali gunmen to keep their arms. It was inevitable that the most formidable faction led by General Aideed would resist a visibly weakened UN presence. He had, after all, viewed UNOSOM's new mandate as a direct challenge to his power base.

Following the death of the Pakistanis, the Security Council adopted Resolution 837, which authorized UNOSOM II forces to retaliate against the SNA. Violence broke out and this postponed indefinitely the peace initiatives in Somali. The UN left everything else and concentrated on the manhunt for General Aideed. Despite the widespread criticism from the international media and the public the manhunt continued while civilians, mainly women and children were dying and being injured. This state of affairs continued until October when several helicopters were downed and an elite contingent of U.S. rangers consisting of a hundred men were either wounded or killed. This incident was then a turning point in the UN operation.

Many Somalis may have believed that UNOSOM and UNITAF would restore peace in Somali by disarming the militias. Robert Oakley who refused to disarm militias first dashed this hope. After this, the Somali people turned to UNOSOM II in the hope that they would disarm but again they were disappointed. The UN proved to be slow in relief operations and intolerant to criticism. Its failures to achieve a political solution laid the groundwork for the escalating violence in Somali.¹¹⁴

Maria Bongartz¹¹⁵ criticizes the loss of impartiality in the UNOSOM military operations after the 5th June and October 3rd 1993 killing of UN soldiers. It took a long time for the UN military command in Somali to acknowledge its failures and when it did, the UN withdrew the death penalty on General Aideed and reformulated its mandate to exclude provisions on forcible disarmament. This was under Resolution 897. Maria believes that in its whole approach to the Somali crisis, the UN had created unspoken alliances of convenience. This was revealed in its whole approach toward the issue of Somaliland, its constant refusal to acknowledge the peace

¹¹⁴ Ibid. p. 561

¹¹⁵ Maria Brons Bongartz Op. Cit. p. 587.

and reconciliation progress in Somaliland, the denial of the right of self-determination for the people of former British Somaliland (now Somaliland) and its disinterest in supporting a national referendum on the question of independence and finally the denial of financial or material assistance for the demobilization of former militia men and for the re-establishment of a police force.¹¹⁶

In March 1994, the UNOSOM military wing finally withdrew its troops from Somali without fulfilling the main political objective of establishing a central government and a system of law and order throughout the whole country. The peace enforcement mission failed blatantly, having resulted in the death of approximately 135 peacekeepers and even more Somali fighters and civilians. The military presence and involvement of UNOSOM II in the power struggle in Mogadishu contributed to the lengthening of the civil war.

Mohammed Farah Aideed¹¹⁷ felt that it was unfortunate for the Somali people that in the name of providing humanitarian help to Somali, U.S. intervened by siding with Ali Mahdi. Instead of concentrating on providing humanitarian help to the suffering Somali people, the U.S. dominated UN began politicking in Somali, unfolding their colonial designs for the country and trying to put Somali as a UN protectorate under the thumb of U.S.

General Aideed further argued that he, on behalf of SNA requested UNOSOM II to leave Somalia because even though Somalis had thought that the UN had come to help them, the UN had come to set up a UN trusteeship in Somali so as to rule the country. He also accused the UN of purposing to kill the Somali people since thousands of them died or were maimed through the UN's wanton and indiscriminate bombing. Aideed claimed that the UN had come to destroy what was left of the Somali national assets. He cited the razing to the ground of Radio Mogadishu and the destruction of the cigarette and match factory, the only one in operation. In

¹¹⁶ Dr. Stya Pal Ruhela (ed) Mohammed Farah Aideed and his Vision of Somalia: (New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 1994) p. 6.

¹¹⁷ My Struggle by Mohammed Farah Aideed as told to Ambassador Hussein Ali Dualeh in Weekly Review December 17 1993, pp. 37-39.

an exclusive interview with Ambassador Ali Dualeh, General Aideed claimed that as far as the Somalis were concerned, the UN failed dismally in its mission in Somali and as a result lost confidence and trust amongst the Somalis who felt the UN had neither credibility nor moral standing and instead had served to compound their tragedy

General Aideed had the idea that the U.S. government had taken a commendable step by sending troops to Somali in December 1992. The Somalis welcomed them because they had confidence in them. Somalis even co-operated with the U.S. troops. Aideed did not want the U.S. troops to hand over to the UN citing distrust of the UN Secretary-General Boutros-Boutros-Ghali who was Minister of State for foreign affairs in Egypt. Boutros Boutros-Ghali was the one who came up with the policy of supplying Egyptian arms to Barre, and in so doing, had given life to Barre's dying regime, prolonging the agony of the Somali people.

Omar Mohallim,¹¹⁸ categorically states that "the U.S. mission was, without doubt, a selfless display of compassion combined with power and prestige in their noblest manifestation." While UNITAF met its main objectives and kept armed militia at bay, facilitating the distribution of food to the starving people of Somalia, it nonetheless failed when it did not disarm both General Aideed and Ali Mahdi.

Mohallim, however, does not mince his words when he states that although in every human endeavor room must be left for mistakes, the blunders UNOSOM II made, no eminent lawyer could defend. For one, UNOSOM II knowingly employed double agents closely related to Aideed. These double agents often gave wrong information which sometimes led to UNOSOM troops raiding the wrong place at the wrong time, for instance, surrounding the UNDP compound in the belief that it was Aideed's compound.

Rakiya Omar and Alex de Waal,¹¹⁹ leveling accusations against Operation Restore Hope, argue that it created dependence on food aid thereby making matters worse. They

¹¹⁸ Dr. Omar Mohallim *What Next for Somalia?* In The Weekly Review December 17, 1993, p. 42.

further posit that disarmament and political reconciliation was half-hearted and sporadic and, as a result, fighting and banditry continued in many parts of the country. The two also argued that the UN put too much emphasis on paper agreement without finding out the necessary precaution to ensure success in implementation on the ground. The UN and U.S. embraced the two major Somali warlords, General Aideed and Ali Mahdi, giving them unmerited legitimacy even though the two were seen by many Somalis to be responsible for the mess the country found itself in.

African Rights Watch, the umbrella body under which Omar and de Waal were writing, took issue with what it termed the doctrine of "humanitarian intervention" by military forces positioning that military intervention rarely solves political conflicts and that military intervention has a reasoning which often goes against the demands of humanitarian assistance. They can help deliver food aid but cannot assist in self-help efforts, improve public health or begin economic rehabilitation as shown in the Somali operation.

Peter Woodward¹²⁰ is of the view that the UN and U.S. intervention in Somali was the most dramatic intervention in the horn. Although the last batch of U.S. forces departed in March 1994 and UNOSOM II a year later, the UN had contributed to a new form of international involvement that could not be abandoned without implications for Africa and the international community. However, from the very beginning, the UN showed uncertainty of purpose. The organization was swaying from one extreme to another with regard to both content of policy and the resolve to carry it through.

The operation in Somali exposed the flaws in the UN's organizational structure especially in relation to its chain of command and internal friction. It also brought to fore the idea that local forces should play a greater role. The failure of UNOSOM affected the credibility of the organization in all aspects and at all levels. The organizational flaws were demonstrated

¹¹⁹ A Report by Rakiya Omar and Alex de Waal (Co-ordinators of Africa Rights) on the role of the US Peace-keeping Mission in Somalia (London: Forthcoming, 1993)

In the way that decisions pertaining to the intervention were made. It was not solely a UN decision. It was the U.S. who influenced the UN's decision to intervene. Other European countries also seemed to have joined the UN force for all the wrong reasons. France went in because they felt it would look ridiculous in Africa if the US intervened and they did not given long history of involvement in Africa in the wake of colonialism.¹²¹

Germany seemed to have gone in to prove that it could co-operate with its allies. This followed European criticism of German attitude in the Yugoslav civil war.¹²² The rest of Europe felt Germany had been too quick in recognizing the independence of Croatia and Slovenia thereby facilitating the violent breakup of the Yugoslav federation. Italy went in because it had a special relationship with Somali having been a colonial master there from 1885 – 1941.

The gist of the argument here is that the decision to intervene was made because of many varied factors, which fell mainly under the national interest of the countries that sent troops to Somali. The need to bring an end to the conflict was secondary. Motivation for intervening had little to do with Somali itself. This presented a problem because when faced with difficulty the troops were ready to pack up and leave.

There were also problems in the command system especially in UNOSOM II. US forces wanted European troops to get involved in the US-UN anti-SNA operations but they were reluctant to become involved. UNOSOM II Force Command and the Italian Brigade Command¹²³ had different approaches in dealing with General Aideed. UNOSMO II Command wanted a clash and a military solution while the Italian Command opted for negotiations. When UNOSOM II won the day, Italy dragged its feet and was not a willing participant. This issue

¹²⁰ Peter Woodward Op. Cit. p.79.

¹²¹ Bruno Delhaye, Head of African Unit in the French President's office in an interview with Gerard Prunier – East African regional specialist for the International Secretaries of the French Socialist party.

¹²² Henri de Bresson L. Chancelier Kohl veut engager la Bundeswehr dans des operations de maintien de la paix l'ONU in Le Monde, December 1992.

¹²³ UN War Report Sec. 147.

pointed openly to the question of legitimate chain of command especially for the European troops involved in UNOSOM II.

The failure of the UN operations in Somali has also been attributed to the close identification of U.S. interests with those of the UN. There is danger in permitting American power calculations to be cloaked uncritically in the UN flag.¹²⁴

As Jonathan T. Howe¹²⁵ observes

"It is important to define the relationship between the U.S. and the UN since both will continue to play an important role in dealing with massive humanitarian catastrophes resulting from ethnic cleansing, genocide or manmade starvation."

The UN and the U.S. approach problems from different perspectives in the sense that the interests, obligations and capabilities of the organization of nations are not the same as those of an individual country. The U.S. which is a democracy must meet the demands of its citizens while the UN answers to member states and not to an electorate.

In the case of Somali, the UN had hoped that the U.S. would assist in finding an enduring solution for Somali. The UN, for instance, hoped that the U.S led coalition would disarm the Somali militias when they began their operation. The U.S., on its part, was not willing to take on such a sensitive task except if the arms directly affected the progress of their relief operations. The UN had also wanted the U.S. to extend its humanitarian relief operations beyond Mogadishu and into the rest of the country. The U.S., however, had approached the issue of Somali with short-term military involvement in mind. The main reason for this was that the outgoing President George Bush did not want the incoming one to start with an overseas engagement. The U.S. military did not want to be tied down in long-term arrangements.

¹²⁴ Ramesh Thakur *From peace-keeping to Peace Enforcement: The UN Operation in Somalia* in *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 32,3 (1994) p. 406.

¹²⁵ Jonathan T. Howe *Relations Between the US and UN in Dealing with Somalia* in Terence Lyons and Ahmed I. Samatar *Learning from Somalia: The Lessons of Ahmed Humanitarian Intervention* pp. 173-190.

Although the U.S. had been very careful to limit the expectation for the UN with regard to the support they would provide, there was a general feeling of betrayal in the UN when the U.S decided in early October 1993, to withdraw by March 31st, 1994. Other UN contingents were at this time ready to wrap up their mission and leave under the cover of U.S forces. The UN saw the mission as long term and therefore found the constant shift in U.S. policy difficult to take in. UNITAF was busy measuring its success by the time lines of its withdrawal while the UN was more concerned about creating continuity. As far as Samuel P. Huntington¹²⁶ is concerned, the Somali operation entitled the prestige of the U.S. as super power and it actually reinforced the need for separating the U.S. national security decision making calculus from the UN peace-keeping one.

5.3 VIABILITY OF PEACE ENFORCEMENT IN SOMALIA

It is debatable whether the idea of peace enforcement might have succeeded in any other set up other than in Somali. The Somali operation involved a state that had experienced collapse. Lyons and Samatar¹²⁷ argues that

“State Collapse occurs when structure, authority, legitimate power, law and political order fall apart leaving behind a civil society that lacks the ability to rebound to fill a vacuum. Without the state society breaks down and without social structures the state cannot survive.”

Collapsed states are a great challenge to the international community. One of the main reasons for this is that the effects of the chaos cannot be limited to a small geographic region. The instability in one State could lead to instability to neighboring states especially as refugees being to flow in. These neighboring states cannot ignore the problems because the affected

¹²⁶ Samuel P. Huntington *The Clash of Civilization in Foreign Affairs* New York 72 Summer 1993, pp. 27-49.

¹²⁷ Terrence Lyons and Ahmed I. Samatar *Somali: State Collapse, Multilateral Intervention and Strategies for Political Reconstruction* Op. Cit. 1-3

communities usually appeal to them for help. It is because of this that UN members began to consider the expanded use of multilateral peace enforcement operations. In the case of Somali, the UN came in under the impression that there was a political vacuum and were surprised by the hostilities they faced from the people of that country who felt they should have been included in the decision making process.

The Somali crisis gave the international community an occasion to develop strategies and mechanisms to address the political challenges of multilateral responses to state collapse. It, however, proved that poorly designed strategies aimed at addressing the humanitarian aspect alone are not enough. The inherent nature of situations like the one in Somalia are that they are basically political and therefore if the operation is to succeed it must include designs to enhance reconciliation and the reconstitution of institutions of legitimate political authority. Despite the constant assurances from Washington that the intervention was purely humanitarian, the operation had great political consequences right from its conception.

As Lyons and Samatar¹²⁸ continue to contend the Somali story is a tragedy for both the local actors and the wider international community. These two actors pursued their different objectives without taking into account the fact that they occupied the same stage and so to succeed in whatever agenda they were pursuing, they had to involve the other party. On their part, the Somalis could not break out of the cycle of violence that had brought wanton destruction to their society while the international community could not rebuild political institutions or manage the humanitarian intervention without involving the local community. The failure by both sides to recognize that their success was dependent upon the other made the outcome a tragedy. Stephen John Stedman¹²⁹ rightfully states that the UN troops may have had the international legitimacy but the internal parties still commanded the asymmetric of civil war. Parties win by not losing. The will of those who intervened will wane over the longer term if

¹²⁸ Ibid. p. 68.

resource and human cost are high. Intervention will be one of many commitments for outsiders where as the internal actors will be single minded in their dedication.

According to Robert Patman¹³⁰ the UN faced a difficult challenge in Somali in view of the fact that it was not easy to facilitate national reconciliation when both the machinery of government and the traditional hierarchies of clan had been destroyed by civil wars. In addition to this, the UN had little experience in the area of peace enforcement. Traditional peacekeeping as laid down under UNOSOM I had failed to rise up to the occasion. Peace enforcement failed in Mogadishu not because the U.S. had used too much force but because the Americans in their conviction not to become politically involved had failed to disarm the Somali Warlords. Forcible disarmament on its own does not automatically reduce tension but its use within the context of multifaceted peacekeeping can enhance rather than decrease the impartiality of the UN in a lawless environment.

Coming to its own defense, the UN claimed that it did not fail completely in Somali. It claims, for instance, that it facilitated reconciliation amongst the different clans by conveying regional conferences. The organization also argues that it aided the recruitment of police officers and set up an Office of Human Rights to investigate and punish violators of human rights. It is however; clear from the analysis in this Chapter that this first attempt at peace enforcement was indeed a failure. The UN's withdrawal without having restored some semblance of peace was an indication that it had failed to achieve its objectives. Acting on the basis of Chapter VII of UN Charter, the Security Council authorized UNOSOM II troops to use force in their task of disarming Somali factions. Instead, the peacekeepers found themselves in conflict with one of the parties involved in the conflict. This eroded the organization's neutrality and led to loss of live and subsequent withdrawal of the peacekeepers.¹³¹

¹²⁹ Stephen Jon Stedman *The New Interventionist* in Foreign Affairs Vol. 72 January – February 1993 p. 8.

¹³⁰ Robert Patman Op. Cit. 532.

¹³¹ The United Nations and Somalia 1992 – 1996 Op. Cit. p. 59

Current conflicts not only spread across existing frontiers but also give rise to new states. In such cases what may begin, as an internal conflict becomes an international one since such separations are rarely smooth or trouble free. In many cases the conflict eventually becomes so dangerous that the international community finds itself obliged to intervene. By then, it can only do so in the most intrusive and expensive way, which is military intervention as was the case in Somali. Once a domestic political conflict becomes militarized, resolution, whether by African or non-African intervenors, becomes very complicated.

The UN response to the crisis in Somali was unprecedented in many ways. Together with the creation of the UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in early 1992, the UN operation in Somali (UNOSOM I and II) and the UN – sanctioned and US-led Unified Task Force (UNITAF) represented one of the rare cases where an international military force was deployed in large measure to deal with a humanitarian crisis. It was distinct from conventional peacekeeping operations in the sense that the force could not be deployed at the request of or with the consent of the host government, since there was no government or on the basis of an agreement among the parties to the conflict.

Consequently, the Security Council had to invoke the enforcement provisions of Chapter VII of the UN Charter so as to enable the US-led multinational force and UNOSOM II to deal with a conflict confined within a state's borders. The resort to enforcement powers occurred in stages, in response to an evolving increasingly difficult set of circumstances.

An attempt at traditional peacekeeping was made with the deployment of lightly armed UNOSOM I but this was later transformed into UNOSOM II, which was given a mandate that explicitly included enforcement powers. According to Robert Patman,¹³² UNITAF had limited enforcement duties while UNOSOM II a UN-led humanitarian operation had extensive

enforcement functions. UNOSOM II's belated programme of disarmament encountered the armed resistance of General Aideed's faction in June 1993. This confrontation eventually ended the UN's experiment in peace enforcement and led to the humiliating withdrawal of UN troops and personnel from Somalia on 2nd March 1995. The question we have been asking all along is whether UN intervention is still a viable option in the management of intra-state conflict following its failure in Somalia.

The Somali and Rwandan experiences have affected the UN, US and European debates on the efficacy of third party intervention in African conflicts. It has become difficult for policy makers to engage meaningfully in preventing or ending armed conflicts. This problem is magnified in the US where the "Mogadishu Syndrome" – the general lack of political will in the US for involvement in Africa following the deaths of US soldiers deployed in the UN peace-keeping operation in Somalia – makes it difficult for policy makers to make credible policy commitments in dealing with actual or potential armed conflicts in Africa. A situation now exists where an internal conflict can continue for a long period of time before the international organization intervenes. As the evidence in the Great Lakes region reveals, the international community is unable to respond quickly and effectively to violent conflict and its disastrous aftermath.

In Africa this problem is more compounded because it would seem that the more intense the conflict, as the cases of Burundi, Liberia, Rwanda and Somalia reveal, the more difficult it is for the international community to bring an end to the violence. Armed conflict is a very big problem in Africa and since she is the world's poorest continent these conflicts increase her poverty, bring chaos and instability that spills across state boundaries. It is estimated that 6.5 million Africans died as a result of civil war between 1960 and 1990. Some of these conflicts

¹³² Robert G. Patman: Disarming Somalia: The Contrasting Fortunes of the US and Australian Peace-Keepers during the United Nations Intervention 1992-1993 in African Affairs Vol. 96 No. 385, p. 510.

continued after 1990 and new ones were initiated. It is imperative that the international community redoubles its efforts to assist Africa in finding appropriate solutions.

It has been argued that especially the UN should not apply peace enforcement as a tool of conflict management. The submission of this thesis is however, that this conclusion was partly to blame for the reluctance to allow effective and timely international action to prevent the massacre of 500,000 people in Rwanda in 1994. In this case as in many other cases peace enforcement as opposed to peace keeping would have been the most effective way of bringing an end to the conflict.

When Dag Hammarskjold, the second UN Secretary General introduced the concept of peace-keeping into UN vocabulary in 1956, he envisioned it as only being successful if the conflicting parties agreed to accept the mission or at least do not resist. Peacekeeping missions are not meant to bring about concrete solutions to conflicts. Instead, their aim is to limit conflict-induced violence and loss of life by building buffer zones. Peace enforcement, which is laid down in Chapter VII of the UN Charter, refers to 'collective security' on which the League of Nations and later on the UN were originally created to secure world peace. In the event that world-peace and international or regional security is threatened, intervention by a multilateral UN force under UN command is justified.

5.4 CONCLUSION

When the conflict in Somalia emerged, the UN evacuated because it saw the situation as an internal problem. Traditionally the UN only intervenes in intra-state conflicts, which constitute a threat to international peace. As the political turmoil emerged, the UN through UNOSOM I sought to ensure peace and security, unity of the country and immediate provision of humanitarian assistance to the population in need. UNOSOM I's attempt to end the crisis did not succeed. When the conflict became intense the UN evacuated.

After the departure of the UN, the total collapse of the state became a reality, lawlessness was the order of the day, massive displacement of the population within and outside the country increased at an alarming rate. UNITAF which was a humanitarian mission was welcomed by those in need while the warlords were apprehensive because they suspected the agenda behind the arrival of a massive military led humanitarian mission in Somalia. One single success story of UNITAF was the provision of humanitarian assistance and the stemming of hunger and disease amongst the people of Somali within a short time. To some extent, security was enhanced in some of the country and roads were open, water and medicine provided to the vulnerable population.

UNOSOM II was received by more apprehensions considering that a much larger mission (UNITAF) had failed to address the core problems of Somalia UNOSOM II' s mandate was ambiguous and did not tackle the political an security issues plaguing Somalia. The UN has a responsibility to maintain international peace throughout the world and so it has a moral responsibility to intervene in Somali. One of the factors that contributed to UNOSOM II' s failure was lack of a clear mandate.

There is wide spread feeling that peace enforcement should not be used again because of the Somali debacle. Regional or sub-regional organizations have, however, succeeded in enforcing peace at a very high cost, which the UN is not willing to commit. The costs are high in terms of the number of troops needed, armament, time and even human casualties. The troop-contributing countries for UN peace operations do not have the political will to deploy their sons and daughters who may die in a UN enforcement mission, neither are they willing to provide the resources for such an expensive mission. The international community will have to change its attitude about peace enforcement before it can be implemented anywhere in the world, not only in Africa. It is at the moment not conceivable that the UN would in the near future resort to peace enforcement even if the situation warrants it. The loss of lives in the wake of the

Rwandese genocide is a case in point. The UN did not intervene when thousands of Rwandese lost their lives. By the time the organization moved in it was too late.

This has, in effect, created a dilemma for the African countries because, on the one hand, many countries like Liberia, Chad and even the DRC are now faced with internal conflicts almost of the same magnitude as that of Somali and they may require peace enforcement to bring an end to the conflict. On the other hand, there is the UN, which is determined never again to resort to peace enforcement. The organization was determined not to enforce peace in Sierra Leone even as violence escalated. Peace enforcement could perhaps have stemmed the genocide in Rwanda but the UN refused to allow its troops to stop the violence by the use of force. The UN is however, not entirely to blame because it consists of member states and it is these contributors who determine how and where the UN intervenes. These member states also represented their own national interests and this is what determines their decisions to intervene.

Africa has in the past not been at the top on the world's agenda unless the country in question is of some value to the more developed world. The intervention in Somali was triggered by the concerns raised by American citizens who had seen the millions of starving Somalis on their television screens. The images they saw evoked sympathy, which led them to prevail upon their government to do something. Most have argued, however, that the intervention was triggered off by President Bush who wanted to leave behind a legacy. This goes to show that the U.S. national interest was represented in the decision by the UN to intervene in Somali. As more and more countries get caught in political turmoil, the UN now tries to intervene in the traditional peacekeeping operation. This is currently not very successful. It can safely be said that unless the UN seeks a new mandate and looks for more effective means of enforcing peace many people in Africa continue to suffer as their countries fall more and more into turmoil. It is now more difficult for the UN to effectively intervene in

intra-state conflicts because it is unable to go the extra mile of enforcing peace. As the cases of Sierra Leone, Liberia and the Democratic Republic of Congo reveal the UN is currently finding it very difficult to effectively manage intra-state conflicts.

It is now becoming evident that African driven initiatives should be sought. There is a general feeling that African states need to move their focus away from the UN and instead shift to empowering regional and sub-regional organizations to help in conflict resolution and subsequently to manage conflicts. In the case of Somali, it can be said that internationalization of the conflict gave an ugly turn to an already difficult problem. The UN concentrated on the warlords and sidelined the civil society and this made it very difficult for there to be a lasting solution.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 SUMMARY

This study has examined the UN intervention in Somali from 1992 through 1993. The aim was to establish why this attempt at a new form of intervention – peace enforcement failed. It concludes that the enforcement operation in Somalia proved to be so unsuccessful that it became the reason why the UN did not invoke peace enforcement as laid down in Chapter VII of the UN Charter even in situations where it should have for instance in Rwanda when genocide broke out. US troops were sent to Somali to stop bloodshed and looting, get foods to desperate people and then hand over the country to UN peacekeepers. The mission was seen as a small one, which would end soon but would involve rebuilding of the nation, which would be more intense.

Although the Somali mission had been envisaged as a simple one, it turned out to be quite complicated. Many things went wrong, mistakes were made and the unfortunate events that followed led to the withdrawal of UN troops from that Horn of Africa country. This study has attributed the failure of the operation to lack of clarity in the mission; policy reversal on disarmament; the anti-Aideed policy; the killing of the Pakistani soldiers in June 1993; the October 1993 firefights and the death of US troops; the increasing cost of the UN mission in light of limited progress and most important of all, the failure of the UN intervention in Somalia has been attributed to the inability and unwillingness of the Somali leadership to reach a compromise.

This study has underscored the fact that the sole responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security still lies with the Security Council. This is clearly stated in Article 24 of the UN Charter. Whatever a regional or sub-regional organization does will only be in support of the UN. It is therefore imperative that Africa and the rest of the world give a wholehearted support to UN peacekeeping operations and stop focusing on its failures. The UN must also put in place certain measures that could aid its operations to be more successful. The organization must be willing to put in the time, weaponry and troops needed to bring an end to intra-state conflicts.

6.2 CONCLUSIONS

The United Nations has the ultimate responsibility for maintaining peace and security within the international system. This is because the international community, having experienced two world wars, is not prepared to descend again to the depth of human loss, genocide and holocaust. It is in line with this that the UN has tried over the years of its existence to intervene in all areas of conflict that clearly go beyond the solutions of the parties involved.

Faced with a dispute, which is a threat or a breach of the peace, the Security Council may under Article 42, take action by armed force to restore the peace. Peace enforcement refers to the external imposition of solutions even in the absence of the consent of the parties involved in conflict. During the Cold war easier to set up peace-keeping without the use of force but in the post – cold War era, it has proved difficult to send UN peace-keeping forces into situations where no government has invited them and fighting factions are unwilling to cooperate with UN forces. When there is no legally sanctioned authority or state structure as in the case Somali, the actions of any international force are governed exclusively by the UN normally authorized by a resolution under Chapter VII of the UN Charter.

Weiss and Chopra assert that "intervention implies violations or intrusion upon authority and while authority like sovereignty is an obstruction, its concrete form consists of territorial boundaries." The main component of the international system has been the nation-state and sovereignty has been their measure of legitimacy. According to Marrach Goudling "this uncompromising assertion of state sovereignty makes it difficult for neighbors to intervene to protect their interests and also makes it difficult for outside mediators to take action to prevent internal conflicts unless they constituted a threat to international peace and security conflicts."

Since the end of the Cold War, conflicts have become very widespread within the international system. Most of them have taken an internal dimension. At its forming, the UN purposed not to interfere in internal conflicts unless they constituted a threat to international peace and security. In fact, Article 2(7) of the UN Charter clearly states that nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state or shall require the Members to submit such matters to settlement under the present Charter; but this principle shall not prejudice the application of enforcement measures under Chapter VII. When the civil war in Somali started the UN did not intervene because the problem was seen as an internal one. The conflict did not end and more and more people died while others fled to neighboring counties. When the images of starving Somalis appeared on the American television screens, public outcry led their government to offer assistance to the UN as it prepared to intervene. The Somali operation was like no other operation because for the first time in UN history, the organization was intervening without a request from the government in question. UNOSOM II's mandate was to take appropriate action including enforcement measures to establish a secure environment for humanitarian assistance and has in effect been referred to as a Humanitarian intervention.

UNOSOM II attempted to do this through disarmament and reconciliation. This task was begun by UNITAF and was to be completed by UNOSOM II. The organization also hoped to

assist the Somali people in rebuilding their economy and social and political life and re-establish the country's institutional structure. UNOSOM II was also to help achieve national political reconciliation, recreate a Somali State based on democratic governance and rehabilitate the country's economy and infrastructure. UNOSOM II however withdrew before it had achieved much.

Since the Somali operation, the new political climate emerging from the end of the Cold War contributed to an increase in demand for UN peacekeeping. The UN failed to intervene earlier in Somali because the conflict was internal, but until then, the UN did not consider internal conflicts to constitute threats to international security. One of the contributions of the Somali intervention was to change this mode of thinking and to lead to the acceptance that internal conflicts, could conceivably, constitute a threat to international peace and security. Since then, In Africa, peacekeeping forces have been sent to Liberia, Sierra Leone, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda and Burundi.

Peacekeeping enables other methods of the peaceful settlement of disputes like negotiation and mediation to take place. In this understanding, it tries to alter the status quo and is therefore not an end in it self. After the Somali debacle, the UN has been very reluctant to change its strategies to conform to the needs of the various countries. Its resolution not to resort to peace enforcement has meant that conflicts go on for a long time before the UN intervenes and even when it does; it does so in a way that is not able to bring and end to the conflict. The UN has been blamed time and again for standing by as the genocide in Rwanda reached alarming proportions. Coming so soon after the Somali disaster, the genocide was almost at its peak before the UN intervened. This intervention however failed to bring an end to the brutal killings.

Although a mandate clearly authorizing enforcement action in support of restoration of order to Somali had been written for the first time in UN history. It was not conducted as a full Chapter VII operation in the sense that military support was not made available. The UN gave the enforcement mandate to a force that was restricted to performing peacekeeping roles.

It is doubtful whether the UN after its humiliation in Somali is willing to put in the time, armament and manpower needed to effectively bring and end to the civil wars. There has been a re-emphasis on the role of regional and sub-regional organizations. It is these, which now show more concern and have at times in the case of ECOMOG attempted to use force to bring about peace. It is difficult for African leaders to watch as their fellow brothers and sisters lose their lives just because the rest of the world has no interest in the region. The UN, however, must rise up to meet its challenges before more lives are lost.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This study has managed to raise certain issues, which would aid in the understanding of UN interventions not only in intra-state conflicts but rather conflicts in general. One area, which would need further examination, is the structure of the organization and how this affects its decisions on whether or not to intervene in particular conflicts. As this study has revealed, the way decisions were made and implemented during the operations in Somali led to the failure of the UN intervention there. A detailed examination on how decisions are made and implemented in the UN during interventions would go a long way in helping the organization be better prepared to handle difficult situations on the ground as it would reveal underlying weaknesses if there are any.

Another issue that has come up and which warrants further research is the role of individual member states and how they affect the outcome of UN interventions. The UN is

composed of member states and, in most cases, they affect the decision making process in the organization. In Somali for instance, the US greatly affected the activities of UNOSOM II. The US decided to get involved as a result of pressure from its citizens who had watched the images of starving Somalis on their Television screens. The provision of troops by the US saw the success of UNITAF and led to the failure of UNOSOM II after the US decided to withdraw their troops. Such a study based on the role of individual member states would address the emerging issues of how vulnerable the UN is to influence from certain member states who are seen to wield more power.

One other area that would require examination would be how regional and sub-regional organizations can better work with the UN to contain emerging conflicts. As the study has shown, the composition for the troops used during interventions will determine the success of the operation. In Somali, the US provided most of the troops as well as the armament used. When the US decided to withdraw, UNOSOM II was left with no alternative but to withdraw as it did not have the required resources. A Study based on the contributions of regional and sub-regional organizations would focus on how they can provide troops based within the areas where the conflict is. This would help the UN better acquainted with the region in which it is intervening since most of the troops would be based locally.

6.4 RECOMMEDATIONS FOR THE UNITED NATIONS

- 1) The UN should seek to plan extensively before the Security Council passes resolutions. The UN intervention in Somali was not well planned in that UNITAF, which was better, equipped in terms of manpower and armament had a limited mandate, which was to ensure that food reached the millions of starving Somali people. UNITAF also operated only in part of southern Somali while UNOSOM II which had less resources was given a much broader mandate and it was supposed to cover the entire region.

- 2) The UN should make some attempt to understand the nature of the conflict before it intervenes. Most conflicts and intra-state ones in particular have deep historical roots and are characterized by broad and mutual suspicion based on past traumatic experiences. One of the UN's greatest undoing in Somali was that it failed to understand the warring faction and their attitudes towards certain decisions. This brought the organization into open conflict with certain factions leading to needless deaths of both troops and citizens.
- 3) The UN should try to be impartial when the Security Council passes its resolutions. In the past, certain member states have greatly influenced UN decisions with regard to interventions. In Somali the US greatly influenced these decisions. Member states often represent their own national interest and within a UN set up where there are many member states and this could be a source of conflict.
- 4) In order for the UN to carry out enforcement measures, it requires the deployment of a force, which is neutral and also large and capable enough to compel the parties involved in the conflict to adhere to certain laid down measures. In Somali, practically the entire society was armed and therefore a much larger force was required.

APPENDIX

SAMPLE QUESTIONNAIRE

1) In your opinion, what factors led to the collapse of the Somali State?

2) Who were the main actors in the conflict?

3) What was the initial response of the international community to the conflict?

4) Was the UN active in Somali before the start of the conflict? If yes how?

5) What was the UN's initial response to the conflict?

6) When did the UN take active steps in trying to end the conflict and how did it do so?

7) How did the people of Somalia respond to UN attempt to bring an end to the conflict?

8) Did any particular State play a significant role in bringing an end to the Humanitarian crisis? In what way?

9) In your own opinion was the UN intervention in Somalia a success?

a) If yes why?

b) If no why?

10) Do you think that the UN should intervene in this way in future? Give reasons for your answer.

11) What do you think could be done differently if the UN is to carry out a similar intervention in the future?

12) What recommendations would you make to the UN as far as future interventions are concerned?

RESPONDENTS

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Kenyan Foreign affairs officials interviewed | 10 |
| Somali nationals interviewed | 19 |
| No. Of UN officials interviewed | 10 |
| Somali politicians interviewed | 15 |
| US officials interviewed | 6 |
| No. Of professionals dealing with Somali affairs interviewed | 10 |
| Total number of questionnaires administered | 70 |

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