

**AN ANALYSIS OF THE SOCIO-POLITICAL
EFFECTS OF THE SOMALIA CONFLICT ON
SOMALI WOMEN (1991-2005)**

**BY
OMAR G. AHMED
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DECLARATION

THIS PROJECT PAPER IS MY ORIGINAL WORK AND HAS NOT BEEN SUBMITTED AT ANY OTHER UNIVERSITY FOR AN ACADEMIC AWARD.

SIGN:  DATE 16.09.2008

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THIS PROJET PAPER HAS BEEN SUBMITTED FOR EXAMINATION WITH MY APPROVAL AS UNIVERSITY SUPERVISOR.

SIGN:  DATE: 22/9/08

PROF. PATRICIA KAMERI MBOTE

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

In the accomplishment of this study, I am sincerely indebted to my brother Mr. Abdi Gomey Ahmed who tirelessly gave me supportive hand both financially and spiritually in pursuit of education. May Allah reward him accordingly because without him, this research would not have come to its light.

I consider it my duty to thank my supervisor Professor Patricia K. Mbote for her parental guidance, dedication and encouragement in pursuit of this work.

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Finally, I owe special debt of gratitude to those many people, too numerous to mention by name who have read parts of this research project in draft form and made many invaluable comments

May Allah reward them accordingly

Omar Gomey Ahmed

Institute of Diplomacy and International Studies - University of Nairobi

November, 2007.

DEDICATION

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

I should venture to dedicate this research work to my entire family whose foresight and encouragement has brought me this far.

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE STUDY

ICG	International Crisis Group
IGAD	Inter-Governmental Authority on Development
INGOs	International Non-Governmental Organizations
IWD	IGAD's Women's Desk
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
RRA	Rahawein Resistant Army
SNRC	Somalia National Reconciliation Conference
TFG	Transitional Federal Government
TNA	Transitional National Assembly
TNG	Transitional National Government
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugee
UNIFEM	United Nations Fund for Women

ABSTRACT

Conflicts are endemic in the human society. Since they are endemic in the society, they should be accepted as a reality and managed in such a way that their dysfunctional effects are minimised and their positive aspects maximised. Conflicts affect men and women differently. Women are mostly affected because they do not possess means to take-off during conflict, they have a strong attachment to taking care of the family especially children, and women have become targets of armed conflict. During armed conflict, women have found themselves unaccompanied by their male counterparts, their role of taking care of children while their husbands are at war is aggravated by the lack of resources, and women have become refugees. Women have become targets of armed conflicts as a means of warfare. Women are raped, tortured, mutilated and killed. When such happens to women, they are not accepted to the society as victims who need the care of the society. Such victims have been considered outcasts in the society. Women continue to be downplayed despite attempts to emancipate them in social and political spheres.

The Somalia conflict is one of the protracted conflicts, which intensified since the 1991. The Somalia community is organised along patriarchal lines. Such organisation tends to elevate men in the social and political circles while reducing or downplaying the social and political role of women in the society. Women are socially and politically marginalized and disadvantaged. This can be based on cultural values and accessibility to resources. The Somalia conflict especially since 1991 intensified the plight of the Somali women both socially and politically. On the other hand, during the Somalia civil war there have been attempts to emancipate the women. Although the women suffered mostly

during the conflict, they also came out as significant actors in the socio-political situation of Somalia. This study presents and analyses the social and political effects of the Somalia conflict on Somali women.

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CHAPTER ONE

RESEARCH PROPOSAL

1.1 BACKGROUND

The Somali state was created by the partition of the Horn of Africa by Britain, Italy, France, and the Abyssinian Empire, during the Scramble for Africa in the nineteenth century. During the colonial period, Somali itself did not exist as a single state, divided as it was between a northern British Somalia land and southern Italian Somali land. On 26th June 1960, Britain granted independence, on July 1960 the people of the former British and Italian territories united to form the Somali Republic.¹ However, the new state found it self engulfed by conflict and war.

The Somalia conflict² can be traced back to colonial era and Cold War rivalry. However, the political process that followed the independent Somalia especially during general Mohamed Siad Barre polarized the conflict. Clan based jealousies began to create splits. Because of Barre's culture of militarism, the splits resulted to considerable violence. This became more serious because natural resources were scare, there was lack of justice, good governance and poor education. In 1990, opposition groups formed a coliation and started fighting Barre's regime until early 1991 when Barre was defeated and went to exile. The opposition coalition due to clan individualism and rivalry they were unable to form a government and started fighting amongst themselves. This resulted to the conflict and anarchy in Somalia..

¹ J. Gardemer, Somalia: The Untold Story, (London: Pluto Press, 2004), pp.1-5.

² J. V. Beurden, "In a State of Permanent Conflict" in M. Mekenkamp et al (eds), Searching for Peace in Africa: An Overview of Conflict Prevention and Management Activities, (Utrecht: European Platform for Conflict Prevention and Transformation, 1999), pp. 156-165.

The fighters of different clan-based opposition militia groups invaded the capital city, Mogadishu and other towns in Somalia causing widespread rape of women, mass execution, destruction of ware supplies and homes led to massive displacement of people into Kenya, Djibouti and Yemen. Atrocities carried out by individual and militia groups against women and girls in Somalia since 1991 are unprecedented in the Somalia history. Traditionally, in Somalia pastoral society feuding and conflict were bounded by codes and social conventions.³ Along with the elderly and sick, women and children were immune from attack.⁴ That is not to say that women were never targeted, but if they were harmed there were rules about retribution and compensations. The traditional code of conflict and war ensured that the weak and vulnerable people were protected from harm. Women particularly who are wives, mothers and sisters traditionally did not take part in armed conflict. This gave them an immune which the Somalia traditions granted to them by considering them inviolable. With the 1991 inter-clan warfare in Somalia the trend took a new turn.⁵ Traditional laws governing armed conflict have played little part, and warring factions with impunity targeted women as well as children and non-fighters.

Among the worst atrocities were the killing, torture, humiliation and 'rape camps' particularly in Mogadishu in the early 1990s.⁶ Militiamen abducted many women, imprisoned them in villas where they were subjected to repeated rape and other forms of sexual violence. Many of the women and their children fled Somalia, some of boat for Yemen, and Kenya and some overland to the Kenyan boarder. Women and children made

³ J. Garderner and J. E. Bushra, Somalia: The Untold Story, op. cit. p.69.

⁴ Ibid., p. 69. See also H. S. Mohamed, "The Somalia Refugee Women's Experience in Kenyan Refugee Camps and their Plight in Canada" in H. M. Adam and R. Ford, Mending Rips in the Sky: Option for Somali Communities in the 21st Century. (Asmara: The Red Sea Press, 1997), pp. 431-440.

⁵ J. Garderner and J. E. Bushra, Somalia: The Untold Story, op. cit. p.69.

⁶ Ibid. p. 70.

up about 80 percent of the estimate 300,000 who had sought refuge in Kenya by October 1993 alone. Most of refugee's population in Africa is composed of children and women. Other scholars have argued that this is expected on the basis of high population growth and high male mortality rate compared to women. Therefore, population of less than 15 years of age and women should altogether make up 60 – 80% of the total refugee population of African countries. This means that, there is no discrepancy between “normal” and “refugee” population.⁷ Therefore, this justifies the high population of women and children under the age of 15 years. Without entering into the debate of discrepancy of statistics of refugee flow, it is clear that many women were displaced together with their children.

Women have become targets of armed conflict as a means of warfare. They have been raped, used in ethnic cleansing, tortured and killed.⁸ IPEP continues to argue that, women have also been perpetrators in aggravating the plight of women in conflicts. The atrocities done to women during the conflict directly and indirectly affect their social and political life. While there are attempts to emancipate and mainstream women in policy making and socio-political processes, such may not be effective unless the socio-political plight of women is understood. Armed conflict afflicts the socio-political life of women during the conflict and aftermath. It is by understanding the depth of effects of conflict on socio-political life of women that proper and comprehensive methodologies can be put in place to address the plight of women during and after conflict. Taking the case study of the Somalia conflict this study explores the socio-political effect conflicts have on women.

⁷ R.E. Mazur, “Refugees in Africa: The Role of Sociological Analysis and Praxis” in Current Sociology Vol.36, No 2, 1988, p. 43.

⁸ OAU, Rwanda the Preventable genocide, (Addis Ababa: OAU, 2000), pp. 159-170.

up about 80 percent of the estimate 300,000 who had sought refuge in Kenya by October 1993 alone. Most of refugee's population in Africa is composed of children and women. Other scholars have argued that this is expected on the basis of high population growth and high male mortality rate compared to women. Therefore, population of less than 15 years of age and women should altogether make up 60 – 80% of the total refugee population of African countries. This means that, there is no discrepancy between “normal” and “refugee” population.⁷ Therefore, this justifies the high population of women and children under the age of 15 years. Without entering into the debate of discrepancy of statistics of refugee flow, it is clear that many women were displaced together with their children.

Women have become targets of armed conflict as a means of warfare. They have been raped, used in ethnic cleansing, tortured and killed.⁸ IPEP continues to argue that, women have also been perpetrators in aggravating the plight of women in conflicts. The atrocities done to women during the conflict directly and indirectly affect their social and political life. While there are attempts to emancipate and mainstream women in policy making and socio-political processes, such may not be effective unless the socio-political plight of women is understood. Armed conflict afflicts the socio-political life of women during the conflict and aftermath. It is by understanding the depth of effects of conflict on socio-political life of women that proper and comprehensive methodologies can be put in place to address the plight of women during and after conflict. Taking the case study of the Somalia conflict this study explores the socio-political effect conflicts have on women.

⁷ R.E. Mazur, “Refugees in Africa: The Role of Sociological Analysis and Praxis” in Current Sociology Vol.36, No 2, 1988, p. 43.

⁸ OAU, Rwanda the Preventable genocide, (Addis Ababa: OAU, 2000), pp. 159-170.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Conflicts are endemic in the human society. Since they are endemic in the society, they should be accepted as a reality and managed in such a way that their dysfunctional effects will be minimised and their positive aspects be maximised. Conflicts affect men and women differently. Women are mostly affected, this is because, although women work harder to sustain their families, they do not poses mean to take-off during conflict, they have a strong attachment to taking care of the family especially children, and women have become the victims targeted during armed conflict. Therefore, during armed conflict women have found themselves unaccompanied by their male counterparts, their role of taking care of children while their husbands are at war is aggravated by the lack of resources, and women have found themselves to be refugees. Women are targeted during armed conflicts as a means of warfare. Women are raped, tortured, mutilated and killed. When such happens to women, they are not accepted to the society. Such victims have been considered outcasts of the society. Although generally the patriarchal Somalia society down grades women in political power, despite attempts for emancipation and gender mainstreaming conflicts continue to marginalize women more and more.

Somalia conflict is one of such protracted conflicts, which intensified since the 1991. The Somalia community is organised along patriarchal lines. Such organisation tends to elevate men in the social and political circles while reducing or down playing the social and political role of women in the society. Women are socially and politically marginalized and disadvantaged. This can be based on cultural values and accessibility to resources. Women do not control most of the resources and rely on the decisions of the

men whether as the husbands or as leaders. While such is the case, the Somalia conflict intensified the plight of the Somali women both socially and politically. On the other hand, during the Somalia civil war there have been attempts to emancipate the women. Although the women suffered mostly during the conflict, they also came out as significant actors in the socio-political situation of Somalia. Therefore, this study seeks to respond to the question: What were the effects of the Somalia conflict in aggravating socio-political plight of the Somali women? What were the effects of the Somalia conflict in advancing the socio-political role of the Somali women? This study investigates how the Somalia conflict has contributed in aggravating and ameliorating the social and political plight of the Somali women.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Broad Objective

The broad objective of the study is to explore the socio-political effect of the Somalia conflict on Somali women.

Specific Objectives

To examine the contribution of the Somalia conflict in the socio-political plight of Somali women

To investigate how the Somalia conflict has acted as a catalyst to the socio-political emancipation of the Somali women.

1.4 LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature on Conflict

According to Mitchell⁹ conflict is a consequence of the incompatibility of goals of different parties about a particular thing. The incompatibility may rise because the parties involved may have different perception, goals and ideas about how to achieve them.¹⁰ Conflict transcend time and space. Therefore, it is inevitable in all social systems. Conflict have both destructive and constructive consequences.¹¹ Management efforts should be directed towards maximizing its potential benefits and minimizing its distractive consequences.¹²

Galtung¹³ warns on the definition or analysis of conflict. According to him, conflict can be behavioral or structural. Behavioral conflicts are those conflicts that are manifest to people. Structural conflicts may not necessarily be evidently exposed to the people involved in it, but their structure of relationship makes people/group achieve less than their potentials. This approach to conflict and ,conflict management challenges traditional conflict analysis, where conflict was perceived to exist when actors are in war, making a distinction between war and peace. Galtung's approach seeks to explore and address the condition of the people and the structure of relationship in the society that may limit people's attainment of their full potential. Therefore, Galtung considers a situation that exist between conflict and peace in traditional analyses of conflict. To him

⁹C. R. Mitchell The Structure of International Conflict, (London: Macmillan, 1998), pp. 15-25.

¹⁰M. Mwagiru, Conflict: Theory, Processes and Institutions of Management, (Nairobi: Watermark, 2000), p. 3.

¹¹J. B. Hill, "An Analysis of Conflict Resolution Techniques: From Problem Solving Workshop to Theory" in Journal Conflict Resolution, Vol. 26, March 1982 p., 113.

¹²J. Bercovitch and A. Houston "The Study of International Mediation: Theoretical Issues and Empirical Evidence" in J. Bercovitch (ed), Resolving International Conflict: The Theory and Practice of Mediation, (London: Lynne Reinner Publ., 1996), pp., 11-35.

¹³See J. Galtung, "Violence, Peace and Peace Research" Journal of Peace Research, Vol. 3, (1969), pp. 167-191. see also J. Galtung, "Cultural Violence" Journal of Peace Research, Vol. 27 (1991) pp. 291-305.

this situation is conflictual and should be addressed if peace must be sustained in the society.

Structural violence and structural conflict is a situation in which human beings are unable to realise their full potential.¹⁴ The structural violence may not necessarily be intended, but influences against people's realisation of the full potential are the basis of structural violence. Galtung moves further to demonstrate that structural violence is connected with cultural conflict. To Galtung, Cultural violence are those aspects of culture, the symbolic sphere of our existence – exemplified by religion and ideology, language and art, empirical science and formal science (logic, mathematics) – that can be used to justify or legitimise direct or structural violence.¹⁵ Galtung in the two articles tries to demonstrate that the structure of relationship, which may be deeply rooted in the minds and ways of people or even rationalised may render people incapable of realising their full potential. To him this is a conflict situation that needs to be addressed irrespective of it being manifest or not.

Structural conflict and violence has revolutionised the study of conflict and conflict managements. Mwangiri¹⁶ contends that conflict relate to cultural setting. What is considered in one culture to be wrong and divisive in one culture may not be considered so in another and conflict management methodologies differ from culture to culture. Conflicts go beyond the immediate physical violence. The structures that underlie social relationships may be the source of the conflict. This approach to conflict ignites a debate between behavioural and structural violence. Structural violence may be imbedded in structure of relationships and may not be immediately recognised by the actors. However,

¹⁴ J. Galtung, "Violence, Peace and Peace Research" Journal of Peace Research, op. cit., pp. 167-191.

¹⁵ J. Galtung, "Cultural Violence" Journal of Peace Research, op. cit., pp. 291-305: 291.

¹⁶ M. Mwangiri, Conflicts: Theory; Processes and Institutions of Management, op. cit. pp. 24- 35.

when structural violence become manifest, it is likely to lead to behavioural conflicts. Cultural perception about conflict has not been sufficiently addressed in most of analyses of conflicts.¹⁷

Unless people are given a chance to unleash their full potentials, they may not be effective actors. The structure of relationship and culture may exclude or render some actors to act below their capacities and capabilities, and may perpetuate or even aggravate such people's suffering. This may be because of the cultural stereotypes¹⁸ that may seek to concentrate power on some of the actors, excluding some or giving them some lesser roles and significance in the structure of relationship. Among the issues that enter this debate of structural violence, structural conflict and cultural conflict is gender issues. Therefore, conflicts can be traced to the structure of relationship and culture, which are biased and exclusionary.

Literature on Gender Dimensions in Conflict and the Gender Relation in Somalia

Mbote¹⁹ considers gender to mean a state of being male or female, which is distinguishable physically by sex or reproductive differences. Gender in recent times has acquired a social and political meaning of relationship between male and female. She recognizes that both classical and behaviorist theorists of conflicts neglected the gender dimension in their analyses. Thus, excluding an important paradigm in the analysis of causes and impact of conflicts and the mechanisms used to manage conflicts. While Mbote considers gender to embrace reproductive differences between male and women as well as the role men and women play in the society, the Stanford Encyclopedia of

¹⁷ J. P. Lederach, Beyond Prescription: New Lenses for Conflict Resolution Training Across Cultures, (Ontario: Waterloo, 1992).

¹⁸ J. Galtung, "Cultural Violence" Journal of Peace Research, op cit. p. 291.

¹⁹ Patricia K. Mbote, "Gender, Conflict and Regional Security" in M. Mwagiru, African Regional Security in the Age of Globalization, (Nairobi: Heinrich Boll Stiftung, 2004), pp. 83-94.

Philosophy²⁰ makes a difference between sex and gender. Sex is the reproductive difference while gender is what the society makes of the sexual differences of men and women. Mbote concurs with the encyclopedia on sexual differences and roles taken. However, Mbote's way of approach is inclusive and does not distinguish between sex and gender. To her gender expresses both sex and the sex roles. These gender roles contribute to the defining of relationships between sexes, understanding, the use and sharing of power between men and women. Gender roles find themselves institutionalized at different levels of social and political relationship.

Men and women take different role during and in conflicts.²¹ Women may be involved in conflict either by being forced or voluntarily, they are more concerned in ensuring that they and their families survive. Although women may be involved in conflict, based on the gender biases, they are mostly excluded from decision-making process. Instead, they take subordinate role. While women are excluded from top decision-making processes, they play a significant role in the community. Their efforts are to secure the well-being of not only women but also all people. Here, Badri and her colleague recognizes that women are concerned with a peaceful society. However, the society has marginalized them from effectively addressing peace issues according to the values they hold most dear.

Byrne²² recognizes that, male gender dominates in initiating conflicts and fighting during conflict. The female gender on the other hand take an active role in seeking peace. Byrne recognizes that the roles gender play in conflict can lead to more conflicts if the

²⁰ Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, (2003) "Feminist Epistemology and Philosophy of Science" p. 3. found in <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/feminism-epistemology/>

²¹ Anna E. Badri and I. I. Abdel Sadig, Sudan Between Peace and War: Internally Displaced Women in Kartoum and South and West Kordofan. (Nairobi: UNIFEM, 1998), pp. 42-47.

²² B. Byrne, Towards Engendering Peace, (IDS Bulletin, 1996), p. 30.

society is male dominated. Men have excluded women in almost all spheres of life.²³ This imply that, if the patriarchal society can mainstream gender, then women participation is likely to lead to peace. This is because women are more inclined to seeking peace. As Burke and her colleagues contend, women maintain a community bond across political divide. Their vision grows out of the disastrous experience they undergo during the conflict. Therefore, they desire peace more than conflict. This can be achieved by positive discrimination in institutions to achieve gender balance, addressing the extent to which men and women can hold full range of social and political positions in governance and development.²⁴

Men and women experience conflict differently. Most analyses of conflicts are largely ungendered. To him “Most analyses of conflicts are largely ungendered and fail to recognize the ways in which international and national structures of power and patterns of resource allocation are based on gender inequalities”. Here, mwagiru recognizes the negative effect of having structures of relationship that do not take into account gender concerns, values and interests. Women are the most marginalized in the conflict and accounting as the majority of its victims.²⁵

Goldstein²⁶ observes that, the attacks on women in Algeria, Rwanda, Bosnia and Afghanistan pointed to a new positive trend toward women as military targets. Systematic rape was used as a terror tactics in Bosnia, Rwanda and Japanese army in world war II operate an international network of sex slaves known as “comfort women”.

²³ E. S. Burke, J. Klot and I. Bunting, Engendering Peace: Reflections on the Burundi Peace Process, (Nairobi: UNIFEM, 2001), pp. 25-27.

²⁴ Patricia K. Mbote, “Gender, Conflict and Regional Security” in M. Mwagiru, African Regional Security in the Age of Globalization, op. cit., p. 89.

²⁵ E. S. Burke, J. Klot and I. Bunting, Engendering Peace: Reflections on the Burundi Peace Process, op. cit, p. 23.

²⁶ J. Goldstein, International Relations, (London: Longman Publication, 2003), p. 136.

Rape has long been treated as a normal if regrettable by-product of war. Jeong²⁷ concurs with Goldstein by highlighting that, rape and other forms of ill treatment of women have been employed as tools of military strategy. The rape and deliberate impregnating of thousands of women, mostly Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina, was a form of ethnic cleansing conducted by Serb nationalists. Many documents report the assault of women by internal security forces in Peru, Colombia and other countries that have anti-government insurgencies. In world war II, the Japanese army sexually assaulted young women from Korea, Philippines and other places in Asia...some of them were as young as 16 or even younger when they sexually assaulted at the war fronts. In July 1992, the Japanese government admitted finally that tens of thousands of women were sent to military bases to provide sex for the soldiers but no commitments were made for redress or retribution by the Japanese government.

Understanding the effects of gender dimension of conflict on gender relation and gender roles of women and men is the best way to ensure that policies and programmes designed to implement peace will guarantee the protection, rehabilitation and the healing of the whole society.²⁸ Burke and her colleagues continues to argue that, as peace processes are evolving quickly, there is need to put in place parliamentary, government and local administrative institutions that will help place women in decision-making positions, otherwise women will be left behind. Burke agrees with Mbote that gender equity and equality is essential in building of sustainable peace.

²⁷ H. Jeong, Peace and Conflict: An Introduction. (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2000), pp. 75-76.

²⁸ E. S. Burke, J. Klot and I. Bunting, Engendering Peace: Reflections on the Burundi Peace Process, op cit ibid p. 24.

Recognizing the devastating effects that conflicts have inflicted in the Horn of Africa region, Abukashwa²⁹ notes that, it is necessary women participate more in preventing, managing and resolving conflict. Proportional representation bring more women into public office. However, in peace process like that of Burundi and Somalia women who make the majority of the population of such countries are minimally represented.³⁰ Sabine Sabimbona³¹ having participated in the Burundi peace talks is optimistic when she concludes “Our voices may not have been heard during the negotiations, but we managed to make our presence felt. Although she seems to be optimistic to gender issues in the peace process, a critical outlook demonstrates that apart from not proportionally represented, their voices (to which the concerns, interests and values of women) were insignificantly presented.

ICG³² recognizes women to have capacity to make peace agreements and post-conflict efforts more viable, effective and practical. Although the efforts of women have great potential, women are seriously constrained. Women peace activists often exposes themselves to personal risks in their daily work to make their communities more safer. Often they receive less resources to support their efforts, their experience, and their advise on peace building are ignored or downplayed by policy makers. Those women who make to the top decision-making organs often are suppressed. Therefore, the structure of conflict in the society is biased against women. It excludes, down plays and

²⁹ Sumaia Abukashwa, “Integrating Gender Awareness and the Participation of Women in IGAD Issues on Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution” in H. Houten and Z. Beyene (eds), Placing Gender in the Mainstream, (Djibouti: IGAD, 2002), pp. 9-11.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 31.

³¹ Ibid., p. 37.

³² ICG, Beyond Victimhood: Women's Peacebuilding in Sudan, Congo and Uganda, Africa Report No. 112 of 28 June 2006.

trivialize the female gender. Gender also aggravates the social and political suffering of women during armed conflict.

The UN Security Council made a resolution in relation dealing with women peace and security.³³ The Resolution sought to make a policy framework that includes women in wide array of issues related to peace and security. However, there is limited progress in countries where leadership remains hostile to a greater role for women in peace and conflict management.

Cindy highlights that: Today the vast majority of armed conflicts occur within state borders. Such internal conflicts have a devastating effect on the civilian population. Women are targets of armed conflict precisely because they are women.³⁴ They are raped in order to humiliate, frightened and defeat its enemy group to which they belong. Displacement is the most common consequence of armed conflict and women are the most affected civilian population. It is estimated that women and children comprise 70-80 percentages of the world refugees and internally displacement population.

The Somali society and political setting is patriarchal. Although all children are a treasured gift from God, in Somali society, greater symbolic value is place on a male than a female child. This is symbolised by the slaughter to two animals when a male baby is born while for a female it is one if any.³⁵ Since the Somali society is patrilineal women are traditionally assigned status inferior to men, who take the dominant roles in society, religion and politics. The society has strict division of labour which confines women to household tasks, which deny the Somali women a chance to engage in community

³³ UN Security Resolution 1325 of 31 October, 2000.

³⁴ H. Cindy, Transitional Nomads. How Somalia's copes with refugees' life in Daddab Camp of Kenya. (PhD Thesis 2000).

³⁵ J. Gardemer and J. E. Bushra, Somalia: The Untold Story. op. cit., pp. 9-11.

decisions or education. Traditionally Somali women also do not own means of production and are not allowed to engage in economic activities outside the home. This made the Somali women to depend on the male counterpart, be they husbands, brother or close relative.

Literature on the Somalia conflict and its socio-political effect on Somali women

The fighters of different clan-based opposition militia groups invaded the capital city, Mogadishu and other towns in Somalia causing widespread rape of women, mass execution, destruction of ware supplies and homes led to massive displacement of people into Kenya, Djibouti and Yemen.³⁶ Atrocities carried out by individual and militia groups against women and girls in Somalia between 1991 and 2000 were unprecedented in Somalia history. Traditionally, in Somalia pastoral society feuding and conflict were bounded by codes and social conventions. Along with the elderly and sick, women and children were immune from attack. That is not to say that women were never targeted but if they were harmed there were rules about retribution and compensations. In the inter-clan warfare from 1991 onwards, this traditional laws have played little part, and warring factions with impunity attacked women as well as children and non-fighters.

Among the worst atrocities were the 'rape camps' particularly in Mogadishu in the early 1990s. Militiamen abducted many women, imprisoned them in villas where they were subjected to repeated rape and other forms of sexual violence. Many of these women and their families were among the thousands of Somalia who fled the country, some of boat for Yemen, and Kenya and some overland to the Kenyan boarder. Women

³⁶ J. V. Beurden, "In a State of Permanent Conflict" in M. Mekenkamp et al (eds), Searching for Peace in Africa: An Overview of Conflict Prevention and Management Activities, (Utrecht: European Platform for Conflict Prevention and Transformation, 1999), pp. 156-166.

and children made up about 80 percent of the estimate 300,000 who had sought refuge in Kenya by October 1993 alone.

Gardener³⁷ highlights that, the world is ignorant of the wartime rape of thousands of Somalia women and girls between 1991 and 1994, which a decade later was still going on in some parts of the country...all through all women and girls were vulnerable, rapists tended to target female members of opposing faction and those with weak clan affiliation and their little clan protection. Many Somalia women fled to Kenya to escape the Somalia civil war but many found themselves facing sexual violence. In words of one refugee quoted in the *Nightmare continues* (African Rights) September 1993, "we ran away from the lion, but we have only found a hyena". Hundreds of rapes and attempted rapes occur almost on daily basis in the Kenyan refugee camps. Just over 100 incidents had occurred after refugees had crossed into Kenya in 1991. In August 1993, alone 42 rape cases were reported. All these occurred in the camps in the North Eastern Province, in Dadaab area. The majority of attacks in Kenya were attributed to armed Somalia speaking bandits or Shifta, who would have included both Somali nationals and Kenyan Somalis.

Fowzia Musee,³⁸ highlights that Somali women in the refugees' camps in the North Eastern Kenya say their attackers were usually people they knew, they were well armed, and they attacked in groups. Some women were forced to submit when militia threatened to destroy their home with their children locked inside. Some were raped inside their homes in front of their husband who were forced to watch at gunpoint. Many victims were raped in front of their children and relatives. Sixteen rape survivors whose

³⁷ J. Gardener, *Somalia: The Untold Story*, op. cit., p. 71.

³⁸ Fowzia Musee, *War Through the Ice of Somalia Women*, (London: Oxford University Press 1993), pp. 73-74.

cases were documented by the UNHCR reported that they had been raped over the body of their dead husbands, child, sibling or other relatives. Fowzia further observes that, sometimes as many as ten men took part in a gang rape. They would be armed with rifles, grenades, daggers, bayonets, clubs and warring sticks. Attackers use physical force against their victims including hitting with rifles butts on the upper body and the legs, unrelenting fist blow to the head, striking the women violently when she was on the ground; using razor blades, daggers or bayonets to remove the 'external virginity' or infibulations of women and girls who had never had sexual relations, often inflicting severe injuries.

In traditional Somalia, as most African cultures, society defines a "good" woman as one under the protection of a male, that is a father, brother or husband.³⁹ However, the conflict in Somalia has killed many men and women have been targeted fled. Therefore, women have been exposed to various threatening and violent experiences beyond their capacity to cope. These violent experiences especially since 1991 have had no cultural mechanisms within the Somali culture to assist women to deal with them. The traditional legal system was undermined and Somalia armed itself. Somali women had no recourse to laws or legal systems to protect them. The Somalis are Muslims and rape was rare in Somalia before the civil war. Within the Muslim religion, rape is ethically and morally unacceptable. Women who are raped are ashamed to report the case, within the Somalia culture women who are raped are blamed for the for the crime, therefore, some of such women have been abandoned by their husbands and families and are marginalized within the community. It is not only within Somalia that women suffer war consequences, those

³⁹ H. S. Mohamed, "The Somalia Refugee Women's Experience in Kenyan Refugee Camps and their Plight in Canada" in H. M. Adam and R. Ford, Mending Rips in the Sky: Option for Somali Communities in the 21st Century, op. cit., pp. 431-440.

that have fled Somalia to other countries also continue to suffer social and political challenges.⁴⁰ Some of the violence against women that exist in war torn Somalia like rape continues in the refugee camps. Such women remain traumatised and despair from living.⁴¹ Such trauma has extended to the family members who have been forced to witness the violation of their loved ones.⁴² In Somalia civil war, Somali women have become war casualties where violence against them has become a means or weapon to armed conflict. Therefore, violence against women in the Somalia civil war was a means to humiliate and destroy women and men of certain clans. The consequences of the Somalia civil war is that social responsibilities for women have increased while they are isolated and marginalized, and their political capacities undermined.

Although women have become targeted victims in armed conflicts and their plight increased, the Somali women have attempted to tackle their plight. Since the 1991, Somali women have attempted to see that their plight is included and attended to during the decision process.⁴³ Some of the success that they have made is the gender mainstreaming in the peace processes. While the conflict was on in Somalia women lobbied and were represented as a sixth clan in the Arta conference.⁴⁴ Getting support from IGAD Women Desk and UNIFEM women have actively engaged in the peace process and other civil society. In other words, during the Somalia conflict especially since 1991 women have been mainstreamed and they have become in the fore front to address their plight be it cultural or artificial.

⁴⁰ Report of the Secretary General on the Situation in Somalia S/2003/636.
⁴¹ UNHCR, "Sexually Assaulted Refugee Women" Information Bulletin, October 1993.
⁴² F. Musse, "Women Victims of Violence" Report of UNHCR, Nairobi, 1993, p. 2.
⁴³ IGAD Women Desk, Heading Women's Voices: The Story of Somali Women's Historic Role in the Peace Process, (Djibouti: IGAD, 2005), pp. 16-21.
⁴⁴ E. Brusset and E. Visman, Preventing Violent Conflicts and the Coherence of EU Policies Towards the Horn of Africa Countries. Saveworld February, 1998.

The literature reviewed reveals two significant things, while conflict can be destructive it can also be beneficial. The Somalia conflict since 1991 has been both destructive and beneficial to women. It is destructive in the sense that, the plight of Somali women especially being targeted as means of warfare, lose of the support system especially from their husbands and cultural legal framework, taking care of children and increased role as heads of families, finding themselves as refugees in other countries and being considered as outcasts after incidences of rape and war violence aggravated the suffering and marginalisation of Somali women from social and political life. On the other hand, Somali women have become active actors in the search for peace in Somalia. They have been recognised as significant actors in the social and political life within Somalia. This is a situation in which the Somali civil war has acted as a double edged sword for the Somali women, that is contributing both negatively and positively in their social and political life and situation.

1.5 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study utilizes Feminism in the analysis. Although feminism has different strands, feminist theorists agree on a number of issues on the structure of relationship and gender inequalities and their effects on women in particular and the society in general. Feminism exposes biases and impartiality embedded in the patriarchal mainstream structure of relationship and epistemology.⁴⁵ It exposes male-centered assumptions, values and interests. Women are not only interested on their emancipation, but they have

⁴⁵ Louise M. Antony, "Quine as Feminist: The Radical Import of Naturalized Epistemology" in Keith Lelievre (ed), The Coherence Theory of Knowledge Philosophical Topics, Vol. 14 (1986) pp. 539-573.

an interest in the well-being of the society, which mitigates the accusation of being value laden.

Feminist theorists distinguish between sex and gender.⁴⁶ While sex is biological difference between male and female, gender is what societies make of the sexual differences like roles, norms, values and meaning assigned to each sex. Feminism⁴⁷ contends that, conceptions of human behaviour are frequently based only on observations of men. Because societies are male-dominated, men contend that the legitimate way to resolve conflicts is the product of male values of aggression and dominance. Feminism counters this assumption by its observation that, since women are assumed to be less violent and aggressive, hence if included in decision-making and in politics in general conflicts will be less frequent.⁴⁸ Feminism places gender inequality in the structure of the society that is patriarchal, under representation, under participation and sexual discrimination. Feminism advocates for re-evaluation of the structure of gender relationship and integrate women in the existing society.⁴⁹ Women are oppressed in the patriarchal society, and therefore, based on their direct experience of oppression, women have an interest in representing their social situation in a way that reveals rather than mask this truth.

Although women in the history of politics have ascended to highest levels, some of their behaviours have been based on the social structure of male-domination, affecting them not to act according to female nature. Therefore, their behaviour is the reflection of

⁴⁶ Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, (2003) "Feminist Epistemology and Philosophy of Science" op. cit. p. 3.

⁴⁷ Stephen L. Spiegel, World Politics in a New Era, (London: Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1995), pp. 700-701.

⁴⁸ Mary Daly, Gyn/Ecology: The Metaethics of Radical Feminism, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1978).

⁴⁹ Stephen D. Tansey, Politics: The Basics, (London: Routledge, 1995), pp. 87-88.

male domination rather than of an intrinsic female nature.⁵⁰ This calls for the re-evaluation of the social structure of relationships in the society to enhance women's concerns, interests and values.

Feminism contends that, in an egalitarian society, women's more natural concerns would become part of the social and political milieu. Relationships based on caring, collaboration, cooperation, and consensus-building would replace those that rests on domination and subordination. As women's oppression become unacceptable and is addressed, so will be the subjugation of other less powerful groups of the society. This will lead to the transformation of the relationships in the society. Preoccupation with power and conflict would be replaced by cooperation and collaboration, and by a ecological orientation, exemplified by the effort to save the mothers society.⁵¹

Feminism is relevant in this study because it insists that, social and politics relationships must come under moral scrutiny. Feminism seeks to emancipate women from gender biased socio-political relationship in the society. Feminism also exposes the plight of women in conflict regardless of the conflicting party they belong. Feminism advocates for human dignity, social and political justice and fairness.⁵² Feminism questions the assumptions implicit in conventional political analysis and socio-political relationships. It seeks integration of women in the mainstream of social and political policymaking process as away of enhancing gender equality. Feminism also seeks to address socio-political values and interests of women in the mainstream structures of the society. Feminism advocates for peace and cooperation rather than war and division

⁵⁰ Stephen I. Spiegel, World Politics in a New Era, op. cit. p.700.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p.701.

⁵² Jean B. Elshtain, "Reflections on War and Political Discourse: Realism Just War and Feminism in Nuclear Age" in R. Little and M. Smith 2nd Ed. Perspectives on World Politics, (London: Routledge, 1991), pp. 462-463.

preferred by male gender. Feminism addresses socio-political plight of women in conflict and the need for female emancipation in their socio-political situation.

1.6 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

This study can be justified in both academic and policy level. At the academic level, there have been assessment of gender issues in society in general and conflict in particular. Most of the literature reviewed represent gender imbalances that have been rooted in the structure of relationships of the societies. Although gender inequality has ailed the human society, particularly with the insubordination of women, there are limited attempts that have been made to emancipate women in socio-political arena. Conflicts have deeply affected the female gender on top of the structural biases against women in the patriarchal societies. Women have become social and political victims of conflicts. Although violence against women is condemned internationally, it has of recent times increasingly become a common means of warfare. Although there are attempts to address socio-political plight of women in conflict situation little has been achieved. This study is justified as it contributes in the building-up of the limited literature that explores why conflicts have continued to disadvantage women in the socio-political arena.

The Somalia conflict is one of the recently managed conflicts under IGAD. This means that, the Somalia conflict continues to be of concern to scholars and researchers hence there is a need for further research. Since the socio-political plight of women featured in the conflict and its management process, this study is justified as it builds to the limited literature that exist on the subject matter. Therefore, this study will offer literature for reference, which will be used by other scholar and students who may be

doing research in related fields. The study is expected to open up new areas of research, which will lead to a comprehensive understanding and subsequently the efficacy of gender emancipation in socio-political arena

At the policy level, the study is justified in that, the study findings will offer conflict managers, policy makers, gender activist, government machinery and individuals modes of assessing the socio-political plight of women in conflict situation. It will also offer critical insights into gender basis on the plight of conflicts. It also offer insights on how conflicts have disadvantaged women on their quest for socio-political emancipation. It also offers new strategies to deal with gender inequalities in conflict situations and conflict management processes.

1.7 HYPOTHESES

The Somalia conflict aggravated the socio-political plight of the Somali women.

The Somalia conflict acted as a catalyst to the socio-political emancipation of the Somali women.

Attempts made to ameliorate the socio-political plight of Somali women during the Somalia conflict have not sufficiently addressed their socio-political plight.

1.8 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study will utilize both primary and secondary data.

Primary Data

Primary data will be collected from the field by face to face interviews. Open-ended question will be utilized during interviews. There will be probing where necessary

to obtain deeper information and clarify some of the issues that are not clear during the interview. The study sample includes competent personnel from IGAD Women Desk, UNIFEM, UNDP, personnel from NGOs dealing with gender issues and female emancipation, and Somalia nationals both male and female. Interviews will extend to conflict managers, political analysts and scholars.

The study sample will be spread a cross gender to avoid gender biases on the conflict and peace. Probing will help to get in-depth information that is not clear or which may be left out during interview but has significance to the study. Primary data is important as the hypothesis will be tested in the field. It also puts the researcher in touch with the reality under study. This method of study as a source of data will complement the limited literature that exist on the subject matter.

This method of data collection may present limitations like respondent biases and non-respondent. This will be addressed by having a large study sample spread across gender and geographical regions.

Secondary Data

Secondary data will be obtained by critically reading and analyzing relevant materials that have been published like books, journals, articles, relevant papers presented at different fora, newspapers, print and electronic media. This method of data collection is relevant in this study in that ,it examines what other scholars have done, and build on their scholarly work instead of repeating what has already been done. This method of data collection critically evaluates works that have been published on the subject matter to show their strengths and weaknesses with a view of contributing to knowledge. It also

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critically analyses works that have been published to explore their contribution to the area under study.

Data Analysis

The data will be analyzed in the light of feminist theories and relevant literature in conflict management and socio-politics. The study will also employ critical reflection on the data collected. This is important as it incorporates the researcher's critical contribution to the study. This will allow critical appreciation of prior studies that have been done on the areas related to the topic under study.

1.9 CHAPTER OUTLINE

CHAPTER ONE

RESEARCH PROPOSAL

This section of the study presents what the study seeks to achieve and how to go about in achieving it.

CHAPTER TWO

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE SOMALIA CONFLICT

This section of the study presents the Somalia conflict with specific emphasis from 1991 to 2005.

CHAPTER THREE

THE SOCIO-POLITICAL EFFECTS OF THE SOMALIA CONFLICT ON SOMALI WOMEN

This section of the study examines gender and conflict, gender dimension of the Somali culture, the social and political plight of the Somali women in the face of the Somalia conflict. It also investigates the attempts made to emancipate the social and political status of the Somali women during the Somalia conflict

CHAPTER FOUR

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS ON THE SOCIO-POLITICAL EFFECT OF THE SOMALIA CONFLICT ON THE SOMALI WOMEN

This section of the study presents critical issues on the socio-political effects of the Somalia conflict on the Somali women and critically analyses them in the light of the feminist theory, theories of conflict and relevant literature.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

This section of the study makes a conclusion based on the study findings and critical analysis.

CHAPTER TWO

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE SOMALIA CONFLICT

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The Somali state was created by the partition of the Horn of Africa by Britain, Italy, France, and the Abyssinian Empire, during the Scramble for Africa in the nineteenth century. During the colonial period, Somali itself did not exist as a single state, divided as it was between a northern British Somalia land and Southern Italian Somali land. On 26th June 1960, Britain granted independence, on July 1960 the people of the former British and Italian territories united to form the Somali Republic.¹ However, the new state found it self engulfed by conflict and war.

The Somalia conflict can be traced back to colonial era and Cold War rivalry.² However, the political process that followed the independent Somalia especially during general Mohamed Siad Barre polarized the conflict. Clan based jealousies began to create splits. Because of Barre's culture of militarism, the splits resulted to considerable violence.³ This became more serious because natural resources were scarce, there was lack of justice, good governance and poor education. In 1990, opposition groups formed a coalition and started fighting Barre's regime until early 1991 when Barre was defeated and went to exile. The opposition coalition due to clan individualism and rivalry they were unable to form a government and started fighting amongst themselves. This resulted to the conflict and anarchy in Somalia.

¹ J. Gardener and J. E. Bushra, Somalia: The Untold Story, (London: Pluto Press, 2004), pp.1-5.

² J. V. Beurden, "In a State of Permanent Conflict" in M. Mekenkamp et al (eds), Searching for Peace in Africa: An Overview of Conflict Prevention and Management Activities, (Utrecht: European Platform for Conflict Prevention and Transformation, 1999), pp. 156-165.

³ B. Mark, The Somali Conflict: Prospects for Peace, (Oxford: Oxfam Research Paper No. 9, 1994), pp.7-15.

The root cause of the Somali conflict today can be linked to the structural layout of Somali as a state. The leadership and the social structure have over time compounded this problem. Since independence, Somalia chose to follow the communist/socialist system of government that was propagated by self preservation by the leaders. The current Somali crisis can be said to have been latent up and until 1969 where Said Barre conducted a military coup and overthrew the legitimate government. Subsequent happenings and occurrences served to stroke and fuel the latent animosity among Somali clans which culminated to Barre's overthrow in 1992. From then, Somalia as a state has been in constant disintegration. The Somali people have not known peace, and the conflict has been a major security concern to neighboring states. Kenya in particular has shouldered the burden of hosting Somalia refugees. Refugee camps of Ifo and Dadaab have been set up by the UNHCR and have been a strain to Kenya in terms of resources (financial, security, environmental, medical, socially and politically).

Many attempts to place Somalia back on track as a state have been showing signs of success, only to collapse soon thereafter. This has set a bad precedent in the management of the Somalia conflict. This section of the study presents the historical background of the Somalia conflict to the year 2005 when the conflict was terminated by the signing of a peace agreement.

2.2 THE SOMALIA CONFLICT AND ITS MANAGEMENT

The Somali state was created by the partition of the Horn of Africa by Britain, Italy and France and the Abyssinian Empire, during the scramble for Africa in the nineteenth century. Formed by colonial treaties, Somali's borders today bear no resemblance to the distribution of the ethnic Somali people who as well as predominating

in Somalia itself, inhabit lands within neighboring countries of Kenya, Ethiopia and Djibouti.⁴ During the colonial period Somalia itself did not exist as single state, divided as it was between the Northern British Somaliland and the Southern Italian Somaliland. On 26 June 1960 Britain granted independence to the North and four days later, the Italian administrated UN Trusteeship Territory of Somalia achieved independence. On 1 July 1960, the people of the former British and Italian territories united to form, the Somali Republic.

The current state of Somalia is located in the Horn of Africa. Somalia is composed of the Somali ethnic community, which spreads to other neighboring countries of Kenya, Ethiopia and Djibouti. The Somali community of Somalia is divided into six clans, that is; Dir, Issaq, Darod, Hawiye, Digil and Rahanweyne which is further divided into sub-clans.⁵ The Somalia population is mainly of Islam religious affiliation.

After independence, the republic of Somalia remained isolated from its nearest neighbors. There was an attempt to form a Greater Somalia by unifying the Somali ethnic community that was spread in Kenya, Ethiopia and Djibouti. In Kenya, the persistent *shifita* war made the Northern Frontier District (NFD) a volatile region. In the West, guerilla activities in the Ogaden region of Ethiopia by ethnic Somali rebels supported by Mogadishu government led to a brief but damaging outbreak of open war in 1964. During the 1960s, the political situation in Somalia was affected by the increasing frustration over the failure of formation of a Greater Somalia, resulting in an increasing clan-based factionalism and continuous destabilization and increasing inter-clan rivalry. All these gradually weakened Somalia's social cohesion and undermined its political structures.

⁴ S. Milas, Causes and Consequences of the Somalia Conflict, (Nairobi: UNDP Somalia, 1997), pp. 1-20.

⁵ B. Mark, The Somali Conflict: Prospects for Peace, op. cit., p.8.

While the political system was being taken over by clan interests, the country's economy and infrastructure were rapidly deteriorating. This resulted in the assassination of the first president Abdirashid Sharma and a coup by Said Barre in October 1969.

General Mohamed Said Barre's military coup in October 1969 overthrew a democratically elected but corrupt civilian government, suspended the constitution and banned political parties. In the place of a democratically elected civilian government, the constitution and political parties, Said Barre set up a Supreme Revolutionary Council of military and police officials and declared war on ignorance, hunger and tribalism as enemies of the people. Exploiting the Cold War superpower politics of the time, he declared Somalia a socialist state in 1970 and introduced the Soviet-backed 'scientific Socialism' as the ideological framework for the country's future development.

Although scientific socialism was progressive in some areas like improving literacy and women's status- its prevailing impact was a high degree of centralized state control. This found expression in many aspects like press censorship; the banning of trade unions, Women's rights, and leadership and political empowerment; manipulation of civil organizations. General Barre's regime priority was to maintain political control in all levels at all costs.

In 1977 Said Barre invaded the Ogaden region of Ethiopia in an attempt to regain land and people separated from the Somali state by colonial treaty. Somalia was heavily defeated when the Soviet Union that had previously supported him switched sides and backed Ethiopia in war. Defeat in the Ogaden was soon followed by the emergence of the armed opposition groups within Somalia- first the Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF) formed in 1978 by military officers from the Majeerteen clan in the north east,

and then in 1980 the Somali national movement (SNM) drawing support mainly from the Isaaq clan in the north-west. But it took another decade to overthrow Said Barre's regime. During this period, Barre's regime prosecuted a scorched-earth policy against the Majeerteen and increasingly repressive policies and human rights abuses against the Isaaq. To ensure control of the state Barre increasingly concentrated power and resources within his own clan and sub-clan family, manipulating Somali clans to his own ends.

By the early 1980's the country's economy was starting to collapse with gross national product (GNP) per capita just US\$280 per year and an estimated 70 percent of the rural population living in absolute poverty. Security expenditure accounted for nearly three quarters of the government spending, and consumed more than half as much again as was earned from exports.

The between 1988 to 1991 there was increased inter-clan and intra-clan conflict and violence, mostly because of President Said Barre's strategy of using one clan to fight another with the massive military aid he had received for the superpowers during the cold war. The proliferation of clan based militias contributed to the intensity of clan disputes and deteriorating reciprocal distrust. This further compromised the peaceful coexistence of different clans and by extension the bases of Somali national unity. During Said Barre's tenure as the president the Cold War rivalry played a significant role in the Somalia conflict by enabling the government and the clan-based factions to acquire large stocks of arms. By the time Barre was overthrown in 1991, the various clan militias were already heavily armed and prepared militarily to make a bid for power.

In May 1988, the SNM attacked and briefly captured Burao and Hargesia, two main towns in the North West. The government responded by relentless aerial

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bombardments destroying most of the buildings in both towns and forced thousands to flee.⁶ By March 1989 an estimated 50, 000 people in the North West had been killed by their own government. Thus, the massacre eventually promoted the international community to cut most development assistance to Somalia, which by then had become bankrupt.

Said Barre's downfall came three years later when an alliance formed by three armed opposition groups called United Somali Congress (USC) led by General Mohamed Farah Aideed attacked Mogadishu in December 1990. This is considered the start of the civil war in the South, a war that has yet to be laid to rest.

Said Barre's downfall did not bring an end to injustice and misery for the people in Somalia. The loose coalition of forces that had defeated Said Barre's dictatorial regime disintegrated with sudden collapse of government institutions. The country fragmented into areas controlled by warlords and their heavily armed clan-based militias. The USC split into two power blocs headed by General Mohamed Farah Aideed and Ali Mahdi. The reason for the disintegration of USC is that, the coalition was loose with no common agenda except the removal of Barre's regime from power. After the removal of Said Barre from power, the coalition partners started to compete for political power and resources resulting to continued conflict.⁷

From 1990 to 1992, when the United Nations eventually brokered a ceasefire, there was almost continuous warfare in the South as clans fought to control power and

⁶ I. Q. Farah, Dual Diplomatic Approaches in Conflict Management: The International Peace Initiative in Somalia 1991-1999, (MA Dissertation Submitted to Institute of Diplomacy and International Studies, University of Nairobi, 2000), pp. 50-60. See also, J. V. Beurden, "In a State of Permanent Conflict" in M. Mekenkamp et al (eds), Searching for Peace in Africa: An Overview of Conflict Prevention and Management Activities, op. cit., pp. 156-165.

⁷ M. O. Omar, The Road to Zero: Somalia's Self Destruction, (New Delhi: Everest Press, 1992), pp. 216-220. See also O. Kamudhayi, "The Somali Peace Process" in M. Mwagiru, African Regional Security in the Age of Globalization, (Nairobi: Heinrich Boll Foundation, 2004), pp. 108-109.

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⁶ I. Q. Farah, Dual Diplomatic Approaches in Conflict Management: The International Peace Initiative in Somalia 1991-1999. (MA Dissertation Submitted to Institute of Diplomacy and International Studies, University of Nairobi, 2000), pp. 50-60. See also, J. V. Beurden, "In a State of Permanent Conflict" in M. Mekenkamp et al (eds), Searching for Peace in Africa: An Overview of Conflict Prevention and Management Activities, op. cit., pp. 156-165.

⁷ M. O. Omar, The Road to Zero: Somalia's Self Destruction, (New Delhi: Everest Press, 1992), pp. 216-220. See also O. Kamudhayi, "The Somali Peace Process" in M. Mwagiru, African Regional Security in the Age of Globalization, (Nairobi: Heinrich Boll Foundation, 2004), pp. 108-109.

resources, especially land and water.⁸ Many civilians died in the first four months of fighting in Somalia. The coastal towns of Merca, Brava and Kismayo and the inland town of Baidoa, in the country's most fertile zone, suffered waves of invasions by fighters of the different clan-based opposition militia groups. Widespread rape of women, mass executions, destruction and exploitation of agricultural land, looting of grain stores and livestock, and destruction of water supplies and homes led to massive displacement of people into other parts of Somalia, Kenya and Ethiopia and Yemen. By the time the United Nations took action at the end of 1992, several hundred thousand people had been killed others died of starvation and hunger-related diseases, displaced, and some had become refugees.

The Act of Union which had united former Italian and British territories in 1960 into the Republic of Somalia was broken in May 1991 when the people of the north west regions of Somalia announced the secession of the republic of Somaliland, a territory demarcated by the former colonial boundaries separating British and Italian rule. This act was the decision of a clan conference in Burao at which the Isaaq and non -Isaaq clans (Darod and Dir) living in Somaliland reconciled after a long period of animosity and civil war. It was a decision taken in response to the pre-emptive formation in February 1991 of an interim government in Mogadishu would lead to a repeat if the persecution they had suffered under Said Barre, in which many people of the North West were killed and many others forcibly displaced. Secession was also a pragmatic move to distance the north from the factional fighting in the south; it signaled that the Northerners had no territorial claims on the South. The decision to declare independence from the rest of Somalia was made without consulting Somali's numerous other political factions. Somaliland,

⁸ O. Kamudhayi, *Ibid.*, pp. 108-109.

although it functioned since secession as a separate state, remained unrecognized by the international community.

On 23rd July 1998, the political and traditional leaders of Somalia's north eastern regions declared the autonomous Puntland State of Somalia under the Presidency of former SSDF chairman Colonel Abdullahi Yusuf. A nine-member cabinet was appointed and a 69-member parliament, including five seats reserved for women. According to its founding charter Puntland is a first step towards rebuilding a future united but federal Somalia. Even though it lacked the infrastructure and potential revenue sources of Somaliland, the administration's first term did see the establishment of a police force and integration of former militia members into a new security force. In June 2001, however, the administration three-year term expired and failure to agree a transfer of power led to a constitutional crisis which threatened the region's security.

The formation of the Transitional National Government (TNG) in August 2000 following the Arta Conference was the most significant development in the politics of Somalia for a decade. The TNG was the outcome of a lengthy process of public dialogue and negotiation that placed more emphasis on civil society involvement rather than factional representation. In contrast to other Somalia peace conferences, it formally included women and minor clans among the voting delegates. Although the conference attracted participants from most of Somalia's regions, some prominent Mogadishu based faction leaders chose not to participate, as did the Somaliland authorities and the formal Puntland representatives. The politico-military leadership of the sub-clans of the Rahanweyne clan – the Rahanweyne Resistance Army (RRA) took part but withdrew

support once the conference was ended. Kamudhayi⁹ notes “The results of the Arta Conference could not be implemented because actors who were excluded, the armed factions, effectively blockaded and confined the activities of the new government to a section of Mogadishu.” Arta Conference also ignored interest of regional actors like Kenya.

Established in Mogadishu in October 2000, the TNG had a 245-member Transitional National Assembly, of which 25 seats are reserved for women, and a president and prime minister supported by a 25member cabinet selected from the 75 ministerial posts. It enjoyed international acceptance in the UN General Assembly, the Arab League and the African Union, which gave Somalia former representation in these bodies for the first time in a decade. However, it was slow to win support within Somalia. With the increasing conflict in Somalia, in October 2001, the IGAD launched a 14th internationally sponsored peace process, held in Kenya.

In January 2002, the Heads of State of member countries of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), decided on a new peace initiative for national reconciliation in Somalia. Three front line countries (Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya) coordinated their efforts under the supervision of the IGAD Chairman and a Somalia National Reconciliation Conference was held in Kenya with President Moi of Kenya as coordinator. The Conference opened in Eldoret, Kenya with some 600 Somali representatives. On 27 October, 2002 Somali leaders signed the Declaration on the

⁹Ibid., p. 109.

Cessation of Hostilities and the Structures and Principles of the Somalia National Reconciliation Process¹⁰ (S/2002/1359. annex).

However, armed clashes continued between rival militias accompanied by controversy among the Somali participants in the Conference over the nature of the future transitional federal government. By mid-September 2003, developments at the Conference, which had relocated to Mbagathi, Kenya created an impasse over the adoption of a charter. The "Somaliland" administration refused to participate in the Mbagathi Conference and tensions between "Somaliland" and the "Puntland" administration over the disputed regions of Sool and Sanaag escalated in early 2004.

At the 10th IGAD Summit held in Kampala on 24 October 2003, under the Chairmanship of President Museveni of Uganda, Heads of State focused their attention on ways of getting the Somali national reconciliation process back on track. President Joaquim Chissano of Mozambique (Chairman of the African Union) and Mr. Alpha Konare (Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union) participated in the Summit.

The IGAD Heads of State decided to expand the membership of the IGAD Technical Committee to include Eritrea, Sudan and Uganda, in addition to Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya, and rename it the IGAD Facilitation Committee. The Special Envoy of the African Union for Somalia was made a member of the Facilitation Committee.

On 29 January 2004, Somali leaders signed a document entitled "Declaration on the Harmonization of Various Issues Proposed by the Somali Delegates at the Somali

¹⁰ Somalia National Reconciliation Conference, The Rules of Procedure, Adopted by the plenary (Eldoret) on 26th October, 2002.

Consultative Meetings from 9-29 January 2004".¹¹ This document proposed amendments to the transitional federal charter adopted at the plenary of the Conference on 15 September 2003. The leaders decided that; the name of the charter would be the transitional federal charter of the Somali republic; the name of the government would be the transitional federal government; it would have a five year term; and the transitional federal parliament would have 275 members of whom 12 per cent would be women. The document also called for a national census to be undertaken while the new constitution was being drafted. It was to seek the approval of an internationally supervised national referendum, however, a controversy arose over the selection of members of parliament.

Agreement was reached on this issue during July 2004 after concerted efforts by IGAD Foreign Ministers. Each Somali clan (Hawiye, Darod, Digil and Mirifle, the Dir and the Allied) was asked to submit a list of 61 MPs. The Allied clan however, was asked to submit a list of 31 MPs. The parliament was formally inaugurated on 29 August 2004 by the Kenyan Vice-President.

On 10 October, the President of "Puntland," Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed, was elected President of the Somali Transitional Federal Government (TFG) with 189 votes. The runner up, Mr. Abdullahi Ahmed Addow received 79 votes. Before voting, the 25 Presidential candidates swore on the Koran and signed a declaration, pledging to support the elected president and demobilize their militia.

The IGAD Ministerial Facilitation Committee urged the international community to support the TFG with diplomatic recognition, a peacekeeping force and prompt financial support. TFG Ministers said that they intended to visit the AU, LAS, OIC, EC

¹¹ Declaration on the Harmonization of Various Issues Proposed by the Somali Delegates at the Somali Consultative Meetings, 29 January 2004.

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and UN Headquarters, accompanied by the TFG President and the Speaker of the parliament.

The driving force behind formation of the TFG was an Ethiopian-backed coalition, the Somali Restoration and Reconciliation Council (SRRC), of which Yusuf was a senior figure. Alarmed by the influence of Islamist groups over the TFG's predecessor, the Transitional National Government (TNG), Addis Ababa gave the SRRC political and military support between 2001 and 2004 in order to cripple and eventually replace the interim government¹² IGAD-led peace talks to reconcile the SRRC and TNG were launched in Kenya in October 2004 but Ethiopian influence within the Facilitation Committee steered the process in favor of the SRRC and against the hapless TNG. Individuals considered loyal to the TNG leadership were denied accreditation, often on the grounds that they were "Islamists". Members of Islamist groups were likewise prevented from participating, with the exception of the traditionalist umbrella organization, *ahlu-Suma wal-Jama'aa*, which denounced members of other groups as "terrorists". The result was a government from which core TNG supporters and Islamist groups were in effect excluded.

Many observers, including the International Crisis Group, worried that Yusuf intended to govern from a narrow, SRRC factional base rather than a government of national unity.¹³ His first year was inauspicious, almost immediately the TFG was beset by severe crises and prevented from functioning. Yusuf's choice as prime minister of All Mohamed Geedi, a veterinarian with no political experience or visible constituency

¹² "The TNG existed between 2000 and 2003. See, O. Kamudhayi, "The Somali Peace Process" in M. Mwangiri, African Regional Security in the Age of Globalization, op. cit., p. 109.

¹³ International Crisis Group Africa Report N°88, Somalia: Continuation of War by Other Means, 21 December 2004.

within his Hawiye clan, was read by many as an attempt to sideline the Hawiye. The cabinet concentrated power within a narrow circle, mainly pro-Ethiopian allies from the SRRC, at the expense of clans and movements from the failed TNG. This was immediately obvious to Somalis but lost on many outside observers, who mistook proportional clan representation, enshrined in the "4.5 formula" on which the TFG is based, with political inclusiveness. The 4.5 formula was first adopted by the Transitional National Government in 2000. It allocates an equal number of seats in parliament to each of the four major clan-families -the Darod, Hawiye, Dir, and Digil-Mirifle - and half that number to remaining minority groups.¹⁴ The use of the formula again for the TFG suggests it is likely to become a fixture in negotiations over national representation. That formula only promises proportional representation by clan-family, which is not the same as a government of national unity. Because all Somali clan-families as well as lower levels of lineage are internally divided, governments can marginalize important clans and faction by "cherry-picking" appointees to give a facade of inclusiveness. President Yusuf and Gedi opted for divide-and-rule tactics, which is unfortunate but they are using the same strategy as previous Somalia leaders.

With more than 80 cabinet posts, Yusuf and Geedi were able to invest authority in allies while marginalizing others. For example, while Mohamed Qanyare Afrah, a willful and openly anti-Ethiopian Hawiye faction leader, was named national security minister, greater authority in that sector was exercised by Hussein Aydiid, also a Hawiye but an SRRC loyalist. Similarly, key posts including minister of defense, minister of international cooperation and planning, chief political adviser, chief economic adviser,

¹⁴ O. Kamudhayi, "The Somali Peace Process" in M. Mwagiru, African Regional Security in the Age of Globalization, op. cit., p. 115.

commissioner of police and director of intelligence were assigned to members of Yusuf's Darod clan, especially his Majeerteen sub-clan.

The constituencies the TFG and its Ethiopian sponsors sought to marginalize emerged as their most potent rivals. Chief among these was the Habar Gedir Ayr sub-clan, the lineage of the previous TNG president, Abdiqasim Salad Hassan, and arguably the most commercially and militarily important sub-clan in southern Somalia. The Ayr are dominant in trade and share control of territory from south Mogadishu to Kismayo, the country's most populous and productive section. They have also produced some of the top Islamist leaders. Their token role in the TFG may have reassured Ethiopia, which had significant input into the cabinet's composition, but it guaranteed resistance in Mogadishu.¹⁵ In the first months, the Ayr did not openly reject the government, but their silence spoke volumes. Likewise, Islamist groups found common cause under the Islamic Court Banner. This signaled the current strained politics in Somalia.

2.3 GENERAL THE EFFECTS OF THE SOMALIA CONFLICT

Due to the widespread increase in fighting, as from 1988-91 of inter-clan and intra-clan, mostly due to Said Barre's strategy of using one clan to fight another, by forming clan based militias contributed to the intensity of clan disputes and deteriorated mutual trust. This further compromised the peaceful coexistence of the different clans of Somalia hence putting the national unity at stake.

As one of the major effect of this conflict, thousands of civilians were killed and others displaced. For example by March 1989 an estimated 50, 000 people in the North West had been killed by their own government. Thus, the massacre eventually promoted

¹⁵ International Crisis Group, Continuation of War by Other Means, op. cit., p. 8.

the international community to cut most development assistance to Somalia, which by then had become bankrupt. Some of the civilians mostly women and children moved to refugee camps in neighbouring countries because of insecurity. Since there was no central government, which marked the end of the Cold War, Somalia lost legitimacy leading to withdraw of foreign aid by placing political conditions on these aids.

Regional effect of the Somalia conflict depends on the interest of each individual neighbouring state. Of special importance is regional rivalry between Ethiopia on one hand and Egypt and Arab state on the other. Egypt and Arab states seek a strong central government in Somalia, one that can serve as a counter-balance to Ethiopia in the region. They have consistently rejected Somaliland's bid for independence, and instead supported the TNG.¹⁶ Ethiopia, fear the return of a strong central government, which will take up Somali irredentist claims on Ogaden region of Ethiopia or become an Arab/Islamic breach head outflanking. For this reason, Ethiopia has a vital security interest in Somalia hence it can do whatever it takes, including injecting periodically its troops into Somalia and supporting a network of Somali client group to protect those interests. From the lesson learnt from above, it can be concluded that while all states are called to make significant contribution to conflict management and prevention,¹⁷ it is evident that not all states are committed equally to this noble cause of conflict management and prevention. Therefore, the interests of states have motivated them to promote peace process or obstruct peace process.

¹⁶ K. Menkhaus, Somalia: A Situation Analysis and Trend Assessment, (UNHCR: Protection Information Section, Department of International Protection, August 2003), p.15.

¹⁷ W. I. Zartman, "Governance as conflict management in West Africa" in W. I. Zartman (ed.) Conflict Management in West Africa, (Washington DC: Brooking Institution, forthcoming.)

Since the fall of Said Barre's regime, the foreign policy of the various entities in Somalia centered on gaining international recognition, winning international support for national reconciliation, and obtaining international economic assistance.¹⁸ Despite the fact that the Cold War rivalry sponsored the dynamics of the Somalia conflict, the UN has endeavoured tirelessly to see peace return to Somalia. The UN by injecting the international resources, through the UN Security Council endorsed Resolution (794) in 1992. The UN authorized an offer of US president George Bush (Senior) to deploy 30,000 US troops to Somalia. The unified Task Force (UNITAF) troops aimed at creation of a secure environment for the delivery of humanitarian relief throughout Somalia. The US marines landed in Mogadishu on 9th December 1992. The UNITAF operation quickly ended the humanitarian crisis and froze factional fighting, but did not wish to risk casualties in a disarmament mission against the factions. This gave the warlords a measure of legitimacy, thus leaving a legacy of problems unresolved.¹⁹

The EU also plays an international role of being the major Western donor and plays a diplomatic role as well as humanitarian role inside Somalia. By doing this, it adopted an alternative approach of track two diplomacy in an attempt to achieve national reconciliation in Somalia, after the withdrawal of UNOSOM II from Somalia in 1995. The EU committed to see peace return to Somalia employed unofficial diplomacy. Right after the UN withdrew its forces from Somalia, the EU adopted three guiding principles for the Somalia conflict: strict neutrality with respect to the fighting factions; non recognition of any government that is not broadly representative, no direct mediation role

¹⁸ I. Q. Farah, Dual Diplomatic Approaches in Conflict Management: The International-Peace Initiative in Somalia 1991-1999, op. cit. p. 56.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 77.

but rather encouragement and support for initiatives by the UN and the OAU.²⁰ By doing this, the EU wanted to sustain development and this goal could be achieved through democratisation, decentralization, and the integration of civil society and respect for human rights. It requested a team of experts from the London School of Economics to provide information about the implication of the different ways of decentralizing political authority. The team came up with a report entitled "A study of Decentralized Political Structures for Somalia: A menu of Options". To effect London School of economic report, the EU decided to sponsor a number of seminars to further disseminate the ideas elaborated in the report.

The clan solidarity is the basis of social organization in the Somali community. Clan loyalty has been used by warlords to mobilise support for the war. Although the Somalia conflict is clan based, the clan system is not a cause of the Somali civil war. The causes lie in a complex set of issues relating to distribution of resources and power, Somali's economic marginalization in the world economy, long-term corruption and exploitation, oppression and uneven development, and a web of interaction among diverse actor with divergent but competing interests. Somalia's civil war of 1978-91 has commonly been analyzed as a conflict between competing clan-based groups, identity-based conflicts are not unique to Somalia but the interaction web of diverse actors has continued to obstruct peace in Somalia.

²⁰ K. Hippel and Yannis, "The European Response to State Collapse in Somalia" in K.E. Jorgensen (ed.), *Somalia* (Copenhagen: Kluwer Law International, 1997), pp. 65.

CHAPTER THREE

THE SOCIO-POLITICAL EFFECT OF SOMALIA CONFLICT ON SOMALI WOMEN

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Conflicts affect human beings adversely. Although conflicts affect all human beings, they do not affect them equally. Some people are affected more than the other depending on their vulnerability. While conflicts affect people differently, it is noticeable that conflicts are not necessarily bad. While conflicts are perceived to negatively affect human beings, some conflict can have positive effects to the human society.

The Somalia conflict has been one of the protracted conflicts in the Horn of Africa with regional implications. The previous chapter presents the historical background of the Somalia conflict and dynamics of the conflict. Conflict has positive and negative consequences to human beings and their social relationships. Since the Somalia culture is highly ungendered, the long conflict which had significant consequences to the Somali people had deep consequences to the Somali women. This section of the study presents the socio-political effect of the Somalia conflict on the Somali women.

3.2 GENDER AND CONFLICT

Gender is a state of being male or female, which is physically distinguished by sex or reproductive differences.¹ Gender in recent times has acquired a social and political meaning of relationship between male and female. Both classical and behaviorist theorists of conflicts neglected the gender dimension of conflicts. Thus, excluding an

¹ Patricia K. Mbote. "Gender, Conflict and Regional Security" in M. Mwagiru, *African Regional Security in the Age of Globalization*. (Nairobi: Heinrich Boll Stiftung, 2004), pp. 83-94.

important paradigm in the analysis of causes and impact of conflicts and the mechanisms used to manage conflicts. While Mbote considers gender to embrace reproductive differences between male and women as well as the role of men and women play in the society², the Stanford Encyclopedia of philosophy makes a difference between sex and gender. Sex is the reproductive difference while gender is what the society makes of the sexual differences of men and women.³ Mbote concurs with the encyclopedia on sexual differences and roles taken. However, Mbote's way of approach is inclusive and does not distinguish between sex and gender. Gender expresses both sex and the sex roles. Gender roles contribute to the defining of relationships between sexes, understanding, the use and sharing of power between men and women. Gender roles have found themselves institutionalized at different levels of cultural, social and political relationship. The institutionalization of gender roles in different spheres of life has diverse effects on the different genders.

Men and women take different role in conflict processes.⁴ Women may be involved in conflict either by being forced or voluntarily. Women are more concerned with their survival together with their families. Although women may be involved in conflict, based on the gender biases, they are mostly excluded from decision-making process and take subordinate roles in conflict and peace processes. While women are excluded from top decision making processes, they play a significant role in the community. Their efforts are to secure the well-being of not only women but also all people. Women are concerned with building a peaceful society, despite this concern, the

² Ibid., pp. 83-94.

³ Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, (2003) "Feminist Epistemology and Philosophy of Science" p. 3. found in <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/feminism-epistemology/>

⁴ Amina E. Badri and I.I. Abdel Sadig, Sudan Between Peace and War: Internally Displaced Women in Kordofan and South and West Kordofan. (Nairobi: UNIFEM, 1998), pp. 42-47.

society has marginalized them from effectively addressing peace issues and concerns according to the values they hold most dear.⁵

The male gender dominates in initiating conflicts and protracting conflict, while the female gender on the other hand take an active role in seeking peace.⁶ Byrne recognizes that the role gender play in conflict can lead to more conflicts if the society is male dominated. Men have excluded women in almost all spheres of life⁷. This imply that, if the patriarchal society can mainstream gender, then women participation is likely to lead to peace. As Burke and her colleagues contend that women maintain a community bond across political divide because their vision grows out of the disastrous experience they undergo during the conflicts. Therefore, women desire peace and more than conflict. This can be achieved by positive discrimination in institutions to achieve gender balance, addressing the extent to which men and women can hold full range of social and political positions in governance and development.⁸

While men and women experience conflict differently, most analyses of conflicts are largely ungendered. Most analyses of conflicts are largely ungendered and fail to recognize the ways in which international and national structures of power and patterns or resources allocation are based in gender inequalities. Mwangi recognizes the negative effect of having structures of relationship that do not take into account gender concerns, values and interests. Women are the most marginalized in the conflicts yet they account

⁵ E.S Burke, J. Klot and I. Bunting, Engendering Peace: Reflections on the Burundi Peace Process, Nairobi: UNIFEM, 2001), pp. 25-27.

⁶ B. Byrne, Towards Engendering Peace, (IDS Bulletin, 1996), p.30

⁷ E.S Burke, J. Klot and I. Bunting, Engendering Peace: Reflections on the Burundi Peace Process. Op. cit., pp 25-27.

⁸ Patricia K. Mbote, "Gender, Conflict and Regional Security: in M. Mwangi, African Regional Security in the Age of Globalization, op. cit., p. 89

for the majority of its victims.⁹ This makes them even more vulnerable during conflict and conflict processes.

Attacks on women in Algeria, Rwanda, Bosnia, and Afghanistan pointed to a new trend toward women as military targets.¹⁰ Systematic rape was used as a terror tactics in Bosnia, Rwanda and Japanese army in World War II where it operated an international network of sex slaves known as “comfort women”. Rape has long been treated as a normal of regrettable by-product of war. Rape and other forms of ill treatment to women have been employed as tools of military strategy.¹¹ Rape and deliberate impregnating of thousands of women, mostly Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina, was a form of ethnic cleansing conducted by Serb nationalists. Many documents report the assault of women by internal security forces in Peru, Colombia and other countries that have anti-government insurgencies. During World War II, the Japanese army sexually assaulted young women from Korea, Philippines and other places in Asia, some of them were as young as 16 or even younger when they were sexually assaulted at the wars fronts. In July 1992, the Japanese government admitted finally that tens of thousands of women were sent to military bases to provide sex for the solders but no commitments were made for redress or retribution by the Japanese government. During the Rwandan genocide of 1994, women were specifically targeted by the genocidaires. They were raped, tortured, mutilated and killed, “ultimately their elimination was central to the genocide plan”.¹²

Understanding the effects of gender dimension of conflict on gender relation and gender roles of women and men is the best way to ensure that polices and programs

⁹ E.S Burke, J. Klot and I. Bunting, *Engendering Peace: Reflections on the Burundi Process*, OP. cit, p. 23.

¹⁰ J. Goldstein, *International Relations*, (London: Longman Publication, 2003) p. 136

¹¹ H. Jeong, *Peace and Conflict: An Introduction*, (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Lintied, 2000), pp. 75-

¹² OAU, *Rwanda: The Preventable Genocide*, (Addis Ababa: OAU, 2000), pp.159-170.

designed to implement peace will guarantee the protection, rehabilitation and the healing of the whole society.¹³ Peace processes are evolving quickly, there is need to put in place parliamentary, government and local administrative institutions that will help place women in decision-making positions, otherwise women will be left behind,. Gender equity and equality is essential in building of sustainable peace.

Recognizing the devastating effects that conflict have inflicted in the Horn of Africa region, it is necessary women participate more in preventing, managing and resolving conflict.¹⁴ Proportional representation brings more women into public office. However, in peace processes like that of Burundi and Somalia, women who make the majority of the population of such countries are minimally represented¹⁵. Sabimbona having participated in the Burundi peace talks is optimistic when she concludes “Our voices may not have been heard during the negotiations, but we managed to make our presence felt”¹⁶. Although Sabimbona seems to be optimistic on gender issues in the Burundi peace process, a critical outlook demonstrates that apart from not proportionally represented, their voices (to which the concerns, interests and values of women) were insignificantly presented.

Women have capacity to make peace agreements and post-conflict efforts more viable, effective and practical.¹⁷ Although the efforts of women have great potential, women are seriously constrained. Women peace activists often expose themselves to

¹³ E.S Burke, J. Klot and I. Bunting, Engendering Peace: Reflections on the Burundi Peace Process, op. cit. p. 24.

¹⁴ Sumaia Abukashwa, “Integrating Gender Awareness and the Participation of Women in IGAD Issues on Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution” in Houten and Z. Beyene (eds), Placing Gender in the Mainstream, (Djibouti: IGAD, 2002), pp 9-11

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 31

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 37

¹⁷ ICC, Beyond Victimhood: Women’s Peacebuilding in Sudan, Congo and Uganda, Africa Report No. 112 of 28 June 2006.

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¹⁶ Ibid., p. 37

¹⁷ ICG, Beyond Victimhood: Women's Peacebuilding in Sudan, Congo and Uganda, Africa Report No, 112 of 28 June 2006.

personal risks in their daily work to make their communities safer. Often they receive fewer resources to support their efforts, their experience, and their advice on peace building are ignored or downplayed by policy makers. Those women who make to the top decision-making organs often are suppressed. Therefore, the structure of conflict in the society is biased against women. The society excludes, down plays and trivialize the female gender. Gender also aggravates the social and political suffering of women during armed conflict.

The UN Security Council made a resolution dealing with women peace and security. The Resolution sought to make a policy framework that includes women in wide range of issues related to peace and security.¹⁸ However, there is limited progress in countries where leadership remains hostile to a greater role for women in peace and conflict management.

The vast majority of armed conflicts occurring within state borders have a devastating effect on the civilian population. Women are targets of armed conflict precisely because they are women¹⁹. They are raped in order to humiliate, frightened and defeat an enemy group to which they belong. Displacement is most common consequence of armed conflict and women are the most affected civilian population. It is estimated that women and children comprise 70-80 percentages of the world refugees and internally displacement population.

3.3 THE GENDER DIMENSION OF THE SOMALI CULTURE

¹⁸ UN Security Resolution 1325 of 31 October, 2000

¹⁹ H. Cindy, Transitional Nomads. How Somali's copes with refugees' life in Daddab Camp of Kenya. (PhD Thesis 2000).

The Somali culture is highly dominated by men and greater symbolic value is placed on a male than a female child.²⁰ This is demonstrated during birth where the birth of a boy is characterised by the slaughter of two animals while the birth of a girl is characterised by a slaughter of one animal. The value attached to male and female life is asymmetrically tilted in favour of male.

Living in a highly patriarchal society the female gender is assigned roles that are inferior to those of men. Men dominate in important issues of the community like social, religion and politics while women's roles and influence are confined to the home.²¹ As the status of men increases with age, the woman's role diminishes with the end of child bearing. Since women are more pre-occupied with household chore with limited time left for them to engage in public life, they have not actively taken part in education. Poor education of women has made them remain behind in taking senior positions and taking active role in Somalia despite attempts to emancipate them.²² Poor education to the Somali men has contributed significantly to their inclination to the fulfilment of traditionally ascribed roles and expectation by the community, which places men superior to women.²³

In Somalia culture, men are traditionally perceived as providers for their families. Somalia women do not own animals despite animals being perceived as a sign of wealth. Women only took control of the sale of animal products. Although women economically contributed to their families, their role was confined to the family and their hard work contributed to the status of their husbands.

²⁰ J. Gardener, Somalia: The Untold Story, (London, Pluto Press 2004), pp. 9-11.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 18.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

Traditionally, in Somalia pastoral society feuding and conflict were bounded by codes and social conventions. Along with the elderly and sick, women and children were immune from attack. That is not to say that women were never targeted but if they were harmed there were rules about retribution and compensations. In the inter-clan warfare from 1991 onwards, these traditional laws have played little part, and warring factions with impunity attacked women as well as children and non-fighters.

3.4 THE SOCIO-POLITICAL EFFECTS OF THE SOMALIA CONFLICT ON SOMALI WOMEN

The fighters of different clan-based opposition militia groups invaded the capital city, Mogadishu and other towns in Somalia causing widespread rape of women, mass execution, destruction of water supplies and homes led to massive displacement of people into Kenya, Djibouti and Yemen.²⁴ Atrocities carried out by individuals and militia groups against women and girls in Somalia between 1991 and 2000 were unprecedented in the Somalia history. Traditionally, in Somalia pastoral society feuding and conflict were bounded by codes of conduct and social conventions. Along with the elderly and sick, women and children were immune from attack. This does not mean that women were never targeted, but if they were harmed there were rules about retribution and compensations. In the inter-clan warfare from 1991 onwards, these traditional laws have played little part, and warring factions with impunity attacked women as well as children and non-fighters.

²⁴ J.V. Beurden, "In a State of Permanent Conflict" in M. Mekenkamp et al (eds), Searching for Peace in Africa: An Overview of Conflict Prevention and Management Activities, (Utrecht: European Platform for Conflict Prevention and Transformation, 1999), pp. 156-166.

Among the worst atrocities were the 'rape camps' particularly in Mogadishu in the early 1990s. Militiamen abducted many women, imprisoned them in villas where they were subjected to or repeatedly raped and other forms of sexual violence. Many of these women and their families were among the thousands of Somalia who fled the country, some on boat for Yemen, and Kenya and some overland to the Kenyan border. Women and children made up about 80 percent of the estimate 300,000 who had sought refuge in Kenya by October 1993 alone.

Gardener²⁵ highlights that, the world is ignorant of the wartime rape of thousands of Somalia women and girls between 1991 and 1994, which a decade later was still going on in some parts of the country. All women and girls were vulnerable, rapists tended to target female members of opposing faction and those with weak clan affiliation and there little clan protection. Many Somalia women fled to Kenya and other countries to escape the Somalia civil war, but soon many found themselves facing sexual violence. In words of one refugee quoted in the Nightmare continues (African Rights) September 1993, "we ran away from the lion, but we have only found a hyena". Hundreds of rapes and attempted rapes occur almost on daily basis in the Kenyan refugee camps. Just over 100 incidents had occurred after refugees had crossed into Kenya in 1991, in August 1993 alone, 42 Rape cases were reported. All these occurred in camps in the North Eastern Province, in Dadaab area. The majority of attacks in Kenya were attributed to armed Somalia speaking bandits or shiftas, who would have included both Somalia nationals and Kenyan Somalis.

²⁵ J. Gardener, Somalia. The Untold Story, op. cit. p. 71.

The attackers of the Somali refugee women in the North Eastern Kenya were usually people they knew, those attackers were well armed and they attacked in groups.²⁶ Some women were forced to submit when militia threatened to destroy their homes with their children locked inside. Some were raped inside their homes in front of their husband who were at gunpoint forced to watch. Many victims were raped in front of their children and relatives. Sixteen rape survivors whose cases were documented by the UNHCR reported that they had been raped over the bodies of their dead husbands, children, siblings or other relatives. Gang rapes of as many men as ten were carried out by attackers who mostly were armed with rifles, grenades, daggers, bayonets, clubs, and warring sticks. Attackers use physical force against their victims including hitting with rifle butts on the upper body and the legs, unrelenting fist blows to the head, striking the women violently when they were on the ground; using razor blades, daggers or bayonets to remove 'external virginity' or infibulations of women and girls who had never had sexual relations, often inflicting severe injuries.

In traditional Somalia, as most African cultures, society defines a "good" woman as one under the protection of a male, that is, a father, brother or husband²⁷. However, the conflict in Somalia has killed many men. Women have remained without fathers, brothers and husbands making them a target and some fled Somalia to refugee camps in different countries. Therefore, women have been exposed to various threatening and violent experiences beyond their capacity to cope. The social and economic responsibilities for the Somalia women increased during the civil war. These violent experiences especially

²⁶ Lowzia Musee, War Through the Ice of Somali a Women, (London: Oxford University Press 1993), pp 73-74.

²⁷ H.S. Mohamed, "The Somalia Reggae Women's Experience In Kenyan Refugee Camps And Their Plight In Canada" in H. M. Adam and R. Ford, Mending Rips In The Sky: Option For Somali Communities In The 21st Century, (Asmara: The Red Sea Press, 1997), pp.431-440

since 1991 have had no cultural mechanisms within the Somali culture to assist women to deal with them. The traditional legal system was undermined and Somalia armed itself. During the conflict, the Somali women had no recourse to laws or legal system to protect them.

The Somalis are Muslims and rape was rare in Somali before the civil war. Within the Muslim religion, rape is ethically and morally unacceptable.²⁸ Women who are raped are ashamed to report the case, within the Somalia culture women who are raped are blamed for the rape; some of such women have been abandoned by their husbands and families. They also become marginalized within the Somali community.²⁹ It is not only within Somali that women suffer such consequences, those that have fled Somalia to other countries also continue to suffer social and political challenges³⁰. Some of the violence against women that exists in war torn Somalia like rape continues in the refugee camps. Such women remain traumatized and despair from living³¹. Such trauma has extended to the family members who have been forced to witness the violation of their loved ones³². During the Somalia civil war, Somalia women have become war casualties where violence against them has become a means of or weapon to armed conflict. Therefore, violence against women during the Somalia civil war was a means to humiliate and destroy women and men of certain clans. The consequences of the Somalia civil war is that social responsibilities for women have increased while socially they are isolated and marginalized, and their political capacities undermined.

²⁸ H. S. Mohamed, "The Somali Refugee Women's Experiences in Kenyan Refugee Camps and their Plight in Canada" in H. M. Adam and R. Ford, Mending Rips in the Sky: Options for Somali Communities in the 21st Century, op. cit. p. 434.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 434.

³⁰ Report of the Secretary General on the Situation in Somalia S/2003/636.

³¹ UNHCR, "Sexually Assaulted refugee women" Information Bulletin, October 1993.

³² Musee, "Women Victims of Violence" Report of UNHCR, Nairobi, 1993, p.2

Although women have become targeted victims in armed conflicts and their plight increased in Somalia and elsewhere, the Somali women have attempted to tackle their plight. Since the 1991, Somali women have attempted to see their plight get included and attended to during the decision process³³. Some of the success that women have made is the gender mainstreaming in the peace process. While the conflict was on in Somalia women lobbied and were represented as a sixth clan in the Arta conference³⁴. Getting support from IGAD Women Desk and UNIFEM women have actively engaged in the IGAD peace process and other civil society. In other words, during the Somalia conflict especially since 1991, women have been mainstreamed and they have become in the fore front to address cultural and artificial plight.

This gave an inclusive chance to women to be represented and participate in the peace process. The representation and participation of women in the Somalia peace process has been referred to be the 'sixth' clan in the peace process. However, this 'sixth' clan in the Somalia peace talks cut a cross all the other five clans of Somalia represented in the peace process. This is because women values, interests and concerns in the conflict and peace talks cut a cross the five Somalia clans in the peace process. Women unite on gender issues on which they agree irrespective of their party affiliation to ensure their issues are taken into account.³⁵

³³ IGAD Women Desk, Heading Women's Voices: the story of Somali Women's Role in the Peace Process, (Djibouti: IGAD, 2005), pp. 1621.

³⁴ E. Brusset and E. Visman, Preventing Violent Conflicts and the Coherence of EU Policies Towards the Horn of Africa Countries. Saveworld, February 1998.

³⁵ E. S. Burke, J. Klot and I. Bunting, Engendering Peace: Reflections on the Burundi Peace Process. (Nairobi: UNIFEM, 2001), p. 28.

The Arta conference was crucial for Somalia women and their contribution in the peace process.³⁶ It was the first time their voices were heard as official delegates. It is through this representation that women found it easy to find acceptability in the peace talks in Kenya.³⁷ However, women faced many constraints in the IGAD Peace Process on Somalia in Kenya. Elmi³⁸ underscores the importance of an inclusive peace process that recognises women as the key stakeholder. She recognises that the effort of women through lobbying ensured that they were allocated a certain quota for participation in the Somalia National Reconciliation Conference (SNRC). This gave them an upper hand to address their issues, concerns and interests in a collective strong voice. Although the women representation in the SNRC was referred to as 'sixth clan' their neutrality and participation made a significant contribution to success. This was a response to develop a political structure that is inclusive.³⁹

The IGAD's gender policy, which saw the establishment of IGAD's Women's Desk (IWD) in 1999, is one of the serious steps to mainstream gender in policy making process. The IGAD's gender policy has been demonstrated by the inclusion of women in the Somalia Peace Process. Although the women were included in the peace talks, their role and participation in the peace talks can reveal the effect of their representation and participation in the peace process.

This effort of gender mainstreaming within IGAD has demonstrated itself in the IGAD Peace Process on Somalia. Engendering peace in IGAD saw an increase in number of the women participant in the Somalia Peace Process, which took place in Kenya from 2002-2004. The result was incorporation of forty women spread in the

³⁶ IGAD Women Desk, Heading Women's Voices: The Story of Somali Women's Historic Role in the Peace Process, op. cit. pp. 16-21.

³⁷ A. Hagi Elmi, "Somalia" in H. Houten and Z. Beyene (eds), Placing Gender in the Mainstream (Djibouti: IGAD, 2002), p. 15.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

³⁹ E. Brusset and E. Visman, Preventing Violent Conflicts and the Coherence of EU Policies Towards the Horn of Africa Countries, op. cit. February 1998.

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six committees that were formed at the beginning of the Somalia peace talks to discuss issues of conflict resolution. These committees were: Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation; Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration; Economic Recovery, Institutional Building and Resource Mobilization; Federalism and the Provisional Charter; International Relation and Regional Cooperation; Land and Property Rights.

Women representation and participation in the six committees of the IGAD Peace Processes on Somalia was an important step in mainstreaming gender in peace processes.

Women of Somalia made a significant contribution in the peace talks. Though women were represented and participated in the IGAD Peace Process on Somalia with an aim of mainstreaming gender in peace, they were downplayed, not given an emphasis they had hoped and also they encountered internal challenges. This downplayed and challenged women's representation and participation in the male dominated peace process to realize their concerns, interests and values, and to take a significant role in conflict and peace management.

Although Somali women were represented in the IGAD's peace talks in Kenya, Amnesty International⁴⁰ reports that women continued to face violence like female genital mutilation, rape and exclusion as outcast. The report also points out that UN reported that there were severe disadvantages affecting women's access to justice.

The Somalia conflict reviewed reveals two significant things, there are, conflict can be destructive and it can also be beneficial. The presentation above reveals these two aspects of conflict on the Somalia women during the conflict. The Somalia conflict since 1991 has been both destructive and beneficial to the Somalia women. It is destructive in that, the plight of Somali women especially from their husbands and cultural legal framework, taking care of children and increased roles as head of families, finding

⁴⁰ Amnesty International Report, 2004, pp. 76-77.

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themselves as refugees in other countries and being considered as outcasts after incidences of rape and violence aggravated the suffering and marginalization of Somali women from social and political life. On the other hand, Somali women have become active actors in the search for peace, social and political processes in Somalia. They have been recognized as significant actors in the social and political life within Somalia. The Somalia culture suppresses women by assigning them a subordinate role in the community; however, the conflict and the search for peace gave them an opportunity to stand out for their values, interests and against their plight. The Somalia civil war has acted as a double edged sword for the Somali women, that is contributing both negatively and positively in their social and political life and situation in this situation.

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CHAPTER FOUR

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS ON THE SOCIO-POLITICAL EFFECT OF THE SOMALIA CONFLICT ON THE SOMALI WOMEN

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This study set out to investigate the socio-political effect of the Somalia conflict on Somali women. It examines the contribution of the Somalia conflict in the socio-political plight of Somali women. This study also investigates the role of the Somalia conflict as a catalyst to the socio-political emancipation of the Somali women.

The Somalia conflict dates back to pre-independence, however, since 1992 it has undergone significant dynamics. The unfolding dynamics of 1992 onwards have aggravated human suffering especially that of women and children. The conflict has been centered on resource distribution and politics of marginalisation. The engagement of the international community to address the conflict resulted to a tragic ending in 1992 resulting to a new era of protracted conflict and anarchy in the country. The conflict underwent multiple management processes leading to the peace agreement and searing in of a government.¹

Conflicts have significant impact along gender lines. The Somalia culture is male dominated in social, political and economic affairs. This culture had a lot of consequences during the long conflict in Somalia. Women suffered a great deal during the protracted conflict, at the same time, a number of issues that were biased against the Somalia women got a platform where they could be addressed leading gender emancipation.² This chapter critically analyses the social and political effect of the

¹ See Chapter Two.

² See Chapter Three.

Somalia conflict on the Somali women. Therefore, this section critically analyses the positive and negative social and political effect of the Somalia conflict on the Somali women.

4.2 A CRITICAL ANALYSIS ON THE SOCIO-POLITICAL EFFECT OF THE SOMALIA CONFLICT ON THE SOMALI WOMEN

Conflict is endemic in the human society and it can not be annihilated without first annihilating the human society. As long as there will be people living in a society conflict will continue to be because different people have different perception about different realities. Different perceptions of the people or groups of people together with their interests that they want to protect and promote will always lead to conflict in the society.³

When conflicts occur all human beings in that particular society get affected in one way or another. Despite all people getting affected by conflict, some groups and individuals get affected differently. Different groups of people also engage or take different roles in the conflict process, which in turn affects their relationship with other groups in the society. At the same time, the engagement groups take in the conflict and peace process has an effect onto them.⁴ One of such group in the society is women and girls.

The Somalia conflict stems from colonial legacy. However, the conflict has gone through different dynamics since independence.⁵ Poor and bad governance in the post-

3. L. K. Magero, "Obstacles to Peace in Africa: Actors, Interests and Strategies" (Conference Paper to the Catholic University of Eastern Africa - Nairobi, Philosophy of War and Peace, November, 2007).

4. See Chapter Two and Three.

5. See Chapter Two.

independent Somalia, minimal and unevenly distributed resources in the country made different clans to struggle against one another to take political power as a means of acquiring or accessing the limited resources. The politics in post-independence Somalia was power based and power seeking as Mogethathau could argue.⁶ Once the clan secures political power, it is more likely to benefit in acquiring or accessing more resources leading to bad distribution of resources. Bad governance of the country especially during Barre's regime aggravated clan cleavages within Somalia. Although some clans got united against Barre's regime, they soon became enemies to each other once their common enemy (Barre's regime) was defeated. The external influence particularly the Cold War divide and regional actors like neighboring states had a significant impact in fueling the conflict. Other actors like arm merchants and traffickers complicated the conflict. Although the immediate parties were deeply involved in the conflict, other actors external to Somalia were involved making a pattern of interaction based on interests that they sought to protect and promote.⁷ Therefore the conflict in Somalia became dysfunctional and protracted with devastating effects in social and political spheres.

Barre's regime was operating in an ordered chaos.⁸ His downfall in 1991 exploded the ordered chaos and conflict became worse. Somalia became fragmented breaking the Act of Union of 1960.⁹ The international community's attempt to broker peace did not deliver substantially. With the 1992 terror on the UN forces in Mogadshu

H. Mongenthau, Politic Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace, (New York: Alfred Aknopf, 1973), pp. 3-12.

P. L. K. Magero, "Obstacles to Peace in Africa: Actors, Interests and Strategies" op. cit.

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⁷ P. I. K. Magero, "Obstacles to Peace in Africa: Actors, Interests and Strategies" op. cit.

⁸ See Chapter Two.

⁹ See Chapter Two.

scared the international community in engagement.¹⁰ It is until the year 2000 that attempts to manage the conflict showed signs of minimal yields with the formation of the Transitional National government (TNG) and subsequent peace processes.

The leadership of marginalization and exclusion lead to clan animosities and polarization, which was later to set Somalia in a state of conflict and anarchy. In the state of conflict and anarchy, there were different people who benefited from that state of the country. Many of the actors, such as the internal clan factions and militia men, arms traffickers and arms dealers, neighboring countries and other international actors based on their interest in the conflict contributed in different ways to obstruct the peace in Somalia. The multiplicity of actors in the Somalia conflict made the conflict to be protracted and complicated to manage.¹¹

It is important to note that, the Somali people suffered gravely the consequences of the protracted conflict. Many people were killed, wounded, displaced and refugees, raped, ostracized, environment depredated and the human dignity was lowered. Despite the negative effects of the dysfunctional conflict in Somalia, the conflict served to demonstrate the negative effects of gender asymmetrical relationship in the community.

The conflict in Somalia affected all people; men, women and children. All these effects had significant resonance to the Somali women. Although men suffered during the conflict, women suffered the more both socially and politically. Despite the suffering incurred by the women during the conflict there are some achievements to Somali women that were attained from the protracted conflict. The positive and negative effects of the

¹⁰ S. A. Omondi, *The Role of the Civil Society in Conflict Management: A case Study of the Catholic Church in the 1994 Rwanda Genocide*, (MA Dissertation Presented to the Institute of Diplomacy and International Studies-University of Nairobi, 2004), pp. 1-2.

¹¹ P. L. K. Magero, "Obstacles to Peace in Africa: Actors, Interests and Strategies" op. cit.

Somalia conflict to the Somali women represents Mwagiru's position that, conflict can be positive or negative to the society.¹² The conflict ruined much that is valued in human society and Somalia in particular. The conflict on the other hand helped the people both within Somalia and outside Somalia to understand the existing structure of relationship. For this case, it tried to expose the structure of relationship that existed in Somalia and how biased it was against women.¹³ The structure of relationship was not giving the Somali women sufficient capacity to unleash the potential and actualize themselves. The consequence was to try to make the relationship better and emancipate women both socially and politically.

Culture is central in peoples' life. It informs the relationships that exist in the society, the roles individuals take in the society and the way people cope with challenges of life.¹⁴ Since Somali culture together with Muslim religion is patriarchal in relationship within the clan and Somalia in general. Therefore each Somali belong to one of the clans based on the male lineage.¹⁵ The Somali women take a subordinate role in the social and political spheres in the Somali society. The Somalia conflict particularly since 1991 distorted the cultural living of the Somali people. Although the culture gave rise to asymmetrical gender relationship in Somalia, the few safety valves that protected the vulnerable groups in the society among them women was dismantled.¹⁶ The Somalia women became outright victims of war and targets of warfare. In this case, women were

¹² M. Mwagiru, Conflict: Theory, Processes and Institutions of Management, (Nairobi: Watermark, 2000), p. 6

¹³ See J. Galtung, "Violence, Peace and Peace Research" Journal of Peace Research, Vol. 3, (1969), pp. 167-191. See also J. Galtung, "Cultural Violence" Journal of Peace Research, Vol. 27 (1991) pp. 291-305.

¹⁴ M. Kirwen, African Cultural Knowledge: Themes and Embedded Beliefs, (Nairobi: Maryknoll Institute of African Studies, 2005).

¹⁵ C. C. Ahmed, Finely Etched Chattel: The Invention of a Somali Woman, (Trenton NJ: Red Sea Press, 1995).

¹⁶ See Chapter Two.

attacked, killed, raped, and wounded during the long conflict in Somalia. The rationale of attacking women was to win the war either by controlling future multiplication of clan members who in turn will fight for their clan, to humiliate and defeat the opponent clan. On the other hand, based on the patriarchal society in Somalia, the rapes were meant to deliberately impregnate women of the opponent clan to produce children who belonged to the rapists' clan therefore distorting the structure of the opponent clan and weaken its capability to engage in future wars.

Socially women were humiliated by rape, raped women were separated ostracized from the community. The family members felt disgraced by their mother, sister or wife who had been raped. This is rooted in the traditional Somali cultural knowledge that a raped woman especially unmarried one is social death.¹⁷ The family members feel ashamed to identify themselves with the raped woman. The conflict also distorted the family structure in Somali. It is the responsibility of the male in the family and clan to protect the honor and status of a woman who belongs in the family. However, the families were disorganized by the conflict making it hard for men to fulfill this responsibility of protecting women. Therefore, the male members of the family and clan took limited role to protect women during the conflict from rape by either being absent or lack of mechanism to punish the offenders and seek redress for women violation. In Somalia, the man who has been raped is blamed for the act. This does not take due account that the woman was violated, this attitude made women suffer both physically and psychologically. The aspect that the family disowns or ostracizes such women¹⁸ aggravates women victims' suffering. Rape was not only within Somalia, it extended to

Gardener, *Somalia: The Untold Story*. (London, Pluto Press 2004).

■ Chapter Three.

refugee camps outside Somalia like Kenya where women had sought protection.¹⁹ The Somali culture's response to rape as a mistake of women does not recognize that rape is a problem of the whole community. It is not only women who got traumatized out of women victimhood in conflict. Women were raped in front of their relatives including children and husbands as a sign of humiliation and defeating. In such a situation, men also suffered psychologically having been forced to witness their relative being raped and targeted during the war.

One effect of the protracted war in Somalia is that women increasingly replaced men as breadwinners of the family.²⁰ This change of gender roles in the community has been the result of the devastating effect of the protracted conflict in Somalia. Men were engaged in the conflict with minimal or no time to work and generate income to provide for their family. Some men were wounded or killed during the war. This meant that where the husband was killed in the battlefield the wife had to take full responsibility of the family and where the husband and sons were wounded during the conflict the wife had to take care of them both medically and materially. The protracted conflict made men (husbands and sons) take a subordinate role in the community exposing women to challenges beyond their capacity to cope with.

As the women were getting overburdened by social and economic responsibilities of the family as a result of men engaging in the war hence taking limited role in the family responsibilities, women became exposed to many dangers. Despite the increasing responsibility to take care of homes, the attackers stole their meager belongings. Therefore, women remained with nothing in their hands to take care of the family and the

¹⁹ Fowzia Musee, War Through the Ice of Somalia Women, (London: Oxford University Press 1993), pp. 73-74.

²⁰ J. Gardener, Somalia: The Untold Story. op. cit., p. 10.

children. Children too were wounded, weak and some had their legs amputated as a result of landmines. This made the Somali women care givers of ailing children on top of husbands and sons wounded in the battlefield. Such engagement which is as a result of the long protracted civil war in Somalia occupied a significant time of the women destructing them from participating in social and political affairs of their communities and clans including those responsibilities of the country.

Suffering the consequences of the conflict in Somalia, the Somali women took an option of running away from the conflict to safe havens. More particularly they moved to Kenya, Yemen, Canada and Germany. While the Somali women were seeking safety, they soon discovered that safety was no where. In the new environment, Somali women got exposed to similar experience as that in Somalia like stealing, killed, attacked and rape or new challenges associated with their new living environment and culture.²¹ Socially and politically the Somali women who found themselves as refugees felt isolated and the new challenges they met as refugees always reminded them of the suffering they had encountered in Somalia.

As noted earlier, the traditional and cultural setting that could protect women from violence and target of warfare²² became distorted and to be more direct it collapsed especially with the 1991 civil war. The legal system in Somalia where women could seek redress and protection was non-existence because the country had sunk into anarchy. Women did not have recourse to law or legal system to protect them. This was not only

²¹ H. S. Mohamed, "The Somalia Refugee Women's Experience in Kenyan Refugee Camps and their Plight in Canada" See also, L. Affi, "The Somali Crisis in Canada: The Single Mother Phenomena" See also, H.A. Utteh, "The Plight of Somali Refugees in Europe, with Particular Reference to Germany (1993)" in H. M. Adam and R. Ford, Mending Rips in the Sky: Option for Somali Communities in the 21st Century, (Asmara: The Red Sea Press, Inc., 1997),

²² A. Adan, "Women and Words" Ufahamu. Vol. 10, No. 3, (1981), p. 135.

the case within Somalia, the Somali women living in Kenya as refugees also face almost the same challenge. Although there is law and order in Kenya and Somali women could seek protection and redress, the Somali women feared reporting the ill treatments to the police who were in some cases perpetrators "the (Kenyan) Police can rape, torture and kill refugees, safe in the knowledge that they will never be called to account."²³ The collapse of the Somali traditional legal system and the Somalia government together with non enforcement of the law in the countries of refugee aggravated the suffering of Somali women.

The political position of Somali women in Somalia is basically confined to the home. This means that, the position of women in Somalia based of the patriarchal setting take a limited role in the social and political arena.²⁴ The long conflict in Somalia affected women seriously in taking any significant role in the political arena. This calls for re-evaluation of the structure of gender relationship in the society. In this case, the Somalia women were not effectively integrated in the social and political dimensions of the Somalia society. This requires that the plight of women as a result of insubordination be revealed instead of masking them to ensure that their concerns, interests and values are taken care of.²⁵ This approach will ameliorate the suffering of the Somali women that results from patriarchal society arrangements and perception.

The challenges and problems the Somali women faced during the Somalia conflict cut across the clans in Somalia. The challenges facing them were as a result of

²³ African Watch Women's Rights Project, Division of Human Rights Watch, Seeking Refuge, Finding Terror: The Wide Spread Rape of Somali Women Refugees in North Eastern Kenya, Vol. 4 No. 14, (1993), p. 22.

²⁴ Stephen L. Spiegel, World Politics in a New Era, (London: Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1995), pp. 700-701.

²⁵ See Chapter Two. See also, Jean B. Elshtain, "Reflections on War and Political Discourse: Realism, Just War and Feminism in Nuclear Age" in R. Little and M. Smith 2nd Ed, Perspectives on World Politics, (London: Routledge, 1991), pp. 462-463.

women and were not limited to clan basis. The Somali women as many other
were defenseless against conflict and its associated challenges.²⁶ This was as a
that women are or perceive themselves as weak, they lack economic resources,
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The international community and more particularly the United Nation body
FEM and the IGAD Women Desk took a leading in helping the Somali women
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NIFEM and IGAD Women Desk as a result of recognition that the structure of gender
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Women Desk is consistent to the peace research paradigm that recognizes that the

²⁶ M. G. Gechaga, "The Impact of War on African Women" in M. N. Getui and Hazel Ayanga, *Conflicts in Africa: A Women Response*, (Nairobi: Ruaraka Printing Press, 2002), p. 78.

²⁷ See Chapter Three.

being women and were not limited to clan basis. The Somali women as many other women were defenseless against conflict and its associated challenges.²⁶ This was as a result that women are or perceive themselves as weak, they lack economic resources, they are not involved in clan decisions and in initiating and perpetrating conflict. Such suffering, which cut across the traditional clans, initiated the solidarity of the Somali women across the clans to address their plight, concern, interests and values in the Somali culture and conflict.

The international community and more particularly the United Nation body UNIFEM and the IGAD Women Desk took a leading in helping the Somali women address their social and political plight.²⁷ UNIFEM and IGAD Women Desk recognized the challenges facing women in the process of conflict and peace process making them to participate less in the process. Taking a passive role in the conflict and peace process made the Somali women face numerous sufferings and challenges to life without or with minimum chances of taking steps to ameliorate their situation. The involvement of UNIFEM and IGAD Women Desk as a result of recognition that the structure of gender relationship in Somalia is asymmetrically tilted against women denying them a significant chance to address to their own plight and contribute to other aspects of life like peace that are of significance to the society. This approach by UNIFEM and IGAD Women Desk is consistent to the peace research paradigm that recognizes that the

²⁶ M. G. Gechaga, "The Impact of War on African Women" in M. N. Getui and Hazel Ayanga, Conflicts in Africa: A Women Response. (Nairobi: Ruaraka Printing Press, 2002), p. 78.

²⁷ See Chapter Three.

structure of relationship in the community can be conflictual regardless of some members of the community not seeing the asymmetrical relationship.²⁸

UNIFEM and IGAD Women Desk having taken a leading role in empowering women to take a significant role in the social and political spheres in Somalia leaves the critical challenge to the Somali women to take a significant role to sustain their empowered role in the Somali society. Social and political emancipation of the Somali women was as a result of external support system. However, such support system is not permanent and can not effectively work in the absence of cooperation with the internal forces. Therefore, the Somali women have been presented with an opportunity that they should capitalize on to address their concerns, interests and values that are to improve gender relationship in Somalia.

While UNIFEM and IGAD Women Desk has taken a leading role in gender emancipation in Somalia, the two bodies have not taken into account the place of men in contributing to female emancipation. While women empowerment has been central in Somalia male disempowerment is also another approach that could be employed to correct the structure of gender relationship in Somalia.²⁹ However, men disempowerment has not been embraced significantly. However, one critical issue on the empowerment of the Somalia women is that the end result of the process is not determined.³⁰

Women are perceived have more orientation to peace than men. The conflict in Somalia persisted since the Somali culture is patriarchal in setting and men are actively

A. J. R. Groom, "Paradigms in Conflict: The Strategist, the Conflict Researcher and the Peace researcher" in J. Burton and F. Dukes (eds) Conflict Readings in Management and Resolution, (London: Macmillan, 1990), pp. 91-95. See also M. Mwagiru, Conflict: Theory, Processes and Institutions of Management, op. cit., pp. 7-9.

M. Mwagiru, *Ibid.*, pp. 30-34.

Ibid., 30-31.

engaged in the social and political structure of domination and insubordination.³¹ Women took a significant role in the search for peace in Somalia. Women were marginalized during the conflict yet they account for the majority victims.³² Men remained divided along clan basis while women remained united based on the suffering experiences they faced during the long conflict irrespective of their clans, social and political affiliations. The suffering experience of the Somali women irrespective of their clan, social and political affiliation led to women solidarity and search for peace in Somalia. The Somali women representation in the Somalia National Reconciliation Conference (SNRC) was referred to as 'sixth clan' their neutrality and participation made a significant contribution to success.³³

Women have the capacity to make peace agreements and post-conflict efforts more viable, effective and practical.³⁴ Although the efforts of women have great potential to peace making and consolidation, women are seriously constrained by the social, cultural and political setting in Somalia. Women peace activists often expose themselves to personal risks in their daily work to make their communities safer. Often they receive less resource to support their efforts, their experience, and their advice in peacebuilding are ignored or downplayed by policy makers.

The role the Somali women took in the search for peace was significant. The Somali women lobbied to ensure that their participation in the search for peace was recognized in the peace processes. The previous attempts to search for peace in Somalia

³¹ See Chapter One. See also, B. Byrne, Towards Engendering Peace. (IDS Bulletin, 1996), p. 30.

³² E. S. Burke, J. Klot and I. Bunting. Engendering Peace: Reflections on the Burundi Peace Process (Nairobi: UNIFEM, 2001), p. 23.

³³ E. Brusset and E. Visman, Preventing Violent Conflicts and the Coherence of EU Policies Towards the Horn of Africa Countries, Saveworld February 1998.

³⁴ ICG, Beyond Victimhood: Women's Peacebuilding in Sudan, Congo and Uganda, Africa Report No. 112 of 28 June 2006.

did not take into account the significant contribution that women could bring in the peace process. This attempt by the Somali women resulted in their inclusion to the peace process. Subsequently, it contributed to the engendering of social and political spheres of Somalia. It is with the Arta conference of the year 2000 that women took a significant position in the search for peace. The Arta conference was crucial for the Somali women and their contribution in the peace process.³⁵ It was the first time their voices were heard as official delegates. The women lobbied during the Arta conference to ensure that the peace process did not collapse and contributed to break deadlock in the peace talks. It is through the Arta Conference that the representation of Somali women found it easy to be accepted in the IGAD peace talks in Kenya.

The IGAD peace process on Somalia continued to recognise the significant role of the Somali women in the search for peace and rebuilding post-conflict Somalia. During this process, women who were represented as the 'sixth clan' were included in all the committees that were set to discuss different issues in the conflict and post conflict Somalia arrangements. The end result was the allocation of a certain quota of seats to women in the government and more particularly the parliament. The allocation of the seats meant that women were not only significant actors during the peace process but also have a significant role in re-building the torn country and ensure that their concerns, interests and values are addressed within Somalia. In this way, the IGAD peace process on Somalia contributed to social and political emancipation of the Somali women. Although these achievements were made still the Somali women continued to suffer the

³⁵ IGAD Women Desk, Heading Women's Voices: The Story of Somali Women's Historic Role in the Peace Process. (Djibouti: IGAD, 2005), p. 16-21.

nces of patriarchy by being ignored or down played during the peace process.³⁶
onstrates that there is a lot that need to be done in order to socially, culturally
cally emancipate women.

uring the IGAD peace talks in Kenya, the Somali women had a significant role
ce processes. This demonstrates the positive effect of the Somali conflict on the
on of the unbalanced gender relations in Somalia that had consistently affected
y excluding or marginalising them in social and political spheres. Therefore, the
elped in recognition of structural and cultural violence or conflict that existed in

³⁷ The structural and cultural violence and conflict in Somalia inhibited
capacities to contribute to social and political affairs of the Somalia society and
t large. On the other hand, the conflict helped in the polarisation of the gender
and cultural conflict that helped to cement and protract the conflict. This
o women activism from within Somalia with the support of external actors like
and IGAD Women Desk together with a number of NGO to help in
ting the Somali women especially in the processes of searching for peace and
tical arrangements. The result of being included in the peace processes also saw
li women take significant political position in the Somalia government with a
of gender mainstreaming in the social and political arrangement of Somali.

hile women have had a significant percentage for social and political
tion, this has been in relation to external support systems. The challenge that
Somali women and Somalia as a whole is the translation of that external support
nal and self support system. Therefore, the issues like education and democracy

D. Tansey, Politics: The Basics, (London: Routledge, 1995), pp. 87-88.

Itung, "Violence, Peace and Peace Research" Journal of Peace Research, Vol. 3, (1969), pp.

See also J. Gultung, "Cultural Violence" Journal of Peace Research, Vol. 27 (1991) pp. 291-305.

have to take precedence. While democracy will ensure the rule of law and socio-political inclusive participation of all the people, education will uplift the literacy capacity of the entire or general population in Somalia with significant bearing on post-conflict gender relations. Women will be educated and emancipated to face social and political challenges together with the traditional and cultural norms and systems that contribute to female subjugation. On the other hand, education will help men to see their social, political and cultural relationship in the light that will accommodate women emancipation. This will contribute to male socialisation to root out traditional patriarchal mindset in the society that advance gender stereotypes that ultimately socially and politically hurt the Somali women.³⁸

The Somalia conflict had significant negative effect on the Somali women. This does not mean that men never suffered the consequences of the conflict in Somalia, but because of structural and cultural gender imbalance that affect the social, political and economic setting of the Somalia society women suffered more.³⁹ While men of different clans were fighting to gain political power, to defend their clan and seeking social status, women did not have anything to do with the protracted conflict in Somalia. Instead, the women needed to cope with the loss of their loved ones and their traditional 'male protection'. There was no victory for Somali women no matter which side could have won. The Somali women became vulnerable to many dangers resulting from the armed conflict and distortion of their traditional setup.

³⁸ M. G. Gechaga, "The Impact of War on African Women" in M. N. Getui and Hazel Ayanga, Conflicts in Africa: A Women Response, op. cit., p. 66.

³⁹ H. S. Mohamed, "The Somalia Refugee Women's Experience in Kenyan Refugee Camps and their Plight in Canada" in H. M. Adam and R. Ford, Mending Ribs in the Sky: Option for Somali Communities in the 21st Century, op. cit. pp. 432-433.

While the conflict aggravated the plight of women in Somalia, the conflict also set a new chapter to the Somali women. Gender emancipation that took place during the period of 1991 to 2005 was so significant that taking the same path Somali women will continually benefit from social and political integration to the society and the country in general.

5.1 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

Somalia is one of the countries in Africa and the Horn of Africa in particular where conflict has had significant dysfunction impact. While conflicts have been considered not to be absolutely negative in human relations,¹ their dysfunctional effect especially as demonstrated in Somalia poses a critical question on the positive effects that have been associated with conflict. The conflict in Somalia has claimed human lives, degraded the environment, spoiled relationship, and economic and human development. Unless these conflicts are resolved, individuals and groups of people in Somalia will continue to suffer the negative consequences.

This study as presented in chapter one set out to investigate the social and political effects of the Somalia conflict on the Somali women. The study was triggered by the observation that conflicts have both positive and negative effects to people.² Therefore, this study taking into account the protracted setting of the Somalia conflict recognises that men and women experience and suffer the consequences of the conflict in different ways and magnitude. This study appreciates that all people are affected by conflicts; however, women suffer the consequences of the conflict more than men. This starting point recognises that most of social, cultural and political setting are male dominated. This kind of social, cultural and political setting has been consistently biased against women in Somalia. This leads to the problem of gender marginalisation and exclusion in terms of resource allocation and contribution, participation in decision

¹ M. Mwangi, Conflict: Theory, Processes and Institutions of Management, (Nairobi: Watermark, 2000), pp. 6-7.

² Ibid.,

processes. This in turn has a significant bearing to women social and political aspects in particular and the society in general.

The study set out to investigate the role of the Somalia conflict in the social and political subjugation of the Somali women. The study also investigates the role of the Somalia conflict in the social and political emancipation of the Somali women. Therefore, the study set out to test three hypotheses: The first hypothesis is that, the Somalia conflict aggravated the socio-political plight of the Somali women. The second hypothesis is that the Somalia conflict acted as a catalyst to the socio-political emancipation of the Somali women. The third hypothesis is that that, attempts made to ameliorate the socio-political plight of Somali women during the Somalia conflict have not sufficiently addressed the Somali women socio-political plight. It is on the basis of testing of these hypotheses that this study was conceptualised.

The second chapter of this study reveals a number of issues. The current Somalia is the creation of the colonialists who joined different colonial territories through the Act of Union of 1960. Somalia is a low resource country where the limited resources are unevenly distributed propelling struggle to access and control those scarce resources. Although the Somalia conflict can be traced to pre-independence era, the subsequent dynamics especially after independence aggravated the conditions for conflict. Somalia as a county has a homogeneous ethnic and religious population ruling out ethnic cleavages as the cause of protracted conflict. The viability of coup d'etat that existed in the mind of the people after the overthrow of the first Somalia government by Barre gave a perception that future coups could be possible. The politics of marginalisation and exclusion especially during Barre's regime led to the polarisation of clan cleavages.

Barre's regime did not foster the politics of integration but favoured his clan in resource allocation. This sent the message to the other clans that taking power or accessing power was the only way that they can acquire or access resources. This resulted to each clan's struggle for power. As a result, Barre's regime got hardened and embraced a policy or culture of militarism. However, the clans fighting as independent units could not win over Barre's regime and take power. This resulted to the formation of a loose coalition of forces from the like minded leaders of different clans to fight Barre's regime. The like mindedness was basically on their common enemy and this was Barre and his regime. Once Barre was defeated and went to exile, the loose coalition turned to each other struggling for power and the result was a chaotic Somalia.

The international political system especially in the Cold War and the subsequent realignment of the international system in favour of one superpower also had a significant contribution to the initiation, escalation of conflict and obstruction of peace in Somalia. The Cold War rivalry provided the financial, logistical and military support to the parties in the Somalia internal and international conflicts. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the adjustment of the international power in favour of the US resulted to the significant withdrawal of the international power forces from Africa and more specific the Horn of Africa. The result was the generation and escalation of internal conflicts that questioned the legitimacy of the leadership of the country and for this case Somalia. Therefore, the Cold War and its subsequent end in the late 1980s continue to be a significant explanation of the causes and fuels of violent conflicts in Africa and Somalia in particular.

The conflict in Somalia has had significant negative effect to the people of Somalia and more particularly women and children. The conflict has also demonstrated regional implications. Therefore, the conflict in Somalia has been protracted and dysfunctional.

There were different efforts that were taking place to ensure that the Somalia conflict came to an end. However, most of the peace initiatives ended with no significant successes. The worst attempt was the International engagement in which UN forces were deployed in Somalia and the initiative ended tragically with the killing and humiliation of the US soldiers in the peace mission. The result was the withdrawal of the US and UN in general from engaging in the Somalia conflict in 1992. Different forces continued to realign themselves and fragment the country into different territories that are controlled by warlords, militia and clan elders. Some militia groups also resisted some forces that attempted to exert their power on particular territories. The management of the conflict started to show positive signs since the year 2000 with the public dialogue under the Transitional National Government involving civil society and more particularly women. Although this seemed to be more inclusive, the results did not endure. The IGAD peace process on Somalia since 2002 saw positive signs of which in 2004 there was an inauguration of the Somalia parliament in Kenya. Later President Yusuf was sworn in as an interim president of Somalia Federal Government.

The third chapter exposes that conflicts have significant effects on gender. First, the Somalia social, cultural and political setting is patriarchal in structure. The patriarchal setting has had a significant domination of the male gender in the social and political aspects in Somalia. Women suffer more than men during the conflict processes. The

ungendered setting in Somalia resulted to aggravating the effects the Somalia conflict on women. Women formed the majority of the victims yet they were not involved in the decisions to initiate and sustain the conflict.

The Somali women suffered the consequences of the protracted Somalia conflict. The suffering was more aggravated by the intensification of the conflict in the early 1990s. Since 1991, the Somali women suffered as targets of warfare, making them means of defeating and humiliating the opponent clans. Women suffered from attacks, killings, rape, mutilated and deprived their meagre possession. The families and communities turned to depend on women for basic needs. Men got deeply involved in the conflict that they could not fulfil their responsibilities as designed in the Somalia culture. This in turn overburdened the Somali women on top of the effects of the conflicts by giving them new roles in the family and the communities. The collapse of the Somali cultural and state legal system aggravated the plight of the Somali women by denying them protection and redress. Those women who crossed the border and became refugees suffered the same consequences of the conflict in Somalia together with new challenges of living in foreign countries. The conflict helped in cementing the patriarchal perception of the reality in Somalia, which served to marginalise or exclude women from the social and political spheres. Therefore, the conflict in Somalia just like any other conflict in human history, women have become victims of conflict and war casualties.³

While the Somalia conflict acted to cement, perpetuate and aggravate gender violence in the social and political spheres, other new developments were in progress. The conflict helped the polarisation of gender marginalisation and exclusion together

³ H. S. Mohamed, "The Somalia Refugee Women's Experience in Kenyan Refugee Camps and their Plight in Canada" in H. M. Adam and R. Ford, Mending Rips in the Sky: Option for Somali Communities in the 21st Century. (Asmara: The Red Sea Press, Inc., 1997), p. 438.

with the negative effects. This led to activism from the Somali women with external support to emancipate themselves by constructing relationships that are not biased against women. Therefore, the conflict and its associated consequences led to the realisation that gender marginalisation and exclusion in Somalia has led to the social and political plight of the Somali women. The consequences of gender exclusion and marginalisation lead the Somali women not to make significant contribution in the social and political welfare in Somalia. This realisation saw the process of gender mainstreaming to start taking place with the highest being the appointment of women representative in the peace processes and Somalia parliament. Women also started to take positive role in the peace processes hence addressing the social and political concerns through their values and interests. Although the Somali women stated realising the processes of emancipation especially through the support of their solidarity across the clans, UNIFEM and IGAD Women Desk, the results are still minimal to deserve a celebration. However, still there was some degree of achievement in addressing the social and political plight of the Somali women.

The critical presentation of the study reveals that conflict can act positively or negatively in the society.⁴ The Somalia conflict was a double edged sword to the Somali women.⁵ The women suffered significantly by being targets of warfare. The conflicts also aggravated the already existing gender violence in the structure of relationship in Somalia, where women were perceived or made to feel subordinate to men in the society.⁶ Socially, the Somali women were under a deep stress from the unfolding circumstances of the conflict. The social norm was degraded by the conflict exposing the Somali women to further vulnerability on top of what they were already exposed to by

⁴ M. Mwangiri, *Conflict: Theory, Processes and Institutions of Management*, op. cit. p. 6.

⁵ See Chapter Three and Four.

⁶ See Chapter Three.

traditional and cultural set up in Somalia. Therefore, the Somalia conflict made a significant contribution to social disorientation and despair on the Somali women. Therefore, the Somali women fear or shy in engaging on serious social activities for fear of being ridiculed through stereotyped sentiment or being a future target of violence.

The Somalia conflict resulted in the disintegration of the traditional and state legal and political system. In the absence or weakening of these systems of law and order and more specifically since 1991 women suffered the deep consequences of the conflict. The perpetrators of violence against women did not have to fear of being brought to account for their inhuman treatments to women. Gender mainstreaming in political processes have tended to show positive signs in addressing the concerns, interests and values of women, which are indeed central in the social and political wellbeing of the society.

However, Somalia does not have self support systems that take care of the women who suffer the consequences of conflicts. The women who were attacked and violated and hence victims of armed conflict received significant rejection and social segregation from their communities. Some women were blamed or even punished for a happening on which they are only victims and not accomplishers. This study recommends that, the Somali people to be sensitised on the consequences of conflict and its impact on the lives of the people and more particularly women. This way the communities may become aware that women are victims and not accomplishers of the violations they face during conflict processes. To this regard, education is more essential in the process of preparing the Somalis to embrace such new and positive perceptions.

The women have received a significant space in the social and political arena in Somalia. Stemming from the common suffering experience women faced across the clans

in Somalia, the suffering has acted as an impetus of women solidarity and women activism. Somali women have united and agitated for their mainstreaming in peace and political processes. Their contribution and more importantly their voices in the peace, social and political processes together with civil society initiatives has been a significant step in gender mainstreaming and women emancipation in the patriarchal Somali society. Although, the success that has been achieved in these spheres in Somalia, it is still minimal but women still have significant future potentials to achieve more space in the social and political space. However, women should ensure that Somalia does not revert to conflict which may distort or shutter the success the Somali women have achieved in their social and political integration. This is where the hailed contribution of women to the search and consolidation of peace should come out strongly.

Besides the external support that the Somali women received to agitate for gender mainstreaming and emancipation in social and political spheres, the Somali women, the government and development partners should strive to build up a self support system in the institutions of social and governance to ensure that gender violence be it structural, cultural or overt is not perpetuated in Somalia.⁷ Despite the negative phenomenon of the Somalia conflict, the Somalia women have been able to address some of their social and political plights with remarkable success. However, the achievements in addressing the social and political plight, the Somali women were facing has not sufficiently addressed the plight of the women. The period of 1991 to 2005 is a significant period to initiate significant challenge the traditional gender perceptions and stereotypes that are biased against the Somali women. These achievements should serve as an appetizer to seek more

⁷ See J. Galtung, "Violence, Peace and Peace Research" Journal of Peace Research, Vol. 3, (1969), pp. 167-191. See also J. Galtung, "Cultural Violence" Journal of Peace Research, Vol. 27 (1991) pp. 291-305.

emancipation, protect the already achieved success and develop systems that will foster women emancipation and gender mainstreaming in social and political spheres.

There is a need to evaluate also the systems of gender mainstreaming and women emancipation in Somalia. Some practices may ignore or contribute insignificantly to emancipate and mainstream women. One of the strategies is to educate Somalis on issues affecting their social and political environment. This should not be done in such a way that it excludes men. Education for men is also very important to ensure that the Somali men realize the challenges of traditional patriarchal society setting, and help them accept the changing dynamics of the community and new roles women are taking in the society. Therefore, in the process of emancipating Somali women through education, the Somali men should not be set in the periphery, for doing that, it will not prepare the Somali men to abandon their negative and outdated traditional and culture values, or the Somali men will not support initiatives that intend to socially and politically emancipate the Somali women.

In recognition of women as untapped resources for peace, all peacemaking organisations and frameworks, governments, UN agencies, NGOs and civil authorities should make every effort to include women and women's organisations in the negotiating and implementing peace processes from grass-root to policy-making level. Women should be well represented in the legal, administrative and other decision-making processes and systems to ensure that they are part of the process that formulate policy for state and civil society to ensure equal access to equal benefits and resources across the board. Grass-root women organisations should be allowed to operate independent of administrative structures to enhance benefits that could accrue from opportunities

presented. Members of women groups and associations and women in general should be trained in literacy, numeracy, civic procedures, electoral processes to ensure transparency and accountability within their organisations. This will give women skills to competitively challenge male dominated cartels in the commercial marketplace.

The UN agencies, NGOs and other development partners should underwrite the rehabilitation of destroyed infrastructure, abandoned villages and towns in Somalia so that inhabitants who are refugees and internally displaced people should return to their homes. Necessary efforts should be made to ensure that all parties in the conflict and peace process cease all violations of human rights to civilians especially unarmed and unprotected women and girls.

To break the culture of impunity, the Transitional Federal Government should strengthen its military, administrative and legal systems to ensure that those who commit crimes against women and girls are brought to justice. The Transitional Federal Government should ensure the welfare of widows and single heads of families/households are safeguarded by codifying women's independent property rights within marriage in both administrative penal code and customary laws.

Women should be helped by the state, civil society organisations to ease trauma inflicted by acts of war committed against themselves, their family and their community by having access to counselling. Women who have been subjected to cruel acts like rape and other forms of sexual violence should be [provided with accessible medical treatment.

UN agencies and local authorities should acknowledge that women who have responsible positions in the community will provide the foundations for peace building. It

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is essential to provide women with development assistance even if such is done alongside emergency assistance even if circumstances dictate that that the assistance can only be in small scale. Development resources should include materials, micro-credit, technical know-how, and training in vocational and academic skills.

The state, UN agencies and the civil society organisations should embrace a fundamental policy that embraces the concept of women in crisis-prone areas, women in areas of relative stability, and displaced and refugee should be equipped with skills that will help them cope with the challenges posed to them from conflict. The skill also can extend to help them to rebuild their country after the conflict is over. Women in refugee camps should be allowed to sell their products that result from their vocational training to enable them get a source of income to sustain their families and those that accompany them like children.

Reconstruction and development partners together with UN agencies should foster women's and men's awareness of women's rights and human rights in general not only through workshops for both sexes but also by incorporating civic education components into the projects and by ensuring that women participate in planning and monitoring their projects. The civil society should agitate and encourage the introduction of and strengthening penal codes that are impartial in stemming out social and political injustices and eliminate prejudices that are against or those that hurt women and girls. Of particular concern are those prejudices that regard to sexual violence and property ownership. In cases when customary law is applied, those laws should enshrine the rights of women.

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