

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL SECURITY CHALLENGES IN SOMALIA IN THE POST-SIAD BARRE ERA

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ABSTRACT

Somalia was one of the first states to breakdown in the aftermath of the collapse of the Cold War era. This study seeks to explain the destruction of the Somali state from a holistic perspective, arguing that a plethora of factors authored the dissolution of this nation-state. Furthermore, it is argued that the emergence of Political Islam to fill the political vacuum configured the pattern of security challenges confronting the country. In doing so, this study uses the qualitative research design based on the interview technique as the main data collection tool. What is evident from this study is that to explain the destruction of Somalia and its security abyss we must probe deeper to uncover the points of fracture of the Somali social order, as well as external factors obscured by an emphasis on clan tensions by media and scholarly reportage. Hence, explaining the collapse of the Somali state and its attendant security challenges is a contribution to the ongoing project of theorizing the global disintegration of nation-states in the post-Cold War era. All in all, it is hoped that this study will provide policy makers and scholar's insights on the challenges of African security in the Twenty-First century.

Keywords: Somalia, post-Cold War era, Political Islam, African security

INTRODUCTION

Somalia has been a major talking point in major international media platforms since the country degenerated into a collapsed state in the aftermath of the fall of the Siad Barre in 1991. Hence, this study discusses the Somali national security crisis since the early 1990s following the unceremonious exit of Barre. What makes Somalia a fascinating case is the conjunction of a set of disparate factors (both internal and external) that make their impact more visible. More specifically, this study analyses and explain various factors, namely, historical, internal and external factors that have collectively impacted the security challenges confronting the post-Siad Barre state of Somalia. Although moving reports by the media and scholars are important in bringing the dire plight of Somalis to the attention of the international community, they do not provide an explanation of the genesis and complex nature of the Somali tragedy (Lewis, 1993; Samatar, 1992). The savagery of the civil war and its various security permutations including terrorism begs for an analysis of what went wrong, and why such a seemingly homogenous society has gone downhill into a security abyss. It is the contention of this study that to really understand the nature and dynamics of the security crisis, one has to go beyond the internal environment. Thus, there is a need to examine other underlying factors such as historical factors, the various internal dynamics within the country as well as external determinants which have all collectively authored the

present dire state of affairs in Somalia. Accordingly, this study attempts to examine holistically the main contributory factors thereby putting the causes for the current security crisis in the correct perspective. From a theoretical perspective, this study will significantly improve knowledge and conceptual tools associated with the failed state theory. Furthermore, this study offers practitioners and scholars with some interesting insights on an instructive case study of state failure, that is, Somalia. This study also enables both professionals and policy makers to have a fuller appreciation of the state failure process in the post-Cold War era. This study also benefits the national intelligence officers, policy makers, and military officers whose responsibilities include ensuring and protecting the national security of Somalia. By and large, the study also contributes towards helping in the formulation of appropriate policies for national security focusing in the wide spread of terrorism, and piracy in the maritime areas of Somalia. Finally, the study fill gaps in the existing literature on national security in Somalia, helping in future studies of security challenges and issues faced and how such issues can be resolved affably

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The Somalia state is strategically located in the Horn Africa with the largest coastline among all the African countries. As indicated in the World Fact Book (2017), the Somali population is estimated at 10 817 354 and has been without a full operational and functioning government for more than two decades since the downfall of Mohamed Siad Barre administration of the country in the early 1990s. Once heralded as the one true nation-state in Africa with an ethnically homogeneous society, Somalia since the 1990s has experienced brutal, politically induced famine and genocidal violence, and the flight of millions of refugees. As can be seen, the current maze of state collapse, security crisis, clan tensions and political violence as depicted in popular media contradicts the model of ethnic homogeneity as depicted in colonial historiography by scholars like Lewis (1961) as cited in Besteman (1996). What has caused this fracturing of the Somali state and society? To be able to explain the Somali debacle and the attendant security problems, we must probe deeper to uncover the sources of this calamity, manifested in the patterning of violence and killings since the early 1990s.

What is evident is that following the displacement of Siad Barre from power as president of Somalia, the country's national security was deeply compromised to an extent that the country was left without a central authority, with people on the edge of mass famine as well as an emerging civil war involving several clans and the militias (Abukar, 2015). Consequently, the Somali state became a playground for the local warlords organized along clan cleavages. The country was heavily turned into a battle field largely pitting two strong factions' led by strongmen, Ali Mahdi and Mohamed Farah Aideed. In due course, several other warlords also appeared on the political scene thereby deepening the destruction of the Somali state. As stated by Samatar (1992) the Somali crisis was mainly caused by the collapse of national institutions of the state. Samatar contends that the Somali society has been torn apart by elite rivalry in the political and economic arena, the neglect of the productive sectors of the economy, and the centrality of state largesse at the mercy of elites. Under those circumstances, coupled with a general absence of law and order, the distribution of weapons among civilians and clans worsened the nascent civil war and political violence.

As the Somali crisis deepened, it was internationalised following an outflow of some hundreds of thousand refugees into neighbouring countries. Images of famine and grinding poverty portrayed in global media platforms attracted the attention of international players

(Little, 2012; Mermin, 1997; Munene, 2013; Thakur, 1994; Western, 2002). As noted by Munene (2013) a number of actors including IGAD, AMISOM and the United Nations (UN) were compelled to act to mitigate the effects of state failure in Somalia such as droughts, famine and civil war. Ironically, the various external interventions by regional and international actors have largely failed (Burk, 1999; Little, 2012; Patman, 1997). Little (2012) established that external interventions have not worked in Somalia, nor are they likely to work in the future. For example, foreign military interventions including by the US, UN, and Ethiopia have been perceived negatively by locals as invasions by occupying forces. Unsurprisingly, negative casing of foreign military forces has had dire consequences. Furthermore, the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the US added a new and rapidly evolving dimension to the Somali tragedy, because of the presence of Islamic fundamentalist groups in Somalia and their presumed connections with al Qaeda, the main target of US-led 'War on terror'. As can be seen, the situation was aggravated by the fact that Somalia, a country without an operational government, could provide an opportune hideout for terrorists who have to flee other countries, where their presence had become shaky and untenable. Interestingly, the ascendancy of political Islam is another compelling case indicating the failure of an external intervention, that is, the so-called Global War on Terror (GWOT). Another dynamic with international tentacles that compounds the political and security crisis in Somalia is the piracy issue characterised by pirates who rob international ships along the Somalia costal area (Aaron, 2010; Roach, 2010).

What is evident from the foregoing discussion is that Somalia, which for most of the 1990s lacked most of the institutions of a functioning state, is currently facing massive security challenges. The situation is worsened by the lack of consensus or compromise among the main actors on the future of the country (Doornbos, 2002). The central government seems to aim for the reinstatement of a centralized state while in other parts of the country, namely Puntland and Somaliland, there are other alternative visions on the way forward. All in all, it is therefore scarcely surprising that Somalia became and continues to be a failed state due to the events triggered by the demise of the Siad Barre in 1991 (Jackson, 2011). For that reason, Somalia has been at the top list of the failed states index produced annually by the *Fund for Peace*, a United States-based think tank

METHODS

The research design of this study is based on the qualitative method. The interview technique was selected as the main data collection tool because this study sought the perceptions and opinions of the research participants. More specifically, the research will adopt the semi-structured interview technique which is generally used in social science research since its objective include obtaining explanation and gaining more understanding of a specific research issue. Basically, the semi-structured interview approach combines predetermined and additional questions raised by interviewees or the interviewer during the interview process. As is evident, flexibility is the trademark of this technique because it allows interviewees to provide as much information as they feel necessary as well as enabling interviewers to ask probing questions to achieve a complete and clear answer (Bailey, 1994). The collected data was stored in the form of transcriptions and computer files. The current study used a non-probability sampling design of purposive sampling. This form of sampling is confined to specific types of people who can provide the desired information, either because they are the only ones who have it, or conform to some criteria set by the investigator (Sekaran & Bourgie, 2009). More specifically, this study adopts judgement sampling that involves the choice of participants who are most advantageously placed or in the best position

to provide the information required. Thematic analysis was used as the data analysis technique.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In more than two decades, Somalia has hogged the headlines of major international media organizations since the country collapsed in the aftermath of the downfall of the Siad Barre regime in 1991. Unsurprisingly, the literature on the Somalia crisis is quite extensive and varied. To understand better some of the crucial issues brought up by the incidence of state failure in Somalia, there is a need to unpack the concept of failed states and investigate the diverse understandings of state failure. To this extent, this section considers the complex web of conditioning and facilitating factors that can trigger a chain reaction eventually leading to state failure or crisis. Thus this section also reviews some contemporary literature on the causes of state failure especially from security angle.

A close inspection of the literature on the Somali crisis reveals that a number of studies have focused on the spectacle of state failure and the related issue of state rebuilding or reconstruction (Besteman, 1996; Doornbos, 2002; Little 2012; Menkhaus, 2006/7; Samatar, 1992; Yoo, 2011). Samatar (1992) establishes that the Somali crisis is the consequence of the collapse of the state's institutional architecture. For Samatar, the Somali society has been torn apart by elite rivalry in the political and economic domains, the neglect of the productive sectors of the economy, and the criticality of state largesse at the mercy of feuding elites. In a related study, Besteman (1996) argues that a blend of factors including external influences (such as colonial policy, donor funding and cold war geopolitics) and internal social stratification (such as race and class) have state failure in Somalia. According to Besteman, Somalis have killed each other not because they are unrelated but because they are competing for power and resources in a vastly militarized atmosphere of suspicion, mistrust, domination, and terror. Similarly, Little (2012) observes that the current humanitarian crisis in southern Somalia is more the result of fierce political struggles than the reoccurrence of natural disasters like drought.

Interestingly, Tripodi (1999) highlights the effect of the colonial legacy, particularly the adoption of a centralized state system, on current gloomy state of affairs in Somalia. For Tripodi the adoption of a centralized state system, premised on the Italian experience of the second half of the 1940s, has proved to be unsatisfactory in laying the foundations that Somalia would need to usher in a viable democratization process and state rebuilding. Consequently, Tripodi identifies the cause of the present Somali collapse as the shortfall of the national institutions that the Somali Republic put in place in 1960 as well as during Italian colonial rule. Accordingly, the Italian political structure could not manage the dynamics of the clan system effectively and Italians viewed the Somali social structure as archaic. With this attitude, which was not respectful of the Somali traditional structure, Italy promoted the adoption of a form of state unsuitable to the Somali people. As a result, the process of decolonisation created an independent state that remained detached from Somali society. In fact, the new state organization became just a tool in the hands of predominant clans, who administered power according to their own interests particularly during the long rein of Siyad Barre. Eventually, this created a new source of clan conflict.

A litany of studies on Somalia focuses on state reconstruction or revival. In his respect, Doornbos (2002) examines attempts at reconstructing Somalia from the abyss of destruction. Doornbos observes that there is no consensus on how Somalia is to be rebuilt (centralised, federal or otherwise). It has been demonstrated that the provisional government in Mogadishu

seems to aim for the reinstatement of a centralized state. However, other players in Puntland and Somaliland have divergent views about the future of the country. All things considered, Doornbos proposes that the views of the key international players will be critical in deciding the outcome of the various state-building initiatives aimed at Somalia. On closer inspection, this may be an ideal approach considering that Somalia since 1991 has lacked most of the institutions of a functioning state. Similarly, Marten (2006/7) observes that if stable, state-like governance structures are ever to form in Somalia, it will be necessary to deploy long-term, robust international peace enforcement missions to limit the resulting violence. Meanwhile, a study by Menkhaus (2006/7) showed that the persistent state collapse in Somalia has produced a uniquely difficult context for state revival. According to Menkhaus, the Somalia case shows that state building is exponentially more difficult where the country has been in a state of failure for a prolonged period of time. This result points to the need for more context-specific state-building strategies in zones of protracted state collapse. It also serves as a warning that delayed external intervention in resuscitating and supporting failing states only worsens the difficulty of state re-building later on. Given that existing informal and local systems of governance have enjoyed real success, and that a central government will necessarily have to be minimalist in the roles it assumes, Menkhaus proposes a formula for state building in Somalia in the form of a 'mediated state' in which the government relies on partnership (or at least coexistence) with various local intermediaries and competing sources of authority to provide essential functions of justice, public security, and conflict management in much of the country.

Other key studies on the Somali crisis focus on the aspect of warlordism which is inextricably linked to state failure in Somalia (Marten, 2006/7; Marchal, 2007). Marten (2006/7) demonstrates that warlordism affects many weak and failed states, and the insular and often brutal rule of warlords deprives countries of the chance for lasting security and economic growth. This study also shows that US policies designed to enhance the stability of Somalia by giving economic and military support to the country's warlords have been misguided, because warlords sustain their authority only by thwarting the emergence of an operational state. After all, history indicates that when warlords are given resources-including money, weapons, and free reign over territory-they will use those resources to support their narrow interests in competition with warlords and in defiance of centralized authority. Basically, warlordism works and survives as a system because it brings proceeds to powerful people who keep the population adequately satisfied to foil any rebellion. Thus, change will happen only when people believe that transforming the status quo is worth the cost.

Generally, extant literature on the Somali crisis also show a strong focus on military and humanitarian interventions in the country (Lederach & Stork, 1993; Lewis, 1993; Little, 2012; Marten, 2006/7; Western, 2002; Yihdego, 2007; Yoo, 2011). Related studies have also examined the issue of peacekeeping in Somalia (Burk, 1999; Little, 2012; Patman, 1997; Thakur, 1994). However, in recent years, as indicated in other prior studies, there is a strong emphasis on terrorism in relation to the crisis in Somalia (Marchal, 2007; Medani, 2002; Thomas, 2014; Yoo, 2011). A crucial study on the relationship between terrorism and state failure was undertaken by Yoo (2011). According to Yoo (2011) failed states pose one of the greatest challenges to international security, peace and stability. Failed states create a broad range of negative externalities (such as the breakdown of central authority) that can generate the conditions for human rights catastrophes and fuel terrorism. To put it another way, the absence of state institutions can allow a territory to be exploited by international terrorist organizations. Medani (2002) argues that President George W. Bush's extensive campaign against Somali money transfer companies-on the grounds that they finance terror is misplaced because it exacerbates Somalia's humanitarian crisis which in turn fuels terrorism.

It is also argued that, the closure of 'hawwalat' threatens to all but destroy Somalia's larger economy, and thereby upsetting fragile state-building initiatives in the war-torn country. Meanwhile, Marchal (2007) observes that concepts or labels such as 'terrorism' and 'warlordism' have contributed to narratives that may have extremely damaging effects. One of the consequences was that internal political dynamics were downplayed. For example, Marchal observes that, few scholars have noted that the eviction of the warlords and the rise of the Islamic Courts also reflected the aspiration of a new generation to take the lead, and that this aspiration is shared beyond south and central Somalia. In another related study, Little (2012) establishes that military offensives by foreign troops, including U.S., U.N., and Ethiopian forces in Somalia since 1991, have been negatively received by locals who regard these interventions as invasions by occupying forces, often with disastrous consequences. The invasion of Somalia by Ethiopia, for instance, a neighbouring state with a long history of tense relations with Somalia and Somalis, served to further fuel local resentment against outsiders and generate support for a well-armed terrorist group like al-Shabaab, which had the ability and external connections to stand up to outside (foreign) forces. According to Little, the youthful al-Shabaab Islamic group, with its connections to global jihadist movements including the al Qaeda network, grew in power due to its feats in defeating the 'foreign-backed' and unpopular Alliance Against Terrorism and the Restoration of Peace (AATRP).

Based on the above review of the existing literature, there are several reasons for pursuing this study. First, the review of the relevant extant literature indicates that little effort is directed to the holistic study of the state failure mystery in Somalia. When one looks at literature on state failure, there is an inclination to lay the problem of state failure to internal processes. Equally important, there is need to highlight the fact that African states are embedded in a larger global system that exerts both positive and pernicious impacts on their vulnerability. For the governments and peoples of the developing world, the new found strategic significance of failed states is double edged sword. It carries opportunities in the form of increased Western policy attention and resources. But it also entails risks, threatening a distorted pattern of North- South policy engagement that seeks to address the symptoms rather than the causes of state fragility in the so-called developing world as demonstrated by the Somali tragedy. Undoubtedly, this study is valuable and will contribute to the ongoing project of theorizing global crumbling and collapse of nation-states in the post-Cold War era.

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

The Failed State Theory is the underpinning theory upon which the proposed conceptual framework in this study was built. Since the end of the Cold War in 1989, there has been widespread optimism about the prospects of African countries. However, instead of growth and democracy, an increasing number of developing states have experienced severe crises with state failure becoming a dominant characteristic in several regions, including parts of the former Soviet Union, Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa (Eriksen 2005). In view of these developments, it is not surprising that the failed state theory has become one of the leading tools of analysis in the study of African politics (Herbst, 1996-97; Zartman 1995; Milliken 2005; Rotberg 2002; Williams 2007; and Ignatieff 2002). Nonetheless, the concept of a "failed" state has been a victim of conceptual ambiguity and controversy. It is a concept that does not signify a precisely defined and classifiable situation but functions rather as an all-encompassing label for a phenomenon which can be interpreted in various ways. As such, one of the problems in dealing with failed states is defining who and what they are. Although

no universally accepted definition of failed states exists, there is general consensus that such countries lack the capacity and/or will to perform critical functions of statehood effectually.

In other words, failed states are unable or unwilling to provide core public services such as governing legitimately, nurturing equitable and sustainable economic development, guaranteeing physical security, and delivering basic services. Yet, lacking concrete indicators to evaluate state capacity in each core area of state responsibility, scholars and professionals resort to a host of labels such as fragile, weak, failed, rogue, failing, and even collapsed - to distinguish among countries suffering from a wide variety of capacity challenges. This inherent problem of defining state failure has resulted in contending claims on the causes of failure. However, in the case Somalia there is general agreement that the country is an epitome of state failure. All things considered, Somalia's political and economic developments since 1991 when the country collapsed following the demise of the Siad Barre regime, have led many analysts to use several labels to describe the country such as rogue, fragile, failed, weak, collapsed, failing, and an outpost of terrorism. Hence, the failed state theory will be deployed as the main tool of analysis. Figure 1 below describes the model of analysis in this study highlighting four key factors which have shaped the security challenges in Somalia.



Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of this Study

The above research framework is premised on the theory of state failure. Within this theoretical framework, we can begin to make sense of the falling apart of the Somali state, and also to determine the degree to which it is unique on the continent.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Since January 1991 Somalia has been without a functional central government, making it the longest-running case of complete state failure in postcolonial history. More than a dozen externally-driven national peace conferences to revive the Somali state have been launched, including several sponsored by the massive United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) in 1993-95. Unfortunately, none has succeeded. This trajectory or record has earned Somalia the dubious distinction of being the world's foremost burial ground of externally sponsored state-building initiatives (Menkhaus, 2006/7). This section will discuss some of the main findings of the study elicited from the interviews and analysis of secondary data.

The study established that the country's colonial legacy promoted the adoption of a form of state inappropriate to the Somali people (see Tripodi, 1999). The Somali state was essentially

a device in the hands of predatory elites and their clans, who administered power according to their own interests.

In the long run this created a new source of clan conflict (A. S. Aynab, personal communication, April 16, 2016; A.B. Mohammed, personal communication, April 18, 2016; A.H. Hussein personal communication, April 25, 2016; A. Miraaf, personal communication, April 15, 2016). In a related development, the study reveals that some of the major issues significant for the preparation of independence such as the artificiality of the colonial boundaries remained unresolved when the country attained independence in 1960. For example, the problem of border demarcation between Somalia and Ethiopia remained unresolved and an ongoing source of conflict and instability in Somalia (A.S. Aynab, personal communication, April 16, 2016; A. Miraaf, personal communication, April 15, 2016; A.B. Mohammed, personal communication, April 18, 2016). These findings are corroborated by a number of existing studies (Marchal, 2007; Tripodi, 1999; Yindeg, 2007). Due to the wave of state failure in Africa in the 1990s, several scholars have contended that the European model of the nation-state is simply inimical to the continent (Herbst 1997; Clapham 2000). They claim that Africa's small demography, geography (poor communication and trade routes); political culture and heritage and social structure (family-oriented) are incompatible with the Westphalian model imposed by European colonisers. For instance, Jeffrey Herbst (1996/7) maintains that the paradox of the African decolonisation process stems from the formal colonialisation which replaced the continent's diverse political systems with artificial state systems. Unfortunately, these artificial structures were carried forward in post-independent Africa. Herbst suggests that the norm of sovereignty that newly independent African states were granted was nothing but a legal fiction which removed the threat of secession and with it provided motivations for rulers to reach accommodation with disenchanted populations.

Withdrawal of support from the superpower 'big brother' after the demise of the Cold War, was a major factor that authored the political and security crises in Somalia. Fundamentally, the end of the Cold War reduced the superpower motivation to use aid and trade as political instruments to obtain allies and keep them in power thus cutting financial and military assistance on which some governments came to rely for their power and their capacity to rule. Likewise, Carment (2003) makes a similar claim that many states have failed largely because the support they got from one or both of the superpowers as proxy allies during the Cold War dried up after the breakdown of the Berlin wall. Tellingly, this study established that one of the African leaders who met this fate included Siad Barre of Somalia. And the rest as they say was history (A.S. Aynab, personal communication, April 16, 2016; A.H. Hussein personal communication, April 25).

The research also shows that the utter failure of repeated external initiatives to resuscitate an orthodox central government in Somalia via a process of power sharing among Somalia's quarreling political elites is one of the chief causes of the Somali political and security crisis (A.B. Mohammed, personal communication, April 18, 2016; Menkhaus, 2006/7).

According to Menkhaus (2006/7), repeated external initiatives to bring around a central government in the country via a top-down process of power sharing among Somalia's quarreling political elites and warlords has been a dismal failure. Menkhaus observes that although this track record of failed state building can partially be attributed to myopic Somali leadership and uninspired external diplomacy, these efforts to resuscitate a central government in Somalia face significant structural obstacles as well.

One obstacle is the weak resource base a Somali state can draw on, a constraint that makes the revival of a large, conventional state claiming omni-competence across a wide range of policy areas a pipe dream (Menkhaus, 2006/7). Although the resolve on such a ‘Greater Somalia’ state structure is reasonable from the perspective of Somali leaders anxious to revive an expansive patronage system and build a capacity for repression, such a prospect is simply untenable for the near future. Moreover, the rise of Islamic Courts in Somalia threatens the greater Somalia project. But while the Islamists undoubtedly have the best chance of financing and holding together a central government, they will be able to do so only if significant external help continues to flow from Islamic states. Even then, the movement is expected to come under considerable strain to maintain a modest administration and public security force.

The most important lesson to be learned from the present tragedy is the recognition that Somali society has been torn apart because blood ties have been manipulated by the elites in order to gain or retain access to unearned resources (A. S. Aynab, personal communication, April 16, 2016; A.B. Mohammed, personal communication, April 18, 2016; A.H. Hussein personal communication, April 25, 2016; A. Miraaf, personal communication, April 15, 2016). The centrality of kinship in understanding contemporary Somali politics and its tendency towards fragmentation and anarchy which has long been stressed by a number of scholars (Besteman, 1996; Doornbos, 2002; Lewis, 1993; Little, 2012; Menkhaus, 2006/7; Samatar, 1992; Tripodi, 1999) is also established in this study. As noted by Samatar (1992) the opportunistic methods by which groups and individuals have marshalled support to gain or retain access to public resources has finally destroyed the very institution that laid the golden egg (Samatar, 1992). The void which followed the breakdown of the state led to a scramble in which each faction or clan assembled a make-shift Bantustan-like structure. The tragic events in Mogadishu since the demise of Siad Barre’s regime, and the intra-clan fighting in Burao and Berbera in the northern region, are clear manifestations of the bottomless nature of the security catharsis into which millions of Somalis have fallen. As factional rivalry proliferates, as the ability of the commanders to provide for their clients declines, and as all public norms of civility and respect for the lives of others vanish, so social and individual paranoia simply merge. Thus, in spite of the supposed power of the loyalty of blood-ties, the rules of the jungle, everyone against all, become supreme. This is the barbarism that has characterized Somalia since 1991.

One of the main findings of this research is the relationship between state failure and terrorism. This study established that states afflicted by chronic state failures are more likely to host terrorist movements that commit transnational attacks, have their nationals commit transnational terrorist attacks, and are more likely to be targeted by transnational terrorists (such as Al-Qaeda and ISIS) themselves (A. S. Aynab, personal communication, April 16, 2016; A.B. Mohammed, personal communication, April 18, 2016; A.H. Hussein personal communication, April 25, 2016; A. Miraaf, personal communication, April 15, 2016). A number of studies have demonstrated that failed and failing states promote transnational Terrorism (Marchal, 2007; Medani, 2002; Moller, 2009; Mulugetta, 2009; Piazza, 2008).

As can be seen, this study concurs with a growing body of scholars and policymakers who have raised concerns that failed and failing states pose a danger to international security because they produce conditions under which transnational terrorist groups can thrive. Consequently, the rise of Political Islam, particularly the *Al Shabaab* group has worsened the political and security situation in Somalia. Basically, the *Al-Shabaab* group is a serious threat to national security as it always attacks Somalian civilians, particularly governments workers, parliamentary members, senior officials, ministers and journalists.

Somalia, one of the most impoverished countries in the world, has seen a number of fundamental Islamist extremist groups come and go since its collapse in 1991. Some experts mention as al-Shabab's originator and the incubator for many of its leaders, the *Al-Ittihad Al-Islami* (AIAI) group, a militant Salafi extremist group that emerged in the 1990s following the collapse of the Siad Barre regime and the subsequent outbreak of civil war. *Al-Ittihad Al-Islami*, had wanted to create an Islamist state in Somalia and was designated a terrorist group by the United States' State Department in the days after the 9/11 attacks in 2001. In 2003, AIAI and some radical youth members created a political front which sought the establishment of a 'Greater Somalia' under fundamentalist Islamic rule. These hardliners ultimately joined forces with an alliance of Sharia courts, known as the Islamic Courts Union (ICU), serving as its youth militia in the fight to defeat Mogadishu's competing warlords. In due course, *Al-Shabab* and the ICU seized control of the capital in June 2006, a triumph that stoked fears of spillover jihadist violence in neighboring Ethiopia, a majority Christian nation.

As can be seen, the Somalia debacle highlights problems when it comes to the role played by internal factors as well as external actors in the past and present. As a result, many efforts have been made to resuscitate the central authority and rebuild state security but obviously all those attempts have been unsuccessful so far (Burk, 1999; Little, 2012; Patman, 1997). The reasons for the failures have yielded various explanations.

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

Somalia is one among many instances of civil war triggered by the demise of the Cold War. What makes Somalia an intriguing case is the conjunction of a set of different factors that shape the conflict obtaining in the country. The absence of an operational state in Somalia has made the rest of the world apprehensive as well. Under those circumstances, domestic and international security is threatened by poorly controlled borders; illegal trade and weapons smuggling that have been rife since 1991. More importantly, the Somali crisis is in essence a national conflict with important regional tentacles, including an Ethiopia-Eritrea proxy war which has helped to fuel and prolong the Somalia security crisis. As is evident, failed states pose one of the strongest challenges to national security and international peace and stability. Finding a comprehensive and effective answer to the challenges of human rights violations, terrorism, or poverty and economic under-development requires some understanding of how to resuscitate failed states like Somalia. This study argues that powerful states can assist by performing the more modest role of promoting and guaranteeing power-sharing agreements between rival groups within failed states.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This study makes a number of recommendations vis-à-vis the situation in Somalia which is an instructive case of state failure. These suggestions include:

Somalis should be left to decide their own leaders, however long-drawn out the process. Hence, the international community cannot successfully develop alternative and enduring governance institutions inside states dominated by warlords simply by writing constitutions and holding elections. Successful system change requires deep domestic roots or organic solutions in a country's political economy and ideational culture, if it is to be sustained.

Warlordism works and endures as a system because it brings benefits to powerful political entrepreneurs who keep the population adequately satisfied to avert rebellion. Change will happen only when people believe that transforming the status quo is worth the cost. Some of

the drivers of change are economic groups that are most aggrieved by the warlord system and have the greatest hope of bettering their circumstances if a stable state re-emerges.

The international community should be warned against treating Political Islam as a monolith or synonymous with terrorism. As such, understanding differences among Islamists is a crucial intellectual and policy exercise. Thus, the failure by the West to engage the Islamic Courts in Somalia was a missed opportunity that could have contributed to the country's peace process.

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