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Abstract

Even though the war on terror proclaimed by President Bush after 9/11 2001 has mainly focused on Afghanistan and Iraq, the Horn of Africa has also featured quite prominently. The US assumes that this subregion is particularly prone to terrorism, both in the sense of a battlefield, breeding ground and hiding place for terrorists—especially of the Islamist or Jihadist brand. These assumptions have motivated the launch of several regional counter-terrorist initiatives. Closer analysis of the historical record and the available statistics, however, provide no empirical support for these assumptions. On the contrary, the incidence of terrorism on the Horn is generally quite low, most terrorist incidents are politically motivated, and those in which religion plays a role have mainly been perpetrated by a sectarian Christian movement, the Lord's Resistance Army.

The paper then focuses on Somalia, showing how statelessness has persisted since 1991, yet with some redeeming features and significant elements of order. This incipient stateless order was upset by US attempts, in the Spring of 2006, of forging a counterterrorist alliance of warlords. This provoked a countervailing alliance of Islamic courts which emerged victorious in the summer of 2006, taking control of Mogadishu and most of the rest of the country. This in turn provoked an Ethiopian military intervention in December 2006, ostensibly in

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support of the otherwise moribund and impotent Transitional Federal Government and with explicit US support. Having defeated the Union of Islamic Courts, however, neither the TFG nor Ethiopia, the African Union or the United States have been able to restore order in the country which has, moreover, been designated as a battle ground for the war against the infidels by the Al Qaeda network.

1. Preface

The Horn of Africa has long attracted the attention of external players, first in the era of European colonialism and then during the Cold War when it became an arena for the global struggle between East and West. Most recently, it has drawn the attention of the United States as a potential hotspot of international terrorism, as a consequence of which Washington has launched several programs, all intended to prevent or defeat terrorism in the Horn of Africa.

The paper critically investigates some of the underlying assumptions of these program, finding most of them to be unfounded. It then proceeds to zoom in on Somalia, which has especially been in the spotlight in recent years. The article provides an account and analysis of the issues of nationalism, religion, clanism and state-building in post-independence Somalia as a preliminary to a more detailed study of the recent crisis, pitting a weak transitional government backed by neighboring Ethiopia against a loose union of Islamic courts. It concludes by outlining two possible scenarios for the future—an optimistic, but unlikely and a more likely, but profoundly pessimistic one.

2. External Powers in the Horn of Africa

The Horn of Africa (HoA) subregion is here defined as comprising Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan, but other analysts have included Kenya in the subregion, while some have excluded Sudan from it.[1] One also sometimes encounters the term "Greater HoA", defined as comprising the Horn itself as well as Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. In-between the two is the delimitation of the subregional organization IGAD (Intergovernmental Authority on Development), to which Kenya and Uganda, but not Tanzania, belong.[2]
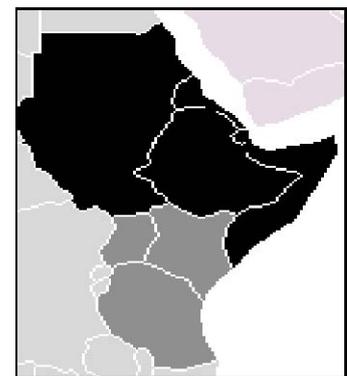
Not only the United States but other external powers have long played important role in the HoA. During the scramble for Africa in the late 19th Century,[3] both the UK, France and Italy were eager to impose their colonial suzerainty over parts of the subregion.

- The French established themselves in French Somaliland, i.e. the present Djibouti.[4]
- The Italians made bits for Somalia where they established a colony in the southern parts,[5] as well at for the present Eritrea and Ethiopia. They were, however, defeated by the latter in 1896 in the famous battle of Adwa.[6]
- The lion's share was, as elsewhere, taken by the British, who not only established themselves in British Somaliland, i.e. the present Somaliland. They also beat the French to the control of the Sudan (at Fashoda)[7] over which they established a peculiar form of condominium rule jointly with Egypt.[8]

As elsewhere in the world, however, the United States showed no particular interest in establishing colonies. On the other hand, the Ethiopian empire embarked on a project of territorial expansion into neighboring territories, representing a form of intra-African imperialism.[9]

The colonial period also saw isolated instances of what is most appropriately called national liberation, but might today have been labeled "Islamist terrorism," especially in Sudan and British Somaliland. The Mahdist revolt from 1881-1885 against combined Egyptian-Ottoman rule was led by Muhammed Ahmad (1843-1885) who proclaimed himself Mahdi, i.e. "righteous".[10] Demanding the establishment of an Islamic state and the imposition of shari'a, he proclaimed a jihad against the infidels, thus launching what essentially amounted to a war of national independence for Sudan. His followers were a blend of devout ordinary Muslims and former slave traders, whose business had been damaged by the British anti-slavery raids[11] and the imposition by the UK of anti-slavery legislation in Egypt (hence also in Sudan). The armed struggle of the Mahdist Dervishes was remarkably successful, leading by 1884 to an Egyptian withdrawal followed by the fall of Khartoum to the Dervishes and the establishment of the Islamic state, the Mahdiyah. Upon the death in 1885 of the Mahdi, his successor Abdallahi ibn Muhammad established a khalifate, which proceeded with the jihad , e.g. with raids into southern Sudan and even Ethiopia and Egypt.[12] These offensives, however, brought the UK into the struggle in a big way. London in 1895 this issued an order to reconquer Sudan, in which endeavor the British forces finally succeeded in the battle of Omdurman in September 1898, followed by a total collapse of the Mahdist forces in November 1898.[13] In the following decades the Anglo-Egyptian condominium rule saw a few small Mahdist rebellions (in 1900, 1902/03, 1904, 1908 and 1916), but none that represented a serious challenge.[14]

Even though it followed the tradition of indirect rule, British colonialism in northern Somalia was contested by parts of the local population, partly inspired by the Mahdist revolt in Sudan, and led by the Sheik Mohammed Abdile Hassan. In 1895 he launched a religiously-inspired revolt (the Darawiish or Dervish revolt) in 1895. It featured guerilla warfare, but also established de facto

statehood in liberated parts of the territory. This revolt by the "Mad Mullah" (as he was called by the British) was only quelled around 1920, partly by means of rather brutal air strikes.[15]

Whereas the First World War had no major impact on the HoA, its successor produced as certain rearrangement of the colonial map, as the UK managed to dislodge Italy from its possessions. These included Ethiopia which the fascist regime in the 1930s had finally managed (with the utmost brutality) to subdue and incorporate it into its Africa Orientale Italiana.[16] Having liberated Ethiopia, the UK in 1942 recognized its independence while maintaining its hold on parts of its territory and playing around with ideas of a "Greater Somalia" and/or an East African federation until 1954.[17] By and large, however, the colonial map maintained intact until the wave of independence hit the HoA in the late 1950s. As in most other parts of the continent, independence was achieved around 1960 and generally without major conflicts, yet followed by a slight reshuffling of the territorial cards. Formerly Italian Eritrea was thus first federated with independent Ethiopia and subsequently incorporated directly,[18] while British and Italian Somalia merged almost immediately after independence.[19]

By that time, however, the subregion was partly subjected to the Cold War dynamics, coming to be viewed by both East and West as part of the "grand chessboard" of global geopolitics,[20] albeit merely an arena of minor importance, where involvement mainly took place in the form of arms provisions, sometimes in return for base rights.[21] Because of the weakness of the states in the subregion, however, even such a minor and half-hearted involvement by a great or superpower could make a tremendous difference. Even though the HoA was thus very much "penetrated" by the global East-West conflict, the impact of the latter fell short of "overlay" in the terminology of Barry Buzan and associates.[22] The pattern of alignment was neither altogether clear nor particularly durable as the "ties of amity and enmity" to a large extent remained indigenous—the most persistent being the perennial Ethiopian-Somali rivalry.

As argued by Jeffrey Lefebvre, "one cannot be friends with both Ethiopia and Somalia. Those who wish to meddle in the affairs of the Horn must be prepared to choose sides."[23] During the Cold War, both superpowers came to realize this. The United States thus supported Ethiopia during the reign of Emperor Hailie Selassie in return for some base rights in what is now Eritrea, i.e. the "Kagnew Station", the importance of which did, however, gradually decline. Partly as a result thereof, but also because of the Marxist and increasingly pro-Soviet leaning of the Derg in Addis Ababa under the dictator Mengistu Haile Mariam,[24] Washington gradually shifted its support to Somalia.[25] The Soviet Union, in turn, supported the avowedly Afro-Marxist Siyad Barre regime in Somalia until around 1976 when it gradually shifted its support to the Derg in Ethiopia. The

Soviet ally (or even proxy) Cuba provided troops for the Derg's defense against Somalia as well as, to some extent, its counterinsurgency campaigns against the various liberation movements—albeit significantly not for the struggle against the EPFL (Eritrean People's Liberation Front), which Havana had previously supported.[26]

The USSR already began its almost complete disengagement from all of Africa during the Gorbachev era,[27] thereby removing the Cold War dynamics of alignment that had previously pushed the USA engage itself in the HoA. In the immediate aftermath of the Cold War the United States nevertheless became involved in Somalia in the form of a humanitarian intervention (vide infra). However, when this failed dismally, the USA disengaged almost as completely as Russia, not only from Somalia or the HoA subregion, but from Africa in general.[28]

Throughout the Cold War period, the USA was on quite friendly terms with Sudan most of the time, albeit with a considerable cooling off of relations in the period when Nimeiri was "flirting" with the USSR, as well as after the assumption of power in Khartoum by the National Islamic Front (NIF) in 1989.[29] They did, however, maintain an engagement, e.g. with regard to the North-South conflict in which they at various stages sought to play the role of "honest broker."[30] What has hampered these praiseworthy efforts is, however, the "terror issue," to which we shall now turn.

3. The War on Terror and the HoA

Many analysts have argued that the terrorist attacks against the USA on the 11th of September "changed everything." This is surely an exaggeration, but there is little doubt that it did have a profound interest on the US attitude towards the rest of the world and that this was predestined to impact the world order, considering the US position in the unipolar world.[31]

3.1 The Global War on Terror and the Horn of Africa

Following the 11 September 2001 attacks against the United States, US President Bush proclaimed a "war on terror."

> On September the 11th, enemies of freedom committed an act of war against our country (…) Our war on terror (…) will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated. (…) We will direct every resource at our command—every means of diplomacy, every tool of intelligence, every instrument of law enforcement, every financial influence, and every necessary weapon of war—to the disruption and to the defeat of the global terror network.[32]

The United Nations implicitly gave its approval when the Security Council in resolution 1368 (12th of September 2001) explicitly called terrorism a "threat to international peace and security" and referred to the "inherent right of self-defense" endorsed by the UN Charter.[33] This was echoed by NATO's formal activation of the article five of the North Atlantic Charter, i.e. its collective defense clause.[34] The proverbial opinio juris also seems to be in agreement on the permissibility of even anticipatory or pre-emptive self-defense against such threats, as this seems to be the only way of parrying them—e.g. by attacking such known bases of terrorists as had been established in Afghanistan. To wage a "war" on terror thus seems to be in conformity with international law in the sense of jus ad bellum, from which one can, on the other hand, neither conclude that the actual war is waged in conformity with the jus in bello criteria nor that it is wise to wage it.[35]

Even considering the US tradition of declaring "wars" against such phenomena as drugs, crime, abortion, and even obesity, to declare war is still something special.[36] It signifies that "the gloves come off" and that normal rules and behavioral constraints no longer apply. It thus meets the criteria of "securitization"—a term invented by Ole Wæver for the "speech act" of discursively constructing a problem as being of existential importance and extreme urgency, hence warranting a resort to "extraordinary measures."[37] It has thus served to legitimate a curtailment of civil liberties in the countries of the West and elsewhere in the name of national security against terrorism,[38] but it has also served to legitimate military actions.

The military element of the war on terror has been lumped together by the United States as "Operation Enduring Freedom," (OEF),[39] comprising several campaigns: the war against the Taliban in Afghanistan (OEF-Afghanistan) followed by the OEF-Philippines, the OEF-Pankisi Gorge and two which relate directly to Africa: The OEF-Trans Sahara is the military component of the somewhat broader Trans Sahara Counterterrorism Initiative (PSCI) which is a successor to what was called the Pan-Sahel Initiative (PSI) from 2002 to 2004. The OEF-Horn of Africa is a follow-up to the EACTI (East Africa Counter-Terrorism Initiative) program and includes the Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTFHOA).[40] While it remained, at the time of writing, subordinated to the US Central Command (CENTCOM), the decision had been taken to transfer the CJTF-HOA to the new Africa Command (AFRICOM) with initial operating capability (IOC) scheduled for October 2007 and expected to be fully operational a year later.[41] The headquarters of CJTF-HOA is at Camp Lemonier in Djibouti. Its area of operations comprises the territories of Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, the Seychelles, Somalia, Sudan and Yemen, and its mission is described as

> … operations and training to assist host nations to combat terrorism in order to establish a secure environment and enable regional stability. The mission is focused on detecting, disrupting and ultimately defeating transnational terrorist groups operating in the region—denying safe havens, external support and material assistance for terrorist activity. CJTF-HOA counters the re-emergence of transnational terrorism in the region through civil-military operations and support of non-governmental organization operations, enhancing the long-term stability of the region.

The activities it lists on its website are mainly civilian such as "providing clean water, functional schools, improved roadways and improved medical facilities," i.e. it portrays itself as devoted to "winning hearts and minds" tasks.[42] Besides this, however, it has also been involved in military operations, e.g. in Somalia, to which we shall return in due course.

Even prior to these new initiatives, however, terrorism had impacted the US policy towards the Horn of Africa, especially as far as Sudan was concerned. Under the auspices of its "rogue states" doctrine[43] the United States had kept an eye on especially Sudan because of its Islamist regime and supposed links with international terrorism,[44] and in 1993 the country was first placed on the US State Department's list of countries sponsoring international terrorism.[45] Following the terrorist attacks on the US embassies in Nairobi and Dar Es Salaam in August 1998,[46] the United States even launched a missile attack against a the a-Shifa pharmaceutical plant in Sudan, alleged to be a covert production site for chemical weapons (including the dreaded VX agent)—a mistake which was later (almost) admitted.[47] In the wake of 11 September, Sudan pledged its support for the US.[48] It has not yet, however, managed to be stricken from the US list of "state sponsors of terrorism," even though in the most recent issue of the US State Department's Country Reports on Terrorism it is described as nothing less than "a strong partner in the War on Terror" which "aggressively pursued terrorist operations directly involving threats to U.S. interests and personnel in Sudan."[49]

3.2 The Horn of Africa: A Hotspot of Terrorism?

It has become a commonplace in the US discourse, including the academic literature, that the Horn of Africa (or, more broadly, East Africa) is a particularly dangerous place, i.e. a hotspot of terrorism, particularly of the "jihadist" kind.[50] The arguments in favor of this view vary: Some allege that it is the weakness of the states in the region which make them particularly susceptible to terrorism and that, a fortiori, collapsed states such as Somalia will serve as staging areas, hiding places or operational bases for terrorist attacks.[51] Others argue that extremist versions of Islam are making headway in the subregion, having

already become established in Sudan and now moving also to Somalia and Kenya, and that this is likely to produce more jihadist terrorism.[52]

However, the available statistical data do not seem to really support the alarmist view of the threat.[53] Table 1 is compiled as a complete listing of all the terrorists incidents in the region, based on the incident records in the "Terrorism Knowledge Base," which is referred to as the authoritative database by the very same US Counterterrorism Office which has placed the spotlight on East Africa.[54] It has taken 1998 as the starting year, for the simple reason that this was the first year with data for both international and domestic terrorism. However, 1998 was special because of two almost simultaneous incidents, i.e. the aforementioned attacks on the USA embassies in Kenya and Tanzania on the 7th of August, which account for about one-third of the total fatalities for the entire period and almost ninety percent of the total recorded injuries. The analytical tables 2-4 have therefore also included totals excluding the 1998 figures, i.e. totals for 1999-2005. All the categorizations are based on the present author's interpretation of the "raw" incident and group descriptions in the database.

The first observation is that neither the total number of terrorist incidents in the region, nor the numbers of deaths or injuries from terrorist attacks seem particularly alarming. Around eleven incidents on average per year with an annual death toll of less than hundred people for the HoA subregion as a whole (See Table 2). Secondly, as is apparent from Table 3, with the exception of the two incidents on the 7th of August 1998, most terrorism has been politically, rather than religiously motivated. Moreover, when religion has been the driving force, it has usually not been Islam but Christianity which has spurred the terrorists into action, albeit the particularly perverted and sectarian form of Christianity represented by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), operating against Uganda from bases in Sudan.[55] Twenty times as many people have thus perished in terrorist attacks perpetrated by "Christians" than in ones launched by the dreaded Islamist terrorists of the Al Qaeda type. Thirdly, the terrorist risk seems to vary quite a lot from country to country as set out in Table 4. Uganda clearly comes out as the most terrorist-ridden of the eight, at least if the two embassy attacks are excluded. The table also reveals mainland Tanzania as a very secure country, as all the (small-scale) terrorist incidents have taken place on Zanzibar.

Table 1: Terrorist Incidents in East Africa, 1998-2005								
Country	Year	Date	Inc.	Inj.	Fat.	Perp.	Nature	Targ.
Djibouti	2004	18/01	B	6	0	?	?	Train
Eritrea	2003	10/08	As	1	2	EIJM	Isl	Car
	2004	01/03	B	12	3	EIJM	Isl	Hotel
	2004	24/05	B	50	3	?	?	Gov.
Ethiopia	1999	03/04	K	0	0	ONLF	Pol	Aid
	1999	13/11	B	1	2	?	?	Train
	2000	22/03	LM	1	14	OLF	Pol	Kenyans
	2000	17/08	R	0	6	?	?	El. mon.
	2002	23/07	B	?	?	OLF	Pol	Vehicle
	2002	11/09	B	38	1	?	?	Hotel
	2003	19/01	M	1	0	?	?	?
	2003	20/03	B	12	0	?	?	Hotel
	2003	10/09	AA	?	1	?	?	Aid
	2003	26/09	B	9	2	?	?	Train
	2004	04/01	B	0	0	?	?	Vehicle
	2004	05/04	AA	0	0	OLF	Pol	Education
	2004	02/05	AA	3	1	OLF	Pol	Business
	2004	24/06	B	?	?	OLF	Pol	Gov.
Kenya	1998	07/08	B/S	5,000	291	AQ	Isl	US Emb.
	2002	28/11	R	0	0	AQ	Isl	Aircraft
	2002	28/11	B/S	80	13	AQ	Isl	Hotel
	2002	18/12	B	0	0	?	?	Discotec
	2002	20/12	Ar	0	0	?	?	Discotec
	2003	08/03	B	0	0	?	?	Mosque
Somalia	1998	15/04	K	?	?	?	?	Aid
	1999	19/09	B	0	0	ULA	Isl	Oil pipeline
	2001	16/11	AA	9	18	?	?	Quran School
	2003	28/07	B	0	0	?	?	Hotel
	2004	20/06	K	?	?	?	?	NGO
	2004	04/10	As	0	1	?	?	Aid worker
	2005	09/02	As	0	1	AI	Isl	Journ.
	2005	17/02	B	6	2	?	?	Hotel
	2005	03/05	B	38	15	?	?	Gov.
	2005	11/07	AA	?	1	?	?	NGO
	2005	06/11	AA	?	5	?	?	Gov. target
Sudan	1998	02/07	B	?	?	?	?	Airport
	1998	02/07	B	?	?	?	?	Power plant
	1999	18/02	K	0	4	SPLA	Pol	NGO
	2001	23/01	B	0	0	SPLA	Pol	Oil pipeline
	2001	05/08	?	?	?	SPLA	Pol	Oil pipeline
	2002	26/04	AA	0	60	LRA	Chr	Funeral Party
	2002	15/10	H	?	?	?	?	Saudi aircraft
	2005	05/7	AA	0	5	LRA	Chr	Vehicle
	2005	05/7	AA	11	6	LRA	Chr	NGO
	2005	05/11	AA	1	1	LRA	Chr	Air worker
Tanzania	1998	07/08	B/S	77	10	AQ	Isl	US Emb.
Tanzania (Zanzibar)	1999	23/12	B	0	0	?	?	Beer depot
	2004	20/03	B	0	0	?	?	Restaurant
	2004	20/03	B	0	0	?	?	Gov.
	2000	12/11	B	1	0	?	?	Gov.

	1998	04/04	B	2	0	?	?	Hotel
	1998	04/04	B	5	2	?	?	Hotel
	1998	12/07	B	3	1	?	?	Restaurant
	1998	18/07	B	?	?	?	?	Civilians
	1998	25/08	B	6	30	NALU	Pol	Bus
	1998	27/11	AA	17	16	LRA	Chr	Aid
	1999	01/03	B	4	0	?	?	Restaurant
	1999	01/03	K	0	8	IH	Pol	Tourists
	1999	10/04	B	4	0	?	?	Taxi park
	1999	11/04	B	13	2	?	?	Taxi park
	1999	14/04	B	35	4	?	?	Restaurant
	1999	24/04	B	16	5	?	?	Stadium
	1999	06/05	B	1	0	?	?	Civilians
	1999	07/05	B	10	1	?	?	Civilians
	1999	30/05	B	12	2	AMM	Isl	Restaurant
	2000	04/05	K	0	0	LRA	Chr	Rel.
	2000	01/10	As	?	1	LRA	Chr	Rel.
	2000	09/10	B	60	9	LRA	Chr	Disco
	2001	14/03	B	3	2	?	?	Civilians
	2001	16/03	B	4	1	?	?	Civilians
	2001	07/07	B	13	1	?	?	Civilians
	2002	24/07	K	?	?	LRA	Chr	Gov.
Uganda	2003	01/09	Am	?	22	LRA	Chr	Vehicle
	2003	13/10	AA	20	22	LRA	Chr	Restaurant
	2003	18/11	AA	?	12	LRA	Chr	Civilians
	2004	01/02	AA	?	8	LRA	Chr	Civilians
	2004	21/02	B	60	239	LRA	Chr	Refugees
	2004	05/02	AA	50	47	LRA	Chr	Refugees
	2004	14/04	AA	8	13	LRA	Chr	Vehicle
	2004	18/04	K	0	0	LRA	Chr	Rel.
	2004	17/05	AA	10	7	LRA	Chr	Vehicles
	2004	20/12	AA	1	2	LRA	Chr	Vehicle
	2005	19/01	As	0	1	LRA	Chr	MP
	2005	23/02	AA	7	1	LRA	Chr	Civilians
	2005	26/02	Ae	8	1	LRA	Chr	Civilians
	2005	09/03	AA	16	6	LRA	Chr	Civilians
	2005	15/03	AA	7	2	LRA	Chr	Civilians
	2005	26/03	K	13	?	LRA	Chr	Civilians
	2005	05/05	AA	?	4	LRA	Chr	Vehicle
	2005	05/05	AA	14	10	LRA	Chr	IDPs
	2005	10/07	AA	?	14	LRA	Chr	Civilians
	2005	18/11	AA	?	5	LRA	Chr	Vehicle
	2005	21/11	AA	5	12	LRA	Chr	Vehicle
	2005	13/12	AA	?	8	LRA	Chr	Vehicle

Legend: AA: Armed Attack; AI: Al-Islah; Am: Ambush; AMM: Ahmadiya Muslim Mission; AQ: Al Qaeda; Ar: Arson; As: Assass; B: Bomb; C: Christian; EIJM; Eritrean Islamic Jihad Movement; H: Hijacking; I: Islamist; IH: Interahamwe; K: Kidnapping; LM: Land Mine; LRA: Lord's Resistance Army; M: Mortar; NALU: National Army for the Liberation of Uganda; OLF: Oromo Liberation Front; ONLF: Ogaden National Liberation Front; P: Political; R: Rocket; S: Suicide attack; SPLA: Sudan People's Liberation Army; Tanz(Z): Tanzania (Zanzibar); ULA: Ummah Liberation Army

Table 2: Terrorism in East Africa			
Year	Inc.	Inj.	Fat.
1998	11	5,110	350
1999	14	96	28
2000	6	62	30
2001	6	29	22
2002	9	118	74
2003	10	43	61
2004	18	200	324
2005	20	126	100
Av. 1998-2005	11.8	723.0	123.7
Av. 1999-2005	11.9	96.3	91.3
Legend: Inc: Incidents; Inj: Injuries; Fat: Fatalities; Av: Annual Average			

Table 4: Terrorism by Country			
Country	Inc.	Inj.	Fat.
Dibouti	1	6	0
Eritrea	3	63	8
Ethiopia	15	191	43
Kenya (A)	6	5,080	304
Kenya (B)	5	80	13
Somalia	11	53	43
Sudan Tanzania	10	12	76
(A) Tanzania	5	78	10
(B) Tanzania	4	1	0
(C) Tanzania	0	0	0
(D) Uganda	4	1	0
	44	427	521
Legend: Inc: Incidents; Inj: Injuries; Fat: Fatalities; (Kenya and Tanzania) A: Total; B): without embassy bombings; (Tanzania) C: Mainland; D: only Zanzibar			

Table 3: Terrorism by Motivation			
Motive	Inc.	Inj.	Fat.
Unknown	43	284	76
Political	11	10	57
Christian	32	308	534
Islam	8	105	21
Emb. attacks	2	5,077	301

It thus seems that the threat from (what the West calls) terrorism, and even more so that of Islamic terrorism, is blown completely out of proportion as far as East Africa and the HoA is concerned. This may not only be the West's fault, as it may also be in the interest of governments in the region to exaggerate the threat. First of all, positioning themselves as the allies of the United States in its global "war on terror" is likely to gain them some much needed goodwill. Secondly, it also makes them eligible for support from the EACTI pool, e.g. for military or police upgrading programs. Thirdly, and more problematically, it may allow governments to label their opponents terrorists, thereby allowing them to resort to "extraordinary measures" to defeat them.

Even though HoA is not yet a terrorist hotspot—and especially not one of Islamist terrorism—one cannot rule out that it may become one in the future. In this connection, concerns have been raised about the alleged spread of particular forms of Islam in the subregion.[56] Others have, however, pointed out that the predominant forms of Islam throughout the region (mainly various forms of Sufism) have been quite moderate and apolitical.[57] Even though there have surely been attempts at Islamization and at garnering popular support for "jihadism," e.g. using various Islamic charities and NGOs as instruments, these have generally been unsuccessfull.[58] The only country where Islamism ever really established itself was Sudan and even here, the tide seems to have turned, e.g. with the split between the government and the Muslim Brotherhood of Al Turabi.[59] Whether something similar might have happened, or been about the

happen, in Somalia is the question to which we shall now turn in a rather elaborate case study of this troubled country.

4. Case Study: Somalia: A breeding Ground for Terrorists?

Since 9/11 Somalia has attracted growing attention as allegedly one of the most likely breeding grounds for terrorism. The actions taken by the United States and its allies (mainly Ethiopia) in the years 2006-07 seem to have pushed this troubled country over the edge, plunging it back into chaos. As a background to the account and analysis of these recent events, a brief account of the historical background is provided , highlighting some of the recurrent themes which also play a role today—nationalism and irredentism, clanism, various "state pathologies," the economy and religion.

4.1 Somali Nationalism

The fact that the Somali are ethnically homogenous may help explain their strong sense of nationhood, notwithstanding the fact that there has never been a state to serve as a superstructure on the national community. In fact the closest the Somali ever came to being united in one state-like political structure was during the aforementioned short-lived Italian empire in East Africa. It should therefore come as no surprise that the lack of correspondence between the "imagined community" of the Somali nation and the political realities have taken the form of a nationalism which has featured elements of both secessionism and irredentism—the former because members of the Somali nation were "trapped" in multinational states such as Ethiopia or Kenya, and the latter because the nation was not united in one state.

Partly because of the country's location it was bound to draw the attention of both the Arabs[60] and later the Europeans, but also that of the rulers of the most state-like polity in Africa, the cohesive and expansive Ethiopia. Hence the division between the Ethiopia and the three European powers France, Italy and Great Britain. The latter controlled both the northern parts, governed as a separate entity, and the southern-most parts, administered as part of Kenya, whereas France controlled the present Djibouti, the Italians the eastern parts and Ethiopia the north-western parts of the lands populated by Somali nationals.

Considering the strong sense of nationhood among the Somali, it was almost inevitable that independent Somalia was born with an irredentist agenda. Indeed, the irredentist aspirations were clearly depicted in the flag of the new republic, in which the five points of the star represent the components of the ideal Somalia,

comprising the present Djibouti, the Republic of Somalia (de facto bifurcated at present into Somalia and Somaliland), the Northeastern part of Kenya and what used to be called the Ogaden province of Ethiopia, now called the Somali Regional State.[61] Unsurprisingly, this nationalist project led to wars, first the low-key "Shifta war" with Kenya (1963-1968)[62] and then the "Ogaden War" with Ethiopia (1977-78)—in both cases commencing with Somali support for indigenous, secessionist rebel movements.[63] The latter war might be seen as a consequence of the pursuit by both sides of "antithetical security goals" stemming from particular conceptions of statehood, as argued by Terrence Lyons:

> Ethiopia's security has been predicated on maintaining territorial integrity and building cohesion for its multinational population. This required maintaining control of the Ogaden. Somalia's security goals have aimed at creating a nation-state that incorporated the Somalis living in the Ogaden. Actions by either of these states in pursuit of their conception of security therefore increased the perceived insecurity of the other.[64]

Somali irredentism also goes a long way towards explaining the somewhat ambivalent attitude of both Kenya and Ethiopia towards Somalia even today—as well as Somali sensitivity towards any Ethiopian interference in its domestic affairs. Seen from Nairobi or, even more so, Addis Ababa, the ideal Somalia is one that is just strong and cohesive enough to be able to feed and care for its citizens, lest they end up as refugees across the border, but not strong enough to act on its latent irredentist national agenda—or, even better, one that is governed by a regime which is totally dependent for its remaining in power on the support from Ethiopia, as is the case of the present Transitional Federal Government (TFG), to which we shall return in due course. During the first phase of the Somali civil war, Ethiopia thus interfered by supporting various armed factions such as the DFSS (Democratic Front for the Salvation of Somalia) and the SNM (Somali National Movement),[65] just as the government in Addis Ababa has done in the recent crisis.

Viewed from Somalia, any interference from Ethiopia is quite understandably interpreted as attempts to curb the legitimate aspirations of the Somali nation, both in Somalia itself and in the Somali-majority parts of Ethiopia, with the inhabitants of which the Somalis feel a deep sense of community. Even though it probably helps that the post-Mengistu Ethiopian constitution with its "ethnic federalism" grants greater autonomy to the Somali inhabitants than any previous regime, it is not without problems, inter alia because it formally allows the constituent parts to secede from the federation.[66] This is likely to make the government in Addis Ababa even more concerned about any secessionist aspirations and any Somali support for such movements, such as the WSLF (Western Somali Liberation Front) and its successors in the Ogaden region of

Ethiopia. Even in the recent past, there has indeed been such support—viewed by Ethiopia as Somali interference in its internal affairs—including some terrorist attacks in Ethiopia itself in the 1990s perpetrated by the group Al-Ittihad al-Islamiya (AIAI), to which we shall return below. At the time it provoked an Ethiopian military intervention which, in turn, merely exacerbated anti-Ethiopian sentiments in Somalia.[67]

Had the Somali flag been designed today, it might have featured a sixth point, symbolizing yet another part of the Somali nation, i.e. the diaspora, which is scattered across the world.[68] Various conflict theories, including the fashionable and influential one of Paul Collier, have found that the presence of diasporas in rich countries tends to intensify and prolong armed conflicts in the respective countries origin of these diasporas.[69] The links are probably not nearly as clear as claimed by Collier, as others have pointed to the occasional peace-promoting potential of diasporas, but it is probably fair to say that large diasporas add an element of unpredictability to armed conflicts, as they represent actors who are both involved in the conflict and detached from its consequences.[70]

The War on Terror has further complicated matters. Regardless of whether Collier's thesis is true or not, or whether his findings can simply be translated into the thesis that diasporas tend to support terrorism, the United States seems to believe in both hypotheses. Washington thus harbors strong suspicions that at least some members of such diasporas contribute to financing terrorism, either by sending remittances to relatives in Somalia who may, in turn, support terrorism or by directly siphoning off funds to Al Qaeda and other terrorist groups from the remittance flow. The USA therefore in November 2001 cracked down on the Al Barakaat bank, which was the main source of remittances sent to the Somali civilians, transferring far greater funds than total international humanitarian aid, via a hawala system.[71] Needless to say, this move did not really improve the already strained relationship between the United States and the suffering civilian population of Somalia in desperate need of these funds. Fortunately, the informal banking sector in Somalia proved resilient and diversified enough to find other avenues for remittance transfers, thereby averting the humanitarian disaster that would otherwise have been inevitable.[72]
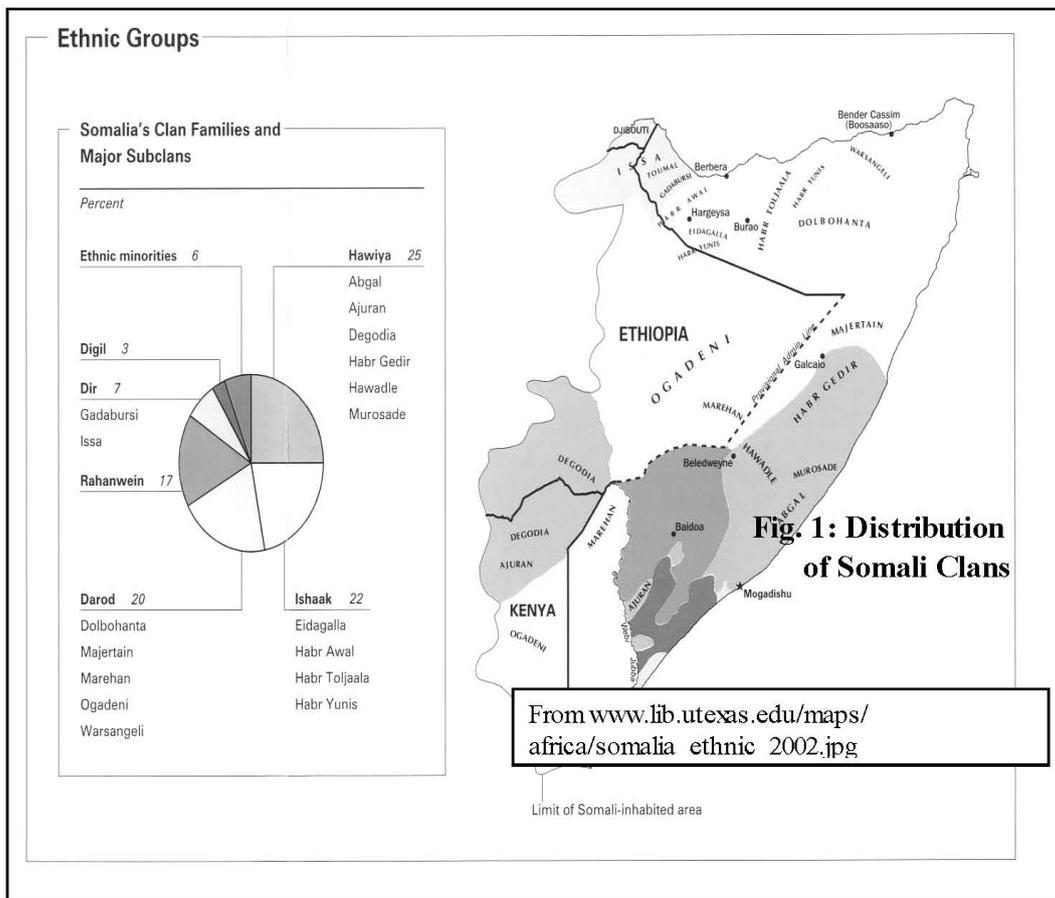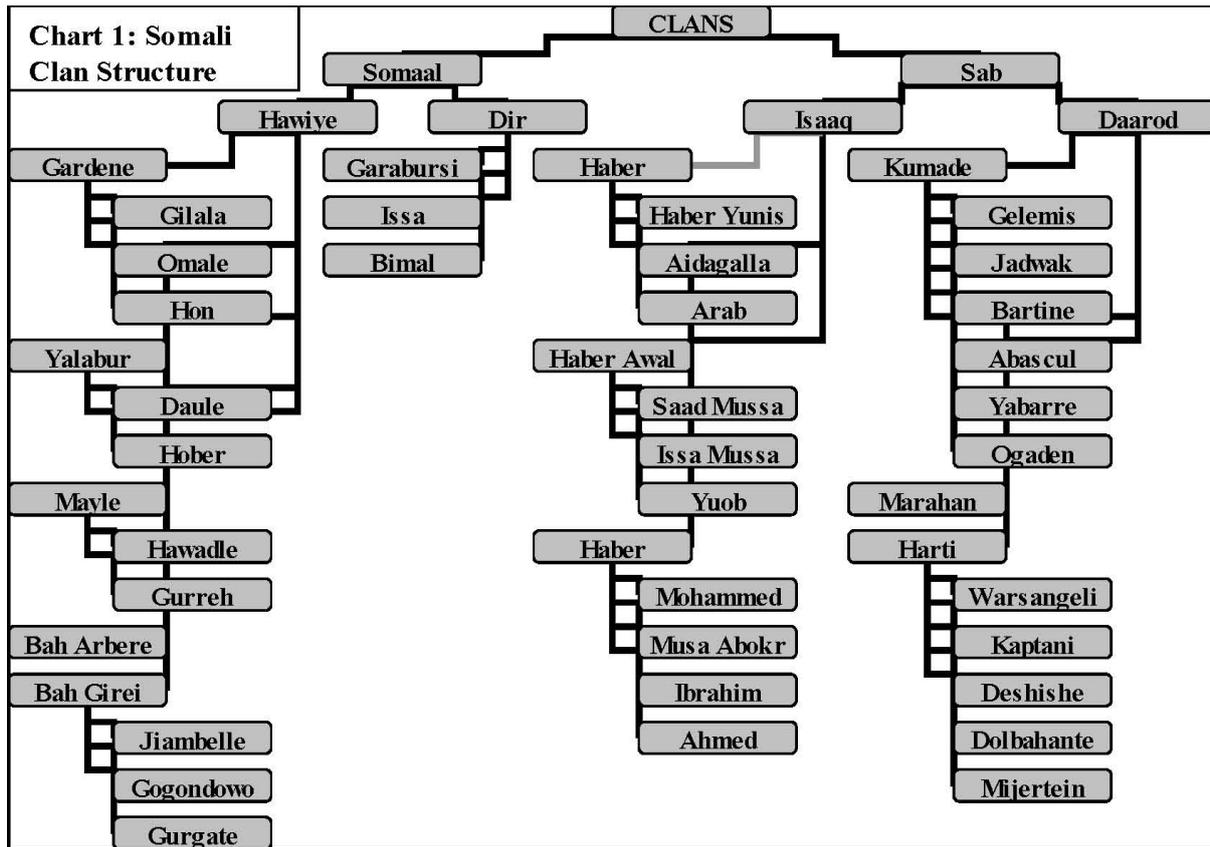
4.2 Identities and Clans

Even though the Somali are arguably one of Africa's oldest and most homogenous nations, both ethnically and in terms of religion and customs (and with a unifying myth of origin based on Islam) the nation has long been divided according to other criteria, mainly those of kinship in the form of clans, previously often referred to as tribes. The clans have their origins in lineage, the Somali tracing their decent through their male lineages many generations back,

thus defining their identity and loyalties according to a genealogy which may be partly mythical, as with the myth of descent from Arabian families, perhaps even from the prophet himself.[73]

The subdivision of the nation into clans forms a complex picture of "major clans" (sometimes referred to as "clan families"), (minor) clans and sub-clans as depicted in Chart 1.[74] Clan families tend to congregate in different parts of the country: Dir in enclaves along the coast in the south as well as in the border region between the present Somaliland and Djibouti; Isaaq in the Somaliland and parts of the Ogaden region of Ethiopia; Darood in the north as well as in the frontier region with Kenya; Hawyie in the middle parts, including the area around Mogadishu; and Rewin south of Mogadishu as well as parts of Ogaden (see Fig. 1).[75] Even though they thus tend to congregate territorially, each clan is scattered, not only across the country but also among adjacent states, to which should be added the aforementioned diaspora.

The clan structure further has some correlation with territory, in the sense that nomadic herding units, enjoying usufructural rights to particular pastures and wells, usually consist of agnatic groups belonging to the same clan.[76] The fact that pasture and water are scarce throughout Somalia, and therefore often fought over, has made these lineage-based groups essential units for self-help and thus for survival in an inhospitable environment. Unsurprisingly, they have often resorted to violence in their struggle against each other.[77] There is thus nothing "primitive" or irrational about them, and that these clan loyalties have also been manifested in armed clan militias and inter-clan strife is thus entirely understandable, however deplorable.

Chart 1: Somali Clan Structure

CLANS
- Somaal
  - Hawiye
    - Gardene
      - Gilala
      - Omale
      - Hon
    - Yalabur
      - Daule
      - Hober
    - Mayle
      - Hawadle
      - Gurreh
    - Bah Arbere
    - Bah Girei
      - Jiambelle
      - Gogondowo
      - Gurgate
  - Dir
    - Garabursi
    - Issa
    - Bimal
- Sab
  - Isaaq
    - Haber
      - Haber Yunis
      - Aidagalla
      - Arab
    - Haber Awal
      - Saad Mussa
      - Issa Mussa
      - Yuob
    - Haber
      - Mohammed
      - Musa Abokr
      - Ibrahim
      - Ahmed
  - Daarod
    - Kumade
      - Gelemis
      - Jadwak
      - Bartine
      - Abascul
      - Yabarre
      - Ogaden
    - Marahan
    - Harti
      - Warsangeli
      - Kaptani
      - Deshishe
      - Dolbahante
      - Mijertein

Ethnic Groups

Somalia's Clan Families and Major Subclans

Percent

Ethnic minorities 6

Digil 3

Dir 7
- Gadabursi
- Issa

Rahanwein 17

Darod 20
- Dolbohanta
- Majertain
- Marehan
- Ogadeni
- Warsangeli

Hawiya 25
- Abgal
- Ajuran
- Degodia
- Habr Gedir
- Hawadle
- Murosade

Ishaak 22
- Eidagalla
- Habr Awal
- Habr Toljaala
- Habr Yunis

Fig. 1: Distribution of Somali Clans

From www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/
africa/somalia_ethnic_2002.jpg

Limit of Somali-inhabited area

According to Issa-Salwe, "[T]he Somali inter-clan conflict is centered on feuds as it aims to injure or eliminate the hostile clan, to seek revenge, to reverse wrongs, and to protect its rights over resources."[78] One might even speak of a "security dilemma of clan rivalry" as argued by David Laitin:

> First, for all nomadic groups in a battle against unforgiving nature, every grazing area, every watering hole, is vital for survival. Increased measures by any clan to enhance security must therefore be seen by leaders of other clans as threatening their physical survival. The security dilemma can thus be seen as a permanent condition of life in the Somali bush. Second, as Siyaad seeded clan warfare through strategic distribution of weapons he received as foreign aid, he surely threatened the survival of enemy clans, who themselves were impelled to seek comparable arms to secure their future. Third, after the collapse of the Siyaad regime in 1991, all clans feared for their futures if an enemy clan captured the reins of power. Surely they armed themselves in part because of the disastrous potential consequences for their security of not arming.[79]

Attempts at separating the state from the clan structure have been made in the past, e.g. under the Barre regime, which passed legislation forbidding the use of clan names for political parties—but all alleged no-clan (or anti-clan) initiatives have, on closer analyses, revealed themselves as tactical or strategic moves in the inter-clan struggle.[80]

4.3 State Weakness, Collapse and Attempted Reconstruction

Not only was the Somali state born irredentist, it was also born weak. Upon independence-cum-unification in 1961, the formal political dispensation was democratic, but actual power was primarily distributed on the basis of kinship.[81]

4.3.1 The Siyad Barre Era

The second and last round of democratic elections took place in 1969 in which no less than 64 parties competed, yet without being able to topple the incumbent Somali Youth League,[82] and on the 15th of October the same year, the President Shermanke was assassinated and the military took over. This brought to power a military junta led by General Siyad Barre, who almost immediately suspended the constitution, closed parliament and banned all political parties, placing a Supreme Revolutionary Council in charge of the state. which was in 1976 superseded by a one-party system based on the Somali Socialist Revolutionary Party (SSRP).[83]

What is today commonly referred to as "the Siyad Barre era" (with distinctly pejorative connotations) might in fact be broken down into at least two main periods: The period from the coup in 1969 until the Ogaden War in 1977/78 was characterized by socio-cultural experiments, albeit guided by a (mainly Chinese-

inspired) "scientific socialism."[84] The Ogaden War seriously weakened the regime. Even though an attempted military coup in 1978 was quelled, the domestic strength of the regime steadily weakened and the opposition gained strength, also spurred by the unpopular introduction of conscription in 1984.[85] After the war the regime went through a transformation, which Hussein Adam has aptly described as autocracy (1978[86]) and tyranny (1987-1991).86 Not only did the regime become more despotic, but it also became increasingly infected by clanism, notwithstanding its initial attempts at banning clanism and tribalism—to the point of making clanism a capital offence.[87] Now the positions of real power were primarily filled with members of the Marrehaan, Ogaadeen and Dulbahante clans (hence the derogatory term "MOD rule") combined with systematic attempts at eliminating the elites of other clans.[88] The opposition, in its turn, also increasingly came to rely on clans—a trend which was reinforced by the mounting economic crisis, which was partly caused, and certainly exacerbated, by the high military expenditures after the Ogagen War. It weakened state structures and made people turn to their clan networks for support and security.

The Ogaden War and its aftermath thus partly explains the rise of nationalist and gradually secessionist movements in what is today (Isaaq-dominated) Somaliland, led by the Somali National Movement (SNM), which was founded in 1981 and supported by Ethiopia. A similar development occurred, at about the same time, in the Mijerteen-dominated north-east, where the Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF) launched a struggle against the central government, thus laying the groundworks for what is today the semi-autonomous status of Puntland.[89] Other national movements were created amongst the Somali diaspora, both in the Arab countries and in Western Europe, all of them roughly following clan boundaries. The USC (United Somali Congress) was thus based in Rome and mainly "represented" the Hawiye clan, including the subsequently (perhaps unfairly) notorious Mohammed Aideed. The Manifesto Initiative, in its turn, was somewhat broader, but also represented mainly the Hawiye and Darood clans, whereas the SPM (Somali Patriotic Movements) stemmed primarily from the Ogaden. Most of the several oppositional factions were thus based on clans, a simplified picture of which is presented in Table 5. A number of (mostly short-lived) alliances were forged between the various factions, e.g. between the USC, SDM, SSNM and SPM, and in 1990 agreement was reached on joint operations against Barre.[90]

Acron.	Name	Membership	Basis	Leaders
SNM	Somali National Movement	*Isaaq*	Somaliland	Abdulrahman Ahmed Ali ("Tuur")
SSDF	Somali Salvation Democratic Front	*Mijerteen*	Puntland	Abdullah Yusuf Ahmed
USC	United Somali Congress	*Hawiye*		Mohammad Farah Aideed
SDM	Somali Democratic Movement	*Rahanwiin*		Abdi Muse Mayo/Mohamed Nur Aliyou
SSNM	Southern Somali National Movement	*Dir*		Abdi Warsame Isaaq
SPM	Somali Patriotic Movement	*Ogadeen*	Southern Somalia	Mohamed Saeed Hirsi ("Morgan")
MG	Manifesto Group	*Hawiye/Darood*		Ali Mahdi
SAMO	Somali African Muki Organisation	Non-clan		Mohamed Ramadan Arbow
SNU	Somali National Union	Non-clan		Mohamed Ragis Mohamed

Table 5: Somali Factions (1991/92)

After a protracted period of growing weakness and mounting turmoil, the opposition movements finally succeeded in deposing Siyad Barre in 1991. Following the fall of Siyad Barre, the Manifesto Group set up an interim government with Ali Mahdi Mohamed as interim president, but this was almost immediately followed by a split between (and within) the various rebel groups. The main protagonists were General Aideed and his Habr Abgal clan and the self-appointed president and his Abgal clan. The two groups effectively established control over the southern and northern parts of the city, respectively, divided by a so-called "green line".

4.3.2 Civil War, State Collapse and UN Intervention

What followed was an extraordinarily messy civil war, featuring extensive inter-clan fighting and sheer banditry, combined with widespread looting, also of the food and other aid provided by the relief agencies.[91] By March 1992 Mogadishu had thus been nearly deserted, at least 300,000 people had died of hunger and related diseases, and the direct death toll from the fighting was around 44,000. The severe famine suffered by the civilian population (also partly caused by a drought) was finally "discovered" by the international media.[92] This belated media coverage brought the suffering of the civilian population to the attention of the proverbial "international community" with an implicit imperative to act—albeit initially mainly in terms of food aid. Not only did most of this only arrive after the famine had run its course, but it may arguably even have exacerbated the problems by contributing to the emergent "war economy", upon which the militias thrived.[93]

The international community, i.e. the UN with the United States as lead nation both politically and militarily, also staged a military intervention, officially mandated as a peacekeeping operation, even though there was no peace to keep. More appropriately it has been referred to as a humanitarian intervention, i.e. an attempt at "saving strangers."[94] As there seems to have been no other strategic or economic interests in Somalia—not even the geopolitical imperatives of the Cold Wars which had just come to an end—it seems reasonable to accept the humanitarian motive as the primary one in addition to which the United States

surely also had to accept the "noblesse oblige logic." For the only remaining superpower laying claim to hegemonic position in a "new world order" characterized by human rights concerns and the promotion of democracy and other western values, there are situations where action is obviously needed and where the hegemon is obliged to take the lead.[95]

Even though the two multilateral UN missions (UNOSOM-1 and -2) as well as the unilateral US missions UNITAF were primarily motivated by humanitarian concerns, their actual accomplishments fell far short of mitigating human suffering. In fact, according to most analyses they probably did more harm than good[96] partly because of the US penchant for Manichaean thinking,[97] categorizing groups and individuals as good or evil rather than recognizing the predominance of different shades of gray. In the role as villain the United States cast one of the rivaling warlords, Mohammed Aideed, partly because of his refusal to sign an agreement coming out of talks in Addis Ababa in January and March 1993.[98] His reputation as (what would today be called) a "spoiler"[99] and the "enemy number one" of the United States was reinforced when his forces in June 1993 ambushed a number of UN peacekeepers which started almost a chain reaction. The United States persuaded the UN to destroy Aideed's radio stations, an attempt which on the 5th of June 1993 led to a serious firefight between Pakistani UNOSOM troops and Somali militiamen who, according to a subsequent UN investigation, belonged to Aideed's faction. In revenge of the loss of 24 UN troops in this skirmish,[100] the Security Council passed a resolution (UNSCR 837) authorizing the use of force to apprehend the culprits, albeit not explicitly naming Aideed or even his USC.[101] This United States placed a prize of US$25,000 on Aideed's head, thus "acting in an idiom more suited to the Wild West than the complex task of peace and security building in Somalia" (as aptly put by Nicholas Wheeler)[102] and effectively transformed at least the US parts of what should have been an impartial peacekeeping operation into a combat mission against an identified target.[103] According to two senior US officials in situ (writing two years later), the designation of Aideed as an enemy was "devastating, for Somalis and the peacekeepers, for U.S. foreign policy, and for peacekeeping itself".[104]

The United States deployed its Quick Reaction Force (QRF) in pursuit of the evasive Aideed, but in the process of doing so caused substantial "collateral" damage—as did other contributors to UNOSOM-II. On one occasion, Pakistani UNOSOM troops fired into a crowd, killing twenty civilians; on another rocket fire was opened at a hospital, killing nine patients; and on the 12th of July, the QRF launched an air and missile attack (code-named "Operation Michigan") against a meeting of clan elders from the Habr-Gedir clan, employing no less than sixteen TOW missiles and more than 2,000 rounds of cannon fire, and killing at least 54 of the elders—but not Aideed.[105] Subsequently, the US

(against the advice of then Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Colin Powell)[106] deployed 400 Rangers and some Delta Force commandos to conduct raids against Aideed's forces, killing "hundreds of Somalis" in the estimate of Trevor Findlay, as the raids took place in densely populated areas.[107] On the 3rd of October, US Rangers found themselves in a fire-fight with Somalis (who may or may not have belonged to Aideed's forces) and eighteen were killed along with between 300 and a thousand Somali casualties (who were almost immediately forgotten) in the incident behind the book and movie Black Hawk Down. [108]

The fact that the bodies of the dead soldiers were not treated with dignity, but that one corpse was stripped naked and dragged through the streets constituted a serious humiliation of the United States. Washington promptly reacted with a proclamation (7 October) by President Clinton that the US would begin a withdrawal of its forces and be out by 31 March 1994, come what may. Henceforth the US troops were almost entirely preoccupied with self-defense, and the hunt for Aideed was abandoned.[109] By March 1994, all US and most European forces had been withdrawn,[110] and the UN Security Council in UNSCR 897 (4 February 1994) announced an unconditional complete withdrawal by March 1995, the last remaining forces being "extracted" with some US and European assistance from 28th of February to the 3rd of March 1995.[111]

Not only did this chain of events exhibit an uncanny resemblance to the events in 2006, when the United States had merely substituted the hunt for terrorists (vide infra) for the hunt for Aideed. There is also a direct link between the two, at least as far as myth-building is concerned. Paradoxically, both the United States and Osama bin Laden have alleged that the latter's Al Qaeda was behind the "Black Hawk down" incident, whereas most analysts dismiss this as highly unlikely and unsubstantiated by any evidence.[112] Even the official 9/11 Commission Report is rather equivocal on the issue, claiming merely that AQ sent weapons to unspecified Somali warlords as well as "scores of trainers" some of whom "were later heard boasting that their assistance led to the October 2003 shoot down." A recent report published by the Westpoint military academy on the basis of declassified papers, likewise dismisses the claim, pointing to the serious difficulties Al Qaeda operatives dispatched to the country had in their relations with the Somali.[113]

4.3.3. Statelessness and attempted State-building

Ever since the collapse of the Somali state, more than a dozen different attempts have been made at state reconstruction[114] of which the two most recent have

produced the TNG (Transitional National Government) of the year 2000 and its successor, the TFG (Transitional Federal Government) of 2004.

The TNG came out of a conference was held in Arta in Djibouti, where 2,000 delegates elected a 245-man Transitional National Assembly (TNA), on a clan basis. This in turn elected a transitional President, Abdiqassim Salad Hassan, who appointed an interim Prime Minister, Ali Khalif Galaydh. This Transitional National Government (TNG) established in August 2000, remained in power until it was toppled by a vote of no-confidence in October 2001. However, its actual control extended to only half of the capital and small enclaves in the interior, and it was never able to ensure the personal security of its members, as several members of the TNG were assassinated. By 2003 the TNG had collapsed in all but name, even though it had called upon former SNA (Somali National Army) troops for protection.[115] Despite its weakness, however, as representative of this "virtual state" the TNG's President Abdiqasim attended UN Millennium Summit, thus achieving some de facto recognition by the UN of his "one-man government still in exile", which was formalized on the 1st of November 2001. From the UN, he proceeded to summits in the Arab League, OIC and IGAD, likewise achieving de facto recognition, and the TNG was recognized de jure by the OAU in December 2000.[116]

The TNG seems also to have tried to exploit the US-proclaimed "war against terrorism".[117] As early as September 2001 it thus established a "national anti-terrorism task force," undoubtedly in the hope that this would gain it some American sympathy and eventually perhaps even recognition. Despite its exploitation of the AIAI threat, some observers have alleged that the AIAI had strong links to the TNG, with about a dozen MPs in the transitional parliament affiliated with it;[118] while others have pointed to the TMG's obvious inability to play any active role in counter-terrorism: "Since the TNG has yet to police its own capital city, the notion that it will combat terrorist cells in the country as a whole is not to be taken seriously", as succinctly put by Ken Menkhaus.[119]

In parallel with the demise of the TNG ran the so-called "Eldoret process", commencing with a gathering of Somali political leaders in October 2002 in Kenyan town Eldoret, under the auspices of IGAD. On the 7th of October the Eldoret Declaration on "Cessation of Hostilities and the Structure and Principles of the Somali National Reconciliation Process" was adopted. Subsequently, the signatories reconstituted themselves as a "Leaders' Committee". In 2003, the process was continued, now under the leadership of the new IGAD envoy, Kenyan Ambassador Bethuel Kiplagat, and relocated to Mbagathi outside Nairobi.[120] By then, however, what had begun as a promising process had, according to the International Crisis Group, evolved toward "an unimaginative 'cake-cutting' exercise in power-sharing by an un-elected and only partially

representative political elite that threatens to repeat the history of earlier failed initiatives".[121] Regional rivalry between, on the one side, Ethiopia, sponsoring the Somali Reconciliation and Reconstruction Council (SRRC) and, on the other side, Djibouti and Arab countries, supporting the TNG, did not help at all.

Nevertheless, in September 2003 agreement was reached on a draft transitional charter envisaging a federalist political dispensation, and dominated by the SRRC and Ethiopia's closest ally in Somalia (in fact in semi-autonomous Puntland) Abdulah Yusuf. While a number of other clans were co-opted into the agreement, others were excluded. This was followed in the autumn of 2004 by the establishment (on the basis of clan-quotas) of a transitional federal parliament (TFP) which on the 10th of October elected Yusuf interim president of the TFG. Three weeks after his inauguration, he appointed Ali Mohamed Geedi for Prime Minister, who in turn was charged with appointing a cabinet. Its very size—comprising three deputy PMs, 33 minister, 34 deputy ministers and 8 state ministers—is evidence of its being based on co-optation of potential rivals. That this did not ensure its representatively was demonstrated when the TPF with 153 out of 275 votes passed a motion of no-confidence, which only made the president dissolve the TFP whilst retaining Geedi as the PM.[122]

The main problem with the TFI (transitional federal institutions) has, however, been that they have exerted absolutely no actual control over the country which they are ostensibly governing. Even though leading members of most of the armed factions were represented in the cabinet, the TFG did not find the situation in Somalia safe enough for it to relocate from Kenya without foreign protection. Having appealed in vain to both the UN and the AU for a protection force of 20,000 troops, the TFG eventually settled for Ethiopian armed protection allowing it to move its headquarters to Somalia, albeit not to the capital, Mogadishu, but to Baidoa in January 2006—but still denying the presence of any Ethiopian troops.[123]

This growing reliance on the arch-enemy was probably the main reason for the internal disagreements within the TFI, several members of the cabinet resigning in March 2005, mainly the so-called "Mogadishu group," most belonging to the Hawiye clan. The TFG made some attempts at creating an army, partly in contravention of the UN-imposed arms embargo which remains in force,[124] but merely implemented a certain redeployment of militias from Puntland to the central parts. In late December 2006 and early January 2007, however, the TFG was finally installed in Mogadishu, yet only as a result of what was in reality (albeit not formally) an Ethiopian invasion. We shall return to these dramatic events in due course.

Whereas state reconstruction has thus failed in the southern parts of Somalia, it has fared somewhat better in Puntland and to some extent even in the inter-riverine region, where a governing authority has emerged in the form of a "Digil-Mirifle clan authority", created through consecutive conferences (in 1993 and 1995 in Bonka and Rewin, respectively). It is based on a bicameral system, featuring a House of Representatives and a House of Elders, and has promulgated recommendations for a future status as a regional state within a looser Somali federation. This is also the status demanded by the regional authorities in Puntland, where in 1997 a National Salvation Council established itself as a de facto state authority, based on a "constitution" adopted by a constitutional conference in 1998. The Puntland regional state comprises the Bari, Nugal and North Mudug provinces and is fairly homogenous demographically, most of the population belonging to the Majerteen clan (part of the Darood clan family). The state was officially proclaimed in July 1998, when a constitution was adopted and a president and prime minister appointed. Notwithstanding a dispute with Somaliland over the districts Sanaag and Sool, Puntland remained fairly stable compared with the south.[125]

4.4 Coping without a State

Societies are remarkably resilient in the face of hardships and one such as Somalia perhaps more than most. In the absence of a functioning political system to manage societal relations, other societal institutions are likely to take charge, simply because life must go on and people are forced to cope as best they can, even under the most dreadful conditions.

As far as law and order are concerned, various non-state mechanisms have taken the place of the state, including the diya system, offering a modicum of order via mutual deterrence among clans, and bringing into play traditional institutions such as the clan elders.[126] Moreover, Islamic ("shari'a") courts have largely taken over from the defunct formal judiciary (vide infra) and Islamic charities are filling in for the non-existent social welfare system (vide supra). Most such arrangement have merely a local scope and they are often clan-based, thereby excluding people living beyond the core area of their respective clan as well as the small minorities who do not belong to clans.[127] Nevertheless, it is certainly better than nothing, and westerners (including the present author) should beware of their/our ethnocentric biases, blinding them/us to forms of order radically different from the state-based ones to which we are accustomed as argued in a controversial work by Patrick Chabal and Jean-Pascal Daloz.[128]

As far as the economy is concerned, in the absence of a state, other societal institutions will usually take charge of "the authoritative allocation of values for a society,"[129] i.e. of determining "who gets what, when and how." Indeed,

Somalia's stateless economy might be seen as simply following the prescriptions of economic liberalism—including the controversial "Washington Consensus"—only to greater extremes than almost any other country and with Adam Smith's proverbial "invisible hand" in a leading role.[130] What makes this problematic is, of course, that Somalia was born with a legacy of poverty and a with very backward economy, depending mainly on farming in the north-west and south and pastoralism in the central and northern regions, with fishing, leather works and trading also accounting for large shares of GDP as well as of employment.[131] Moreover, the country is extremely vulnerable to climatic fluctuations as well as to such "coincidents" as outbreaks of rinderpest or rift valley fever, either in Somalia itself or in neighboring countries. This has typically lead to the imposition by Saudi Arabia and other major trading partners of occasional bans on livestock imports from Somalia (e.g. in 1983 and 2000), which have severely disrupted the entire economy.[132]

Successive governments have done little to improve the situation, but have tended to exacerbate rather than solve the problems. Surely, the civil war had extremely destructive effects on the economy, as commerce was superseded by looting—and where even the mere presence of the peacekeepers contributed to distorting the economy.[133] However, when the fighting had peaked the economy has actually benefitted from state collapse, i.e. that "as far as economic welfare is concerned, absence of government has proven to be better than the repressive institutions and improper policies if Barre' government", as claimed by Jamil Mubarak.[134] It allowed for a revival of the private sector, especially the (today almost all-encompassing) informal economy, which developed under Siyad, but which has also provided a fall-back system after state collapse. Not only has the (at least parts of) the economy managed to "muddle through", with most economic transactions now being based on clientilistic networks, i.e. on the basis of social rather than legal contracts. There have also been localized and rather chaotic economic booms, e.g. in cross-border trade in livestock. Foreign trade has thus continued, as has private investment, even though it has become more opportunistic, small-scale and short-term than before. The markets function, with an order of sorts being maintained by a combination of clan elders, clergy and militias. Perhaps even more surprisingly, the faith in the Somali Shilling persisted for a very long period as the legal and accepted tender even though by 2001 four different types of banknotes were in circulation[135] The aforementioned remittance system ensured a steady influx of foreign currency, e.g. via the hawala system.[136] Peter Little thus portrayed the economy of this war-torn society in rather sanguine terms:

> The economy of Somalia goes on, even "booms" in some cases, despite an environment of risk and uncertainty. Traders do business and consumers buy products, and through it all markets generally follow principles of supply and

demand. Conflict disrupts commerce but, like droughts and floods, it becomes just another risk element for which the trader, producer, and consumer must adjust.[137]

Thus describing the armed conflict as "just another risk element", however, does not capture the full impact on society of a prevalence of violence which has now lasted for about eighteen years. It may make more sense to describe it as a "war economy" in which the profits reaped by certain segments of society give them an incentive to perpetuate the fighting, regardless of the chances of winning.[138]

4.5 The Role of Religion

Like in the rest of East Africa, Islam came to Somalia via the Indian Ocean trade (and slaving) routes, where Arab and other traders established gradually expanding enclaves along the coast of East Africa.[139] Moreover, large numbers of Africans were simply converted to Islam via deliberate proselytizing (da'wa), mostly by Sufi "holy men."[140] In the area between the Shebelle and Juba rivers, an Ajuraan imamate seems to have been in place from the 15th to the 17th Century. If not before that, then certainly by the early 16th Century, all of Somalia was clearly Muslim.[141]

The dominant form of Islam has ever since, at least until very recently, been that of Sufism.[142] Hence the predominance of Sufi orders and brotherhoods (especially the Qadiriya, the Ahmediya and the Saalihiya) most of which are fairly liberal and often significantly "creolized," i.e. syncretic. The clergy and scholars (ulama), on the other hand, tends to be more orthodox Sunni Muslims, and in many cases they are closely related (via clan, ethnic or patron-client bonds) to the ruling elites.[143] The influence of the more radical and/or conservative and fundamentalist Salafi orders (such as Wahhabism) is of a much more recent vintage. As argued by Ken Menkhaus, rigid forms of shari'a thus tend to be viewed as "an imposition of Gulf Arab customs, seen by most Somalis as "un-Somali," whereas such fundamentalist variants of Islam are more likely to attract a popular following among the Somali diasporas in non-Muslim lands or in Somalia proper when confronted by a foreign and non-Muslim threat.[144]

Religion had not played any major political role in Somalia until the 1990s.[145] A group called Waxda was founded in 1969, promoting the ideas of the Islamist reformers such as Qutb and Mawdudi, yet with entirely peaceful means and mainly in the present Somaliland. Siyad Barre's regime nevertheless cracked down on them in 1978, thereby apparently further politicizing the organization leading its members to support the SNM with its secessionist agenda.[146] Neither did religious originations play any major role for most of the civil war, except in so far as they provided various social services and in the sense that Islam and its

various institutions were able to provide a modicum of security. Roland Marchal has identified a total of six predominantly religious groups playing a certain role: Ahle Sunna wa Jama'a, set up as a counter to the radicals by Aideed, the quietist Al Tabliq, Al Majma al Islam, the Wahhabist Ansar-e-Sunna, Al Islaah (Somali Islamic Movement) and Al-Ittihad al Islaamiya (AIAI) of which only the latter played any role as a combatant in the civil war.[147]

AIAI is based on Wahhabism and an offspring of the Muslim Brotherhood. Its ancestry can be traced back to some of the early Islamic movements such as al-Ahli (founded in 1978 in Saudi-Arabia) and the Muslim Youth Union (Wahda al shabab al-Islam), which subsequently merged to form the Somali Islamic Union (SIU, i.e. al-Ittihad) in 1984, posing as a branch of the Muslim Brotherhood (al-Ikhwan al Muslimin) and with some overlap in membership with al-Islah.[148] Frequent allegations to the contrary notwithstanding, it seems to have had only weak and inconsequential links to al-Qaeda and similar networks.[149] AIAI had a militant agenda, based on a combination of nationalism/irredentism and Islam, on which it acted during the civil war, mainly in the form of guerrilla warfare. However, when it established territorial control (mainly over a couple of ports) it made itself vulnerable, in casu to an Ethiopian military intervention in 1996. Even before that, they had suffered from attacks launched by the present president of the TFG, Abdullah Yuusuf Ahmed, in control of most of what was to become the semi-autonomous Puntland, and already supported by Ethiopia.

Following their military defeat in the mid-1990s, AIAI seems to have abandoned the armed struggle as well as to have moved most of their activities to the Ogaden region of Ethiopia. On two occasions they have engaged in what might reasonably be called terrorism, but they are credited by the aforementioned MIPT Terrorism Knowledge Base with a mere two incidents (one in Somalia and one in Ethiopia, both in 1996) with a total of six fatalities and injuries.[150] According to some (Ethiopian) analyst it has primarily pursued a strategy of infiltration and it appears to have established some control of various charitable organizations allowing it to fund patronage networks, in addition to which it has sponsored Islamic courts, which have provided some law to the unruly country. There may thus have been pockets of Islamists in all the main, clan-based, factions, just as there may have been some infiltration in Puntland, Somaliland, perhaps even in Djibouti.[151] The veracity of such claims is, however, difficult to determine, as most have their origins in Ethiopian intelligence and, it would seem, misinformation.

In recent years, however, AIAI seems to have virtually disappeared and it remains contested whether it even continues to exist.[152] According to a 2005 report from the UN Security Council's Monitoring Group on Somalia, however, it had not only survived but was running no fewer than seventeen training camps

and importing and stockpiling armaments.[153] However, the usually at least as well-informed International Crisis Group questioned this, whilst pointing to a new jihadi group, Al-Shabaab, the comprising among others former AIAI combat veterans and led by a young militia leader called Aden Hashi Farah 'Ayro, which is alleged to have links with al-Qaeda, even though these links have also been questioned as based on quite weak circumstantial evidence.[154] We shall return to some of these questions in the following section.

4.6 2006/07: *Annus Horribilis* for Somalia

The year 2006 was to become quite dramatic for Somalia, featuring the creation of a counter-terrorism alliance of warlords of dubious repute, the establishment of control over most of the country by the Islamic courts with a somewhat opaque agenda, and an Ethiopian armed intervention of dubious legality which was followed in 2007 by a rapid plunge of the country into an abyss of chaos and human suffering. Ken Menkhaus is surely right in describing this as a tragedy rather than a cataclysm, i.e. an inevitable consequence of structural factors:

> [T]he extraordinary events in Somalia since 2005 (..) were by no means preordained. The current crisis in Somalia was eminently avoidable, the result of a series of bad or cynical decisions and occasionally horrific misjudgments by Somali and foreign leaders who should have known better. More than a few of those miscalculations were the product of hubris. That qualifies Somalia's current crisis as a tragedy—in this case, a tragedy in five acts.[155]

Having already dealt with what he calls the first act, i.e. the establishment of the TFG, we shall largely skip the second act, i.e. the apparently promising, but ultimately failed, security and stabilization plan for Mogadishu, launched in the summer of 2005 by the aforementioned break-away faction from the TFG (consisting mainly of Hawieye clans, factions and warlords) with some participation of civil society. For all its merits, it could also be seen as an trap intended for the TFG. If a modicum of security could be established in the national capital, it would have been hard for Yusuf's TFG to refuse a relocation to Mogadishu, where he and his government (without foreign support) would be at the mercy of the Hawieye elites.[156]

4.6.1. The CIA, the ARPCT and the Terrorist Threat from Somalia

It all seems to have begun with US efforts to enlist the support for its war on terror from various Somali warlords, including some who were formally parts of the TFI, but had broken ranks with President Yusuf. Even though it has not been officially confirmed, the United States—seemingly acting through the CIA and the private military company "Select Armor"—was in the beginning of 2006

"handing suitcases full of cash to warlords on the streets of Mogadishu," as bluntly put by John Prendergast and Colin Thomas-Jensen, who estimated the cash flow to be $150,000 per month. The outcome of these efforts was the formation in February 2006 of an Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counter-Terrorism (ARPCT, sometimes referred to as ATA: Anti-Terrorist Alliance).[157]

The rationale for the Bush Administration's support for the ARPCT was spelled out by Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Jenday Frazer, according to whom, "We will work with those elements that will help us root out al-Qaeda and to prevent Somalia becoming a safe haven for terrorists, and we are doing it in the interest of protecting America."[158] By 2006, the general impression was indeed spreading in the United States that Somalia represented a special threat with regard to terrorism, but there was very little concrete about this impression, e.g. concerning who might do what to whom and how. The US State Department in the 2006 edition of its Country Reports on Terrorism thus only listed one Somali organization as terrorist, namely the aforementioned (and probably no longer existing) AIAI. It further claimed that three individuals were hiding in Somalia, enjoying the protection of the Council of Islamic Courts and the al Shabaab leadership: Fazul Abdallah Mohammed, Abu Talha al-Sudani, and Saleh Ali Saleh Nabhan, suspected for complicity in the 1998 embassy bombings and a 2002 hotel bombing in Kenya.[159] The US Treasury further listed four individuals (Abbas Abdi Ali, Hassan Dahir Aweys, Ahmad Ali Jimale and Abdullahi Hussein Kahie) on its "Terrorist Exclusion List" along with several companies and other entities located in Somalia, i.e. Al Barakaat (several branches and subsidiaries), Al Haramain (several branches and subsidiaries), Heyatul Ulya and Somali Internet Company as well as two organizations located elsewhere but providing aid to Somalia—the Somali Network AB (in Sweden) and Somali International Relief Organization (in the USA).[160] AIAI was included in the US "Terrorist Exclusion List," but not on the US State Department's list of designated "Foreign Terrorist Organisations".[161]

These US listings have seemingly been more or less carbon-copied to that of the United Nations. The UN Security Council's "1267 Commission" thus included on its list of individuals and entities associated with either the Taliban or Al Qaeda the AIAI, Al-Barakaat, Heyatul Ulya, the Somali International Relief Organization, the Somali Network Ab as well as Ali Abbas Abdi, Maxamed Cabdullaah Ciise, Hassan Dahir Aweys, Ali Ahmed Nur Jimale, Abdullahi Hussein Kahie, and Abdullkadir Hussein Mahamud.[162] The European Union's terrorist list, on the other hand, does not list any individuals or entities based in Somalia.[163]

4.6.2. The Union of Islamic Courts: A Taliban Regime in the making?

As so many other steps in the war on terror, the US creation of the ARPCT seems to have seriously backfired, as it led directly to a countervailing alliance of the various Islamic Court throughout the country which inflicted a decisive defeat on the ARPCT in June 2006.[164]

There is considerable confusion and disagreement about the organizational history of these courts, as well as about the name itself.[165] As mentioned above, shari'a courts had sprung up spontaneously, on a local scale and usually based on clans, especially since 1996. A Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) was formally established in 2002, according to Gérard Prunier,[166] whereas others have put the founding date somewhat later. The International Crisis Group thus mentions 2004 as the founding year of the Supreme Council of Islamic Courts of Somalia (SCIC) as the successor to a Shari'a Implementation Council, established in 2000.[167] In any case, a real unification, also including their paramilitary forces, i.e. court militias, only came about in 2006, mainly in response to the formation of the ARPCT. On the 20th of February court militias took up arms against the ARPCT warlords, producing heavy fighting for the following months, until the UIC finally defeated its opponents on the 16th of June.

Having established control of Mogadishu and most of the rest of Somalia (except Somaliland), the SCIC proceeded to establish order, actually managing to disarm most militias in Mogadishu and elsewhere, dismantle the roadblocks, to have the port and airport reopened, etc.—thus offering a significant improvement of the quality of daily life for civilian inhabitants.[168] They also set about governing, albeit in a somewhat incoherent and haphazard fashion— protecting the environment by banning the charcoal and wildlife trade,[169] caring for public health by banning the trade in khat and tobacco,[170] but also cracking down on a radio station and arresting journalists who were unsympathetic to their rule.[171] As far as the implementation of shari'a, the SCIC sent mixed messages, one member reportedly having stated that people who did not pray the compulsory five times a day should be shot (sic!).[172]

The SCIC also vacillated as far as its relations with the TFG were concerned, sometimes apparently being prepared for some form of compromise and power-sharing, sometimes not—which was also the case of the TFG.[173] Whereas the two sides seem to have partly agreed on the need for integrating their respective armed forces,[174] the SCIC was just as firm in its rejection of foreign (and especially Ethiopian) troops as the TFG was in its insistence on them.[175] Indeed, the SCIC even proclaimed a defensive jihad against what it saw as (in retrospect, correctly) a clandestine Ethiopian military intervention.[176] On the other hand, the UIC also lent some support to both the Ogaden National Liberation Front (consisting of ethnic Somali) and the Oromo Liberation Front,177 just as they

forged close relations with Ethiopia's arch enemy Eritrea which probably saw the conflict as a proxy war that might allow it to "get even" with Ethiopia, having effectively lost the 1998-2000 war.[178]

The best explanation of these mixed signals may be that the SCIC was a very mixed group without any clear hierarchical structure and with unclear chains of command. It featured both moderates such as the chairman Shaykh Sharif Shaykh Ahmed or his deputy, Sheykh Abdulkadir Omar, and more radical individuals such as former AIAI military commander Shaykh Hassan Dawir Aweys (designated by the USA as a terrorist) and the less well-known, but at least equally militant, Adan Hashi Ayro, who also seems to be in charge of the Al-Shaabab militia and responsible for several, rather nasty, terrorist attacks, e.g. on personnel of humanitarian agencies.[179]

Apart from such warning signs, analogical reasoning may also have played a role on the part of especially the United States, inducing it to abandon its initial opposition to an Ethiopian intervention in favor of whole-hearted support for it. Not only were the circumstances in Somalia in some respects similar to those in Afghanistan in the mid-1990s, but there were also certain undeniable similarities between (at least elements within) the UIC and the Taliban around the time of the latter's ascent to power in Afghanistan in 1996.[180] Hence, Washington may have feared a repetition and have been eager to prevent this, disregarding the equally striking differences between the two cases.

4.6.3 The TFG and the Ethiopian Intervention
In December 2006, Ethiopia launched a major assault at the Islamic courts, ostensibly on behalf of the TNG. Considering that this was a very uneven battle, it was not particularly surprising that the SCIC chose not to fight, but left Mogadishu, perhaps to continue the struggle by other means, either as a guerilla war or in the form of terrorism[181] Nevertheless, fighting continued in the following months and was still continuing by the time of writing (end of July 2007) even though it was unclear whether the main combatants were militant Islamists or merely clan-based militias—but, on the other hand obvious, that they included a growing number of child soldiers. In any case, the response by the Ethiopian forces was very indiscriminate, killing hundreds of civilians and displacing hundreds of thousands, especially from the capital—but their opponents also "fought dirty," e.g. attacking humanitarian and UN agencies, and using roadside bombs.[182]

Following the eviction of the UIC from Mogadishu, the TFG was now, at long last, able to establish its seat of government in the national capital, albeit only thanks to the continued Ethiopian militant support. It was somewhat equivocal

about its relationship with the remnants of the defeated UIC, some spokespersons expressing the intention of co-opting at least moderate elements into the TFIs, but others taking a less conciliatory position. As so often before, however, the TFG's ability to actually govern the country was extremely limited, also because they had lost most of whatever legitimacy they might have enjoyed in the first place by aligning so closely with what was seen by most Somali as a hostile invader and occupant. It probably did not help either that the TFG President explicitly endorsed the air strikes which the United States launched against Somalia in the wake of the Ethiopian intervention in January 2007, apparently killing more than thirty innocent civilians. While both the United Nations and the European Union criticized the air strikes, Yusuf condoned them with the argument that the USA "has the right to bombard terrorist suspects who attacked its embassies." Nor did he object to the transfer of at least one Somali detainees to the Guantanamo prison.[183] In May the Transitional Federal Parliament further passed an anti-terrorism bill introduced the TFG, allowing the latter to freeze property of people suspected of (as opposed to found guilty of) terrorist activities. An even more draconian measure included in the same bill was the institution of capital punishment for membership of a terrorist organization—regardless of whether this entailed actual terrorist activities.[184]

The situation was thus quite volatile and the future unpredictable by the summer of 2007. Before nevertheless venturing some guesses about the future, it seems appropriate to provide an overview of the various external actors involved.

4.7 External Actors

The 2006/7 crisis brought into play a number of external actors, most of whom have been pursuing their national or organizational agendas regardless of their compatibility with the interests of the Somali people.

Fig. 2: Aligments and Antagonisms in Somalia 2006/07
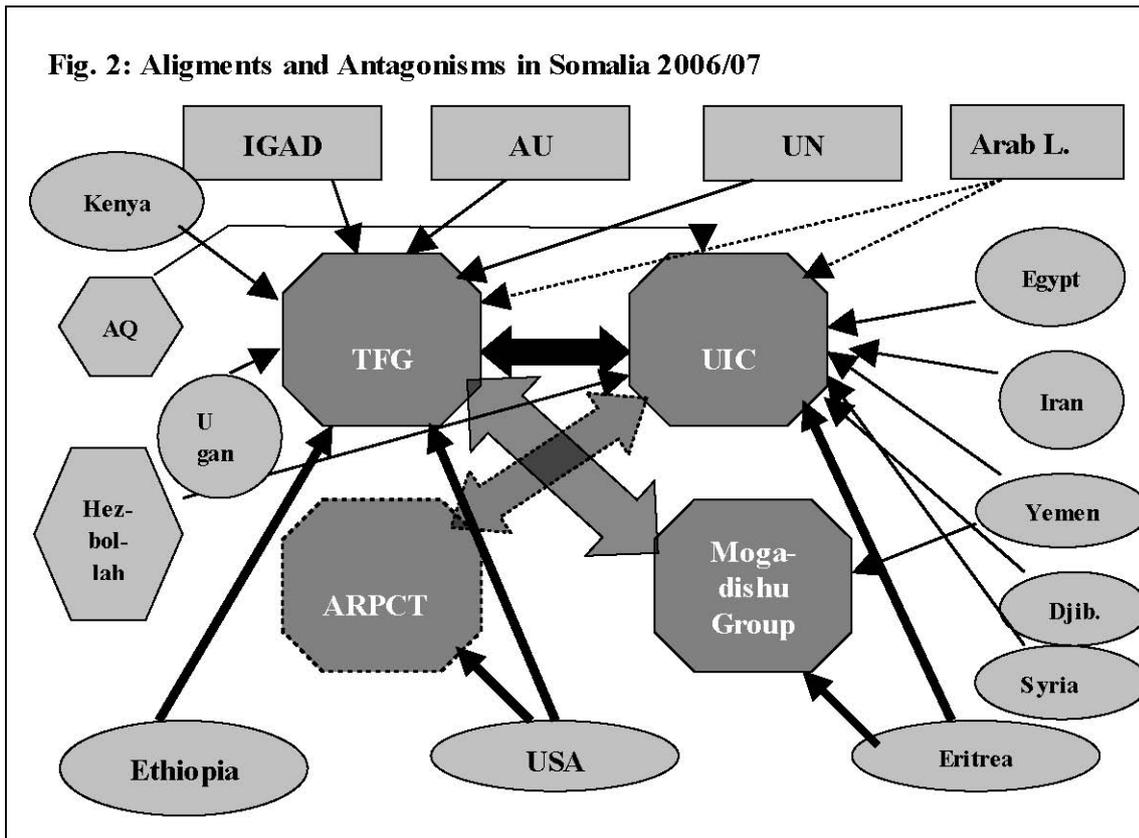
The various humanitarian agencies constituted a partial exception, doing their best to cater for the innocent victims of the struggle, the refugees and internally displaced persons, under extremely challenging circumstances.[185] As will be obvious from the account above, the United States has been quite active throughout the crisis, yet almost exclusively pursuing its own security agenda with little regard for the Somali population. In addition to this, a plethora of neighboring states and international organizations have also been involved.

The complex picture of external support has been summarized in Fig. 2, in which ordinary arrows signify support and block arrows antagonism. If it appears confusing this simply testifies to its approximate accuracy, as the situation is indeed very complex and confusing.

4.7.1. Neighbors
Ethiopia has obviously been a major player, partly driven by legitimate security concerns—which does not mean that its actions have actually enhanced Ethiopian national security. Meles Zenavi and his government have probably been sincerely worried about the perceived rise to prominence of their old foe, the AIAI (even though they seem to have vastly exaggerated its importance and strength), especially considering that it seemed to hoist the irredentist flag once again. They have probably also been concerned about a possible spill-over of

Islamism from Somalia to their own population (about half of whom are Muslims),[186] especially considering the links forged between the UIC and the Ogaden and Oromo liberation movements, i.e. the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF), the little known United Western Somali Liberation Front (UWSLF) and the Oromo OLF.[187] Finally, they have surely been concerned about the prospects of Somalia's falling under the influence of Eritrea.

Eritrea has throughout been a minor, but significant player, apparently supporting the UIC/SCIC with weapons—in clear violation of the UN embargo (vide infra). Eritrea's support has not been based on any religious or ideological affinity, as the regime of President Isaias Afwerki's PFDJ (People's Front for Democracy and Justice, an offspring of the old EPLF) is not at all Islamist (or even Muslim), but Christian and secular.[188] In fact, the regime is opposed by a couple of Islamist (and partly jihadist) rebel groups. The main opponents of the regime are the remnants of the former ELF (Eritrean Liberation Front), most of which are self-proclaimed Islamist. Some of them have at various stages resorted to an armed struggle, featuring elements of terrorism. This has, for instance, been the case of the Eritrean Islamic Jihad (EJI, sometimes referred to as EJIM: Eritrean Islamic Jahid Movement), founded in 1988 and based in Sudan, but operating in Eritrea since 1989, i.e. prior to independence, and allegedly related to al-Qaeda Its leader in 1998 described the goals of the movement as "to realize our position as servants of Allah, and to establish the Islamic State.".[189] What has spurred the support of the PFDJ regime for Islamist forces in Somalia has thus rather been the wish to support whomever Ethiopia was opposing according to the "my enemy's enemy is my friend" logic—or even its derivative, "my enemy's friend's enemy is my friend," as may have been the explanation for Asmara's support for the rebels—especially JEM (Justice and Equality Movement)—in the Darfur province of Sudan, viewed as opposing the government of Sudan, in turn seen as aligned with Ethiopia.[190] Following the Ethiopian intervention and considering IGAD's continued support for the TFG and its arch-enemy, Eritrea decided to suspend its membership of IGAD.[191]

The role of Sudan role seems to have been minor and on the whole rather constructive, e.g. much more even-handed than one might have expected from a government based on Islamism. Khartoum has thus remained neutral throughout the conflict, but played the role as honest broker, e.g. during the stand-off between the TFG and the SCIC where Sudan hosted reconciliation talks between the opposing sides.[192]

Kenya's role has been less central than one might have expected, considering that a good deal of the refugees from Somalia are bound to end up across their common border—and in view of its historical problems with Somali irredentism

and its alleged (but probably vastly exaggerated) "Islamist problem."[193] Whatever substantive role Nairobi has taken has followed the multilateral track, i.e. it has been working through IGAD (vide infra). Without really taking a stand on the substance, however, Kenya has been collaborating closely with the United States by helping to close the border to Somalia (in breach of international obligations) and apprehend people suspected by Washington (or Ethiopia) of being aligned with terrorists.[194]

4.7.2 International Organizations

Having served as the "midwife" of the TFG, it is hardly surprising that the subregional organization for the HoA, IGAD, has been unswervingly on the side of this so-called "government," also because Ethiopia has a large say in the organization. IGAD was thus, from the very start, very favorably inclined towards the TFG's request for armed protection.[195] as well as in favor of a relaxation of the arms embargo on Somalia in order to allow for a build-up of armed forces loyal to Yusuf and his entourage.[196] In June 2006 the organization (minus Eritrea) followed Kenya's lead in imposing various sanctions, including a travel ban, on what it called "warlords," some of whom they also wanted prosecuted for crimes against humanity.[197] Likewise without Eritrea's participation, IGAD heads of state and government met in January for an extraordinary meeting at which they voiced no opinion on the Ethiopian intervention, yet took note of its intention to withdraw, urging the international community to take steps to prevent the emergence of a "security vacuum."[198] Due to the organization's weakness, however, its actual role has mainly consisted in putting pressure on the African Union.

The AU, in turn, could not easily go against one of the REC's designated as its operational arms in the making—or against the expressed wishes of its host country, Ethiopia—and especially not at a historical juncture where its utility was being assessed by the world community with a view to granting much needed external support.[199] Moreover, considering that the OAU had already recognized the TNG, the AU chose to view the TFG as a simple successor which made its support for the latter almost preordained.[200] The actual role of the AU was, however, quite modest, mainly because of a lack of armed forces and other resources. Having first dispatched a fact-finding mission and then acknowledged the need for the dispatch of "peacekeepers" to assist the TFG—and having endorsed the proposal by the United States and IGAD to lift of relax the arms embargo the Peace and Security Council in January 2007 mandated a peacekeeping mission (AMISOM) to take over from the Ethiopian forces. Even though it was mandated to comprise 8,000 troops —and partly financed by EU and US support of €15,000 and $14,000, respectively—by the time of writing,

however, only Uganda had actually sent forces which had come under heavy fire and proved unable to establish even a modicum of peace in Mogadishu.[201]

The role of the United Nations has been predominantly reactive, presumably because neither the organization as such nor the veto-weilding powers in the Security Council would want to land themselves in a situation resembling that of the early 1990s, obliging them to intervene (vide supra). The UNSC thus passed a total of twelve resolutions on Somalia since 2001 compared to fourteen in the years 1992-95, most of them dealing with the arms embargo which was imposed on Somalia in 1992 (UNSCR 733). In 2003 a Monitoring Group was established under the auspices of the Council's Sanctions Committee, which has ever since produced very detailed and insightful reports on the various breaches of the embargo.[202] It has, for instance, documented extensive violations of the regulations by several states, especially Ethiopia (in support of the TFG) and Eritrea in support of, first, the splinter faction of the TFIs from Mogadishu and then the UIC. This should be added the clandestine (and usually denied) support provided by Uganda and Kenya to the TFG and the even more secret support provided to the UIC by Arab countries such as Egypt, Libya and Syria as well as by Djibouti and Iran, not to mention the assistance provided by Hezbollah and even the Al Qaeda.[203]

Throughout the present crisis, the Secretary General has presented regular situation reports and the Security Council has passed several resolutions, mainly endorsing the various IGAD and AU initiatives (e.g. in UNSCR 1725 of 6 December 2006) for an international force whilst making it clear that this also entails the specification included in the IGAD deployment plan, according to which "those States that border Somalia would not deploy troops to Somalia" (art. 4). There was thus no ex ante authorization of the Ethiopian intervention (UNSCR 1725, art. 4). The Council did, however, amend the embargo to allow for the deployment of AMISOM (UNSCR 1744, art. 4-6).[204] By the time of writing (ultimo July 2007), some consideration had been given to the deployment of a UN peacekeeping operation, but no decisions had been taken. The requisite strength of such a mission, even under the most optimistic assumptions, was estimated at around 20,000 troops with substantial air and maritime components.[205]

The Arab League has played a minor role as mediator in the crisis, mostly acting in consort with the AU and occasionally the United Nations,[206] as has been the case of the European Union. An International Contact Group has been established, comprising the EU, Italy, Kenya, Norway, Sweden, Tanzania, the UK, the United States, the AU, IGAD, the League of Arab States, and the UN. At its meeting in January 2007, however, it merely took note of the new situation.[207]

4.8 Scenarios for the Future

By the time of writing in late July 2007, the prospects for the future looked very bleak indeed. The TFG and what was left of the UIC still had not come to terms with each other and the reconciliation conference between the two kept being postponed. The general security situation in the country had deteriorated considerably compared to one year earlier when the UIC was in control, and the TFG seemed completely unable to actually govern the country. The number of refugees and internally displaced persons had skyrocketed and the humanitarian crisis was very severe indeed, featuring shortages of just about everything—except weapons and ammunition. Rather than pretending to know what the future holds in store for the Somali, we may try to sketch the contours of an optimistic and a pessimistic scenario—hoping that the former will materialize whilst being more inclined to believe that the latter will.

Optimists might hope that the TFG with the help of its foreign supporters may be able to actually establish control of at least Mogadishu and parts of the rest of the country before its mandate expires in 2009.[208] If the TFG manages to co-opt significant parts of the present opposition, e.g. influential members of the Hawyiye clan in and around the capital as well as (moderate, but still representative) Islamists, it may come to be viewed as reasonably legitimate by a major part of the population—especially if it manages to keep its Ethiopian backers at arms length and only draw on their support discretely. If the international community honors its pledges of support, the government might have enough funds available for distribution to actually achieve an improvement of the daily lives of its citizens. If so, it might achieve a "performance legitimacy" to make up for its shortage of procedural legitimacy, in which case its opponents may gradually come to be viewed by the Somali as spoilers rather than as freedom fighters protecting the nation against the Ethiopian foe. Not only might this benefit the Somali, but it might also make them less inclined to support terrorism, thus also furthering the national security of both Ethiopia and the United States. In other words, the Somali crisis could be contained as well as mitigated rather than spreading and escalating. Unfortunately, however, all its conceivability and indisputable attractions notwithstanding, this scenario does not seem at all likely at the present juncture.

A pessimistic—but in the present author's opinion much more realistic—is premised on the assumption that the TFG regime is devoid of inherent legitimacy in the eyes that matter, i.e. those of the Somali nation. Not only was its coming into being somewhat questionable—exacerbated by its subsequent bending of the rules—but it is simply not sufficiently representative of the entire Somali nation, as it excludes some of the most important clans as well as other strata of the nation, defined in religious terms. "A victor's peace in contemporary Somalia is a fantasy," as aptly put by Ken Menkhaus.[209] Trying to make up for the unsatisfactory representatively and governing capacity by

drawing heavily on Ethiopian (and American) support simply detracts further from what little legitimacy the regime might have had in the first place by giving it a "Quisling image." This, in turn, makes the Somalia oppose the regime, either directly by taking up arms against it or indirectly, by lending moral and material support to those who do—perhaps even including terrorist.

Even though no armed conflict escalates in a linear fashion, but all have their ups and downs, there is no reason to expect the temporary lull in the fighting following the brutal Ethiopian offensive in Mogadishu to be more than just that—as the regime's opponents can afford to bide their time and launch new assaults at what they deem to be an opportune moment. There is thus every reason to expect the conflict to continue as well as to spread to neighboring countries, mainly Ethiopia. While some of it may take the form of guerrilla warfare, it is also very likely that it will feature terrorist attacks conducted by the remnants of the UIC and its allies. The major attack against an oil field in Ethiopia by the ONLF, with a death toll of 74, may thus be a harbinger of worse to come.[210]

It is also entirely conceivable that elements from the routed UIC—perhaps especially the Al-Shabaab, rather than AIAI—may join forces with Al-Qaeda, and that this may be motivated just as much by the "my enemy's enemy is my ally" logic than by ideological-religious sympathy or affinity. In its turn, Al Qaeda is clearly welcoming the opening of a new battlefield in Somalia in addition to those in Afghanistan and Iraq, as is obvious from recent statements by Al-Zawahiri—often, albeit somewhat misleadingly, referred to as the second-in-command of AQ:

> The near-term plan consists of targeting Crusader-Jewish interests, as everyone who attacks the Muslim Ummah must pay the price, in our country and theirs, in Iraq, Afghanistan, Palestine and Somalia, and everywhere we are able to strike their interests... And the long-term plan is divided into two halves: The first half consists of earnest, diligent work, to change these corrupt and corruptive regimes.... As for the second half of the long-term plan, it consists of hurrying to the fields of jihad like Afghanistan, Iraq and Somalia, for jihad preparation and training. Thus, it is a must to hurry to the fields of jihad for two reasons: The first is to defeat the enemies of the Ummah and repel the Zionist Crusade, and the second is for jihadi preparation and training to prepare for the next stage of the jihad.[211]

5. Conclusion

The above analysis has, hopefully, shown that much of the attention paid by the international community, and especially the United States under the auspices of its War on Terror, is based on erroneous premises. Neither has the Horn seen many terrorist attacks in the paqst, nor were there prior to the dramatic events in Somalia in 2006-07 any reasons to expect so for the future. There did not seem

to be much fertile soil for the seeds of Islamist extremism which some, including the Al Qaeda network, tried to sow there. Even though the subregion was host to several intractable conflicts most took the form of ordinary guerrilla war rather than terrorism, and most were primarily motivated by political grievances and nationalism rather than by religious fervor.

This was also the case of Somali, as the rather elaborate case study has tried to demonstrate. This conflict-ridden country has experienced a host of problems throughout its history, most of them related to the frustrated national ambitions and weak state structures—and ever since around 1990 the country has been at a state of war, pitting clans against each other with their respective political superstructures and in ever-changing patterns of alignments, both internally and with external players. Religious extremism has never been predominant and, at most, an epiphenomenon, i.e. a vehicle for articulating political grievances and rallying support for a political cause, rather than a motive for conflict at such. Moreover, contrary to prevailing opinion, Somalia has been neither a battlefield, staging area or breeding ground for terrorism, not even after its effective state collapse. Failed states are not nearly as attractive to terrorists groups or networks as moderately weak and/or moderately strong but sympathetic states.

There was thus no good reasons for the United States to fear terrorism in or from Somalia, but such fear were nevertheless a reality. Ironically, just as in Iraq—where there were no terrorists prior to the American invasion, but which was transformed by the invasion into the most terror-ridden country in the world—the steps taken by the USA to curtail a non-existent terrorist threat seems to have created one. When the United States sponsored a warlord alliance against terrorism it inadvertently helped bringing to power and subsequently radicalizing islamist forces. When it along with its ally Ethiopia then resorted to military force to dislodge these islamists from power, they may well have transformed them into a terrorist foe which may cause both of them considerable trouble in the years to come.

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