

Somalia: Exploring A Way Out



Edited by:
National Civic Forum

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This document has been produced with the financial assistance of the European Union and Heinrich Boell Foundation; the Contents of this document are the sole responsibility of National Civic Forum and can under no circumstances be regarded as reflecting the position of the EU and HBF.

Design, layout and printing: Reach-Over Creative Ltd. Photo credits: Axel Harneit-Sievers

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

NCF would like to acknowledge the Somali civics, intellectuals, and business community, youth and women representatives both at home and in Diaspora who have been attending the organization annual conferences since 2009. During the conferences, the participants have been presenting commissioned as well as non commissioned papers some of which form part of this publication. The discussions of the papers during the conference greatly enriched these papers. We appreciate the high level of tolerance by participants for divergent views presented during these conferences and the ultimate commitment to continue with the search of a lasting solution to Somalia conflict.

Congregating of the Somalis and publication of these papers was made possible through the funding of the European Commission and Heinrich Boell Stiftung. Thank you for funding this and other activities of NCF, Carol Lintari; HBS Peace, Security and Political Dialogue programme coordinator has consistently guided and nurtured NCF and gave editorial input to this publication, we say thank you. We appreciate the editing skills of George Omondi the executive director of African Research and Resource Forum for editing the papers and compiling the introductory chapter. NCF staff worked tirelessly to make this publication a success specifically Wambui Kihui NCF assistant coordinator who harmonized the whole process while Mohammed Abdi the coordinator managed the administrative and logistical aspects of the conference.

Finally I would like to thank NCF Board of Directors under the chairmanship of Abdi Mohamed Baffo for their consistent leadership, NCF members, development partners and friends and all the Somalis for holding on to the future despite the gloomy past and present.

Dr. Abdullahi Haider
NCF Executive Director

INTRODUCTION

State collapse in Somalia: The causes, costs and prospects for state recovery

1.1. Understanding the Problem

Somalia is for many students and researchers of state development, the best example of total state failure in contemporary society. This is not just a case of labeling and misapplication of development *lingua*. Indeed, there is not much of an academic debate going on the accuracy of this notion. For many, the violent conflicts, especially in central and Southern Somalia, the appalling humanitarian situation resulting from the breakdown of public service delivery, the illegal activities of alleged terrorist groups within Somalia as well as the involvement of neighbouring states in Somalia, are the prominent features of an underdeveloped state. The current Transitional Federal Government (TFG) is facing serious challenges in administering the parts of the country under its control. Communities have not been reconciled with one another and bad blood fuels the conflicts. Economically, there is a high level of unemployment, extremely low levels of human development and an overdependence on remittances (Menkhaus, 2010).

It is necessary at this stage, to recall the difference between a ‘nascent’ and a ‘failed’ state as advanced by Peter Halden (2008), in reference to the Somalia case. We do not want to detain ourselves here with a detailed consideration of what the actual differences may be, but suffice it to say that this is intellectually intriguing. The thrust of Halden’s argument is that Somalia may only be a young state, at early stages of state development, facing the hurdles along the way that have been faced by other states that are considered much more developed than Somalia. Even in analysis of political transitions in more established states, this point is often made. For some, it even provides a rationale for the political violence and other unacceptable acts of political actors in electoral contests, especially in less developed countries. It is all a matter of political (im)maturity, which comes with time. To the extent that there is no consensus on the ‘stages’ of democratization and their characteristics, this argument is difficult to accept, whether in the case of Somalia or indeed any other state.

Giving some credence to Halden’s arguments ¹ has the potential of rekindling the hope long lost by many on the future of Somalia. However; an extension of the debate into whether state failure is synonymous with a breakdown in public order - suggesting that a broken down public order does not necessarily amount to state failure - borders on intellectual mischief that might confuse our understanding of the actual problems at hand and introduce a rather unhelpful debate. As demonstrated above, the effects of state failure in Somalia are not really contestable. Furthermore, an examination of the history of Somalia clearly shows that total state collapse in Somalia is the result of a degeneration of state systems in the country over the last twenty years. When then Zambia’s president Kenneth Kaunda visited Somalia in 1968, he sat between then President Sharmarke and former President Osman and remarked “Somalia is the only country in the world where a reigning president and his predecessor enjoy state parties together. Elsewhere in the continent, the former leaders are in jail, exile or worse” (Samarta, I, 2006). There can be no better illustration that Somalia was once a stable democracy. Something went wrong in the post-independence period and especially

¹ *Op cit*,

during the Siad Barre regime.

There are both internal and external factors that led to this situation. Internally, the repressive regime of Siad Barre not only generated enormous discontent and rebellion at home but also contributed to the minimal involvement of the international community in resolving the crisis that was gathering storm in the country. In the early 1980s, Somalia had one of the highest per rates of foreign aid in the world (Menkhaus, 2008). External factors had to do with the end of the cold war, following the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1991 and the declining importance of satellite support for the western and eastern blocs of the cold war era. Closer to Somalia, Ethiopia's security interests are closely linked to the capability and character of the state in Somalia. Indeed, since the 1990s, Ethiopia has remained the single most important country pursuing an overt strategy to watch over political developments in Somalia and seek to influence them openly. Lately, Uganda and Burundi have also sent troops to help keep the fragile peace in the country.

What is at issue, in the views shared by most authors in this volume, is not really the determination of whether or not Somalia is a failed state. Papers in this volume are rich in their coverage of the historical antecedents to the situation in present day Somalia. The authors bravely face the hard questions on state recovery in Somalia. They also exercise considerable modesty in the recommendations that they make, knowing fully well that there is no single 'right answer' to any of the dilemmas. A fundamental question may very well be: 'what is the ideal we want to see in Somalia, in terms of state formation and state character?' There are no normative concepts to follow even in our understanding of state development. What is important is to carry out an analysis of the objective conditions in Somalia and offer suggestions drawn from these realities². There are varied proposals and the papers in this volume add fresh ideas to the propositions already under debate. One of the most fascinating of these is the suggestion that Somalia requires something between anarchy and the former Barre regime. This may be far-fetched, but the crucial point is that no known 'ideal' systems can be replicated in Somalia; not even liberal democracy for all its much vaunted suitability in poor countries.

1.2. The Public Space and Public Actors

This introduction is not intended to pre-empt the contents of the publication. But we will bring out some of the main features of politics and public affairs management in Somalia. To start with, colonialism created Somalia as the single entity we know today. The country did not exist as such prior to colonialism. Clanism is central to Somalia politics. These clan differences are also at the core of the relations between the southern and northern parts of the country. The northern part of Somalia (Somaliland) is dominated by a single clan – the *Isaaq*, which only cohabits with a few small clans while the southern part is home to three major clans, namely, the *Dir*, *Hawiye* and *Digil-Mirifle*. In Puntland, the *Majareteen* clan is the major group. Interestingly, these regions have had different experiences in their separatist moves. Whereas the northern part has seen the emergence of two semi-autonomous regions of Puntland and Somaliland, the southern part is the centre epicentre of the struggles for the soul of Somalia, as it were. There should be no simple extrapolations pointing to the differences between the clans as the major drivers for the state formation processes in the various regions. The turmoil in the south invalidates this proposition. It mostly arises from intra-*Hawiye* conflicts. Even attempts to use Islam as a unifying factor in the region have not quite succeeded.

1.3. Beyond Clanism

There is more to an enquiry into Somalia beyond the complexity of clan relations. Take for example, the

² The point about the unique nature of each context in development management is a general one, but Coyne C.J and Lees (2002) make the point in the specific case of Somalia.

success factors in the regional state development in the northern part. Compared to the experiences of the south, the regional state-building process in Somaliland is a community-oriented bottom-up process, hence the relative stability of the regional government. In the southern part, state-building has taken a top-down dimension, driven largely by elite groups. Puntland has for long, exhibited the double interest in state unification and regional autonomy. At the same time, Riverine region, dominated by the Digil-Mirifle clan group has been unable to establish a separate regional unit, as is the case with Puntland and Somaliland. The reasons are certainly not linked to clanism; at least not entirely. These are elements of the governance architecture beyond clan differences and they have a discernible impact on the current state of affairs in the country. The summation of all critical factors in the governance order of Somalia into clanism is therefore a narrow conception.

What then are some of the other critical factors, beyond clan differences, in understanding the Somalia situation today? We are by no means suggesting that whatever the other issues may be, they have no linkages at all with the phenomenon of clanism. There may be some relationships and linkages but these factors are in their own ways, major contributors to the overall picture. This book outlines and discusses some of these factors quite clearly. The actors involved in the governance landscape in the country are diverse in their identities and objectives and/or motivations. In some ways, each chapter in this volume focuses on at least one key actor. We will discuss these in light of the content of the book a little later. At this stage, we may only enumerate the most critical ones. They are: the local business people, the international business community, the Somali Diaspora, the militia groups, neighbouring states and international development organizations. These actors are driven in the roles they play, by different motives. It should not even be taken for granted that all of them are negatively affected by the breakdown of law and order. Many of them actually benefit a great deal from this state of affairs. A general classification of the actors would group them as profit-makers (both genuine and criminal), risk takers or risk averse actors in both politics and business.

1.4. This Book and its Contents

This book is a compilation of papers presented at conferences organized by the National Civic Forum (NCF) in 2009 and 2010. As the papers affirm, the conferences were convened to offer an opportunity for academics and leaders from other sections of the Somalia society – both at home and abroad—to reflect together on the progress of conflict resolution and the prospects for the re-establishment of the Somalia state. This is a broad subject. At the minimum, discussions on state re-establishment would delve into matters of national security, public service delivery, civil society and the public participation in governance processes. This list is neither complete nor arranged in any order of the importance/significance of the elements. The important point is that this volume attempts to cover the subject by touching on at least each of these elements and more. For papers commissioned separately and not as component parts of an overall research project, coherence and linkages between the various chapters in this volume is the result of the realities of the situation in Somalia today, much more than it is a reflection of coordinated research and analysis among the authors. Without offering a flattering excuse for the inadequacies of the analysis in the volume, the gaps in this volume may very well represent the knowledge gaps in our understanding of contemporary Somalia.

Governance in general: There are eight chapters in this publication, all of which are devoted to the governance challenges in Somalia and the status of various initiatives aimed at improving the political, social and economic environment in the country. As expected, this volume pays almost disproportionate attention to the issue conflict resolution and peace development. In a country that

has been under violent conflict for at least 20 consecutive years now, there is no doubt that the crux of the governance agenda is the attainment of peace. But other governance elements matter too. They include, *inter alia*, public service delivery, constitutionalism, accountability and civil society development. In Somalia, these secondary issues over the search for peace will be assessed on the basis of their contribution towards sustainable peace and security. It is as good as saying that none of these is as good in and of itself, without the prominent attention to their roles in achieving peace.

Civil Society: Mohammed Ibrahim narrows down to the question of civil society in a stateless society, and in most of the paper, he tries to find a conceptual ground on which to lay the idea that there can be a civil society without an established state. It is not an easy conceptualization as civil society is often seen as the governance formations outside the state and the market, presupposing the initial existence of the two³. Indeed, the argument that civil society is important as a check on the exercise of state power runs through the paper. The author considers the question as to whether the emergence and growth of a strong civil society could have negative impacts on state development. This is a valid question, seeing as it is in the case of Somalia that both the state and the civil society are nearly non-existent. This dilemma faces even post-conflict countries. It is not very much a question of how effort should be apportioned between interventions in civil society building and state system development in the state-building project. Rather, the dilemma is about which of the two will be the primary driver of development in crisis and post-crisis situations.

In discussions on state-building in South Sudan, Mahmood Mamdani (2011) contends that there can be no state run by NGOs⁴. It is the responsibility of governments to discharge the duties and responsibilities of a state to its citizens. Despite the humanitarian crises that often magnifies the roles of NGOs in public service delivery; they cannot be the main drivers of state-building in Somalia, especially because the humanitarian NGOs that we discuss here are in most instances, international NGOs, run by non-Somalis. But even indigenous CSOs are greatly constrained, first and foremost by the security challenges in the environment. There is little they can do to contribute to state-building. A major contribution of this chapter is the point made clearly in the paper that thinking about civil society need not be along the lines of civil society formations in western countries.

There are interesting civil society formations, emerging in the Arab countries, but also in countries like Somalia with a substantial portion of the elite living outside their countries – in Diaspora. It takes us back to the point we made earlier that Somalia will have to be examined and understood as a unique case in which the application of conventional knowledge and principles cannot be without an inquiry into their relevance for local circumstances. To be sure, Somalia actually had a vibrant civil society movement, mainly dominated by youth organizations, in the colonial days, fighting for independence. But these were replaced by traditional formations after independence. Why could this have happened? It is such questions that will direct our minds to the crux of the Somalia situation.

Diaspora: Osman Farah's chapter carries the forward the analysis launched by Mohammed Ibrahim on the various forms of civil society and focuses on the Diaspora population and their contribution. The role of the Diaspora in financing economic activities in Somalia through remittances back home from abroad is well highlighted in the paper, as one would have expected. But there are aspects of the Diaspora activities that connect in fascinating ways with the governance processes and even the civil society activities that we have already discussed above. Going through this paper, the reader

³ See, for example, Porter & Kilby, 1996

⁴ We are aware that civil society does not equate NGOs, but the application of the term in this context permits the inclusion of NGOs among CSOs under discussion. In situations of humanitarian crises, NGOs are key players, outside the state, if there's any state. At any rate, Mohammed Ibrahim, in his paper, seems to apply the term in this sense.

will most likely find that for Somalia, Diaspora life is closely linked to citizenship back at home. The paper gives detailed accounts of the activities of Diaspora communities in different parts of the world and how these have influenced events back home. In the case of Somalia, one does not want to take it simply that Diaspora can be useful in resolving the crisis at hand if their participation is enhanced. The critical question will be: what is the actual implication of the fact that Somalia has a large number of its elite population living outside the country? Has this delayed or enhanced the resolution of the governance challenges back home?

In his accounts of the lives of Somalis in different parts of the world, Osman illustrates (a) the persistence of the clan factor in Somali interactions, even outside their homeland, and (b) the critical importance of the host countries and their historical or contemporary interests in Somalia, in defining the experiences and contributions of the Somali Diaspora living in those countries. There are considerable differences in the experiences of Somali Diaspora in Saudi Arabia and Denmark, for example, for obvious reasons. A major limitation of this paper is the fact that it has no coverage at all of the Somali population living within the East African region, especially in Kenya. This group is large in number and perhaps highly influential in business and politics back home, for reasons of proximity among others. There should have been an attempt to include this group in the analysis of Diaspora roles and contributions.

Ibrahim Noor and Mahboub extend the discussions to the involvement of the youth. The paper shows the structural limitations facing youth engagement in Somali affairs, both at home and abroad, owing to the long-established conservative structures of clanism and patrimonial leadership systems. But as we have pointed out, the youth were the vanguard of the struggle for independence in Somalia.

Islam: Numerous studies of the Somali society have confirmed the near religious homogeneity in Somalia—almost the entire population is Muslim. From the surface, religious schism is therefore not a potential driver of conflict. But there are divisions among the Muslim population, along smaller sub-groups of the faith. These have had their impact on the conflict situation. Abdurahman Abdullahi in his paper digs deep into the history of the intra-faith relationships and how they impacted on peace and stability. Our interest is however on the state of play at the moment in as far as this issue is concerned, which the paper addresses quite well. The raging conflicts in the southern part of the country are connected to activities of radical Muslim groups, including the *Al-shabaab*. It would appear that the attempt to use Islam, in some kind of a theological-legalistic approach to seeking cohesion, to transcend clan differences has failed.

A major limitation of the paper is in its treatment of the Union of Islamic Courts, which is no doubt a prominent player in the political and security systems, but also the epitome of political militarization of Islam. Those who support the view that traditional governance structures would suit Somalia have to contend with the intricate relationship between clanism and religious leadership in the traditional governance systems. When conflated in practice and analysis as is often the case, the link between traditional governance and religious leadership gets too blurred. This is further complicated by the distinction between ‘moderate’ and ‘radical’ religious leadership. Abdurahman Wandati attempts to navigate this terrain in his paper in this volume, with an appreciable reference to history.

Public-Private Partnerships: The paper by Yusuf Nur on PPPs for development launches a new level of debate. Theories of development are predicated on certain systems of public administration and features of the state. The notion of PPPs is well appreciated in liberal democracies. If one was to look at the state-building project in Somalia as one whose logical outcomes will be the emergence of

a liberal democratic state, then PPPs will unavoidably be prominent features of the development in the new state. This is not to imply that the debate is premature. In any case, interesting forms of PPPs are taking place in the current situation, and Nur outlines some of these. The bottom-line however, is that a debate on the trajectories of development policy and planning will necessarily be predated by conversations on the nature of the state. The paper by Nur is forward-looking in this sense and gives additional incentive for the completion of the state recovery project in Somalia.

In summary, this book brings to public discourses the thinking of Somalis about Somalia. The publication is thus a little different from most of the literature on the Somali question in the sense that it is not the work of academics and researchers from outside the country. As we know, state collapse in Somalia has been academic fodder for numerous researchers from outside Somalia. Indeed, until recently, even some of the most basic information on the country could only be accessed from knowledge resources abroad. It is gratifying to see the active involvement of Somali nationals in debates concerning the future of their country. It is interventions such as this by the NCF that may advance the course of state recovery in Somali much faster. It is this approach that may end up unlocking the deadlock arising from the fears, friction and fatigue over the Somalia statehood, in the words of Khalif Ahmed (2006).

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Does civil society in a stateless environment hinder or help in reestablishing the state?: The Case of Somalia

Ibrahim Sh. Ahmed Mohamed

December 22, 2010

**Paper presented at the annual conference of the National Civic Forum, Nairobi, Kenya,
Lukenya, Gataway, December 19 to 24, 2010.**

Publication Type: Conference Paper/Unpublished Manuscript

The key research question this paper is going to examine is whether civil societies in a stateless environment hinder or help in reestablishing the failed state. Somalia has been without a functioning government since the start of the civil war in 1991, earning the dubious distinction of the longest occurrence of state collapse in postcolonial history. In the absence of a functioning government, Western donors use civil society as a vehicle to deliver services to populations within failed states, like Somalia. This makes civil societies more powerful and reliable than the failed governments under which they function. Scholars should study civil societies as a vital part of the failed state, not as a tool to deliver services, as is currently the case in Somalia. As the state collapses and civil society becomes stronger, sometimes the only employer in town becomes a profit maker for the individual actors who manages such civil society. Fear of losing that profit led to the individual actors and civil society's decision to adopt obstructionism as a modus operandi that ultimately hinders reestablishment of the state. One exception however, is the educationally based groups in civil societies. They would rather have a strong functioning government that can help them advance and reach out to more people to educate.

According to Ken Menkhaus (2007), since the collapse of the Somali state, the international community has attempted a two-track method to reconstitute a conventional central government. The first was several peace accords imposed by foreign powers to build a transitional government in a top-down process of power sharing among Somalia's political elite and warlords; this effort has failed Somalis consistently. The cause of the failure is the direct result of an inharmonious environment. The international community has always been interested in forming a government that would consist of several different warring factions in a power sharing arrangement without genuine reconciliation. This approach has failed consistently. As a result, the trajectory of a top down approach is a failed one. The second track was a bottom up approach that was based on funding one civil society organization after another for local projects. Many institutions have been embracing the idea of state building through civil society, among them the World Bank, the European Community and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) - to name a few. The notion was a noble one, "that state building and civil society go hand in hand" (Mertus and Sajjad, 2010:13). To further justify funding civil society organizations, Mertus and Sajjad referenced a recent USAID publication that proclaims that civil society plays a critical role in democracies by "informing citizens about their rights and responsibilities and ensuring that governments meet citizen needs." (Mertus and Sajjad, 2010:5) The notion was civil society will promote governance and later foster democratic values. Decades of civil strife and an international community eager to aid Somalia have made the civil society more powerful and reliable in delivering goods and services than the national government institutions that exist in Somalia.

However, state leaders failed to create functioning governance systems that could displace the civil society. Once established, civil society becomes strong and profitable, the element of that society advocating the establishment of a government that may later limit its power and profit is very unlikely.

Western scholars differentiate between for profit and nonprofit establishments, theorizing that for-profit organizations are part of the market, not of civil society; however, as I outlined above such distinction does not exist in a failed state environment. To guide my research, let me establish a working definition that is helpful in understanding Somali civil society.

Civil society refers to the arena of uncoerced collective action around shared interests, purposes and values. In theory, its institutional forms are distinct from those of the state, family and market, though in practice, the boundaries between

state, civil society, family and market are often complex, blurred and negotiated. Civil society commonly embraces a diversity of spaces, actors and institutional forms, varying in their degree of formality, autonomy and power. (LSE: 2004)

There have been four eras of Somali history in which civil societies have been active: the initial stage of the colonial period from 1950 to 1960, the second stage, after independence and the establishment of a democratically elected civilian government from 1960 to 1969, the third stage, the dismantlement of the civil society following the 1969 military coup d'états that ousted the civilian government and finally, the fourth stage, which has seen the reemergence of the civil society in a stateless environment during the civil war from 1990 to the present. These four different periods broadly define the role Somali civil societies played and their functions.

Civil society in Somalia was established during the colonial times and was a mechanism to defeat the colonial power in that era. Colonialism, therefore, has been the catalyst for the formation of modern Somali civil society. After independence in 1960, a powerful amalgam of civil societies formed a modern civilian Somali government that allowed them to mature. However, the 1969 military coup d'états that ousted the civilian government ushered in the third stage of Somali civil society. The first action of the military government was to prohibit the existence and activities of independent civil society groups. As a result, the civil society that Locke and Hume envisioned, which was a civil society that establishes a government so that it is people may be secure in their lives, liberties, and properties, has vanished under this regime.

After the demise of Somali civil society during the military rule, a civil war broke out in Somalia that destroyed the Somali state in 1990. This destructive civil war gave birth to the fourth state, which will be the focus of my research, a civil society that reemerged in a stateless environment, and one that provides education, health care, develops the economy as a state would and consults with the international community in a state building capacity. As a result, many in the country see these civil entities as political groups in the bureaucratic sense.

A number of scholars have distinguished themselves by bringing together a wide variety of perspectives and traditions positioned within particular religious traditions, including those of Islam, Judaism, and Confucianism. I would assert the very exploration of non-Western tradition helps to foster an understanding of civil society that occurs in the non-Western world, Somalia included. The exploration of this context, in turn, might provide deeper insights into the religious and cultural dimensions of a global civil society of every tradition.

Hasan Hanafi (2002) explores "alternative" understandings of civil society from within and beyond Western traditions. Since Hanafi's focus is on alternative civil society in the Muslim world, I hoped his approach would be different from that of Western scholars and give insight to Somali history. An example of this trend to examine civil society in varying cultural contexts can be found in the work of Hasan Hanafi(2002), who examines civil societies of Muslim countries that bear a resemblance to Somalia. He considers three different "Muslim political societies": fundamentalist, secularist and reformist or modernist alternative. Hanafi assigns to each spectrum of Muslim societies an alternative conception of civil society that reflects their interpretations and values of civil society. First, on the far right spectrum of Muslim society are "radical fundamentalists" such as Al-Shabab in Somalia or Taliban in Afghanistan, whose position is to reject the actual idea of civil society because they claim it is a secular concept that originates from the West and is, therefore, antireligious and un-Islamic. The second position is secularism, which positions itself at the far left spectrum in direct opposition to the fundamentalist and affirms "the concept of civil society as a universal concept". (Hanafi 2002:172)

Regardless of its Western origin, the secular group embraces civil society as an ideal way of life for modern Muslim society. The third group is the reformists, or as Hanafi calls them “modernist alternative”. Reformists fall in between the two extremes. The reformist group acknowledges both the similarities and differences in the Western concept of civil societies and that of Islamic societies. However, they argue that civil society is compatible with modern Islam and therefore, the reformist may interpret Islamic teachings to align the need of the modern Muslim society without infringing Islamic norms. In Arabic, such interpretation is called *ijtihad*. The reformists, like the current Transitional Government in Somalia, argue that through *ijtihad* “similarities can be maintained and differences can be bridged,” (Hanafi 2002:171) while keeping with upstanding Islamic values.

If the concept of civil society is a Western one as the fundamentalist’s charge, is it relevant to its application? Hanafi affirms that “(t)he concept of civil society is a Western concept, coined in the seventeenth century by ...Thomas Hobbes as alternative to Kingdom and Church.” (Hanafi 2002:172) Also, John Ehrenberg (1999: 3) states that “the classical understanding of civil society as a politically organized commonwealth received its first coherent formulation in the cities of ancient Greece.” Hanafi and Ehrenberg are in agreement that the concept of civil society is a Western one. Whether it originated in ancient Greece or in England is relevant to neither.

The third and final practice of an alternative concept of civil societies that Hanafi considers are the modernist Arab and Islamic states that employ an alternative concept of civil society through *al-ijtihad*. The countries he considers as being model are the North African Arabs like Egypt, Libya, Tunisia and the Kingdom of Morocco as well as Kuwait, Jordan, Oman and United Arab Emirates. Hanafi believes that these countries have struck a balance “between civil society and the dictates of medieval Islamic law.” (Hanafi 2002:172). Hanafi describes how in the public sphere “the rule of civil society are maintained: citizenship, equality of all in front of the law, the constitution, freedom of expression, democracy pluralism and the like”, In the private sphere of these countries he describes institutions “such as family law, the *shari’a*” and how the *shari’a* is the prevailing source of the civil law. I would question both of these assertions, as it is a matter of public record that democratic pluralism is nonexistent in these countries and freedom of expression is severely limited. The *Shari’a*’s use in the private sphere is informal at best and then only for family matters. However, the law of these lands is a statutory law informed by the *shari’a* indirectly. In the entire Muslim world, the only countries that claim to be using *shari’a* law are Iran, not mentioned in the article, and Saudi Arabia, where the will of monarchy trumps all else.

Hanafi presents no unique characteristics of functions for countries like Somalia. Whether one considers Western or non-Western thinkers in regards to the neo-Tocquevillean notion, civil societies everywhere endeavor to limit the thrust of state power and foster citizen participation to fight corruption, heighten transparency, and demand accountability and good governance. The disciplined-configurative method of reviewing alternative conceptions of civil society divulges no answers as to whether civil society in a stateless environment hinders or helps to reestablish failed states.

Somalia has become the most prominent example of state-failure in the modern history of mankind. It is important to note, however, that not the entire country is besieged by the breakdown of civil and state order. In the northwestern part of Somalia, the self declared Republic of Somaliland, a former British protectorate declared independence in 1991 and established a democratic political system with parliamentary elections. Also, the northeastern part of Somalia, a region known as Puntland, declared its autonomy within Somalia in 1998. Puntland established local administration that has achieved relative peace and stability on the mainland, with the exception of the pirates in coastal waters of the Puntland region, which does not affect the relative peace in the land.

Somalia has been a very unstable country since 1991, but much of the instability associated with Somalia is focused on the south of the country, particularly around Mogadishu, the Lower Shabelle, Hiran and Jubba valley. These southern regions are inhabited by several different clans, while northwestern Somalia, the Somaliland and Puntland are inhabited by mainly three clans. I am mentioning clan affiliation because western scholars tend to attribute state failure to clan differences; they also tend to think that eventual reconciliation will be based on settling clan differences. Clanism does exist but it did not cause the catastrophe the Somali people have endured and harmonious clan relationships will not usher in a lasting solution. Historically, Somalis were divided by clans and experienced clan based wars against each other, but never to the extent that Somali society has experienced in the last two decades.

The conflict in Somalia has attracted considerable academic attention in many ways. Most academic interest has focused on foreign military intervention and clan structures as the causes of the state failure. The negative externality that Somali civil society may represent since the collapse of the government in 1991 has drawn significantly less scholarly attention. The growth of a self interested civil society that has grown out of necessity in the absence of state may have fostered conflict and it can be asserted, and remains an obstacle for viable state formation.

Mertus and Sajjad (2010:3) report that, as in Somalia, a “record amount of international resources have gone into efforts to construct a strong state in Bosnian Civil society.” Due to this influx of international aid, the number of civil societies and their scope has grown exponentially. This is not to suggest that internationally funded projects run by Somali civil society have been ignored by the scholars. “What has been largely overlooked, however, is the role civil society has played in creating a weak state”, according to Mertus and Sajjad (2010: 4), or preventing a weak state to reemerge as a strong one. Since the top to bottom approach did not work and the bottom up grass moment has proven to be problematic, is state building in Somalia doomed? Menkhaus contends that “the problem in Somalia is not that state building itself is doomed to fail; it is rather that the type of state that both external and local actors have sought to construct has been unattainable and has as a consequence repeatedly set up Somali political leaders and their external mediators for failure.” (Menkhaus 2007; 105-106) While the external mediators and the elite are trying to perfect negotiated settlements, the civil society has evolved from service provider to a de facto government that will not relinquish the power it gains; essentially becoming what Simone Chambers (2002) termed “bad civil society”. While this author is generally favorable to civil society, she challenges the shortcoming of modern Western scholars who fail to recognize the danger some civil societies, like those in Somalia, pose to democracy. (Chambers 2002:101)

The lack of governance and the role of Somali civil society, Menkhaus (2007) believes, is an important area of research for two reasons: first, the intractable conflict and the role civil society played would have introduced a new understanding of the behavior of civil society in a stateless environment. Stephen Stedman (1997) calls such civil society a “spoiler’s problem,” he theorizes them as a group whose modus operandi is to undermine the peace process and devote their energy to blocking reconciliation. Most civil societies who provide services to the needy have become profitable enterprises, whose wealth will diminish once a functioning government is established. There are also, some criminal enterprises that work with civil societies whose profit will be compromised once law and order is established under centralized regime. These two forces are formative, allied and a barrier for a weak state to reestablish as a strong one.

However, Menkhaus asserts that “the Somalia case suggests that a wider range of spoilers exists and must be accounted for in efforts to manage them”. War torn societies like Somalia, Menkhaus

asserts are overwhelmed by “three interrelated but distinct crises—protracted warfare; chronic, often violent criminality or lawlessness; and state failure.” (Menkhaus 2007:75). The negative externalities of civil societies in such an environment are focused on propagating one or two of the above activities. In Somalia, Menkhaus writes “some spoilers have successfully undermined peace accords to perpetuate armed conflict; others have acted only to undercut local efforts to improve law and order and reduce criminality; still others support peace building and the reduction of crime, but block efforts to revive an effective central government.” (Menkhaus 2007:75) Civil society’s mistrust of a Somali government is a historic one, as I mentioned on the third era of Somali civil society and how government marginalized civil societies and severely limits or outlaws its activities. Given that history, the obstructionist behavior of the businesslike civil society is quite predictable. They would want to have a safe and predictable environment in which to conduct commercial activities, without government interference, taxation or the fear that a revived central government will become repressive and predatory at their expense. The history of Somalia’s government provides the current Somali civil society a legitimate cause for concern.

If this causal pattern holds true, it may offer some insight into rebuilding the Somali state. There are limits to what international efforts at state building can accomplish in the absence of revolutionary domestic change. This analysis also suggests that U.S. policies designed to further the stability of Somalia by giving economic support to civil societies without accountability have been misguided, because these businesslike civil societies maintain their authority only by preventing the emergence of a functioning state. If the international community would have eliminated the profit aspect out of the humanitarian work and service delivery, only the genuine humanitarian professionals would have been the care takers of the current civil society and they would not have rejected the formation of government. In fact, I would argue a civil society without a profit motive would welcome government that may provide them a safe environment in which a genuine civil society could function.

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Formal and informal mobilization of the Somali diaspora

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May 2011

Introduction

The level of Diaspora community organization and mobilization tells us whether the community is able to exploit diverse cultural, social, economic and political resources both in the host and homeland environments. The Somali Diaspora can for instance pursue a hybrid strategy combining its own cultural and traditional values with an open learning attitude towards the host environment. In addition, Diaspora organization and mobilization depend on three locational orientations. The first is the host country, where Diaspora has settled. The second is the homeland from which most of Diaspora's values, norms and cultures originate. The third is the transnational network that Diaspora might be able to organize and mobilize.

In studying Diaspora organization mobilization complexities, Sokefeld (2006) applied social movement approaches, which he describes as *"collective challenges based on common purposes and social solidarities, in sustained interaction with elites, opponents, and authorities"* (Tarrow cited in Sokefeld, 2006). The success of social mobilization depends on three main opportunity structures. The first is the political opportunity structures enabling such movements to mobilize and allowing them to operate at society level. The second is the mobilizing opportunity structures including the *"collective vehicles, informal as well as formal, through which people mobilize and engage in collective action"*, i.e. networks and associations that movements create (McCarthy and Zald 1996: 3). The third is the projection of ideas, the so-called framing, in strengthening and keeping the movement and its mobilization together (Snow et al., 1986).

This study focusing on Somali Diaspora cases in the UAE and Denmark, applies the social movement framework. First the Somali Diaspora needs political opportunities, particularly institutional citizenship support to pursue proper community mobilization. Second, Somali Diaspora mobilization requires mobilizing structures and practices in the form of networks and association people create and join to articulate and express their wishes. Such associations and networks could be host country oriented as well as associations based on kinship trans-national oriented relations. Third, Somali Diaspora needs framing ideas to define Somalis as a distinct group in the process of structuring community cohesion. In this process, the community might create *"master frames"* that construct the identity of the community. According to Sokefeld (2006), such frames not just aim to establish and sustain community but also refer to concrete, significant events *"reflecting collective memoirs, grievances, identity and history"* (ibid.) shaping and consolidating community consciousness.

Furthermore, the Foucault's discourse approach guides the analyses of interviews, discussions and texts dealing with Somali Diaspora mobilization. Foucault is one of the first social scientists who linked discourse in the society with the emergence of structures and power relations. For him, discourse is not just utterances but a representation of competing and often unequal, subjective worlds (Neubauer, 1999: 165). The discourse tells us about the subjects under study and the world these subjects construct as well as the one surrounding them. This means the statements of ordinary people contain history and complex power relations and institutions influencing the individual and the collective behaviour. In addition, the meso-domain approach is also relevant in this context. The approach focuses on the dynamics of micro, meso and macro domains, their interaction and relations (Hall, 1995 cited in Sokefeld, 2006). In the analysis, the thesis pays attention to the actions of *"significant people, events and institutions"* in focusing on people, institutions and activities to better understand and interpret community dynamics (Jenkins, 2006).

This paper presents community organization and mobilization with the following categories. The first is how host country opportunity structures influence Somali Diaspora organization and mobilization. The second is how the community exploit both formal and informal channels and

resources to access opportunities both with regard to the host environment and homeland. Third the kind of frames of ideas and proclamation the community employs to reach and sustain the aims of community organization and mobilization.

Migration and Diaspora formation

The history of the Somali migration attests that Somalis fled from persecution, *fitnah* (widespread intolerance and violence) and *qabiilah* (*qabiilism*). The Somali Diaspora largely consists of migrants expelled from their country of origin due to dictatorship and warlordism. Somalia in the 1990s became home for notorious warlords (Charlton and May, 1989).

The conventional wisdom considers Somali migration as recent and refugee oriented. This is not the case for Alpers (1986) who researched African migration and Diaspora formations including Somalis in the regions around the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea. Alpers's basic argument is that Africans migrated to Arabia, to Indonesia and to India for trade and colonial related activities. These Africans eventually mixed with the locals but remained attached to their homeland through customs, language, culture and rituals. Despite their long presence, these diasporas created distinct Diaspora with cultural practices and interaction with other communities in host societies (ibid.). Alpers propose the need to challenge the state and economic centric conventional paradigms of migration and Diaspora analysis (ibid.). With regard to the Somalis, Alpers's research is important as he examined the Somali Diaspora in Yemen, Aden and non-Somali Diaspora formations in Mogadishu, among others, the Hadramis (immigrants from Yemen) and Persians (Iranians)¹.

In modern times, migration from Somalia was colonial-driven, later post-colonial authorities, civilian and military regimes intensified the process. The post-dictatorship and the subsequent collapse of the state led to mass historic exodus. The different stages produced different migration types. As indicated in figure 2.1, the first was strategic and it took Somalis to Africa, Arabian Peninsula and Asia to sustain colonialism in these regions. The second was partially economic and opposition-driven and resulted in the migration of bureaucrats, army officers and students. The third was global on a much larger scale and included traumatized groups including children and women.

Figure 1.1 Migration pattern Source? Own representation?



¹ The name Mogadishu means "The seat of the Shah" indicating its Persian origin. Persian Muslims migrated from Shiraz, Persia to Mogadishu where some of them built one of the oldest and known mosques in the city Arba'a Rukun in the 11th century (Mukhtar in eds. Ahmed, 1995: 5).

Somali Diaspora

As discussed earlier there is no academic consensus on the definition of Diaspora. The general understanding is that Diaspora should fulfil the conditions of “*dispersion, dealing with reluctant hosts, contest and maintenance of an active relationship with the homeland*” (Cohen, 1996). According to this description Somalis qualify as Diaspora. For centuries, the Somalis travelled and settled in other countries. Some of the earliest destinations were the Arabian Peninsula and East Africa. The devastating traumatic civil war generated the latest phase of the migration. About two million Somalis fled abroad as dictatorship and warlordism shattered their lives. Many of them belong to the most capable in social, political and economic terms. The collapse of the Somali state in 1991 brought havoc and scattered millions to destitute refugee life in many countries. Though arriving in different periods and circumstances, the estimated 1½ million Somalis in Diaspora (see table 1.1) consider themselves related and connected to each other. The intensified global telecommunication and internet have since helped create a better organized dispersed community (Issa-Salwe, 2009).

Table 1.1 Somali Diaspora

HOST COUNTRY	ESTIMATED NUMBER OF SOMALIS
USA	200.000
UK	200.000
Norway	40.000
Sweden	40.000
DK	18.000
UAE	100.000
Saudi Arabia	200.000
Kenya	400.000 ²
Yemen	300.000
Total	1.498.000

From Colonial Migration to Cosmopolitan Migration

Somalis in the UAE are not a homogeneous group. Some have been in the region for generations, working with the colonial system³. Others arrived in the post-independent and post-Somali state collapse periods. Initially most were men who got employment in the then booming oil sector and in other public institutions. The British colony recruited employees and soldiers from colonized territories, often balancing one native group against the other⁴. Somali migrants who had some basic school education got employment as translators and office employees.

The second wave of Somalis arrived after independence. They were relatively urbanized and better educated and came to fill positions in the expanding oil and construction sectors in the UAE. Compared to other expatriates, the Emiratis do not consider Somalis distant foreigners. Apart from sharing common religion, Islam, Somalia joined the Arab league in 1972, giving Somali passport holders certain privileges. Somalis had a particular relationship with the late Sheikh Zayed, who ruled

² This is the new Somali Diaspora and refugees, the number of Somali Kenyans are more than 2 million.

³ Somalis have been settling Arabia for centuries. But large Somali diasporas first emerged from the end of the nineteenth century mainly linked to colonialism and colonial related wars. The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 created jobs in Aden where the Somalis were employed as stokers and firemen on passing ships. By the end of the nineteenth century there were Somali enclaves in and around ports as far apart as Perth and New York (Turton E. R. (1974), *The Isaq Somali Diaspora and Poll-Tax Agitation in Kenya, 1936-41*, African Affairs, Vol. 73, No. 292 (Jul., 1974), pp. 325-346)

⁴ Vassallo, C. (2006) *The Indians, for example, served bureaucracy below senior British civil servants, where the Maltese exceptionally represented part of the Royal Navy* (Journal of Mediterranean Studies 16 (1-2), pp. 273-289).

the Emirates from 1971-2004.

In the past decades, the UAE, particularly Dubai, acquired an international trading and investment Zone (Romano, 2004: 59). Somalis also shifted their employment focus to these sectors by engaging in business entrepreneurship. Many invested their xaq (pensions) from long time public employment to start business activities dealing with the homeland.

Recently, Somalis from different places, including some from the west, arrived, exploiting the booming business opportunities in the country. These recent arrivals are complex and include people with cultural, education and legal citizenship capital. This Diaspora group exploit their status as western citizens in combination with their Somali origin. In situations where they find their Somali background useful, especially when dealing with Somalis, they use their cultural and linguistic ties. In periods where they confront legal challenges from UAE authorities, they appeal to their western embassies. In the UAE, a western citizenship particularly British, American and Canadian gives the Somali Diaspora a higher status in the social hierarchy⁵.

The younger generation of Somalis in the UAE is another group not easily classifiable as migrants or as natives. The youth have acquired cultural capital, by attending public schools and socializing with the natives. Nevertheless, they confront legal challenges as they grow up, especially those without citizenship status⁶. Some young people get help from their parents and relatives, who save money to let them travel and study abroad. The aim is to improve the young generation's cultural capital and the overall family well-being. Such efforts include attending universities in the West or in Asia, from where they return to the UAE soon after graduation to attain professional positions the parent generation never dreamt of. Another method to improve the social capital of the youth and thereby the family status is the migration of the young to the west to get citizenship and education, with the purpose of returning to the UAE to start businesses or pursue lucrative careers⁷.

Illegal Somali refugee women comprise the most vulnerable among the Somalis in the UAE. They have no proper housing, jobs and protection. Both the natives and the Somali Diaspora exploit these underprivileged women for, among other tasks, conducting harsh domestic work. Occasionally, their Somali kinship network comes to their assistance.

5 Some Somalis with western citizenship report that when the police and other representatives of the authority and even ordinary emirates find out about their citizenship they retreat and show respect. There was once an episode where two Somali women with Canadian citizenship had an accident on one of the highways in Dubai. Police and others rushed to them and shouted at them. The girls spoke English and told the crowd they were Canadian citizens. The police helped and escorted them free. If the ladies had been speaking Somali and had shown some African or third world documents, they would have had more trouble. Many Africans were deported by just making a simple traffic accident.

6 The law in the UAE requires of children when they reach the age of 18 to be independent from their parents. This means that they will have a job by themselves and they need a separate residence. Interestingly, this does not apply to women. The authorities leave girls to stay with their parents. This is probably related to Arab Islamic culture, considering females more vulnerable than men. Or it could be that the Authorities consider foreign men as a threat, if they just stay unemployed.

7 In a discussion with a young man who now runs an IT company tells us that his father invested migration to Britain when he reached 18 and had the option to return Somalia or get a job. After over a decade residence in Britain, he has not only helped his father and other relatives to join him in Britain, but has since resettled in the UAE establishing a successful IT business, culturally in terms of social and language he is similar to the natives. He reconnected to his wider network of classmates and childhood friends. He also used his Somali and British background to pursue trans-national business.

Table 1.2 Somali migration to the UAE

MIGRATION TYPE	MIGRATION PERIOD	MIGRANT RESOURCE
Colonial related migration	1940s- 1960	Nomadic young men recruited to fill posts under the British empire. Some of them were trained later.
Oil boom migration	1960-	Educated young men and women
Business related	1980-	Business activities
Refugees	1991-	Civil war victims
Cosmopolitan migration	1999-	Transnational migration from the west and east

From Guest Workers to Refugees

The first Somalis, though few, arrived Denmark in 1960s. They came here to join the country's post war reconstruction. The second group arrived in the 1980s and they were mainly students. The largest group arrived in 1990's and most of them were refugees and relied on the Danish state for support. But the situation is gradually improving and Somalis are increasingly becoming assertive:

They got education and the booming economy helped them. In the past Somalis were marginalized? Now they are improving (Yusuf, DK, 2009).

The Somali Diaspora in Denmark is, in contrast to those in the past, better educated and therefore find jobs more easily. The Danish job market really opened for the community in the booming years from the late 1990s to 2007. Most were employed in areas where the Danes would not work in e.g. low paid hard jobs.

Some of the early refugees who came to Denmark fled from urban areas in Somalia and were better educated. In the early 1990s, Denmark did not readily recognize degrees obtained from non-western educational institutions and most certainly not those obtained in developing countries. Consequently, many ended up either receiving welfare support or accepting jobs for which they were overqualified. Gradually, Somalis acquired cultural capabilities in, for instance, learning the Danish language, getting an education and creating cultural associations to overcome social, economic and political challenges in the host environment.

Depending on the welfare system has created tensions in the Somali family, where women and children received greater social and even economic independence. The Somali culture in Denmark has always been under pressure, since the first large group of Somalis came to this country. Media and political manipulations focusing on Somalis, especially during elections, contributed to the gap between Danes and the Somalis. Somalis used this cultural exclusion to transform it to a cultural asset in creating cultural institutions, allying with friendly Danish constituents and other Diaspora communities, such as the wider Muslim community, confronting similar challenges.

Table 1.3 Migration to Denmark

MIGRATION TYPE	MIGRATION PERIOD	MIGRANT RESOURCE
Guest worker migration	1960-1970s	Young men got jobs in industry and construction sectors
Political refugees	1980-	Political activists and students
Civil war refugees	1990-	Mixture of political elites and civil war victims
Secondary migration	2001-	Educated Somalis and their families migrating to UK for jobs and for fleeing from negative focus on Muslims

Diaspora organization and mobilization: Somali Diaspora in the UAE

Informal mobilization to relieve host country exclusion

The Somali community in the UAE mobilizes to respond to both host country and homeland challenges. In the host country, the community struggles to overcome socio-economic and citizenship constraints such work and residence permits. Most Somalis have residence permit with non-citizenship status. Thus community mobilization takes place through informal organizations. The Somalis as foreigners, individually or collectively, dare not formally and publicly criticize the authorities in the UAE. Instead, the community restricts its activities to providing relief for vulnerable members of the community.

The UAE government controls but does not provide welfare services for non-citizens. The country officially divides people into “*Muwadiniin*” (citizens) accessing institutional benefits and “*Muwafidiin*” non-citizens excluded from social assistance (Peck, 1986: 68). The institutional limitations include the prohibition of collective, formal, political or religious mobilizations.

Despite such restrictions, Somalis in the UAE mobilize both at national and trans-national levels. They do this through mobilizing structures such as gender associations, youth groups, professional networks and business elites. The community mobilizes by utilizing kinship relations and master frames that include references to Somali statehood and nationalism.

Mobilizing traditional and economic structures

Organizationally, for the Somali Diaspora in the UAE, community mobilization rests on the kinship network system through which the business community, professionals, associations and pan-Somali mobilization groups interact. Particularly, the traditional leaders and business entrepreneurs play a significant role in leading the organization and mobilization of the community. In periods with major homeland activities, Diaspora’s traditional leaders receive reinforcement from the homeland. Such visits from the homeland attract the business community as well as women and youth groups. They show their solidarity to the visiting traditional leader and in this way, reaffirm their relationship with the homeland as well as the importance of community cohesion in the host country. Although it is an informal social activity, there exists a division of labour. Each sub-group is responsible for the mobilization and the collection of resources from that particular group:

If politicians and traditional leaders come here or if somebody needs help, people are *waa la abaabul* (mobilized) and organized properly. For instance the business people are sent to business persons, the young people to young persons, the women to the women (Faarax, UAE, 2010).

The Somali business community in the UAE is a rather controversial group. Some of them engage in legal businesses while others pursue illegal, economic activities. The support of the business elite is indispensable for community mobilization. They have particularly sponsored high profile visits from the homeland and national celebration events in the host country. This is obviously a strategic action from their side, as they depend on community legitimacy and support both in the host environment and in the homeland.

The *qaraan* (Charity collection) plays a significant role in the community organization and mobilization. Through the collection of *qaraan*, the community shares potential economic burden. Each member of the *qabiilah* with a job and income contributes to the *qaraan*. In return, the individual qualifies for support during recession.

The Diaspora also mobilizes to provide charity and humanitarian support for the poor both in the host country and in the homeland. In a country like the UAE with no universal welfare system, people depend on the Diaspora for survival. So the community mobilizes financial resources in order to reach such vulnerable groups. Though kinship mobilization is dominant when it comes to community structuring, there are also non-*qabiilah* based *Qaraan* collections. These include networks of friends and professionals who collect and provide support for people in need.

Empowering the community in the host country

At sub-group level, the community mobilizes its resource to reach those who confront major obstacles. These include Somali women, some of them young, who due to unemployment and problems with legal residence, suffer in the country. To help them, the community collects resources. The community also mobilizes to empower the unemployed youth to get an education. The aim is to remedy structural barriers that often lead to young men and women losing their legal residence at the age of 18, when they are no longer considered children with their parents. If they do not get jobs, they risk expulsion to the homeland. Individual groups and associations collect money and invite the Somali embassy to support young people with obtaining minor skills and computer training⁸. Normally, it is the government's responsibility to provide welfare services, but in this context the civil society fills the gap.

Empowering homeland regional alliances

Somalis in the UAE mobilize economic resources to help vulnerable community members such as women, the sick and youngsters in the homeland. In addition, they organize fundraising events for the development of their ancestral homeland regions. This includes both humanitarian and political events aimed at supporting homeland constituents. Mobility and the proximity to Somalia makes such trans-national engagements more frequent. Again, this is a significant contribution that comes from the traditional leaders and the business elite.

Over the past two decades, the community experienced intense mobilization focusing on regional and kinship constituent support in the homeland. This is mainly to do with the lack of a centralized government in Somalia. The absence of properly functioning Somali embassy exacerbates such community fragmentation. Prior to the civil war, the embassy played significant role in community organization and mobilization. Although kinship network mobilization provides a certain relief for many people in the host country, the system also indirectly undermines the collective, general mobilization of the Somalis.

⁸ Discussion with young Somali UAE Diaspora members in Abu-Dhabi, UEA (14th, February 2010).

Organizing national holiday celebrations

The devastating civil war in the homeland in 1991 affected the Somali Diaspora in the UAE negatively. Organizationally, they increasingly became regional and *qabiilah* oriented. Each *qabiil* mobilized to openly support its *qabiilah* and regional constituents. The first to start were communities from northern Somalia (current Somaliland). When the military regime persecuted northerners and later bombarded major cities in the North, Somali Diaspora from the region mobilized to support Somali National Movement, which was one of the main insurgent movements opposing the regime (Mohamoud, 2006: 129). As the hope of reconfiguring the Somali state faded, these constituencies transferred their decisive backing to the current regional authorities in Puntland and Somaliland. Dissatisfied with such secessionist tendencies, an increasing number of the younger generations among the Somali Diaspora in the UAE, tried to mobilize across regional and kinship cleavages. They have particularly expressed their vision to organize commemoration and celebration events for national holidays. The youth belong to the age groups between 18 to 35 years, many of them born or raised in the UAE. They receive assistance from the business community who sponsor national holiday events. Interestingly, the government of Sharjah subsidizes the events. It is said the support has been a tradition even before the collapse of the Somali state. The UAE, particularly Sharjah, had long historical relationship with Somalia⁹.

Responding to pressing issues

Apart from the community mobilization aimed to prevent the social exclusion among vulnerable community members, the Somali Diaspora in the UAE, due to a lack of state protection, confront periodical political challenges. Two cases are worth mentioning. The first is the decision by the UAE authorities to ban issuing visas for Somali passport holders. The second is the UN representative in Nairobi who, with the approval of the UN system, accused the Somali community in Dubai, particularly the business community, for their connection and cooperation with Somali pirates.

The two issues were mainly externally generated. For security reasons, western countries put pressure on the UAE authorities to restrict movements from civil war torn Somalia¹⁰. The current transitional Somali government in Mogadishu also indirectly propagated such ban as an attempt to strengthen its legitimacy. They urged people to change their passports, asking them to abandon old passports and use the new one they provided. At official level, the Somali community approached the UAE authorities for help. The Diaspora also appealed to the transitional government. Interestingly, the embassy in Abu-Dhabi announced the visa issue concerned only Dubai and not the entire UAE: underlining the lack of state legitimacy in Somalia.

Unofficially, Somalis tried to help the situation as much as they could. The only formally registered Somali organization in the UAE is the Somali chamber of commerce. Community statements in the local newspapers illustrated desperation and helplessness in their appeal to the authorities both in the UAE and in Somalia. Eventually, the business community, with threats to withdraw their investment and negotiations, managed to convince authorities that a visa ban was unsustainable¹¹.

⁹ There is a general perception among the Somalis that during the colonial rule, ancestors of Al-qasimi tribe, whose descendents currently rule Sharjah opposed the British empirical rule. Somali tribal leader in Puntland region sent message to the Arab tribal chief informing that he is ready to send 5000 Somalis with horses to fight the British alongside their fellow Muslims in Sharjah. The Sharjah ruler visited Boosaaso in Pntland, which was named after him as "Bandar Qasim". The Letter sent by the Somali qabiilah leader is said to be in a Museum in Sharjah, but it was not possible during the research to confirm its existence.

¹⁰ Al-shabaab, a terrorist accused and Alqaida allied Somali organization that control most of Southern Somalia, vowed to wage jihad against western countries and their allies. The organization is registered as terrorist organization both in the US and Europe. They have also recruited young Somali Diaspora members from western countries. Some of them have allegedly committed suicide.

¹¹ The largest Somali businesses are located in the UAE most Somali hawaala (remittance companies) and IT have their headquarters in the UAE (Regulatory frameworks for hawaala and other remittance systems, Volume 2004 (International Monetary Fund. Monetary and Financial Systems Dept).

The second major case was the piracy issue. This brought accusation and suspicion over the Somali businesses elite in Dubai. The Somali community also dismissed this accusation. The UAE authorities also denied such accusations, complaining it was a conspiracy against the image of the UAE¹². It is interesting to note that there has not been a direct organized official communication between the UAE authorities and the Somali Diaspora.

Furthermore, Somalis do not organize formally, not in their interaction with the UAE authorities. The Somali chamber of commerce might in the future at least organize and represent the business community.

Table 1.4 Mobilization and Somali Diaspora in the UAE

	Opportunity Structures	Mobilizing Structures	Framing Structures
Local level			
National Level	Trying to overcome lack of supporting institutional structures in the host country	Kinship networks, associations, business networks	Kinship relations
Transnational level	Trying to contribute to opportunity structures in the homeland	Kinship relations Regional alliances	Kinship affiliations Regional frames Nationalist frames

Diaspora Mobilization: Somali Diaspora in Denmark

Formal organization to resist host country exclusion

The Somali community, as members of the Muslim Diaspora in Denmark, joined the mobilization against the Danish cartoons depicting the prophet¹³. The protest against the cartoons brought Ethnic Danes, Pakistanis, Syrians, Iraqis, Palestinians, Somalis and many other Muslims and non-Muslims together. Ironically, both the 9-11 attacks and the cartoon crises helped to shift the narrative from the Somalis as a distinct deviant ethnic group in Denmark. With emphasis on religiosity, Somalis shared public and political scrutiny with the large Muslim *Umma* (community). From a mobilization perspective, the Muslim community is not much different from the Somalis. Despite the existence of common grievances that especially intensified after September 11th 2001, Muslims in Denmark appear disorganized and divided into conservative and less conservative groups. The Turks, the largest and the first ethnic group to arrive, and other Muslims have often been less organized than the recent of the more politically conscious Muslim refugees (Dassetto, 2000).

Five years after the cartoon crises, in January 2010, a young man with a Somali origin attacked the principal *Jyllandsposten* (JP) cartoonist, Kurt Westergaard. The young man tried to kill the aging cartoonist who luckily survived. The incident affected the Muslim community in Denmark, particularly the Somalis. The frustrated young man came to Denmark as a child with his parents. Acquaintances and neighbours described him as an integrated, calm individual. What prompted this

¹² The UAE made statement dismissing any piracy cooperation taking place in their country. They blamed external enemies targeting the UAE reputation (*Al-bayan*, 14th February 2009).

¹³ In September 2005 one of Denmark's main conservative newspapers, the *Jutlandsposten*, published a dozen cartoons caricaturing the Prophet of Islam. The Muslim community in Denmark initially protested to the government and requested a meeting to discuss the issue. Similar steps were taken by diplomatic representatives of several Islamic countries in Copenhagen. The government ignored this call apparently giving for pressure from their parliamentary coalition partner, the Danish Peoples Party. After months of diasporic consultations, imams travelling to and from the Middle East, community mobilization and diplomatic manoeuvring, the case shifted to transitional level. Angry protesters attacked the Danish embassies in Syria and Beirut. Widespread international demonstrations and counter demonstrations erupted. Over hundred people died worldwide and many more were wounded.

young man to act impulsively remains unclear. Obviously it could be the so-called war on terror and the subsequent invasion of Ethiopian troops in Somalia in 2007 that might have radicalized young Somali men from marginalized groups (Eichstaedt, 2010: 46). Apart from the general exclusion in the society, the negative discourse against Islam might also explain the radicalization tendency among the youth (Malik, 2009: 130-6). The angry reaction could also result from the generational gap between the first and second migrant generations in differences in religious interpretation. The parent generation appears more conservative, kinship oriented, and linked to the homeland, while the younger generations prefer universalistic, ideological global orientation (Nayar, 2004: 139).

One month after the axe attack incident, a former Danish councillor from Aarhus with a Somali origin called for the need to focus on and deal with an increasing radicalization tendency among the Somali youth in Denmark¹⁴. He claimed that Somali youngsters from Denmark have become victims of radicalization and recruitment for the conflict in the Horn of Africa. The Aarhus mayor, Nikolai Wammen, supported the initiative. Together they proposed a major conference specifically targeting the Somali community in an attempt to prevent youth radicalization.

In response, Somali associations held an urgent meeting and agreed to condemn the proposed selective conference with special focus on the Somalis. Instead, they suggested an inclusive conference with the participation of other ethnic communities to discuss radicalization and exclusion in general. The mayor dismissed the proposal and together with the Somali politician Ali Nuur decided to hold the conference on the 27th of May 2010¹⁵. The Mayor had for some time also a good working relationship with Ayaan Hersi Ali, another member of the Somali Diaspora, globally renown for her harsh Islam critique¹⁶. The next few months witnessed intense debate, disagreement and mobilization in both camps.

The following sections present and discuss the community mobilization mechanisms and the dynamics, particularly the mobilizing and framing structures Diaspora utilized to negotiate, promote and defend its position. The case illustrates the essence of trans-national Diaspora organization and mobilization.

Political and Institutional Support for Community Mobilization

Similar to other immigrants, Somalis in Denmark access political, economic and social opportunities. This includes the partial economic support for their associational activities (Anderson, 2008: 92). However, immigrants often do not exploit the benefits to actively participate in the political process (Siim, 2004: 76).

To counter the municipality sponsored radicalization conference the Somali Diaspora used local and national opportunities in Denmark and combined it with homeland resources and transnational networks.

For instance four major political parties backed the Somali position in opposing the conference¹⁷. The parties had probably their own oppositional political agenda to criticize the Mayor for his narrow-minded conference. But intense networking campaign and alliance building from the Somali community succeeded to divide the political parties¹⁸. The Somali community's proposal for inclusive conference supplemented with political lobbying convinced opposing parties at Aarhus municipality to boycott the Mayor's conference.

¹⁴ *Jyllandsposten*, 8. February 2010 "Ali Nuur sent a letter to the Mayor warning that Denmark can be a target for terrorism if the authorities do not do more.

¹⁵ *Jyllandsposten*, 9. February 2010

¹⁶ *Jyllandsposten*, 29. April 2010

¹⁷ *Jyllandspost*, 22. May 2010

¹⁸ *Jyllandsposten* 9. April 2010

The second political support was trans-national and partially homeland oriented. Somalis invited the Somali ambassador in Genève to make the opening speech at their alternative conference at Aarhus Theatre. This move transformed the Somali-Danish local issue to a trans-national level. At the same time, Somalis signalled, despite the state collapse in their homeland, they still had homeland related, international, diplomatic institutions to refer to. The presence of a Somali ambassador elevated the community's status. The Somali state does not exist but the transitional Somali government enjoys international recognition and Somali government officials attend international forums in making their case (Shay, 2010: 87). In addition, the ambassadors presence and the case received coverage in Somali transnational media¹⁹. From his side the ambassador did not see the issue as a sign of division between the Somali Diaspora in Denmark and the Danish society. He interpreted the case as an evidence for the Somali integration and ability to combine democratic opportunities Somalis access in the host country with the relationship Somalis maintain with the homeland:

What you are doing is in accordance with the Islamic, the Somali and Danish values. You should not forget that many Danish support your position (Ambassador Yusuf Bari-bari, 27th May 2010).

In a seminar held for Somali Diaspora activists, participants expressed the following ideas on positive opportunities promoting community development in Denmark and the negative aspects affecting the community.

Table 1.5 Opportunities and challenges in Denmark

OPPORTUNITIES	CHALLENGES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic opportunities (Access to economic support from the authorities , We live in a prosperous Scandinavian country, We can establish businesses, Fund raising and investment) • Social and political liberty (We have political liberty and opportunities , Religious freedom where we can invite an Imam from abroad , We can articulate and protest, Political, social and economic rights) • Peace and stability (Peace and stability • Welfare and education opportunities (Access to education both for elders and for youth, Employment opportunities and voluntary work, Live long learning opportunity, Health care, We can have own educational institutions) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Racism and exclusion (Media manipulation and lies ,The police stigmatizing our youth, Undocumented terror and radicalization accusation , Politicians who divide the community for moderates and radicals, Marginalization of the youth) • Internal division (People who spy for the police and discredit the community, Lack of embassy and lack of government, Using Somali opportunists as Somali experts) • Segregation (threat to end at the bottom of the society, inferiority complex) • Assimilation

Mobilizing traditional and cultural structures

Somalis consider religion as a strength and significant for their presence in Denmark. Their ability to maintain their religion and practice proves their strength and conviction²⁰. The community conducts

¹⁹ www.Somalitalk.com , serious Somali news internet with branches and news reporters globally

²⁰ Discussion at the weekend seminar in Kaløvig

prayers in small makeshift mosques in the basement of Somali association premises. Such places do not qualify as proper mosques but function as such. Together with other Muslim communities in Denmark Somalis have for years campaigned to build a proper mosque, but due to economic challenges and political obstacles they have yet to succeed (Gartner, 2007: 21). These temporary mosques together with the religious leaders play an important role in community mobilization and cohesion (Kühle, Lene, 2006: 39-47). Following the 9/11 events, mosque activities came under surveillance from security agencies (Deflem, 2008: 283).

With regard to associational life, Somalis establish associations mobilizing and defending the community from external political and media challenges. In recent years, Somalis mobilized to participate in local and national elections²¹. Consequently, Somalis consider themselves as established Diaspora, overcoming the early stages of refugee life in Denmark²². Obviously, speaking the language, acquiring citizenship and the younger generations born and bred in this country suggest certain Diaspora consolidation. Finally, Somalis consider the homeland relation as positive. In difficult times, they mobilize resources, raise funds and remit money to relatives and friends.

With regard to community weaknesses, Somalis recognize numerous internal community challenges and setbacks. These include the community's suspicion on community activists whom they accuse of exploiting their positions. In addition, the frequent inter-community quarrelling and disagreements often paralyze community efforts and cohesion. More seriously, the issue of which Danish political parties and candidates to support divides the Somali Diaspora. For instance, during the latest municipality elections, the community were introduced to four candidates from four different political parties. This led to intense community mobilization, but none of the candidates made it to the municipality council²³.

Another long-term challenge the community confronts is the widening gap between older generations, not born in Denmark and with considerable relationships and contacts with the homeland, and younger Somalis born or bred in Denmark. Although the two groups belong to the same Diaspora, they have diverging world views. The first generation, many of them traumatized, initially had difficulties to adjust to Denmark. Thus the youth complain about the lack of proper role models²⁴.

Somali associations also recognise their invisibility in relation to the Danish society. They do numerous activities promoting integration but remain invisible in the wider society in Denmark. More importantly, the community does not own properties but utilizes temporarily rented facilities. Consequently, there are no community managed private institutions such as private schools. Other immigrant communities such as the Turks and the Arabs own and administer independent educational institutions²⁵. The lack of community properties and institutions often force Somalis to depend on other Diaspora communities. For instance, Somali pupils constitute more than 50% of students of Arab and Turkish owned schools in the city²⁶.

On the 5th of April 2010, the Somali community in Aarhus held a meeting to counter the Aarhus municipality and Mayor-sponsored conference. The conduct of the meeting illustrates the dynamics of community mobilization. The gathering appointed an elder to chair the meeting. Although Somalis met to talk about the then developments with regard to the conference, a gentleman

21 *Denmark's statistics (www.stat.org)*

22 *Jyllandsposten, March 2010*

23 *Discussion in the weekend seminar in Kaløvig*

24 *Discussion with Somali youth group (November 2010).*

25 *The Turks community in Denmark runs many private schools; one of them is Salam school. Almost 50% of the pupils are Somalis. Lykkeskolen is another school located in Aarhus, here the share of Somali students are also high, prompting managers of these schools urging Somali associations to establish their own schools.*

26 <http://www.lykkeskolen.dk/>

who had just returned from the homeland was the first to speak. For the elder generation, challenges confronting Diaspora can only be solved if Somalis manage to reconcile in the homeland. For them, host country challenges are linked to homeland deficiencies:

We could not reconcile in Somalia. That we will reconcile and make peace in Diaspora is therefore not possible (Kaarshe, 5. April 2010).

After a long debate, the meeting agreed on mobilization strategies. The participants considered reaching to out women and young people as vital as the two groups are the most difficult to mobilize. Women are busy at home and the youth are busy with their studies and spare time jobs. They agreed on the need for outreach activities to disseminate information about the upcoming conferences:

The problem of the debate on radicalization we are now facing is serious. We need to understand and explain to the Somalis. Those who are the most difficult to explain it to are the youth and the women. There must be publications, home visits, dialogue and contacts (Hassan, 5. April 2010).

Participants also agreed to a division of labour in terms of who would do what and when. The elders would do community mobilization by visiting different constituents. People who are integrated in the Danish society and who hold a certain amount of knowledge of the Danish language and system will have to attend to the technicalities:

With regard to the work the community will do countering the accusations, we need to leave the work to the leaders and the educated group. Others need to support (Abdi, 5 April 2010).

Finally, the mosque centres, and the associations utilizing the centres, became principal institutions organizing the protest. The meeting agreed to arrange several community activities countering the official conference on the same day on the 27th of May 2010. Financial donations came from women, youth and elder groups. Two major events were held. One at the Music House in down town Aarhus, the other in the ethnic-dominated neighbourhood Gellerup, also in Aarhus. Close to 400 people with diverse ethnic background attended the first event while the second attracted 700 Somalis.

The issue must be addressed in the mosques and people there must be informed. We need to go to the neighbourhoods (Guuleed, 5 April 2010).

As the time scheduled for the competing conferences approached, a traditional leader (he has the title of Imam- not the religious but the customary one) enters the scene. The community mobilization balance immediately changed. Support by the wider community was considered important by both the authorities coordinating the municipality conference and the Somali community's protest conference. The municipality organizers targeted and invited Somalis to attend²⁷. If the Somalis did not participate in the conference, then the conference would be worthless. With the defection from a traditional community leader, the municipality conference organizers could not fully count on community support.

²⁷ *Jyllandsposten, May 2010*

Kinship relations have no political and economic significance in Denmark, but in this mobilization context it represented an important informal mobilization and organization factor. The focus in this regard was not on the kinship itself but on being Somali and the Somali Diaspora's attempt to integrate into the Danish society. In an exclusive interview with *Jyllandsposten*, the traditional leader boycotted the conference and announced his solidarity with political parties and the Somali associations²⁸. He dismissed the radicalization of the Somalis and their alleged cooperation with Al-shabaab (a radical Islamist organization in Somalia). The traditional leader admitted Somalis might have supported radical organizations in Somalia during the Ethiopian invasion of the country, but also said that belonged to the past and had therefore nothing to do with the present situation. Similarly, the way in which some political parties changed sides and the move from the traditional leaders followed after determined lobbying and campaign from Diaspora activists who convinced traditional leaders and other important personalities on the importance of opposing the municipality conference.

On the municipality side, another significant person entered the scene supporting the conference organizer's side. Ayaan Hersi Ali²⁹ aligned with the Mayor and his supporters. Miss Ali visited Aarhus and gave a lecture at *Jyllandsposten* headquarters. Aarhus Mayor attended this lecture. She declared her support to the municipality's conference, by saying:

"It is fine to organize such a conference. It is good to see why the Somalis are radicalized³⁰"

With Miss Ali's contribution to the conflict, now the Somali Diaspora became divided into assimilation oriented Somalis and integration inclined Somalis. With the earlier support by four political parties together with traditional leaders supporting the community mobilization, the Somali Diaspora associations eventually gained ground.

Somalis held a cultural festival called "*AarhuSomali*". Critics called it an act of provocation against the radicalization conference. The Somali community had at the same time established a Danish language homepage (www.aarhusomali.dk), with the aim of directly communicating with the Danish society. Danish media often profile ethnic minorities negatively and with prejudice (Nikunen, 2011: 163). The homepage is professionally run by the Somalis and administrated by journalists. In this regard, Somalis managed to bypass mainstream media and transmit their message directly to the Danish public. The community also succeeded in having the Danish media citing and referring to the homepage.

With an offensive strategy in introducing a professional homepage together with the cultural festival, Somalis managed to transform a negative focus on them to a positive one. Apart from protesting, Somalis also demonstrated their active formal participation in society affairs.

Hybrid framing of Danish and Somali Values

The attack of the Danish cartoonist by a Somali Diaspora member triggered a political demonization and subsequent community mobilization. A number of significant people, locally, nationally and globally condemned the attack of the Danish cartoonist. The Mayor of Aarhus was one of them. He described the attack as a cowardly act and in opposition to democracy³¹. Somali associations called the attack tragic³². In the following days, the Mayor upgraded the incident from being an attack by a frustrated, possibly psychologically disturbed young man to a clash between civilisations, with the

²⁸ *Jyllandsposten*, 19. April 2010

²⁹ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4985636.stm>, profile of Ayaan Hersi

³⁰ *Jyllandsposten* 29. April 2010

³¹ *Jyllandsposten*, 3. January 2010

³² *Jyllandsposten*, 3. January 2010

democratic, civilised world confronting the uncivilised. The case no longer remained a criminal police case but a mainstream socio-political discourse. Apart from the rhetorical division of the world into good and evil, the Mayor insisted upon the global implications of this event. This was a war, he said, ought to have been fought all the way through³³. Denmark recently pursued what was referred to as an offensive foreign policy by participating in the “*coalitions of willing*” in Iraqi and Afghanistan (Singh, 2006: 35).

The Mayor and those opposing the Somalis wanted to link the Somalis to the homeland and consider them as people with tremendous challenges to integrate. The Somali associations saw the case from a different perspective. They framed their activities as a process of combining Danish and Somali values.

The issue of belonging is also clear, as Somalis see themselves belonging to both the Danish society and the Somali society. They do not consider this an obstacle to the integration in this country. The presence and performance of the Somali-Danish cultural band at the Music House illustrated the attempt by the Somalis to profile themselves as hybrid and trans-national:

If we decide to demonstrate, we need to use our flag but also to use the Danish flag, so we could attract Danish participants. This is our second country (Elmi, 5. April 2010).

The Somali community condemned the attack against the cartoonist and described it as a terrorist act. At the same time, the community warned politicians and the media not to exploit the tragic event to scrutinize a community already struggling from stigma and marginalization³⁴. In their response, Somalis referred to the general anti-immigrant atmosphere in Denmark. They stressed that most Somalis are normal citizens, busy with their daily routines. Therefore the action of an individual should not victimize the majority, especially the young and children.

Another important point is the way in which Somalis invited and included historical and cultural figures both from Denmark and beyond. Halima Sofo³⁵, a resident in Aarhus, anti colonialist and freedom fighter, was invited as a prominent guest in the festival. Amin Amir - Somali artist, currently a Canadian citizen, was also present³⁶. Barre Fiidow, a prominent Somali poet and playwright also participated.

With the announcement and the coordination of the cultural festival, Somalis brought significant people, institutions and events together, including Somali-Danish girl band, the Somali ambassador from Geneva as well as historical and cultural figures from Denmark, Canada and other European countries. The selection of a significant cultural institution such as the Music House was a milestone for the Diaspora image. The Music House is a major public institution (major cultural icon for the Danes and for Aarhus city in particular).

The invitation of the Somali ambassador was importantly symbolic. The ambassador is based in Geneva, working for a recognized but non-functioning government³⁷. Bringing all these dimensions together, as table 1.6 shows, the Diaspora managed to distance itself from radicalization and succeeded to project its Diaspora transnational identity.

³³ *Jyllandsposten*, 3. January 2010

³⁴ *Politiken & Berlingske* 8th January 2010

³⁵ Halima Sofoe, former freedom fighter is a history for herself. Member of SYL (Somali Youth League) an organization that mobilized resistance against the Italians in south Somalia. She fled as many others. Barre Fiidow, one of the most known Somali poets from the now destroyed Somali National Theatre. His poem was much more interesting with regard to the link between the host and homeland.

³⁶ The participation of the Somali cartoonist was important as the whole incident started with an attack of a Danish cartoonist. With his arrival the Danes become aware that the Somalis had also their own cartoonist that was also threatened by extremists (www.ami-narts.com).

³⁷ The transitional Somali government controls few kilometers in the Capital Mogadishu. The rest of the country are either autonomous regions or are controlled by opposition armed groups

Table 1.6 Mobilization of the Somalis in Denmark

	Opportunity structures	Mobilizing structures	Framing structures
Local level	Mayor, Somali councillor, Somali Diaspora	City council, Music house, Somali associations and network	Attack on Danish cartoonist
National Level		Political parties, traditional qabiilah system Media commentator, expert	
Transnational level	The Somali Imam, Ayaan Hersi,	Kinship relations	Global war on terror, Islam Vs. the West

Informal mobilization for homeland affairs

The Somali Diaspora associations held a two-day seminar at Kaløvig to evaluate and discuss their efforts. The seminar brought Somali activists and resource groups involved in community mobilization together³⁸. In the discussions, Somali Diaspora members discussed their relationship with the homeland.

Remittance constitutes the major link between Somali Diaspora in Denmark and the homeland. Somali associations in Denmark do not formally participate in the political activities in the homeland. This does not mean the Diaspora do not contribute. The same Diaspora formally involved in community organization and mobilization in the host country might informally contribute to Somali politics and development.

The humanitarian dimension is an exception. When droughts and other humanitarian challenges occur, the community collectively organizes and mobilizes. Another exception is when Somalia faces an external attack such as when the Ethiopian invasion occurred. The community then mobilized resources by organizing demonstrations and collecting funds for the homeland (Roble & Douglas 2008:149). Such informal humanitarian involvements often evolve to political involvement when Diaspora activists interact and study the homeland context properly (Sheffer, 2003: 207).

Community organization and mobilization in the UAE and Denmark: Similarities and differences

There are similarities and differences in the way in which Somali Diaspora mobilizes in Denmark and the UAE. Since the September 2001 attacks in the US, Somalis similar to other Muslim Diaspora struggled to overcome suspicion and recurring accusations of extremism. In the UAE, the community was accused of financially sponsoring radicalization, warlordism and piracy in the homeland. In Denmark, the community, together with other Muslim diasporas, was suspected of harbouring radical elements.

In addition, the two diasporas, though in different ways, utilize cultural mobilizing structures such as traditional leaders and ethnic associations in order to negotiate and promote community interests. The two diasporas also operate at trans-national level by interacting and linking to the homeland,

38 In May 2010 thirteen Somali associations established Aarhus Somali to counter the municipality's political pressure. The associations considered the events successful as they managed mobilizing the community to held a parallel conference with cultural components that attracted significant media and public attention. To build on this gain, the association agreed to organize a weekend seminar for community activists. They selected Kaløvig centre, a seaside summer resort 30km outside Aarhus, as the seminar venue. This attractive green landscape contradicts the relatively poor residential areas most Somalis live. In this regard the Somalis try to move spaces beyond the familiar ethnic neighbourhoods.

host country and beyond.

The first difference between the two diasporas relates to citizenship opportunity structures that each Diaspora accesses in the host country. The Somali Diaspora in the UAE has the advantage of residing in an Islam Arab country geographically and culturally close to Somalia and with a long historical relationship. An efficient homeland oriented trade depends not only on the capability and the engagement of the business elite but also on the type of Diaspora, geographical and opportunity structures (Kitching, Smallbone, Athayde, 2009). The main challenge confronting the Diaspora in the UAE is the lack of citizenship rights. Because of this legal restriction, Somalis choose to operate informally in host country related mobilization activities, whereas they formally organize in their interaction with the homeland. Formality in this context means organizing and expressing community priorities and views openly in community assemblies and in the media.

The acquisition of citizenship is an important opportunity structure transforming Diaspora's socio-economic and legal conditions in relation to both host country and homeland. This is not the classical citizenship conceptualization assuming the naturalization process changing the individual's status and relationship in favour of the host country. In a post-modern context, acquiring citizenship has a trans-national consequence. For instance, the acquisition of Chinese Diaspora of American or Canadian citizenship facilitates a return to the homeland with an elevated status (Ong, 1999). In this regard, citizenship increases Diaspora's homeland involvement rather than the host country, which was also the original purpose of providing such citizenship.

Diaspora also responds positively to opportunity structures promoting better integration in the host country. In a situation with "unwelcoming" opportunity structures in which the host society for instance "*erects barriers of discrimination and exclusion*", Diaspora might "isolate itself in becoming more insecure and informal" (Esman, 2009: 119). The utilization of existing political opportunities depends on the mobilization and the politicisation circumstances (Totoricagüena, 2004: 17). The opportunity structure also provides Diaspora with a chance to engage at trans-national level for involvement in homeland affairs from a distance (Karishnamurti, 2007: 57).

In the UAE, *qabiilah* relations, although modified, still prevail. Apart from the conflict mediation among the Somalis, the *qabiilah* network provides welfare, particularly for individuals who might suddenly lose their residence permit. Despite the absence of a welfare state, Somalis in the UAE exhibit self-confidence in managing their livelihoods and at the same time contributing to the development of the country (Wharfage, 2009).

In contrast, the Somali Diaspora in Denmark organizes and mobilizes formally in relation to the host country while pursuing informal activities in relation to the homeland. This is mainly to do with the existence of citizenship opportunities and interaction with the host institutions. Most Somalis in Denmark are either citizens or hold a permanent resident status with expanded social and political rights. Although they often become the subject of political rhetoric and exclusion, they have formal rights to organize and pursue civil liberties, though authorities recently have introduced anti-immigrant restrictive legislations. However, the inclusion of the Somalis into the Danish welfare system affects the community positively. Most obvious is the fact that the state-sponsored social and institutional protection reduces dependency on the Somali *qabiilah* relation and thereby *qabiilah-ism*. If the *qabiilah* network originally provided belonging, security and welfare, the Danish state takes many of these prime functions. Similar to other citizens, Somalis refer to the authorities in times of social, health and employment challenges. *Qabiilah* relations might exist theoretically but in the Danish context, it loses its basic functions, except for limited informal applications for homeland politics among elder, usually unemployed, Somali men engaged in heated "*fadhi kudirir sessions*". Though

homeland relationship run informally, the digitalization and cyberspace provide opportunities for transnational activism in which cyber technologies expand Diaspora's engagement in the homeland and beyond (Totoricagüena & Reno, 2007: 18). As an institution, *qabiilah* relation among the Somalis in Scandinavia is, at least officially, replaced by a Pan-Somali framing and sometimes also by multi-ethnic framing.

The second difference is the character of mobilizing structures. Both diasporas face an internal division influencing their relationship with the homeland. The Diaspora in the UAE is divided into *qabiilah* and regional lines. *Qabiilah* and the regional divisions although they exist in Denmark, are not formal and visible. In the UAE, this division is formal and visible. The reason is probably the proximity to Somalia, where there are frequent visits and continuous interaction with homeland *qabiilah* leaders. Often *qabiilah* and regional mobilizations take place in the UAE.

Finally the two cases differ on the framing of opportunities. Somalis in Denmark frame ideas and values promoting Somali and Islamic identities occasionally combined with the adapted Danish identity. The basic ideas bringing the community together emanate from being Somalis and Muslims, while remaining legally integrated into the Danish society.

We should expect an opportunity structure providing citizenship and extended rights to transform Diaspora with regard to mobilizing and framing structures. But it seems the opposite happens, as the Somali Diaspora case in Denmark illustrates. Diaspora mobilization rests on religion and ethnic identity. The general anti-immigrant discourse in the society often emphasizing religion and ethnicity explains the diversion to identity politics.

The Somali Diaspora in the UAE does not formally frame socio-religious and cultural issues, as there are no significant religious and cultural differences. Instead, they organize cultural and national festivities linking to the homeland. The Somali Diaspora in the UAE qualifies as a trade Diaspora³⁹.

Diaspora mobilization depends on the political opportunities (the institutional and legal conditions), the mobilizing opportunity (the associational, organizational and networking possibilities) and the framing opportunities (the opportunity to express ideas and values to mobilize) both in relation to the host environment and to the homeland. The two Somali Diaspora cases in Denmark and the UAE illustrate how differences in opportunity structures influence Diaspora mobilization. For instance, the Diaspora in Denmark pursues formal mobilization in relation to the host country. This is in accordance with the associational tradition in Scandinavia, where citizens establish civil society groups to mobilize and participate in the society through specific networking and group activities.

In contrast, the Diaspora in the UAE refrains from organizing formally, at least officially, in relation to authorities in the UAE. Instead, the Diaspora's formal organization and mobilization targets the homeland. If Somalis in the UAE need to mobilize officially, they will have to do it within business framing arrangements. Such trade-oriented structural priority brings the business elite at the top of the community structure.

Similarly, Anti-immigrant discourse in the Danish society strengthens the traditionalizing tendencies of the Somali Diaspora in Denmark. As a consequence, it influences the way in which the community mobilizes. Although the community accesses democratic citizenship opportunities, it is the mosque centres, the elders and religious leaders that play prominent roles in community leadership and mobilization. Clearly, the differences of the mobilizing structures between Somali Diaspora in Denmark and in the UAE are linked to the different opportunity structures in the two host environments. The Danish system provides a political structure allowing certain rights to Diaspora, whereas the structures in the UAE do not allocate people the rights to engage formally with

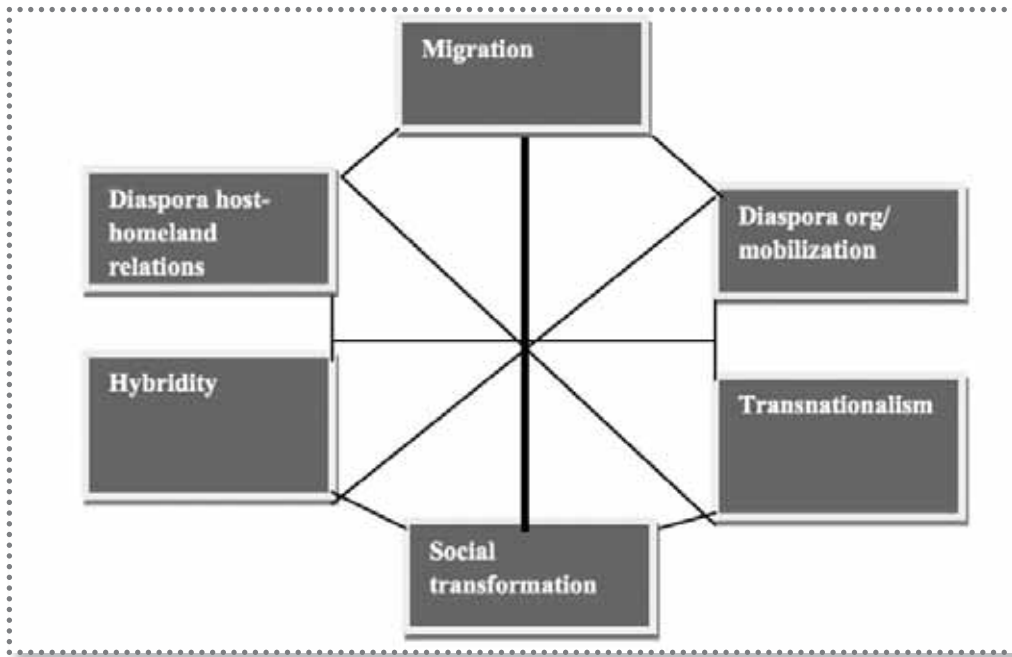
³⁹ Cohen 2006 in his archetypal classification of Diasporas described The Chinese and the Lebanese as trade Diasporas, whereas, he argued, the Jewish, the Palestinians, the Armenians and probably the Africans are victim Diasporas.

governmental authorities.

There is strategic difference in the way in which the two Diaspora engage with their homeland. For the Diaspora in Denmark, the permanent legal and institutional status makes the community to be less preoccupied with homeland affairs formally. This is not the case for the UAE Diaspora. Due to their temporal legal status, they need to retain and consolidate their position in the homeland. These activities manifest in *qabiilah* and regional dynamics and relations.

In general the different aspects of Diaspora experiences are interconnected, as figure 9.1 shows. For instance, migration not just leads to social transformation but also influences how Diaspora organizes and mobilizes. In return, Diaspora organization and mobilization impacts the migration process as mobility is an integrated part of Diaspora experience and even survival.

Figure 1.2 Diaspora formation



THIS RAISES THE QUESTION OF WHETHER STUDYING DIASPORA MOBILIZATION SHOULD FOCUS ON THE INTERNAL DECISIONS AND PRIORITIZATIONS WITHIN THE DIASPORA COMMUNITY OR ON THE EXTERNAL HOST COUNTRY AND HOMELAND OPPORTUNITIES MOTIVATING AND INFLUENCING DIASPORA'S BEHAVIOUR. THE TWO SOMALI DIASPORA CASES OF DENMARK AND THE UAE SUGGEST THE NEED TO COMBINE THE INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL CONDITIONS AND CONSTELLATIONS EVENTUALLY LEADING TO DIASPORA ORGANIZATION AND MOBILIZATION.

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Abandoning Comfort for Unknown Cause: A Lesson from Missing Somali American Youth

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1/21/2011

Abstract

In the winter of 2007, the Somali community in Minnesota, United States learned through the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) that 20 of their young men were missing and were presumed to have returned to Somalia. A year later, the FBI revealed that the youth, who immigrated to the United States in their early teens or younger, went back to Somalia to join the Al-Shabab group (a group the US and UK have branded as terrorist). Over the course of 2008 and 2009, two of the missing Minnesota Somali Americans were found in Mogadishu, dead with bullet wounds. Another blew himself up in the Northeast Region of Somalia, making him the first American suicide bomber in United States history.

The United States authorities apprehended another one of the missing youth when he returned from Somalia. The location and condition of the rest of the youth is still unknown as of this writing. The uncertainty surrounding the missing youth caused US law enforcement agencies to go into a heightened security alert. It was a high priority to prevent the possibility of these young men, trained in different aspects of bomb making and armed with extremist ideologies, from returning to a nation that suffered the worst terrorist act on its soil in September of 2001. On the other hand, it also created a complicated scenario for the missing youth. If these missing young men come to realize that Al-Shabab's cause is not what they envisioned and are ready to come back to reunite with their families, they could be prosecuted for committing acts of terrorism or aiding a terrorist organization. Most of these Somali Americans grew up and went to school in Minnesota. Some even started higher education, but all eventually ended up dropping everything and snuck out of the country without even informing their parents. They abandoned the comfort they had known most of their life for a cause they were not well versed in; into an uncharted future that was riddled with possibilities of extreme peril in a country that has experienced civil strife for 20 years. They faced the prospect of languishing in a maximum security prison for a number of years if they returned back to the USA.

This paper examines the likely causes that compelled these youth, who grew up in a country that values law and order to opt for a violence riddled country they barely knew. The role of meaningful family relationships, educational facilities with appropriate curriculum, and after school programs will be discussed, along with the role viable community organizations including faith-based entities, can play in fostering a better environment for children to excel in their lives. This presentation will also explore how vital these institutions are in shaping the cultural identity of Somali youth in a manner they feel comfortable with. Finally, what sort of intervention, and at what level, can these institutions apply to help the youth maintain a healthy relationship with society and channel their energy toward a bright future? The ordeal of the missing Somali youth was a traumatic experience for the parents of the missing youth and the Somali Community in Minnesota. It is an experience that needs to be examined in order to find the appropriate remedy.

Background

The Somali migration to different parts of the world started long before the collapse of the central government in 1991. The sour economy in the 1980s, coupled with acute government corruption precipitated the mounting dissatisfaction with Siad Barre's regime which was already reeling from the humiliating defeat in the 1977 war with Ethiopia. Many educated individuals, including cabinet ministers, opted to leave the country seeking refuge in different parts of the world. This Somali brain drain persisted throughout the 1990s albeit in slow motion.

In January 1991, the Somali migration drastically changed from trickle to mass exodus after different factions toppled the government split along clan lines and then turned the guns on each

other. People piled up their basic necessities on vehicles, bikes, boats, donkey carts, and even on their backs before they embarked, along with their children, on the long arduous journey to their destination. While a good number ended up as Internally Displaced People (IDPs) by settling in areas where their clans were affiliated, others crossed the borders to become refugees in the neighbouring countries of Kenya, Ethiopia, Djibouti or Yemen.

The United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) successfully lobbied several richer nations in Western Europe, North America and Australia to receive some of the Somali refugees into their countries. It was through this initiative, in part, that a vast number of Somali refugees resettled in and made the United States of America their adopted country.

Due to its liberal society with plenty of low-skill jobs and a generous social system, Somalis found the state of Minnesota an ideal place to live and raise a family. They could land a laborer job with ease since it did not require English language skills. The nomadic culture that dictated communal living prompted those who settled in other states to join their countrymen, thus making Minnesota home to the largest Somali community in the USA.

Minnesota State

Historical accounts are inconclusive when the first European reached the area now called Minnesota. However, it is agreed that trade prompted the Europeans to come to Minnesota. From 1600 to 1800, Native Americans, Dakota and Ojibwa tribes, traded with Europeans along the east coast using canoes as means of transportation. Due to persistent hostilities between Dakota and Ojibwa tribes and Minnesota's notorious winter temperatures, the demand for clothes, tools and weapons was high in this northern territory. However, in 1679 a former French officer called Du Luth and seven of his countrymen, left Montreal, Canada and made their way to Mille Lacs, Minnesota, to discuss trade with the Dakota tribe (Federal Writers' Project, 1938).

In the ensuing years, a number of Indian treaties helped facilitate more land to become available for developments allowing the railroad to quickly reach the Mississippi river. The days of cumbersome journeys in canoes were replaced by train and boats. Also, with the first land sale in Minnesota in 1848, people from the east coast started migrating in big numbers to settle and take advantage of the fertile agricultural land. By May 11, 1859, Minnesota was granted statehood and admitted into the Union (Federal Writers' Project, 1938).

Somali Resettlement in Minnesota

In most communities across the United States, new Americans or recent immigrants live in poor neighborhoods as they get their start in America. In these neighborhoods, unemployment, violence and criminal activities tend to be quite high. The new American cultural groups are very grateful to be living in America and most are eager to participate in civic and community activities. While their enthusiasm and excitement for involvement are excellent ingredients to foster integration, a study conducted by the Center for Immigration Studies shows that rising numbers of immigrants weaken employment opportunities for "natives who occupy the lower rungs on the socioeconomic ladder" (Morris and Gimpel, 2007). Thus natives, many of whom are descendants of those who immigrated more than a century ago, are concerned that the presence of more immigrants may harm their economic livelihood. Therefore the natives can develop hostility towards the immigrant communities. In 1990, Somalis immigrated to Minnesota in record numbers. As history confirmed, it was expected that there would be some resistance to new arrivals of a different culture from a few native Minnesotans. Somalis, just like any other previous immigrants to the state, experienced intolerant remarks from

other groups in the state. As recently as July, 2010, someone sprayed “GO HOME” in red paint on a Somali owned store in St. Cloud, Minnesota. In April, 2010, a man from New Hope, Minnesota, pleaded guilty to making terrorist threats against Somalis. Although the authorities treated these incidents as hate crimes, they were relatively minor nuisances compared to what the Irish and the Jewish communities experienced in late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

The impediment to a successful integration

It was in late 2007 when the information about 20 missing Somali missing youth blazed across the nation. Although some of the Somali parents got a brief phone call from their children informing them that they went Somalia to participate a holy war, the larger Somali community was caught off guard by this new development. To their consternation, the community learned the incident was under law enforcement investigation- primarily the FBI. The ensuing reaction was one of shock, confusion, denial and outright panic. Some of the relatives blamed the boys’ disappearance on the warring parties in Somalia while others questioned the validity of the information calling the situation a prelude to racial profiling. Some even suspected the involvement of the Abu-Bakr Saddique¹ since a number of the missing youth frequented the mosque before their disappearance even though, as of this writing, no one affiliated with Abu-Bakr Saddique mosque was formally charged. The question that begs for an answer is how did the young men manage to keep their departure undetected until some of them called from Somalia? What was the message they received, and from what source? How were they convinced to leave their home and be willing to put their lives in imminent danger? And why were the relatives and the community as well oblivious to the drama that was unfolding in their midst?

Family Relationship

Most of the Somalis that settled in the US have transited through refugee camps in Kenya where living conditions were so strenuous that most of the people did not have the time to learn the English language which is the official language there. It was only after they arrived in the US that some parents took the initiative to enroll in ESL² classes. Regrettably, the parents’ limited education and language skills were easily outpaced by their children within a short span of time. As a result, an ever widening communications gap appeared in the family relationship. To make matters worse, the youths’ desire to satisfy the parents’ push to cling to old traditions from back home, and the pull from the new society to affiliate with the new life precipitates an identity crisis among the youth.

Perhaps this can be best illustrated from the Minnesota Somali youths’ response to Ken Menkhaus³ question when he asked them how they identified themselves to others. Their reply ranged from “Somali”, “Somali American”, “Muslim Somali American” to “American”.

As we look to the different perspectives of this identification, it is fair to ask what kind of tug-o-war was the youth subjected to at home and by society, to warrant different concepts of identity. And can this new shift of cultural identity paradigm in the youth trigger the need to explore clarity elsewhere, even if it leads to uncertainty?

Educational institutions

According to the Minnesota Department of Education, there are 93 schools with students whose primary language is Somali. While this may sound good to a relatively new community to the state, the graduation and dropout rate paint another picture, especially when African-Americans and Somalis

¹ A mosque in South Minneapolis, Minnesota USA

² English as Second Language

³ Associate Professor at Davidson College, North Carolina. USA

are seen as “Black” compared to Whites or Asian/Pacific Islander.

2009-2010 Fall Enrollment	Graduate %	Dropout%
White	82.36	3.65
Asian/Pacific Islander	68.03	5.69
Black	43.95	10.9

Source: Minnesota Department of Education

Recently there was a heated debate in the Minnesota legislature regarding the best way to close the achievement gap in education between African-American and white communities in Minnesota. However, with the \$6.2 billion projected state budget deficit for fiscal year 2010-11 and subsequent funding declines for education, there are not enough resources to introduce or maintain after school programs that are necessary to keep the youth competitive in education.

The reality is that America has become a reactionary society that typically responds after the fact as evidence shows the United States is the only democratic or industrial country that has two million citizens in prison or jail. Poor people in the third world countries are usually isolated and contained in a specific area or neighborhood where there is no proper sanitation or law enforcement. In contrast, the United States has developed inner city projects for poor people and persons in need of rehabilitation. As the economy deteriorates in this recessionary period, more people are becoming poor. What will be our response? Social forces that only focus its resources on rescuing people as opposed to preventing behavior will be paying more in the criminal justice and welfare system (Bloom, 2010). We wholeheartedly agree with Bloom’s argument that now is the time to invest more public funds in research and programs to help avoid and address risky youth behavior even during this time of severe constraints in public resources. Otherwise, once the child loses focus or interest in school, it will drive the truancy rate high thus restricting the community’s success in integration. The youth may also be soft targets for illegal activities such as drugs, gangs or even international terrorism recruiters.

According to a recent City of Minneapolis Report on Somali Youth, students that often exhibit disruptive behavior at school are likely to end up dropping out and eventually join gangs that are involved in criminal activities. The report also showed that there were three local organized Somali gang organizations with approximately fifty two members total: Rough Tough Somalis (RTS), Hot Boyz Gang and Somali Mafia. However there are other gangs such as the Somali Outlaws and the Lady Outlaws which were recently indicted with sex trafficking of juveniles and conspiring to sex traffic juveniles, obstruction of justice, perjury, auto theft, and credit card fraud. Violence and fatal revenge shootings increased within the Somali community with the emergence of these gang organizations. Sadly, some of the victims were Somali youth in their prime.

Community and Faith Based organizations

There are more than forty five Somali community organizations in the US. However, some of these community organizations have clan affiliated names. Some examples include: Somali Benadiri Community of Minnesota, Somali Mai Community of Minnesota, Somali Bantu Community Organization and Somali International Minorities of America. The negative connotation of associating with a particular clan or group led others to either establish rival organizations or seek assistance elsewhere, thus rendering most of these organizations ineffective.

To some extent, faith based organizations rival the community organizations over membership.

Although there is no clannish mentality in Mosques, their association with sub- groups or movements such as Al- Islah, Al- Itihad or Sufi, often impede their cooperation with each other. One of the shortcomings of the mosques is that their teaching is profoundly in the worshipping curriculum and often neglects to preach Islam as a comprehensive way of life. All these community and faith based organizations with often competing interests compound the confusion within the Somali youth who were already wrestling with their cultural identity.

Recommendations:

Visible role of Somali Civil Society

There is no general consensus as to the definition of the civil society however, the Wikipedia describes the civil society as a composition of “the totality of voluntary civic and social organizations and institutions that form the basis of a functioning society, as distinct from the force-backed structures of a state (regardless of that state’s political system) and commercial institutions of the market”

Somalia has not seen a strong, organized, fully functioning civil society since 1969, when the democratically elected government was overthrown in a military coup. Organized social gatherings without prior government approval were not permitted during the revolutionary regime.

Presently there are Somali civil society organizations that operate both within and outside Somali borders, however, few managed to articulate a vision based on a grass root approach. They are yet to mobilize and give a voice to the silent majority.

It is, in part, the absence of the civic culture that facilitated the emergence of Somali Warlords in the 1990s and Islamic courts later in mid-2006. Aside from the argument on whether they were good or bad, they managed to fill the void of the civil society role.

The same can be said of the Somali Diaspora. Despite the existence of a number of community and non-profit organizations, there is no meaningful, effective presence of a civil society role to complete the social normative gaps- whether it is family relationships, education or civic studies. In addition, Somali civil society should assume the leadership role in debates on Somali issues; to lead, to the extent possible, the national agenda; and to be more proactive instead of reacting to outcomes as was the case of the March, 2010, UN monitoring group report on Somalia that described the weakness of the Diaspora. It is incumbent on civil society leaders to rise above the petty politics of opposing factions in Somalia, and instead advocate for the resurrection of national pride by investing heavily in tomorrow’s leaders-the youth.

Grass root mobilization

Since the collapse of the central government in 1991, the country has seen numerous self appointed warlords without long term vision acting only for their own short term gains. After fifteen National Conferences, these warlords have not only failed to establish a viable government but have sworn to destroy the results of the conferences they participated in.

It is an obligation and duty of Somali civil society to save its country from the sure path of total destruction, which is definite outcome if the present course is not reversed. Somali civil society has shouldered its responsibility before when it mobilized the grassroots at the Arta, Djibouti conference in 2000. As a result, a national, democratically elected government was born. Somalis across the globe were proud of the civil society that brought the six month process to a successful conclusion. In another example, they did it again in 2006 when they organized the Diaspora to voice their opposition against the Ethiopian Army invasion of Somalia even though they failed to sustain the momentum or de-escalate the hostility in the aftermath.

Somali civil society must mobilize and also provide a venue for the Somali youth to participate and

learn more about the social, political and economic issues in a tangible way. It must help the youth to be more vigilant of their civic duties to both of their countries-adopted and origin.

Strong communications network

Too often, Somalia and Somalis have been defined by so called “experts” who are predominantly non-Somali and have never set foot in the country.

It is almost two years after the 20 young men went back to Somalia yet there is no consistent strategy in place among Somali communities across the globe to avoid the recurrence of youth radicalization.

A viable communications network is essential to have different Somali communities in the world learn from each other’s experience in youth radicalization. A communications method with appropriate technologies such as e-mail, Face book, Twitter or text-messaging inspire the youth to take a more active role in discussing youth challenges. At the Somali youth conference held in Virginia, USA in August, 2010 young men and women from different states gathered to discuss different topics. This is a step in the right direction that needs to be replicated in different parts of the globe. Instead of *ad hoc* meetings, every effort should be made to have more structured, adequately resourced youth conferences in order to make them more successful. In addition, Somali youth should be encouraged to take summer jobs or volunteer work in safe areas of Somalia as this approach will not only help them retain their cultural identity, but protect them from falling prey to the disingenuous information of extremists.

Conclusion

The challenges of Somalia have been painful. Somalia has seen no effective government since the collapse of the central government in January 1991. Over half of the population is either internally displaced or live outside of the border. The emigration to different parts of the world has not abated yet. Although the international community has a visible presence in Somali issues, they arguably don’t have credible partners to re-build the national institutions. The dysfunctional politics on the ground in Somalia also percolate in the Diaspora, thus driving the challenges to bigger proportions. A tragic example is that the first US citizen suicide bomber in history happens to be a Somali youth who went back to fight with one group. But Somali challenges, albeit painful, also create opportunities. To quote John Powell⁴ “The only real mistake is the one from which we learn nothing”. The generations of the 1950s and 60s will soon pass the torch to the next in line. However, to ensure successful transition, there is a tremendous obligation to fulfill. The Somali civil society must shoulder the responsibility of mobilizing the parents, communities, faith based organizations, and educational institutions in assisting the youth to maintain their cultural and linguistic heritage; to be proud of their origin; to have a bright and successful future ahead of them; and to always have a place in their heart for Somalia interest. Only Somalis can bring back Somalia to its rightful place in the international community. The Somali youth cannot and should not be victims of extremist ideology but instead should grow up to be accountable citizens.

⁴ John Powell is a British Author that wrote several books.

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August 2010

This year, the Somali people commemorated the 50th anniversary of their independence gained in 1960, even though this nation has been entangled in more than 20 years of the post-colonial collapsed state¹. This case puzzles politicians and scholars and also challenges conventional theories of nation-building². Hypothetically, Somalia could be seen as an ideal nation that has a good measure of elements “which have in the past been assumed to be the essential ingredients for the nation.”³ In general, the Somali people speak one language, adhere to Islamic faith, and share historical experiences. That ideal nation, nonetheless, is immersed in multiple conflicts. One such conflict is between clan, Islam, and state which comprise what Hassan Keynan called “The Somali Equation.”⁴ This equation signifies “the complex of ideas, values, beliefs and institutions that define and underpin the Somali society.”⁵ These three elements are deeply immersed in the mindset of every Somali, appealing to his/her sentiment and stimulating his/her attitude and behavior. They endlessly generate three competing ideologies – clanism, Islamism, and nationalism within every Somali individual.⁶ However, in every historical juncture, within its internal dynamics, one element might emerge and triumph while the other two retreat until a favorable time when they resurface. For instance, nationalism prevailed during the struggle for the national independence and in the subsequent years of nation-building (1960-1991). Likewise, armed political clanism strongly emerged in the 1980s due the erosion of the state legitimacy and claimed victory by collapsing the state in 1991. Finally, Islamism has publicly articulated its various ideological trends after the collapse of the repressive state in 1991, and its militant persuasion claimed victory in 2006 when the Islamic Courts took over Mogadishu.⁷ These three radicalized ideologies – nationalism, clanism, and Islamism – polarized the Somali people into secular nationalists, clanists, and Islamists, even though these ideologies are dynamic, crosscurrent, and often overlap each other. Moreover, within each element: Islam, clan and nationalism, internal conflict has been brewing.

This essay does not undertake the huge task of tracing conflicts between these three elements; it simply limits its scope in tracing doctrinal roots of conflicts within Islamic persuasions and organizations. It explores both traditional Islamic conflict in the contemporary history of Somalia and modern conflict between radical Islamism and Sufi orders.

1. Background:

Islam reached Somalia in the first century of the Islamic calendar; however, mass conversion occurred in the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteen century AD through peaceful propagation spearheaded by immigrant Arabs from the Arabian Peninsula. As elsewhere in the Muslim world during this period, Islam was accepted as the ultimate reference for laws and morals, although it was combined with many local customs in many aspects. For example, the Qur’an and Prophetic tradition were accepted

¹ The other two collapsed states in the 1990s, Sierra Leone and Liberia, were restored in 2000 and 2003, respectively. On Somali state collapse see Abdullahi, Abdurahman. “Perspectives on the State Collapse in Somalia.” In *Somalia at the Crossroads: Challenges and Perspectives in Reconstituting a Failed State*, edited by Abdullahi A. Osman and Issaka K. Soure. London: Adonis & Abby Publishers Ltd, 2007.

² Nation-building relates to the building of a national identity through creating national paraphernalia. However, it has taken a new dimension after the collapse of the state and means “ending military conflict and rebuilding political and economic structures.” See Schwoebel, Mary Hope. *Nation-building in the Land of Somalis*. A PhD thesis submitted to George Masson University, 2007, 16.

³ Touval, Saadia. *Somali Nationalism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963, v.

⁴ See Keynan, Hassan. “Male Roles and Making of Somali Tragedy: Reflections on Gender, Masculinity and Violence in Somali Society.” In *Variations on the Theme of Somaliness*, edited by Muddle Suzanne Liluis. Turku, Finland: Centre of Continuing Education, Abo University, 2001: 241-249, 241.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Details on conflicting loyalties in Somalia see Abdullahi, Abdurahman. “Tribalism, Nationalism and Islam: Crisis of the Political Loyalties in Somalia.” MA thesis, Islamic Institute, McGill University, 1992.

⁷ Barnes, Cedric, and Harun Hassan. “The Rise and Fall of Mogadishu’s Islamic Courts.” *Chatham House Briefing Paper*, April, 2007. (AFP BP 07/02). Islamic Court Union was not purely “Islamic”. It combined Islamism with nationalism and clanism, creating a strong appeal to wider Somali audience.

as the basic sources of Islam. However, these sources were interpreted by various scholars in different times and spaces, and this produced various schools of thought in theology and jurisprudence.⁸ Moreover, Sufi orders appeared in the Muslim world and played a major role in spreading Islam in Far East Asia and Africa and in countering colonialism.⁹ When Islam reached many nations with diverse cultures, some elements of their cultural norms and customs were incorporated into the Islamic jurisprudence. Moreover, some un-Islamic elements of culture were accommodated by some Sufi orders. Indeed, Islam, as practiced for generations in Somalia, follows three main persuasions: the Ash'ariyah theology, Shafi'i jurisprudence, and Sufism. Therefore, the traditional Somali society goes along with their scholars who espouse *taqlid* (imitation) and follow strictly these three persuasions. In addition, these three persuasions are perpetuated through traditional Islamic institutions comprising educational establishments and Sufi orders' centers where the master-disciple intimate relationship is nurtured.¹⁰ This relationship is the core foundation of Sufism and is preserved through various social functions. The most important of those functions are: *Mawliidka* (commemoration the Prophet's birthday), *Xuska* (offering alms to the souls of the deceased parents), and *Siyaaro* (paying homage to respected teachers and visiting their tombs).

In Somalia, the advent of Sufism has been recorded since the early 15th century with the arrival of 44 Islamic scholars under the leadership of Sheikh Ibrahim Abu-Zarbai in 1430.¹¹ Nevertheless, its renewal and reform as an organized movement was noted from the last quarter of the 19th century to the middle of the 20th century. Indeed, Said Samatar wrote, "These years between 1880 and 1920 can be described as the era of the Sheikhs in Somali history."¹² Revival is an important dimension of the historical experience of Muslims; Sufi reformation entailed shifting from individual Islamic activities to institutionalized orders.¹³ Traditionally, Sufi order masters belong to all three categories of Islamic scholars in Somalia, the "Ulama" or "Wadaado." In their communities, they are easily identified by the titles attached to their names: Sheikh (Islamic jurist and teacher), Moallim (Qur'anic teacher), and Aw (a person with an elementary Islamic education). After joining a Sufi order by taking the oath of allegiance called "Bay'a" and receiving a banner, a chain, and the litanies (Awrad) of the order, some of them retain their original titles, while others may change to the title "khalif," the marker of the Sufi masters.¹⁴ The stimulus for their revival, as described by Trimigham, was the emergence of charismatic spiritual preachers with a talent for mass mobilization during this period.¹⁵ However, this *raison d'être* is not enough to explain the phenomenon. It seems that this revival is not an isolated occurrence in Somalia but could be related to similar revivalist movements in the Muslim world that could be linked with the increased awareness of external threats and the decline of morality in Muslim societies.

⁸ These are the four main Sunni schools of jurisprudence like Maliki, Hanafi, Shafi'i and Hambali. Also, there are three theological schools considered to be within the framework of Ahl-Sunna wa Al-jama such Asha'ariyah, Maturidiyah and Salafia school of theology.

⁹ B. G. Martin, *Muslim Brotherhoods in Nineteenth-Century Africa*. Cambridge University Press, 2003. also, Trimigham, J.S. *Islam in Ethiopia*, Routledge, 2007.

¹⁰ As a general overview of the traditional Islamic scholars see Muhammad Qasim Zaman, *The Ulama in Contemporary Islam: Custodians of Change*. Princeton University Press, 2002.

¹¹ It also reported that Sheikh Jamal Al- Din bin Yusuf al-Zayli (d. 1389), the author of the book *Nasbu al-Raya li ahadith al-Hidayah*, was one of the Sufi Sheikhs in Somalia. However, this remains a speculation, since there are no more accounts of him. See Jumale, Mohamed Ahmed "Castro". *Dawr ulama Junub al-Somaal fi al-Dacwa al-Islamiyah (1889-1941)*. A PhD thesis submitted to the University of Omdurman, Khartoum, 2007, 84.

¹² Samatar, Said. *Oral Poetry and Somali Nationalism: The Case of Sayid Mohamed Abdulle Hassan*. Cambridge University Press, 1982, 97.

¹³ Rees, Scott Steven. *Patricians of the Banadir: Islamic Learning, Commerce and Somali Urban Identity in the Nineteenth Century*. A PhD thesis submitted to the University of Pennsylvania, 1996, 306.

¹⁴ Since there is no certification system in traditional education, the minimum requirement to bear the name of "Sheikh" is the right to contract marriages and administer the law of inheritance. On the other hand, the title of "Moallim" is carried by those who have dedicated their life to teaching the Qur'an, and "Aw" is a less significant title demonstrating simply that a person went through some kind of elementary Islamic teaching. See Abdullahi, Abdurahman. "Tribalism and Islam: The Basics of Somaliness." In *Variations on the Theme of Somaliness*, edited by Muddle Suzanne Liluis. Turku, Finland: Centre of Continuing Education, Abo University, 2001, 233.

¹⁵ Rees, Patricians, 302-303.

There are two main Sufi orders in Somalia: Qadiriyyah and Ahmadiyah. Each Sufi order has its local offshoots.¹⁶ Qadiriyyah has two main branches, Zayli'yah and Uweysiyyah. Zayli'yah was founded by Sheikh Abdirahman al-Zayli (1815-1882), who was based in Qulunqul near Dhagahbur in the Western Somalia (Somali state of Ethiopia). Uweysiyyah was founded by the spiritual master Sheikh Aweys ibn Ahmed al-Barawe (1846-1907), and its seat was located in Balad al-Amiin near Afgoye, about 40 km south of Mogadishu. Ahmadiyah also has three offshoots in Somalia: Rahmaniyyah, Salihiyah, and Dandarawiyah. Rahmaniyyah was founded by Maulana Abdurahman Bin Mohamud (d.1291 H). Salihiyah has two branches: southern branch introduced by Sheikh Mohamed Guled al-Rasheedi (d.1918) and northern branch by Sayid Mohamed Abdulle Hassan (1856-1920). Dandarawiyah was introduced by Sayid Adan Ahmed and has a limited following in northern Somalia.¹⁷

The Ash'ariyyah theology adhered by the Somalis was founded by Abu al-Hasan Al-Ash'ari (873-935) in reaction to the extreme rationalism espoused by the school of Mu'tazilah.¹⁸ In developing its defense mechanism, the Ash'ariyyah school employed the method of *Ta'weel*, meaning interpreting some of the attributes of Allah. The Ash'ari theology and methodology were accepted as the standard for mainstream Sunni theology by the scholarly community during that time and in every generation afterwards.¹⁹ This theology is mainly based on seeking to defend Islam from the extremes of excessive literalism and excessive rationalism, maintaining the middle and moderate way of Islam. Without getting into further discussion, examples of the most controversial issues of the debate is the question how to comprehend the divine attributes and the way of consigning the meaning to Allah. The preferred position of the Ash'ari theology is to affirm whatever attributes Allah has affirmed for himself and negate what Allah has decisively negated for himself, which is any similitude between the Creator and creation, as affirmed by the verse, "There is absolutely nothing like unto Him."²⁰ Among the most prominent scholar of Ash'ari rites is Abu-Hamid al-Ghazali (1058-1111) who articulated moderate Sufism that combines it with al-Ash'ariyyah theology. Sufism in Somalia belongs to that moderate Sufism rooted in Al-Ghazali's way, and it had a significant missionary impact throughout Somalia. Its tremendous influence is exercised through its two main brotherhoods: Qadiriyyah and Ahmadiyah. Somalia also adheres to the Shafi'i school of jurisprudence, one of the four main schools of Sunni jurisprudence.²¹ This, in a nutshell, is the nature of Islam adhered to by an overwhelming majority of Somalis and advocated by Ahl Al-Sunna wa Al-Jama (AWJ), an organization that belongs to various Sufi orders.

2. Early Islamic militancy: conflict between Sufi Orders

Militancy means here the use of violent approaches to achieve doctrinal objectives and to impose leadership within Sufi brotherhoods, while moderation simply signifies tolerance and the avoidance of all forms of extremism. In general, Sufi brotherhoods are moderate and use peaceful means of propagating Islam that offer due consideration to the norms and customs of the people. Sometimes

¹⁶ Most scholars fail to distinguish between the original Sufi order and their later derivatives. Sometimes these Sufi orders are said to be three, making Salihiyah a separate order from Ahmadiyah and also neglecting the existence of the Rufaiyyah Order. See Laitin and Samatar, 45.

¹⁷ Caqli, Cabdirizaq, Sheikh Madar. *Asaasaha Hargeysa*. A book written in the Somali language on Sheikh Madar with no date or publishing house.

¹⁸ Mu'tazilah is theological school established by Wasil ibn Ata (d. 748). Adherents believe that human reason is more reliable than tradition; a practice frowned upon by many Sunni scholars. Moreover, the founder of Ash'ari theology, Abu al-Hasan al-Ash'ari (873-935) laid the foundation of the theology that destroyed the logic of the Mu'tazelites. See Majid Fakhry. *A History of Islamic Philosophy*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1983, 44-65.

¹⁹ For instance, Al-Azhar University teaches this theology. See Al-Qardawi, Yusuf, *Muhammad Al-Gazali kama Araftuhu: Rixlat Nisf Qan*. Beirut: Dar Al-Shuruq, 2000, 82-86.

²⁰ Qur'an (42:11)

²¹ There four main Jurisprudence school in the Sunni Muslims are Maliki, Hanbali, Shafi'i and Hanbali.

they use innovative means to assimilate and absorb pastoral and illiterate masses and mobilize them into common action. With blood-shedding being the most heinous crime in Islam, Somali scholars usually abstain from clan fighting in the harsh pastoral environment. Their role is limited to conflict resolution, community education, and conducting religious functions. However, there were four historical events when militancy emerged, and Islamic scholars led internal fighting to gain politico-religious hegemony. These events constitute historical precedents for current militancy and extremism in Somalia and offer lessons that doctrinal differences may develop into violent confrontation between Islamists.

A. Bardheere Jama'a and Geledi Sultanate

The first episode occurred in the town of Bardheere as a confrontation between the Bardheere religious settlements (Jamaaca) and the Geledi Sultanates at Afgoye.²² The Bardheere settlement was founded in 1819 by Sheikh Ibrahim Yabarow, introducing some reforms such as outlawing tobacco and popular dancing and prohibiting ivory trade.²³ The religious settlements began to implement some elements of Islamic Shari'a, such as the wearing of decent Islamic dress for women. In the mid-1930s, after receiving strong adherents among immigrants, the Jama decided to expand its sphere of influence to other regions during the era of Sharif Abdirahman and Sharif Ibrahim, who originated from Sarman in Bakol.²⁴ By 1840, the Jama warriors reached Baidoa area and Luq and finally sacked Brava, the historic seat of the Qadiriyyah Order where both Sultan Ahmed Yusuf of Geledi and Sheikh Madow of Hintire had studied.²⁵ Brava accepted capitulation conditions that included prohibiting tobacco and popular dancing, adopting Islamic dress code, etc. They also agreed to pay an annual tax of 500 Pessa.²⁶ This action provoked a concerted response from the clans of the inter-river areas under the charismatic leadership of Geledi Sultan Yusuf Mohamed. The sultanate mobilized an expedition force of 40,000 from all clans in reverine areas, stormed Bardheere, and burned it to the ground. Cassanelli characterized this conflict as one between the rising power of Islamic reformists and the established traditional power of the Geledi. Moreover, he adds the economic factor of curbing the lucrative ivory trade as well as a clan aspect, which stemmed from the armed immigrant nomads, the followers of the Jama, being perceived as a threat to the local population.²⁷ The external actors' role in this conflict was not well researched; however, it is said that Sayid Bargash, the Sultan of Zanzibar, was on good terms with the Geledi Sultanate in the confrontation and in dealing with the threat perceived to be a Wahabi penetration into Somalia.²⁸

B. Sheikh Ali Majertain and Geledi Sultanate

The second episode is connected with the arrival of Sheikh Ali Abdurahman (Majertain) (1787-1852) in Merca in 1946 and his confrontation with the dominant Geledi sultanate. Sheikh Ali Majertain was born in Nugal region between Garowe and Lasanod in the current Puntland. He traveled to Mecca

²² The narration of this event was misnamed "Baardheere Jihad" by most historians and, in particular, professor Cassanelli. In fact, internal wars between Muslims should not be called Jihad. It is a misnomer that militant Baardheere Sheikhs used to justify their war with the others. Note that Sultan of Geledi did not call it Jihad. See details of this event in Cassanelli, *Shaping*, 136-139.

²³ Baardheere was founded in 1819 by Sheikh Ibrahim Hassan Yeberaw, a native of Dafeed, a town between Afgoye and Bur-Hakaba, who was refused to establish a reformist religious community in his home district. Dafeed sources claim that Sheikh Ibrahim was affiliated with the Ahmadiyah Order. See, Cassanelli, *Shaping*, 136. However, the nature of Jama'a is highly disputed as a Qadiriyyah settlement, as Trimigham argued. See Trimigham, *Islam in Ethiopia*, 240-41. Moreover, it was also labelled as being Wahabis by many European explorers. See, Cassanelli, *Shaping*, 136.

²⁴ Cassanelli, *Shaping*, 137

²⁵ These two persons were the most powerful leaders who together reacted to the Baardheere expansions.

²⁶ Issa, Aw Jama Omar. *Safahat min Tarikh al-Allama al-Haji Ali Abdurahman Faqigh (1797-1852)*. Sana: Markaz Ibadi li dabaat wa nashri, 2009, 124.

²⁷ Cassanelli, *Shaping*, 140-14. Also see Luling, Virginia. *Somali Sultanate: The Geledi City-State over 150 Years*. London: Haan Publications, 2002, 23.

²⁸ Ahmed Jumale, *Dawr Al-Ulama*, 41.

and Baghdad for further studies where he met “with the disciples of Mohamed Abdulwahab” and came back to his home area.²⁹ He established an Islamic education center at Halin Wells near Taleh. However, he emigrated from his home after conflicting with his clan and moved to the eastern region under the tutelage of Majertain Sultan Nur Osman. Here also, Sheikh Ali found it unacceptable to live with the overt violation of Islamic Shari’a by the Sultan Nur of Majertain and formed an alliance with Haji Farah Hirsi, a rebel sultan of Majertain. Haji Farah attempted to establish a new sultanate or to overthrow his cousin. Under this arrangement, he would take political responsibility and Sheikh Ali would administer religious affairs.³⁰

To achieve this goal, Sheikh Ali sent a letter to the ruler of Sharja Sheikh Saqar al-Qasimi offering his allegiance and requesting his support.³¹ However, Sheikh Saqar could not respond promptly and, dismayed, Sheikh Ali traveled to Zanzibar and remained there for 15 months under the custody of Sultan Said al-Bu-Saidi. Having in mind to establish an Islamic emirate, Sheikh Ali arrived in Merca in 1946, three years after the defeat of Bardhere Jama and the dominance of Geledi Sultanate over the vast southern regions. However, the Biimal clan, the major clan of Merca, was rebelling against the Geledi sultanate. Sheikh Ali Majertain arrived in Merca in alliance with the Biimal clan, with five boats, 150 followers, and substantial quantities of firearms and ammunitions. He settled near Merca with the consent of the Biimal clan and began his activities and education programs. First, he attempted to play the role of a peacemaker between Sultan Yusuf and the Biimal clan and sent a letter to Sultan Yusuf requesting that he accept his reconciliation efforts. However, when Sultan Yusuf refused his offer, he arbitrarily declared war against him. Sheikh Ali’s followers confronted the Geledi Sultan in 1846 without the support of the Biimal clan and were easily defeated. Sheikh Ali’s expectation of receiving assistance from the Sultan of Zanzibar was dashed; instead, the Sultan of Zanzibar helped the Sultan of Geledi to confront what was perceived as the threat of the “Wahabis”.

The doctrinal inclination of Sheikh Ali is evident in the letter he sent to the clans of Brava, showing that he considered the Geledi sultanate to be a deviated sect (*firqa dalah*). Commenting on the outcome of war, he stated that “in reality ours [deaths] are in paradise and theirs are in hell” and “if you are among the deviated sect which Sultan Yusuf leads, there is no relation between us, and your blood will not be saved from us.”³² The intolerance of Sheikh Ali to the propagation of Islam among his people, his mobilization of armed followers, and his siding with the Biimal clan against the Geledi sultanate all indicate that he belonged to a militant ideology similar to that of Bardheere Jama.

C. Sayid Mohamed Abdulle Hassan and Sheikh Aweys al-Barawi

The third significant event was the arrival in Berbera in 1895 of Sayid Mohamed Abdulle Hassan. This was not only the beginning of armed encounters with the colonial powers but also the initiation of an internal conflict among Somali Sufi orders. Upon his arrival in Berbera, Sayid Mohamed challenged the authority and credentials of the Qadiriyyah establishment, setting up the competing Salihiyah Order. He publicly criticized some practices of Qadiriyyah sheikhs and introduced new verdict fatwas on some issues, such as the prohibition of chewing Qaad and tobacco, although these were tolerated by other scholars. However, Qadiriyyah scholars succeeded in overcoming Sayid Mohamed’s challenges through religious debate. Scholars such as Aw Gas and Haji Ibrahim Hirsi invited Sheikh Madar from Hargeysa, head of the Qaderia Order in the region, and Sheikh Abdullahi Arusi, the teacher of Sayid Mohamed, to participate in a meeting held in Berbera in 1897 to discuss the issues of what is lawful and what is prohibited in Islam raised by Sayid Mohamed. However, after heated discussions on the

²⁹ *Aw-Jama, Safahat, 12.*

³⁰ *This form of alliance is similar to the alliance of King Saud and Sheikh Mohamed Abdul-wahab in creating Saudi Kingdom.*

³¹ *See the letter in Aw-Jama, Safahat, 110-117.*

³² *Isse, Aw-Jama Omar, Safahāt, 152.*

major disputed issues, followers of Qaderia in Berbera rebelled against Sayid Mohamed, and the British authorities intervened to maintain public order. As a result, Sayid Mohamed was compelled to emigrate from Berbera, carrying with him doctrinal enmity against Qaderia.

This deep-rooted conflict between Qadiriya and northern Salihiyah had both political and doctrinal dimensions. First, Sayid Mohamed was aiming to establish an Islamic emirate under his leadership without consulting other prominent scholars. His unilateral, authoritarian, and violent approach annoyed many scholars and clan leaders. Second, Salihiyah questioned the doctrinal credentials of the rival Qadiriya Order, condemning them as heretical and claiming that only Salihiyah was authentic and original. This theological controversy escalated into a polemic exchange and then developed into bitter propaganda against each other.³³ For instance, Sheikh Aweys wrote poems vilifying the Salihiyah Order. Here are some selected excerpts from the poem, translated by B.G. Martin.³⁴

The person guided by Mohamed's law, will not follow the faction of Satan [Salihiyah]
Who deem it lawful to spill the blood of the learned, who take cash and women too: they
are anarchist
Do not follow those men with big shocks of hair, a coiffure like the Wahabiya!
Publicly, they sell paradise for cash, in our land; they are a sect of dogs
They have gone astray and make others deviate on earth, by land and sea among the
Somalis
Have they no reason or understanding? Be not deceived by them
But flee as from a disaster, from their infamy and unbelief.

This verbal polemic was countered by a similar diatribe of poems by Sayid Mohamed, which concluded: "A word to the backsliding apostates, why have gone astray, from the Prophet's way, the straight path? Why is the truth, so plain, hidden from you?"³⁵ This developed into physical attacks on the leaders of Qadiriya, and on April 14, 1909, followers of Salihiyah murdered Sheikh Aweys al-Bawe at Biyooley. When Sayid Mohamed heard of the death of Sheikh Aweys he recited a victory hymn saying, "Behold, at last, when we slew the old wizard, the rains began to come!"³⁶ The implications of this conflict in Somalia were tremendous, affecting anti-colonial resistance and tarnishing the image of the Salihiyah Order among the population.

D. Sayid Mohamed Abdulle and Dandarawiyah Order

On the other hand, before the arrival of Sayid Mohamed in northern Somalia, there was the Dandarawiyah Order, an offshoot of Ahmadiyah, in the towns of Sheikh and Haahi. Sayid Mohamed demanded the Dandarawiyah to follow him claiming absolute authority over the order. After refusing Sayid's initiative, the conflict between the Dandarawiyah and Sayid Mohamed escalated. Sayid Mohamed dispatched to the town of Sheikh, the seat of the Dandarawiyah, about 80 cavalry troops with the message that the order should participate in the Jihad against the British. Sending an armed mission without consultation was perceived as a threat by the Dandarawiyah, and therefore the order captured most of the soldiers and surrendered them to the British forces stationed in Laylis between Sheikh and Berbera. In reaction, Sayid Mohamed dispatched a strong military expedition and razed

³³ See *Sheikh Aweys's poems in Samatar, Said (ed.). In the Shadows of Conquest: Islam in Colonial Northeast Africa*. Trenton, NJ: The Red Sea Press, 1992, 55.

³⁴ See complete translation in *Ibid.*, 55-56.

³⁵ *Samatar, Shadows of Conquest*, 59.

³⁶ The Somali version is "Candhagodoble goortaan dilaa roobki noo da'aye." See *Samatar, Shadows of Conquest*, 61.

Sheikh to the ground.³⁷ Sayid Mohamed's bright points were romanticized by the Somali nationalists in their efforts to nurture national consciousness by narrating a glorious past and reconstructing symbols, heroes, and myths. In this approach, self-inflicted wounds, civil wars, massacres, and human atrocities are downplayed and belittled.³⁸ However, in tracing the background of the current extremism in the name of Islam, it is necessary to bring up other episodes of Sayid Mohamed that suggest the historical roots of the current extremism in Somalia.³⁹

2. The emergence of Islamism and Modern Islamic militancy

Islamism is defined as "the active assertion and promotion of beliefs, prescriptions, laws, or policies that are held to be Islamic in character."⁴⁰ It addresses multiple strains in the society inflicted by colonialism, modernity, and lack of capacity of the traditional Islamic institutions to counter these. Streams of ideas and groups belonging to this category are numerous and diversified. However, in Somalia, two main conceptions of Islamism are most visible. These are the Salafia School and Muslim Brotherhood, and it is relevant to explore their core ideas and relation with traditional Islam.

(1) Salafism versus Traditional Islam

Salafism stands completely in opposition to the traditional Islam in Somalia. The adherents of this ideology identify the pernicious innovations (*bida'*) introduced to Islam as the primary obstruction that caused the decadence of the Muslims. Therefore, in placing an overriding emphasis on preaching idealized Tawhid (monotheism), they focus their condemnation on many traditional Muslim practices as being innovations and *shirk* (polytheism). This school adheres to what is termed the Salafia theology, which arrived to Somalia with the increased influence of Saudi Arabia through students educated in its Islamic universities and through migrant labor.⁴¹ The students learned the teachings of Sheikh Mohamed Abd Al-Wahhab, often referred to by their adherents as Salafi and by their detractors as Wahabi. The Salafia theology is based on the refutation of any interpretation of the attributes of Allah⁴². Adherents of the Salafia theology in Somalia also introduced some aspects of Hanbali jurisprudence, the official Saudi jurisprudence, replacing with it the predominant Shafi'i jurisprudence under the pretext that they do not necessarily follow any specific school of jurisprudence. They consider their principal duty to be spreading *al-Aqidah al-Sahihah* (the right theology), deliberately engaging in conflicts with other Islamic groups. Accordingly, they believe that their theology is the only right one because it is the theology of the first three generations of Muslims. This is the claim from which they draw their name, *al-salafia*, (followers of the early pious generations of the Muslims). This mode of thinking breeds intolerance, internal conflict, and extremism. Moreover, being educated in Saudi Arabia, many of these students were employed to preach the "the right theology" (Salafia) in Somalia. Furthermore, the Salafis consider Sufism a dangerous heresy and are engaged in an uncompromising conflictual campaign against the Sufis.⁴³ In that way, Salafism, as projected in Somalia, is not a reform movement but a revolutionary approach that aims to obliterate and completely change traditional

³⁷ The leadership genealogy of the Dandarawiyah in Somalia is as follows; (1) Sheikh Adan, (2) Sheikh Nur, (3) Sheikh Mohamed Husseyn (d. 1964), (4) Engineer Ali Sheikh Mohamed Hussein (d. 2009), (5) Sultan Mohamud Ahmed (collective leadership). See *Ibid*.

³⁸ Adeed Dawisha. *Arab Nationalism in the Twentieth Century: From Triumph to Despair*. Princeton Press, 2003, 63.

³⁹ These resemblances were (1) personal rule; (2) exclusion of other Islamic orders and monopoly of religious legitimacy; (3) excessive use of violence against other Muslims; and (4) selective and haphazard application of Shari'a.

⁴⁰ See The International Crisis Group Report. "Understanding Islamism". *Middle East/North Africa Report no.37-2 March, 2005, 1*.

⁴¹ Approximately 250,000 Somalis have migrated to Gulf countries after the Somali/Ethiopian war of 1977/78. See Laitin and Samatar, 145.

⁴² See Ibn-Taymiyah, *SharhAl-Aqidat Al-Wasitiyah*, translated and commented by Dr. Muhammad Khalil Harras. Riyadh: Dar-Us – Salam Publications, 1996, 32.

⁴³ See Abdurahman M. Abdullahi and Ibrahim Farah. *Reconciling the State and Society in Somalia: Reordering Islamic Work and the Clan System*. <http://www.scribd.com/doc/15327358/Reconciling-the-State-and-Society-in-Somalia>. Accessed on June 15, 2010.

Islam as practiced in Somalia for centuries. This stream of thought is followed by Al-Itihad and its more extreme versions such as Al-Shabab and Hizb Al-Islam, which engaged in the destruction and desecration of the tombs of prominent Sufi scholars.⁴⁴

(2) The Muslim Brotherhood versus Traditional Islam

The MB was founded in 1928 by Hassan Al-Banna in Egypt; this ideology reached Somalia in the 1950s through Egyptian teachers and then via Somali students in Arab universities. It has inspired many Islamist organizations in Somalia, with the Islah Movement representing its International network. The MB stands in the middle of the two orientations: traditional Islam and Salafism. Hassan Al-Banna wrote in the treatise of “Al-Aqaid” (Creed) the following moderate position:

We believe that the position of the Salaf, which was to refrain from enquiring into the meanings of Allah’s attributes and leave the explanation of their meanings to Allah, is safer and should be followed in order to avoid problems resulting from metaphorical interpretation on the one hand, and the nullification of Allah’s attributes on the other. ... On the other hand, we believe that the metaphorical interpretations of the Khalaf [ash’ rites] do not sanction any judgment on them as having gone outside Islam or to have strayed from the right path, nor do they justify that long dispute between them and others past and present, because Islam is vast and comprehensive enough to accommodate all of them.

Moreover, the MB adopted the slogan, “We should unite upon that which we agree, and excuse each other in that which we disagree.” The tolerance of the MB emanates from its worldwide program based on the gradual reform of Muslim societies. These Muslim societies adhere to different schools of jurisprudence, theologies, and various forms of Sufism. Hassan al-Banna, who belonged to one of the Sufi orders, wrote that “differences on the branch matters of Islamic Jurisprudence should not be allowed to cause division, contention, or hatred within the ranks of the Muslims.” In that context, followers of the MB methodology avoid divisive Islamic discourses on doctrinal matters and legal aspects within its society. Being open to the diversity of Islamic theology and practices, they are tolerant to the different theological views on Islam and deplore rigid preoccupation with nuances of the religious doctrine. They believe that Sufism and other traditional practices should be accommodated and that the focus in Islamic activism should be directed toward social and political issues, rather than theological hair-splitting. This means that the MB does not contravene the Ash’ari theology, Shafi’i jurisprudence, and Sufism, which constitute the basic components of the traditional Islam in Somalia. However, the MB works to purge un-Islamic practices in the society through an educational process in a tolerant atmosphere, which does not ruin community cohesion and avoids religious disputes. Its main program is to create an environment of cooperation between various Islamic groups and organizations for the benefit of the bigger goal, the Islamization of the society and the post-colonial secular state. This stream of thought is adhered by Islah Movement, the official offshoot of the international Muslim Brotherhood network in Somalia. Islah is known for its developmental programs, peaceful approach to politics and rejection of all forms of violence.

⁴⁴ See <http://www.raxanreeb.com/?p=42206>. Accessed on June 18, 2010.

3. Conclusion

Islamic conflict is a product of militancy and influence of Salafia ideology brought from the Arabian Peninsula which confronted traditional Sufi Islam with violence. Salafism in Somalia undertook the task of purging innovations prevalent in some Sufi practices through violent means. Early Islamic conflicts between Sufi orders were also rooted to the influence of Salafism to the Salihyah Order which attempted to introduce some Islamic reforms. Bardheere Jama, Sayid Mohamed Abdulle and Sheikh Ali Majertain had common features of attempting to establish Islamic emirates at gun point. As a result, they provoked violent conflicts in the name of Islam between Islamic orders and establishments. Likewise, modern Salafism embodied by Itihad, Shabab and Hizbul-Islam use not only violent means against Sufi Orders and armed factions, but are poised to dominate Somalia through violent means instigating the reaction of the Sufi Orders. As a result, Ahl al-Sunna wa al-Jama are also being radicalized. Concluding, Salafia persuasions in Somalia with its violent means are the major cause of the Islamic conflict in Somalia. Eliminating this conflict requires establishing independent national council of Islamic affairs, which promotes and oversees unity of the Islamic education and practices in public spaces.

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Somalia: Conflicts, Interventions and Reconciliation

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AUGUST 30TH, 2009

1. BACKGROUND

a. Demographics, society and institutions

Somalia lays in northeast Africa, in the region known as the Horn of Africa neighbouring Djibouti to the northwest, Ethiopia to the west, and Kenya to the southwest. It is separated from the Arabian Peninsula by the Gulf of Aden to the north and is bordered on its eastern and southern regions by the Indian Ocean.

The population of Somalia is said to be about 8 million¹. This figures cannot be ascertained since no census has been held in Somalia since 1975, when the population was estimated at 3.3 million². *Despite the existence of minority groups, Somali society is relatively homogenous linguistically (Somali) and religiously (Islam). Lineage underpins Somali society, with divisions defined along clan and subclan lines. Traditionally, the main clan families of Darod, Dir, Issaq, Hawiye and Rahanweyn, along with minority clans, constituted Somali Society. The population consists largely of pastoral or nomadic groups and agricultural communities, with a significant number engaged in trade, businesses, and fisheries (coastal areas). The rate of urbanization is increasing rapidly, with groups migrating to the more developed areas in search of employment³.*

Arab and Persian trading posts were established along the coast from the 7th to the 10th century. Nomadic tribes occupied the interior, occasionally pushing into Ethiopian territory. In the 16th century, Turkish rule extended to the northern coast, and the sultans of Zanzibar gained control in the south.

The British made the Somali coast its source of food after occupation of Aden in 1839. The French established a coal-mining station in 1862 at the site of Djibouti, and the Italians planted a settlement in Eritrea. Egypt, which for a time claimed Turkish rights in the area, was succeeded by the Britain. By 1920, a British and an Italian protectorate occupied what is now Somalia. After 1941, the British ruled the entire area with Italy returning in 1950 to serve as United Nations trustee for its former territory. By 1960, Britain and Italy granted independence to their respective sectors, enabling the two to join as the Republic of Somalia on July 1, 1960. Somalia broke diplomatic relations with Britain in 1963 when the British granted the Somali-populated Northern Frontier District of Kenya to the Republic of Kenya⁴.

Somalia occupies a strategically important geopolitical position at the Horn of Africa. The political culture is influenced by competition among a number of clans and clan-based factions.

2. THE SOMALI CRISIS IN CONTEXT

On October 15th 1969 the democratically elected government of President Abdi Rashid Ali Shermarke was overthrown by the Military led by Maj. Gen. Mohamed Siad Barre. With the aim of reclaiming the Somali – populated territory in Ethiopia, Siad Barre’s military government built up armed groups and invaded Ethiopia in 1977. With Cuban military assistance, Ethiopia repelled the invasion and on its part subsequently backed new armed Somali opposition groups fighting the Siad Barre government. The opposition groups finally toppled Siad Barre’s government and sparked off what was to become a Civil War lasting almost 20 years which precipitated security concerns regionally and internationally. *The United Somali Congress (USC) captured Mogadishu and overthrew the government in 1991, while the Somali National Movement (SNM) took Hargeisa and later unilaterally declared an independent Somaliland in the northwest within the borders of the former British Somaliland Protectorate. The Somali Republic collapsed later in 1991 as civil war spread in the south. The UN intervention (UNOSOM,*

¹ Somalia-HISTORY-BACKGROUND. <http://education.stateuniversity.com/pages/1376/Somalia>

² The World Bank, *Conflict in Somalia: Drivers and Dynamics*, January 2005

³ *Ibid* p 7

⁴ Somalia: History, Geography, Culture and Government – Infoplease.com, www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0107979.html

1993-5, backed by US forces) became an armed conflict with numerous casualties and civilian deaths. Tens of thousands of civilians have been killed in the post-1991 clan or sub-clan wars and faction-fighting up to the present time⁵.

Eighteen years later, Somalia still remains without an effective central government and has seen periodic conflict between rival factions, which has led to massive displacements of people and severe disruptions to the economy. Cycles of drought and flooding across Somalia have created conflict, with the conflict creating a catastrophic impact on the ordinary citizens of Somalia⁶.

*'Nearly half of Somalia's population, 3.2 million people, is now in need of humanitarian assistance. This number has increased by 77% since the start of 2008. 1.3 million people have been forced to flee their homes due to violence, drought, flooding and record high food prices and across the majority of the country, people are suffering from malnutrition above the UN's emergency threshold rates'*⁷.

What happened in Somalia in 1991 and the protracted conflict and the resultant environment characterized by lawlessness and the absence of any legitimately acquired and held central authority can only be described as State collapse. When it happened the international community first saw it as a crisis that could be mitigated through collaborative interventions to address the humanitarian disaster that had revealed itself. Hardly was it seen as a danger to regional peace and security. Because of its nature however the resultant power vacuum invariably engendered violence and instability pushing to the fore the International Community's responsibility to intervene. In his paper 'The Somali Peace Talks and Human Rights' presented during the 9th Somali Studies International Conference at the Aalborg University, Denmark in September 2004, Martin Hill profiles the national character and the responsibility of the International Community to respond in crises caused by state failure in the following terms:

'The phenomenon of state collapse, however, creates an international crisis as well as a national crisis, because of the dangerous power vacuum which it creates and the violence and instability it engenders. There is thus a recognized international responsibility to respond to such a crisis through the UN and regional inter-governmental bodies. In real terms, however, the crisis is national, as it affects the collapsed state's citizens the most. It strikes at the heart of the three functions of a state as the authoritative political institution controlling a recognized territory, as

- *Sovereign authority, in the sense of being the accepted source of identity and the arena of politics;*
- *Tangible organization of decision-making and symbol of identity;*
- *Guarantor of security for the population in its territory.*

*State collapse means that these intertwined basic functions are no longer performed. There is a breakdown of governance, law and order. It does not necessarily mean full-scale societal Collapse as well, but power falls into the hands of those with the physical means to fight for it and impose their particular demands - the warlords, their militias, their financial backers and freelance profiteers and criminals*⁸

This paper examines the dominant factors in the Somali conflict and the efforts towards reconciliation

⁵ Hill M, THE SOMALIA PEACE TALKS AND HUMAN RIGHTS, a Paper presented during the 9th Somali Studies International Conference , Aalborg University, Denmark, 3-5 September 2004 p.3

⁶ Oxfam International Humanitarian update on Somalia, http://somalii-civilsociety.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=127&Itemid=1

⁷ Ibid

⁸ Hill M, THE SOMALIA PEACE TALKS AND HUMAN RIGHTS, a Paper presented during the 9th Somali Studies International Conference , Aalborg University, Denmark, 3-5 September 2004 p6

and peace building. Using the Arta process as a case study, the paper will contrast the outcome of Arta with Mbagathi and Djibouti II conferences. Basing its analysis on the contemporary theory of reconciliation, the paper will also contrast the Somali experiences to those of Mozambique and South Africa on the African continent and seek to establish why Somaliland and Puntland – the two autonomous regions of North-west and North-east Somalia – have recorded long periods of peace and stability while the South-Central Zone has remained in turmoil.

3. THE MANIFESTATION OF THE CONFLICT

Born from the unification at independence in 1960 of two colonial territories, formerly under British and Italian rule, Somalia experienced nine years of multi-party democracy, twenty one years of oppressive and autocratic military rule which gave way in 1991 to years of civil war that has led to the destruction of political and economic life, widespread displacement and poverty. This period has seen sporadic fighting between the many clan-based militia factions, resulting in fragmentation of the nation, proliferation of political factions and the emergence of localised political authorities⁹. The serious famine in Southern Somalia in 1991 was partly responsible for the humanitarian relief intervention with which the International Community responded to the Somali crisis. However, when UNOSOM peace-keeping forces were drawn into the political melee beyond the limits of their mandate, the UN presence was widely discredited, and it withdrew ignominiously in 1995¹⁰.

The United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM I) was set up to facilitate humanitarian aid to people trapped by civil war and famine. The mission developed into a broad attempt to help stop the conflict and reconstitute the basic institutions of a viable State.

From November 1991, there was heavy fighting in the Somali capital of Mogadishu between armed elements allied to General Mohamed Farah Aidid, or to Mr. Ali Mohamed Mahdi, the appointed “interim President”, and other factions. In addition to Mogadishu, there was conflict in Kismayo, and in the north-west, local leaders were pushing to create an independent “Somaliland”. The country as a whole was without any form of central government. Banditry was rife.

The fighting that followed, with clans and sub-clans constituted in loose alliances without central control, took place at a time of serious drought. That combination proved disastrous for the population at large. By 1992, almost 4.5 million people, more than half the population, were threatened with starvation, severe malnutrition and related diseases. The magnitude of suffering was immense. Overall, an estimated 300,000 people, including many children, died. Some 2 million people, violently displaced from their home areas, fled either to neighboring countries or elsewhere within Somalia. All institutions of governance and at least 60 per cent of the country’s basic infrastructure disintegrated¹¹.

4. INTERVENTIONS AND RECONCILIATION

1. INTERVENTIONS

The consequences of the collapse of the Somali state were local, regional and global. *“Violent conflict causes massive humanitarian suffering, undermines development and human rights and stifles economic growth. In situations of conflict, political democracies are unable to mature and conflict creates conditions where terrorism and organized crime thrive”*¹². Intervention then refers to deliberate actions undertaken to alleviate the human suffering and establish mechanisms for the normalizations

⁹ Novib Somalia, *Donor Assistance towards Somalia and Somaliland: Development Policy and Coherence*, 2003

¹⁰ *Ibid*

¹¹ Somalia - UNOSOM I, document Prepared by the Department of Public Information, United Nation, Mogadishu March 1993

¹² Hill M, *THE SOMALIA PEACE TALKS AND HUMAN RIGHTS*, a Paper presented during the 9th Somali Studies International Conference, Aalborg University, Denmark, 3-5 September 2004 p3

of life. Such deliberate actions during the many years of conflict in Somalia were observed from local, regional and International Actors with varying degrees of success.

Since 1990 many schools have closed and a whole generation of young people has missed out on education. Literacy rates are amongst the lowest in the world (adult literacy rate: 36% of men over 15 and 14% of women³). The breakdown of the public health system, the collapse of water and sanitation systems (less than 5% of the population has secure access to clean water throughout the year) has dropped the average lifespan down to 44.6 years for men and 47.8 years for women. Somalia is one of the poorest countries of the world and is classified as a Least Developed Country¹³.

2. RECONCILIATION

As a word, reconciliation implies the restoration of relationships between two people or countries after differing. As a concept, reconciliation is an element of peace building – in the terms popularized by former Secretary General of the UN Boutros Boutros-Ghali in his 1992 address Agenda for Peace. Peace-building in this perspective and as could practically be used in Somalia is the amalgam of actions and strategies for economic and social development undertaken with the view to preventing a relapse to the conflict situation and focused on more sustainable and peaceful relationships. In this regard, peace building is an intervention that seeks to maintain a peaceful outcome after a negotiated cessation of hostilities between Parties in armed conflict.

Presenting his Report titled 'An Agenda for Peace Preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping' the Summit Meeting of the United Nations Security Council in January 1992 Dr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali the then Secretary General of the United Nations said the following of Peace-building:

'In surveying the range of efforts for peace, the concept of peace-building as the construction of a new environment should be viewed as the counterpart of preventive diplomacy, which seeks to avoid the breakdown of peaceful conditions. When conflict breaks out, mutually reinforcing efforts at peacemaking and peace-keeping come into play. Once these have achieved their objectives, only sustained cooperative work to deal with underlying economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems can place an achieved peace on a durable foundation. Preventive diplomacy is to avoid a crisis; post-conflict peace-building is to prevent a recurrence'¹⁴.

The efforts and attempts to have Somali political and other leaders agree on the future of Somalia following the overthrow of Siad Barre and to resolve their differences without the use of force can correctly be described a reconciliation process, which, as has been pointed out earlier is a component of Peace-building. In his paper entitled 'Somali Reconciliation Conferences: The unbeaten Track, Professor M'H Smattar sheds some light on the many conferences convened to reconcile Somali Leaders:

Since 1991 there has been 15 major national and an uncountable number of regional and clan reconciliation conferences, most of which took place outside of Somalia. Ethiopia hosted four, three in Addis Ababa in 1992-93 and one in Sodere - a hot spring resort about 100 kilometers southeast of Addis Ababa - in January, 1997. Djibouti hosted three, two in June-July, 1991, and in May 2000 in Arta, a summer resort near Djibouti¹⁵. Professor Samattar highlights the fact that the majority of the Conferences took place outside Somalia. This means that a number –certainly – less than what took place outside – did take place in side

¹³ These observations were made in 2003

¹⁴ Boutros-Ghali B, *An Agenda for Peace Preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping, Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to the statement adopted by the Summit Meeting of the Security Council on 31 January 1992, A/47/277 - S/24111, 17 June 1992 Paragraph 57*

¹⁵ Mukhtar M.H. *Professor, Somali Reconciliation Conferences: The unbeaten track*

Somalia. We shall endeavor to build upon the remarks of the good Professor and outline in this section the Conferences under the two categories of 'Internal' and 'External'

It must be clear from the profile of a failed state discussed in the preceding parts of this paper that the conferences were convened to respond to the crisis as perceived and framed by internal as well as external Actors respectively. As will become clearer as each Conference is discussed, the goals leading to the convention of each conference were always exposed to internal as well as external intrigues. In this paper all the interventions and reconciliation efforts initiated by Somali Actors or in which the Somali played a leading role – whether held inside or outside Somalia fall within the category of the Internal Interventions.

a. INTERNAL

1993 - Conference on National Reconciliation

It would appear that while the Somali state had imploded and disintegrated at a national scale the vacuum that resulted in governance was only discernible as such from a national standpoint. At the local levels however attempts were being made at re-establishing order and some sort of stability. Without an organ with national reach such as the state to do this, local structures assumed this role. Oxfam Novib identified one of the organs and the role they played thus:

Throughout the 1990s it was clan elders who proved to be key players in re-establishing Somali public administration, and initiating moves towards restored peace, political stability and social contracts between clans. Traditional clan elders are the main supporters of the regional state-like entities, namely the Republic of Somaliland and the Federal State of Puntland, and their political structures remain the most important functional structures to date. These same clan elders also supported regional economic revival in order to revitalize trade between regions in Somalia¹⁶.

Even though the declaration of independence from the whole by Somaliland in the early stages of the Civil War had been followed by the immediate stabilization of what was hitherto the North Western Zone of Somalia and establishment of a viable government, the politicians in Mogadishu, it would seem, were still focuses on reviving the political entity that the Somali state had been prior to the onset of the Civil War. Barely 2 years on, had plans commenced in earnest to for such an eventuality.

From 4 to 15 January 1993 fourteen Somali political movements attended a preparatory meeting for a conference of national reconciliation and unity and concluded three agreements: the *General Agreement* of 8 January 1993; the *Agreement on Implementing the Cease-fire and on Modalities of Disarmament*, and; the *Agreement on the Establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee* for the conference on national reconciliation¹⁷.

The search for a political solution to the Somali crisis along the lines envisioned in January 1993 seems to have lost its urgency or at least failed to attract enough commentary. Not much is on record about that year and 1996.

1997 - National Salvation Council

This multi-faction structure comprising 41 members with a collective chairmanship of five, which were: Ali Mahdi Muhammad (USC-SSA), Osman Hassan Ali Ato (USC-SNA, dissident faction), Abdulkadir Muhammad Aden Zoppo (SDM, +2002), Abdullahi Yussuf Ahmad (SSDF) and Aden Abdullahi Nur

¹⁶ Novib Somalia, *Donor Assistance towards Somalia and Somaliland: Development Policy and Coherence, 2003*

¹⁷ Somalia - UNOSOM I, document Prepared by the Department of Public Information, United Nation, Mogadishu March 1993

Gabiyow (SPM) was set up on 3rd January 1997. The Council whose tenure remains obscure, did not come anywhere near to the 'National Reconciliation' it was intended to foster with a significant segment of political and other Somali Actors failing to attend a planned meetings in Sanaa, Yemen.

1997 - Conference in Cairo

The Cairo Conference co-chaired by Hussein Muhammad Aideed and Ali Mahdi Mohamed and attended by 26 other political actors resolved among other things to convene a National Reconciliation Conference in Baidoa with the purpose of electing a Presidential Council, a Prime Minister and to adopt a Transitional Charter¹⁸. Due to deteriorated security and an outbreak of cholera, the Baidoa conference did not take place.

2000 - Somalia National Peace Conference

Somalia National Peace Conference (SNPC) which is usually called the Djibouti conference was held in Arta, Djibouti from April 20 to May 5th 2000. The conference had been greatly anticipated and attracted many Somali people and was generally seen as fair in the eyes of the majority of the Somalis. It represented all major warring factions and appeared to be the mechanism to end the long Somali Civil War that had claimed the lives of nearly one third of a million. After nearly 10 years of civil war, Somali representatives elected a new head of state, Abdiqasim Salad Hasan. Elected by a 245-strong clan-based Transitional National Assembly (TNA), the new Somali president was sworn in 27 August in a ceremony lead by the Djibouti president, and watched by international representatives, including heads of state from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Yemen, and Sudan. Three days later, Abdiqasim Salad made a triumphant visit to Mogadishu, the divided capital, ruined by years of fighting and the absence of government" to lead the "Transitional National Government (TNG)¹⁹.

2001 - National Commission for Reconciliation and Property Settlement

Following on the success of the Arta process, an effort in May 6, 2001 to create a 25-member working body, dubbed the National Commission for Reconciliation and Property Settlement (NCRPS), was rudely halted by the Somalia Reconciliation and Restoration Council (SRRC) and Puntland leadership who strongly objected when Abdirizak Haji Hussein, former Prime Minister, was named as its head.. Hussein later resigned on July 25, 2001 and nothing was ever heard of the SRRC again..

2002 - Somali Reconciliation Conference

The "Somalia National Reconciliation Conference" (October 2002 – October 2004) was the 14th attempt by political actors in Somalia to re-engineer a state since 1991. It was sponsored by IGAD, funded by the EU and Arab States, hosted by the neighboring Kenya and administered by the Nairobi-based European Commission- Somalia Unit. Relevant actors - political factions, international partners, and civil society were invited to this meeting which sought - in a three-phase initiative- to attain a cease-fire, agree on the key issues of reconstruction in Somalia, and create a new interim inclusive government to replace the Transitional National Government- whose three-year term of office ended in August 2003.

The government was intended to be for the whole of the former Somalia, as backed by specific statements on the "unity and integrity" of the state, maps posted on UN websites, and the use of the former Somali flag. The Conference Facilitation Committee consisted

¹⁸ Cairo Declaration on Somalia, 12 November to this 22nd day of December 1997, www.incore.ulst.ac.uk/cds/agreements/pdf/som1

¹⁹ Irin

of two frontline states, Ethiopia and Djibouti, and the “International Partners Forum” of relevant governments and donors, with a Kenyan chairperson (former Foreign Minister Elijah Mwangale was appointed by the then Kenyan President Daniel Arap Moi in 2002 and was replaced by President Kibaki’s appointee - Ambassador Bethwell Kiplagat in 2003). Both the Ethiopian diplomatic representative and the Djibouti representative were ethnic Somali, (as is the Djibouti President) – though from different clans to those inside Somalia. Meetings were also followed and/or attended by the UN agencies and international NGOs. There is also a Somalia Aid Coordination Body (SACB), a grouping of donors and international and local NGOs (who also have an NGO Consortium). All are based in Nairobi on account of the security dangers for international staff in Somalia, although most have small locally-staffed offices in Somalia²⁰

Division of Somalia (1998-2006²¹)

Following the civil war and the ensuing anarchy, some factions managed to exert a degree of authority over certain regions of Somalia where they maintained broad, clan-based support. This allowed these factions to establish working administrations and eventually coherent states, and restored order to their regions. This occurred first in Somaliland, then in Puntland, Southwestern Somalia, Jubaland, Banadir and finally Galmudug.

6. Transitional Governments

There are two distinct phases of the transitional government: the Transitional *National* Government (TNG) and the Transitional *Federal* Government:

6. 1. Transitional National Government

A conference in the Djibuti resort town of Arta succeeded in ending the violence between USC factions, and made strides towards unity, but failed to set up a comprehensive government. Many factions refused to attend as they could not set the terms of reconciliation, and their backer, Ethiopia, was against the TNG. These pro-Ethiopia factions formed their own pan-tribal national government movement, the Somalia Reconciliation and Restoration Council (SRRC).

6. 2. Transitional Federal Government

The Transitional Federal Government (TFG) was declared in Kenya, in October 2004 giving the impression of a breakthrough in Somalia’s protracted crisis of statelessness and civil strife. The IGAD member states set 15 December (as the date for the return of the TFG to Somalia) expired with it still in Nairobi, citing insecurity in its homeland. Divisions between regional powers and the wider international community have impeded the emergence of a common orientation toward the interim Somali leadership. When the Transitional Federal Parliament elected Colonel Abdillahi Yusuf Ahmed as interim president, some saw the choice as divisive and controversial representing ‘not a step toward peace but continuation of the war by other means’.

The departure of the TFG from their host country, Kenya, nine months after its formation, to their new base in Jowhar, Somalia, was marked by a ceremony at State House Nairobi on 13th June 2005. *‘President Yusuf who delivered a speech at the function stated that all members of parliament were on 12th of June 2005 officially disbanded and ordered the cabinet to each return to the region of*

²⁰ Hill M, *THE SOMALIA PEACE TALKS AND HUMAN RIGHTS*, a Paper presented during the 9th Somali Studies International Conference, Aalborg University, Denmark, 3-5 September 2004 p7

²¹ Wiki: *Consolidation of states within Somalia (1998-2006)*

*their origin and fulfill the agreed terms. After the ceremony President Yusuf left for Qatar and the Prime Minister of TFG, Ali Mohamed Geedi, left for Jowhar*²².

The Transitional Federal Parliament convened on Somali soil for the first time in February 2006, 'when it met in a converted grain warehouse in the western city of Baidoa because security concerns kept the legislature from entering Mogadishu. Even when it did convene, the TFG lacked cohesion, which undermined its power.'²³

Since taking office in 2004, President Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed set foot in the capital city of Mogadishu for the first time on January 8, 2008, symbolizing a victory by the TFG over the Islamic Courts Union, which had grown so powerful over the preceding year even briefly controlling much of the country's territory. Internal divisions within their ranks caused the TFG failure to live up to the hopes of the international observers to bring stability to the war-torn nation after sixteen years of "failed state" status²⁴.

Rise and fall of the ICU, Ethiopian Intervention, and the TFG (2006–2009)

The Union of Islamic Courts rose to prominence and consolidated their power in Somalia with Mogadishu as their base after embarrassing a motley of War-lords believed to have been beneficiaries of Financial and perhaps military support from George Bush's United States Administration. After driving the war-lords out of town and annexing more territories in the South-Central Zone, the Union of Islamic Courts then set their sights on the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) then led by Abdillahi Yusuf Ahmed with its seat in Baidoa. The TFG was smarting from internal divisions and lack of popular support from within the country. By June 2006, The Union was all-but the sole Authority over the South-Central Zone, and with the TFG losing confidence in its ability to defend its fort, Abdullahi Yusuf appealed to Ethiopia for military support. The Ethiopians obliged, invaded Somalia in the middle of December and by January of the following year the Ethiopian army had ousted the Union prompting Sheikh Sharif and his colleagues in the leadership to flee into exile while most of its fighters retreated into the population only to re-emerge later as al-Shabbab which has sustained an insurgency that, together with the peace agreement signed in Djibouti between the TFG and the rebranded Union in June 2008, led to the Ethiopian pull-out from Somalia in January of 2009²⁵.

The Government of National Unity

Sheikh Sharif was elected on January 30th in Djibouti by the 550 member Parliament which had been expanded to create 200 seats for the former TFG, 275 for the Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia (ARS) –the rebranded Union of Islamic Courts and 75 seats shared between the civil society, the business community, women and the Diaspora. Abdullahi Yusuf had prior to this election lost his political battle with the then Prime Minister, earned a rebuke from regional leaders and the international community and taken the unprecedented step to resign. For Sharif's supporters, it was indeed poetic justice when, as his very first official function as Somali head of State, he flew to Addis Ababa to take his seat during the African Union (AU) Summit that was taking place there. Indeed the icing on the cake was to come when both Abdullahi Yusuf and Meles Zenawi the Ethiopian Prime Minister lauded him on his elections.

Having been elected on the platform of reconciliation and viewed by the West as moderate, a significant portion of the Somali society has expressed optimism in Sheikh Sharif's government especially since he had pacified most of South-central during his first stint at the country's leadership.

²² *Saxaafada Malahan Saaxiib Joogtaa Waagacasub on line, Somalia: the Flip flop policy of Sharif Hassan Sheikh , 30th June 2009Aden*

²³ *Hanson S , Kaplan E, Somalia's Transitional Government, www.cfr.org/publication/12475/ -*

²⁴ *Ibid*

²⁵ *Wandati, AM, Basic steps towards securing Peace in Somalia, Nairobi, 27th February 2009P3*

The United Nations too lauded Sheikh Sharif for his victory and like many others, entertains the hope that under him, peace can finally come to Somalia, heralding stability and the commencement of the hard task of reconstruction of the society and polity of this country that has been ravaged by violent conflict for eighteen years now. The economic crunch that has engulfed most of Europe and the United States coupled with a re-alignment of America's Foreign Policy under Obama, Sharif is likely to worry less about interference from the International Community as he should about the local groupings within the country bent on undermining his attempts at consolidating power.

As al-Shabbab and other groupings opposed to his government continue to up their *jihadi rhetoric*, Somalia's neighbors such as Kenya are likely to introduce even stricter controls on their borders with Somalia. Until Sharif is able to effectively counter their rhetoric with sound Islamic arguments that can find resonance and indeed amplification in the majority of the Muslim communities within and without Somalia, al-Shabbab is likely to retain the identity of the Islamic movement that drove the 'infidel' army of Ethiopia from Somalia and the better placed to protect it from outsiders –especially the United states. In the event of a military confrontation, Sheikh Sharif cannot afford to lose but in the same vein a victory that is presided over by forces not internal to Somalia could have the effect of the TFG/Ethiopian forces victory over the Union of Islamic Courts. On a wider plane, the longer al-Shabbab and its partners remain active in Somalia the faster the goodwill currently enjoyed by the Sharif Government is likely to diminish. It would appear that Sheikh Sharif is caught up in a catch twenty-two situation that guarantees him to lose in any violent confrontation he finds himself in against the al-Shabbab. The only way out for him it would appear is a mediated settlement that has to commence with an immediate cease-fire followed by a truce that allows him to embark on finding solutions to some of the immediate crises in the country.

A contingent of African peace keepers (AMISOM) mainly from Uganda and Burundi had been providing some semblance of security to the government but have lately come under fire from the insurgents who have vowed to challenge Sheikh Sharif's presidency on account that it is not based on Islam and is propped up by foreign forces.

b. EXTERNAL

1992-1995: UN Missions to Somalia

The United Nations intervened in Somalia in 1992 following "*the desperate and complex situation in Somalia*" (which required) *energetic and sustained efforts on the part of the international community to break the circle of violence and hunger*".²⁶ The United States intervened under operation restore hope ostensibly "*to take the lead in creating the secure environment which is an inescapable condition for the United Nations to provide humanitarian relief and promote national reconciliation and economic reconstruction, objectives which have from the outset been included in the various Security Council resolutions on Somalia.*"²⁷

THE 14TH NATIONAL RECONCILIATION CONFERENCE²⁸

The Somali National Reconciliation Conference was not only the 14th attempt by Political actors in Somalia to re-establish a state but the most inclusive so far (with all warlords attending on under threat of sanctions – threatened but never imposed) as well. It seemed to be the most politically

²⁶ UN Secretary General's address to the Security Council cited in Somalia - UNOSOM I, document Prepared by the Department of Public Information, United Nation, Mogadishu March 1993

²⁷ US President George H. W. Bush cited in UNOSOM I, document Prepared by the Department of Public Information, United Nation, Mogadishu March 1993

²⁸ This section based almost exclusively on Martin Hill's the Somalia Peace and Human Rights paper presented during the 9th Somali Studies International Conference, Aalborg University, Denmark, 3-5 September 2004

neutral and realistic at the outset. It was built on general recognition of the failure of the TNG to establish itself and deliver its mandate, and the need for a new solution after the failure of the Arta agreement.

It succeeded in obtaining the presence and participation of all the warlords, the TNG (whose President stayed away until nearly the end), and large numbers of “civil society” from South-Central Zones and Puntland with Somaliland boycotting (for obvious reasons)²⁹. There was also a delegate problem over the Puntland internal conflict. The conference accepted Abdullahi Yusuf as the Puntland President (backed and reportedly armed by Ethiopia) but his rival Jama Ali Jama (supported by the TNG, and from a different Majerten subclan) managed to remain at the conference, despite attempts to exclude and refusal to recognize him. The 4.5 clan representation applied in Arta was retained and applied in the allocation of Delegate slots and subsequent Parliamentary seats. This consisted of the three pastoralist clans (Darod, Dir and Hawiye), the agricultural/riverine Digil-Mirifle (or Raheenwein), and a half-share for the discriminated minorities

Except the ‘leaders’ (warlords) all other delegates (self-appointed and many of whom were allegedly connected to factions and warlords through their clans) claimed the “Civil society” label. It thus included “traditional leaders” (from clans and minorities), Muslim religious leaders, prominent civilians from the time of the former government, political figures from the diaspora or within the country who turned up at the conference, with or without any financial or political backing or representation, and some members of NGOs in Mogadishu, such as the Coalition of Grassroots Women Organization (COGWO) and the Dr Ismail Jumale Human Rights Organization (DIJHRO), who were not given any status or representation.

Although the TNG never really exercised any significant control over Somalia (except around a few blocks in Mogadishu), the government that was established at the end of the Arta Peace Process, in August 2000 signified perhaps the most serious attempt in that direction since the ouster of Siad Barre.

The Transitional Federal Parliament (TFP) constituted in 2004 in Nairobi following the completion of the 14th National Peace and Reconciliation Conference concluded with the election of a president³⁰. Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed however resigned on 29 December 2008 after disagreements with parliament and his prime minister, as well as pressure from the international community. Yusuf’s resignation came four years into his 5 – year term and only days after the man he appointed as Prime Minister, Mohamed Mahamud Guled, resigned - in defiance of Parliament. In his resignation speech, he told Parliament that he had failed to bring peace and stability to the war-torn country and blamed both Somalis and the international community for his failure³¹.

2007 - TO DATE AFRICAN UNION MISSION IN SOMALIA (AMISOM)

The African Union Mission to Somalia AMISOM was launched in January 2007, as the continental body’s fourth peacekeeping operation. Its deployment to Mogadishu was seen as a move to prop up the Ethiopian government’s preferred faction in Somalia’s ongoing civil war. Since its deployment AMISOM’s life has not been a happy one. Its ability to operate has been restricted by severe challenges similar to those faced by the three UN-authorized operations during the early 1990s.

In January 2009 the withdrawal of Ethiopian forces, the election of Somalia’s new transitional

29 Somaliland refused to send or allow Dir clan elders to participate. There were, however, self-selected delegates from Somaliland who opposed Somaliland’s independence and advocated union with the rest of the former Somalia. Many were from a clan-based opposition grouping had little status at the outset of the conference but eventually became members of the new Transitional National Assembly for Somalia through the clan-based allocation of seats

30 Somalia: History, Geography, Culture and Government – Infoplease.com, www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0107979.html

31 IRIN, Somalia: Fresh turmoil, uncertainty as president resigns, 29 Dec 2008, NAIROBI cited in Feral Jundi.com

government led by Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, and the arrival of Barrack Obama's administration in the United States renewed the debate over how AMISOM should relate to the new Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and how the mission might be brought to an end³².

Sheikh Sharif's election is recognized by most Somalis, the Africa Union and the United Nations. Both Abdillahi Yusuf and Meles Zenawi – his erstwhile enemies - have recognized him. He has formed a broad-based government in which – most sectors of the Somali Society are represented. He has declared his readiness to negotiate with all the groups opposed to his rule. Shabelle Media network reported the presence in Mogadishu since Friday 20th February 2009 of a delegation of Scholars from the Islamic world on a mission to mediate between the Sharif – led government and al-Shabbab, Hizb Islam and all the other factions opposed to Sharif's leadership. Speaking on behalf of the six member delegation, Abdirahman Nuemi confirmed that Sheikh Yusuf Al-Qardawi the current chairman of Muslim clerics in the world had dispatched them to seek a solution to the standoff. The visit to Mogadishu by the delegation follows the offer made by Al-Qardawi early this month to lead a process of mediation and reconciliation among Somalis. According to the same media reports, Sheikh Qardawi had called upon the Government of Qatar to immediately initiate peace talks between the Somali factions. It will be recalled that Somali clerics had themselves embarked on a similar mission but failed to register any success.

During July 2009, IGAD called for a review of AMISOM's rules of engagement in order for them to engage in active defence. AMISOM troops had been reported to have engaged in fighting. A Ugandan Daily (New Vision) quoted a spokesperson for the Ugandan military calling for the AU troops in Somalia to be given a Chapter 7 mandate (to change it from a Chapter 6 and allow them to engage in combat) saying 'we are engaged in peacekeeping where there is no peace'³³.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Fighting between several clan factions in the South-Central Zones as well as the break away republics of Puntland and Somaliland characterizes the conflict in Somalia. It can be most directly viewed as the consequence of civil strife that has dominated the nation since the 1980s. The current conflict, which began soon after the ouster of Siad Barre's regime in 1991, has been marked by intense fighting between rival clans, periods of severe famine, repeated bids for independence by Puntland and Somaliland, an unsuccessful foreign intervention and attempts at mediation – all against the backdrop of a failed Somali state³⁴.

Armed Opposition to any incumbent wielder(s) of authority continues to define the Somali conflicts. The rise to prominence of the Islamic Courts Union and later on the Al-shabab, Ahlul Sunnah Waljamaca and Hizbul - Islam as similarly armed groups, has added religion to clannism and clan cleavages as factors driving the conflict. Much of the conflict in Somalia is waged in the name of the clan and in the attempt to amass and control power for its advantage. Yet mediation of the conflicts cannot start or indeed be expected to bear any fruits except within the structures of Traditional Clan Elders who dispense clan based customary law which includes enforcement of the payment of blood money when necessary³⁵. The question to ask now is: what role do the clan elders play in areas under Shariah – given that this is dispensed by Religious - and not traditional clan elders? As a code, the traditional law could be partaken in most cases in terms reflective of common clan positions hardly requiring any interpretations. The same cannot be said of Islamic law whose application– even within

³² Williams P.D Prof, *AMISOM's Five Challenges*, Africa Policy Forum, Centre for Strategic & International Studies April 2009, forums.csis.org/africa/?p=247

³³ The document quoted is embargoed and has not been revealed here.

³⁴ SOMALIA (SOMALI CLANS) Historical background, acd.iiss.org/armedconflict/.../dsp_ConflictBackground.asp?ConflictID.

³⁵ Ibid

a Shafi'i jurisprudence – may be a subject on interpretation.

The numerous conflicts that have taken place at the local community levels have been settled through traditional cultural dispute-settlement mechanisms with some success. This grassroots community conflict resolution and conflict management or bottoms up approach – even with potential conflicts between the traditional and religious leaderships - has a higher chance of succeeding if no outside forces are involved. If applied to conflict involving higher-level or outside actors and where there is a developed national-level civil society affected by it and able to contribute to resolve it however, this approach has limitations³⁶.

The Somali conflict may have been ignited by local factors; its persistence however can no longer be solely the work of internal actors. Even though it is reported as a civil war, the conflict is not local by any standards. The invasion and in 2007 of Ethiopian troops and occupation of Somali cities, the deployment of the AMISOM and the reported presence in the country of foreign fighters supporting Al-shabab testify to this. It is typical of much of the conflicts in the Horn of Africa where 'conflicts have been fuelled by neighboring countries in the form of providing political support or a presence in the country, or clandestine weapons, training, or safe passage to armed opposition groups³⁷'. On January 9th 2009 a Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) was signed between President Omar el-Bashir's National Islamic Front and Dr. John Garang's Sudanese Peoples' Movement/Army (SPLM/A in which they committed themselves to a permanent cease-fire among other things. This event took place only a few months after the election in Nairobi of Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed as the TFG President. Today, Salva Kiir, (who succeeded Dr. Garang as the SPLAM/SPLA Leader) and President Omar El-Bashir have continued to work together in a structure of government in which Kiir is the President of Southern Sudan and El-Bashir's deputy within the entire Sudan. Since the signing of the PCA, the conflict in Darfur has attracted more international Media attention than the conflict between the North and South which had been referred to as the longest civil war on the Africa Continent. Both Sudan and Somalia are IGAD member states whose conflicts were mediated in Kenya. Whereas no relapse to violence between the South and the North have been reported, Somalia continues to host one of the most active combat operations after Afghanistan, Iraq and Pakistan.

The Rwandese civil war that matured into a genocide has since ended and now only serves as a historical lesson of what not to do to one another with the post-genocide state of Rwanda making deliberate steps and confidently assuming her place within the region, continent and the world. South Africa survived Apartheid and has since witnessed three black Presidents assume power in peaceful transitions. Mozambique has successfully shed off her violent past and has similarly concluded three elections peacefully. Why have these states successfully moved on while Somalia has moved even further away from the potential of a viable state?

It is our considered opinion that all the processes that have been outlined above were attempts at restoring the Somali state in the shape and form it was in before the civil war. This is the process that has generally been referred to as a process of Reconciliation. In this vein, we wish to suggest that where reconciliation has taken place i.e. where the people have come to terms with their circumstances and decided to live their lives within those circumstances such as in Somaliland and Puntland - they have been able to go about their daily affairs in relative peace. The People of Somalia with the help of the International community may have failed to resurrect the Siad Barre state but at least two entities – Somaliland have risen from the ashes to craft entities that can legitimately present themselves as such. They meet the classical Weber definition of the state as the entity with the

³⁶ Hill M, *THE SOMALIA PEACE TALKS AND HUMAN RIGHTS*, a Paper presented during the 9th Somali Studies International Conference, Aalborg University, Denmark, 3-5 September 2004

³⁷ *Ibid* p4

capacity to lay legitimate claim to the monopoly of violence and to the appropriation and distribution of surplus products available in the society. While the search for the grand state goes on with its attendant disastrous outcome in the South-Central zones, Somaliland and Puntland provide the foundations for contrasting the outcomes of local efforts with the failures of efforts designed, funded and controlled from outside.

As polities, Somaliland and Puntland have substantially monopolized violence by regulating the small and big weapons accessible to civilian individuals and groups. Both polities are directed by some ideology of state. Puntland considers herself an autonomous state within a Federal structure of Somalia while Somaliland on the other hand views herself as an entirely independent polity. While Somaliland is yet to receive international recognition, Hargeisa continues to host many international agencies and personalities whose presence in the state is regulated by laws promulgated and administered by Somaliland as a sovereign state. For the purpose of this paper having successfully transitioned from the Barre state and maintained a relatively sustainable peaceful environment since, it can be claimed that a process of reconciliation did take place in Somaliland. Within the Somaliland society – at least-broken relations must have been mended sufficiently to power on an administration. To the extent that there exists a coherent governmental structure, there is a level of respect of institutions that is critical in any process of state building. If -as is hoped by some schools of thought³⁸ within the larger Somali society – Somaliland decides to rejoin the Federation, she could just be the glue that holds it together. The converse of this is to wonder, whether Puntland – tired by the un-ending conflict within the South-Central regions – may not opt to emulate Somaliland and declare her own independence some time in not too long a future.

Why have Somaliland and Puntland succeeded to consolidate themselves into peaceful polities while South – Central has not?

The issues that define political discourse in the North of Somalia (Somaliland and Puntland) resonate locally. In South-central local issues are intertwined with matters of international or even global magnitude. The international consideration in all occurrences within South-Central have the inevitable effect of being multi-layered and therefore requiring the involvement of more players and consuming more time. While political disagreements in Somaliland will be framed as disputes – even between political parties, disagreements in South Central between any players are inevitably played out between different Islamic standpoints, clans and even allies who may include foreign actors.

The violent conflicts in both Somaliland and Puntland in the early phases of the search for lasting peace in each administration were conclusively decided with the losing side conceding and seeking integration into the system. Further, there are clearly defined political structures in these two states while in South-central the dispute remains that of the form and not the function of government. Since the ouster of Siad Barre no one political actor has been declared the ultimate victor. The absence of an outright victor in this cycle of violence could only mean that the opposing sides are evenly matched and that their deadly contest will only continue harming the civilian population. This scenario underpins the urgency for a negotiated peaceful settlement.

In the light of the foregone it is very unlikely that a mega-state encompassing the boundaries of the Barre State will be realized soon. Yet the role of some form of state in fostering reconciliation and promoting peace is clearly demonstrated in the success that Somaliland has had in presiding over a peaceful region for close to two decades now. While formulating the mega state has remained unattainable, it is recommended that the parts of Somalia that are not Somaliland and Puntland be

38 The philosophy guiding the processes of reconciliation and State building in South-Central Somalia and Puntland is 'Federal' and not only harbors but perpetuates the concept of a Federated Somalia in which Somaliland – in spite of her declared independence – is just but a state or region. Although in a minority, a segment of Somalilanders have associated themselves with this philosophy.

considered a complete state along the lines of Puntland and Somaliland for the purpose of securing stability and lasting peace before the resumption of the project to revive the state along the lines left by Siad Barre. A Somaliland that has been stable over the years may then see sense in joining some kind of joint Presidency as a prelude to the consolidation of the new Somali state.

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Public-Private Partnerships: The Way Forward for Reconstructing the Somali Economy.

Yusuf Nur

February 2011

Abstract

If the 20-year long statelessness, civil war, and anarchy in Somalia, has any silver lining to it, it is the business entrepreneurial successes that it has engendered everywhere in Somalia. Ironically, statelessness has created an environment in which new business models could flourish with minimal government interference, and, most importantly, without competition from international firms. Statelessness did away with government institutions that had long hindered and stifled Somali entrepreneurship; and insecurity discouraged international business firms from encroaching into the Somali market. This paper proposes that state and infrastructure building in Somalia should emulate successful and profitable business models and firms that Somalis have created in the country in the last 20 or so years.

Granted, there are a lot of differences between politics and state building and establishing infrastructure on the one hand, and business entrepreneurship on the other. There are, however, a number of ways that the accumulated business experiences of the last 20 years can be tapped into in order to help Somalia rebuild its devastated state institutions and infrastructure. This paper will argue that Somalia has an unprecedented opportunity to create new models of state institutions in partnership with the vibrant private sector. The new business and entrepreneurial models arose out of necessity (the Siad Barre's government which had a monopoly on almost all services disappeared seemingly overnight), the profit motive, and the insecurity that have pervaded the country soon after Siad Barre's regime was overthrown. The necessity and the profit motives still exist. As security improves, the necessary regulatory environment has to be created in order to encourage more domestic entrepreneurial activities and competition, and protection from encroachment by foreign firms.

Not all state services or infrastructure can be adequately or efficiently provided by the private sector. This is the main reason why public goods have suffered the most in the anarchic environment that the seemingly endless civil war has engendered. However, almost all revenue generating state agencies and all development projects can benefit from public-private partnerships.

Introduction

The mandate of the Somali Transitional Federal Government has recently been extended, pending parliamentary ratification. (The TFG's mandate was supposed to expire on August 20th, 2011). In its most recent meeting, the African Union recommended a mandate extension for the Transitional Federal Parliament (TFP). Between now and August 20th, 2012, the TFP will choose its speaker and the next president of the Somali Republic. Perhaps, the TFP will also remove the "transitional" dubbing from its and other Federal Institutions designations, thus giving them more permanency, a crucial prerequisite for them to find a lasting solution to the seemingly intractable Somali problem. Whoever takes over the helm of the country will face daunting challenges, the most important of which is the establishment of security. This will not succeed unless massive economic development projects are undertaken at the same time. The new Somali Government, regardless of who will be at its helm, will need much expert help in order to achieve even the most modest of successes. One has to only consider the ongoing situations in Afghanistan and Iraq to appreciate the daunting task any government will face in Somalia. Despite massive American military presence in Afghanistan and Iraq and despite America's declared strategic commitment to rebuild those two countries, political stability in both countries has been elusive so far.

To succeed, the new government will have to replace the old dispensations and mentalities with new thinking that takes a page from the successes of the private sector. The new government should partner with the private sector in order to bring about sustainable economic development.

At minimum, it is the duty of the new government to accord serious and careful consideration to all economic decisions that it makes, lest they end up stifling the entrepreneurial spirit the Somali people have demonstrated for the last 20 years of statelessness.

Despite the anarchy and extensive destruction that ensued soon after Siad Barre (the Somali military dictator who had ruled the country since 1969) was ousted in a popular revolt in 1991, and despite the lawlessness and insecurity that became part of the landscape in Somalia, businesses have boomed and many services that were hard to obtain during Barre's 21-year dictatorial near-monopoly of the public and private sectors, have become readily available to anyone who can afford them (Mayoux, 2001). The highly risky business environment has not deterred enterprising domestic and foreign firms from investing in Somalia. The civil war transformed the Somalis from people, only 20 years ago utterly dependent for almost everything on an all-encompassing and stiflingly pervasive government, to entrepreneurs imbued with ingenuity, initiative and acute business *savoir-faire*. If resourcefulness, opportunity recognition, innovation, and creativity are counted among the essential characteristics of entrepreneurship (Rangan, et al, eds., 2007), Somali businesses of the civil war era have fully embodied them. In some respects, the absence of a central government has turned out to be a blessing in disguise. It has unfettered the entrepreneurial spirit of the Somali people in a way that nobody could have imagined or foreseen.

Somali successes are not limited to the traditional wholesale, retail, and import-export sectors alone. Private clinics, hospitals, healthcare centers, and pharmacies have sprung up everywhere. Private schools at all levels have been established and staffed – some with outside help, others with local initiative and resources. There are at least five universities/institutes in the capital city alone, all of which opened their doors for students in the last 15 years. These universities offer courses on Arabic and Islamic Shari'ah, business administration and computer science as well as medicine and engineering. Granted, these educational institutions suffer from a dearth of qualified instructors and severe scarcity of other resources, and they cannot accommodate even half of the students who apply for admission every year. Nonetheless, they are a good start, and if the government nurtures them, they will be an essential prerequisite to the future economic development of Somalia.

The business and educational achievements also come at an enormous price. Impressive they may be, but the attained successes have to be weighed against the devastation to the collective body and soul that the Somali people have endured since 1991. No public building, utility or infrastructure has escaped the blatant thievery and unabashed greed of clan militias, unaffiliated robbers, and lawless thugs that have too long roamed the streets of Mogadishu. The physical environment has suffered much damage. The scanty and irreplaceable trees of the Somali semi-desert have been uprooted and burned into charcoal for domestic consumption and exportation to the insatiable markets of the Middle East. There have been widespread rumors that some warlords have been bribed to allow dumping of hazardous wastes in some parts of Somalia (Brons, 2001; Little, 2003.)

The business and educational successes attained during the civil war also have to be weighed against the opportunity costs arising from the insecure climate Somali businesses operate in today. The risky business and investment climate in Somalia allows for only 'bazaar-type' business relationships – a situation not known to have ever led to economic development. The lack of government regulatory protection precludes long-term investment and long term business dealings, without which the economy will not develop beyond subsistence level.

There are limitless and unprecedented opportunities in today's global economy for nations that create the right business climate and incentives to attract domestic as well as foreign investments. That is the first order of business for the new government. The whole project of reconciliation and nation building may hinge on the successful implementation of policies that can help the new government

take advantage of the entrepreneurial opportunities that globalization presents. The Somali Republic has a golden opportunity for a new start, and the entrepreneurship the Somali people have displayed for the last 20 years, if fostered properly, could lead the way to an economic prosperity unaccustomed to in Africa.

The remainder of the paper consists of four sections. The first section discusses globalization and the entrepreneurial opportunities associated with it. The second section builds on the first section and attempts to provide an institutional explanation of the entrepreneurial experiment in Somalia and why it has been so successful without state or government institutions to help it. The third section draws on recently published research carried out under the auspices of the World Bank on the role government business regulations play in promoting entrepreneurship, economic development, and poverty reduction. The section also tackles both the elements of the regulatory environment the Somali government needs to establish in their national markets in order to foster growth, and how it can create favorable investment climates for entrepreneurs. The fourth and final section will give a brief review of the literature on public-private partnerships (PPPs). The section will conclude with an exposition of the benefits PPPs could have for sustainable economic development for Somalia.

Globalization and Somali Entrepreneurship

Somalia's civil war has roughly coincided with the flourishing of globalization. Stiglitz (2001) defines globalization as 'the removal of barriers to free trade and the closer integration of national economies.' Countries across the globe liberalized their trade and opened up their economies for foreign direct investments, thus making their economies more integrated with, and more dependent on, the economies of the rest of the world. Globalization is based on the premise that if countries removed trade barriers and opened up their markets for foreign investment, their economies would specialize in those goods and services in which they have a comparative advantage. Globalization was promised to lead to economic growth and poverty reduction all round. Under the exhortations of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the General Agreement On Trade and Tariffs (now the World Trade Organization, WTO), large amounts of capital have been flowing from the rich countries of the world into developing countries to exploit the comparative advantages these countries have in untapped markets and inexpensive factors of production.

However, the promises of economic growth and poverty reduction, which were to result from globalization, fizzled out for the overwhelming majority of the world's developing countries that followed the prescriptions (the so-called Washington Consensus) championed by the World Bank, IMF, and the WTO. Globalization has been subjected to withering criticisms from all corners, some of which are specious. There are, however, other more serious and more substantive criticisms against globalization and the ill effects it engenders in developing countries. Among the serious critics are: Stiglitz (2001), Rodrik (1997) and Hertz (2001). Stiglitz (2001) takes to task the supranational institutions, the World Bank, the IMF, and the WTO. The winner of the Nobel Prize for Economics, speaks from a position of knowledge and authority. His book, *Globalization and Its Discontents*, is based on his experiences and observations during his tenure as chief economist and senior vice president of the World Bank. He exposes the hypocrisy of Western countries, which "pushed poor countries to eliminate trade barriers, but kept up their own barriers, preventing developing countries from exporting their agricultural products and so depriving them of desperately needed export income." (p. 6).

In response to critics of globalization, including Stiglitz, Wolf (2004) provides in his book, *Why Globalization Works*, reasonable and logical refutations for the most common charges against

globalization. Wolf accepts, however, the seriousness of some of these criticisms. Similar to Stiglitz, Wolf concedes that developed countries use multilateral agreements to impose trade liberalization on poor countries while keeping their own markets off limits to the products of the poor countries. Another criticism that the two authors agree on is that the supranational institutions entrusted with the global economy seem to exasperate the situation by prescribing rigid and outmoded policies that more often than not resulted in social hardships unaccompanied by the promised economic development.

The shortcomings of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Trade Organization are well documented. However, the justifiable criticisms of these institutions and their policies should not detract from globalization itself and the entrepreneurship it fosters. Stiglitz (2001) himself reiterates in his book that he believes that globalization has the potential to be a force for good. The entrepreneurship opportunities that arise with globalization can be pursued without following the recipes or prescriptions, some of which are ill conceived, of the multilateral institutions mentioned above.

There is an abundance of literature on the crucial role governments play in fostering entrepreneurship (AAARI, 2005). In the entrepreneurship literature, however, the existence of governments is taken for granted. There is virtually no literature on entrepreneurship in the absence of government and state institutions. That is why the Somali situation presents such an intriguing case. The existent literature defines entrepreneurship as a process of creating something new of value, both for profit and non-profit, which requires the expenditure of the necessary time and effort while assuming tremendous risks. This definition of entrepreneurship provided by Hisrich (2008) perfectly defines the entrepreneurial experiment that has been going on in Somalia for the past 20 years.

Kirchoff (1991) cites a lot of recent evidence of entrepreneurship's significant contributions to growth and development. Whereas Sage (1993) emphasizes that economic development strategy needs to promote an environment that is conducive to new business formation and growth, Sterns (1996) ties the increase in economic globalization to the increase in entrepreneurship activities throughout the world. The author describes nine models that could explain the emergence and sustainability of entrepreneurial activities: the environment; the economic system; entrepreneurial behavior; an organization; opportunity; innovation; taking risks; marshalling resources; and creating and realizing value for individuals and society. All nine models have been in full display in Somalia. The necessities created by the absence of government have uncorked the innate entrepreneurial and innovation abilities of Somalis. They have marshaled the meager resources available to them; taking tremendous risks they have created numerous kinds of organizations from scratch that provide value and services to their customers.

The impetus for the current entrepreneurial climate in Somalia was created by the collapse of the Siad Barre's regime, which, like a typical dictatorship, stifled new business formation with cumbersome regulations and government fiat. Siad Barre's regime collapsed following the popular armed uprising of 1991. Within ten months, state institutions crumbled during what the Somalis in Mogadishu call, "the four-month war," when the two faction leaders whose forces deposed Siyaad Barre's dictatorship, General Aidid and Mr. Ali Mahdi, could not agree to share power. This culminated in an all-out war fought in the streets of Mogadishu. That was when the real civil war began, and although the rest of the country had its own local armed confrontations, nothing matched the fighting which took place in Mogadishu, the capital, in its intensity, brutality, viciousness, or destruction.

It is not by accident that the most devastated parts of the city are mostly state buildings, whether government offices, schools, universities, hospitals, or factories. Somalia was not a state before the

British, French, and Italians gradually occupied the country in the 19th century. State institutions are thus a novelty to the Somalis. In fact, in the Somali mind there is no distinction between state and government. To the average Somali (i.e., the generation that knew no government other than Siad Barre's), Siad Barre and his government were the state. Therefore, during the anarchy of the "four-month war" in Mogadishu, state buildings and properties were not only thoroughly looted but destroyed as well. The jagged remains of such famous buildings as the old parliament, Hotel Jubba, and the socialist-era monuments, all testify to the pent-up destructive anger against state institutions unleashed by the fall of the Siyaad Barre regime.

Somali entrepreneurship was born out of necessity. The first entrepreneurial enterprises were formed to facilitate remittances from the Somali diaspora to the families and relatives they had left behind. (There was a mass exodus from Somalia in the 1990's.) These enterprises which are called hawala (Arabic for exchange or transfer) became veritable financial institutions based not on government oversight and guarantees but on trust. Somali hawala have offices in almost all major cities in the world where there are sizeable number of Somali residents. In the USA for example, any Somali who wishes to send money to Somalia may walk into a hawala office in Boston, New York, Atlanta or other major cities, and after paying the four to five percent fee, can rest assured that within minutes his family would receive his remittance.

It was not long before the hawala enterprises expanded into other areas of business. One of the first businesses to develop that way was telecommunications. This was a most natural development. The Somalis are quintessentially oral; they rarely communicate by writing. There was need for Somali families to communicate with their members widely dispersed throughout the world. Thus three wireless telecom firms had sprung. At first their technical standards were not compatible with one another. It was not uncommon to see a Somali businessman juggling three cell phones, each one serviced by a separate telecom firm. This was not good for business and the three firms realized that and rectified the situation. Soon after, the firms expanded into fixed lines. At present, Mogadishu boasts one of the cheapest telecom services in the world. (Economist, 2005; Davis, 2007).

In the early years the entrepreneurship climate was one of 'everything goes' and 'seat of the pants' business planning. The textbook requirements of starting an entrepreneurial venture and the plans associated with that (business, marketing, financial, and organizational; managing and growing the business; Hisrich and Peters, 2008) were not formally followed. Sources of financing were mostly from diaspora remittances and small amounts of venture capital from overseas Somalis. There were no ties between the new entrepreneurial enterprises and the educational institutions that had sprung up at about the same time.

Early on, private enterprises had started delivering the essential services which were previously exclusively provided by the state. In 1991 there were no private schools or health clinics in Somalia. Both education and health were exclusively in the public sector. Within a few years after the collapse of the Siad Barre regime, neighborhoods started organizing private primary schools, soon to be followed by high schools and higher education institutions. Exact figures are hard to come by, but in the Mogadishu environs (with a population of about three million), private institutions provide at least a third of the educational needs of young people in Mogadishu (see Cassanelli and Abdikadir, 2007, for a detailed treatment of the education situation in Somalia).

Other entrepreneurial enterprises soon followed. The most successful ones are those protected by the highly volatile and insecure environment. Since there is no government, there are no restrictions on imports or exports. In fact, import and export businesses never missed a beat despite the closure of the main port and airport of Mogadishu. Entrepreneurs prospected for and found a number of natural ports on the long Indian Ocean, the Somali Sea and Gulf of Aden coasts of Somalia. As for

airports, three main ones that serve Mogadishu have been constructed during the civil war. Thus entrepreneurs had to avoid producing any product that can be cheaply imported into the country. Those who did not avoid them had to struggle for survival, many of them not making it.

Business Environment

Trade liberalization and economic integration with the rest of the world, by themselves are not going to meet the developmental entrepreneurship needs of countries like Somalia. The countries that benefit the most from the opportunities that globalization offers and that are most successful in minimizing its ill effects do so through the establishment of the rule of law and robust institutions of checks and balances, the curbing of corruption, and the maintenance of fiscal and monetary discipline. The Fraser Institute, a Canadian think-tank, in its yearly report of economic freedom of the world, argues that economic freedom, defined by low taxes, protection of private property, freedom of contract, free trade and monetary stability, attract the investment – both domestic and foreign – countries like Somalia need (Gwartney & Lawson, 2004). All of the items that comprise the Fraser Institute's economic freedom require a good and strong government.

The Somali government should at a minimum focus on two functions of good government: designing proper business regulations, in general, and creating a business climate that fosters investment, in particular. Without these regulations in place, the new government will have a difficult time creating job opportunities for the Somali people, especially the youth – a panacea for the establishment of lasting security. Political stability will not be possible without creating legitimate job opportunities to lure the unemployed youth that now swell the ranks of the private militias. The following sections will expand on the above two functions.

Recently the World Bank has undertaken a number of studies which culminated in the publishing of the “Doing Business” series: “Doing Business in 2004,” “Doing Business in 2005,” and “Doing Business in 2006.” Together the three studies, which were carried out in 145 countries, identified, collected data on, and analyzed ten indicators of government regulations that directly impact business activities. The areas indicators apply to are: (1) starting a business; (2) dealing with licenses; (3) hiring and firing workers; (4) registering property; (5) obtaining credit; (6) protecting investors; (7) paying taxes; (8) trading across borders; (9) enforcing contracts; and, (10) closing a business. These indicators have important implications for capital and labor productivities, unemployment, poverty, attraction of domestic and foreign private investments, corruption, and the relative sizes of the formal and informal economies, and thus the efficacy of government tax collection.

In many poor countries business regulations make it so hard to start a business that many entrepreneurs are forced into the informal economy, where they do not have to pay taxes or give benefits to their workers. In order to start a business, an entrepreneur will have to grapple with capital requirements, which could be substantial. The African continent is notorious for its obstacles to starting a new business. By far, entrepreneurs there face more complications than anywhere else in the world. Start-up registration and licensing require considerable investment of effort, time and money. If entrepreneurs resist the allure of the informal economy and go through all the hurdles of registering their new business, they then have to grapple with regulations dealing with hiring and firing workers. Rigid hiring and firing regulations force businesses to hire workers under the table, with all of the attendant abuses of the informal economy. Thus, the people that the hiring and firing regulations were supposed to protect end up getting hurt by them.

Besides simplifying rules dealing with starting a business, and hiring and firing workers, the governments should focus on setting up simple and straightforward regulations for the registration and protection of property rights. Entrepreneurs are less willing to invest where property rights are

not secure. Protection of property rights link effort with reward. The second report (World Bank, 2005a) found that the more bureaucratic and cumbersome property regulations are in a country, the more property disputes there are in that country, the more prevalent bribes which business have to pay, and the more assets entrepreneurs and businesses keep in the informal sector. If cumbersome regulations force business people to keep their properties in the informal sector, it will be harder for them to get credit since they cannot use their unregistered properties as collateral.

Obtaining credit is another area where governments can help entrepreneurs. The World Bank (2005a) cites a number of studies that point out simple policies that governments can promulgate in order to facilitate the procurement of credit for businesses. Among these policies are: making access to credit easier, creating credit registries that sort good borrowers from bad ones, and putting in place laws to enforce collateral and debt collection, and bankruptcy.

The alternative to debt financing is equity financing, a proposition which is more appropriate in a country like Somalia with its religion-inspired aversion to interest bearing loans. Both equity and debt financing require robust legal protection for their proper functioning. Thus, without appropriate investor protections, equity investment will remain a risky endeavor and the sources of such investments will be limited to family members, close relatives and friends. The study points out three areas of investor protection: (1) disclosure of financial information for individuals and firms seeking investment; (2) legal protection of small investors; and, (3) enforcement capabilities in the courts. Enforcing contracts, yet another indicator, will also require efficient and well functioning business courts, fewer procedures, shorter time to resolve disputes, more efficient judges of good repute and integrity. Finally, the studies identify a number of important reforms that could improve the closure of businesses. Making it easier to close non-productive businesses will free scarce human and financial resources to be put to more productive use elsewhere.

All three World Bank studies emphasize that regulatory burdens that businesses have to bear in poor countries are higher than those that businesses have to contend with in rich countries. These regulatory burdens tend to push businesses in poor countries into the informal economy, which accounts for over 40% of the overall economy in those countries. The studies maintain that in developing countries government red tape presents a significant hindrance to economic growth. The more red tape a country has in place and the more cumbersome the regulations, the more likely they are to foster graft and corruption, which in turn hamper economic development of poor countries.

Getting It Right the First Time

The situation in the Somali Republic that the new government will inherit is quite daunting but at the same time it furnishes unprecedented opportunities to try out new models of development. All state institutions have been laid to waste, giving the new government a golden opportunity to start from scratch. It is essential that things are gotten right this time around. The new Transitional Federal Government does not have to repeal any formal business laws – in today's Somalia there are no formal laws: everything is in the informal sector. The government will be starting out with a clean slate with absolutely no red tape, unless it chooses to reinstitute the draconian gridlock of the Siad Barre regime, or go back even further to colonial era laws. Business regulations, however, will need to be promulgated for protecting property rights and the environment, for granting titles, and for establishing fair courts that can enforce contracts and debts. It is vital that these regulations so fundamental to vibrant entrepreneurship and economic development be kept to the absolute minimum necessary. Once a rule is in the books it is not easy to repeal it or reform it. The government has to balance the need to provide incentives and encouragement for investment with the need to protect the interests of society at large. This balancing act is an ongoing process of improvement that

requires regular review and adjustment of policies.

The government should consider the provision of public goods as one of its most important functions. It comes as no surprise that this is the area of public life that suffered the most in Somalia in the absence of a central government. The market left to its devices cannot do a good job of providing public goods. In its broadest sense, public goods include ensuring security of property through the establishment of the rule of law, and independence of the legislative and the executive branches of government. This requires the creation and maintenance of such institutions as courts, a police force, and prisons. It is incumbent on the new government to have sound fiscal and monetary policies, which are hard to maintain for any government without a robust and independent central bank. With such institutions in place the new government will be able to curb the excesses of the market, what economists call internalizing externalities.

According to conventional wisdom, it takes many years to establish the institutions that are so indispensable for sustainable economic development. Recently, however, two studies (Glaeser et al, 2004; Hausmann et al, 2004) have suggested that an initial economic growth spur may be achieved through small piecemeal policy changes, which in turn may lead to long-term institutional reforms. The examples cited include the protection of property rights reforms that Deng Xiaoping introduced in China in 1978, which directly led to China's unprecedented economic growth. Similarly, reforms implemented by General Park's regime in South Korea provided the necessary impetus for the boom in private investment in that country. General Pinochet did something similar for Chile in 1983. In all three countries these simple reforms led to more fundamental ones which in turn ensured the successful continuation of economic development. The end results are visible to all.

The government's efforts should be prioritized, gradual, and incremental. It should build on the few institutions already in existence in the country and that established positive track records during the civil war. New regulations, processes, and institutions should be introduced on need basis and not under the prescription of policies developed somewhere else or developed for some other country, regardless of how that country appears to be similar to Somalia.

One of the top priorities of the new government is the protection of the environment. Preserving the environment and controlling pollution are things the market cannot take care of without active government intervention. The new government should pass and enforce laws banning exportation of charcoal out of the country. In the longer term, domestic use of charcoal should also be curtailed in urban areas. This cannot be done unless the government makes it a high priority to develop modern cooking fuels, especially those that utilize solar energy and wind power. At the present rate of charcoal production where irreplaceable trees are cut down and converted into charcoal, Somalia will turn into a barren desert in less than a generation.

The fostering of vibrant entrepreneurship and sustainable economic reconstruction will entail repairing and rebuilding the basic infrastructure. Roads, soil health, water for irrigation, drinking water and sanitation, and modern cooking fuels will have to be the primary areas of concentration for the new government. In addition, basic health care concerns such as control of malaria, TB, childhood diseases, childbirth, and nutrition should be addressed. Finally, the new government has to put in place accreditation processes for the private schools that at present provide primary and secondary education in the absence of a central government. A skilled labor force is a sine qua non for a modern economy, and proper education is the main ingredient of a skilled labor force.

The Somali Republic needs a strong, relatively corruption-free, and accountable government. Accountability requires transparency, which in turn cannot be realized without freedom of expression and a free press. Only a government that encourages the above qualities will be able to create an environment in which people can become more productive. Every report on business

entrepreneurship and economic development emphasizes that there are no economic ills that a good government cannot remedy. Corruption and misuse of public funds are what denied Somalia and other developing countries the economic development they sorely need and deserve.

The new government has the daunting task of reintroducing security and stability into a country where internecine bloodshed and irredentism became a way of life for more than 20 years. But the government has also the best potential to succeed in putting in place the necessary government policies and behaviors for cultivating entrepreneurship, economic reconstruction and growth. It is not going to inherit bad policies that need reforming or scrapping. There is a dire need, however, for government regulations essential for the stewardship of a modern economy. The government should resist the temptation to import regulations from countries or policies put together by consultants or Non-Governmental Organizations that are not well versed in the intricacies of the Somali situation. It should also resist dismantling homegrown institutions under unfounded foreign claims that they pose security threats to one country or another. Instead the new government should build on the wartime institutions that the Somali people themselves established, often without outside assistance. Building on existing institutions will create a sense of ownership and continuity, two ingredients absolutely essential for the success of state building.

One experience that the Somalis learned from their long and costly civil war is that they can accomplish a lot of things without a government. The entrepreneurial spirit of the Somalis has flourished not only in Somalia proper but in the neighboring countries where there large Somali inhabitants. However, another experience the Somalis gained is that there are a lot of things that are impossible without the supremacy of a central authority. The job of the new Transitional Federal Government is to strike a fine balance between these two experiences: to get out of the way of the people in the former, and to ensure its pervasive presence in the latter. If it does not do that, it is likely the Somali people will resort to yet another experience that the civil war taught: they will not put up with any unnecessary interference from any government, however strong.

The government should not try to reinvent the wheel. There is a sizeable, readily accessible accumulated knowledge in the world about how best to create the necessary environment for vibrant entrepreneurship, economic reconstruction, and sustainable development. The government should solicit the advice of people who have the requisite knowledge and expertise, and under their supervision judiciously choose and implement the most applicable policies, benchmarking the performance of applied policies against comparable countries that preceded the Somali Republic in the path to development and economic prosperity.

The World of PPPs

There is extensive literature that explores Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) despite the fact that the concept had not taken off until the 1990s. The existent literature shows that since then PPPs have been employed in the provision of such public goods as transportation, energy, running water and sewage, telecommunications, health, and education. Besley and Ghatak (2001) note that PPPs run the gamut from the state contracting out the completion of projects while maintaining ownership, to complex arrangements and outright privatization. Thus PPPs lie between mere contracting and fully privatized enterprises. The form any individual PPP takes will depend on compatibility of goals between the private and public participants, the coordination of decisions and the commitment of resources (Schaeffer & Loveridge, 2002).

De Bettignies and Ross (2004) discuss the economies of PPPs, citing instances of PPPs used in Canada such as airports, schools, incineration facilities, water and wastewater treatment, medical facilities, recreation facilities, property management, and utilities. (p. 136). The authors point

out, however, that independent evaluation of these PPPs successes and failures are rare. In all the examples cited, the government limits itself to regulating the PPPs, leaving the financing and actual provision of services to the private partner.

The literature proffers a number of PPP definitions, which show that PPPs cover a wide range of activities. For the purpose of this paper, let's consider two definitions. The first definition is given by the British Columbia (Canada) Ministry of Finance (2002): "PPP's are contractual arrangements between government and a private party for the provision of assets and the delivery of services that have been traditionally provided by the public sector." The second one offered by Akintoye (2009): "A contractual agreement of shared ownership between a public agency and a private company, whereby, as partners, they pool resources together and share risks and rewards, to create efficiency in the production and provision of public or private goods." In his definition, PPPs include such contractual agreements as leases and concessions, but do not include service and management contracts.

The existent literature points out that PPPs are not as prevalent in the developing world as they are in the developed world. One would think that the case should be the other way around, since governments in the developing world do not have either the monetary resources nor the wherewithal to issue bonds in order to fund the provision of public goods. In the 1990s PPPs became a matter of necessity in the developed world, which at the time was undergoing huge budget cuts in the face of government deficits. PPPs became a viable alternative to government issued bonds as a funding source for development projects. Thus advances in PPPs developments have been mostly in developed countries as opposed to developing countries, which still considerably lag behind in that regard. According to Akintoye (2009), this is due to the high transaction cost for PPPs arising from the lack of "efficient, transparent and participatory policies, mechanisms, and institutions." However, it is evident that governments in developing countries do not have the resources to undertake the infrastructure projects necessary for their development. PPPs provide a viable alternative. Thus once PPPs achieved some successes in the developed world, it did not take long for PPPs to be seriously considered in the developing world.

In the case of Somalia, the state has never been in a position to issue bonds or raise domestic funding for infrastructure development. Moreover, current and previous governments in Somalia have become so notorious for their corruption and mismanagement that no outside funding sources would trust them. In this regard, the private sector stands in good stead. Some private enterprises have even developed excellent reputation in issuing highly profitable shares. A case in point is Dahabshiil and Hormud, which are fast becoming veritable conglomerates in Somalia. Such enterprises will make good private partners for the state in any PPP undertaking. They could also be viable partners for outside sources of funding such as the World Bank.

The World Bank has identified four categories that PPPs could fall into: management and lease contracts, concessions, greenfield projects, and divestures (World Bank, 2005). According to the Institute of International Project Financing (IIPF), projects that have been successfully financed through PPPs arrangements include "energy generation, pipelines developments, mining developments, toll roads, waste disposal, and telecommunications." (Akintoye, 2009, p. 125).

The World Bank maintains a database of all public projects with private participation – The World Bank Private Participation in Infrastructure Database. The database tracks four areas of investment: 1. Energy generation; 2. Telecommunication; 3. Transportation; and, 4. Water, including sewage. As analyzed by Akintoye (2009) demonstrates that Sub-Saharan Africa is among the regions of the world where PPPs in the above four areas are least employed. Latin America and the Caribbean, and East Asia and Pacific lead the way where PPPs are more prevalent than they are in Europe and Central Asia. The data also indicates that both PPP projects and the amount of investment in them

have been increasing since 2003.

Akintoye's (2009) analysis of the World Bank Private Participation in Infrastructure database demonstrate that the countries that the database covers (divided into six regions of the world except Canada and USA.) They looked at PPPs used in concessions, divestures, greenfield, and management contracts. Akintoye concludes that with the proper business regulatory environment, developing countries could take advantage of PPPs in reducing the risks and costs of infrastructure development and attracting infrastructure project investments that could provide efficient and high quality services.

According to Tati (2005), in a number of Sub-Saharan countries in Africa, PPPs were instituted in the context of privatization of state owned enterprises (SOEs), which had monopoly over utilities. Similar to the situation which had been prevalent in Socialist Somalia, these SOEs were highly inefficient, slow in providing services, and highly corrupt. Thus the current trend in Africa to privatize utilities. Privatizations in Africa generally tend to be messy affairs. The privatized firms tend to inherit all the bad legacies of the SOEs they replaced. Fortunately, the current situation in Somalia does not have to deal with those kinds of problems since there are no SOEs currently providing any kind of services. There is no comparison between the old state enterprises of Siad Barre's regime and the private enterprises that have arisen from the civil war rubble. Private enterprises in Somalia have time and again demonstrated the ability to provide services faster, more innovatively, and more efficiently than anything Somalia has seen in its existence as a nation since 1960.

The literature notes two problems with PPPs: first, when circumstances change necessitating demand for renegotiation of the contract on the part of the private partner, this could prove very costly for the public. The second is that the state may not be in a position to provide the necessary supervision of the private partner, which could lead to the latter cheating on the quality of the services provided (De Bettignies & Ross, 2004). One possible remedy lies in the ex ante establishment of rigorous and comprehensive bidding process and contractual safeguards before PPPs are set up. The advantages of PPPs to Somalia, however, outweigh any potential problems that may arise from their implementation. Among the clear advantages of PPPs pointed out by De Bettignies & Ross (2004) are:

1. Traditionally the private sector is incomparably more skilled than the public sector, and with the profit motive and ownership incentive, could provide high quality services.
2. A competitive bidding process could be used to guarantee that the best private partnership is identified for the envisaged PPPs.
3. In today's global competitive environment, private firms are better positioned to stay abreast of, and implement, innovations in their particular sector.
4. Private partners are better suited to manage economic risks associated with projects well suited for PPPs.
5. Private partners can take advantage of economies of scale and complementarities if they provide similar services in other jurisdictions.

Conclusion

Somalia offers a unique opportunity to implement PPPs in numerous areas of productive economic and infrastructure projects. The reasons for this are:

1. The private sector has developed by leaps and bounds and has become quite efficient in providing essential services such as money transfer, banking services, telecommunications, education, health, and other small businesses, and such mundane services such as running water, electricity, and roads. One of the most important developments of the private sector is the crafting of locally effective business models, financing, transfer of knowledge and technology, and the recruitment and the training of the necessary human resources. They have also been successful in self-regulation. Therefore, with appropriate government guidance, the private sector has the wherewithal to effectively carry out development projects.
2. Whereas the private sector has made major strides for the last 20 years, the opposite is the case with respect with the public sector. Not only is the public sector non-existent, for all practical purposes it is not likely to recover anytime soon.
3. By empowering the private sector to provide traditionally public goods, the government will be able to focus on providing security and good governance, which is a daunting task as it is.
4. If PPPs are structured so that they run like private enterprises, they will be more efficient and productive than the traditional public sector arrangements, at least those that were prevalent in pre-conflict Somalia.
5. Perhaps one of the most important rationales for PPPs in today's Somalia is the potential for the eradication of corruption for which the public sector has always been notorious. In the experience of the Somalis and many other developing countries, the public sector had been most wasteful and corrupt.
6. PPPs will provide a disincentive for those people who are motivated by opportunities for graft, nepotism and embezzlement that have traditionally plagued the public sector. This will allow for the institution of a minimalist government that is focused on governance and that avoids the ownership or management of factors of production.
7. PPPs allow for a bottom-up development. Because of budget crisis and dearth of funding, employment of PPPs has become quite popular in many developed countries .

Much evidence exists demonstrating that the Somalis have attained many entrepreneurial successes for the last 20 years. The Somali experiment has been one of entrepreneurship without government oversight or regulation. However, its continued success and viability are questionable; thus the need for a good and strong government. The challenge facing any government in Somalia is quite daunting: how to regulate and at the same time foster and partner with the businesses, and the health and educational institutions that have sprung up and thrived in the absence of government for the last 20 years. There is no doubt that business and investment regulations are crucially needed. Public goods are in total devastation; the environment needs to be protected; and the harnessing of solar and wind power as alternative energy sources needs to be given ample incentives. PPPs may perhaps be the most viable way forward in the economic reconstruction of Somalia.

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