

Research Report

MUNISH '12



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Forum: Security Council

Issue: The Situation in Somalia

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Introduction

The Somali Republic was formed in 1960 by the unification of Italian Somaliland and British Somaliland. In 1969, a bloodless putsch resulted in the takeover of Mohamed Siad Barre. He soon came to lead the Socialist Revolutionary Council (SRC), the Communist party in control of the one-party state they promptly renamed the Somali Democratic Republic (SDR). After a 22-year rule, Barre's regime was overthrown in 1991, thus beginning the ongoing Civil War. There has been no central government controlling the entirety of Somalia ever since, and the current government is thought to control only a section of the nation's capital, Mogadishu. With several clans in competition for power in the country, but no party taking ultimate control, Somalia's political instability has paved the way for many other issues in the region: lawlessness and civil strife throughout Somalia, piracy in the waters off its coasts, influxes of refugees to neighbouring countries and region-wide humanitarian disasters to name but a few.

Bordering Djibouti to the northwest, Ethiopia to the West and Kenya to the south and southwest, Somalia also boasts the longest coastline of any African nation, with access to the Gulf of Aden in the north and the Indian Ocean to the east. Unfortunately, increasingly frequent occurrences of piracy have resulted in the past 5 years due to disputes as to the usage of Somalia's adjoining waters.



Since its release in 2005, Somalia has consistently been ranked in the top 5 of the world's Failed States Index every year, topping the list every year since 2008. The list's creators, Washington-based Fund for Peace, claims Somalia is the world's number one failed state due to "widespread lawlessness, ineffective government, terrorism, insurgency, crime, and well-publicized pirate attacks against foreign vessels."

Somalia is one of the poorest states in the world, with a GDP/capita of only 600 USD, ranking it 222nd of 226 states. It is also one of the most violent, having been through 2 decades of an ongoing civil war estimated to have killed 350,000 to 1,000,000 Somalis. Hosting a population of approximately 10 million, the country is divided into 3 key regions: Somaliland in the northwest, which operates its own government and declares itself independent from Somalia although not internationally recognised; autonomous Puntland in the northeast, which although having its own government in operation does not

claim to be a separate nation; and the less peaceful south of the country, which has had little to no governmental control over the past 2 decades.

Definition of Key Terms

Internally displaced persons (IDPs)

IDPs are people who have had to leave their homes for one reason or another (in this case primarily due to armed conflict in their hometowns and drought/famine) because it is unsafe to remain where they are. As opposed to other forms of asylum seekers, these people remain within the borders of their own nation, relocating from one region to another.

Islamist insurgency

Rebellion by Islamist parties against the federal government having received support and encouragement from external bodies. Islamist insurgency is one of the leading sources of instability in Somalia.

Militias

Citizens organised in paramilitary groups believing they are acting to defend their individual rights and opposing the interference of the federal government.

Piracy

The armed hijacking and robbery of ships to gain cargo and/or money, often capturing entire 'mother ships' and holding its crew hostage until ransom money is received.

General Overview

An interim state president, Ali Mahdi Muhammad, was selected in January 1991, but leaders of several key clans refused to recognise him as such. It was feared that any future president would also not be recognised as president by opposition clan leaders, which could lead to further governmental collapse. This led to a year and a half of violent conflict in the south of the country between 2 coalitions of clans: The Somali National Movement (SNM), Somali Patriotic Movement (SPM) and the United Somali Congress (USC) [which had opposition also within the party], versus the armed groups the Somali Manifesto Group (SMG) [Muhammad's party], Somali National Alliance (SNA) and the Somali Democratic Movement (SDM).

The warring clans' fighting for land and resources in 1992 led to a famine killing an estimated 300,000 Somalis, which the UN responded to by launching the United Nations Operation in Somalia

(UNOSOM I). This peacekeeping mission was intended to peacefully end the famine and although initially having been supported, the clans soon resumed their fighting.

The US launched the Unified Task Force, a military coalition sending troops to end the famine and provide humanitarian aid in Somalia, at the end of 1992, on Operation Restore Hope. This was largely successful, and made way for UNOSOM II to begin in 1993. The then-president Mohammad Farah Aidid felt threatened by the UN's presence however, and his party opened fire in a series of attacks on the troops leading to many casualties. Having not reduced the violence in the region as intended, and instead having stimulated more, UNOSOM II was ended and troops returned home in 1995. Since then, there has been little enthusiasm for a repeat UN intervention involving sending in UN peacekeeping troops.

In 2000, the Transitional National Government (TNG) was established as a result of the Somali National Peace Conference (SNPC) in Djibouti, and a new president appointed. This was succeeded in 2004 by the Transitional Federal Government (TFG), which, as the 14th attempt at a national government since 1991, has been the internationally recognised government of Somalia ever since. Having ousted the previous governmental regime however, the biggest threat facing the TFG is still coalitions of opposition clans. At this point in time, such clans are fighting to regain control of most of the south of the country, reducing the TFG's credibility as Somalia's central power. On 8th January 2007, the TFG relocated to Mogadishu, marking the first time that the federal government had controlled most of the nation since before the Civil War began.

The Indian Ocean tsunami on the 26th of December brought more disasters to light: toxic and hazardous waste had been dumped in the Indian Ocean, which promptly washed up on Somalia's shores. It is thought that Western nations were responsible for this, probably having paid the Somali government tens of millions of dollars to be allowed to dump waste there. In doing so however, millions of lives have been endangered in a region where healthcare is already insufficient.

2006 saw the War in Somalia hit a new low, with Ethiopian troops entering Somalia to support the TFG, and facing armed opposition by the ICU who had taken control of much of the southern regions. The combined task force, also aided by US troops and African Union peacekeepers, failed to aid the TFG in regaining complete control and only increased resistance by the ICU. This has fuelled further Islamist insurgency in the country, a threat the United States has taken an increasing interest in since the September 11th 2001 attacks; knowing that Somalia has connections to al-Qaeda groups, the US was determined to prevent it becoming a haven for terrorists.

Following 2006, the ICU promptly broke up into several militias who did not agree on all points. One such faction was al-Shabaab, a group of al-Qaida-linked Islamist extremists who oppose the government and have employed violence to prove so. Several suicide bombings in the country have resulted, harming innocent citizens as well as former ICU members, and keeping the title of 'the most dangerous nation of earth' for Somalia.

Peace talks in Djibouti in 2008 led to the doubling in size of the government from 275 to 550, including 200 new members of the opposition alliance and 75 members of civil society. In 2009, President Yusuf Abdullah Ahmed resigned and a new leader, Sheikh Sharif Ahmed, was elected on January 31st 2009 as the new coalition ARS-TFG leader. A deal was signed between the Prime Minister Nur Hassan and opposition leader Sheikh Ahmed of the Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia (ARS) which is mainly composed of former ICU members. This coalition ARS-TFG government agreed that Ethiopian troops would be withdrawn from Somalia allowing the ARS, TFG and African Union peacekeepers to resolve the issue.

Ethiopian troops who had been supporting the TFG left Somalia on January 25th 2009. Meanwhile, al-Shabaab threatens to regain control and dominate Somalia, with support from Eritrea who have a history of conflicts against Ethiopia. Foreign aid organisations have considered leaving Somalia due to fear for their security but as yet humanitarian aid has not stopped.

2011's second consecutive dry rainy season saw the Horn of Africa suffer its worst drought in 60 years, causing many Somalis to leave their homes to save themselves from famine. By the end of July 2011, there were 1.46 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Somalia and approximately 800,000 Somalis seeking refuge elsewhere. Within the country, the warring factions' violence also led to hundreds of civilian deaths, an act which the UN Special Envoy to Somalia calls a "genocide". The TFG responded by creating a national committee to assess the needs and solutions of drought-ridden regions of the country.

Having been scheduled to do so, on August 1st 2012, TFG drew up a new draft constitution which will replace the 2004 Transitional Federal Charter (TFC) which was introduced along with the TFG. A suicide bombing outside the talks where this was being discussed goes to show that stability in the country is in no means already accomplished, and although al-Shabaab, who have admitted being behind the attack, have little control left, they are still a threat to security there. AU peacekeeping forces remain stationed in the country trying to prevent the spread of Islamist insurgency elsewhere.

Piracy

Somalia has been notorious over the past 5 years for Somali pirates, which have hijacked and captured several hundred ships within this period. Following the uprooting of tonnes of dangerous waste into the region in 2004, volumes of fish in the region were greatly depleted. Fishermen from the coastal towns of Somalia depended upon fishing for their livelihoods, and were further enraged in the following years by illegal foreign trawlers depleting their resources. In retaliation, many of these fishermen took to the seas to prevent other fishing boats capturing what they believed to be their reserves of fish, in the 200 nautical miles of sea that Somalia has claims to. This quickly escalated however, and ships were being hijacked and their sailors kept captive for ransoms and pirates travelled further afield (i.e. into the Indian Ocean). Due to Somalia's strategic position on the horn of Africa, hundreds of thousands of ships

pass through their waters every month, meaning there is no shortage of opportunities for pirates to go after goods and their ships. According to Fox news, there were attacks on passing ships “almost every day” in spring 2009. In several cases, this has resulted in economic gains for the pirates, which although it has benefited the coastal towns of Somalia where money is newly being spent, most nations have reacted negatively to it. Member states have acted both individually and in groups to enable several ships to remain in the region to monitor piracy and deter pirates. Puntland has also put into place laws to deter piracy. Following these measures, piracy in the region has considerably reduced. Although many hijackings have received media coverage, relatively few of the pirates have actually been charged, as it has been difficult to trial them abroad and there is no fully functioning judicial system in Somalia.

Major Parties Involved and Their Views

Somalia

Somalia is the nation we are discussing. This consists of the autonomous Somaliland, semi-autonomous Puntland and the southern central regions. While Somaliland and Puntland serve as self-governed macro-regions, they are not independent and are also in need of a centralised government. Both have put into place new judicial systems to deal with crime in their country and have made valiant contributions to improving the social and humanitarian standings of their citizens. Being more peaceful than the southern parts of Somalia, they are a popular destination for IDPs from the south.

Ethiopia

Between 1977 and 1978, the Ethio-Somali war was waged between the bordering nations as the Somali government tried to take control of the Ogaden region. This ended in a truce, and since 2006, Ethiopia has been supporting the TFG with peacekeeping forces, primarily to protect the sovereignty of their nation, as they could be devastated by further instability/conflicts in the region.

Bordering Somalia to the west, Ethiopia has been a key source of refuge for Somali asylum seekers. This influx of Somali refugees has put strain on its Ethiopia and its other neighbouring countries as they are in no position to take responsibility for the failings of the Somali government. Ethiopia donated 5,000 peacekeeping troops to Somalia in 2008, although these were later withdrawn.

Islamic Courts Union (ICU)

The ICU claimed control of most of southern Somalia in 2006, imposing sharia’s law only to be later relocated by the TFG’s aided conquering of the south. This party disbanded after AU

Al-Shabaab

The Somalian branch of military Islamist group Al-Qaida, first being recognised as such in 2012. The group, which is estimated to have around 15,000 soldiers, is one of the factions into which the ICU split after its defeat in 2006. They are the largest of a small number of clans still opposed to the TFG, and remain determined to gain control of southern Somalia.

African Union Peace and Security Council (AUPSC)

The most powerful body of the African Union (AU), the AUPSC discuss issues relating to stability and security of African nations, and intercepted with peacekeeping forces in Somalia in 2006. Some states believe that the jurisdiction of the issue of Somalia rightly belongs solely to this body as opposed to the UN Security Council on the whole.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

This is the office of the United Nations associated with displaced persons, and is working on aiding Somali IDPs and refugees from a base in Nairobi, Kenya.

Indian Navy

The Indian navy, having fallen victim to piracy on numerous occasions throughout the conflict, has contributed greatly to the monitoring of ships within the region where Somali pirates have been posing a threat. Japanese fleets have also been aiding security in the region, working surprisingly with the US and Russia.

Timeline of Events

| Date | Description of event |
|---------------------------------|--|
| January 1991 | Barre's regime ousted; outbreak of Civil War |
| 1992-1995 | UN peacekeeping interventions UNOSOM I (successful), Operation Restore Hope (successful) and UNOSOM II (unsuccessful) |
| April 1995 | UN establishes United Nations Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS) to monitor the country's progress having withdrawn troops |
| 2000 | Transitional National Government (TNG) established; unable to gain/maintain control of southern Somalia |
| 2004 | Transitional Federal Government (TFG) established; manages to gain control of many towns in the south following 2006 |
| December 26 th 2004 | Indian Ocean tsunami brings to light the illegal dumping of hazardous waste in the Indian Ocean by western nations |
| 2006 | ICU sieges most southern towns/cities and gains control; TFG responds with AU forces along with Kenyan and Ethiopian troops – order eventually regained somewhat |
| 2008 | The height of Somali piracy – international outcry leads to many deterrent strategies and several UNSC resolutions to resolve the issue in coming years |
| December 9 th , 2011 | Secretary General visits Somalia and holds discussions to resolve social structure within Somalia |
| December 2011- January 2012 | AUPSC holds meetings discussing AMISOM strategies |
| August 2012 | Elections for a new presidency for Somalia scheduled; new draft constitution drawn up |

UN involvement, Relevant Resolutions, Treaties and Events

Much of the UN's involvement in this issue, along with its degree of success, has already been addressed in General Overview (See pages 2-5), but specifically, the following resolutions have played a part in the developments of the War in Somalia:

- UN Security Council Resolution 733, 23 January 1992 (S/RES/733); establishes arms embargo on Somalia
- UN Security Council Resolution 751, 24 April 1992 (S/RES/751); establishes UNOSOM I
- UN Security Council Resolution 794, 3 December 1992 (S/RES/794); Creation of Unified Task Force (UNITAF) in Somalia
- UN Security Council Resolution 954, 4 November 1994 (S/RES/954); final extension of mandate for UNOSOM II, calls to withdraw troops

- UN Security Council Resolution 1474, 8 April 2003 (S/RES/1474); one of several resolutions calling for investigations into violations of Somalia's arms embargo
- UN Security Council Resolution 1744, 21 February 2007 (S/RES/1744); authorises the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM)
- UN Security Council Resolution 1816, 2 June 2008 (S/RES/1816); authorises nations cooperating with the TFG to enter Somali's waters to repress piracy

Evaluation of Previous Attempts to Solve the Issue

Of the several UN interventions that have taken place to resolve the situation in Somalia, not all of them have been particularly successful.

The first of these, UNOSOM I, launched in 1992 and withdrawn in 1993, was successful in its aim to put a stop to the widespread famine by the warring clans in the south of the country. It did not however restore peace in the region and the UN withdrew in 1993 while the clans continued fighting between themselves.

The Unified Task Force, UNITAF, launched by the UN to be coordinated by the United States in 1993, on its mission Operation Restore Hope, was able to continue the work on the famine in the early 1990s and provide humanitarian aid to thousands of Somalis who needed it. Such provisions worked in this way because they were on a short-term scale. Longer term solutions to the issue should involve empowering Somalis to provide their own food and water with tactics to reduce the risk of famines/droughts.

The follow-up to this, UNOSOM II, involved UN peacekeeping troops being present in the region with the intention of. Many of these troops were attacked by opposition clans in Somalia, and were later withdrawn in 1995, having not been able to reduce the violence in the regions where it was needed most. This embarrassing feat for the United Nations has greatly diminished enthusiasm for a repeat intervention involving sending UN peacekeeping troops to reorganise the country.

It is difficult to determine the success of the 'general and complete' arms embargo enforced on Somalia at the beginning of 1992, although having legitimate cause in the region (i.e. to reduce violence happening in Somalia by disabling clans and the government attaining greater weaponry). This is because nobody knows the casualties that would have resulted had it not been in place, though it is widely thought to have been the best response to the situation. In 2001, it was amended to allow non-lethal military equipment to enter the country provided it was for use in humanitarian operations. In 2007, the embargo was further amended to allow arms to reach Somali government forces but not to opposition clans. There have also been several resolutions released regarding sanctions for entities that

have broken their agreements, implying the embargo was not as successful as it was intended as some groups got around it.

In 2006, Somalia requested assistance from its neighbour states Kenya and Ethiopia along with the African Union for troops to enter their borders and regain control of southern regions that had been taken over by opposition ICU forces. This intervention, although a successful initiative by the TFG, sparked further opposition by Islamist factions who denied the need for Ethiopian troops' presence in the country. [These forces later left the country in 2008-2009 although AU and Kenyan forces are still present in some towns.]

Combined attempts to reduce piracy are acknowledged to have been successful, reducing the reports of hijacked ships by Somalis off their coast from 26 in 2009 and 2010 to only 4 in 2011. Nevertheless, Oceans Beyond Piracy (OBP) estimates that Somali piracy is costing global trade nearly \$7 billion in losses per year, meaning the issue still needs addressing. Coalitions of unlikely nations have seen the region patrolled constantly by independent entities over the past 4 years, primarily by the Indian Navy and Russian military ships.

The mandate declaring that a new constitution must be drawn up in August 2012, introduced at the same time as the TFG in 2004, was successful in that it is expected to result in the passing of the current draft bringing further political stability to the nation as a single state without direct interference by other nations. The talks resulting in this treaty were brokered by the UN but the new constitution's contents are to be determined solely by the Somali ARS-TFG government.

Possible Solutions

Having already declared themselves autonomous, it must be considered whether Somaliland, or indeed Puntland, where a separate government has been put in place along with different laws and regulations than the rest of Somalia, are granted autonomous recognition as separate states, or whether unification would be a better solution for Somalia as a whole and reduce the effect of different clans clashing in the region.

Aggressive interventions are favoured by none of the Permanent 5 members of the Security Council, and many other states believe the African Union should organise peace enforcement in the region. Saying this, the UNSC's resolutions hold more authority overall and further discussions on the issue are necessary.

It is unknown whether the coalition government will operate as it was intended and meet the humanitarian needs of all factions of the population. Further international interference in this matter may backfire and enrage Somali politicians, but leaving them to resolve it themselves is also likely to be

unsuccessful if history is anything to go by. It is imperative that the new draft constitution is seen through to the end and put into place, although it depends on individual nations whether they will contribute to

Foreign aid organisations currently remaining posted in the country should consider whether their presence is still necessary – Somalia needs to feel able to enforce its own laws and governmental regime and foreign presence in the country can be counterproductive if they remain there.

Further conflicts in the region threaten the stability of the entire Horn of Africa as well as the seas where pirates have already terrorised hundreds of ships. Therefore, piracy regulations should continue to be reviewed and the situation monitored.

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Appendices

- I. New York Times country page for Somalia – regularly updated with the latest news on Somalian affairs
<http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/international/countriesandterritories/somalia/index.html>
- II. AMISOM's page outlining its previous actions on the issue
<http://amisom-au.org/about-somalia/somali-peace-process/>
- III. Website of the UN body UNPOS, featuring relevant documents on the issue and up-to-date progressions
<http://unpos.unmissions.org/>
- IV. The CIA World Factbook – a good starting point for researching your country
<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/>
- V. BBC country profiles – similar to the World Factbook, they provide vital statistics of your nation along with political and economic background information (thus can be determined their status on the issue)
http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/country_profiles/default.stm

