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“Engagement and Disengagement: Rethinking Somalia”

By **Ethan Hamilton**

ABSTRACT

This paper outlines three international policy options for Somalia in an effort to begin working towards solving the issues that have plagued the Horn of Africa for over 40 years. A short introduction summarizing Somalia’s tumultuous history precedes an examination of the three policy options. The first proposal, as supported and practiced by the U.S. State Department, is an interventionist policy involving political, economic, and in the past, military intervention. The policy would continue to allow the U.S. to closely monitor Somalia’s struggling government in an effort to maintain and protect its regional interests. The second proposal reconsiders Somaliland’s *de facto* secession and discusses the possibility of reunification with Somalia. Although not internationally recognized, Somaliland has become largely independent from southern Somalia and functions much like an autonomous state. This policy considers the benefits of Somaliland’s reunification with Somalia. The third and final proposal is the controversial containment policy recommended by several analysts familiar with the condition of Somalia. The containment policy would require the international community to disengage from the current government and allow the country to recover—or ruin—itsself. After outlining three possible policies, this paper recommends a variation of the third proposal offered—a policy of international containment towards Somalia, as well as giving further analysis and supporting data. The discussion will conclude with considerations of inevitable challenges and potential long-term goals for the recommended policy.

Introduction

This paper outlines three international policy considerations for Somalia. The first section summarizes important elements of the Somali history and people as a preface to the discussion of international intervention. The importance of Somali clans, the reign of Siad Barre, and the subsequent international humanitarian efforts to aid Somalia during its famine in the early 1990s, provide a background to the current state of affairs in Somalia today.

Saadia Touval, Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences at Tel Aviv University, writes that

“Somali nationalism stems from a feeling of national consciousness in the sense of ‘we’ as opposed to ‘they’.”¹ The Somali people exhibit an almost unique characteristic in Africa—a deep sense of nationhood. Counterpoised to this feeling of unity, however, Jeffrey Gettleman observes that “Somalia is a political paradox—unified on the surface, poisonously divided beneath. It is one of the world's most homogeneous nation-states, with nearly all of its estimated 9 to 10 million people sharing the same language (Somali), religion (Sunni Islam), culture, and ethnicity.”² But in Somalia,” he writes, “it's all about clan.”³ There are four major Somali clans—the Darod, Hawiyya, Dir, and Isaaq. At an even more finely-grained level, there are nearly 1,000 groups, making for complicated and dynamic political allegiances.

Somalia attained formal independence on July 1, 1960 with the merging of the British and Italian Somaliland colonies and the formation of the Republic of Somalia. In October 1969, Major General Mohamed Siad Barre staged a coup, ushering in twenty-one years of a highly authoritarian regime through a military dictatorship. John L. Hirsch and Special Envoy to Somalia Robert B. Oakley note that the worst damage Siad Barre did to Somali culture was to politicize clan relations by encouraging conflict at the level of the clan families.⁴ Barre found popular support by exploiting Somali nationalism and irredentism (advocacy of territorial annexation due to common ethnicity or historical possession). In 1977, he invaded the Ogaden region of Ethiopia, an area populated largely by ethnic Somalis.⁵ Almost simultaneously, he broke military ties with their former Soviet allies and obtained military equipment from powers in the West, including the United States. According to Walter S. Poole from the Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Soviets reacted by supporting Ethiopia with arms, advisers, and Cuban troops;⁶ Barre's troops were quickly overrun and driven back to Somalia. Although he stayed in power after the failed invasion, opposition to Barre's rule mounted, leading to a full-scale guerilla war in May 1988 that left all vestiges of civil society and government institutions in tatters. Barre's soldiers retaliated by slaughtering thousands of civilians, but the violent repression only intensified the opposition. After four weeks of fighting that devastated the capital, Mogadishu, Barre fled south in January 1991, leaving behind a carnage that had been financed by a Cold War rivalry.⁷

Clan warlords ousted Barre in 1991 but also clashed among themselves. Partisans of

“provisional” president, Ali Mahdi, fought the clansmen of General Mohammed Aideed in Mogadishu. Arms were made readily available to all sides by both the United States and USSR.⁸ Somalia as a nation and as a cohesive society dissolved. At the same time, an unusually severe drought struck. In late January 1992, the UN intervened, urging a cease-fire by all parties and imploring nations to contribute to humanitarian aid relief. In July 1992, UN Special Representative to Somalia Mohammed Sahnoun estimated that 1.5 million Somalis faced imminent starvation.⁹ To mitigate the crisis, the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) decided to send in humanitarian relief supplies and the first 500 UN peacekeepers to secure the food. In the months that followed, U.S. military aircraft (in an effort named Operation Provide Relief by President Bush) delivered more than 28,000 metric tons of relief supplies to southern Sudan.¹⁰ Unfortunately, looters and armed thugs stole most of the food. Very few people who needed it actually received the aid. On December 4th, 1992, President Bush announced that U.S. troops would enter Somalia in what was christened “Operation Restore Hope” for the specific mission of “creating conditions that would allow starving Somalis to be fed and make possible the later transfer of security function to a UN peacekeeping force”.¹¹ Between March-April 1993, the U.S. transferred responsibility to the U.N operation, UNOSOM II, although about 6,000 troops remained in Somalia. A failed raid on the afternoon of October 3, 1993 claimed 18 U.S. lives and 312 Somali lives, and forced the U.S. decision to withdraw.¹²

Somalia today is in anarchy as an unruly, ungoverned space between its neighbors and the sea. The U.N-sanctioned transitional government (TFG), the 14th government since 1991, controls only a few city-blocks. The TFG has not governed in a traditional sense. At best, it is an unrepresentative group of warlords with meager prospects who rebranded themselves as a “government”.¹³ A radical youth militia, al Shabab (rather than the TFG) actually maintains control of Somalia’s southern and central regions. Beyond even the political crisis, all the elements for another famine are lining up again, as Jeffrey Gettleman observes: war rages on unconstrained amidst drought, swelling food prices, and the exodus of foreign aid workers.¹⁴ With 3.8 million people urgently in need of relief, Somalia has once again become the site of one of the world’s worst humanitarian crises.¹⁵ Freedom House, an NGO that conducts research and advocacy for democracy, political freedom, and human rights, lists Somalia as an “Unreformed Autocracy” and has rated Somalia a 6-7 for political rights and civil liberties. The rating scores

scale from 1 (high) to 7 (low).¹⁶ Peter Pham of James Madison University, seeing the current state of Somalia, asserts the urgent need for change. “Unitary Somalia... has been dead for a decade and a half... Reanimation is no longer in the realm of the possible.”¹⁷

Considerations

This section offers three of the many policy considerations responsive to Pham’s warning that attempting to build a unitary Somalia is not possible. The first proposal is an *interventionist policy* practiced by the U.S. State Department since the humanitarian crisis in the early 1990s. The second proposal is a reconsideration of Somaliland’s secession and *possible reunification* with Somalia. The third and final proposal discussed is a *containment policy* offered by several analysts, namely Peter Pham and Bronwyn Bruton, who have closely examined the condition of Somalia and who offer some radical solutions. After reviewing the strengths and merits of each proposal, the discussion will move to policy recommendation and give a more detailed explanation of what appears to be the most pragmatic and realistic proposal, including its ideal goals.

Since the early 1990s, the U.S. State Department’s “interventionist approach” has involved political and economic intervention. Peter Schraeder notes one of the Clinton administration approaches to conflict resolution that is still followed. He writes that “the choice is not between intervening or not intervening. It is between getting involved early and doing it at cheaper cost, or being forced to intervene in a massive, more costly way later.”¹⁸ In shaping the policy towards Somali intervention during the humanitarian effort in 1992, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Vice Chairman, and the Joint Staff had to plan how U.S. military forces could execute an evolving range of missions accompanied by a nation-building effort.¹⁹ In order to advance its current political interests in the region, the State Department (as well as the U.N.) is offering financial support to the currently struggling TFG in Somalia by bringing in moderate Islamists in a desperate attempt to keep it from disbanding and allowing any power vacuum to be filled by other radical, competing groups, such as al Shabab.²⁰ When writing about al Shabab, one of the most radical multi-clan military factions and the current rebellion insurgency that controls most of Somalia (from the south to the central region of Galmudug), Jeffrey Gettleman states that, although they “are not wildly popular, they are formidable.”²¹ He also explores the possibility of

al Shabab waging an asymmetric war on Somalia's secular neighbors and their secular backers, including the United States. The U.S. State Department's position coincides with Gettleman's.

The State Department declared al Shabab a terrorist organization in December 2006 in an effort to discourage it from gaining a stronger foothold in the region after its leaders were rumored to be working with foreign jihadists, including al Qaeda. During his visit to the Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa in December 2007, Defense Secretary Robert Gates said that the Pentagon's "biggest concern about Somalia is the potential for al-Qaeda to be active there."²²

The State Department's political intervention is meant to keep radical Islamists such as al Shabab from gaining too much power and influence in the region, which is believed to be a risky area that supports the growth of extremists that are enemies of the United States. One of the ways the United States maintains its influence is by allying with specific warlords and recruiting them to combat U.S. enemies. The United States also maintains its influence in Somalia by integrating a three-track strategy (humanitarian, political, and security goals) into its economic aid.

The second proposal is to disallow Somaliland from seceding and gaining independence, instead reuniting it with the rest of Somalia in hopes that it will bring stability to the region. Over the last 18 years, every attempt to rebuild Somalia has failed. Markus Höhne of Martin Luther University observes that this (along with a multitude of other problems), has led to a crisis of political and national identities among many Somalis.²³ For those in northern Somalia, the question of people's orientation towards the state is not about parties or ideologies within the state, but about the existence of a state itself, and the individual and collective identities related to it. With Somaliland in the northwest and Puntland in the northeast, two functioning state administrations have been set up which partially fill the state vacuum. Somaliland is presented by its government as an independent state that seceded from the rest of Somalia and claims international recognition. This claim however, does not have the full support of those in Somaliland.²⁴ Those over 40, in particular, remember Somalia in the 1960s and 1970s, with a strong national army and healthy international relations. Many older Somalis see the people in the south as their brothers and sisters, even if split by civil war. They prefer a future reunion with the south and adhere to the vision of a united Somalia over one of the independence of Somaliland.

In Puntland, to the east, the government shares similar sentiments and is, according to the constitution, working towards rebuilding the Somali government. By sabotaging the full integration of Somaliland in its colonial borders, Puntland politicians hope to prevent its definitive split from Somalia. Höhne sees Puntland as a representation of the vision of a re-united Somalia. “This fits well,” he says, “with the political attitude of many ... who take pride in being the ones holding secessionist Somaliland and war-torn Somalia together”.²⁵

Otherwise stated, this second policy option is more of a conceptual paradigm than a formal proposal, but may prove to be a valuable consideration nonetheless. Many people, including the older generation in Somaliland and the politicians in neighboring Puntland, wish for Somaliland to remain unified with the rest of Somalia. They remember Somalia as a prosperous and growing nation in the 1960s and 1970s and have a vision of a united Somali people under one flag. Some policymakers in Somaliland that do not see it as economically strong enough to support itself and see the value in strengthening the rest of Somalia by integrating themselves with it.²⁶

The third proposal, a policy of containment, is advocated by several analysts, most notably Peter Pham. In his article “Do Not Resuscitate,” Pham presents a radical solution to a seemingly impossible problem. He recognizes that the West believes there is no alternative to the current systems at work dealing with failing states (see Proposal #1), but suggests that breaking failing states such as Somalia, Congo, and Sudan apart—rather than building them up—may be the answer.²⁷ To clarify, he wrote that the United States “hold[s] up the crumbling foundations of statehood. Adopting a strategy of altering states to fit ‘nations’ instead of forcing ‘nations’ to fit states will put an end to the draining and futile efforts to prop up weak and tenuous countries. It is time to stop nation-*building* and start nation-*razing*.”²⁸ In order to lift the increasingly burdensome weight of humanitarian intervention, he suggests, it may be that in some cases, “nation breaking” is what is needed to escape the cycle of violence at the root of the crises. Beyond breaking up Somalia and other failed states, Pham says, “it is about... controlling the flow of people and materiel along the borders of the collapsed state.”²⁹ Not only would Somalia be broken up into multiple, smaller states, but those states would essentially be quarantined from the outside world, separated from influence of outside sources (referring to the extended influence of organizations such as al Qaeda), necessitating the confrontation of competing

insurgencies and allowing a natural resolution to take place.

Bronwyn Bruton echoes Peter Pham, saying, “It is time for the United States to adopt a policy of constructive disengagement toward Somalia.”³⁰ He acknowledges that giving up on a bad strategy is not admitting defeat, but it is simply the wise (if not counterintuitive) response to the realization that perhaps in Somalia, doing less is better. With respect to the U.S. support of the current transitional government in Somalia, Bruton believes that the U.S. should forget about its political projects to create a central government authority (through the TFG), since any attempts will likely be futile. “If anything,” Bruton writes, “the TFG's presence in Somalia hurts U.S. goals. Resistance to the so-called government has united various radical groups [such as al Shabab] that would otherwise be competing with one another.”³¹ After abandoning what has been the policy for years now, Bruton encourages the United States to learn to coexist with al Shabab and allow it to realign itself under the right conditions.³²

The goal of this containment option proposal is not only to disengage from Somali affairs and allow the weak transitional government to flounder, but also to help (peaceably) break Somalia into multiple, separate states. Once the separate states have been put under the control of local clan leaders, they will be separated from their neighbors, allowing them to deal with other pressing security matters. When Somalia has been broken into several new states, analysts argue, the power-struggles will naturally lead to resolution over time.

Rethinking Somalia

The current conditions in Somalia are clearly difficult to engage. They are complicated on the surface level, but even more complex and intricate issues are contributing to the overall problem on a much deeper level. Somalia is in its current state because of the legacy of colonization that disrupted its normal clan-based system. The state of affairs arising from the disingenuous attempts of colonial powers to relinquish their usurped powers presently befuddles policy makers. All of the policies boast certain strengths and advantages in dealing with the issues at hand and offering long-term solutions, but there is only one policy that offers a complete and organic solution for the troubled state of Somalia. After carefully examining the various arguments, it is Phan’s model of containment touting a solution of ingenuousness rationale that

appears to be the best course of action for the future. The following section will expand and elaborate the details and implementation of disengaging from the Somali political arena and separating Somalia into several new states.

The first step the international community should take is to help war-torn Somalia separate into four new and autonomous states. The new states should be broken along major clan borders through a “sequencing process,” or on a measured timeline. Because both Somaliland and Puntland have been recognized by the U.S. government (and others) as political mechanisms functioning independent of Somalia, Somaliland should be granted independence and international recognition first, closely followed by Puntland. The remaining portion of Somalia should be split by the section of the Shabelle River that extends to Mogadishu. The new central state would extend north from the region of Galmudug, with possession over South Galkayo (sharing it with Puntland’s North Galkayo), along the major highway to Beledweyne, and along the Shabelle River south, to Mogadishu. This is the main territory claimed by Somalia’s largest major clan, the Hawiye and would likely retain the name Somalia over the new territory. The territory south of the Shabelle River would then belong mostly to the southern population of the Darod clan (Somalia’s second-largest clan). This territory is currently almost completely controlled by al Shabab, thus allowing a unified state under the control of al Shabab, and for the sake of simplicity, may be referred to as “al Shababland.”

Although partitioning Somalia into separate nation-states may yield three more struggling and perhaps radical governments that would make intervention increasingly difficult, the logic behind breaking apart the Somali clans into separate states is based both on historical patterns and the internationally recognized requirements for statehood. In the Post-Cold War era, civil wars have not decreased as precipitously as general war.³³ That is, there is less likely to be conflict (historically speaking) across international borders than if Somali borders stayed as they were right now. For a territory to be considered a state, four fundamental conditions must be met. First, a state must have a geographically defined boundary. Second, a stable population must reside within its borders. Third, there must be a government legitimized by its population. Fourth, the state must be recognized diplomatically by other states, though the legal criteria are not absolute.³⁴ The Somaliland Republic, for example, affirms the concept of territorial integrity

as defined by the OAU.³⁵ Recent events also point toward a peaceful future for the new states. In January 2011, 99% of voters in Southern Sudan opted to secede from the country's north in a peaceful process that will likely conclude in July 2011 with a formal declaration of independence. With support from the international community and the possibility of violence escalating small, the new development signals a new era for Africa. It is an African solution to an African problem.

After dividing Somalia into four new states, the international community must disengage itself from the situation. They must desist playing interventionist roles and allow the system to naturally disentangle itself. Bruton notices a correlation between international intervention and the threat of terrorism, pointing out that the “terrorist threat posed by Somalia has grown in proportion to the intrusiveness of international policies toward the country.”³⁶ He also notices that Somalia's major political actors—al Shabab, Hizbul Islamists, local clerics, and the Hawiye leadership—are unified in their desire for foreign troops to leave and foreign governments to interfere less.³⁷ Smith Hempstone, U.S. ambassador to Kenya during the humanitarian crisis in 1992, wrote that “there is little reason to believe that the bitter and long-standing clan rivalries in Somalia...will yield to outside intervention.”³⁸ Jeffrey Gettleman also sees the disadvantages of intervention in Somalia, writing, “The United States has been among the worst of the meddlers... and [has] consistently failed to appreciate the twin pulls of clan and religion.”³⁹ As can often be problematic, Somali society often divides and sub-divides during internal disputes, but it quickly unifies when confronted by an external enemy, especially the United States. In fact, an article in *The Economist* states that foreign intervention has only succeeded in pushing moderate Somalis together with the belligerent minority, weakening the moderates and strengthening the extremists.⁴⁰ One of the most important steps for the international community is to distance itself from Somalia without delay.

It may be counterintuitive for the United States (and other states) not to protect its vital political interests by watching over Somalia's figurative shoulder and keeping track of developments that potentially threaten U.S. security, but it may not be as much of a gamble as the State Department believes it to be. Bruton sees the TFG's presence in Somalia as a hindrance towards U.S. goals rather than a symbolic preservation of its goals. He argues that the resistance to the transitional

government is unified among various radical groups, when they would otherwise turn on themselves and compete with one another.⁴¹ Bruton also argues that al Shabab, the main threat to U.S. security according to the State Department, is not as strong as it is thought to be. He sees the line between the vocally pro-West TFG and the vocally radical al Shabab as thinner than often believed, citing clan and economic-based interests that often trump actual ideology when determining allegiances. In reality, “loyalty is in short supply.”⁴² The bottom line is that al Shabab’s power is weak—it does not so much govern territory as occupy it through clan manipulation, public relations, and intimidation, and it most certainly is not a transnational terrorist organization that could one day pose a threat to U.S. national security. “For now,” Bruton concludes, “the United States should commit itself to a strategy that promotes development without regard to governance [because] encouraging development without promoting governance may not yield political outcomes that are palatable to Washington . . . but it is the only safe way to proceed.”⁴³

The international community needs to allow political groups to naturally rise up and gain control, even if those groups may seem objectionable. It is certainly possible that a radical internal group will rise to power, as has happened in the past, but they may surprise us. For example, the Islamists gained control and drove the warlords out of Mogadishu by June of 2006. They had quietly stepped in and built mosques, Koranic schools, and had started an Islamic revival. By the early 2000s, the Islamists had rounded up the criminals on the streets, held trials according to Sharia law (the only principle the clans could agree on), and set up the Islamic Courts Union.⁴⁴ The brief reign of the Islamists offered the only six months of peace Somalia has seen since 1991. Even the feeble transitional government and its Islamist opposition have agreed to work together in the past to rebuild their ruined country.⁴⁵ The most notable exception to allowing groups that might not necessarily align with U.S. interests come to power is piracy. A possible short-term solution would be to severely limit Somalia’s border into the waters along the coast. The process of containing the newly formed Somali states would also involve an international cooperation between states using the Gulf of Aden for trade to provide security in the gulf. There is a mutual interest for states that rely heavily on the trade routes through the Gulf of Aden to provide such security.

The most crucial component that enables the policy to provide long-term peace and solutions to the Somali people is the implanting and cultivation of a strong civil society, starting bottom-up, at the grass-roots level. During Special Envoy Mohammed Sahnoun's duty in Somalia, it was recognized that the best course for reconciliation has been through his bottom-up approach, revitalizing the system of clan elders, and mobilizing local community action groups (including women's groups).⁴⁶ Sahnoun himself wrote about the importance of working with the local culture, especially the value of mobilizing women. By encouraging broad community-development projects, local enterprise can be stimulated.⁴⁷ Gettleman recalls that Somalia in the 1990s, even without a stable government or bank, was more stable than in the 1980s because of private businesses that began supporting the population through services that the government usually provides such as: healthcare, education, and mail service.⁴⁸ He concludes his discussion on civil society by stating that "the civilian administration that emerged is key in a society where the influence of kinship on personal and communal identity is still pervasive," and, "when unification stems from the people within a nation... success can be natural."⁴⁹

Challenges

The road to a safer and successful Somalia will not be free of challenges—it will be marked with difficulties and breakdowns. The problems that plague Somalia are many, and none of the solutions can be singularly or easily defined. The following section will briefly address three of these inevitable challenges: the unchecked piracy that controls Somalia's coast and Gulf of Aden to the north, al Qaeda's possible influence in the region, and where the funding required for Somalia to move in a new direction will come from. The section will conclude with possible U.S. approaches to successfully meeting those challenges.

Two attacks on the U.S. vessels, Maersk Alabama and the Liberty Sun, off the coast of Somalia in April 2009 prompted a U.S. Congressional Hearing to discuss the recent increase in piracy. Both flagships had been carrying food aid to Somalia when they were attacked by Somali pirates. Although the separate incidents marked a dramatic rise in the threat of pirate attacks in the heavily-trafficked Gulf of Aden and Somali coast, it is important to keep the issue in perspective. As noted by Hon. Michèle Flournoy, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, over 33,000 vessels transit the Gulf of Aden annually.⁵⁰ In 2008, there were 122 attempted pirate attacks, but only 42

of those were successful. In other words, successful pirate attacks occurred for only .12% of all shipments.⁵¹ These figures are not meant to mitigate the severity of piracy in the region, but rather only to illustrate that piracy is merely a symptom of more deeply rooted problems.

Sec. Flournoy addressed the root causes of Somali piracy as the poverty and instability that plague the country. Because “legitimate opportunities are scarce,” she said, “piracy and other criminal activities flourish.”⁵² Pirates are able to operate with impunity from the coastal fishing villages, most notably in the town of Eyl—although it is not piracy as a crime (or the massive networks supporting piracy) that should be the international community’s main concern. It is the pirates looking for the stability and protection offered by groups such as al Qaeda that pose the true threat. These pirates are considerable targets for conscription into al Qaeda. They are uneducated and desperate, and the possibility of their involvement in terrorist activities may become very real.⁵³

In the aftermath of 9/11, concerns about terrorist links (especially to al Qaeda) within Somalia rose dramatically. From 2001 to 2003, evidence began to emerge that al Qaeda and other activities inside Somalia were beginning to evolve. In 2005, Major-General Douglas Lute designated Somalia as a possible target for al Qaeda expansion, giving several reasons for his conclusion. Somalia is a safe haven for foreign terrorists seeking to escape the rule of law. The complete lack of customs and immigration at borders and ports has been a cause for concern. The unpatrolled beaches and borders also allow for transshipment of men, money, and materiel. The unpatrolled beaches under the control of pirates prove to be the most troublesome, as they allow the massive piracy networks to communicate and cooperate with al Qaeda and other terrorist networks.⁵⁴ The pirate-controlled ports (Eyl, for example) also constitute ideal environments for al Qaeda recruitment, especially, as Kenneth Menkhaus points out, “among uneducated, unemployed young men who currently face a bleak future.”⁵⁵

However, the lawlessness of collapsed states such as Somalia is a double-edged sword for terrorist organizations. In reality, Somalia is a flawed haven for al Qaeda and its affiliates.⁵⁶ In zones of state collapse, terrorist cells are more exposed to international counterterrorist efforts, and those areas tend to be inhospitable and dangerous. Foreign terrorists are also more

susceptible to betrayal by Somalis eager to reap the rewards of handing over a terrorist to the United States. Al Qaeda has a difficult and doubtful future in Somalia, but the real concern lies with its ally and affiliate groups, such as al Shabab.⁵⁷ In July 2010, al Shabab claimed responsibility for twin bomb blasts that killed nearly 80 people in Uganda's capital city, Kampala. There is no doubt that, although not as frightening as many U.S. analysts believe, al Shabab is a greater threat to Somalia's success than al Qaeda. Fortunately, the United States is in an ideal position to monitor the growth of terrorist activities, patrol the Somali coast for pirates, and contribute to Somalia's development through financial support.

George Ayittey, Professor of Economics at American University, points out that despite massive economic assistance from the West in 1987, Somalia earned the nickname "the Graveyard of Aid."⁵⁸ With few exceptions, international ventures in the country during this time were wasteful and without gain. There is a hope for change, however. During the May 2009 Congressional Hearing on Piracy, the allocation of military resources in the region was discussed in accordance with securing shipping lanes and the vessels carrying aid to ailing Somalia. Sec. Flournoy acknowledged the United States' ability and willingness to use resources to conduct regional surveillance on land-based activities, namely extremist activity and growth.⁵⁹ The United States has also been a leader in promoting international cooperation against piracy, showing its commitment in time and financial support to bringing regional stability.

In October 2010, Ugandan President Museveni began urging the U.N Security Council to consider a proposal that would allow more Ugandan AMISOM troops into Somalia in hopes that the expanded mission could quell the recent insurgencies.⁶⁰ Pres. Museveni has been more frequent in his efforts to maintain regional peace after a Kampala bombing earlier that year killed nearly 80 people. He has emphasized Ugandan troops' experience, tradition, and force. He only requests financial support.⁶¹ African solutions such as these may be the answer the international community has been looking for.

Goals and Conclusion

After the international community has distanced itself from the political climate in Somalia, it would be beneficial for NGOs to stabilize Somalia and foster community and social

development. Unfortunately, as noted by *The Economist*, Somalia's current environment is not very conducive to foreign aid; workers from several agencies have been killed or kidnapped in recent weeks.⁶² It will be a struggle, but NGOs will most likely be more effective than despised foreign governments. Perhaps desiring to play an active role in Somalia, the international community could redirect a portion of the funds currently supporting the TFG to private security firms. Funds would incentivize those companies to provide limited security to NGOs and aid packages, as well as protecting Gulf of Aden shipping lanes and aid vessels from pirates.

Ideally, and with time, the separate Somali states will form a loose but cooperative federation, maintaining a regional unity and common national history. Over the long-term, hopefully the cultivated systems, rooted in organic structure (developed locally), will yield legitimacy, stabilizing the region and opening the door for more flexible international relations. If the newly-created states collapse, the international community might be content with *de facto* territories; in this case, the separate territories would be neither official nor internationally recognized, but would be accepted as autonomous.

One avenue that may prove extremely and surprisingly useful is the use of Web 2.0 technologies to incorporate the Somali diaspora in the nation-building process. The new Somali states will be separated and closely monitored by the international community, however native Somalis living abroad can still participate in the growth of the new states. This is where Somali nationalism becomes such a valuable tool. Bruton considers this possibility: a member of the diaspora might be convinced to contribute a small percentage of the money they would normally send back home to their families to a community-development fund local to his family in Somalia.⁶³ That amount could be matched by international organizations, allowing the international community to maintain a discreet role in the development of the new Somali states. By tracking these contributions using Web 2.0 technologies, contributors can be assured of transparency. Similarly, the use of Web 2.0 might allow transparency and accountability in voting for new community officials or having an idea of the developments in their areas.

The future of Somalia is uncertain, and the path to peace and stability is unclear, but whichever direction the world decides to move in will require a new norm for the African continent as a

whole. It will require an African solution and commitment. Success or failure in the Horn of Africa will have broader implications than the Somali people, just as the effects of Tunisia's recent Jasmine Revolution have sparked riots in Egypt and Libya, or the peaceful secession of Southern Sudan may soon lead to an independent Somaliland. A new era in Africa has begun, and there is hope for a brighter Somali future.

Endnotes

¹ Christian P. Potholm, *Four African Political Systems* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1970), 190.

² *Ibid.*, 191.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Walter S. Poole, *The Effort to Save Somalia: August 1992-March 1994* (Washington, DC: Joint History Office, 2005), 9.

⁵ Tom J. Farer, *War Clouds on the Horn of Africa*. 2nd ed (New York: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1979), 121.

⁶ Poole, *Effort to Save Somalia*, 5.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁸ John L. Hirsch and Robert B. Oakley, *Somalia and Operation Restore Hope: Reflections on Peacemaking and Peacekeeping* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 1995), 13.

⁹ Poole, *Effort to Save Somalia*, 6.

¹⁰ Hirsch and Oakley, *Somalia and Operation Restore Hope*, 25.

¹¹ Poole, *Effort to Save Somalia*, 23.

¹² *Ibid.*, 57.

¹³ Peter J. Pham, "Do Not Resuscitate." *National Interest* 94 (2008): 21-25.

¹⁴ Jeffrey Gettleman, "The Most Dangerous Place in the World." *Foreign Policy* (2009).

¹⁵ Bronwyn Bruton, "In the Quicksands of Somalia: Where Doing Less Helps More." *Foreign Affairs* 88.6 (2009): 79-94.

¹⁶ April A. Gordon and Donald L. Gordon, eds. *Understanding Contemporary Africa*. 4th ed (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2007), 98*tab*.

¹⁷ Pham, "Do Not Resuscitate," 22.

¹⁸ Peter J. Schraeder, "African International Relations," in *Understanding Contemporary Africa*, ed. April A. Gordon et al. (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2007), 190.

¹⁹ Poole, *Effort to Save Somalia*, 1.

²⁰ Gettleman, “Most Dangerous Place.”

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² Pham, “Do Not Resuscitate,” 23.

²³ Markus V. Höhne, “Political Identity, Emerging State Structures and Conflict in Northern Somalia.” *Journal of Modern African Studies* 44.3 (2006): 397-414.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ Pham, “Do Not Resuscitate,” 24.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, *ital* added.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 25,

³⁰ Bruton, “Quicksands of Somalia,” 79-94.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² *Ibid.*

³³ Karen A. Mingst, *Essentials of International Relations*. 4th ed (New York: W. W. Norton, 2008), 219.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 99-100.

³⁵ Gordon and Gordon, *Understanding Contemporary Africa*, 164.

³⁶ Bruton, “Quicksands of Somalia,” 79-94.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ Poole, *Effort to Save Somalia*, 8.

³⁹ Gettleman, “Most Dangerous Place.”

⁴⁰ “Continuing to Fail.” *Economist* 7 (2008): 58.

⁴¹ Bruton, “Quicksands of Somalia,” 79-94.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ Gettleman, “Most Dangerous Place.”

⁴⁵ “Continuing to Fail.” *Economist* 7 (2008): 58.

⁴⁶ Mohammed Sahnoun, “Mixed Intervention in Somalia and the Great Lakes: Culture, Neutrality, and the Military,” in *Hard Choices: Moral Dilemmas in Humanitarian Intervention*. (Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield, 1998), 89.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ Gettleman, “Most Dangerous Place.”

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ Senate Committee on Armed Services, *Ongoing Efforts to Combat Piracy on the High Seas*, 111th Cong., 1st sess., May 5, 2009.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ “Piracy and Much Worse.” *Economist* 389 (2008): 14.

⁵⁴ Kenneth J. Menkhaus, “Somalia and Somaliland: Terrorism, Political Islam, and State Collapse.” *Battling Terrorism in the Horn of Africa*, ed. Robert I. Rotberg. (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 2005), 44.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 40-41.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 41.

⁵⁸ George B. N. Ayittey, “The Somali Crisis: Time for an African Solution.” *Cato Policy Analysis* 205 (1994).

⁵⁹ Senate Committee on Armed Services, *Ongoing Efforts*, 2009.

⁶⁰ Louis Charbonneau, “UN Eyes Proposal for More Somalia Troops.” *Reuters Africa* (2010).

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² “Continuing to Fail.” *Economist* 7 (2008): 59.

⁶³ Bruton, “Quicksands of Somalia,” 79-94.

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