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CAUGHT IN BETWEEN: THE IMPACT OF THE 'WAR ON TERROR' ON AFRICAN SOIL: AN ANALYSIS OF THE SOMALIA FAMINE CRISES AND REGIONAL SECURITY IN THE HORN AND EAST AFRICA

Abstract

The 2011 famine crisis in Somalia has arguably exposed the active ongoing Islamic terrorist activities in Somalia. This has to an increased attention not only from the international media but also from the international community in particular the Western countries. Although Somalia has previously been identified by the USA as a potential safe haven for terrorists, the country has relatively received little attention from the international community and international media especially since the 1993 failure of 'Operation Restore Hope' when 18 US Soldiers were killed. However, the UN declared a famine crisis in Somalia in July 2011 and the subsequent humanitarian operations, exposed the Al Qaida affiliated Islamic group, Al Shaabab, which triggered response from the international media, Western countries, and other countries in the region. The Al Shabaab threatened to cause havoc in Kenya and to international aid workers and tourists in the region. In October 2011, for example, Kenyan troops entered Somalia in the effort to counter kidnappings of foreign aid workers and tourists by Al Shabaab group. The group is claiming that the humanitarian intervention in Somalia and in Daadab Refugee camps in Kenya is only a justification by Western countries to access and intervene in Somalia affairs. This paper analyses the nexus between the latest famine crises in Somalia and international security. The paper argues that central to this chaotic situation in the region is the global wide 'war on terror'.

Introduction

The 2011 famine crisis in Somalia has arguably exposed the active ongoing Islamic terrorist activities in Somalia. Although Somalia has previously been identified by the USA as a potential terrorist hub as well as taking efforts since 9/11 to prevent Somalia from becoming an Al Qaida hub[1] the country has relatively received little attention from the international community and international media. However, in

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[1] Bruton B., In the Quicksands of Somalia; Where Doing Less Helps More, Foreign Affairs, 88/6, Nov-Dec. 2009, pp.79-94

the wake of the famine crises in July 2011 and the obstacles faced by international organizations to deliver humanitarian aid, the Al Qaida affiliated Islamic group, Al Shabaab, has been attracting attention from not only international media but more so increased counter efforts to fight the Al Shabaab from the neighbouring countries in the region with support from the Western governments. The Al Shabaab threatened to cause havoc in Kenya and to international aid workers and tourists in the region. In October 2011, for example, Kenyan troops entered Somalia in the effort to counter kidnappings of foreign aid workers and tourists by Al Shabaab group. The mandate of this operation, however, is bigger than that as it is reflected in the operation's name, which is named 'Operation Linda Nchi', meaning 'Protect the Country'. The Kenyan involvement in Somalia was partly motivated by a desire to inoculate North Eastern Province from the chaos across its border, ease a huge refugee burden and curtail the radical influence of Al-Shabaab.[2] Since Al Shabaab is an enemy to both Kenya and the Western governments, the Kenyan government as received funds and political support from the U.S. government to fight the group. [3]

The security situation in Somalia is extremely dynamic and it keeps changing each day. The complexity of this situation has defied easy explanation. Since the fall of Siad Barre government in 1991, and the failure of the international community (in particular the UN peacekeeping and the US government) to restore the country into a peaceful situation, it has not been possible to establish a functioning state in Somalia. The neighbouring countries in the Horn and East Africa through regional institutions such as the African Union have tried to establish a government but only to be proven incapable of addressing Somalia's political problems. In 2006 the Ethiopian troops entered into Somalia to help the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and later on hand over the peacekeeping efforts to the African Union Peacekeeper (AMISOM), which brings peacekeepers from different African countries in particular Rwanda and Burundi. The peacekeeping mission has been funded and supported by the

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[2] International Crisis Group, The Kenyan Military Intervention in Somalia, Africa Report, No. 184, February 2012

[3] Whitlock C., U.S. intensifies its proxy fight against al –Shabaab in Somalia, The Washington Post, 24/11/2011, at http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/us-intensifies-its-proxy-fight-against-al-shabab-in-somalia/2011/11/21/gIQAVLyNtN_story.html Accessed 13/3/2012

European Union and the US government. The U.S. government, for example, has spent US $ 500 million since 2007 to equip and train East African troops to fight terrorism and bring stability in Somalia.[4] In connection to this, it is important to mention that although it's African soldiers who have been on the Somali ground in efforts to addressing the lawlessness issues, the international community, in particular the USA has been funding these peacekeeping operations. Bruton and Pham also highlight the financial and political support from the US to AMISOM, they observe that 'In return for their troop contributions to AMISOM, the United States has given Burundi and Uganda several hundred million dollars in salary, equipment, training, and logistical support. Perhaps more importantly, Washington now calls both countries allies.'[5] Even with the AMISOM, Al Shabaab continued with their activities in crucial areas of Somalia including the capital city, Mogadishu. It was only in late 2011 when AMISOM managed to remove Al Shabaab out of Mogadishu.

All in all, the overall security situation in Somalia has worsened over the last 20 years or so. The 2011 famine crisis was like a turning point, which renewed the international and regional interest to address the situation. Arguably, this is because the famine exposed and highlighted the activities of Al Shabaab. This has led to a renewed interest to address the security situation. The Kenyan troops to enter Somalia to fight Al Shabaab in October 2011. In the same month, the UK Prime Minister, David Cameron, convened a conference with senior representatives from over 40 governments and international organizations including the UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon.[6] The final communiqué for the conference agreed to put focus on the following factors: political (aiming at a functioning representative government); security and justice; piracy; terrorism; stability and recovery; humanitarian; and international coordination. Although the conference had all those mentioned factors in the agenda, it is arguable that the increasing threats that are jointly posed by the pirates and Al Shabaab have triggered and renewed international

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[4] Ibid; see also Bruton B., and Pham P.J., The Splintering of Al Shabaab: A Rough Road From War to Peace, Foreign Affairs, 2/1/2012, at http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/137068/bronwyn-bruton-and-j-peter-pham/the-splintering-of-al-shabaab Accessed 13/3/2012

[5] Bruton and Pham, The Splintering of Al Shabaab

[6] For more information on this conference please see FCO, London Somalia Conference, 23 February 2012, at http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/news/somalia-conference/ Accessed on 24/2/2012

attention to the Somalia's problem. In the same month, through a video recording, Al Qaida and Al Shabaab top leaders confirm their allegiances to each other.[7] Since Al Qaeda is one of the top enemies to the US and other Western countries, their formal recognition to this group should not be ignored. Thus, the current Somalia crises cannot be explained in isolation to the global war on terror.

The aim of this paper is to contribute to our understanding of the complex security issues in Somalia by exploring the nexus between the global war on terror and the security situation in Somalia and its impact on the region (i.e. Horn and East Africa). The paper argues that the 'global war on terror' can partly help us to understand the ugly story of the ongoing Somalia security havoc, which is threatening the security situation of the whole region of East and Horn of Africa.

Methodology

The argument developed in this paper is based on documentary analysis of reports, communiqué, news articles, speeches, and other media outlets. Since the main aim of this paper is only to contribute to our understanding of the current crises in Somalia, documentary research is the appropriate way to do so as 'documents can provide an important historical perspective on any area being studied'. [8] In addition, documentary analysis is a useful method for the small research project such as this as it is an extremely efficient, cost efficient and productive method.[9] To ensure reliability, the documents were gathered from different sources including the UN reports, International Crisis Group Reports, EU reports, Somalia websites, and academic commentaries such as the Council on Foreign Relations. These documents were studied along with an examination of their contexts, authorship, intended audiences, intentions and purposes.[10] This was done to guarantee a balanced view of the account is given without focusing on one-sided account.

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[7] CNN, Al Shabaab joining Al Qaeda, Monitor Group Says, CNN News, 9/2/2012, at http://articles.cnn.com/2012-02-09/africa/world_africa_somalia-shabaab-qaeda_1_al-zawahiri-qaeda-somali-americans?_s=PM:AFRICA Accessed 13/3/2012

[8] Wellington J., and Szczerbinski M., Research Methods for the Social Sciences, (London: Continuum International Publishing, 2001)

[9] Ibid

[10] Ibid

Power Vacuum and Statelessness in Somalia

The lingering Somalia's crisis of state collapse is not easy to explain. Ken Menkhaus has suggested that disaggregating the Somali debacle into three distinct crises- collapse of the central government, protracted and armed conflict, and the lawlessness, helps to produce more nuanced analysis.[11] By 1992, Somalia was a non- functioning state.[12] Its government and related services had collapsed in early 1991. It was the first country since the end of the Cold War to exist in a state of chaos without a government.[13] In the early 90's, there was a coup in Somalia and President Siad Barre was overthrown. This was particularly problematic because at the time, there were no strong political groups or parties who could have taken over. Thus the country became fragmented paving the way for war lordism to come into existence. There was political polarization and rise of clans' differences, which led to tensions and warfare between different clans. Somalia's situation worsened and we see the collapse of both the economic as well as the political establishment, which is why the country was classified as a failed or collapsed state by western governments.

After the coup, there was an interim government that was spearheaded by Ali Mohammed Mahdi, who was being attacked by various warlords, the most prominent one being Mohammed Farah Aidid. Needless to say, there was an ongoing humanitarian crisis, which is why the UN sent a mission in the country in 1992. It was at this time when the US intervened to help the UN to deliver humanitarian aid and also to oust Aidid because he was becoming too powerful. In Resolution 751, the Security Council established the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM 1), providing for the immediate dispatch of fifty unarmed UN observers to monitor the situation. Peacekeeping in Somalia, as anywhere, proved complex and difficult. Problems of logistics, recruitment and finance crippled UNOSOM 1 before it got

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[11] Menkhaus, K., State Collapse in Somalia: Second Thoughts, <u>Review of African Political Economy</u>, 30/ 97, 2003, pp. 405-422

[12] Rutherford, K. R., <u>Humanitarianism Under Fire: The US and UN Intervention in Somalia</u>, (Sterling: Kumarian Press, 2008)

[13] Ibid, p.177

going.[14] The first phase, UNOSOM 1, (the second phase being UNOSOM 2) was ultimately an inadequate effort launched with only limited support from the Security Council and the Secretariat.[15] Its failure in the face of humanitarian disaster exacerbated widespread international dissatisfaction with the shortcomings of traditional peace keeping, and prompted the Bush Senior administration to take initiative in launching Operation Restore Hope. According to John Bolton, the Bush administration sent troops to Somalia strictly to clear relief channels that could avert mass starvation.[16]

The US decision to intervene to extricate the country from the deplorable situation it was grappling with ended with unfortunate deaths of 18 soldiers who were killed in the process of battling against warlords and bandits. It could be argued that the reason why so many Americans lost their lives is because they did not had a clear picture of the kind of enemy they were going to face. So long or more specifically, till the end of the Cold War in 1989, the US had been used to the state centric approach towards warfare and security. When they arrived in Somalia, they did not know whom to attack because of the power vacuum and because of the 'state-less' situation. There were thus no clear state actors who could be targeted. Once they arrived in helicopters to 'save' the indigenous people from the warlords, they found themselves in a confused situation whereby they were being attacked from below by bandits and gangsters.

In this connection, mention maybe made of the New Security Agenda[17] and that the concept of security has changed in the post cold war period. In this period, aggressive states following a policy of territorial expansionism and aggrandisement were not always the security threats (like they had been in the Cold War era as with the former Soviet Union) because new non state actors also came into existence like the insurgents, and transnational Islamist groups e.g. Al Qaeda and their affiliates like the Somali Al Shabaab and Nigerian Boko Haram. In early 1990s, Western

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[14] Hirsch, J.L, and Oakley, R.B, <u>Somalia and Operation Restore Hope: Reflections on Peacemaking and Peacekeeping,</u> (Washington D.C: United States Institute of Peace Process, 1995), p26
[15] Ibid, p149
[16] Bolton, J., Wrong Turn in Somalia, Fundamental Diversion from Bush, <u>Foreign Affairs</u>, 73/56, 1994, pp. 54-66
[17] Buzan, B., <u>Security: A New Framework for Analysis,</u> (London: Lynn Rienner Publishers, 1998)

governments like the US were not very familiar with the new situation and took a while to get acclimatized to the new concept of security or the post cold war concept of security and security threats. The warfare in Somalia was an example of what Mary Kaldor termed as 'new wars' that have characterized conflicts in the post Cold War period. According to Kaldor, the new wars:

> take place in the context of the disintegration of states and are fought by networks of state and non-state actors, often without uniforms, sometimes they have distinctive signs, like crosses or *Ray- Ban* sunglasses as in the case of the Croatian militia in Bosnia Herzegovina. They are wars where taxation is falling and war finance consists of loot and pillage, illegal trading and other war-generated revenue. They are wars where the distinctions between combatant and non-combatant, legitimate violence and criminality are all breaking down. These are wars, which exacerbate the disintegration of the state – declines in GDP, loss of tax revenue, loss of legitimacy, etc. Above all, they construct new sectarian identities (religious, ethnic or tribal) that undermine the sense of a shared political community. Indeed, this could be considered the purpose of these wars. They recreate the sense of political community along new divisive lines through the manufacture of fear and hate. They establish new friend-enemy distinctions. [18]

It is difficult to fight these new wars with conventional military strategies and weapons, as the enemy do not employ the conventional tactics. Thus, when the US intervened in the Somali situation, many of them got killed because they did not know what sort of 'enemy' to expect. The deaths of American soldiers made many of the western governments lose their interests in the region. This could also partly explain the reason why American forces did not intervene in Rwanda in 1994.[19] Because Somalia poses such a major security threat, not only did the western governments lost interests in the region, for a while African leaders also took a step

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[18] Kaldor M., Old Wars, Cold Wars, New Wars, and the War on Terror, <u>Lecture to Cold War Studies Centre</u>, London School of Economics, 2/2/2005, available at http://dspace.cigilibrary.org/jspui/bitstream/123456789/8613/1/Old%20Wars%20Cold%20Wars%20New%20Wars%20and%20the%20War%20on%20Terror.pdf?1 Accessed 8/3/2012

[19] Clarke W. and Herbst J., Somalia and the Future of Humanitarian Intervention: Learning the Right Lessons, <u>Foreign Affairs</u>, 75/70, 1996, pp. 70-85

back and decided not to intervene in Somali affairs. Most African countries or regional organisations could not solve the Somali threat because of the lack of adequate economic, military power and political will.

After the killing of US soldiers, the situation in Somalia worsened and the UNOSOM (United Nations Operations in Somalia) withdrew in 1993. As the country disintegrated further, the international humanitarian relief operations became the major source of revenue to Somali fighters. The armed gangs stole food, extorted protection money from the NGO's and UN agencies, and charged them for shipping and landing rights.[20] The complete collapse of any semblance of national structure, making the clan the only basis of authority, order and survival, plus the hot blood created by earlier clashes, led to an attitude of 'every clan for itself'.[21] Factionalism had been entrenched in the country.

Finally, these different factions decided to meet up for peace talks in neighbouring Djibouti in 2000 and they elected a temporary president called AbdiKassim Salat Hassan. But because of the ongoing problems, he could stay in power only till the year 2002. In 2002, there was a ceasefire after two years of talking, in 2004 under the auspices of IGAD (Inter Governmental Authority on Development) a Somali National Reconciliation Conference was held in Kenya and adopted a Transitional Federal Charter. The Charter established a number of Transitional Federal Institutions (TFI), including a 275-member Transitional Federal Parliament (TFP) whose membership is designed to balance the distribution of power and influence among Somalia's main clan families. A Transitional Federal Government (TFG) was formed with a prime minister, Prof Ali Mohammed Geedi and President Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed. Because the crisis in Somalia itself was so bad, these political leaders or the transitional federal government as it was called had to operate from Nairobi. Despite the signing of papers and the establishment of TFG, there were bitter feuds between the then political leaders particularly the speaker of the parliament on the one hand, Sharif Hassan Sheikh and the President and the prime minister on the other hand. Finally, the speaker decided to sign a declaration with the president and

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[20] Rutherford, Humanitarianism Under Fire, p.178.
[21] Hirsch and Oakley, Somalia and Operation Restore Hope, p.16.

the prime minister, which was signed in Yemen, a country that was mediating. The declaration was called the Aden declaration of 2006. However, the Aden declaration did not root out the problem and even today there are still tensions between the speaker and the president. In June 2011 regional leaders met up again to try and address the situation, this culminated into the Kampala Accords[22] yet the problem still persists. Overall, the intricacy in solving the Somali problem is well explained by Menkhaus' argument that 'political and economic actors in collapsed states fear a change in the operating environment which, though far from ideal, is one in which they have learned to survive and profit.'[23] The UN declared famine in July 2011 and the difficulty in delivering humanitarian aid exposed the ongoing dire humanitarian and political situation in the country. The existence of terrorist groups, such as the Al Shabaab was further highlighted.

The Al Shabaab

In the midst of the chaotic situations and presence of warlords, clan leaders, and other power aspiring groups, the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) and Al Shabaab emerged to fight the TFG. The general perception is that the Western governments through the African Union and other specific countries such as Ethiopia support the TFG. This is important to note, because Al Shabaab is against anything that is pro-West and for a long time Ethiopia has been an enemy to Somalia in particular due to border conflicts in Ogaden.

The Union of Islamic Courts in Somalia had assumed control of Mogadishu for a certain period of time. However, the AMISOM led by Ethiopia stepped in to support the effective establishment of the TFG against the UIC and other groups. Although the AU and Ethiopia was successful in disintegrating the UIC's control in Mogadishu, they were not successful in bringing back the TFG into full sustainable and complete control of Somalia's affairs. Once the UIC lost power and left Mogadishu, they spread to other parts of the country, especially the southern parts of Somalia and established

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[22] http://unpos.unmissions.org/Portals/UNPOS/Repository%20UNPOS/110609%20-%20Kampala%20Accord%20(signed).pdf Accessed on 7/3/2012

[23] Menkhaus, State Collapse in Somalia: Second Thoughts

their bases there. Thus we see the rise of Al Shabaab, which means the 'the youth' who now have a strong control over certain parts of Somalia like Puntland and Lower Shabelle.

A number of scholars[24] have attempted to account for the origins and nature of Al Shabaab. According to Abdisaid Ali, the Al-Shabaab is an offshoot of Somalia's UIC, which evolved from a grass-root community driven Islamic Jihad movement inspired by Somali Islamic scholars who were trained in Saudi Arabia as Wahhabi sect followers.[25] It is an active, armed, politicized fanatical group that is very flexible with multiple cells that has no specifically written or declared program other than creating and imposing strictly Islamic Wahhabi doctrine in Somalia, and with the express aim of expanding it to the rest of the Horn of Africa in time, and eventually into various corners of the Africa continent (proper).[26] Al-Shabaab and a few other Islamic extremists in Somalia including the UIC have their roots in the former Al-Itihad Al-Islamiya (AIAI), which also evolved from Somalia's religious organization, the Al Salafiya Al-jadiid in the early 1970's.[27] Al Shabaab is a military manifestation of AIAI, whose leaders such as Shakykh Hassan Awey and Aden Hashi Farah Ayrow travelled to the then Taliban-controlled Afghanistan to train in Al Qaida camps. These leaders decided to establish ' Al Shabaab' as a reaction to the Ethiopian intervention into the country that was trying to help the TFG establish itself in Somalia. Lorenzo Vidono et al, argue that many Somalis perceived Ethiopia as acting as a proxy for the US and America's involvement was itself widely seen as a desire to avenge the 1993 'Black Hawk' incident or as part of a larger plan to attack Muslim countries.[28]

With the evidence that Somalia is increasingly becoming a terrorist haven, western governments are ever more getting involved with the Somali affairs. Also important to mention at this point is the piracy issue in the coastline of Somalia. Piracy is a crime of opportunity and it is an economically motivated activity conducted either by

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[24] Vidino L., Pantucci R., and Kohlmann E., Bringing Global Jihad to the Horn of Africa: al Shabaab, Western Fighters, and the Sacralization of the Somali Conflict, <u>African Security</u>, 3/ 4. 2010, pp. 216-238; Ali, A., *The Al-Shabaab Al –Mujahidin- A Profile of the First Somali Terrorist Organization*, Switzerland: International Relations and Security Network, , June 2008

[25] Ali.The Al-Shabaab Al –Mujahidin

[26] Ibid

[27] Ibid

[28] Vidono et al, Bringing Global Jihad to the Horn of Africa, p. 220

gangs of petty thieves who steal ships' property or by organized criminals who steal whole ships for their cargo and in many cases kills whole crews to prevent them from interfering.[29] Martin Murphy argues that Somali pirates are different: in their model it is the crew who are valuable not the ship or its cargo; their aim is to exploit the difference between the marginal value placed on human life in Somalia and its value in the outside world.[30] Although that is hardly the only aim of the Somali's pirates, Murphy's description of this particular aim of the Somali piracy activities underscores Kaldor's concept of 'new war' as explained above. That is why the conventional military strategies are not sufficient to address such issues. New strategies are needed to solve the root causes of the piracy problem in Somalia, which is linked to lawlessness and appalling human conditions. Martin Murphy further argues that the piracy issue in Somalia is important because its prevailing lawlessness makes it vulnerable to exploitation by violent Islamists groups that desire to use it as a base to destabilize other states in a region that borders geo-strategically vital waterway.[31]

Because of the lawlessness and the power vacuum, the access to arms for pirates has become a lot easier in the region in recent times. It should be mentioned that Somalia has a very strategic position geographically. It is located right on the edge of the African East Coast, often called the Horn of Africa, it has easy access to vessels passing through the Indian Ocean that want to trade with Kenya or vessels that are travelling from the Middle East e.g. Gulf of Aden that want to travel down the East coast of Africa to trade with southern African countries like South Africa. This trade between Asia and East Africa has gone on for centuries, which also partly accounts for the cultural commonalities between Asia and East Africa. There are a significant number of Arabs and Indians living in East Africa. In connection to this, it is important to mention that one of the reasons why Ethiopia makes an effort to resolve the situation in neighbouring Somalia (as mentioned earlier) is because Ethiopia is a landlocked country and wants to have easy access to the sea to maintain strong trade

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[29] Murphy M., *Somali Piracy: Not Just a Naval Problem*, Centre for Strategic and Budgetary Assessment, April. 2009
[30] Ibid
[31] Ibid

relations with countries in Asia and the Middle East. But because Somalia is very well geographically positioned, it has taken advantage of its position to plunder ships that come anywhere near the East African coast. This has in turn adversely impacted on the Ethiopian economy/security as well as other East African economies and their securities, which are striving to have access to the sea to maintain robust trade relations with other Asiatic countries for the maintenance of a flourishing economy. Ethiopia was also quite desperate to see the situation in Somalia resolved because relations between Ethiopia and Eritrea have already collapsed, so apart from Djibouti, the only possible way for Ethiopia to have access to the sea was through Somalia. The stateless situation in the country and the lack of political authority has allowed the ongoing piracy in the region to continue unabated. The problem of piracy has reached such a height that vessels from Asia try not to pass through that region which has in turn caused further problems for Ethiopia as well as the East African and Central African region, especially those countries which depend on imports coming through the East African coast. Thus the role of the pirates has adversely affected both the economy and security of East and Central Africa. The region is already unstable because of the various other ongoing conflicts and civil wars such as the one in Democratic Republic of Congo, northern Uganda and Darfur in Sudan. This overall situation in Horn/East and Central Africa has become even more problematic because the Somali pirates, who have easy access to arms, can sell their arms to rebels involved in these conflicts for obvious profit motive.

It's a marriage of convenience between al Shabaab and the Somali pirate networks, says Bruno Schiemsky, the former chief monitor for the United Nations group of experts keeping track of the myriad violations of the UN's arms embargo in Somalia.[32] For al Shabaab to fight, it needs weapons, which is why it needs the pirates to import them. According to Schiemsky, they know how to evade the naval forces trying to disrupt the pirates. However, they do not do it for free. While pirates have collected pay in weapons and cash, they have also traded their services for

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[32] Eichstaedt, P., <u>Pirate State: Inside Somalia's Terrorism at Sea</u> (Chicago: Lawrence Hill Books, 2010) p145.

training. Al Shabaab trains the pirates in conventional use of weapons.[33] The Somali pirates are not one monolithic group but comprise loosely organised, localised bands based on tribal and land ties. These groups intermittently seize the most vulnerable ships on the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean. Alternatively, some pirates and their groups are well organised and supported by foreigners and members of the Somali Diasporas.[34]

According to the UN Monitoring Group report, published in July, 2011, Islamist groups like Al Shabaab generates between $70 million and $100 million per year, from duties and fees levied at airports and seaports, taxes on goods and services, taxes in kind on domestic produce, 'jihad contributions', checkpoints and various forms of extortion justified in terms of religious obligation.[35] Al Shabaab controls a number of places in Somalia including those that the UN declared to be famine stricken.

The 2011 Famine Crisis and the Securitization

Somalia is an agrarian economy, which depends on agricultural farming for its survival. Climatic fluctuations can have disastrous consequences on the economy and ultimately on the people. Failure of rains, which has happened in recent times, means that there is no possibility of agricultural farming or cattle grazing. In turns this leads to epidemics and pandemics costing the lives of millions. The total failure of the October-December, 2010 (deyr) rains (secondary season) and the poor performance of the April-June, 2011 (gu) rains (primary season) have resulted in crop failure, reduced labour demand, poor livestock body conditions, and excess animal mortality.[36] The resulting decline in maize and sorghum availability has subsequently shot up local cereal prices to record levels, and in combination with reduced livestock, prices and wages substantially reduced household purchasing

[33] Ibid, p.146

[34] Ibid

[35] See http://www.un.org/sc/committees/751/mongroup.shtml Accessed 1/2/2012

[36]See www.fews.net/docs/Publiations/FSNAU_FEWSNET_030811press%20release_final.pdf Accessed 2/2/2012

power in all livelihood zones. Large-scale displacement and significant limitations on humanitarian access have further exacerbated the situation.[37] This led the UN to declare a famine in two regions of south Bakool and lower Shabelle in July 2011. In August 2011, three new areas in southern Somalia were declared to have deteriorated into a famine situation. The new areas are parts of middle Shabelle region, the Afgooye corridor settlements home to roughly 400, 000 displaced people since 2007 and parts of Mogadishu which are hosting displaced populations.[38] This situation is tied in with the ongoing refugee problem. To escape the harsh Somali realities like hunger, people have fled from the country to neighbouring countries like Kenya, where recently a fourth camp in Daadab had to be introduced for the sake of Somali refugees only.

Because of the perception by Al Shabaab that the West intervenes in their internal affairs to fight them, the group claimed that the declaration of 2011 famine crises and the deliverance of humanitarian aid was an excuse and a means by the West to get into Somalia. Al Shabaab called the famine a 'crusader' invention and an excuse for western occupation, and issued threats to aid agencies delivering food to afflicted areas.[39] As a result of this, Al Shabaab restricted delivering of food and other humanitarian aid. The World Food Programme once reported that food supplies had been stolen in Somalia and it had been investigating.[40] The group has gone to the extreme of even 'terminating' Red Cross food supply in the places were they control.[41] In addition to banning humanitarian aid and food supplies, Al Shabaab and the pirates have kidnapped western aid workers. The need to protecting aid workers and tourists in the neighbouring Kenyan coasts from kidnappings by the Somali pirates and Al Shabaab partly triggered Kenyan troops to enter Somalia in October 2011. The

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[37] Ibid.
[38] UN OCHA, Situation Report-Somalia, 29/7-5/8/2011
http://ochaonline.un.org/somalia/SituationReports/tabid/2715/language/en-US/Default.aspx
Accessed 2/2/2012
[39]See http://edition.cnn.com/2011/WORLD/africa/08/06/somalia.forces.rebels/index.html
2/2/2012
[40] Houreld K., Somalia famine aid stolen; U.N. investigating, The Washington Times, 15/8/2011, at
[41] Chonghaile C.N., Somali Islamists ban Red Cross, The Guardian, 31/1/2012, at
http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2011/aug/15/somalia-famine-aid-stolen-un-
investigating/?page=all http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/jan/31/somali-islamists-ban-red-
cross Accessed 10/3/2012

troops are fighting against Al Shabaab. Perhaps, even more seriously, the USA government sent a Navy Seal team to rescue two US aid workers in January 2012 from the pirates.[42]

As a result of lawlessness and presence of different factions, which are more interested on financial gains than stability, delivering humanitarian aid in Somalia has been a nightmare since 1992. The early 1990s famine crisis was characterized by similar difficulties that humanitarian aid agencies faced in the 2011. Due to the piracy the shipments of humanitarian aid has been at risk. Since the early 1990's the waters of the East African state of Somalia have been among the most pirate infested in the world.[43] A report by the African Development Bank (AfDB), (2011) for example, said piracy has been a longstanding problem for aid efforts to Somalia as 80%-90% of food aid arrives by sea.[44]

The complexity of working and delivering humanitarian aid in failed states and particular in Somalia can further be understood in the context of 'securitization' of international aid. The concept of 'securitization' is championed by the Copenhagen school, which argues that securitisation is a 'speech act through which an inter-subjective understanding is constructed within a political community to treat something as an existential threat to a valued referent object, and to enable a call for urgent and exceptional measures to deal with the threat.'[45] Thus securitization of international development refers to practices where international aid is dispensed for the ultimate purpose of ensuring peace and stability to both the recipient country and the donor countries. Since the 1990s, arguments for aid have included objectives such as: 'aid to help reduce immigration to Western countries'; 'aid to curb new terrorism'; and 'aid to prevent civil conflicts'. In the post-Cold War era, stability, as

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[42] See Pfalnz M., Barack Obama hails US Navy Seal Somalia raid that freed aid workers, The Telegraphy, 25/1/2012, at http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/piracy/9038395/Barack-Obama-hails-US-Navy-SEAL-Somalia-raid-that-freed-aid-workers.html Accessed 10/3/2012
[43] Murphy M., Somalia: The New Barbary? Piracy and Islamism in the Horn of Africa, (London: Hurst, 2011),p.1
[44] Tran M., Piracy hampers delivery of aid to Somalia, The Guardian, 11/8/2011, at http://www.guardian.co.uk/global-development/2011/aug/11/piracy-hampers-aid-delivery-somalia Accessed 9/3/2012
[45] Buzan, B. and Weaver, O. Regions and Powers (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2003), p.491.

Mark Duffield argues, is achieved by activities designed to reduce poverty, satisfy basic needs, strengthen economic sustainability, create representative civil institutions and protect the vulnerable, as well as to promote human rights'.[46] In connection to this, it is important to mention that securitization is a political choice, a decision to conceptualize an issue in a particular way.[47] Abrahamsen argues that one reason for placing an issue within a narrative of security might be a desire to give an issue a new sense of urgency.[48] In relation to this, Rotberg argues that in the wake of September 11, the threat of terrorism has given the problem of failed nation-states, of which Somalia is a classic example, immediacy and importance that transcends its previous humanitarian dimension.[49]

From the above perspective, we can understand why Al Shabaab has thought that the famine is political. This declaration of famine in 2011 triggered a sense of urgency and interests to address the issues in Somalia and in particular to fight the Al Shabaab. Although Somalia had been in chaos for almost 20 years, the famine reinforced renewed international interests to 'save' Somalia. President Barack Obama and the UK Prime Minister, David Cameron, joined the international efforts appealing for contributions to humanitarian aid.[50]

Due to anti-terrorism legislation, the USA government had restricted aid delivering to Somalia especially because it may have involved paying toll fees to al Shabaab.[51] It is also known that terrorist organisations such as Al Qaeda, Hamas, and Hezbollah raise money and utilise Islamic charities for various reasons such as the anonymity of the Islamic donations (Zakat and Sadaqah, voluntary contribution for charitable

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[46] Duffield, M., "Governing the Borderlands: Decoding the Power of Aid", <u>Disasters</u>, 2001, 25/4, p 310.
[47] Weaver O., 'Securitization and Desecuritization', in Lipschutz R., (Ed.) <u>On Security</u>, (New York : Columbia University Press, 1995); Abrahamsen R., A Breeding Ground for Terrorists? Africa & Britain's 'War on Terrorism', <u>A Review of African Political Economy</u>, 31/102, 2004, PP. 677-684
[48] Abrahamsen, A Breeding Ground for Terrorist?, p. 682
[49] Rotberg R., Failed States in a World of Terror, <u>Foreign Affairs</u>, 81/4, July/August 2002, pp. 127-140
[50] See <u>The Telegraphy</u>, Barack Obama urges global response to Africa famine, 29/07/2011 at http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/barackobama/8672095/Barack-Obama-urges-global-response-to-Africa-famine.html
[51] See Hersh J., Somalia Famine: Confusion Reigns Over New U.S. Policy for NGO Aid, <u>Huffington Post</u>, 10/8/2011, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/08/08/somalia-famine-new-us-policy_n_921613.html; <u>USA Today</u>, U.N.: U.S. aid restrictions hurting hungry Somalis, 18/2/2010, at http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/2010-02-17-un-us-aid-somalia_N.htm

causes), and hence there is limited information for authorities and countries to scrutinize in relation to finances and their activities.[52] This can explain why the US government had imposed restrictions on aid giving to Somalia so as to limit the terrorists from taking advantage of this situation. However, due to the brutal and harsh humanitarian needs brought by the famine crises, the US government had to try and loosen these restrictions so as to try and save some lives.

The issue of securitization of humanitarian aid can also further be underscored by the fact that the Al Qaida have also played along with the politics of aid. It is worth mentioning that Osama bin Laden himself had funded relief and development programs in Sudan and Afghanistan in the 1990s.[53] In Somalia, Al Qaida operatives distributed aid to drought-affected Somalia. There is evidence of video clips showing Al Qaida giving food and money to malnourished people in Somalia and al Shabaab respectively.[54] This is politics and indeed an aspect of securitization of international and humanitarian aid. As we saw above, al Shabaab banned many humanitarian organizations from delivering aid in areas that they control.

In February 2012, the UN declared that the famine is over, despite the observation by the Food and Agricultural Organization Director General, Jose Graziano da Silva that 'there is still a crisis in Somalia that affects 2.34 million people with high risks of malnutrition and insecurity'. This does not mean that humanitarian works have also ended, relief agencies are still operating in various parts of Somalia as well as in refugees' camps outside the country. However, the international political attention has now moved from focusing on the famine and starvation to other political issue, in particular helping the TFG to be more effective and fighting the terrorists.

Terrorism in the Horn/East Africa

[52] See: Looney, R., "The Mirage of Terrorist Financing: The Case of Islamic Charities", <u>Center for Contemporary Conflict Strategic Insights</u>, 5/3, 2006.

[53] Benthall J., "Humanitarianism and Islam after 11 September," Macrae, J. and Harmer, A. (Eds.), <u>Humanitarian Action and the Global War on Terrorism: A Review of Trends and Issues,</u> (London: Overseas Development Institute, HPG Report No. 14, 2003)

[54] Osman J., Al-Qaida and the politics of aid in Somalia, <u>The Guardian</u>, 1/11/2011, at <u>http://www.guardian.co.uk/global-development/poverty-matters/2011/nov/01/al-qaida-politics-aid-somalia</u> Accessed 9/3/2012

It is difficult to exclude African politics from the contemporary discourse on 'new' terrorism and the war on terror. Just as 'proxy wars' were fought in Africa during the Cold War,[55] the current Somalia crises and in particular the fighting between the Al Shabaab and the TFG with AMISOM and Kenyan troops, is arguably kind of a 'proxy conflict' for the global war on terror.

While we see significant attention given to South East Asian countries such as Pakistan and Afghanistan with regards to terrorism, Western government have eyed African countries as potential hub for terrorists. Chris Mullin, for example, who was the UK's Foreign Office Minister in 2004 argued that:

> there are a number of reasons why Africa should matter to us…the first is moral, referring to war, famine, disease and unspeakable barbarity that have haunted that tragic continent for much of the twentieth century. In addition to the moral arguments, there are practical reasons why Africa cannot be ignored. The most immediate of these is terrorism. He further argued that it is little known fact that there have been more Al Qaida attacks in Africa than anywhere else in the world. The fact that in parts of Africa such as Somalia entire societies have imploded makes them a ready breeding ground for terrorism.[56]

Mullin's statement above helps us to understand the geostrategic importance of Africa in this global war on terror and in particular the region of Horn and Eastern Africa. Although Al Shabaab has become more known in the wake of the Somalia famine crises, the group has been around for a period of time. In fact, the 1998 bombings in the US Embassies in East Africa and the 2002 simultaneous attacks in the Israeli filled hotel in Mombasa and the failed attempt to shoot down the Israeli passenger jet were both carried out by Al Qaida through members of the Al

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[55] Gaddis, J.L, <u>We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History.</u> (Oxford: Clarendon. 1997); Mott,W. H.,<u>Soviet Military Assistance: An Empirical Perspective.</u> (Westport, CT: Greenwood,2001); and Westad, O.A., Rethinking Revolutions: The Cold War in the Third World, <u>Journal of Peace Research</u> 29 /4, 1992, pp.455–64.

[56] Mullin C., Our Role is to Help Africa Help Itself, <u>Speech at the Council of Foreign Relations</u>, New York, 4/2/2004

Shabaab.[57] Based on its experience in Afghanistan, al Qaeda clearly thought initially that Somalia would provide it with a stable operating location and made considerable efforts to bring this about.[58] It used Somalia as a transhipment point. A disadvantage from al Qaeda's perspective was that Somalia, like almost every other failed state, lacked targets. Western interests were barely represented and few westerners went there.[59] That, however, changed between 1992 and 1995, when the UN intervened. Following the US withdrawal, al Qaeda's interest in Somalia as a planning and transhipment point continued but its commitment to Somalia as a theatre for jihadist operations dwindled rapidly. Nonetheless, the small cell, which remained, eventually mounted the deadly attacks on the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998.[60] Members of the AIAI, mentioned earlier, had worked with al Qaeda previously. Using new recruits they planned and executed two further attacks in Kenya in 2002, one on an Israeli airliner departing from Nairobi that mercifully failed and the other on Israeli guests at a Mombasa hotel which left fifteen dead and eighty injured.[61] To retaliate the 1998 bomb attacks in two US embassies in East Africa- (Tanzania and Kenya) the Clinton Administration stroke a Sudan pharmaceutical factory, El-Shifa.[62] Both the bomb attacks in the embassies and the air strikes in Sudan claimed a number of African lives. Although the conflict was between Osama bin Laden, who accepted the responsibility for the attacks, and the USA, the battle was on the African soil. Away from East and the Horn region of Africa, there have also been terrorist attacks in other parts of Africa. This is especially with the case of the extremists group in Nigeria, the Boko Haram, which means 'Western Education is forbidden'. Although the Boko Haram directs most of its attacks to Christian and Nigerian government buildings, in June 2011 they claimed responsibility for bombing the United Nations Offices in Abuja. Boko Haram is also an Al Qaida affiliated group and their attack is directed to institutions that have apparent connection to the West.

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[57] Gaddis, We Now Know; Mott, Soviet Military Assistance; and Westad, Rethinking Revolutions: The Cold War in the Third World; Murphy, Somalia: The New Barbary?
[58] Murphy, Somalia: The New Barbary? p. 71.
[59] Ibid, p.72
[60] Ibid,
[61] Ibid,p.73
[62] Gellman B., and Priest D., U.S Strikes Terrorist-Linked Sites in Afghanistan, Factory in Sudan, The Washington Post, 2/8/1998, at http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/inatl/longterm/eafricabombing/stories/strikes082198.htm Accessed 24/2/2012

Since Boko Haram is concentrated in West Africa (Nigeria), we will not discuss it in this paper as our focus is on the East and Horn Africa where the Al Shabaab is the main terrorist actors.

Terrorists have found failed and fragile states safe haven for them and their recruits. Although considerable attention has been directed to Afghanistan and Pakistan with regards to terrorist recruitment and training, there is emerging evidence that Somalia is now popular for such training. Radicalized youths from the USA, UK, Denmark Sweden, and African countries, in particular Kenya, have been going to Somalia to undertake training on terrorism. Many of these youths have recently joined the Al Shabaab and they are fighting the AU and Kenyan troops in guerrilla warfare. A number of video clip of Al Shabaab's operations in Somalia have featured group members with British and American accents. Videno et al gives an account of volunteers who have been joining al Shabaab since the Ethiopian invasion.[63] From the USA, the U.S. authorities have revealed that between 2007 and 2008 some 20 people from Minneapolis area went to join al Shabaab.[64] The Canadian authorities estimated a similar number of Canadian residents have joined al Shabaab in Somalia. For example, a Canadian resident, Abdullah Ali Afrah was killed in 2008 by the Ethiopian troops and another Canadian national, Abdifatah Mohammed Ibrahim, was arrested in Somalia in 2009 with a truck full of explosives.[65] In 2010, it was estimated by security sources in the UK that the numbers of volunteers from the UK to al Shabaab were 100.[66] A Somali British, who was an Oxford Brookes University drop out, participated in a failed suicide attack against a Somalia Prime Minister in 2007.[67] In 2011, Britain's security intelligence, the MI5 and MI6, believed that more than 100 British residents have been training and fighting in Somalia and about 40 are estimated to be active there now.[68] The fact that the Al Shabaab is effectively using internet and social media networks such as twitter is another proof that they

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[63] Videno et al, Bringing Global Jihad to the Horn of Africa,pp. 225- 227
[64] Ibid
[65] Ibid
[66] Ibid
[67] Ibid
[68] Norton-Taylor R., Al Shabaab training UK residents to fight in Somalia, The Guardian, 1/11/2011, at http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/nov/01/somalia-shabaab-training-uk-residents Accessed 9/3/2012

have an audience that is outside Somalia. Only a few people in Somalia would use the internet and most of the population are struggling to only get their daily basic needs such as clean drinking water and food. According to Martin Murphy, the Islamist faction would not have made the gains that it has unless it had been supported fulsomely over many years by Islamic charities, rich individuals across the Gulf states and Arabia, and by radical members of the large Somali expatriate communities living in Europe and the United States.[69]

As a result of these terrorism operations in Somalia we have seen increasing political attention to Somalia and to the region. As mentioned earlier, on 23 February 2012, the UK Prime Minister, David Cameron, convened a conference on Somalia. The conference discussed many things but the main focus was to enforce an effective government in Somalia (i.e. supporting the TFG) and fighting terrorism, in particular the Al Shabaab. On Terrorism, the communiqué of the conference stated that 'Terrorism poses a serious threat to security in Somalia itself, to the region, and internationally. It has inflicted great suffering on the Somali population. We agreed to work together with greater determination, and with full respect for the rule of law, human rights, and international humanitarian law, to build capacity to disrupt terrorism in the region, and to address the root causes of terrorism. We agreed on the importance of disrupting terrorists' travel to and from Somalia, and on the importance of disrupting terrorist finances, and called on countries in the region to implement the Financial Action Task Force's recommendations on combating money laundering and the financing of terrorism. We noted that effective intelligence gathering and investigation, and support to the Somali criminal justice system, were critical to the fight against terrorism. We agreed to work with the Global Counter Terrorism Forum and other international and regional bodies to deliver this important work'. In light of this communiqué itself, it is fair to expect more regional and international intervention in Somalia aiming to fight terrorism.

Conclusions and Policy Recommendations

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[69] Murphy, *Somali Piracy: Not Just a Naval Problem*

The 2011 UN declaration of famine crises in Somalia was a turning point that renewed international attention to political problems in Somalia. Somalia has been in a lawlessness situation for over 20 years, yet there has been relatively lack of interests from the international community to intervene in Somalia's grave political chaos. There are many possible reasons for this. The most appealing one being a failure of the UN and US 'Operation Restore Hope' project in early 1990s. Another possible explanation to this could be lack of national interests from the Western countries. Whatever the reasons may be, what is certain is that there has been inadequate international political will to address issues in Somalia. International political will is a scarce commodity[70] and to re-build a failed state, there are must be an international will to do so. In spite of the presence of African troops and other regional based political efforts to address the stateless situation in Somalia, the level of lawlessness in Somalia required much more efforts than those that had so far been directed.

However, the recent famine crises enhanced an international attention from Western countries echoed by their leaders such as Barack Obama and David Cameron pleading for humanitarian assistance to Somalia. This attention has been on the rise and even after the UN declared that the famine is over (in February 2012), the West is apparently more concerned not only on humanitarian but political side of the problem.

This paper has argued that the famine crisis was a catalyst for this increased attention not only because of humanitarian issues but also because it exposed the activities of a terrorist group, Al Shabaab in Somalia. Although the group has been there for quite sometimes and the Western governments have been aware of its existence, it was until the famine declaration that we have seen more attention given to Somalia. It is arguable that the famine crisis provided a chance to expose the Al Shabaab's activities and so 'legitimize' the efforts to counter the group. In connection to this, it is important to note that there have been efforts by Western government to counter terrorism in Somalia for a while but most of these operations have been

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[70] Rotberg, Failed States in a World of Terror, p.134

indirect through African troops such as AMISOM, Ethiopian, and now Kenyan. However, the February 2012 London Conference on Somalia has showcased a renewed direct interest by both international and regional players to address the issue of lawlessness in Somalia.

In light of the above, the paper concludes by maintaining that the 'war on terror' can partly explain the political crisis in Somalia. One of the groups that have been a major hindrance to the establishment of an effective government in Somalia have been the AIAI, which transformed to be an UIC and now manifests itself as Al Shabaab. This group is closely associated with Al Qaida and their leaders have been through Al Qaida training since the 1990s. The goals of this group are to spread and establish an extremist Islamic ideology in Somalia and in the rest of Sub-Saharan Africa. Anything western is their enemy. The international mandate of Al Shabaab has been proven by its recruitment strategy as well as it's target for the aid workers from the West.

In view of this, the West has to intervene and counter-terrorism in Somalia. This explains the securitization of humanitarian and international aid. One of the reasons that the West wants to stabilize Somalia is to counter terrorism. On the other side the Al Shabaab, due to the perception that the famine was a 'crusader' hindered the effective deliverance of food and humanitarian aid, which, if anything led to more people dying out of starvation or running away as refugees to neighbouring countries such as to Kenya. The refugee problems and the need to protect countries from Al Shabaab have heightened security issues in the region. This is why the Horn and East African region is caught in between the war on terror between the U.S and terrorists.

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