

ABSTRACT

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Somalia: Recommendations for Conflict Resolution Where Failure is the Norm
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Conflict has gripped Somalia for decades with little to no end in sight. While many have tried to resolve the conflict, a sustainable and successful strategy remains elusive. As a failed state with a bitter past and tenuous future, there is both a tactical and moral imperative to bring stability to Somalia. Furthermore, with a moderate government, international attention, and an as yet imperfect insurgency, there may never be a better opportunity to act than now. Based on analysis of the Somali conflict history and context, as well as research on conflict resolution and management methods, this study outlines a comprehensive and multifaceted approach to achieve long-term peace in Somalia.

The research indicates taking the conflict of Somalia and the semi-autonomous region of Somaliland on a separate—though mutually informing—basis. For Somaliland, partition is recommended to remove the region from the danger of continued attachment to Somalia proper as well as to encourage nascent state, civil and democratic institutions in Somaliland. In Somalia proper, however, a two-pronged strategy is best. This policy consists of peace- and state-building via international intervention, followed by negotiations between the government, insurgents, and any other important players such as remaining warlords and/or clan leaders. Through a careful and considered application of these prescriptions, the country has a chance to usher in an era of stability, security, and opportunity that the people of Somalia have seldom seen.

INDEX WORDS: Somalia, Somaliland, Conflict Resolution, Failed States, Partition, Secession, International Intervention, Peacekeeping, Peacebuilding, Statebuilding, Negotiation, United Nations, African Union

SOMALIA: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION
WHERE FAILURE IS THE NORM

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

In recent months, piracy has seen a modern resurgence that has nothing to do with illegal movie downloads or the swashbuckling Captain Jack Sparrow. The now infamous Somali pirates, however, are part of a much larger and more wide-ranging set of problems that has gripped Somalia for decades. Somalia's is a conflict that many have tried—and largely failed—to resolve. It appears so intractable that few are willing to go anywhere near the country, preferring a low whistle and a shake of the head before they walk away as quickly as possible. Yet this is neither a wise nor a just course of action. It is time to think seriously about conflict resolution in Somalia and find the answers that have fatally and disastrously eluded potential efforts for so long. With a relatively new government in place that has ties to many of the most important players in the conflict and in the international community, there may never be a more promising opportunity to act.

Taking a new approach to the Somali conflict is imperative not only for Somalia itself, but the international community as a whole. Sufficient motivation for other states to maintain an interest in resolving the conflict is provided not only by the more recent threat of piracy, but also by regional destabilization, refugee flows, and terrorism. These issues exist irrespective of whether or not one recognizes a moral imperative—evinced by a legacy of failed colonialism, years of neglect, mishandled interventions, and the long-standing suffering of the Somali people. Any resolution must take into account the perspectives of all parties to the conflict in a constructive and reasoned manner. It will also likely require acknowledging the distinction in context between the semi-autonomous region of Somaliland and greater Somalia.

The research indicates that Somaliland is a candidate for partition to remove it from the conflict and allow for strengthening of its peace and nascent democracy efforts within its own borders. Somalia proper will likely prove a more difficult case if past endeavors are any indication. Yet both Somalia and the international community can learn from those failings to produce a viable new approach to peace- and state-building that would provide the necessary backbone of security and freedom for the country to move forward. This could potentially be led by the African Union (AU) and supported by other interested international actors such as the United Nations (UN). With these efforts underway, the primary actors to the conflict must be brought together in negotiations to produce a plan for stability and peace acceptable to all sides. Of course, this will be far from a simple task and will take a commitment of time and resources from within and without the country. Yet neither Somalis—on either side—nor the international community can afford to allow the conflict to continue and spin ever more wildly out of control. The time for resolution is now.

CHAPTER 2 UNDERSTANDING SOMALIA: CONFLICT BACKGROUND

Historical and Societal Context

Modern-day Somalia was formed in 1960 when the British colony of Somaliland in the north and the southern Italian colony of Somalia became independent and merged into a united republic.¹ The democracy that formed was short-lived and “poorly adapted to the clan-based nature of Somali politics.”² Ultimately, it fell in a coup to General Siad Barre in 1969. Barre assumed power and subsequently established “Scientific Socialism” in the country.³ Somalia was supported by both sides during the Cold War—first by the Soviets, and later by the US.⁴ The eventual drop in overall aid in the 1980s, however, posed a serious challenge to the Barre regime.⁵ Barre had also been systematically destroying democratic institutions, and bringing all wealth and power to himself and his clansmen.⁶

Eventually, as the state lost functionality and the government lost legitimacy, the country rose against Barre using their own clans as an organizing force, and succeeded in ousting him in 1991.⁷ The warlords that sprung up following Barre’s fall divided the country amongst

¹ BBC, “Timeline: Somalia,” BBC, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/country_profiles/1072611.stm (accessed September 20, 2009), para. 6-15.

² *Rebuilding Somaliland: issues and possibilities / WSP International Somali Programme* (Lawrenceville: Red Sea Press, 2005), 10.

³ BBC, “Timeline...” para. 19-20; Ioan M. Lewis, *Understanding Somalia and Somaliland: Culture, History, Society* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 38-39.

⁴ Gerald Helman and Steven Ratner. “Saving failed states.” *Foreign Policy* no. 89 (1992-1993): para 4; BBC, “Timeline...” para. 24.

⁵ Helman and Ratner, para 5; Abdulahi A. Osman, “Cultural Diversity and the Somali Conflict: Myth or Reality?” *African Journal on Conflict Resolution* 7, no. 2 (2007): 105, 107.

⁶ Robert I. Rotberg, “The Failure and Collapse of Nation-States: Breakdown, Prevention, and Repair” in *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences*, ed. R. I. Rotberg, 12 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004).

⁷ William Zartman, “Introduction: Posing the Problem of State Collapse” in *Collapsed States: The Disintegration and Restoration of Legitimate Authority*, ed. W. Zartman, 3 (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 1995);

themselves and when their tenuous agreements faltered, the state and the capital of Mogadishu, in particular, became their battleground.⁸ This power struggle coincided with a severe drought, the combination of which claimed many lives and forced countless others to become internally displaced or flee as refugees.⁹ Indeed, drought and hunger continues to be of concern to this day and the humanitarian crisis which has been building over the last several decades has yet to be dealt with in full.¹⁰ The already weakened state structures that existed under Barre were not bolstered in time to prevent collapse. After 1991, the opposing warlords and clans failed to agree upon or constitute a replacement government to Barre's dictatorship, sending Somalia into a state of near anarchy from which it has never entirely been able to emerge.¹¹

Since 1991, Somalia has seen many efforts—both internal and external—to return it to a state of order, if not complete peace. Between 1991 and 2007, Somalia was “the subject of 14 failed reconciliation conferences” which attempted to broker peace between various factions and install a stable government in the capital.¹² The UN finally established a mission, UNOSOM, in Somalia in 1992—primarily to provide humanitarian assistance. The United States agreed to support their flagging and vulnerable efforts in late 1992 with a military presence. The US—alongside early 1993 peace conferences—initially made some progress, turning the bulk of the operation back to the UN within five months. UNOSOM II was then established, with the

Hussein M. Adam, “Somalia: A Terrible Beauty Being Born?” in *Collapsed States: The Disintegration and Restoration of Legitimate Authority*, ed. W. Zartman, 69 (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 1995).

⁸ Kiran Bhat, (Associate Ed.), “Learning From Within” *Harvard International Review* 29, no. 2 (2007): 32.

⁹ Osman, 94.

¹⁰ BBC, “Q&A: Somalia's Conflict,” BBC, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/4760775.stm> (accessed September 20, 2009), para 26-30; Thomson Reuters Foundation, AlertNet, “Somalia in Turmoil,” Thomson Reuters Foundation, AlertNet, http://www.alertnet.org/db/crisisprofiles/SO_PEA.htm?v=in_detail (accessed September 20, 2009), para 1-10.

¹¹ BBC, “Country Profile: Somalia,” BBC, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/country_profiles/1072592.stm (accessed September 20, 2009), para 5.

¹² Ken Menkhaus, “The crisis in Somalia: Tragedy in five acts” *African Affairs* 106, no. 424 (2007): 359.

additional charge of disarming the Somali militias.¹³ However, the UN and remaining US troops met increased resistance that resulted in intensified fighting, attacks on UN forces, as well as the now infamous US Blackhawk helicopter incident.¹⁴ The US was forced to pull out entirely in 1994 and the UN peacekeepers followed suit in 1995 with the mission left unresolved.¹⁵

The various reconciliation attempts alternately involved warlords, clans, and other past and potential government operatives.¹⁶ As these factions fought amongst themselves, Islam as a political movement gained ground—especially in the south. By 2000, the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) had been formed with *Shari'ah* law at its center, uniting several groups and even providing some much-needed social services to the citizenry.¹⁷ This caught the attention of the US, which has come to fear a purported Al Qaeda presence in the UIC and has generally tried to thwart the radical Islamists' efforts.¹⁸ Ethiopia was also alarmed by a rise of Islamism on its border; declarations within the UIC of *jihad* against Ethiopians eventually brought Ethiopia directly into the fray.¹⁹

In 2004, key warlords and politicians agreed to a transitional government.²⁰ The new government was plagued by tensions and disagreements from the start.²¹ Consequently, facing little resistance, the Islamists rose in 2006 to control most of southern Somalia and wrest control of Mogadishu from the warlords who had ruled there for fifteen years.²² Organizing around the UIC, the Islamists initially experienced great success and won support from much of the

¹³ Paul F. Diehl, "Peacekeeping in Somalia, Cambodia, and the Former Yugoslavia" in *Resolving Regional Conflicts*, ed. R. E. Kanet, 155-156 (Urbana : University of Illinois Press, 1998); Lewis, 126-127.

¹⁴ Lewis, 126-127. BBC, "Timeline..." para. 29-31.

¹⁵ BBC, "Timeline..." para. 29-31.

¹⁶ Lewis, 127-128.

¹⁷ Bhat, 32.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ BBC, "Country Profile..." para 8.

²¹ Thomson Reuters Foundation, para 40.

²² BBC, "Country Profile..." para 10.

population. They brought long-absent stability and relative peace to their territory and cut across the clans that had been so divisive for many years. The Courts' control faltered, however, when the moderates were unable to prevail over their own hardliner factions.²³ The hardliners' rhetoric and actions provoked the already bristling Ethiopia into full scale conflict, which erupted at the end of 2006.²⁴ In the end, the UIC elements were routed and scattered by a combination of Ethiopian and government forces assisted by (controversial) US support.²⁵

Nevertheless, the last two years have seen a resurgence of the Islamic radicals, resulting in renewed violence.²⁶ In fact, they have regained control of much of the southern part of the country.²⁷ Facing much pressure both within Somalia and from abroad, Ethiopia eventually withdrew its troops in early 2009.²⁸ AU peacekeepers now comprise the major foreign force in Somalia, having first arrived at the height of the renewed conflict between insurgents and Ethiopian troops in 2007.²⁹ The AU forces have not been able to be very effective and may suffer from a too-narrow mandate and lack of resources (although the international community pledged additional aid in April 2009).³⁰ However, some reports indicate that many Somalis believe that this small force (approximately 5000 troops) is all that keeps the government secure and in place.³¹

²³ Menkhaus, 370-374.

²⁴ Ibid, 378-380.

²⁵ Ibid, 381-383.

²⁶ Ibid, 386-387.

²⁷ BBC, "Country Profile..." para 12.

²⁸ BBC, "Country Profile..." para 13; BBC, "Timeline..." para 53; Jeffrey Gettleman, "Somalia." *New York Times*, September 17, 2009,

<http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/international/countriesandterritories/somalia/index.html?scp=1-spot&sq=somalia&st=cse> (accessed September 20, 2009), para 13.

²⁹ BBC, "Timeline..." para. 57.

³⁰ Amnesty International, "Somalia: Report 2009," Amnesty International

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/region/somalia/report-2009> (accessed September 20, 2009), para 10; Thomson Reuters Foundation, para 70; BBC, "Q&A..." para 23-25.

³¹ Gettleman, para 7.

Today, it is the remaining radical elements of the UIC and Islamic movement that comprise the majority of the insurgency. Primary among the rebels is Al Shabaab—originally the youth and military branch of the UIC, it is now listed as a terrorist organization by the US.³² There are other elements fighting alongside Al Shabaab, and though they have seen successes, the insurgency is described as “deeply fragmented.”³³ Indeed, there are also lingering warlords and clan elements that stand against the government as well.³⁴ Although the Islamists have gained supporters over their rise to power, some of their more extreme stances alienated many Somalis.³⁵ Overall, the insurgents’ form of Islam is more extreme and fundamentalist than most Somalis (who tend to practice mainstream Sunni beliefs), and they have not been appeased by the current government’s introduction of Islamic law.³⁶ Nevertheless, the Islamists are far from backing down and maintain considerable power and support.³⁷

The current government, while not overwhelmingly strong, is one of the most moderate and encouraging seen in Somalia in recent years. The transitional government’s parliament met in Djibouti in January 2009 to bring in additional members from the opposition and elect a new president.³⁸ The new president, Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, is a moderate Islamist and was a member of the UIC when they controlled Mogadishu in 2006.³⁹ His hardliner former allies have labeled him a traitor.⁴⁰ A man of modest beginnings, Ahmed nonetheless has both grassroots and

³² Thomson Reuters Foundation, para 49; Gettleman, para 9, 12; BBC, “Q&A...” para 3-4.

³³ Human Rights Watch, “World Report 2009: Somalia, Events of 2008,” Human Rights Watch, <http://www.hrw.org/en/world-report/2009/somalia> (accessed September 20, 2009), para 1; Thomson Reuters Foundation, para 61, 64.

³⁴ Menkhaus, 357.

³⁵ Thomson Reuters Foundation, para 53-55.

³⁶ BBC, “Q&A...” para 10-12.

³⁷ Bhat, 33; BBC, “Timeline...” para. 96, 99.

³⁸ BBC, “Country Profile...” para 16.

³⁹ BBC, “Country Profile...” para 31; BBC, “Q&A...” para 6; Thomson Reuters Foundation, para 45-47.

⁴⁰ Thomson Reuters Foundation, para 45-47.

international support.⁴¹ Ahmed has also tapped the Somali Diaspora as a resource, and another moderate Islamist group (Ahlu Sunna WJlamaca) has aligned itself with the government.⁴² Furthermore, President Ahmed selected Omar Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke as his prime minister in February 2009. Sharmarke is a former diplomat with ties in the Diaspora and international communities, as well as the moderate Islamists.⁴³ Together, Sharmarke and Ahmed represent two of the major—and historically antagonistic—clans in Somalia, broadening government appeal.⁴⁴

It should by now be apparent that Somalia is an extremely complex and multi-faceted case—much more complicated, in fact, than such a relatively brief treatment can assess. While a more detailed study is better left to other research (see, for instance, Osman, Menkhaus, Bhat), there are a few additional issues that must be addressed before moving forward. First, let us consider two relatively narrow—though nonetheless significant—concerns: the geopolitical situation and the arms issue.

Somalia's strategic location has long been attractive to forces within and outside the region.⁴⁵ Somalia has also historically soured relations with its neighbors by claiming Somali-inhabited lands in Kenya, Djibouti and Ethiopia.⁴⁶ As described above, Ethiopia and the US have become embroiled in the conflict—often with negative consequences.⁴⁷ Eritrea has also become negatively attached to the conflict. In addition to potential ties to outside terror groups, the radical Islamists receive support from Eritrea, “including receipt of arms and military advisors.”⁴⁸ As such, Eritrea is able to use Somalia “as a convenient theater in its proxy war

⁴¹ Gettleman, para 3.

⁴² Gettleman, para14; Thomson Reuters Foundation, para 65.

⁴³ BBC, “Timeline...” para. 97-98.

⁴⁴ Thomson Reuters Foundation, para 85.

⁴⁵ Osman, 95.

⁴⁶ BBC, “Country Profile...” para 1-3.

⁴⁷ Human Rights Watch, “World Report...” para 2.

⁴⁸ Menkhaus, 378; BBC, “Somalia: Who Supports Who?” BBC, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/5092586.stm> (accessed September 20, 2009), para13-23.

against Ethiopia.”⁴⁹ Thus, both state and non-state actors are also becoming involved; some reports indicate that Al Qaeda may view Somalia as a viable launch pad and breeding ground for international terrorism.⁵⁰ The burgeoning refugee problem—i.e. in Kenya—also creates tension, humanitarian concerns, and potential spillover effects.⁵¹

As the availability of arms and the need to disarm is frequently discussed by conflict resolution theorists, it is worthwhile to note the particular difficulties Somalia faces on this matter.⁵² The easy availability of armaments weakens a state and severely hinders the government from providing security.⁵³ The UN arms embargo seems to carry little real weight and has been violated on numerous occasions.⁵⁴ As indicated above, it is believed that Al Shabaab is receiving arms from Eritrea.⁵⁵ Somali factions have also received, at various times, arms and/or arms money from the US as well—ostensibly as part of the anti-Islamist/antiterrorism campaign.⁵⁶ It is also believed that many of the US arms sent to the current government end up in insurgent hands via certain government military forces (including officers) with ties to Al Shabaab.⁵⁷ Ethiopian troops may be involved in the illicit arms market as well.⁵⁸

In terms of broad-based complexities, none is more so than the cause of the Somali conflict. Again, this is a topic worthy of greater and more extensive research. Indeed, Osman admits, the Somali conflict literature is thus far inconclusive on a supreme cause, and touches

⁴⁹ Human Rights Watch, “World Report...” para 19.

⁵⁰ Gettleman, para 4.

⁵¹ Human Rights Watch, “World Report...” para 19.

⁵² Paul F. Diehl, Daniel Druckman, and James Wall, “International Peacekeeping and Conflict Resolution: A Taxonomic Analysis with Implications” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 42, no. 1 (1998): 38-40; Michael Renner, *Ending Violent Conflict* (Washington: Worldwatch Institute, 1999), 8; Rob McRae and Don Hubert (Eds.), *Human Security and the New Diplomacy: Protecting People, Promoting Peace* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2001), 48; Rotberg, 32.

⁵³ Osman, 112.

⁵⁴ Amnesty International, para 11.

⁵⁵ Gettleman, para 8.

⁵⁶ Bhat, 32.

⁵⁷ Gettleman, para 6.

⁵⁸ Thomson Reuters Foundation, para 72-74.

upon many issues (i.e. leadership, geopolitics, economics, group hatreds, colonialism, resources, anarchy, etc.) which are part of the fabric of the conflict and underlie much of the discussion in this and other research.⁵⁹ Moreover, Osman reminds us that the three categories of causes of civil wars—ethnicity/identity, politics and economics—tend to “overlap and interact in political systems.”⁶⁰ Thus, while understanding the context and multiple roots of conflict in Somalia is imperative, selecting one primary cause out of the whole may be less important and relatively impossible. Nevertheless, there is one final issue that should be touched upon in order to frame the conflict resolution policy: the nature of the interaction between the parties to the conflict.

Conflict is naturally divisive, and yet Somalis have much to unite them—a fact which has been perplexing to many who have studied the country’s deterioration.⁶¹ Though the debate centers on a dichotomy between a homogenous and a heterogeneous view of Somalis, the reality lies somewhere in the middle. True, they have similar cultural traditions, common ancestry, Islamic faith, and a historical sense of nationhood (if not statehood). However, Osman is quick to point out that there are both nomadic and settled communities, as well as more differentiation amongst language than is commonly believed.⁶² Thus, though there appears to be natural diversity, there are also enough parallels which could potentially act as unifying factors in a functioning Somali state.

Somalis are more firmly divided, however, along clan lines—the closest Somalia comes to ethnic differences (and ensuing ethnic problems, which have received so much attention in the literature).⁶³ The state of clanism today, however, is unclear—certainly still important, it does

⁵⁹ Osman, 94, 96.

⁶⁰ Abdulahi A. Osman and Issaka K. Souaré (Eds.), *Somalia at the Crossroads: Challenges and Perspectives in Reconstituting a Failed State* (London: Adonis & Abbey, 2007), 8.

⁶¹ Rotberg, 11.

⁶² Osman, 97.

⁶³ Adam, 70.

not appear as strong (i.e. in offering systems of protection) as it once was.⁶⁴ Moreover, the current divisions in the conflict are not based on the clan system.⁶⁵ As described above, the Islamists have been cross-clan in nature, and the current government has attempted to bring in members from the varying clans as well. In fact, Souaré suggests that Islam may be the key uniting factor, “if not misused and taken to an extreme,” that could bring Somali society together.⁶⁶ Of course, others see a return to traditional clan structure—which also has the potential to function positively if not radicalized and manipulated—as the best future course.⁶⁷

Though the definitive solution may do best to consider both of these important elements, let us keep in mind Kaufmann’s theories on the nature of civil wars and how they may be resolved. Kaufmann posits that ethnic conflicts are often the most intractable essentially because the actors’ loyalties are much more rigid.⁶⁸ If we read ‘ethnic conflict’ as ‘clan-based,’ this might have been very worrisome a few years previous. However, if clans are no longer the most important factor in the Somali conflict (and especially if they can be used in a positive way in the future), we have greater reason to hope. After all, Kaufmann describes ideological civil wars as “contests between factions within the same community over how that community should be governed” and where the government and rebel forces compete to win the support of the people, whose loyalties are more fluid.⁶⁹ This sounds very much like the current Somali context (perhaps with certain religious elements added—identities which Kaufmann places between ethnic and ideological on his rigidity scale). If this is so, Kaufmann’s research may imply that the parties to

⁶⁴ Thomson Reuters Foundation, para 78; Human Rights Watch, “World Report...” para 3.

⁶⁵ BBC, “Q&A...” para 9.

⁶⁶ Osman and Souaré, 209.

⁶⁷ Osman, 126.

⁶⁸ Chaim Kaufmann, “Possible and Impossible Solution to Ethnic Civil Wars” *International Security* 20, no. 4 (1996): 140-141.

⁶⁹ *Ibid*, 138-141.

the conflict (particularly the faltering government) could gain the popular support they need to promote conflict resolution and peace—interwoven ideas discussed in detail below.

Life in a Failed State

From the above discussion, a picture of persistent and pervasive lawlessness and insecurity in Somalia should emerge.⁷⁰ This is the reality of a failed state—a country which is “tense, deeply conflicted, dangerous, and contested bitterly by warring factions,” where governments are unable to provide the citizenry with basic services, and infrastructure and legitimacy are in short supply.⁷¹ Rotberg and Zartman put Somalia in the extreme category of failed states known as collapsed states.⁷² This is perhaps the issue that most complicates the Somali case and thus requires an additional moment of our attention. Furthermore, the conditions found in a failed or collapsed state affect the choices made in pursuing conflict resolution, and create a host of issues (i.e. rule of law, respect for human rights, working institutions, etc., discussed in detail below) which must be addressed in order for the state to be viable and have a chance at maintaining peace.⁷³ Additionally, as Helman and Ratner explain, a failed state is incapable of helping itself and threatens not only its own people but its neighbors “through refugee flows, political instability, and random warfare.”⁷⁴ Since the failure of any one state is dangerous to the whole, it is imperative—and given the state’s incapability, apparently necessary—that the international community take an active role in the rebuilding process.⁷⁵

⁷⁰ BBC, “Q&A...” para 1.

⁷¹ Rotberg, 5-9.

⁷² Zartman, “Introduction...” 7; Rotberg, 9-10.

⁷³ George K. Kieh, Jr., (Ed.), *Beyond State Failure and Collapse: Making the State Relevant in Africa* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2007): 261-262.

⁷⁴ Helman and Ratner, para. 1.

⁷⁵ Rotberg, 1, 31.

Once again, however, all is not lost. Rotberg reminds us that failure is preventable, and thus we can hope that with time and assistance, Somalia can achieve long-term stability without great fear of relapse.⁷⁶ Furthermore, Somalia has a few remaining instruments at its disposal. The Somali Diaspora, for one, is a monetarily and intellectually wealthy resource.⁷⁷ The AU peacekeepers have also had success with the port of Mogadishu, returning elements of business and commerce with even this small component of increased infrastructure.⁷⁸ Perhaps most importantly, civil society has grown in the vacuum created by the collapsed state.⁷⁹ Although civil society cannot fill the role of government on its own—and ideally needs the support of a functioning state to really thrive—this is a key ingredient of any viable polity and an essential cornerstone upon which Somalia can be rebuilt.

Potential Promise for Somaliland

The northern region of Somaliland has taken a divergent path from greater Somalia, and thus necessitates separate consideration. From the colonial period, British Somaliland and Italian Somalia had differing experiences. The British mode of indirect colonialism left the clan structure in Somaliland relatively intact—much to the benefit of that region when the greater Somali state floundered. In Italian Somalia, however, the direct colonial system “practically destroyed the conflict resolution mechanisms practiced by the Somali clans,” manipulating the clan structure and hierarchy to the colonizer’s advantage.⁸⁰ Somaliland is also “less tribally diverse than central Somalia” and “the tribes in Somaliland have a history of working together in

⁷⁶ Ibid, 10, 31.

⁷⁷ Osman, 94.

⁷⁸ Thomson Reuters Foundation, para 70.

⁷⁹ Adam, 79.

⁸⁰ Osman, 101-102, 125-126.

opposition to oppressive leaders” such as Barre.⁸¹ Moreover, the people of Somaliland feel their “economic and social ties are closer to Somalis in nearby Ethiopia and Djibouti than those in Mogadishu and southern Somalia.”⁸² Solidifying these differences, following the fall of the Barre regime in 1991, Somaliland officially declared its independence.⁸³ They remain unrecognized by the international community, though whether their isolation has helped or hurt the fledgling ‘nation’ is up for debate.⁸⁴ Thus, Somaliland is rather well divided territorially and culturally—separation, discussed in the next section, seems almost natural.

Partition, however, is not to be considered lightly—one must also take into account the current state of affairs in Somaliland. Indeed, it is at a delicate stage where the future is extremely uncertain. On the one hand, Somaliland has been relatively peaceful since 1991 and has been building democracy, establishing legitimate and transparent institutions, and disarming tribal and rebel fighters in the region.⁸⁵ Somaliland quickly found a use for the clans when the central government fell in 1991, creating a group of elders from rival clans to steer the country, eventually blending these traditional elements with Western-style legislatures, a popularly elected President and a “secular and independent judiciary.”⁸⁶ Though it is not democratic by Western (or perhaps any) standards, it reflects cultural norms and has delivered in the areas of peace and security.⁸⁷

Unfortunately, problems remain and in some cases, may be worsening. Although Somaliland maintains a well-armed military, it has been the victim of attack by greater Somali

⁸¹ Bhat, 35.

⁸² Adam, 79.

⁸³ BBC, “Timeline...” para. 28.

⁸⁴ *Rebuilding Somaliland*, 1.

⁸⁵ Bhat, 34.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ Rakiyah Omaar, “Peace-Building and Democracy—Lessons of Somalia and Somaliland” in *Global Challenges and Africa : Bridging Divides, Dealing with Perceptions, Rebuilding Societies*, ed. R. Cobbold and G. Mills, 89. (London: Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies, 2004).

insurgents in recent months.⁸⁸ Complete disarmament and demobilization also remains a problem in the comparatively less settled and less peaceful eastern regions.⁸⁹ Though there has been great improvement since 1991, social services and human development remain inadequate.⁹⁰ Somaliland is also economically fragile and relatively poor and underdeveloped compared to Somalia proper.⁹¹ Recent elections, though peaceful, have not been above reproach.⁹² In fact, “an ineffectual government is emerging,” which has delayed elections, continually ignored the opposition-ruled legislature, and exerted undue influence over the judiciary.⁹³ With the situation so precarious, it is crucial that Somaliland be recognized for its successes and assisted where it still requires improvement. As this research recommends, this mandate may deviate Somaliland further from the track of Somalia proper, but it may also be extremely beneficial in the long-term.

⁸⁸ Bhat, 35; BBC, “Timeline...” para. 92.

⁸⁹ *Rebuilding Somaliland*, 26.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 27.

⁹¹ Bhat, 34.

⁹² Omaar, 89.

⁹³ Omaar, 91; Human Rights Watch, “Somaliland: Fragile Democracy Under Threat,” Human Rights Watch, <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2009/07/13/somaliland-fragile-democracy-under-threat> (accessed: September 20, 2009), para 2, 6.

CHAPTER 3 POLICY OPTIONS AND PRESCRIPTIONS

It is imperative in any conflict to understand the context, but once this is established, one must turn observations into a successful policy.⁹⁴ Any policy, in turn, must be executed with a well-conceived and thoroughly thought-out strategy.⁹⁵ Of course, no policy will be perfect and one must choose the course of action that best fits the situation with the fewest potential problems. Yet despite these issues, a policy must be selected because at this point, something has to be done in Somalia. Once the choice is made, the policy should be adhered to as closely as possible (allowing for some flexibility due to natural oscillations in the conflict). This, along with transparency of intention, will help to provide the crucial public support for the policy.

Somalia is a particularly complicated and difficult case for conflict resolution. Unfortunately, this means that it needs such a resolution even more. Taking the issue of Somaliland separately can make the task somewhat clearer, if not necessarily easier. The paths of Somaliland and greater Somalia will always be intertwined. However, the differing colonial experiences, the divergent paths taken after Barre's fall, the distinct government and leadership styles, and the establishment of relative peace and semi-autonomy in Somaliland discussed above implies the need for distinct—though mutually informing—policies. For Somaliland, partition is identified as the best course of action. For Somalia proper, a combination of peace- and state-building and negotiation is prescribed. Both policies are multi-faceted and complex and must be pursued with great care if they are to have any hope of success.

⁹⁴ Diehl, Druckman and Wall, 34; Sandra Cheldelin, Daniel Druckman and Larissa Fast, (Eds.), *Conflict: From Analysis to Intervention* (New York: Continuum, 2003), 91.

⁹⁵ Ray Murphy, *UN Peacekeeping in Lebanon, Somalia and Kosovo: Operational and Legal Issues in Practice* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 308.

Somaliland: A Separate Case

One could argue that Somaliland's separation from greater Somalia is little more than a technicality, and has existed in a *de facto* status for almost two decades.⁹⁶ Why, then, is it necessary to make its independence official? For one, as Tir suggests, secession could help avoid any potential restlessness that might lead to war.⁹⁷ Mostly, however, Somaliland would be partitioned in an effort to save it from the perils of attachment to Somalia. Though it may have succeeded in protecting itself thus far, there is no guarantee that this will continue. Indeed, the 2008 bombings would seem to indicate that Somaliland is not immune from the spread of violence.⁹⁸ Although official statehood alone does not guarantee security, it does provide legitimacy and all of the benefits of sovereignty, including, potentially, support to pursue more defensive measures should further problems arise.

We can “define partition as an internally motivated...division of a country’s homeland...territory that results in the creation of at least one new independent secessionist state...and that leaves behind the now territorially smaller rump state.”⁹⁹ For future stability and to avoid conflict, it is extremely important that the partition itself be peaceful and preferably reached by referendum.¹⁰⁰ The state of affairs in Somalia proper might make such a poll difficult (although the prescriptions described below should improve this ability over time). Provided the Somaliland government moderates somewhat, it should be possible to hold some manner of referendum to secede in that area. Indeed, Somaliland has already declared its independence.

⁹⁶ BBC, “Country Profile...” para 18.

⁹⁷ Jaroslav Tir, “Dividing Countries to Promote Peace: Prospects for Long-Term Success of Partitions” *Journal of Peace Research* 42, no. 5 (2005): 545.

⁹⁸ BBC, “Timeline...” para. 92.

⁹⁹ Tir, “Dividing Countries...” 545-46.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid*, 549.

With a popular referendum somewhat problematic, the role of the leaders becomes all the more important. Moderates and extremists are already vying for control of Somalia. Though the Somaliland government is relatively stable, it has drawn its share of criticisms. Nevertheless, with the moderates in control of the official Somali government and the Somaliland leaders presumably amenable to the idea of secession, it is reasonable to believe that a peaceful agreement could be reached.¹⁰¹ This is likely to have a further stabilizing effect, as Tir also tells us that peaceful partitions “validate the moderates’ policies of compromise; this in turn helps establish a general climate of trust within both the rump and secessionist states.”¹⁰²

Fortunately, Somaliland is already fairly well divided from greater Somalia territorially and culturally. Furthermore, they have largely found a constructive way to use the clans (which alleviates concerns of anything close to ethnic conflict, though clans are a somewhat distinct issue, as described above). It is therefore unlikely that the potentially violent processes of creating distinct regions would be necessary.¹⁰³ The closest Somaliland has come to problems with border definitions are with the neighboring semi-autonomous region of Puntland, although the fighting in 2007 resulted in Somaliland control of the disputed area.¹⁰⁴ One can presume that Somaliland could continue to maintain its borders, particularly if agreed upon through negotiation with greater Somalia.

Somaliland has gotten this far without international support or recognition.¹⁰⁵ International reluctance may be ameliorated if Somaliland and Somalia reach a mutual decision to separate with the support of the people. Indeed, Adam asserts that international assistance will likely be necessary to carry through a full and peaceful partition and advance post-partition peace

¹⁰¹ Ibid, 548.

¹⁰² Ibid, 549.

¹⁰³ Kaufmann, “Possible...” 161-163.

¹⁰⁴ Amnesty International, para 44.

¹⁰⁵ *Rebuilding Somaliland*, 21; Omaar, 84.

and development.¹⁰⁶ If the partition is conducted peacefully, military intervention, at least, should not be needed. However, Tir's research has shown "that economic and political development assistance could be used with the ultimate goal of making partitioned countries more stable," which in turn reinforces peace.¹⁰⁷ This is especially important in the context of a less than ideal Somaliland government, although care should be taken not to force any style of government or set of principles on the new country that it is not prepared to pursue. Nonetheless, this could be an advantageous time for the international community to induce the Somaliland government to adhere to principles (i.e. justice, human rights protections, and rule of law) in return for recognition of statehood. Such changes (as well as statehood in general, discussed above) have obvious potential benefits for the future of Somaliland and its people.

Kaufmann acknowledges several notable critiques of the partition strategy, particularly that it splinters states, causes damaging population transfers, turns civil wars into international ones, makes rump states non-viable, and does not resolve antagonisms.¹⁰⁸ The relative division existing between Somaliland and Somalia makes population transfers relatively unnecessary. Furthermore, the existing conflict is really within Somalia rather than between Somalia and Somaliland, making the third and fifth points comparatively moot. As to the fourth, Kaufmann also notes that few partitioned states have failed economically.¹⁰⁹ Somalia proper is far from viable as it is, but there is little reason to think that the removal of Somaliland would exacerbate this situation. Additionally, with time and effort, Somalia could take advantage of infrastructure such as the port of Mogadishu to be perfectly functional with or without Somaliland. The

¹⁰⁶ Adam, 79.

¹⁰⁷ Tir, "Dividing Countries..." 558.

¹⁰⁸ Kaufmann, "Possible..." 169-174.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, 172-173.

splintering of states, therefore, is the most problematic of these critiques. However, if the country has already fallen apart, this at least has a chance of saving part of the state.

There is a further concern that post-partition, the rump and secessionist states may become dissatisfied with their end of the bargain and they may use force to retrieve lost territory or gain more.¹¹⁰ However, as discussed above, if the borders are agreed upon from the beginning and the process is peaceful, post-partition violence is less likely.¹¹¹ International assistance can also help mediate any problems that may arise.¹¹² The Islamist extremists in greater Somalia are the most likely to play spoiler. However, their little apparent interest in Somaliland (aside from the 2008 bombings) indicates that this is not their primary concern. Perhaps they or other actors would want that land once they had the capability to get it (which they do not currently have)—but the division may be accepted by that point. At the very least, any potential violence should decrease over time.¹¹³

It is worth noting that the other semi-autonomous state in Somalia, Puntland, might also be encouraged by the partition of Somaliland to secede as well. Though this does increase concerns of state splintering, it is not necessarily likely or recommended for Puntland to break away. For one, Puntland may not be interested in removing itself from Somalia entirely.¹¹⁴ Lewis' report also suggests that Puntland is considerably more dangerous and less stable than Somaliland.¹¹⁵ Future partition is therefore possible and could be beneficial under the right circumstances, but it is not advisable at this juncture.

¹¹⁰ Jaroslav Tir, "Keeping the Peace after Secession" *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 49, no. 5 (2005): 713, 716.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 736.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

¹¹³ Jaroslav Tir, *Redrawing the Map to Promote Peace: Territorial Dispute Management via Territorial Changes*, Innovations in the Study of World Politics Series (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2006), 127.

¹¹⁴ Thomson Reuters Foundation, para 12.

¹¹⁵ Lewis, 101-105.

The possibility of federalism as opposed to official separation is also less preferable than a clean break. Though the new states could potentially be reunited in confederation, it will be some time before Somalia in particular is ready to do so. Bringing the partitioned states back into partnership could help resolve any lingering tensions resulting from the loss of territory. At this time, however, it is not recommended because Somalia proper is not ready to be a functioning member and federations have been most successful in the West—a far cry from the African context. Moreover, as Hicks warns, federation is not likely to succeed where the creation is unnatural, and at this time, secession is the course desired by Somaliland, at least.¹¹⁶ Once again, it would be more helpful to Somaliland (if not Somalia as a whole) to pursue a more reliable course. Timing is important, and there may not be a better window of opportunity. After all, to increase chances for peaceful partitions, one must cultivate the existing moderate leaders and be proactive to separate the states before the situation worsens.¹¹⁷ Somaliland still has a lot of problems to work out, but would this not be easier to do without the weight of Somalia dragging it down?

Somalia: Building up to Talks

Further partition of Somalia or intrastate divisions a la federation is not a viable option. There are too many overlapping identities in Somalia—based on clan, religion, ideology, etc.—to satisfy individual citizens based on separation along any one line.¹¹⁸ Moreover, institutionalizing these classifications under such a policy may only serve to lock in and

¹¹⁶ Ursula K. Hicks, *Federalism—Failure and Success: a Comparative Study* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 11.

¹¹⁷ Tir, “Dividing Countries...” 558.

¹¹⁸ John McGarry and Margaret Moore, “The problems with partition” *Politics & the Life Sciences* (1997): 267.

radicalize them.¹¹⁹ Despite differences in these areas, Somalis do not necessarily demonstrate heterogeneity in ethnicity, specifically. Thus, overarching ethnic identities that might provide a hardened, unifying identity to separate groups are not really present in Somalia. Even if they were, Hicks' research suggests that ethnic or religious divisions, as well as lack of organization, can prove fatal to a federation.¹²⁰ Moreover, McGarry and Moore demonstrate that where divisions exist, they are not necessarily easily defined by territory—a necessary condition to avoid conflict.¹²¹ As the Islamist groups have continued to push from the South, it is possible that they would not stop at gaining that territory but rather push for more. Additionally, the government and its supporters are not likely to be satisfied with ceding the South (including all of its important cities and potential infrastructure) to the insurgents.

If partition can only save part of the country, what is to be done about the rest of Somalia? It is here proposed a two-pronged approach based on international intervention via peace- and state-building along with negotiation (potentially mediated) between the primary actors in the government and insurgency, as well as any important clan elders. Simple peacekeeping—which has been attempted—is no longer sufficient, but must be “extended to also include peacemaking and peace building, both of which involve the use of conflict resolution processes or skills” including “negotiation, mediation, facilitation, consultation, conciliation, and communication,” as Diehl, Druckman, and Wall delineate.¹²² Such a multifaceted approach follows Deng's prescription that successful interventions must address immediate conflict,

¹¹⁹ Gail M. Presby, “Unfair Distribution of Resources in Africa: What Should Be Done about the Ethnicity Factor?” *Human Studies* 26, no. 1 (2003): 25-29.

¹²⁰ Hicks, 11.

¹²¹ McGarry and Moore, 267.

¹²² Diehl, Druckman and Wall, 36.

identify root causes, and design “a plan of action for the reconstruction of the society and the state.”¹²³

Although a certain amount of peace-building must be pursued before negotiations can be productive, Zartman contends that the latter must follow or even overlap the former fairly quickly. Otherwise, the impetus caused by pain of conflict is lost by the time conflict management has moved towards conflict resolution.¹²⁴ Nevertheless, it will be impossible to make any lasting and fruitful changes until the state is stable. Thus, as Bobrow and Boyer report, peace- and state-building “create a stable environment for negotiations that can lead to the resolution of the underlying issues of the conflict.”¹²⁵ In this way, the state will be restored and able to find long-term solutions to its conflict, hopefully resulting in a constructive plan for the development and maintenance of future peace and revitalization.

In Support of Intervention

As discussed previously, international actors are often reluctant to become involved in other states’ conflicts—particularly one as contentious as Somalia’s. Yet in addition to the layers of interest in the conflict outlined above, peace-building itself provides benefits at all levels of international action. It can enhance the operations ability of the intervener(s), such as the UN. It can allow public goods to be fulfilled in terms of private interest (as public good and private interest are not mutually exclusive). The immediate parties to the conflict receive the obvious benefits of peace, some groups and states actually make a profit off of participating in or

¹²³ Francis M. Deng, “State Collapse: The Humanitarian Challenge to the United Nations” in *Collapsed States: The Disintegration and Restoration of Legitimate Authority*, ed. W. Zartman, 208 (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 1995).

¹²⁴ William Zartman, “Conflict Reduction: Prevention, Management, and Resolution” in *Conflict Resolution in Africa*, ed. F. M. Deng and W. Zartman, 310 (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1991).

¹²⁵ Davis B. Bobrow and Mark A. Boyer, “Maintaining System Stability: Contributions to Peacekeeping Operations” *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 41, no. 6 (1997): 726.

allowing peacekeeping operations, and even major international actors and states benefit from stability, economic development, human rights improvements, etc.¹²⁶

If a state is largely failed or collapsed, how can it be expected to help itself? Though intervention in failed states may be the most difficult, these are precisely the states that need such assistance the most. Helman and Ratner tell us that simple aid is not effective, as in countries like Somalia, “aid cannot reach its intended recipients because of violence, irreconcilable political divisions, or the absence of an economic infrastructure.”¹²⁷ Thus, it is necessary to help the state rebuild itself through activities such as “strengthening governmental institutions, protecting human rights, pursuing bilateral cooperation projects, and encouraging demilitarization” so that there is a platform for improvement and change.¹²⁸ One can also link further aid to quantifiable improvements, adding incentive to moderate and giving the citizenry reason to pressure for certain transformations.¹²⁹

Nilson also reports that the presence of peacekeepers (often a part of a successful intervention, as described above) in such civil war conflicts has been connected to increased peace duration following settlement and resolution.¹³⁰ Indeed, these conclusions are also supported by Fortna’s research. Fortna finds that though peacekeeping in civil wars (particularly in the post-Cold War era) can be exceptionally trying, it is these conflicts which benefit the most from peacekeeping efforts.¹³¹ Akin to Nilson’s findings, Fortna states that overall, “peace lasts longer when peacekeepers are present than when belligerents are left to their own devices.”¹³² It

¹²⁶ Bobrow and Boyer, 726-727.

¹²⁷ Helman and Ratner, para. 11.

¹²⁸ Ibid, para. 12.

¹²⁹ Ibid, para. 20.

¹³⁰ Desirée Nilson, “Partial Peace: Rebel Groups Inside and Outside of Civil War Settlements” *Journal of Peace Research* 45, no. 4 (2008): 487.

¹³¹ Virginia Page Fortna, “Inside and Out: Peacekeeping and the Duration of Peace after Civil and Interstate Wars” *International Studies Review* 5, no. 4, Dissolving Boundaries (2003): 98.

¹³² Ibid, 111.

should be noted, however, that strict “Chapter VII enforcement missions” remain potentially hazardous, although further investigation is needed.¹³³

How to Build a Peaceful State

It is imperative that whatever the particular prescriptions of the peace-building policy, it must provide security and freedom to the citizens of Somalia so that they are able to support the government over the insurgents. Indeed, security is one of the most important goods that a state provides.¹³⁴ Security (and the security dilemma) becomes even more important when people find themselves enmeshed in a state of anarchy or near-anarchy, as is often the case in Somalia.¹³⁵ It is the inability of the Somali government to provide this good to its citizens that has driven many to tolerate the insurgents and the protection they provide. Such has been the case in countless conflicts. As such, any intervener must address the legitimate fear of insecurity amongst the Somali people.¹³⁶ This can occur through an internal, institutional presence and capability and/or vis-à-vis strengthening of moderate actors (i.e. the current government in its largely failed attempts to provide security to the citizenry). As Posen articulately states:

...if outsiders wish to understand and perhaps reduce the odds of conflict, they must assess the local groups’ strategic view of their situation. Which groups fear for their personal security and why? What military options are open to them? By making these groups feel less threatened and by reducing the salience of windows of opportunity, the odds of conflict may be reduced.¹³⁷

Yet of equal importance is the state’s ability to provide opportunity through participation in the political process and civil society, and provide access to resources such as health care,

¹³³ Ibid, 112.

¹³⁴ Rotberg, 3.

¹³⁵ Barry R. Posen, “The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict” *Survival* 35, no. 1 (1993): 28.

¹³⁶ Posen, 45.

¹³⁷ Ibid, 43.

education, and economic openings.¹³⁸ These parallel pillars must be strengthened in order to give the government the critical ingredient of popular support. Although many have been forced out, Rotberg explains that there are still important civil society elements that developed in Somalia even under state collapse.¹³⁹ These can be cultivated and encouraged in the process of giving the citizenry better options than a weak government on one side and a radical insurgency on the other. In this way, peace-building also begins to fulfill another goal of “long-term socioeconomic and cultural activity directed mostly at the ordinary members of the disputing parties to change their negative image, perceptions, and attitudes toward the followers of the other side” which targets both members of the elite and the average citizen.¹⁴⁰ Subsequent negotiations will be much more likely to succeed in such an environment.

Any strategy must address the issue of spoilers to the conflict, as there are always those who can profit from continued animosity.¹⁴¹ The protracted conflict has allowed many on both sides to learn how to profit from the status quo, and these actors are thus less likely to support peace. Some of the issues can be addressed through negotiation, described below. Yet initially one must create the necessary strength in the government to put them on par with the insurgents. If it is too difficult or dangerous to decrease the rebels’ power, then it is logical to increase the government’s power proportionately. Putting the parties on equal footing makes potential conflict more costly and can provide the space to negotiate a lasting peace agreement.¹⁴² Additionally, as described, giving the government more power will help balance the ability to provide security to the people. In return, security gives the citizens greater confidence in trusting

¹³⁸ Rotberg, 3.

¹³⁹ Rotberg, 36.

¹⁴⁰ Ray Taras and Rajat Ganguly, *Understanding Ethnic Conflict: the International Dimension* (New York: Longman, 1998), 101.

¹⁴¹ Doyle and Sambanis, 780.

¹⁴² Regan, 341.

moderate leaders committed to peace (provided the government leaders continue to be characterized as such and these elements of the leadership are supported by the interveners over the potential spoilers). Of course, one must be careful that this policy does not simply arm the government heavily enough to exterminate the insurgents, particularly when the arms issue continues to prove divisive and contentious in Somalia.¹⁴³ Furthermore, it should not be assumed that the government is to be supported blindly and unconditionally by virtue of its position. However, the government does currently appear to be the more moderate of the two major parties to the conflict and is also the most in need of support if parity is to be achieved. Because of these inherent difficulties, a carefully controlled and strategically planned strengthening program must be carried out if one hopes to avoid any or most negative consequences and if negotiations are to prove constructive.¹⁴⁴ This might mean, for example, that government forces are trained and assisted, or that the bulk of power resides in the intervener (assuming it can be trusted to show more restraint).

In this vein, the notion of a hurting stalemate and its potential positive effects on the successful resolution of a conflict is an interesting one to consider. A hurting stalemate exists when two rivals recognize that their conflict has become painful and costly with little or no gain in return. As a result, the actors turn to other strategies to resolve their differences, making hurting stalemates one of the key elements that Greig identifies as central to long-term success of conflict mediation.¹⁴⁵ Although Greig is discussing interstate rather than intrastate conflicts, it is possible to apply some of his lessons to Somalia. Indeed, the notion described above of supporting the government insofar as to allow them to pose a real challenge and resistance to the

¹⁴³ Thomson Reuters Foundation, para 72-74.

¹⁴⁴ Posen, 44.

¹⁴⁵ J. Michael Greig, "Moments of Opportunity: Recognizing Conditions of Ripeness for International Mediation between Enduring Rivals" *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 45, no. 6 (2001): 694, 709-710.

rebels could help create a hurting stalemate. Somalia has already seen the damage created by a lengthy conflict that has not yet produced a clear winner; this course of action could make it clear to the rebels that they will not meet their ultimate goals by using their current tactics. Additionally, as described, this strategy could create more support for resolution amongst the leadership and the people—other important elements that make a conflict ripe for resolution.¹⁴⁶ Thus, following the prescribed policy could create even more favorable conditions in Somalia for negotiations to progress and a settlement to be reached.

There are a number of strategies which any intervener will have to choose from and employ based on their assessment of the situation in Somalia. However, any plan of action will have to contend with several key points. A renewed peace-building effort will likely have to encompass elements of humanitarian assistance, establishment of law and order, infrastructure and security forces, solidifying of power in the government, and possibly pacification of belligerents if conflict is particularly heavy at the time of intervention.¹⁴⁷ However, combining all of these elements in one effort can prove impossible and may have contributed to the failure of past Somali interventions.¹⁴⁸ Humanitarian assistance is identified as particularly problematic, possibly because of its mixture of what Diehl, Druckman and Wall call primary and third-party roles.¹⁴⁹ Such incompatibility can be mitigated, however, by dividing the peace-building operations between two separate (though coordinated) groups, such as a state or international organization and an NGO.¹⁵⁰ This could serve the additional purpose of strengthening the capacity and legitimacy of the operation by receiving support from several sectors.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid, 694.

¹⁴⁷ Diehl, Druckman and Wall, 38-40.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid, 51.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid, 50.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid, 51.

In a conflict as unpredictable as Somalia's, some element of military capacity cannot be foregone. However, it should be used selectively and in tandem with powerful elements of soft power such as diplomacy and persuasion.¹⁵¹ According to Regan, a mix of economic and military incentives and strategies tends to have the most success.¹⁵² In a failed state, there are many issues that must be addressed to restore the necessary security and freedom. These issues include:

...demobilization, disarmament, and reintegration...restoring or creating social capital...working with local officials to revive optimism and to ensure human security, enhance leadership capacity, and improve the delivery of basic services...reintroduction of criminal law, property law, contract law, liability law, and constitutional law... finding legal mechanisms to hold public officials accountable... financial stabilization, rehabilitation and reconstruction, and development...¹⁵³

Once these processes are achieved, one can *begin* to consider higher-tier objectives such as elections.¹⁵⁴ However, the democratic process can and should only be liberalized gradually and with caution.¹⁵⁵ Before institutions and policies (such as those described above) are in place, such a process can be unnecessarily dangerous and put questionable leaders in power. As Rotberg warns, elections—while essential in the long run—“can also exacerbate competition, polarize already fractured societies, institutionalize existing imbalances of power, and retard as well as advance the transition from war and failure to resuscitation and good governance.”¹⁵⁶ Doyle and Sambanis do find that UN involvement (a choice taken up in detail below) can significantly improve the quality of such a transition.¹⁵⁷ Nevertheless, Ottaway reminds us that democratization is a rocky course to begin with, and one with which Somalia has a difficult

¹⁵¹ McRae and Hubert, 9.

¹⁵² Patrick M. Regan, “Conditions of Successful Third-Party Intervention in Intrastate Conflicts” *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 40, no. 2 (1996): 345.

¹⁵³ Rotberg, 34-39.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 39.

¹⁵⁵ Barbara F. Walter, “Designing Transitions from Civil War: Demobilization, Democratization, and Commitments to Peace” *International Security* 24, no. 1 (1999): 154.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 39-40.

¹⁵⁷ Michael W. Doyle and Nicholas Sambanis, “International Peacebuilding: A Theoretical and Quantitative Analysis” *The American Political Science Review* 94, no. 4 (2000): 779.

history.¹⁵⁸ However, as Ottaway also argues, this does not mean that one must wait for preferable conditions to appear. On the contrary, by addressing some of the underpinnings discussed above, one can overcome these obstacles to liberalizing the democratic process.¹⁵⁹ If such activities are at least underway and shown to be progressing productively and positively, negotiations may have the support they need as well.

Selecting an Intervener

One of the primary obstacles to an international intervention of this design in Somalia is finding an intervener with the capacity and willingness to carry it through. Unfortunately—though perhaps not surprisingly—Bhat reminds us that Somalia exists within a complicated geopolitical situation where it must deal with the pressures from neighbors like Ethiopia and Eritrea as well as the AU and the United States.¹⁶⁰ Issues of neutrality—towards parties and/or goals—and credibility persist. McRae and Hubert claim that an intervener can be impartial, but never neutral.¹⁶¹ In fact, it may be difficult to be impartial to the most radical of the rebel groups—increasing the impetus to identify and support any moderates. The main concern, however, should be on rebuilding the state so that the people are able to choose who to support based on the power of their ideas rather than fear. To do this (as well as to provide a stage for fair negotiation), some amount of neutrality must be maintained. This is also important so as to avoid the appearance of forcing any given outcome past what is desired or natural within the polity.

Choosing an intervener with credibility may also prove difficult. Ethiopia has shown a vested interest in Somalia, but is not widely liked nor trusted by the majority of Somalis. They

¹⁵⁸ Marina Ottaway, “Democratization in Collapsed States” in *Collapsed States: The Disintegration and Restoration of Legitimate Authority*, ed. W. Zartman, 235 (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 1995).

¹⁵⁹ Ibid, 245.

¹⁶⁰ Bhat, 33.

¹⁶¹ McRae and Hubert, 44.

may also bring Eritrea further into the conflict. Given its history in Somalia, the US may be similarly sullied in the eyes of the citizenry. Additionally, the US may be too wary and overstretched to become involved. Although Regan's research indicates that great powers—both international and regional—may be best poised to carry out interventions, it does not appear preferable in this case.¹⁶² Furthermore, Diehl and Leggold warn that unilateral actions or actions based on alliances are not often viewed with legitimacy in Africa.¹⁶³

With these options removed, one is left with multinational organizations—both regional and global. The EU or NATO might represent Western interests (as much as they can be considered similar) in a less divisive way than unitary action by the US. Certainly the UN has been involved in Somalia intermittently for some time with often disastrous results. To be fair, however, the UN tends to get the most difficult cases and Somalia is no exception. Even with its limitations and record, one needs the UN in some capacity because of its potential fount of resources drawn from its members and its global approach to conflict.¹⁶⁴ In fact, a comprehensive study of civil war by Doyle and Sambanis found “that multilateral, United Nations peace operations make a positive difference.”¹⁶⁵ Further, the UN is more likely to consider perspectives from outside the West. Overall, Nilson suggests that the UN may be more neutral than a regional peacekeeper.¹⁶⁶ The UN may, however, need reform to deal with the proposed issues adequately—but this is beyond the scope of this research.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶² Regan, 349.

¹⁶³ Paul F. Diehl and Joseph Leggold, (Eds), *Regional Conflict Management* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2003), 87.

¹⁶⁴ McRae and Hubert, 51.

¹⁶⁵ Doyle and Sambanis, 779.

¹⁶⁶ Nilson, 487.

¹⁶⁷ McRae and Hubert, 213.

The AU, on the other hand, is currently present in the country and has a limited capacity to exert pressure and provide aid.¹⁶⁸ It also enjoys the benefit of relative credibility resulting from multinational roots and a local African perspective. Nevertheless, it has many shortcomings that would likely need to be bolstered—perhaps by the UN or NATO—in order for it to take on such a wide-ranging approach to state- and peace-building.¹⁶⁹ Coordination with NGOs, as discussed above, would also likely prove fruitful in providing all of the necessary elements in a comprehensive strategy. This is naturally difficult (particularly when bringing civilians into the mix) but certainly not impossible given proper planning and a willingness to learn from other initiatives.¹⁷⁰

Potential Problems with Intervention

Perhaps the biggest elephant in the room when it comes to intervention is the fact that it has been tried before—numerous times, in fact—with little to no positive effect. Indeed, some research indicates that Somalia is no more likely to benefit from peace-building efforts than before as the conflict has some basis in identity, has been long and costly, has low development levels, and may not enjoy full UN support.¹⁷¹ Again, however, what can be done until stability is established—and how can this be done without assistance? Additionally, Nilson and Fortna’s research, described above, highlight the possibility and even probability that intervention efforts can lengthen the duration of peace. Possibly, the many failures have a silver lining in that any new strategist can learn from past mistakes. It is entirely possible to identify past failures as Rotberg does—such as the lack of complete disarmament.¹⁷² Though satisfying this element may

¹⁶⁸ Bhat, 35.

¹⁶⁹ Deng, 210.

¹⁷⁰ McRae and Hubert, 52-53.

¹⁷¹ Doyle and Sambanis, 795.

¹⁷² Rotberg, 34.

not be possible or required at this stage, it at least gives the intervener a sense of the context and potential issues that may arise.¹⁷³ Other past difficulties, such as those identified by Diehl, can be more easily avoided. These obstacles include the size of the intervening force, the difficulty and vulnerability of delivering humanitarian assistance, lack of coordination and cooperation with sub-national actors, lack of enforcement potential, failure to maintain some modicum of neutrality, and the inability or unwillingness to pursue conflict *resolution* measures.¹⁷⁴ Moreover, as Murphy points out, the UN did not have much precedent for how to deal with a conflict like Somalia.¹⁷⁵ Also, the US and the UN did not sufficiently coordinate their efforts and did not tend to address underlying causes of the conflict.¹⁷⁶ However, it is worth noting that organizations such as the UN and AU are not inherently incapable, but they are typically curtailed by strict rules of engagement. They may need to change their mandate (i.e. by using a strategically applied military presence, as mentioned above) in order to assist in providing the necessary security.¹⁷⁷

By addressing these issues in a new strategy, state- and peace-building in Somalia—and thus negotiation and conflict resolution—may have a chance of succeeding where it never has before. Importantly, this step in the process will take time, resources and patience. As Murphy explains, “there is no ‘quick fix’ solution or a universal template that can be transposed from one situation to another.”¹⁷⁸ Furthermore, a state so completely demolished by conflict as Somalia will take the most time and effort.¹⁷⁹ A tailor-made approach that acknowledges the commitment is therefore necessary for any intervener to accept and employ. Having a clearly delineated

¹⁷³ Walter, 154-155.

¹⁷⁴ Diehl, 158-160.

¹⁷⁵ Murphy, 52.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid, 59, 63.

¹⁷⁷ Posen, 33-34.

¹⁷⁸ Murphy, 307.

¹⁷⁹ Rotberg, 34.

approach allows the intervener to work with the necessary speed and flexibility to resolve the situation.¹⁸⁰ To do otherwise may mean that the international community is back in Somalia, trying to ameliorate wide-spread suffering—which Diehl identifies as “an expensive and risky prospect.”¹⁸¹ After all, “the worst enemy of reconstruction is a premature exit by international organizations and donors;” this is precisely what happened in Somalia.¹⁸² Failing to resolve this problem has already proven costly and damaging to all involved. Reluctance to act now will only make future efforts more difficult. If such a strategy could work and prevent future conflict, suffering, and expense, isn’t it worth the commitment?

The Negotiation Stage

As discussed, conflict management must be followed by conflict resolution, here in the form of negotiation. In order for this to work, Goodman and Bogart argue, one must look for and take action during turning points when both sides doubt their ability to prevail in the conflict.¹⁸³ The peace- and state-building efforts should go a long way towards creating this opportunity. Additionally, the stage is already set with moderate leaders (at least in the government), potential alliances and international interest. The situation in Somalia is not quite a stalemate—which would be preferable for the reasons delineated above—but, as discussed, reports have indicated that despite their many successes, the Islamists have weaknesses and faltering elements of support.

¹⁸⁰ McRae and Hubert, 48.

¹⁸¹ Diehl, 161.

¹⁸² Rotberg, 34.

¹⁸³ Allan E. Goodman and Sandra Clemens Bogart (Eds.), *Making peace: the United States and Conflict Resolution* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992), 5.

Goodman and Bogart point out that “there is no standard process for negotiating an end to warfare.”¹⁸⁴ However, it does require set strategies, plans and goals in a constructive, non-threatening setting which brings all of the important actors to the table.¹⁸⁵ Certain conditions may increase the likelihood of negotiations to succeed, however. These comparatively straightforward and practicable conditions may include: engaging in “sustained problem-solving behavior through the middle phases of the talks,” focusing on interests (which will overcome any inclination toward ideology), favoring bilateral structures, and recognizing differences prior to the beginning of talks.¹⁸⁶ Walter’s research also indicates that the presence of a third party greatly enhances the probability of negotiations to succeed.¹⁸⁷ In Walter’s view, parties to a conflict are often capable of addressing their grievances, but fail to create “credible guarantees on the terms of the agreement.”¹⁸⁸ It is then that an intervener becomes incredibly useful in overcoming this commitment problem. This comes not only in military efforts, but also in “creative institutional design.”¹⁸⁹ With an intervener already present under the outlined policy prescriptions, this condition should be relatively easy to fulfill.

Who to Bring to the Table

It will be necessary to work with the leadership in order to reach a settlement, and for the purposes of this research, one must assume rationality. This may seem counterintuitive in the face of the actions carried out by some of the most radical factions. However, even though the

¹⁸⁴ Goodman and Bogart, 6.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid, 6-7.

¹⁸⁶ Cheldelin, Druckman and Fast, 23-24.

¹⁸⁷ Walter, 128-130.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid, 154-155.

rebels are currently putting forth a more extremist face, there are always moderates from which to pull and cultivate.¹⁹⁰ As Spears explains,

the key is to recognize [*sic*] that a core of potential deal makers exists and then identify and protect them. More importantly, innovative ways must be found to expand on this co-operative core by drawing in opportunists who might then be moderated and accommodated.¹⁹¹

Of course, all sides will need incentive to come to the table. Again, the peace-building portion of the policy should provide some of that via reduction or increase in popular support (for the insurgents and government, respectively), conditioned aid and sanctions, etc. The suffering of war can also make pursuing change and resolution more desirable.

The Islamists, in particular, do not have to win outright—they simply have to not lose. However, they are the essential second party to the conflict and must be brought into negotiations with the government.¹⁹² As described above, security would be less of an issue if the government was more widely acceptable. Menkhaus suggests that making the government more inclusive is a potential way to produce this effect.¹⁹³ For all of these reasons, the Islamists must be included in the bargain. In fact, it may even serve to moderate them further. Of course, one must be careful when dealing with a group that at least has ties to terrorist factions. However, if they are ignored they will simply continue to play the spoiler again and again, protracting the conflict and preventing any lasting resolution. Furthermore, Osman recognizes that Islam on the whole can be a powerful uniting force for Somalis.¹⁹⁴ Indeed, as was discussed above, despite elements of heterogeneity, Somalis have much to bring them together.

¹⁹⁰ Ian S. Spears, “Understanding inclusive peace agreements in Africa: the problems of sharing power” *Third World Quarterly* 21, no. 1 (2000): 112.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid*, 113.

¹⁹² Lewis, xi.

¹⁹³ Menkhaus, 384.

¹⁹⁴ Osman, 121.

Given these issues and the complex Somali context, how does one choose the negotiators? As described above, the government and the Islamists have emerged as the two central parties to the current conflict. As such, they must be brought to the table. Nilson's research has shown that peace between signatories to an agreement is not necessarily threatened by exclusion of other factional elements of the opposition. However, the overall peace in a polity achieves greater security and probability of success via an all-inclusive agreement.¹⁹⁵ This has several implications. For example, returning momentarily to the Somaliland case, this may lend further credence to the idea that an agreement between the governments of Somaliland and Somalia proper could be sufficient to grant the former independence (i.e. without the express agreement of the rebels). In the greater Somali issue, this finding suggests that although the two primary parties will likely need a presence in the negotiation, smaller splinter groups or problematic warlords or clan leaders could potentially be left out of the process. Again, although an all-inclusive process between the government, Islamists, any key warlords remaining, and any important clan elders is most likely preferable it is also difficult. This option that Nilson delineates could provide space to choose negotiating blocs from more moderate players in each larger group amenable to negotiation. However, as discussed, no actor in a conflict is blameless. Even the worst ones have concerns that must be addressed; otherwise, they may prove to be the most dangerous spoilers to lasting peace.

Once the actors are identified in general, the question of choosing negotiators also applies on a more individual level. Unfortunately, there is not a universal mechanism to select negotiators. Indeed, it is not necessarily constructive to name names—and such an action might even prove dangerous for those suggested. However, should these negotiators be chosen (or sanctioned) by the intervener? Should they, perhaps, be selected through a committee or an

¹⁹⁵ Nilson, 480, 492.

election? Ultimately, this will be determined by the context of the conflict at the time that negotiation begins. There are, at least, some characteristics that could guide this choice, such as experience with negotiation, rapport with the rival and outside actors, etc. Additionally, as has been emphasized repeatedly, the support of the people is extremely important. These negotiators must be trusted and have a following amongst (and potentially outside) the group, or their decisions—and ultimately the outcome of the negotiation—will have no authority.

The potential role for third parties in negotiations must also be considered. Though Walter (above) recognizes their potential benefits, such third parties have, according to Menkhaus, often been detrimental in the past.¹⁹⁶ Of course, bilateral negotiations can be difficult because of the perceived zero-sum nature of conflicts. However, conflicts have certainly been resolved bilaterally throughout history and one must therefore conclude that it is possible. If necessary, a mediator can be brought in, but this carries many potential dangers. Mediators can provide leverage as well as ease communication and transparency.¹⁹⁷ Nevertheless, Beardsley acknowledges that mediation's benefits may fall apart in the long-term and ultimately produce less durable resolutions.¹⁹⁸ Beardsley also notes, however, that staying involved and ahead of the curve as future crises arise may alleviate some of these problems with mediation.¹⁹⁹ However, this does not necessarily make it more preferable than a straight negotiation if at all possible. Nevertheless, a third party enforcement presence outside of the negotiations themselves, as described above, may be beneficial.

¹⁹⁶ Menkhaus, 364.

¹⁹⁷ Zartman, "Conflict Reduction..." 312; Kyle Beardsley, "Agreement without Peace? International Mediation and Time Inconsistency Problems" *American Journal of Political Science* 52, no. 4 (2008): 726.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 723.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 737-738.

If mediation must be used, Zartman contends that private individuals and NGOs are most acceptable and least threatening to the state and other parties.²⁰⁰ Zartman also suggests that African mediators are highly preferable, though they are likely to lack many of the necessary resources to act as more than “communicators and formulators.”²⁰¹ Though one does not want to risk an agreement falling apart once the mediator leaves, a mediator should not *have* to stick around. An agreement must therefore have strength and legitimacy independent of a third-party guarantor, at least in the long-run.

Overcoming Obstacles to Negotiation and Moving Forward

The particular context of Somalia does give pause to the prescription of negotiation. Obstacles include spoilers who would prefer to see the conflict continue, extremist fears that they will lose power or even be arrested, preference in some sectors for the current government to fizzle out, the pressure of Ethiopia to eradicate the Islamist threat, and the danger of proxy wars in the region (i.e. Eritrea).²⁰² The presence of hardliners on both sides can be addressed by the use of moderates, discussed above. Again, supporting the moderates and giving them the power to *allow* the people to support them without fear of insecurity will help reduce spoilers’ credibility. In the case of the extremist and regional concerns, it will not do to allow any of these groups to bully an otherwise productive peace process into a corner. Naturally, preventing this is easier said than done, but with a stronger state and international support as the result of the intervention, Somalia may have the ability to stand up to these pressures for the first time.

It is also important to consider the likelihood that there will be legitimate complaints against the negotiation and resolution process. In order to separate these grievances from

²⁰⁰ Zartman, “Conflict Reduction...” 311.

²⁰¹ Zartman, “Conflict Reduction...” 313.

²⁰² Menkhaus, 389.

spoilers' disruptions, one must consider the spirit and potential outcome of the complaint. If this sounds imprecise, that is because negotiation is a difficult and imperfect course of action.

Spoilers may come from either side of the bargaining table and can be well-disguised. However, with skill, practice, and careful consideration, a negotiator (or, potentially, a mediator or intervener) may be able to determine whether addressing any given objection is in the spirit of improving the process and its overall chance of success, or rather derailing it completely.

Regardless, any successful negotiation must be able to withstand the pressures of spoilers and their tactics so as not to break apart at the slightest push or prod.

More generally, negotiations have proven difficult during civil wars. However, Somalia does (or could, given the success of the first part of the policy via intervention) fit the main criteria for whether a conflict can be negotiated. These characteristics as identified by Goodman and Bogart are: stalemate, constraints on the resources of war, pressure from allies and neighbors, and internal pressures to end conflict.²⁰³ Like intervention, however, negotiation has been attempted numerous times in Somalia. Perhaps it has never been pursued under the right circumstances, however, such as those extant in the current context and those provided by the success of state- and peace-building efforts. Additionally, Souaré argues that Somalia actually missed opportunities when negotiation should have been pursued, such as when the moderate Islamists had control of Mogadishu.²⁰⁴ One can also identify problems with past negotiation attempts and apply these lessons to a new round of talks. For example, in the past, leaders with criminally poor human rights records were allowed to participate.²⁰⁵ Certainly no one will be beyond reproach, but constructive and relatively respectable negotiators are extremely important.

²⁰³ Goodman and Bogart, 5.

²⁰⁴ Osman and Souaré, 210.

²⁰⁵ Murphy, 50.

Additionally, the issue of clan cannot be forgotten, nor can the need for a functioning state and unified government be overemphasized.²⁰⁶

To assist in overcoming some of the problems described, it should be noted that the extensive Somali Diaspora is a potentially powerful tool that could be used during both the intervention and negotiation segments of the proposed policy.²⁰⁷ Osman asserts that the Diaspora can provide instrumental support to the peace process in terms of wealth and “brain power.”²⁰⁸ Somalis living abroad have created prosperous communities in key countries, such as the United States, the United Kingdom, South Africa and Canada.²⁰⁹ They have provided economic support to their homeland since its collapse.²¹⁰ Recently, the Diaspora has shown a willingness to use this fact as a powerful sanction to control incentives to negotiate.²¹¹ Osman additionally notes that their expertise and knowledge is also an important factor to consider when attempting to put a state back together.²¹²

Once negotiations are underway and the state is being reconstructed, the parties to the conflict may decide on a further course of action (i.e. non-territorial autonomy, consociationalism, democracy, etc.) to move the state forward and create a stable government. However, this decision and selection should be natural and organic, an outcome of discussions and careful analysis amongst the intrastate groups. Zartman recognizes that it is ultimately for

²⁰⁶ Menkhaus, 359-360.

²⁰⁷ There are, of course, other potential tools—such as the media—available to those involved in the Somali case. Though the media is generally highly restricted in Somalia, some elements are beginning to show signs of non-partisanship [BBC, “Country Profile...” para 47-51]. It is possible that these elements, as well as media outside the country, could be used to outline the proposed plan for conflict resolution with greater transparency of action. This gives the citizenry much-needed information and the ability to hold interveners and state actors accountable. Of course, universal access to media will likely remain an obstacle. Additionally, as researchers and theorists such as Snyder and Ballentine point out, the media can also prove dangerous if not used correctly or even when liberalized too quickly [Jack Snyder and Karen Ballentine, “Nationalism and the Marketplace of Ideas” *International Security* 21, no. 2 (1996): 5-6]. To delve into these issues fully, however, is outside the scope of this research.

²⁰⁸ Osman, 94.

²⁰⁹ Ibid, 128.

²¹⁰ Ibid.

²¹¹ Ibid, 129.

²¹² Ibid.

indigenous leadership to decide what will work best, however useful foreign support may be in making that a possibility.²¹³ Of course, all of these potential policies have their own problems which should be recognized and dealt with in time. Nevertheless, none of these prescriptions are even possible until the state is stable and a space for negotiation between all parties has been created.

²¹³ William Zartman, "Putting Things Back Together" in *Collapsed States: The Disintegration and Restoration of Legitimate Authority*, ed. W. Zartman, 273 (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 1995).

CHAPTER 4 CONCLUSION

To abandon Somalia and leave it to fester indefinitely is not only unjust, it threatens the lives of the Somali people, the fragile political and social fabric of the region, and international stability as a whole. “Vague humanitarian commitments” will no longer do—a steadfast and carefully thought out (if ultimately somewhat flexible) strategy must be delineated and executed.²¹⁴ Here, that policy is proposed in two separate though mutually informing parts. First, partition is recommended for Somaliland—a chance to remove itself from the conflict and sustain its more promising initiatives before it is too late. Second, for Somalia proper, peace- and state-building, followed by negotiations between at least the government and rebel factions, is endorsed.

In addition to the need to act, there may never be a greater opportunity or context in which to move forward with resolution as there is currently. A relatively moderate government, African Union presence, and imperfect insurgency provide a space for real, fruitful conflict resolution that has not been seen in many years. The Somali citizenry need to know that they can trust and find security in the moderates that are promoting peace—reasoned intervention can provide that. In the end, any change must be organic to the people if it is to last. Yet in a failed state unable to help itself, it is in the international community’s best interests—and ultimately their responsibility—to give the Somali people the best chance to succeed.

²¹⁴ Posen, 43-44.

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