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The Involvement of third parties in the Somali conflict

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Abstract

A significant issue in the Horn of Africa is the involvement of third parties in the Somali conflict and their influence. The civil conflict in Somalia stems from the use of several conflict management strategies, including discussions, mediation, and foreign interference in the nation's internal matters. The Somali population has faced significant historical conflicts as they attempted to rebuild their state, which ultimately collapsed over two centuries ago. The elites' power struggle, sometimes waged in the name of Islam and other times in the name of tribalism, has weakened senses of pride and dignity in the country, prolonged the Somali crisis, and resulted in difficulties such as displacement for many generations. Asylum seekers emigrate, while others have experienced the impacts of state absence and the scarcity of essential services throughout the country. The study investigates the involvement of third parties in the Somali conflict, aims to address the concept of third parties' involvement in the conflict, and highlights the contributions of numerous scientific papers that describe the involvement of neighboring and developed countries.

Keywords: Involvements of actors, third parties, and conflict effects.

1. Introduction

Conflict arises from the fundamental interactions among elements and components found in nature, the individual and societal dynamics. It is a psychological state of tension arising from the conflict or contradiction between multiple goals or demands and its unique competitive situation emerges when one or more parties anticipate possible future incompatibility or when each party chooses positions that conflict with the potential interests of the opposing party or parties. Civil wars are an ongoing occurrence in Africa, with hardly any part of the continent free from violent conflicts. These conflicts generate significant impacts not just on political affairs but also across all strata of the continent. Conflict in Africa characterized by difficulty, encompassing its origins, causes, outcomes, and effects, with numerous factors contributing to the emergence of civil wars. Colonial powers in the Horn of Africa influenced the conflict in Somalia, as the post-independence political map largely contradicted the country's national, ethnic, and linguistic distributions due to the imposition of fabricated borders. This negatively influenced Somalia, precipitating a crisis of national integration, despite the country's distinct national, religious, and linguistic unity.

A political conflict arises when many parties, possessing divergent ideals and interests, undertake a sequence of forceful actions and responses intended to undermine or incapacitate the other party or parties. Each side seeks to optimize their advantages at the expense of others while safeguarding their sources of power. More than three decades of state fragmentation in Somalia have resulted in numerous armed factions primarily structured along clan affiliations and oriented toward local political objectives. Irregular international intervention has influenced the political dynamics that have emerged during the Somali conflict. The Islamic Union, a Salafi reform organization, has prominently highlighted a significant strand of militant Islamist groups, which aim to construct an Islamic state that encompasses all of Somalia and some parts of Ethiopia. The Islamic Union recruited a limited number of Somali jihadists who had participated in fighting in Afghanistan during the Soviet invasion. Nevertheless, the group lost clan loyalty and faced a restriction on military forces following the destruction of its training sites by the Ethiopian army.

This article primarily examines the role and participation of third parties in the Somali conflict, focusing on the effects, motivations, and obstacles associated with their involvement. This may encompass actors from both Western and Arab nations, as well as non-governmental and international organizations that have participated in the internal conflicts in Somalia. This article aims to examine the positive and negative shapes of interventions by analyzing the multiple involved actors. Additionally, it explores the main involved actors, such as Ethiopia, Kenya, the United States, and Turkey, and provides recommendations for real-world involvement.

2. The Background for the Conflicts in Somalia

The colonial effects

The significance of East Africa to the main colonial powers escalated with the inauguration of the Suez Canal in 1869. Consequently, European countries were competing for control over the African continent, with a specific focus on its eastern coastline. The Belgians assumed control of the Congo; the French conquered Tunisia, and the British conquered Egypt. Britain's incorporation of Egypt made the latter's holdings along the Red Sea coast in East Africa a focal point for imperial ambitions. The interests of England, France, and Italy aligned in a singular territory. Each sought to acquire further territory in Somalia and the eastern coast of Africa¹. France gained control of the Obokh area along the Gulf of Tadjoura in Djibouti in 1881, while Italy acquired the adjacent Assab territory in Eritrea in the same year. This motivated Britain to fight back against foreign competition from its colonies in India, leading to efforts to prevent Italian and French influence in those areas after its 1885 resolution to withdraw Somalia and East Africa from Egyptian governance. Additionally, Britain successfully imposed authority over these territories in place of the Egyptian army and established a pact with the Sultan of Sumatra to govern Bab al-Mandab, thereby securing the route to India (Bolt, 2023).

Consequently, Britain, France, Italy, Ethiopia, and Kenya divided Somalia. The colonial authority designated each region with its own name. British Somaliland included Zeila and Berbera; Italian Somaliland included Assab, Bandar, and Massawa; French Somaliland comprised the Djibouti area, Obockh, Tadjoura, and Amyad; and Ethiopia had the Harar region along with districts. Kenya seized a segment of Somaliland, designating it as Kenyan Somaliland. The map of Somalia displayed various colors, each representing a country that governed a specific area².

According to Nigel Biggar British colonialism employed a variety of tactics, including obstructing water access during droughts, suppressing national newspapers critical of the colonizers, neglecting education, combating the Arabic language and Islamic religion, detaining individuals, prohibiting public assemblies, executing citizens, manipulating elections, disregarding health needs, monopolizing national wealth and resources, and perpetuating racial discrimination

¹ Steve & Steve. (2021, July 6). *Britain's strategic failure: Suez Canal 1854–1882*. Wavell Room. <https://wavellroom.com/2021/07/16/britain-suez-canal-strategy-1854-1882/>

² Cecil Rhodes. (n.d.). *The Age of Imperialism* (p. 773). <https://www.lew-port.com/cms/lib/NY19000328/Centricity/Domain/135/Chapter%2027%20Book.pdf>

between whites and blacks. In addition, the British persisted in opposing the Islamic appeal via missionary groups while also attempting to disseminate drugs and alcohol (Biggar, 2021). In addition, the colonized systems of European empires differ, with the British using indirect rule to colonize the northern regions of Somalia, now known as Somaliland. In contrast to France's commitment to direct rule, the British employed the indirect rule method, which was a crucial aspect of their governance in Africa. The British authorities determined that the ongoing collaboration of the chiefs and the colonists with the governing British administration, thereby integrating them into this administration, constituted the most efficient, suitable, and economical governance model while securing the allegiance of the governed to the ruling powers³.

Italy primarily colonized the southern territories of Somalia, successfully establishing a cohesive administrative governance throughout the country, seizing the most fertile fields, and offering incentives to stimulate further immigration and settlement. Furthermore, the Italians appropriated the nation's riches and resources, depriving the people of education and healthcare, which led to an increase in illiteracy, sickness, and poverty. As the owners, they forbade socializing, eating, or marrying the slaves, regarding them solely as their property (Dhaysane, 2022).

In 1941, during World War II, British soldiers seized control of Italian Somalia because of Italy's hostility toward Britain and its alliance with Germany. British dominion over Italian Somalia continued until 1949. Italy's loss in World War II and Britain's need to assist Somalia and other countries created an opportunity for the national factions in Italian Somalia to seize. They presented to the British administration a political agenda advocating for the eradication of colonialism throughout Somalia, its unification under a single flag and state, the dissolution of tribal fanaticism and any traditions that contradict the state's principles, and the establishment of Somalia as a democratic republic with Islam as its official religion (Trunji, 2019). In addition, British Somalia proclaimed its independence on June 2, 1960, although former Italian Somalia attained its freedom on July 1, 1960. Following this, the unification of British and Italian Somaliland led to the declaration of the Somali Democratic Republic. On July 6, 1961, the Somali Republic elected Adam Abdullah Osman as president for a six-year term. On September 20, 1961,

³ Wikipedia contributors. (2024, July 22). *Indirect rule*. Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indirect_rule.

Somalia gained admission to the United Nations, and on February 14, 1973, it joined the Arab League⁴.

The state collapse

In 1991, the collapse of the central government in Somalia, coupled with Siyad Barre's dictatorial governance, led to the state's breakdown and the outbreak of a civil war, with the regime's increasing violations fueling popular instability. The violent tribal struggle originated inside the military system, particularly after the Somali army's loss in the prolonged fight with Ethiopia, which was the start of the state's collapse in Somalia. These conflicts marked the start of the decline of the Barre government while also signifying the first stages of the civil war. As Barre saw the approaching conclusion of his rule, he created numerous conflicts among the tribes, armed several factions, offered them financial assistance, and committed countless additional violations (Issa-Salwe, 1996).

The state's breakdown resulted from a failure to understand the fundamentals of the existing state, create a united identity for Somali society by uniting clans and tribes, and prioritize the development of state institutions. Moreover, the genocides that transpired under the military regime, the consequences of which were evident in the civil war, significantly contributed to the state's collapse. The military defeat in the Ethiopian war of 1978 had immediate repercussions. At the onset of the civil war, the number of deaths exceeded a thousand, and the escalating severity of the conflict resulted in significant damage to the country's infrastructure, as well as an increase in waves of displacement, migration, and asylum-seeking to both nearby and other countries⁵.

Given the prolonged duration of the civil war and the lack of a clear victor, the warlords from the Somalia faction pursued reconciliation and actively participated in negotiations. This desire led to the organization of several conferences with global funding, in addition to local ones. However, the failure of these conferences to establish a comprehensive strategy for political participation and implement effective strategies to reduce increasing conflicts appeared to be primarily due to a lack of genuine dedication and external intervention⁶. Most post-war conferences concentrated on

⁴ *Foreign Area Studies, The American University. (1982). Somalia: A Country Study (H. D. Nelson, Ed.; Third) [Book]. United States Government, Secretary of the Army. https://www.marines.mil/Portals/1/Publications/Somalia%20Study_1.pdf*

⁵ . ACCORD. (2022, August 30). *Remembering the Ogaden War 45 Years Later: Four and a Half Lessons Towards a Peaceful Future – ACCORD. <https://www.accord.org.za/publication/remembering-the-ogaden-war-45-years-later/>.*

⁶ . Aydin, M., & Kaptanoglu, N. (2020). *Transformation of the Somali Civil -War and Reflections for a Social Contract Peacebuilding Process. <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/download/article-file/830939>.*

the methods and strategies for forming states, often overlooking the root causes of the conflict and the lessons they could impart. These conferences did not provide a comprehensive answer for the creation of a state. The conferences also postponed the decision-making process on numerous issues affecting various societal members, including the accountability of warlords, compensation for those affected and other matters for which the country continues to endure consequences through the emergence of diverse forms and responses⁷.

3. Consequences of third-party involvements

Conflicts have devastated Africa for decades, stemming from economic, political, cultural, and religious factors. Conflicts characterized the period that followed shortly after independence, both among countries on the continent and within different nations. The situation remained unchanged until the end of the Cold War, when the world witnessed a surge in conflicts, particularly internal ones. The end of the Cold War generated changes that affected other global regions. Nonetheless, because of its unique, diversified characteristics in politics, economics, and socio-cultural and ethnic diversity, the African continent disproportionately encountered those conflicts. International interference in its conflicts affects Somalia, a great African nation characterized by ethnic and tribal variety and a multifaceted socio-cultural framework. Since gaining independence, Somalia has experienced continuous instability. In addition, the involvement of terrorist groups in internal conflicts has contributed to the ongoing instability in the country. This battle has led to the destruction of Somalia, as significant potential and resources have improperly allocated in the struggle against the insurgent organization across various regions of the country (Osman, 2008).

The interest of the security

In light of the economic, political, and social difficulties that have troubled Somalia for decades, securing stability is a national interest and a strategic need. Resolving a multifaceted collection of obstacles such as foreign intervention, terrorism, internal conflicts, fragile governmental institutions, and pervasive poverty and unemployment is crucial for ensuring the security and stability of Somalia. Moreover, Somalia's security is not only a domestic concern; it has regional and worldwide implications owing to its key geographic position next to the Indian Ocean and

⁷ . Casanova, P. (2013). Post-Secession State-Building and Reconstruction, Somaliland, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan. Uppsala University. <https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:648083/FULLTEXT02>.

even the Gulf of Aden. The region plays a crucial role in marine commerce routes, and ensuring Somalia's stability is essential for managing security challenges that influence both the country and the global community. Additionally, countries are often involved as third parties in Somalia's internal conflicts, which are below.

Ethiopia

The Ethiopian government has been deeply involved with Somalia's internal conflicts, motivated by expansionist policies and historical territorial ambitions. After to the Berlin Conference, Ethiopia gained the western Somali region, valued for its mineral wealth and agricultural geography. This resulted in two conflicts between Ethiopia and Somalia, none of which fulfilled their political or military goals, consequently worsening the political situation in both countries. The instability in the Horn of Africa has grabbed the attention of regional and international forces aiming to resolve continuing political conflicts in the region.

The European powers created the modern borders of African countries during the colonization period, ignoring the political, economic, and social structures related to the regions and primarily serving their own interests. The colonial countries conducted their planning at random; neglecting to take into account the demographic presence in the territories that later became boundary zones. This irresponsible design led to the inclusion and addition of certain regions to others. The most prominent case of this is the situation in the Somali region, known as Ogaden (Eastern Somali region of Ethiopia). The Ethiopian kings fulfilled their ambitions by seizing control over territories they had long desired to incorporate into their empire. These sovereigns' expansionist ambitions not only threatened the territories and countries of the Horn of Africa, but also captured parts of the eastern Somalia region⁸.

⁸ *Colonial Borders in Africa: Improper Design and its Impact on African Borderland Communities.* (n.d.). Wilson Center. <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/blog-post/colonial-borders-in-africa-improper-design-and-its-impact-on-african-borderland-communities>.

The Somali territories are a strategic priority for Ethiopia, whose emperor has long attempted to expand their power in the region. During the Italian mandate, Ethiopian authorities attempted to take over territories that were traditionally associated with Somalia. Following the conclusion of Italian colonialism, these pressures continued, shifting their attention to the British Empire, which had assumed control of the eastern portion of the African continent post-World War II. Since Somalia's independence, persistent turmoil, stemming from both Italian and British influences, has arisen due to border disputes about control over regions with a significant Somali population. Ethiopian troops, backed by the Soviet Union and Cuba, caused a devastating defeat to the Somali army during the Ogaden War from 1977 to 1978. Ethiopia aimed, for distinct geopolitical reasons, at preventing the development of a powerful Somali state that might challenge its position of power in the Horn of Africa. The Addis Ababa administration viewed its Somali neighbor with suspicion and dislike, since it consistently advocated for the unity of all Somali territories, including the Ogaden area (Marangio, 2012).

The Barre regime's ambition to establish a powerful military force that would position Somalia among the major African powers exacerbated Ethiopia's concerns. The Somali situation has emerged as a primary worry for Ethiopian authorities, who showed no interest in reconstructing the central government that collapsed in 1991. Ethiopia has extended assistance to the Republic of Somaliland and Puntland, two distinct northern territories that experience significant stability compared to the political instability prevalent in the central and southern areas. On the other hand, Ethiopia has emerged as one of the surrounding nations actively seeking a resolution to the Somali situation. It has advocated for the federal option and divided the country into provinces equipped with extensive self-governing authority, all under the cover of improving national administration and reducing regional and clan conflict (Yihun, 2014).

Ethiopia's geopolitical interests drive its involvement, viewing Somalia as a potential threat to its territorial integrity and domestic security. The collapse of the Siyad Barre administration resulted in the rise of armed groups and Islamic organizations, forcing Ethiopia's military and diplomatic intervention. In 2006, Ethiopia ousted the Islamic Courts Union (ICU), which had seized control of Mogadishu and other portions of the country. In addition to Ethiopian justifications, the action attracted extensive condemnation from the Somali populations, who saw it as an invasion of their

national sovereignty. These attempts have exacerbated the Somali conflict by drawing attention to specific groups, thereby heightening tensions. The Ethiopian involvement in Somalia illustrates the need for a comprehensive approach that takes into account the effects of foreign operations on the Somali people (Khayre, 2013).

In last, Political actions and military forces in Somalia significantly influenced the Ethiopian administration, securing its interests and regional desires. The Ethiopian government has participated in military intervention to support the Somali governments in their battles against groups such as the Al-Shabaab organizations and the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) and has dispatched soldiers to the African Transitions Mission in Somalia (ATMIS). Additionally, the Ethiopian government has leveraged its political influence with regional organizations to bolster its presence in Somalia. These measures aim to protect national security and mitigate instability, particularly in the border regions between Ethiopia and Somalia. Furthermore, the Ethiopian government's involvement in Somalia is multifaceted, taking into account its intensified interventions for internal conflicts in Somalia and Ethiopia's interest in ensuring the stability of Somalia⁹.

Kenya

Numerous factors have influenced Kenyan-Somali relations, some of which remain unsolved and sometimes generate rivalry. Since the collapse of the Somali central government, Kenya has played a crucial role in the civil war in the country. This conflict among Somali groups has influenced neighboring countries, particularly Kenya, which has hosted thousands of Somali refugees. This highlighted Kenya's strong involvement and influence in Somali issues, encouraging the nation to help facilitate multiple attempts at reconciliation among the armed Somali groups.

The dynamic character of Somali and Kenyan relations, often marked by tension and fluctuations due to a series of conflicts over various topics, plays a significant role. In addition, the focus will be on the Somalia-Kenya maritime border disputes and the Jubaland region because of the variety of relations involved. The Kenya's plans for Somali reconciliation aim to bolster its regional influence in Somalia and garner support from various conflicting Somali factions, especially since

⁹ Middle East Council on Global Affairs. (2024, November 7). *Ethiopia and Somalia on the Edge of War - Middle East Council on Global Affairs*. https://mecouncil.org/blog_posts/ethiopia-and-somalia-on-the-edge-of-war/

Kenya, with British support, seized control of the Northern Frontier District (NFD) in 1963. Furthermore, as a significant and influential state in the East African region, Kenya's involvement in the Somali crisis from its inception and the consequences it faced make it difficult to ignore in future agreements related to Somalia¹⁰.

A disagreement over a maritime region rich in gas and oil has conflicted relations between Somalia and Kenya, leading European investigator firms to identify eight offshore exploration locations. Kenya authorized the French firm Total, the American firm Anadarko, and the Italian firm Eni to explore four of these locations, leading Somalia to file an official lawsuit with the International Court of Justice in August 2014, following unsuccessful negotiations between the two nations regarding a coastal border conflict¹¹.

On October 12, 2021, the International Court of Justice rendered its conclusive ruling in the dispute between Somalia and Kenya, affirming Somalia's sovereignty over the predominant portion of the disputed maritime zone in the Indian Ocean, encompassing 100,000 square kilometers, which encouraged Kenya's annoyance. Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta rejected the decision, emphasizing the Kenya administration's dedication to safeguarding the country's territorial integrity, which poses significant risks to regional security¹².

According to Claire Mc Evoy It is crucial to highlight a significant issue: Kenya's role in reconciliation following the disintegration of the Somali state does not aim to encourage Somalia or safeguard the Somali people and the integrity of their territories. Instead, the objective has been to strengthen Kenya's regional importance at Somalia's expense, as well as that of other influential regional powers in East Africa, particularly Ethiopia. In addition, Kenya seeks to gain the trust of the international community and its organizations, notably the United Nations, thereby declaring its political significance and crucial influence in the East African region while simultaneously fighting to keep Somalia's internal conflicts within its national borders and away from Kenya (Evoy, 2013).

¹⁰ Throup, D. W. (2024, September 25). *Kenya's Intervention in Somalia*. <https://www.csis.org/analysis/kenyas-intervention-somalia>. <https://www.csis.org/analysis/kenyas-intervention-somalia>

¹¹ . Migui, J., Kemunto, N. D., Kiamba, A., & University of Nairobi. (2022). *an analysis of Kenya-Somalia Maritime Territorial Dispute in IR perspective*. In *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science (IJRISS)*: Vol. VI (Issue XI, pp. 350–351) [Journal-article]. <https://rsisinternational.org/journals/ijriss/Digital-Library/volume-6-issue-11/350-355.pdf>

¹² ICJ draws the line in Kenya and Somalia has troubled waters | ISS Africa. (n.d.). ISS Africa. <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/icj-draws-the-line-in-kenya-and-somalias-troubled-waters>.

Kenya's involvement in the internal conflict in Somalia began before the colonial period, but the most recent dispute between the two countries has been over maritime borders and intervention for internal conflicts in Somalia's border regions. The Kenyan government entered this region without obtaining permission from the Somalia government, leading to a conflict on their maritime boundaries that has persisted since both countries gained independence. The conflict originated in 2005 when Kenya unilaterally modified the maritime boundary to its benefit, capitalizing on Somalia's instability and the absence of a maritime treaty. Somalia has since disputed Kenya's activities. The two states have opposing views about the border's alignment: Kenya advocates a horizontal line along the latitude, while Somalia favors a vertical line reaching southeast along the coastline. The region has been determined to have considerable oil and gas deposits, encouraging both nations to investigate investment and development opportunities inside both their countries¹³.

According to Derek Henry Flood, the Kenyan administration's involvement in the internal conflict in Somalia extends to agreements for certain regions, particularly the border regions between Somalia and Kenya. The Jubaland region, situated in southwestern Somalia, comprises three provinces: Gedo, Middle Juba, and Lower Juba, with Kismayo serving as its capital. Ethiopia borders Jubaland to the north, while Kenya borders it to the west, giving it strategic significance. Kenya has established connections with local clan leaders to combat the Al-Shabaab terrorist group and exert influence over the transitional government in Mogadishu. The primary goal of this support is to create an independent administration in southern Somalia that is in keeping with Kenyan interests. Jubaland fulfills two primary functions: it strengthens security by establishing a buffer zone against instability and develops economic goals, including the development of infrastructure such as the port of Lamu, which desires to be the largest port in Africa. Kenya's involvement stems from its ambition to achieve the self-governance and stability observed in Somaliland and Puntland (Flood, 2011).

Lastly, Kenya's involvement in Somalia's internal conflicts stems from competing security and political objectives, primarily aimed at protecting its borders from the Al-Shabaab organization

¹³ Dr. Maluki Discusses Kenya-Somalia Maritime Tussle and What Happens Next in The Conversation. | Department of Diplomacy and International Studies. (n.d.). <https://idis.uonbi.ac.ke/latest-news/dr-maluki-discusses-kenya-somalia-maritime-tussle-and-what-happens-next-conversation>.

and upholding regional peace. This includes military activities under the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) and assistance to local groups to enhance influence in border areas. Critics argue that Kenya's strategies could worsen internal conflicts instead of promoting peace. Kenya's activities illustrate a multidimensional relationship between its interests and Somalia's internal situations, mixing stability with strategic benefits.

The involvement of Western countries

Certain Western countries, such as the United States and the United Kingdom, have played a significant role in shaping the internal conflicts in Somalia. After the collapse of the central government, Somalia became extremely complex; the political issue left the Somali population in a dire state of starvation and poverty, leading to both domestic and international displacements. Issues such as the disintegration of governmental institutions, the rise in militias, tribal wars, foreign and regional interventions, as well as rivalry and conflict among various Somali factions, have plagued Somalia. This has resulted in the establishment of multiple administrations throughout the country, each empowered to influence governance. Additionally, Somalia has fragmented into many regions. Conflict and competitiveness arose between various territories, resulting in tribal disputes within the same regions.

An overview of United Nations and Somali relations, including the beginnings of US commitment to Somalia and the historical progression of these relations, addressed how the disintegration of the Somali state following the Cold War precipitated US intervention as a reaction to its collapse. The unsuccessful intervention compelled the Americans to withdraw from Somalia, leading the United States to escalate its initiatives against international terrorism and piracy along the Somali coast¹⁴.

The countries located in the Horn of Africa hold significant role in the background of American global affairs. The United States of America's approach following the end of the Cold War, the emergence of a unilateral global order, and its reaction to international terrorism have molded these countries' perspectives. The United States has sought to capitalize on the existing international and

¹⁴ . *United Nations operation in Somalia i (unison i) - background (full text). (n.d.).*
<https://peacekeeping.un.org/mission/past/unosom1backgr2.html>.

severe economic conditions of the Horn of Africa countries, together with their internal conflicts, to secure the greatest benefits in the region. The countries of the Horn of Africa have rapidly committed their loyalty and cooperation to the United States in return for substantial financial assistance aimed at improving their standard of living. Examining American-Somali, American Sudanese, American-Eritrean, American-Ethiopian, and American-Ugandan relations can shed light on the connections between the United States and these countries in the Horn of Africa¹⁵.

The United States initially became involved in the internal conflict in Somalia when Somalia collapsed; subsequently, it utilized the United Nations to modify its principles of sovereignty and non-interference. This entails broadening the scope of humanitarian intervention, pressing the Security Council to address both global and domestic issues, and advocating for the nation's interests in governing the international system. Provided that the structure and operational dynamics of the UN Security Council correspond with the global balance of power, the United States may use the UN Security Council to further its interests and attain its objectives by influencing the interactions within the international system (KIRDIM, 2017).

Stefano Recchia argues that the goals of combating terrorism, establishing a secure zone, and addressing the challenge of the absence of a widely recognized administration in Somalia justified American involvement. Nevertheless, the reality is different. The United States invaded Somalia in response to the fatalities of its troops in 1993. The United States aimed to seize control over Somalia's strategic location to ensure the safety of oil ship transit across the Horn of Africa, as Somalia plays a crucial role in connecting the Arabian Gulf, the Indian Ocean, and East Asia. Consequently, the geopolitical significance of Somalia's ports increases. The USA significantly contributed to the maintenance of its presence in Somalia and the region (Recchia, 2018).

On the other hand, the United Kingdom previously held a prominent position in colonization, particularly in East Africa. Additionally, the UK has been involved in Somalia's internal conflict in various ways, dating back to the period of colonialism. Following Somalia's independence, the UK continued to maintain an indirect influence in Somali affairs, particularly through humanitarian assistance and peace initiatives. However, some of these initiatives have raised concerns about the stability of the country. In addition, the United Kingdom has provided political

¹⁵ Dpeleschuk. (2022, January 11). *The US risks losing its influence in the Horn of Africa. Here is how to get it back.* - Atlantic Council. Atlantic Council. <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/the-us-risks-losing-its-influence-in-the-horn-of-africa-heres-how-to-get-it-back/>.

and economic assistance to the Somali government, as well as implemented security projects. Despite these efforts, Somalia continues to face significant obstacles such as terrorism and clan disputes. Consequently, there is an ongoing debate about the effectiveness of foreign interventions, particularly those from Britain, in either improving or worsening the country's situation¹⁶.

Western countries, particularly those providing security and humanitarian support, have been involved in the internal conflicts in Somalia and have significantly influenced the country's internal disorder, both directly and indirectly. They have intervened by providing political and military support to the federal governments, thereby intensifying tensions among the some regional administration. At times, European actions have exacerbated the problem by implementing sanctions or supporting fragile administrations, thereby impeding the establishment of durable stability and peace. Nonetheless, European development and humanitarian aid have failed to take on the underlying causes of the violence. Instead, they have often prioritized their security concerns, particularly in countering terrorism. This has led to increased dependence on foreign assistance instead of fostering sustainable alternatives locally¹⁷.

The involvements of Arab countries

Two factors influence the Arab countries involved in the Somali issue: the first is the extent to which the developments in the Somali situation influence their regional and international standing, and the second is their specific role in the United States-led global war on terrorism. Regional goals prioritize political interests, while diplomatic relations shape the formation of specific movements. Yemen previously faced the Somali problem due to its geographical position on the Gulf of Aden and its perspective on the eastern African coastline, which influences human migration originating from this region amid ongoing crises and instability and in addition, consequently, geographical, economic, and political variables explain the Arab countries' involvement in the Somali conflict and their mediation efforts. In addition, Egypt's fear concentrates on safeguarding stability in an area essential to its interests, especially the region

¹⁶ Dusterhöft, I. K., & Gerlach, A. I. (2013). *The Successes and Failures of the Interventions of the European Union, the African Union and Neighbouring Powers in Somalia. Sicherheit & Frieden, 31(1), 18–23.* <https://doi.org/10.5771/0175-274x-2013-1-18>.

¹⁷ PubAffairs Bruxelles. (2023, October 12). *EU Missions in Somalia: Successes, Challenges and Future Prospects - PubAffairs Bruxelles.* <https://www.pubaffairsbruxelles.eu/opinion-analysis/eu-missions-in-somalia-successes-challenges-and-future-prospects/>.

around the Nile. Egypt has consistently considered regional conflicts with fear, including the Eritrean War of Independence, the Ethiopia-Eritrea border conflict from 1998 to 2000, and the armed rebellion against the Siyad Barre regime in Somalia in 1990, along with the subsequent civil war (Healy, 2010).

According to Peter Woodward in the 1990s, the region witnessed far more invasions. Despite an overall improvement in bilateral relations between Sudan and Ethiopia, Khartoum attempted to utilize the Islamic Courts card. Consequently, it facilitated a series of discussions between representatives of the Islamic Courts organizations and the Somali transitional government. However, these discussions ultimately yielded no significant outcomes, illustrating the failure of similar mediation efforts by other Arab nations, including Yemen. The Arab League's attitudes highlight the variety of Arab perceptions of developments in Somalia after the Ethiopian invasion, with many of its members advocating for the return of talks between the Islamists and the transitional government. At the same time, many countries, particularly Egypt, expressed their understanding of Ethiopia's involvement, emphasizing their support for the initiative to deploy an African peacekeeping force to Somalia as a League member, a proposal that the Islamic Courts strongly rejected (Woodward, 2007).

Some Arab countries have influenced and affected the internal conflicts in Somalia, both politically and economically. These countries have participated in the conflict in Somalia through both humanitarian assistance and politically motivated interventions, with varying intentions and effects. Although nations such as Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Qatar have acted independently, they have significantly contributed by hosting peace conferences and bolstering Somali institutions. Additionally, Qatar has engaged in political mediation and provided assistance to the central government. Meanwhile, the UAE has focused on enhancing its military capabilities, despite tensions stemming from its competition with regional countries like Turkey's government. The Arab countries are strategically invested in Somalia because of its geographic position, which governs essential trade routes, and its security issues, including terrorist organizations, in addition

to the initiatives of the Arab governments facing various obstacles, such as the lack of a unified vision within the League of Arab States and the regional rivalry with other nations¹⁸.

4. The Influence of Third-Party Involvement

The end of the Cold War marked an important period in international relations, particularly in security and strategic studies, due to the significant shifts it generated. The most significant transformation occurred when the focus shifted from international conflicts to internal conflicts. The increasing number of ethnic and internal conflicts in various communities inside the state, including ethnicities, religions, races, linguistic, and political minorities, emerged as major actors, and the influence of third-party involvement in the internal conflicts Somalia was one of the evil activities that the Somalia people suffered for more than three decades, and these actors are mostly from the neighboring countries such as Ethiopia and Kenya. Following the collapse of the regime, Somalia underwent a descent into chaos and collapse, leading to a reduction in its influence as a powerful political and military force in the region. Consequently, Somalia no longer plays a significant role in regional organizations such as the African Union and the IGAD; it previously played a significant role in alleviating security and political tensions among African nations. The reduction of these roles and the intentional exclusion of Somalia from its significant position in regional and international areas have left Somalia feeling disappointed and dissatisfied.

There is another influence of third-party involvement for issues for Somali conflicts in its colonial period; they make interventions and involvement roles for the Somali cultures, religions, and also educational system and also the way that Somalia makes reconciliation and negotiations for internal conflicts for the community, and in addition, Somalia inherited from colonialism a system that interconnected the entirety of Somali life with the colonial rule, resulting in a transformation of lifestyle and a shift in the principal actors, scholars, and leaders within social leadership. This reorganization reduced their influence on the political setting to a secondary role and fostered a pronounced division between the state and society. Additionally, the colonial rules prioritized producing graduates capable of filling roles that the colonists were unable to fulfill. However, the

¹⁸ <https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/sites/default/files/en/sc/repertoire/96-99/Chapter%208/Africa/03%20-%20Somalia.pdf>

missionary groups collaborating with the colonial countries bear this responsibility, and Somalia primarily rejects missionary organizations that fail to fulfill their roles¹⁹.

The country's economic and political changes significantly shaped the influence of third-party involvement in Somalia's internal conflicts. Many countries involved in these conflicts shared mutually beneficial interests, each leveraging the other to achieve their own goals. The United States leveraged the poverty and suffering of the Ethiopian population, Emperor Haile Selassie's desire to expand his empire, and Ethiopia's desire for support and backing. Meanwhile, Ethiopia capitalized on the Cold War dynamics and the United States' need for a strong ally in a region largely untouched by colonization. Honesty and pure interests characterized their partnership, as each country relied on the other. For all these reasons, the two countries involved, in pursuit of their own interests, jointly intervened in the internal conflict of Somalia and collaboratively contributed to the economic and political dynamics of the country. Additionally, the United States of America viewed Ethiopia as a favorable alliance due to its identity as a Christian nation in a predominantly Muslim region. This served as the organizing principle for the nation's involvement in the region and its subsequent assistance in securing the Somali Ogaden region²⁰.

Similar to other nations, Somalia has committed to protecting the idea of the unity of Somali territory by legal and peaceful methods, establishing this unity as an essential principle of its foreign policy throughout consecutive administrations. Consequently, from independence until the state's dissolution, different administrations have addressed this difficulty through diverse approaches, while persistent diplomatic difficulties, continuous conflicts, and border clashes have remained a hallmark of their relations with adjacent nations. In this regard, Kenya and Ethiopia established a cooperative military pact to collaborate against Somalia's claim to acquire the eastern area from Kenya and the western part from Ethiopia²¹.

Third-party involvement in internal conflicts in Somalia has influenced not only political and economic issues, but also clan division, which has been a critical problem for the Somali people.

¹⁹ Issa-Salwe, A. M. (n.d.). *The Collapse of The Somali State: The Impact of the Colonial Legacy (Revised, updated and expanded edition)*. <https://arcadia.sba.uniroma3.it/bitstream/2307/5265/1/The%20Collapse%20of%20The%20Somali%20State%20-The%20Impact%20of%20the%20Colonial%20Legacy.pdf>

²⁰ . *US Policy Toward Ethiopia Is a Story of Cynicism and Self-Interest*. (2023, January 22). https://jacobin.com/2023/01/us-policy-toward-ethiopia-is-a-story-of-cynicism-and-self-interest?utm_source=chatgpt.com.

²¹ . Almi, A. A. (2021). *Somalia's Foreign Policy: Stages and Initial Odds*. *Open Journal of Political Science*, 11(03), 370–377. <https://doi.org/10.4236/ojps.2021.113025>.

This division has had a negative impact on the government system, and Somalia has historically and simultaneously functioned as a tribal state. Some wish to establish the tribe as the permanent basis for the state, while others want to move Somalia forward by integrating tribal and clan connections into it, emphasizing loyalty to the state over tribal commitment. The tribal conflicts in Somalia have significantly influenced the formation of Somali identity and the establishment of positive values. Tribalism has been an important driver for the majority of conflict during the last three decades, and in addition, clan and tribe dynamics have played a crucial role in Somali society, serving as the societal foundation. Loyalty to these groups often outweighs loyalty to the state, a pattern that has persisted from Somali independence until the state's collapse under the central government. Under Siyad Barre's regime, there was significant conflict among tribes and clans in Somalia, which led to violent clan actions, efforts to overthrow the state, and the fragmentation of regions under the control of clan insurgent groups. Upon the regime's collapse, clans engaged in a power battle, resulting in the fragmentation of regions and cities²².

The involvement of third parties influenced the Somali population in various ways, particularly following the decline of the central government in 1991. The country's internal conflicts, involving numerous countries, led to an immediate breakdown of its system. Internal conflicts significantly contributed to the initiation of the civil war in Somalia. However, international interventions and their involvement also exerted varied influences on the conflict. Several neighboring countries played a significant role by allowing Somali government opposition groups to operate from their territory, facilitating their attacks on Somali government troops, and providing military protection, financial assistance, and logistical support. International and regional forces have intensified the Somali civil war through both indirect and direct involvement. The argument stems from the international community's delay in intervening early to mitigate the intensifying conflict in Somalia. Additionally, the Siyad Barre dictatorship has clearly lost the legitimacy of the majority of Somali populations, which has contributed to the current impacts of the conflicts in Somalia.

²² . *Somali - Core Concepts*. (2024). *Cultural Atlas*. <https://culturalatlas.sbs.com.au/somali-culture/somali-culture-core-concepts>.

This has led to the emigration of thousands of Somalis from their homeland, primarily due to insufficient protection from the central government²³.

5. Evaluation and Conclusions

The conflict in Somalia holds a critical position in Africa's internal conflicts, as it represents a unique instance of total destruction. Although other African governments have had temporary breakdowns, these crises were brief, caused by the existence of certain factions that were effective at settling the struggle to their benefit. The only example of a prolonged and severe state collapse is Somalia, which happened after President Mohamed Siyad Barre's administration fell. Neither side in Somalia was able to govern effectively, leading to a significant fragmentation of the state among several armed groups, each affiliated with specific clans, nor did the balanced distribution of power among these factions prevent any party from achieving a decisive victory over the others. The ongoing terrorism in Somalia has exacerbated the situation, jeopardizing security and resulting in significant consequences for the Somalian people. Additionally, it has prompted some countries involved in Somalia's internal conflicts to engage in unethical behavior.

The Ethiopian invasion has shifted the situation in Somalia, as the removal of the Islamic Courts from their bases and the withdrawal of Islamist activists into hiding may not effectively enhance the authority of the fragile transitional government, which struggles with establishing its control over the country. There is a risk that warlord groups supported by Ethiopia could resurface in Mogadishu and other areas, potentially causing chaos and civil unrest, intensifying security issues, and exacerbating the already dire economic situation. The situation worsened further due to the United States' continued intervention in Somalia, following its attacks on locations in the southern region believed to be sheltering Al-Qaeda affiliates and collaborating Islamists. This aggressive action, which resulted in the deaths of several innocent citizens, has attracted condemnation from several international organizations, including the European Union and the United Nations. They are concerned that if Islamist militant factions collaborate with other organizations that are hostile to Ethiopia and the American military presence in East Africa, the situation could escalate and take on global proportions.

²³ What caused the Somali civil war? (2024, August 16). Geeska. <https://www.geeska.com/en/what-caused-somali-civil-war>

Other African nations, including Eritrea, escalated the situation by challenging Ethiopia and relocating their protracted struggle with Addis Ababa to the Somali region. The continuing military operations in Somalia undoubtedly concern surrounding nations, who are apprehensive about a potential flood of refugees or the entrance of further radical Islamic groups into their borders. Kenya is mainly affected due to the remnants of the Islamic Courts encroaching on its border with Somalia. It is important to note that the Muslim community in that region has been experiencing escalating conflict for some time. The Ethiopian provinces with a Somali majority may face adverse consequences if separatist inclinations escalate and a Somali-Islamic front emerges to conduct guerrilla warfare against the Ethiopian military and American soldiers.

Numerous issues plague the relationship between Somalia and Kenya, the most significant being the conflict over their maritime boundaries, which has resulted in a diplomatic crisis. Furthermore, Kenya's determination to establish a local Somali government in line with its northeastern boundaries, known as the Jubaland determination, suggests that these conflicts will continue to shape their interactions, thereby ensuring tension and volatility in Kenyan-Somali relations. In addition, it is clear that Kenya significantly influences the political and security developments in Somalia. Since the collapse of the Somali state, Kenya has been the most significant regional player shaping the internal dynamics of Somalia. This suggests that the dynamics of these relations are not balanced and favorable to Kenya, highlighting Kenya's significant involvement in these relations to the detriment of Somalia.

A closer look at Ethiopian-Somali relations indicates that they have undergone phases of tension and interest, mostly influenced by the actions of the various administrations governing each country. Ethiopia sought to establish its supremacy over the considerable mineral and agricultural resources of the Ogaden region in western Somalia. Ethiopia's aspirations were manifest, both politically and militarily, as it used many strategies to maintain its dominance over the Ogaden region. Alongside securing regional and international backing in its conflict with Somalia, Western assistance for Ethiopia significantly motivated its pursuit of its foreign policy objectives. As a result, Ethiopia successfully established its presence in the western Somali area, known as the Ogaden region, with the assistance of the Soviet Union. Additionally, Ethiopia is heavily involved in the internal conflict in Somalia, with the primary motivation being the desire of Ethiopians to avoid a strong Somali government with forceful military forces in the region.

The colonial powers worsened divisions among tribes, favoring some over those of others, particularly after European authorities identified vulnerabilities within Somali tribes, such as tribal sanctification, a propensity for revenge, and strict adherence to tribal customs. The British tried to mobilize Somalis against their neighbors. The Italians employed a similar strategy to weaken patriots and revolutionaries, particularly by targeting specific tribes to sway them against those aligned with the revolutionaries. The British administration propagated the idea of dividing and uniting the Somali people, resulting in a situation where many Somalis now oppose each other.

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