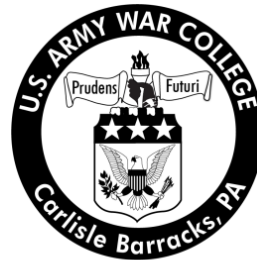


# Why Failed States Matter: The Case of Somalia

by

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United States Army War College  
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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**WHY FAILED STATES MATTER: THE CASE OF SOMALIA**

by

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## **ABSTRACT**

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As the U.S. continues to conduct successful military operations in Afghanistan and Pakistan to target and disrupt Al Qaida's ability to recruit, train and plan future attacks, terrorist organizations continues to spread in un-governed areas of the world. Since the 1991 civil war that tore Somali apart, no central government has been successful in reestablishing the ability to provide rule of law in that country. Today, Somalia is a failed state that offers a safe-haven for terrorist groups such as the Al Shabaab, who has aligned with Al Qaida in their ideology and poses a national security risk to vital U.S. interests and the international community. This paper will seek to understand how a nation is able to descend into a failed-state status and the ramifications if the international community does not intervene.





## WHY FAILED STATES MATTER: THE CASE OF SOMALIA

At the forefront of today's National Security Strategy are the protection of American citizens and the eradication of terrorism that threatens vital U.S. national interests. With military operations in Iraq now complete and all U.S. forces withdrawn, we continue to fight the Al Qaeda terrorist organization within the borders of Afghanistan and Pakistan in response to their Sept 11th attacks on the United States. Prior to these attacks on the United States, Al Qaeda, with support of the Taliban leaders, was able to establish a permanent base of operations to plan and prepare for the attacks in the relative safety offered by Afghanistan's ungoverned territories.<sup>1</sup>

As terrorist organizations such as Al Qaeda continue to grow and spread their ideology, they will continue to seek areas that offer protection from international law and shelter from outside influence. Failed or failing states offer an ideal environment for these terrorist organizations to exploit based on expansive un-governed areas and lack of a functioning central government capable of enforcing the rule of law.<sup>2</sup> This paper, using Somalia as an example, will examine how a nation is able to become a failed-state and the ramifications if the international community does not intervene. It will offer possible measures the U.S. and our partners might take to reduce the violence that threatens to further destabilize the region and impact our national interests.

### Colonial History of Somalia

In order to fully appreciate the complexity of the current on-going crises within Somalia, it's important to understand the region's history beginning with its colonial legacy. Following the Berlin Conference of 1884, the colonial powers of Europe (primarily Britain, France and Italy) all expanded their interests in Africa in what is now

known as the “scramble for Africa”.<sup>3</sup> The conference was an attempt to equitably divide the continent for the purpose of European economic expansion and exploitation. This quest for economic gains came at the expense of creating “artificial states that lacked any cultural or linguistic or ethnic coherence” .<sup>4</sup> The European nations were in a rush to secure local goods and resources to support their spread into Africa and establish coaling stations for their maritime fleets along the strategic Horn of Africa.<sup>5</sup> As colonial rule and allegiances were established, Somaliland signed a “protection” treaty with Britain, in response to the growing French and Russian influence being established in the region.<sup>6</sup>

Ultimately, the Horn of Africa would be colonized with Great Britain signing the treaty of protection with Somaliland; France colonizing Djibouti; and Italy colonizing Somalia.<sup>7</sup> Ethiopia would remain independent of any colonization attempt and even achieved a major military victory against the Italians in 1896. This defeat of the Italians at the Battle of Adowa would become the first major defeat of a colonial power by an African nation.<sup>8</sup> The out-come of this victory was two-fold for Ethiopia; freedom from colonial rule and the conquest of the Ogaden Desert, once sovereign territory of Somalia.<sup>9</sup> This annexation of the Ogaden desert produced much animosity and conflict between Ethiopia and Somalia that would continue through the 1970’s.

In 1960, the Italian colony of Somalia and the British protectorate of Somaliland gained their independence and reunited into a single state, the Somalia Republic .<sup>10</sup> This republic remained incomplete though, as portions of the original country remained under Kenyan, Ethiopian or Djiboutian foreign rule. The years between 1960 and 1969 in Somalia were marked by “clan party politics”, until finally in 1969 Mohamed Siad

Barre led a bloodless coup and became the president.<sup>11</sup> Once in power, Siad Barre quickly aligned his government with the Soviet Union and began a 22 year authoritarian rule as a brutal dictator.<sup>12</sup>

### The Ogaden War; The beginning of Guerrilla Warfare in Somalia

The origin of today's terrorist organizations within Somalia can arguably be traced to Somalia's loss of the Ogaden War to Ethiopia in 1978. A legacy of the Ethiopian annexation was a large presence of Somali descendants who maintained an allegiance to their homeland and a strong sense of national pride.<sup>13</sup> This national pride coupled with the Somali government's desire to regain the lost territory fueled many armed battles in this area.

In 1977, the Somali army aligned with Western Somali Liberation Front (WSLF) guerrillas to attack Ethiopian forces in a bid to restore lost territory and avow past wrongs.<sup>14</sup> The WSLF members were a clan of nomadic Somali descendants living in the Ogaden desert who began a military campaign to expel Ethiopia from the region.<sup>15</sup> Although Somalia attacked with a far superior force, the Ethiopians were able to align with the Soviet Union who provided not only advanced military weapon systems, but also advisors and 15,000 Cuban soldiers.<sup>16</sup> Compounding the situation for the Somali forces was the fact that they had over extended their supply capabilities and had to assume a defense posture deep within Ethiopia. As the Somali army was not able to adequately resupply and fuel its heavy armored force, they became an increasingly vulnerable target for the Ethiopian Air Force.<sup>17</sup> Finally, on 8 March, 1978, Siad Barre recalled his forces in a military defeat.<sup>18</sup> The WSLF would splinter from the Somali army

and continue to conduct a guerrilla war campaign against Ethiopian targets in the Ogaden region.

### Somali Civil War

In the aftermath of this defeat of the Somali army, clan-based, nomadic groups of guerillas were formed with the intention of toppling Siad Barre's increasingly repressive regime. By 1988 the result was a full-scale civil war, resulting in the January 1991 collapse of the central government and the ousting of Siad Barre.<sup>19</sup> By November of 1991, the warlords had turned on each other and 4.5 million Somalis had been displaced from their villages and homes with an additional estimate of 300,000 dead due to famine and fighting.<sup>20</sup>

The raging internal conflicts during this time destroyed Somalia's crops and further disrupted the country's organic ability to provide subsistence, creating massive humanitarian crises that would play-out around the world through the international media. Food aid and humanitarian assistance would be provided through foreign assistance and distributed by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's), but would soon be exploited by gangs and used as a form of population control and currency.<sup>21</sup>

In December of 1992, the United Nations Security Council would pass the United States-drafted resolution to deploy armed peace-keeping forces under U.S. leadership to provide protection and distribution of humanitarian supplies.<sup>22</sup> By the end of December, 30,000 American troops along with 10,000 soldiers from various other countries would be deployed to Somalia to establish the United States-led United Task Force (UNITAF), in support of Operation Restore Hope.<sup>23</sup> With an overwhelming military force, the UNITAF was able to establish security early on and calm the situation,

persuading fourteen Somali factions and groups to convene in an effort to discuss disarmament and proposals for peace.<sup>24</sup> These efforts to disarm were very successful initially, but as time passed the gangs became indifferent to the occupying force and the situation on the ground would further deteriorate.

By January 1993, UNITAF believed it had succeeded in creating a secure environment for the delivery of humanitarian relief, but was not successful in disarming the Somali gangs as required.<sup>25</sup> This would begin to create tensions between the U.S. leadership who were attempting to create the conditions to transfer the humanitarian mission to UN command, and the UN themselves, who expected the disarming to be complete prior to accepting responsibility from the U.S. After nearly three months of steady humanitarian aid delivery, the UNITAF forces began to transition mission command to United Nations Operations in Somalia (UNISOM II). This transition would prove to be premature in that UNISOM II did not have enough military forces (less than 15,000 representing 41 countries) or experienced personnel required to continue to operate at the same level of competence as the U.S. led UNITAF did.<sup>26</sup>

On 5 June, 1993, one month after the UN assumed responsibilities for operations in Somalia, a Pakistani patrol was attacked while inspecting a radio tower.<sup>27</sup> Twenty-four Pakistani soldiers were killed and fifty-five injured.<sup>28</sup> As a result, a new UN Security resolution was passed authorizing the capture of General Aidid, and all actions required to establish UN authority throughout Somalia.<sup>29</sup> General Aidid, the Somali National Army leader, was found guilty by a UN investigation of planning and authorizing the attack on the Pakistani patrol.<sup>30</sup> These events would lead to a second build-up of U.S.

troops and ultimately the October 1993 battle of Mogadishu, which would be chronicled in the book *Black Hawk Down*, by Mark Bowden.<sup>31</sup>

From late 1994 the capital city of Mogadishu would be divided between the two most powerful of the warring factions. Each of the warlord leaders declared himself the president of the nation and organized a supposedly national government. In March of 1995 the remaining U.S. and UN forces were evacuated from the coast under the protection of an international flotilla as no desire for peace was ever established among the Somalis. For the rest of the decade the situation would continue to spiral into chaos as warring clans would continue to prevent any humanitarian relief missions and deprive the populace of basic needs. This would mark the turning point of Somalia's final descent into lawlessness and clan- based interest that only proved to worsen the humanitarian crises wrecking the country.

#### Transitional Federal Government

In an effort to offer a solution to the lawlessness that had descended upon Somalia, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) established a Transitional Federal Government (TFG) within Somalia.<sup>32</sup> The IGAD is an alliance of six Eastern African nations united for the purpose of responding to droughts and other natural and humanitarian crises within the region.<sup>33</sup> The purpose for establishing the TFG was to create a functioning government within Somalia capable of uniting the country by ending the civil war and restoring law and order.

The Somali government, which continues to operate under the extended authority of the Transitional Federal Government, is still not capable enough to provide basic services outside of the capital city of Mogadishu. This has allowed tribal warlords,

Islamic militias, and gangs such as the al Shabaab to establish regional control and engage in illegal activities such as kidnapping, arms smuggling, drug trafficking, and piracy.<sup>34</sup>

The Somali government has very little capacity to govern, as it does not possess the military or police forces required to provide internal or external security. This has allowed clan warlords, Islamic militias, and transnational gangs such as al Shabaab to operate with impunity throughout the country, forcing the local populace to resort to crime and corruption to meet their basic survival needs. This instability and lack of essential services has directly contributed to the emergence of Somalia-based maritime piracy.

This inability to establish and maintain the rule of law has resulted in increased criminal and gang activity as well as cross border raids into Kenya and Ethiopia by transnational gangs based in Somalia. These attacks have resulted in the bombing of government facilities to instill fear and further destabilize the region, and the kidnapping of western aid workers and tourists to hold hostage for ransom.

The current U.S. policy in support of Somalia's Transitional Federal Government consists primarily of food aid and humanitarian assistance delivered through NGO's. As the central government is not able to provide basic necessities to the populace, the international community must provide leadership and the resources required to alleviate human suffering until long term solutions can be implemented.

### The 21st Century Global Security Environment

The military-security environment of the next 25 years will be shaped by a unique and substantially unfamiliar set of political, economic, technological, and cultural forces,

driven by population explosions in developing countries along with the proliferation of technology. In the future, ethnic, tribal, and religious differences will be exacerbated by population growth and socio economic disadvantages that will incite uprisings to bring about change.<sup>35</sup> Where the media was once closely censored by governments, hand-held mobile phones are now common place throughout the world, allowing information to spread in real time and free of censorship. This was evident as witnessed during the January 2011 overthrow of the Hosni Mubarak regime in Egypt, where cell phones were critical in organizing and uniting the uprising.<sup>36</sup> Most recently in Somalia, al Shabaab has begun to broadcast messages using social media means such as Twitter to not only threaten and intimidate the local populace, but to quickly communicate internally to their members.<sup>37</sup> This continuous availability of two-way communications has allowed terrorist organizations around the world to maintain real time situational awareness and adapt their tactics and response to law enforcement efforts faster than ever.

#### Impacts of Growing World Population on Failing States

Today, the world population has surpassed the 7 billion mark and is projected to top 8 billion by 2025, with nearly all of the population growth concentrated in poor, under developed countries.<sup>38</sup> This growth will continue to strain systems already at full capacity in providing basic services. Violence and social disorder have been shown to be linked to rapid population growth, and this demographic pressure shows no sign of slowing. Some of the greatest stresses will be concentrated in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, and the Palestinian territories - all Islamic societies with powerful currents of anti-Western extremism.<sup>39</sup>



Only sub-Saharan Africa faces an even sharper demographic challenge, where many countries currently experience a median age of 17 years of age and birth rates averaging greater than 5 per female.<sup>40</sup> Thus, a region of exceptionally high birth rates, coupled with fragile economic conditions that threaten the disintegration of social systems and governments' ability to maintain the rule of law, provide opportunities for terrorists to find sanctuary and cause substantial regional instability.<sup>41</sup>

In the future, according to the National Intelligence Counsel, terrorist organizations will be as prevalent and active as any time in history:

The key factors that spawned international terrorism show no signs of abating over the next 15 years. Lagging economies, ethnic affiliations, intense religious convictions, and youth bulges will align to create a "perfect storm," creating conditions likely to spawn internal conflict. The governing capacity of states, however, will determine whether and to what extent conflicts actually occur. Those states unable both to satisfy the expectations of their peoples and to resolve or quell conflicting demands among them are likely to encounter the most severe and most frequent outbreaks of violence.<sup>42</sup>

### Al Qaida

The Al Qaida terrorist organization can trace its roots to 1988 when Osama Bin Laden created it to establish a pan-Islamic caliphate.<sup>43</sup> On 9 February 2012, the al Shabaab terrorist organization, located within the borders of Somalia, formally pledged its loyalty and support to Al Qaida in order to help further their global jihadist efforts<sup>44</sup>. Their intent is to disrupt any attempt to bring back a rule of law, and they have sided with Al Qaida in fighting western efforts to restore order.

In August 2011, the TFG, supported by the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISON), launched a military operation to remove al Shabaab from Somalia<sup>45</sup>. The mission was successful in forcing al Shabaab to recede from several key areas

including Mogadishu, handing the Transitional Federal Government an enormous opportunity to finally establish security within the capital city and begin uniting the fractious country after two decades of war. This also presented the international community with an opportunity to support the TFG and re-establish the rule of law.

### Why Somalia Matters

Somalia based Piracy. One of the most prevalent impacts on the international community as a result of the failed state of Somalia is the escalation of piracy in the Indian Ocean and Gulf of Aden.<sup>46</sup> As the economy imploded during the civil war, many Somalis once associated with the fishing industry branched out to the more lucrative business of piracy on the high seas, where the potential for huge ransoms for commercial vessels and hostages exists. Strategically, Somalia has a huge coastline that wraps around the Horn of Africa and extends for over 3000 kilometers (see figure 1.).<sup>47</sup> The geographic location in relation to the Gulf of Aden, the Red Sea and the Suez Canal ensures a steady supply of merchant ships and other maritime vessels vulnerable to pirate attack.

The International Maritime Bureau considers the Somali coast to be the most dangerous stretch of water in the world, responsible for half of all global piracy and 86% of all hostage taking at sea.<sup>48</sup> At any given time, pirates are holding at least a dozen ships hostage, including the occasional oil supertanker for which they can demand up to \$25 million in ransom. Impacts to world economic interests vary by report, but estimates of effected commerce range between \$7 and \$12 billion.<sup>49</sup> In response to the piracy, commercial shipping lanes were moved further away from the Somali coast in an attempt to avoid confrontation.

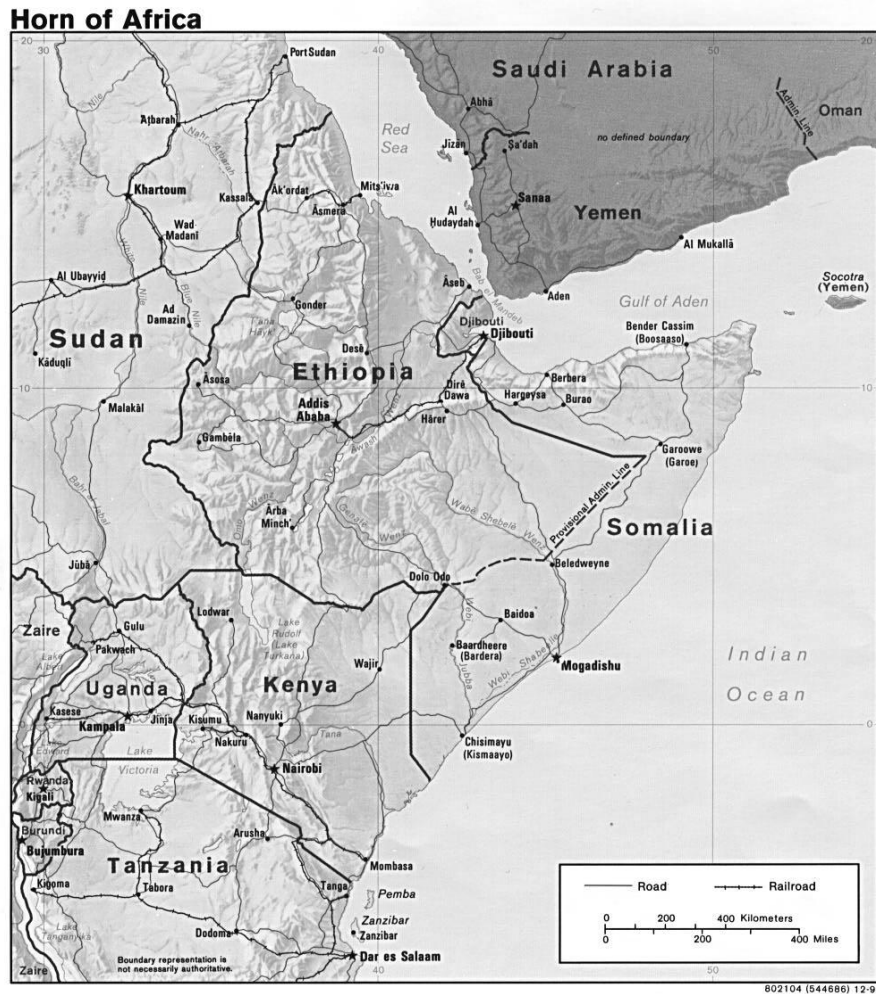


Figure 1. Horn of Africa Map, 1992; Source: CIA - Central Intelligence Agency

Maritime piracy is a universal crime under international law that places the lives of seafarers in jeopardy and impacts the shared economic interest of all nations whose commerce transits these waters. The United States along with the international community have a security and economic interest to ensure that global maritime commerce is not affected by piracy.

In response to the significant increase in piracy, the U.S. Navy stood-up the Combined Task Force 151 (CTF 151) in January of 2009 with the primary mission of

conducting anti-piracy operations in the Indian Ocean and Gulf of Aden.<sup>50</sup> Additionally, the United Nations Security Council passed a series of resolutions authorizing states to undertake all necessary measures in Somalia to suppress acts of piracy.<sup>51</sup> With no ability to stop the pirating itself, the Somali Transitional Federal Government also granted international navies the authority to operate in Somali territorial waters and ashore, to counter any act of piracy.<sup>52</sup>

As the warlords and militant gangs continue to seek new sources of revenue, they have turned to piracy as a primary source of income. The piracy has spread deep into international waters and has become a major disruption to maritime activities within the Indian Ocean, resulting in higher fees for cargo transportation and longer delivery times.

As the international efforts to move the shipping lanes further out to sea were having a positive impact on anti-piracy efforts, the pirates adopted the tactic of using “mother ships” to extend their range and launch attacks at greater distances from the coast. The “mother ships” are captured ocean-going vessels able to launch smaller boats, or skiffs, to attack and hijack unsuspecting vessels. Attacks committed by Somalia based pirates have taken place at distances of more than 1,000 nm from the Somali coast.<sup>53</sup>

According to the CIA’s World Facts, Somalia does not have a naval force capable of controlling the country’s ports or territorial waters.<sup>54</sup> Therefore the pirates based within Somalia are free to operate with impunity while conducting illegal maritime activities. Complicating the issue is the lack of a functioning judicial system within

Somalia to prosecute suspected pirates and other criminal elements, resulting in their release and return to piracy even if they are captured.

*Terrorist Safe Haven.* According to the State Department's latest annual *Country Report on Terrorism*, terrorist safe havens are defined as "ungoverned, under-governed, or ill-governed areas of a country and non-physical areas where terrorists that constitute a threat to U.S. national security interests are able to organize, plan, raise funds, communicate, recruit, train, and operate in relative security because of inadequate governance capacity, political will, or both".<sup>55</sup> Somalia's lack of a functioning central government has created an environment that favors gang activity and is hostile to any effort to attempt to establish the rule of law. With very limited capacity to secure even the capital city of Mogadishu, the rest of the country is ungoverned and vulnerable to exploitation. The al Shabaab terrorist group has found sanctuary in these ungoverned areas and continues to disrupt and prevent any attempt to stabilize the country. These ungoverned spaces offer ideal conditions to support the recruitment of new members, and the training and planning of future terrorist acts against western targets.

In an attempt to gain control of these ungoverned areas, member countries of the East African Community, along with Ethiopia, have begun operations to support Somalia's transitional government against the al Shabaab and other transnational threats and are committed to bringing stability and peace within Somalia and the region. These operations have been successful in offering pockets of security, but are temporary in nature and limited in scope unless dedicated resources are continuously applied to hold secured areas.

A safer and more stable Somalia is the intended solution that would counter the armed gangs and militias currently bringing instability to the country and international waters. Getting an effective government in place should be the first step, but the current economic and security environment does not allow for a central government to restore the rule of law. A sweeping change is required within the borders of Somalia in order to ensure stability.

### Implications of Somalia as a Failed State

The *Fund for Peace* currently list Somalia as the #1 failed state on its world index.<sup>56</sup> The U.S. and international community cannot afford for Somalia to spiral into further lawlessness, compounding a humanitarian crisis that continues to threaten regional stability and maritime losses. In the absence of a Somali government capable of meeting basic human needs, the international community consisting of the United Nations, African Union and all nations with an interest in the region must be willing to commit resources to a long term solution to the lingering security challenge, or risk its further descent into a terrorist safe haven. The primary challenges associated with Somalia as a failed state include:

*Piracy.* Absent of a functioning central government and capacity to prosecute those suspected of committing acts of piracy, Somalia will continue to offer a prime environment for pirates to freely operate from. Piracy provides substantial revenue for gangs and terrorist groups, disrupts global trade, and diminishes the ability to provide food aid in the region. As no state-wide law enforcement exists, many fishermen have turned their knowledge of the sea to piracy in an effort to greatly increase their income.

The Rule of Law must be established and enforced throughout Somalia in order for the piracy issue to be controlled.

*Porous Border.* Somalia currently has limited capacity to control those who wish to enter or exit its country. Land borders shared with Kenya, Ethiopia and Djibouti extend over 2300km's long, exposing Somalia to transnational threats looking to conduct illicit activities, disrupt commercial trade and threaten overall regional security. Increasingly violent gangs and terrorist organizations based in Somalia are free to travel throughout the region to conduct operations and challenge regional stability.

*Kidnapping.* The rampant lawlessness within Somalia has created an environment conducive to kidnapping and hostage taking for ransom. With no security present outside of the capital city of Mogadishu, gangs and terrorist groups can abduct NGO workers and foreigners supporting relief operations and demand ransoms for their safe return.

*Weapons and Narco Trafficking.* The trade and sale of weapons and drugs is a traditional source of revenue for Somali warlords and gangs who use the revenue to maintain their source of power and control over the populace. This trade continues to proliferate illegal arms to further destabilize the country and region and creates a much more heavily armed populace should future military operations be conducted within Somalia.

*Natural Disaster and Famine.* Humanitarian crises complicated by the lack of a functioning central government continues to escalate, with 350,000 Somalis imminently at risk of starvation, and millions more adversely impacted due to on-going drought conditions. The lack of internal security has severely degraded the international

community's ability to provide foreign assistance in the form of food aid which could easily be provided if the environment was stable. Compounding the problem, the country continues to suffer from extreme drought and an outbreak of cholera which poses a humanitarian crisis. Gangs who control the ports and interior roadways are able to control the distribution of medical aid and food supplies, which they have used in the past as a source of currency and control over the populace.<sup>57</sup>

### Possible Solutions

Based on the lessons we've learned since the events of 9/11, the international community cannot afford to allow sovereign nations to descend into chaos. Somalia is a failed state that will continue to threaten regional security and maritime activities if not addressed. The very first step is to recognize that a secure and stable Somalia is in the best interests of the international community and solutions to restore the rule of law are possible.

In order to fully address the on-going gang and terrorist activities expanding within Somalia, the international community must address the lawlessness that engulfs most of the country and prevents any lasting stability. The African Union, supported by the United Nations, must take the lead in reestablishing the rule of law through a robust international peacekeeping mission.

Although an interim government was created in 2004, it has had no success in establishing a central government within Somalia. In contrast, regional and local governing bodies continue to exist and control various regions of the country, including the self-declared Republic of Somaliland in northwestern Somalia and the semi-



autonomous State of Puntland in northeastern Somalia.<sup>58</sup> These regional successes must be further explored to capitalize on their ability to unite and stabilize the populace.

Among the top priorities in establishing internal security is the securing of national borders. This is critical in order to prevent the further import of illegal weapons which help rearm and resupply the various gangs still resident within Somalia.

Additionally, the ports and coastal waters of Somalia must be secured to both prevent any resupply efforts of the gangs and to deny any attempt to launch further pirate raids from within its territorial waters.

As Somalia has been a failed state for more than three decades, it currently has no credible, experienced leaders to govern the country or build functioning institutions. Therefore, the international community must be willing to pursue a long-term approach to successfully rebuild the nation. This long-term approach must take into consideration that past efforts to prop up a central government in Mogadishu have not worked and new solutions are required to be successful. Consideration must be given to the establishment of regional governance in a federal system, with voting representatives who understand and lobby for local interests at the national level. This will ensure that regional clan interests are presented at the national level acted upon accordingly.

Over the past twenty years, there have been many high profile, multi-million dollar peacemaking initiatives in southern Somalia which produced few lasting results. During this same period in Somaliland to the north, the local clan elders were able to organize a series of peace conferences, using traditional procedures, to secure a level of inter-clan peace and cooperation surpassing anything achieved in the south.<sup>59</sup> This is

a prime example of why regional governance must be explored as a lasting solution to peace.

Any potential solution must understand that rival warlords, gangs, or terrorist organizations must be accounted for and dealt with or internal security will not be achieved. A deliberate effort must be taken to ensure that all sources of funding that allows these groups to operate are identified and cut, and that the ability to deal in illegal arms trade must like-wise be cut in order to remove the means to conduct future hostilities.

In order to return to normalcy, the Somali rule of law system must be restored and fully capable of prosecuting those responsible for engaging in illegal activities, crime and corruption. As long as lawless behavior is allowed to continue unchecked, peace and stability cannot be achieved. A possible solution here is the use of “Galaca” courts, as used in Rwanda in the aftermath of their 1994 genocide. Galaca courts were local tribunal courts devised to prosecute those accused of genocide atrocities in a timely manner and to assist in the healing process. Likewise in Somalia, there must be a means to quickly and efficiency hold accountable those charged with crimes, yet show compassion and understanding, given the events of the past thirty years.

Economic reforms, driven by foreign investment, are critical to any effort to stimulate economic growth and reduce the level of poverty in Somalia. In order to attract foreign investment, a stable and secure environment must be present, so that all risks associated with capital investment and commerce within Somalia are minimized. Until the risk of conducting business in Somalia is reduced, no real expectation of external capital investment can truly be expected.

## Conclusion

As the United States and its international partners continue to fight the war on terror, the importance of denying terrorist organizations safe-havens and the freedom to operate cannot be over stated. As we have observed in Somalia over the past 30 years, any environment that offers porous borders, ungoverned space, and is free from the enforcement of the rule of law, will attract and grow terrorist cells that continue to challenge regional stability and international security. As the case with the Al Shabaab has demonstrated, warlords and gangs that are allowed to operate unchecked have been shown to affiliate with international terrorists organizations such as Al Qaeda, who are determined to launch future attacks against western targets around the world. The United States must remain a world leader in combating the spread of international terrorism wherever it may be found by supporting democratic governments and providing leadership to the international community in preventing weak states from failing.

## Endnotes

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