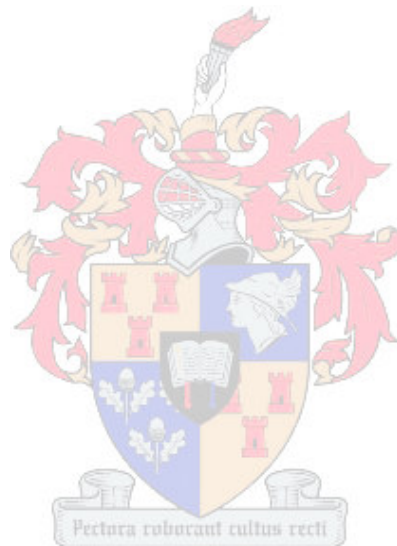# Filling the Political void: The mechanisms of coping in stateless Somalia.

By

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Supervisor: Mr Gerrie Swart

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DECLARATION

By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the owner thereof (unless to the extent explicitly otherwise stated) and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

Date: 24 August 2011

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ABSTRACT

Somalia continues to intrigue scholars and policy-makers around the world, due to the fact that it is enduring what few others have, total state collapse. Not only does the situation defy easy explanation, the degree of state failure is unprecedented. After more than two decades without a functioning central authority, Somalia is now the longest-running instance of state collapse in postcolonial history.

While researching and understanding state weakness and state failure is critical, it is useless unless combined with devising ways to prevent state failure in the future. Somalia provides policy makers with a unique opportunity to study the consequences of state collapse. Understanding the complex dynamics of state weakness and state collapse could ultimately help save the lives of thousands of people on the African continent.

This study focuses on the mechanisms of coping by analysing the actors who have stepped up to fill the political vacuum left behind by the collapsing state. The role played by both state and non-state actors will be explored throughout this study. As it is not possible to address every actor who has played a part in Somalia since the implosion of the state in 1991, only the three most important internal and external actors will be analysed.

The role played by the United Nations (UN) and the African Union (AU) will be discussed at length. The contributions made by neighbouring country Ethiopia, will also be investigated. Although the contributions and the impact of these external actors have in some instances led to undesired results, it does not change the fact that these actors attempted to fill the void in Somalia.

Non-state actors positions within Somalia will also be examined in detailed. These actors include regional authorities, the role of Al-Shabaab, as well as the Islamic Courts Union. The study does not excuse the behaviour of these actors but rather discusses the rise of these organizations in light of the collapsing state and the position which they have taken up in Somalia to fill the political void. Lastly the role of the "Somali coast guards" also known as the Somali pirates, will be discussed.

SAMEVATTING

Somalië bly die brandpunt van belangstelling vir geleerdes en beleidmakers dwarsoor die wêreld. Die hoofrede hiervoor is dat hierdie land ervaar het wat min ander lande het, naamlik algehele ineenstorting van die staat en bestuur. 'n Maklike verduideliking of vereenvoudiging van die situasie is daar nie, want die ongeëwenaarde ineenstorting van stuktuur en staat, van Somalië is uniek. Twee dekades later is hierdie land nogsteeds sonder 'n funksioneerende gesetelde staatsgesag. Hierdie tydperk is die langste voorbeeld van staatsineenstorting sonder herstel in post-koloniale geskiedenis.

Navorsing en insig in elke staat se inherente swakhede en probleme help om mislukte bestuur te voorspel en te voorkom. Hierdie inligting moet korrek geimplimenteer en geinterpreteer word om krissise en mislukkings binne staatsbestel te verhoed. Somalië bied beleidmakers 'n unieke geleentheid om die gevolge van totale staatsineenstorting te bestudeer en daaruit te leer. Net deur middel van begrip vir die komplekse dinamika van 'n staat wat ineenstort en deur wanbestuur verswak word, sal daar uikoms vir duisende mense op hierdie vasteland kom. Sodoende sal ontelbare lewens in Afrika gered kan word.

Hierdie studie analiseer die tegnieke van aanpassing, gebruik deur die rolspelers wat die politieke vakuum vul, wat deur die staatineenstorting nagelaat is. Die ondersoek fokus ook op die impak en effekte van beide interne en eksterne rolspelers. Aangesien dit onmoontlik is om die aandeel wat elke rolspeler sedert die ineenstorting van Somalië in 1991 gehad het te bestudeer, word net die drie belangrikste interne en eksterne rolspelers bespreek.

Die Verenigde Nasies (VN), Afrika Unie (AU) en die buurland Ethiopië se bydraes sal ondersoek word. Alhoewel die bydraes en insette van hierdie eksterne rolspelers soms tot ongewenste resultate gelei het, bly die feit staan dat hulle probeer het om die leemtes in Somalië te vul.

Ander belangrike rolspelers wat nie deel van die plaaslike regering is nie, sal ook in diepte bespreek word. Hierdie invloede binne Somalië sluit streeksowerhede in, asook die rol van Al Shabaab en die Islamitiese Howe Unie. Die studie verskoon nie die

gedrag van die rolspelers nie, maar bespreek eerder die opkoms van hierdie organisasies. Dit word alles gesien in die lig van die ineenstorting van die staat en die posisie wat hulle in Somalië geneem het om mag te bekom en die politieke leemte te vul. Ten slotte word die omstrede rol van die "Somaliese kuswagte", anders bekend as Somaliese seerowers, bespreek.

ACKNOWLEGMENTS

ABBREVIATIONS

AU- African Union

AMISOM- African Union Mission in Somalia

COGWO- Coalition of Grassroots Women Organizations

ICU- Islamic Courts Union

IGAD-International Government Authority for Development

SCIC- Supreme Council of Islamic Courts

SNA- Somali National Alliance

SSRC- Somali Reconciliation and Rehabilitation Council

TFG-Transitional National Government

TFC- Transitional Federal Charter

TNG-Transitional Federal Government

UN- United Nations

UNITAF- Unified Task Force for Somalia

UNOSOM- United Nations Operations in Somalia

USSR- Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

UNEP- United Nations Environment Programme

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(Central Intelligence Agency 2007)

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1 Overview

Somalia has been without a functioning central government since 1991 which makes this country the longest-running instance of state collapse in post-colonial history (Menkhaus, 2007b:74). Not only has the country not had a functioning government for more than two decades, it is also currently the site of the worst humanitarian crisis in the world (Menkhaus, 2010:320). The people of Somalia have endured civil war, autocratic rulers, military dictatorships and oppression for the last 40 years (Menkhaus, 2003:407). Years of fighting between rival warlords and the inability of the state to deal with famine and disease has led to the deaths of roughly one million people in Somalia (BBC, 2011a).

Somalia's descent into civil war and state collapse can ultimately be traced back to various underlying factors in the 1980's which finally led to the political catastrophe of 1991 (Menkhaus, 2007b:78). In 1969, Mohammed Siad Barre headed a coup which overthrew the government and ushered in a socialist rule characterized by "the repression, jailing and torture of political opponents and dissidents" (CIA- World Factbook, 2011). The new Democratic Republic of Somalia proclaimed scientific nationalism as its national goal and went on to nationalize all foreign businesses in 1970 (African Insight, 1986:215). The Barre regime established close links with both China and the Soviet Union which also supplied the army with equipment (African insight, 1986:215). During this time the army and the state became increasingly dependent on foreign aid from the USSR (African Insight, 1986:215). The high levels of foreign aid the country received during the Cold War funded an unsustainable patronage system (Menkhaus, 2007b:80). The Somali state was almost completely funded by external sources and once these sources started to dry up the state rapidly disintegrated (Menkhaus, 2007b:80). Even though the country has been without a central government since 1991, it is clear that the state collapsed much earlier than that. It could be argued that by the mid 1980's Somalia was already a failed state (Menkhaus, 2007b:80).

In fact, most government institutions began falling apart after the catastrophic Ogaden War with Ethiopia which started in 1977 (Menkaus, 2007b:80). The war together with increased government repression, gross levels of corruption and the crumbling of the school system combined to accelerate state failure (Menkhaus, 2007b:80). The state became an "instrument of repression and expropriation" which finally boiled over in 1988 (Menkhaus, 2007b:81). The civil war that broke out drastically altered the future of Somalia.

The impact of the civil war is still evident in Somalia today. In light of the multiple opposition groups that the Barre regime faced, the army adopted a scorched earth policy as a measure of last resort (Menkhaus, 2010:323). The policies adopted by the government militia together with the atrocities against civilians created severe famine conditions within the country. The result was the death of nearly 250 000 civilians and the massive displacement of close to a million people (Menkhaus, 2007b:81). The fall of the Barre regime in early 1991 did not improve the situation within the country. In fact matters seemed to go from bad to worse.

An economy of plunder and looting developed, featuring violent banditry, armed gunmen and gangs looking for opportunities to loot (Menkhaus, 2007b:81). A culture of lawlessness swept through the country, which nurtured a climate for the birth of multiple warlords who thrived in stateless Somalia. Much of the capital was destroyed due to fighting, with almost all public and state property being stolen (Menkhaus, 2007b:81). The country was in shambles due to the destruction, violence and the massive displacement of people which led Somalia into turmoil and anarchy.

The terms "collapsed state" and "failed state" have become throwaway labels due to the fact that they have been linked to and used to describe a variety of political crises in the post-colonial era (Menkhaus, 2003:407). While many states have been described as failed or collapsed in the past, none of them have been as worthy of the title as Somalia. Not only has the country been without a functioning government since 1991, the current fragile transitional government controls no more than a few blocks of the capital, Mogadishu (BBC, 2011a). It cannot even manage this tiny bit of "control" without the backing of the United Nations and African Union troops (Guardian, 2011).

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In light of all that has happened in Somalia, this study will look into how the country has adapted to life without a government. The study focuses on the mechanisms of coping by analysing the actors which have stepped up to fill the political vacuum left behind by the collapsing state. It will do this by investigating the role that external actors have played in providing some basic governmental functions to the people of Somalia. The role played by the United Nations (UN) and the African Union (AU) will be discussed at length. The contributions made by neighbouring country, Ethiopia will also be discussed. Non State actors' positions within Somalia will also be examined in detailed. These actors include regional and transregional authorities, the role of Al-Shabaab as well as the Islamic Courts Union. The study does not aim to condone the behaviour of these groups but rather discusses the rise of these organizations in light of the collapsing state and the position which they have taken up in Somalia to fill the political void left by the lack of effective governance. Finally the recent developments regarding piracy in Somalia will also be analysed as a mechanism for coping without a central government.

1.2 Literature Review

The amount of empirical literature addressing the background and history of the Somali state is extensive. Scholars have exhausted this avenue and written countless articles about the circumstances which led to the collapse of the Barre regime and consequently the state as well. The nature and the consequences of state failure have also been covered in much detail (Menkhaus, 2007b; Menkhaus, 2003; Hohne, 2006). The very notion of state collapse is also not foreign in the African context and has therefore not aroused any new curiosity. Somalia has however received global recognition for being a safe haven for terrorist groups with various links between Al-Shabaab and Al-Qaeda being exposed (Gartenstein-Ross, 2009). More recently however, the hijacking of ships and the killing of innocent civilians by the pirates operating from the Somali coast, has also managed to attracted international attention (Gartenstein-Ross, 2009).

The recent activities in Somalia are definitely a cause for concern, and should not be overlooked. This study will therefore address the root causes of these issues. These issues stem from the collapse of the Somali state, which has produced an environment within which such activities can flourish. More importantly however these activities

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should be recognized for what they are, they are the mechanisms of coping in a stateless Somalia, the way that people have attempted to adapt to state failure in the country.

The purpose of this study is therefore to fill the gap in literature by looking at how the people of Somalia have managed to cope and survive without a state and by investigating the actors who have filled the political void in the country after the implosion of the state in 1991. The study also hopes to shed light on the importance of non-state actors and the contribution which they can make in weak and failing states. Even though much of the country is in turmoil and an atmosphere of lawlessness persists, some communities have managed to restore some normality to everyday life. Given Somalia's ugly history of oppression, brutality, violence, conflict and state failure, Somalia does not only make for an interesting case study but rather an important one. This case study will help determine how the political vacuum has been filled in Somalia and the impact this has had on the country. The study will emphasize and elaborate on the work done by Menkhaus (2007b), which looked at "Governance without Government in Somalia."

Menkhaus' (2007b) article highlighted a number of aspects that are important to take into consideration. His argument is based on the premise that even though the government system has collapsed, governance still takes place in Somalia through the rise of informal systems of adaptation (Menkhaus, 2007b). This trend is the natural response of any country that is facing the prolonged absence of a central government. "This development is being driven by the evolving role of coalitions of business groups, traditional authorities, and civic groups in promoting more organic forms of public order and rule of law" (Menkhaus, 2007b:74). Recent research has shown that communities that have been cut off from an effective functioning state, have taken up the responsibility to provide for themselves the core functions that a state is meant to supply (Menkhaus, 2007b:75). Local communities are not incapable of providing for themselves and have instead adapted in a variety of ways to cope with state failure and insecurity.

These trends are not unique to Somalia and can also be found in other African countries where communities have been cut off from the state. Similar informal

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systems of governance can be found in areas experiencing warfare or where the government is indifferent or unable to provide minimal state functions (Menkhaus, 2007b:75). The Somalia case is therefore important to consider, not in isolation, but also with regards to future trends that may be taking place in other African states. The situation in Somalia can help shed some light into other complex African situations where communities have had to rely on local organizations as well as international institutions to fill the gap that the state is unable or unwilling to fill.

This study by no means tries to undermine the importance of a central state structure and the positive impact which this could have for Somalia. The existing informal and local system of governance will also never be able to take the place of a central government, but as we know, the African state is fundamentally different to other state structured countries in the world. The very notion of European statehood is a foreign concept to many African nations and it is simply wishful thinking that all states in the long run will eventually converge towards the model of Western liberal democracy as described by Weber (Hagmann & Hoehne, 2009:43). The longer the Somali state remains without a central government the more difficult it will be to reinstate such a structure in the country especially since the country has no reference as to what an effective state should consist of. In fact many still view the state as an instrument of accumulation and domination, which exploits and harasses its population for personal gain (Menkhaus, 2007b:87). The future of the Somali state may therefore rest on its ability to incorporate and partner with the local and international organizations which have been fulfilling its functions for the past 20 years (Menkhaus, 2007b:78).

The study will therefore focus on the mechanisms of coping in Somalia by drawing on the role of both internal and external actors. The external actors include the UN and the AU and the role which these organizations have played in providing governance in Somalia. Even though the operations organized and led by these two institutions have not always been a success, without their presence in the country the situation in Somalia would be significantly worse. The UN has played an instrumental role in the country since the collapse of the Barre regime in 1991 (Menkhaus, 2010). The US-led, UN-authorized "Operation Restore Hope" which was set up in 1992, managed to transform the political security landscape of humanitarian operations within the

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country (Menkhaus, 2010:325). Even though the operation was not as successful as expected it was the platform for the United Nations Operations in Somalia, and still managed to help stabilize the countryside (Menkhaus, 2010:325). Not only did the UN aim to stabilize the country and provide protection for the humanitarian relief that needed to reach communities on the outskirts of the country, its long term objectives included national reconciliation, state revival and economic recovery (Menkhaus, 2010:325).

During the first couple of weeks in Somalia the UN was able to improve security and access to humanitarian relief and could therefore tackle other problems such as food shortages, as well as other emergency needs such as health and sanitation (Menkhaus, 2010:325). Humanitarian Operations were merely the first steps to the UN objectives in Somalia and the focus quickly shifted to a higher objective - stabilization (Menkhaus, 2010:326). The United Nations Operations in Somalia (UNOSOM) wasted no time in assisting the people of Somalia in rehabilitating their political institutions, their shattered economy as well as promoting political reconciliation (Menkhaus, 2010:326). The UN took on the challenge to rebuild the country through broad participation by all the sectors and people within the Somali society (Menkhaus, 2010:326). The UN was even authorized to help re-establish the Somali police at both the local and national level, which would promote and encourage the maintenance of peace, stability and law and order within the country (Menkhaus, 2010:326). From the very beginning the UN has played a central role in building up Somali institutions and structures.

Even so, UNOSOM faced several challenges while in Somalia. It was under constant attack by rebel forces and militiamen and lost several of its peacekeepers while posted in Mogadishu. Reports surfaced that peacekeepers and unarmed staff members were being viciously attacked and killed while distributing food parcels. UNOSOM continued to apprehend those responsible for instigating and committing armed attacks against UN and US personnel (United Nations, 2003). Then in late 1993 United States Rangers and the Quick Reaction Force troops joined the UN in its operation aimed at capturing a number of key aides of General Aidid, a powerful warlord responsible for various attacks on the UN forces (United Nations, 2003). During the operation two United States helicopters were shot down by Somali

militiamen using automatic weapons and rocket-propelled grenades (United Nations, 2003). While trying to evacuate the fallen helicopters, the Rangers came under heavy fire. A total of 18 US soldiers lost their lives that day while another 75 were wounded. The now infamous Black Hawk Down incident marked the beginning of the end of the UN peacekeeping operation in Somalia.

After various setbacks and complications UNOSOM left Somalia and its ambitious state building dreams behind in 1995 (Menkhaus, 2010:328). The departure of UNOSOM did not however lead Somalia back to a state of anarchy and demise; instead the next seven years were characterized by a gradual decrease in armed conflict and the rise of a fairly secure localised system of informal governance (Menkhaus, 2010:328). The country was slowly adapting to life in stateless Somalia and showing the signs of coping without a central government.

It wasn't until after 2001 that the UN staged another large scale intervention programme in Somalia. The country managed to gain international attention post 9/11 for its alleged links to the Al-Qaeda terrorist group (Menkhaus, 2010:331). Both the UN and the USA were concerned about the security threats that emanated from Somalia's ungoverned spaces (Menkhaus, 2010:331).

The situation in Somalia also caught the attention of the continent's main regional body, the AU. The AU however did not get involved in Somalia until some years later. The AU intervention in Somalia has once again highlighted the inadequacy of the organization and its inability to deploy capable peacekeeping forces at short notice (Baker, 2007:120). The aim of the study is not to assess the AU or its performance, rather it wishes to assess the role it has played in Somalia in helping to fill the security vacuum. The progress that the AU has made may have been slow but this does not mean that it should be overlooked. The circumstances within which the African Union Peace and Security Council staff are deployed is both complicated and dangerous. The AU has also had to make do with limited troops and equipment (Baker, 2007:121). This is due to the fact that most African countries are poor and do not have the finances, resources or the capability to project military power (Baker, 2007:121).

Given these constraints and the obstacles that the AU is facing, the fact that they have managed to intervene and make some contribution towards filling the security vacuum should be praised. The rise of a "complex insurgency" in early 2007, led by radical Islamist militia, Al-Shabaab, against Ethiopian forces and the TFG, resulted in the massive displacement of some 700 000 Mogadishu residents and caused a massive humanitarian crisis in the country. After the catastrophe of 2007/2008 the AU launched the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) (Menkhaus, 2010:336). AMISOM was given a relatively broad mandate by the UN and its primary task was to protect transitional federal institutions (Menkhaus, 2010:336). The responsibility to create the "necessary security conditions for the provision of humanitarian assistance" was also part of AMISOM's orders (Menkhaus, 2010:336). By 2009 the AU had deployed a 3400 member peace keeping force to Somalia, composed of troops mainly from Burundi and Uganda (CNN, 2009). The number of troops posted currently in Somalia has increased significantly and is now a force close to 8000 strong, which is helping secure and support the transitional government (BBC, 2011). They have also managed to work together with Somali troops to reclaim territories held by Al-Shabaab (Guardian, 2011). Once again the progress has been slow and met with fierce opposition but they are slowly regaining control over parts of the capital (Guardian, 2011). The impact which the AU has in Somalia should not be underestimated. The role played by the AU will therefore be investigated in the study to understand the magnitude of its contribution to this country.

Another aspect which the study will address is the role the neighbouring countries have had in filling the security vacuum in the country. Even though relations between Ethiopia and Somalia may have been strained in the past, Ethiopia has played a central role in securing and supporting the current transitional government. The presence of neighbouring Ethiopia is however also responsible for creating friction within the country especially with regards to the Ethiopian military occupation of Mogadishu in 2007 (Menkhaus, 2010:332). The rise of complex insurgencies in 2007 led by radical Islamists against the Ethiopian forces, the TFG, as well as the AU peacekeepers, created further tension and instability in Somalia (Menkhaus, 2010:332). Ethiopia's meddling in Somali politics destabilized the situation within the country and served to radicalize insurgency groups as well as damage the already fragile relationship between the neighbouring states.

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Ethiopian troops have however been working closely with Somali troops as well as the AU peace keeping forces to recapture and reclaim regions in the country currently under Al-Shabaab control. With regards to the UN, the AU and now Ethiopian contributions, these 3 actors have stepped in to help restore peace to this war-torn African state and rehabilitate the state. They may not have been as successful as they hoped to be but the impact they have had on Somali society and filling the security gap left by the falling Somali state should be recognized.

Even though Eritrea's role in Somalia has been fundamentally different to the other actors who have been mentioned, the impact it has had on its neighbour should be addressed. It would seem that Eritrea has no real stake in the Somali conflict but rather that it is the hostile relationship with Ethiopia which has become the driving force behind its interest and participation in the Somali conflict (Moller, 2009:33). The hostility between Ethiopia and Eritrea dates years back to the border war that broke out between the two countries in 1998, killing roughly 70 000 people (Clarke, 2009). Instead of this war coming to an end in 2000, it has simply been relocated to Somalia, where the opposing countries now battle it out in a proxy war (Moller, 2009:33). The fact that Eritrea has been providing weapons and military training to Al-Shabaab is fuelling the conflict and violence in the country (Clarke, 2009).

The nature and the motivation for internal actors to fill the political vacuum are fundamentally different to those of external actors. While external actors filled the gap to bring stability to the country and consequently also the region, internal actors struggled for control in order to gain power and authority in Somalia. They are opportunistic and have grown in strength as a mechanism of coping with state failure. These groups have become increasingly influential and shaped the landscape of Somalia's political environment.

Both Al-Shabaab and the Islamic Courts Union want to govern the country by implementing Islamic Law (Gartenstein-Ross, 2009). These hard-liner Islamist groups were able to rise from obscurity to international prominence, with Al-Shabaab ideologies and commitment to global jihadism becoming a reason for international concern (Gartenstein-Ross, 2009). Both of these groups control vast swaths of Somalia and the "governing strategies which they have put in place indicate that both

groups thought long and hard how to maintain and expand their power" (Gartenstein-Ross, 2009).

The turmoil within Somalia in the 1980's gave rise to two Islamic groups that were the predecessors for Al-Shabaab (Gartenstein-Ross, 2009). The first of these groups was the Islamic Union, which according to credible accounts, was created around 1983 (Gartenstein-Ross, 2009). This group was originally comprised of educated, young men who had studied in the Middle East (Gartenstein-Ross, 2009). The group had two main goals. First it wanted to overthrow the Barre regime and replace it with an Islamic State and secondly it aimed to unify the Greater Somalia (Gartenstein-Ross, 2009). The group however never managed to gain momentum or much support and by 2004 it was considered a spent force (Gartenstein-Ross, 2009).

The first generation of Sharia courts were created in the early 1990's (Menkhaus, 2007b:85). Local communities widely embraced and encouraged the courts and saw them as a means to restore the rule of law. They were predominantly local in nature and therefore could not project their authority beyond their own neighbourhood or town (Menkhaus, 2007b:85). These Sharia courts were formed and controlled by a coalition of actors including clan leaders, business leaders as well as traditional Sufi sheiks. The courts also followed traditional Somali customs and disputing parties had the right to choose between customary law and sharia law (Menkhaus, 2007b:85). Another important aspect of the Sharia courts is the fact that they were moderate in nature and were generally opposed to radical interpretations of Islam (Menkhaus, 2007b:85-86).

These courts were instrumental in Somalia in keeping the peace between the people and as well as providing a hybrid form of juridical arrangements, they managed to provide some basic services (Menkhaus, 2007b:86). Some succeeded in operating piped water lines, managing the market places and even collected some form of taxes to cover salaries within the community (Menkhaus, 2007b:86). Similar ways of adapting could be seen in communities all over Somalia. They were able to provide some of the services that a functioning state would have.

These Sharia courts later become the "springboard for a new, radical Islamists movement," the Consultative Council of Islamic Courts (Menkhaus, 2007b:86). This group has been responsible for disarming militiamen, removing roadblocks which had been operated by gunmen and has also policed the streets of Mogadishu (Menkhaus, 2007b:89). The actions taken by this group has slowly started reducing crime in the area by establishing high levels of public order and security in the areas under its control (Menkhaus, 2010:332).

The Supreme Council of Islamic Courts (SCIC) or Islamic Courts Union (ICU) has a greater capacity to govern than the IU ever did, and gained international attention when it seized Mogadishu in June 2006 (Gartenstein-Ross, 2009). The group also did not hesitate to take over key port cities in the country. The group was able to gain power due to the circumstances emanating from the ungoverned spaces in the country. This group together with Al-Shabaab wrestled the new transnational federal government (TFG), which was instated in late 2004, for control of the country (Menkhaus, 2007b:74).

Al-Shabaab is another influential and powerful player in Somalia's political sphere. The break between Al-Shabaab and other insurgent groups functioning in Somalia came at the end of 2007 (Gartenstein-Ross, 2009). This radical Islamic group openly declares its loyalties to Al-Qaeda and is therefore considered an international threat (Menkhaus, 2010:332). The militant group has also been trained in sniper fire and suicide bombings, tactics which they use in the hopes of acquiring their political goals (Guardian, 2011). The group has carried out multiple suicide bombings, claiming the lives of hundreds of people (Guardian, 2011). Somalia is not the only country which has experienced casualties and losses due to the group's activities. In July 2010 the group carried out a suicide bombing in Uganda that killed 76 people (Guardian, 2011). It is clear that this group holds a significant position within the country and has been able to do so due to the circumstances within Somalia. The study will therefore investigate this group in further detail as it has not only gained international attention, but because it has gathered internal support due to the political void left by the collapsed state.

The last aspect which the study will address is the recent piracy developments in Somalia. Somalia's piracy problem rose to global prominence in 2008 due to the drastic increase in the number of attacks on vessels off the Somali coast (Gilpin, 2009). The number of attacked vessels during that year was a staggering 111, while 47 ships were hijacked (Gilpin, 2009). Even more worrying were the figures from the first quarter of 2009 which were ten times higher than the same period in 2008 (Gilpin, 2009). The situation has become increasingly dangerous for any vessel travelling along the Somali coast and has resulted in a drastic increase in insurance rates for ships. These rates have skyrocketed and increased almost 40 fold from $500 in 2008 to $20 000 per voyage in 2009 (Gilpin, 2009).

Somalia's piracy can be directly traced back to the conditions within the country. Poverty and unemployment is a major problem for all Somali citizens with 40% of Somalis living in extreme poverty (less than $1 a day) while almost 75% of the population live on less than $2 a day (Gilpin, 2009). The devastating circumstances within the country have facilitated crime in most parts of Somalia (Gilpin, 2009). The combination of corruption, desperation and inter-clan rivalry has led to the drastic increase in criminal activity, both on land and sea (Gilpin, 2009). The majority of the pirates are poorly educated, young, unemployed men who rely on these activities for their livelihoods (Gilpin, 2009). The pirates are merely the creation of their desperate circumstances. Piracy developed as a mechanism for coping with the current situation within which the country finds itself.

1.3 Purpose and Significance of the Study

The situation in Somalia is unique, given the fact that it has been two decades since the country has had a functioning central government. This makes Somalia not only an interesting case study but also an important one. The underlying factors which led to the collapse of the state are not all that different from other African countries. This study is therefore significant as it will provide critical insight into the current situation and determine whether what we are seeing is merely an isolated case or whether it could become a future trend for other African states. The study focuses on the mechanism of coping in stateless Somalia and highlights the roles which various actors have played in providing the services and fulfilling the functions of a central government. For external actors, a state is a prerequisite for development and growth,

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while for many Somalis it is nothing more than an instrument of accumulation and domination (Menkhaus, 2007b:87). People have become too focused on the one structure that provides the least amount of rule of law in Somalia - the state (Menkhaus, 2007b:87). This study does not want to undermine the importance of a central government or by any means suggest that Somalia is better off without a state, it simply wants to highlight the importance of the actors who have stepped up to fill the political void left behind by the collapsing state.

The Purpose of the study is therefore:

a) to describe the underlying factors which have led to the collapse of the Somali state;

b) to assess the impact of the failing state on Somalia's citizens;

c) to investigate the relationship between a weak state and a strong society;

d) to investigate the actors (both internal and external) who have stepped up to fill the political void left behind by the failing state;

e) to assess the progress which these actors have made in providing the basic functions of the state;

f) to consider the Nirvana fallacy and the relevance it has on the Somalia case. The Nirvana Fallacy was first used to describe the relationship between government intervention and imperfect markets. The reasoning concludes that government intervention is required to overcome market imperfections (Coyne, 2006). This overlooks the fact that governments themselves are imperfect and may fail to allocate resources effectively. Coyne took this reasoning and applied it to failed states. His argument was that where central governments are absent or dysfunctional, it is assumed that reconstruction efforts by foreign governments generate preferable outcomes. This is simply not the case. This assumption overlooks 3 key factors. (1) "the possibility that foreign governments intervention can fail (2) the possibility that reconstruction efforts can do more harm than good and (3) the possibility that indigenous governance mechanisms may evolve that are more effective than those imposed by military occupiers" (Coyne, 2006:1).

g) and finally to assess whether what is happening in Somalia can become a future trend that we will see in other African countries.

1.4 Aims of the research

The aim of the research is to investigate how the people have adapted to life in stateless Somalia. The study therefore looks at the mechanisms or the politics of coping in the country and the rise of actors and organizations during these uncertain and unpredictable times. The saying "desperate times call for desperate measures" truly is applicable in the Somali case. The Islamic Courts Union and Al-Shabaab have both tried to fill the political vacuum by introducing informal systems of adoptions, security and governance in response to the prolonged absence of a functioning central government in Somalia (Menkhaus, 2007b). Their role in Somalia will therefore be discussed in detail.

One cannot analyse present day Somalia without looking at the escalating piracy problem the country is currently experiencing. The reasons behind this criminal activity can also be traced back to the situation within the country. It could be argued that the pirates are simply the creation of their circumstances. It seems that individuals did not so much choose this lifestyle, there just does not seem to be many other alternative options available to uneducated, young men in Somalia. This recent development is but one of the mechanisms of coping in a failing and collapsed state.

The study also aims to analyse the role of external actors. When looking at Somalia it is crucial to understand the important contribution these actors have made in constructing a "safe" environment. These external actors have tried to re-establish order and security in Somalia by filling the security vacuum in the country. The role of the UN, AU and Ethiopia will therefore be discussed at length.

1.5 Research Question

Which actors have stepped up to fill the political vacuum left behind by the collapsing Somali state? Consideration will be given to national groups and organizations as well as international actors.

Further sub questions which arose during the literature review and which this study will also focus on are:

- What contribution can the Somalia case make to understanding the situation in other African States?

- Is what we see in Somalia a trend that could possibly be seen in other African states?
- What is the importance of non-state actors in providing governance for states in Africa?

1.6 Research Method

This study deals with both descriptive and explanatory aspects and thus falls under the broader term of qualitative research. This study makes no use of a hypothesis or any falsifiable assumption and it also does not test for any social or international relations theory. With regards to the time dimension of the study, the study will focus mainly on events and circumstances from 2001 to the present day situation in Somalia. This time dimension will only serve as a guide line however and will not be strictly adhered to as important aspects of the study fall outside these perimeters.

1.7 Conceptualisation

Before delving into the study, it is crucial to explain what is meant by a failed state. To prevent confusion, the study will use the conceptualization as set out by Menkhaus (2003).

Failed State:

Conceptualisation- "A situation in which a central government has either lost presence in a significant portion of real estate (territorial collapse), or has lost the capacity to rule the territory in which it has a physical presence (collapse of governing capacity), or both" (Menkhaus, 2003:407). It is therefore the situation where the government has either lost control over a significant portion of the territory it is meant to control and/or is no longer able to provide the services or fulfil the functions which a state is supposed to.

1.8 Structure of Study

The structure of the study will be as follows: Chapter 2 will cover the theoretical aspects of the paper by looking at the notion of failed states in Africa. It will discuss the relationship between weak states and strong societies as well as emphasize the role/function of a modern state. The chapter will also look into the history of the

country in order to understand the setting and context within which the Somali state was constructed. A historical account and background of Somalia is crucial to incorporate into the study in order to gain insight into the reasons why the state failed and eventually collapsed.

Chapter 3 will discuss the external actors who have stepped up to fill the political void in Somalia. While there have been countless actors and countries involved in Somalia, only 3 major external actors will be analysed. The UN and the AU will be discussed in detail, focusing on the contribution they have made since the collapse of the state. The third and final external actor that will be looked at is Ethiopia. Even though the impact and the consequences of the actors vary significantly, the roles which these actors have played are crucial to understanding the circumstances in Somalia today.

Chapter 4 on the other hand, will discuss the internal actors and how they have adapted to life in stateless Somalia. Three of the most important local actors who have stepped up to fill the political void after the implosion of the state will be discussed. Firstly the role of the ICU will be addressed, looking specifically at how the group transformed Mogadishu in 2006 by restoring law and order to the capital for the first time in 15 years. The second internal actor that will be discussed is Al-Shabaab. While Al-Shabaab has gained international recognition for its terrorist activities and its ties to Al-Qaeda, the group managed to take advantage of the security vacuum in Somalia and therefore take control of the resistance movement against the TFG and AU forces. The third and final internal actor the study will look into is the Somali pirates.

 Chapter 5 will address any sub questions which have come up during the literature review as well as any others that may have developed throughout the study.

1.9 Data gathering

This study will rely on information and statistics gathered from a variety of sources. The study will rely exclusively on secondary sources, as travelling to the country to gain first-hand experience is not possible. The sources that have been consulted and on which this paper is based are academic articles and journals. The paper also uses a variety of sources to make sure all the information used is reliable and accurate. More

current information will also be secured by making use of different news sites such as CNN, BBC and Guardian, which make information available just days or even hours after an event has taken place.

1.10 Conclusion

Looking at the information presented above, it becomes clear that Somalia does not only make for an interesting case study but rather an important one. Somalia provides policy-makers with a unique opportunity to gain insight into the workings of a failed and collapsed state. This chapter has explored the actors who have filled the political void after the implosion of the state and those who continue to fill the vacuum due to the lack of effective governance in Somalia.

The following chapters will expand on the findings of this chapter and delve deeper into the notion and meaning of collapsed states. The study will address both internal and external actors in detail while assessing the role they have played in filling the political void. The study therefore looks at the mechanisms or the politics of coping in the country and the rise of actors and organizations during these uncertain and unpredictable times.

Chapter 2 will address the theoretical aspects of the study by looking into the role of the state as well as the relationship between a weak state and a strong society. The chapter will also give an historical account of Somalia to provide us with a clear understanding of the circumstances out of which the Somali state was constructed, as well as provide insight into why the state failed and eventually collapsed.

CHAPTER 2
Weak and Failed States: Taking a closer look at Somalia

2.1 Importance of understanding State Collapse

State failure can occur due to a number of reasons. These may include historical circumstances, prolonged war, ethnic clashes or the collapse of the central government (Carment, 2003). Regardless of the reasons or circumstances that eventually lead to the collapse of the state, the impact of a collapsed state, not only on its citizens, but also on the region with regards to regional security, is immense and the results catastrophic.

Understanding why states collapse will help policy-makers design methods that will not only help to restore and revive weak states, but will help prevent state failure and collapse in the future (Rotberg, 2003:2). The factors that led to the current situation in Somalia are unfortunately not all that unique to the Somali context. Similar aspects can be seen all over the African continent. This is a cause for great concern. Although the study does not have the space to provide an in depth comparison between Somalia and other Africa states, this avenue should make for an interesting comparative study. Scholars interested in African politics should consider this topic for future research.

2.2 Lessons learnt from Somalia

Somalia has become the poster child for collapsed states not only in Africa but in the world. The African continent currently has a number of countries that are weak and in the process of failing. It is therefore crucial to examine the circumstances surrounding the failure and the collapse of the Somali state in order to gain insight and understanding which could possibly be used to prevent the severe circumstances which materialized in Somalia from replicating themselves in other African states. A number of crucial insights can already be drawn from the Somalia case study.

It has become apparent that the top down approach to state building has failed time and time again. Even so, policy makers cling to this approach in a desperate attempt to revive and resuscitate failing states (Hagmann & Hoehne, 2009:46). These top-down approaches often leave little or no room for alternative modules of statehood (Hagmann & Hoehne, 2009:46).

It may be time to consider and construct state models that are context specific and are able to incorporate the unique aspects of the state in question, rather than force generic models of state building on these states. The Western world is convinced that the only way for a state to be successful is for it to comply with the requirements of the Westphalian state structure (Omaar, 2004:84). Many consider this the only way to achieve good governance in the international system. However, Africa's history, culture and geography does not always allow this "one size fits all policy" to be transferred from the Western States to African Nations.

Many African states are considerably weaker against the backdrop of European state structures and forcing them to comply with this Western concept may not be the best solution to the vast array of problems which African states encounter. Some scholars even go as far as questioning the very notion of the state and whether it should be reinstated in Somalia (Ahmed & Green, 1999:126). According to Ahmed and Green (1999:126) "the fact that Somalia did for some time constitute a state cannot be considered a sufficiently convincing reason to go back to it again, unless one finds that there were some elements in it that are still worth retaining or building upon."

This study does not however suggest that the state be done away with, but rather that local and informal systems of governance, which societies are accustomed to, be incorporated into the state structure thereby constructing an Africanized state which is better able to meet the demands of its people. One must be careful not to generalize, as each country is characterized by a unique endowment of culture and historical experiences and creating a specific state structure for each individual country is obviously impossible. What is important to take into consideration however are the local forms of governance that have been around for centuries. It is crucial that they are incorporated into the state structure. A compromise between local indigenous African societies and the modern state structure should be reached in order to create a hybrid form of state which allows "good governance" to flourish.

Matt Bryden (1999) suggested such an approach more than a decade ago. According to Bryden (1999:134) "local administrative structures could constitute building blocks in the restoration of peace and statehood in Somalia." Even though policy-makers and scholars have slowly started embracing the "building block approach" in theory, they

still find it problematic to implement in practice. The approach does open a window of opportunity, not only for the civil society and those involved in local politics, but also provides the international community with a new avenue through which it can help assist state revival.

The prolonged state failure of Somalia has provided policy-makers with a unique opportunity. Somalia has been the "guinea pig" for international organizations and aid partners who have all tried and tested various techniques and approaches in an attempt to rebuild the state. The fact that many of these "attempts" have been to the detriment of the Somali people is extremely unfortunate, but has highlighted the need for new methods when addressing state reconstruction. The international community has gradually realized the importance of sub-national dynamics in a collapsed state and that these local systems cannot be excluded from the nation building process (Bryden, 1999:135). Aspects of this approach can be seen in the more recent attempts to rebuild the state in Somalia. Even though these have not been as successful as was hoped, it is definitely a move in the right direction. What is also important to remember is that the severity of state collapse in Somalia is rather unprecedented and will take years before the results will show meaningful progress.

2.3 The Role of the State

The Nation State exists purely to provide and deliver political public goods to the citizens within its borders (Rotberg, 2003:2). The modern state was constructed to answer the concerns and demands of its citizens while at the same time mediating the constraints and challenges of the international system to ensure a secure and stable environment for its citizens (Rotberg, 2003:3). The political goods which the state is meant to supply are the intangible claims that the citizens make on states (Rotberg, 2003:2). These include expectations and the obligations which the citizens expect the state to fulfil.

The most important political good which the state is meant to supply is the notion of security, especially human security (Rotberg, 2003:3). The state's primary function is therefore to prevent cross border invasions, the loss of any territory, to eliminate any domestic threats to or attacks against the nation state, to prevent crime or conflict

which may lead to human insecurity and it should also enable citizens to resolve disputes against the state or with other citizens in a peaceful and diplomatic manner without having to resort to violence (Rotberg, 2003:3).

The delivery of all other political goods is directly related to the ability of the state to supply and provide a sense of security to its inhabitants (Rotberg, 2003:3). If the state is unable to supply human security to its citizens it is only a matter of time before other political goods and public services which the state is meant to supply will start suffering. Other key political goods enable citizens to participate openly and freely in politics and the political process (Rotberg, 2003:3). This good also encompasses the essential freedoms which include fundamental civil and human rights (Rotberg, 2003:3).

There are also various other political goods that the citizens expect the state to provide. Some of these goods may be provided by the private sector but most are typically provided by the state (Rotberg, 2003:2). These services include medical and health care, schooling and an education system and various disability and unemployment benefits (Rotberg, 2003:3). The state is also expected to supply and maintain certain aspects within the public realm such as the physical infrastructure within the country. The state therefore has to maintain the roads, railways as well as harbours within the country while replacing and fixing any damages these may incur. The state is also normally responsible for commerce, regulating trade, communication, the banking and financial system, the promotion of civil society and is in charge of regulating the domestic environment within a country so that citizens can pursue their own economic goals (Rotberg, 2003:4; Clapham, 1998).

All the above mentioned categories and characteristics are necessary for a state to function efficiently and effectively. A strong state for example will perform well across all these areas whereas a weak state may fulfil only part of its functions (Rotberg, 2003:4). A state does not need to fail in all the categories however to be deemed a failed state. This is due to the fact that some political goods are more important than others. If a state fails or is unable to provide security for its citizens, and experiences high levels of internal violence, then the state is considered weak with the potential to fail or collapse in the future (Rotberg, 2003:4). Although,

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violence alone does not condition failure, the absence of violence also does not guarantee state survival (Rotberg, 2003:4). It is therefore important to judge and analyse the state as an entity and not only consider the components that constitute a weak or failing state.

2.4 Weak states

State decay is a process, one which does not happen overnight. State weakness often creeps in unnoticed and slowly starts eroding the legitimacy of the state and the capacity of its institutions. State weakness is not directly linked to the physical strength of the state, with regards to military power or economic wealth, although these aspects are important to consider when determining the capabilities of the state in question. A state is rather judged according to its performance and according to the level of its effective delivery of the most important political goods (Rotberg, 2003:2).

The problems generated by weak states are among the most relevant issues in the world today. This is due to the fact that most of the new threats that international actors face arise in countries with weak states or illegitimate governments (Chickering & Haley, 2007:59). These states have the potential to unleash chaos that poses a threat to global, political and economic security and stability (Coyne, 2006:2). What makes a weak state even more threatening to international security is when these weak states house strong societies. While having a strong society is to the advantage of citizens living in a democracy, it can be to the detriment of those living in states governed by weak or illegitimate governments. These strong societies become threatening when non state actors start competing for power.

If a state is unable to fulfil its functions, a power void is created. It is a common misconception that these voids are only found in countries where the government has collapsed. A void can occur in weak states, or even in stronger states, that are unable to fill that particular void. When these voids or vacuums arise, a group or faction will step up to fill that "gap." These weak states presents a very difficult challenge to the international community, one which international actors are not all too sure how to approach.

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Originally international actors resorted to using violence and military interventions in order to restore security. But using force against a weak state brings into play a variety of issues that mocks the realist's belief in hard power. "For what weakens a strong state will often strengthen a weak state" (Chickering & Haley, 2007:60). Military intervention in these countries does not only produce undesired results, it often provokes increased resistance from the state as well as factions and groups within these states who oppose foreign intervention. In these situations opposition groups actually acquire more support and power.

The next step on the international agenda is usually to attempt to reconstruct the weak or failed state. These attempts however often suffer from the nirvana fallacy (Coyne, 2006:1). Foreign governments assume it is their responsibility to generate reconstruction efforts where central governments are absent or dysfunctional. These foreign governments believe that their interventions will produce preferable outcomes and help restore order and stability. This assumption however overlooks 3 fundamental aspects. It often disregards the fact that their interventions may fail; it pays no heed to the possibility that their reconstruction efforts may do more harm than good and finally ignores the possibility that indigenous governance mechanisms that have evolved in these weak states may be more effective than those that are constructed by foreign governments (Coyne, 2006:1).

There is ample evidence that the nirvana fallacy is at work in Somalia. Several foreign governments have been involved in attempts to reconstruct the state. Not only have these attempts failed, some have managed to deteriorate the situation on the ground even further, creating further factions and splits within society and laying the ground work for additional conflict and destruction. What makes the Somalia case even more complex is the strong society that developed as a mechanism to cope with the weak Somali state. These local and indigenous forms of governance took on more responsibility and gained more support as state institutions crumbled and deteriorated. This, together with state repression, motivated and shaped these local forms of governance to take on the functions that an effective state is meant to supply.

Local forms of governance started filling the power vacuum created by the weak state in Somalia as civil society lost faith in the capability and the legitimacy of the state.

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External actors and foreign governments stepping in to fill the security void, which the state has been unable or unwilling to fill, has stirred up resentment from the Somali society, who had established indigenous mechanisms of coping in stateless Somalia. Another crucial factor which has become evident in Somalia is that local mechanisms have proven to be more effective in generating cooperation and order than the attempts by foreign governments to impose a central authority (Coyne, 2006:5). In fact, attempts by external governments to establish a central government since 1991 have only managed to increase the level of armed conflict in Somalia.

Within this context and considering the current situation in Somalia, understanding reconstruction efforts and the impact of the nirvana fallacy on the country, the Somalia case study can shed light on the potential for future efforts in other African countries. What has also become apparent is that the collapse of government does not necessarily mean the collapse of governance (Raeymaekers, 2005:4). A number of relevant cases have suggested that a combination of withering statehood and violent armed conflict can motivate the formation of new, non-state centres of authority (Raeymaekers, 2005:4). Somalia is one of the cases where new frameworks for accountability and control have emerged in the aftermath of the collapsed state.

Although the state has traditionally been responsible for providing security and other political and public goods to its citizens, the role that non-state actors play in society has become increasingly important. The importance of the role which these non-state actors play has also grown significantly over the last couple of decades as the limitation of the state has become clear (Ulimwengu, 2007:1). The artificial creation of the nation state in Africa has created a void which does not allow it to meet the needs of its people. It is therefore crucial that non-state actors not only be recognized, but incorporated into the state structures so that they can fulfil their role and contribute to a capable state in Africa (Ulimwengu, 2007:1).

A number of non-state actors can be identified in Somalia and the role which they have played since the collapse of the state has been instrumental. As the Somali state has been unable to provide public services, Islamic non-state actors have stepped up and provided many of these basic services themselves (Mwangi, 2010:88). The Islamic Courts Union is one of the notable armed non-state actors which has

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effectively provided local-level security, law and order and was also able to restore peace to Mogadishu for the first time in 15 years (Mwangi, 2010:89).

In the absence of a structured state and central authority, Somali clans resorted back to traditional ways of regulating life. Many clans set up Sharia courts to provide security, deal with criminality and provide much needed services. The courts system was originally a great success and won the support of many Somali citizens. The courts would later be unified and merge to become the Islamic Courts Union. The role which the ICU played in Somalia was truly instrumental as it was able to accomplish something which international NGO's, humanitarian agencies and foreign government state reconstruction initiatives failed to do, restore law and order; even if it were only for a brief period.

The ICU is truly a testament to the importance of non-state actors and proves that local mechanisms of governance can be more effective than those imposed by international actors. The following chapters will further investigate this phenomenon by analysing the actors who have stepped up to fill the political void.

2.5 Failed and Collapsed State

While these two concepts are closely related and are often used interchangeably, they do in fact describe different degrees of state deterioration. While all collapsed states are failed, not all failed states have collapsed. A collapsed state is therefore the extreme version of a failed state (Rotberg, 2003:4; Clapham, 1998). A failed state is a dangerous and a deeply conflicted place where in most cases the government troops battle armed forces (Rotberg, 2003:5). The most noticeable characteristic of any failed state is the prevalence of violence within the country. It is not so much the intensity of the violence which should be taken into consideration however but more importantly the enduring character of the violence (Rotberg, 2003:5). Whether or not the violence is directed at the state is another concept which should be taken into account, which reveals not only the attitude of the people towards the state but also the state's ability to contain the situation. A weak state will have difficulty diffusing the situation without leading to further violence and conflict.

Further characteristics of a failed state include disharmony between communities, permeable borders that the state is unable to control, the loss of control over sections of their territory, a considerable increase in criminal activities and flawed institutions (Allen, 1999). Failed states are further typified by deteriorating infrastructure. As the state becomes weaker, and loses legitimacy it often neglects physical infrastructure which leads to further dissatisfaction among its citizens. A failed state is therefore a state that is unable or unwilling to perform the functions that a nation state is expected or supposed to perform in the modern world.

While all these attributes are also common within a collapsed state, the severity of deterioration of the state is very rare. Only a handful of states are grouped into this elite category. A collapsed state is the extreme of a failing state and is a very dangerous place for any country to find itself in. Only the fittest survive within these circumstances where the rule of law, human rights and freedoms often give way to a culture of lawlessness and anarchy. Chaos and turmoil become part of the way of life as the state crumbles and the people are left to fend for themselves. A collapsed state leaves behind a political vacuum or void which will be filled sooner or later. It is not a question of *if* it will be filled but rather *when* it will be filled. The vacuum of authority left in the wake of the collapsed state often leads to the rise of war lords and insurgency groups.

Although the circumstances within these states are grim, the situation should not be considered hopeless. State failure is a process of decay which can not only be slowed down but also reversed (Carment, 2003:408). Even though weak states are more prone to fail than strong states, weak states need not be destined for failure (Rotberg, 2003:10). Failure can in fact be prevented especially since most states fail due to human agency rather than structural or institutional flaws (Rotberg, 2003:10).

Investigating the circumstances surrounding state failure in Somalia will provide critical insight which will enable other African states to escape the same fate. There is much to learn from the Somalia case and even though no situation is ever completely alike, its significance and importance should not be underestimated. While Somalia has also proved that no situation is ever completely hopeless, what is crucial however

is the time factor. The longer the country remains stateless, the more problematic it will become to reintroduce political institutions in Somalia.

Not only can policy-makers and international actors learn from the mistakes made in Somalia, they can also analyse the situation to see whether what is happening in Somalia is an isolated instance, or whether we will be seeing more collapsed states in Africa in the future. This would not only prove disastrous for the African continent with regards to human security, economic growth and development, but also pose a threat to international security with regards to the security vacuum which these collapsed states create.

The rise of Islamic groups with ties to Al-Qaeda is another cause for concern. These groups thrive in weak countries and take advantage of the ungoverned spaces. Terrorist activities have been on the increase not just in Afghanistan and Iraq but also in Africa due to the condition and quality of the states on the continent and the opportunities which weak and failing states provide for these groups.

2.6 Somalia – A collapsed State

Before the study can address the actors responsible for filling the power vacuum left behind by the collapsing state, the study will first look at a brief history of the country. This will be done in order to set the context which led to the collapse of the state. This will provide insight not only into the reasons for state collapse but also give a unique perspective of the dire circumstances out of which the local forms of governance were birthed. Looking at the collapse of the state is also important to gain a deeper understanding of why states collapse, as well as why external actors are so set on reconstructing not only the Somalia state, but all weak and failed state in the international system.

Somalia's complete state collapse is not only unprecedented but has also managed to defy easy explanation. The most dramatic and unique feature of the Somali crisis is the total and protracted state collapse of the country (Menkhaus, 2003:407). Technically the country has only been without a central governing authority since January of 1991, although the state's collapse dates back nearly a decade earlier.

2.6.1 Background

During the colonial period the Somali people were split between 5 different political units: the Italians, British, French, Ethiopians and Kenyans (Munnik, 1986:214). Somalia as we know it today is the result of the amalgamation of Italian Somaliland and British Somaliland (Munnik, 1986:214; Ahmed & Green, 1999:116). Somalia finally gained independence on July 1 1960, when the two territories unified after more than 70 years of European domination (Reyner, 1960:247). The merging of these two separate territories presented more problems than originally anticipated.

The first major problem that arose after independence was the issue of governance. The two dominant parties in the north merged with the ruling party of the south to form a tripartite coalition government, with Dr Abdirashid Ali Shirmarke becoming the first prime minister of Somalia (Munnik, 1986:215). Regardless of the diverse legacies left behind by the former colonial masters, the political leaders shared a desire to unify Somalia and incorporate Somali communities in Ethiopia, French Somaliland and northern Kenya and establish a Greater Somalia (Munnik, 1986:215). Political commitment to the nationalist struggle was not however enough to keep the government intact.

It was not long before friction and infighting between northern and southern officials started tearing the newly formed coalition apart (Ahmed & Green, 1999:116). Southern Somalis not only held the majority of the major posts in the new government, they also had the majority of seats in parliament (Ahmed & Green, 1999:116). Further division crept in with regards to the unification between the north and south territories.

In a unification referendum held not long after independence, the majority of northern Somalis voted against the unification of the territories yet in the interest of preserving the union, had accepted the conditions set by southern leaders (Ahmed & Green, 1999:116). Somaliland (which had initially been independent, even if it were only for a brief time) did this in the hopes that the differences between the north and south could be rectified. The measures aimed at enforcing rapid integration, taken by the southern officials, went directly against the wishes of Somalilanders and only led to further division between these counterparts (Ahmed & Green, 1999:116).

The split between the northern and southern territories was not the only problem that the new democratic Somali government faced. The number of political parties involved in the election process had increased from only 5 in 1960 to 21 only four years later (Payton, 1980:501). While western analysts were thrilled by Somalia's progress, the upcoming competitive elections, and the fact that democracy was "alive and well," the opposite was in fact true (Payton, 1980:501). Instead of strengthening democracy, the multiple parties undermined the very nature of the state. This led to sub divisions within clans and further fragmentation of political parties spurred on by political differences (Payton, 1980:501). The fragmentation continued until 62 parties contested for the general elections held in March 1969 (Payton, 1980: 501).

The inappropriateness of the Italian-style parliamentary form of government soon became apparent (Payton, 1980:501). The model did not only intensify clan differences but also fostered large scale corruption within Somalia (Payton, 1980:501). The post-independence government therefore proved to be "experimental, inefficient, corrupt and incapable of creating any kind of national political culture" (Rotberg, 2003:11). The government did not have the necessary skills or knowledge to run a country and was unable to meet the needs of the people (Elmi & Barise, 2006:34). The people soon become disillusioned with their new democratic government which provided little, if any, government or service delivery (Ahmed & Green, 1999:116).

The situation continued to deteriorate as the government unravelled and political infighting increased. The general elections held on 26 March 1969 highlighted the frustrations and friction within the government and culminated in violent confrontations among Somali political factions (Payton, 1980:501). The sporadic street clashes led to the death of over 40 people and marked the beginning of the end of democratic governance in Somalia.

2.6.2. 1969 Military Coup and Siad Barre's regime

On the 15th of October 1969, President Sharmarke was assassinated by a police constable while visiting a drought stricken area in Somalia (Payton, 1980: 501). Five days after Sharmarke's death, the Somalia Youth League members in Parliament came together to nominate the next presidential candidate (Payton, 1980: 502). After

much debate the members decided on a candidate who would formally be elected the next day. Hours after their decision was made, Major-General Muhammed Siad Barre, Commander of the Army, took control of the country. At 3 am on 21 October 1969 General Siad and his troops seized the capital in a swift and bloodless coup (Payton, 1980: 502).

General Siad immediately suspended the country's constitution and banned all political parties as well as all forms of political and professional association (Rotberg, 2003:11; Ahmed & Green, 1999:116). He promised he would "cure all the country's ills" and decided that Scientific Socialism was the best way to solve the country's problems (Ahmed & Green, 1999:116). Not long after coming to power Siad banned all clan and kinship ties. He did this under the slogan "socialism unites, tribalism divides" and promised to root out any references made to clanship, be it verbal or written (Ahmed & Green, 1999:117; Powell, Ford & Nowrasteh, 2008:658).

The new regime also wasted no time in nationalizing access to land and water and imposed severe restrictions on trade and livestock (Powell *et al.,* 2008:659). These restrictions had a devastating impact on nomads and rural farmers who relied on livestock for a living. By the 1980's land reform worsened as land was now being privatized and being transferred to elites (Powell *et al.,* 2008:659). In some extreme cases, entire villages of local farmers "became victims of Barre's policies" (Powell *et al.,* 2008:659).

Throughout the 1970s and the 1980's the government did however try to set up public investment programs, but failed horribly (Powell *et al.,* 2008:659). The unsuccessful investment programmes were unproductive and created huge sums of public debt. The financial situation continued to deteriorate until in 1990, the total outstanding foreign debt was 277% of GDP (Powell *et al.,* 2008:659). The population also never saw the benefits from all this spending, as 90% of all spending was directed towards defence and administration while less than 1% of GDP went towards social services (Powell *et al.*, 2008:659).

Most sectors of the economy were eventually brought under government ownership including all medium sized businesses, banks, insurance firms and schools (Ahmed &

Green, 1999:117). As a result economic conditions worsened and the financial system fell into a deep crisis. The informal black market expanded rapidly to fill the void and took on some of the responsibilities of a banking system (Powell *et al.,* 2008:659). It provided credit and investment financing and even gave private traders access to foreign exchange (Powell *et al.,* 2008:659).

The Barre regime did not only plunge the country into an economic crises, it also destroyed governmental and democratic institutions and was responsible for severe human rights violations (Rotberg, 2003:12). Barre's power was safeguarded by use of direct violence and he used repressive measures to keep his people in check (Bakonyi& Stuvoy, 2005:364). The focus of his regime was to extract the maximum amount of resources that would directly benefit his regime and his allies (Powell *et al.,* 2008:659). This was done at the expense of the Somali people with no regard for the population's well-being.

Thousands of people died under Barre's dictatorship and the repercussions of his reign are still evident in Somalia today. The military regime used excessive force to suppress any and all opposition. The military was also involved in killing civilians and mass abuses in order to retain their position of power (Elmi & Barise, 2006:35). Fierce government repression, clan cleavages, gross levels of government corruption, deteriorating economic conditions and crumbling government legitimacy together with collapsing institutions all combined to accelerate state decline (Menkhaus, 2007:80).

2.6.3. The 1974-1975 famine

The severe drought of 1974 together with the socialist experiment led to a major famine in the north of the country resulting in the death of over 20 000 people (Ahmed & Green, 1999:117). The country was experiencing a shortage of food prior to the drought due to the nationalization of farm land and the implementation of strict price controls. These circumstances, together with a prolonged drought, intensified the famine in the northern regions of Somalia (Ahmed & Green, 1999:117). The shutting down of the major historic Arabian-Somaliland-Ethiopian trade axis and the failure of the state's food rationing system, which had been introduced to replace the free market system, only created further complications and managed to prolong the

famine conditions (Ahmed & Green, 1999:117). The effects of the droughts were disastrous and killed an estimated 5 million animals and had far reaching and lingering results for the entire country (Ahmed & Green, 1999:118).

2.6.4 The Ogaden war

The Ogaden War of 1977-1978 between Ethiopia and Somalia is often seen as the turning point of the Barre regime (Ahmed & Green, 1999:118). The defeat of Somalia in Ogaden together with the atrocities the Somali people endured under the Barre regime led to the outcome in April 1978, when senior army officials attempted to overthrow the government (Ahmed & Green, 1999:118). Although the coup was unsuccessful and the government managed to crush the rebellion, some senior officials escaped to Ethiopia and formed the first opposition movements against the Barre government (Ahmed & Green, 1999:118). It was not long before Somalia saw an uprising of opposition factions being formed in directed protest to the regime.

This rise in opposition groups can be accounted for by the fact that the war had completely eroded the legitimacy of the state, the credibility of the army and the police force (Ahmed & Green, 1999:118). The war had also produced an estimated 400 000 refugees, the majority of them being Somali Ethiopians (Menkhaus, 2010:322). The refugees regrouped in large refugee camps situated within Somalia which placed tremendous pressure on the already fragile economy (Ahmed & Green, 1999:118). Instead of seeing the influx of people as a crisis though, the Barre regime saw it as an opportunity (Menkhaus, 2010:322). Government officials became intermediaries in the flow of resources to refugees from international aid organizations (Menkhaus, 2010:322). They did this to gain control of the resources which enabled them to divert a large percentage away from these camps and made huge profits by reselling these resources. The government also grossly inflated the number of refugees in order to increase the amount of food being sent to Somali camps.

What the government did next however, shocked everyone. The Barre regime recruited large numbers of refugees into its military (Menkhaus, 2010:322). It transformed the refugee camps into training sites for its military units while using international aid agency resources to fund its operation (Menkhaus, 2010:322). Even

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worse was the fact that the recruited refugees were used in a brutal military occupation of northwest Somalia.

The military campaign against Northern Somalia took place in 1988. The atrocities which took place during that time were reported to be of "genocidal proportions" (Menkhaus, 2010:323). The actions of the government left the US no choice but to freeze all US aid to the Barre regime. It was not long before other donors followed suit abandoning thousands of refugees (Menkhaus, 2010:323). Most aid agencies and international NGO's decided to close their doors and leave the country as the situation had become too dangerous for aid agency staff members with the fighting and conflict coming ever closer to the capital (Menkhaus, 2010:323).

The government's actions led to the death of thousands of individuals, not only due to its military operations, but due to the very nature of Barre's rule. He used the army for personal use and did not hesitate to abuse human rights or kill innocent civilians. The Somali people experienced 21 years of repressive military rule during which time they received little, if any, public goods and services while Barre exploited the limited resources of the country for personal gain (Powell *et al.,* 2008:658; Elmi & Barise, 2006:35). Somalia is considered a classic example of a "vampire state" which sucked the life-blood out of the population for the benefit of an elite few (Powell *et al.,* 2008:658).

2.6.5 The fall of the Barre regime and Civil War

Circumstances within the country were deteriorating rapidly with increased civil unrest and violence sweeping the nation. The number of war lords and insurgency groups increased dramatically, further contributing to the conflict. By 1998, Somalis found themselves in the middle of a brutal civil war (Hagmann & Hoehne, 2009:50). The result of the war was catastrophic.

The war claimed the lives of thousands and led to the destruction of most of the capital, Mogadishu, as a culture of lawlessness and anarchy settled over Somalia. Easy access to weapons further complicated the delicate situation in the country with inter-clan rivalry turning to full blown conflict (Menkhaus, 2007b:81). Any remaining institutions crumbled as nearly all public goods and state property were destroyed or

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stolen (Menkhaus, 2007b:81). Key infrastructure and essential economic activities also collapsed. Bridges, roads, telecommunication, trade, processing plants and water and power generators were completely demolished (Ahmed & Green, 1999:121). Schools and hospitals were specifically targeted during the initial fighting further contributing to the chaos in the country. Anything not destroyed by the war was eventually looted and shipped to surrounding countries. As many as a million Somali's fled the country causing massive internal displacement of the population (Ahmed & Green, 1999:121). This number would possibly have been higher if the fighting along the borders had not prevented many from fleeing to neighbouring Kenya and Ethiopia.

The prolonged civil war and instability within the country finally led to the collapse of the state in January 1991 (Hagmann & Hoehne, 2009:50). The state had however failed long before the onset of the civil war (Rotberg, 2003:12). The civil war simply destroyed any ounce of legitimacy and control that the state had retained which ultimately led to the Somali state collapsing onto itself. Even though the government had officially collapsed, Barre's forces maintained a strong base in the country for another year, during which time they destroyed and ransacked a number of villages (Ahmed & Green, 1999:120; Menkhaus, 2010:323). The Barre government's military also implemented a scorched-earth policy, burning the crops and livestock of countless farmers, which destroyed the livelihoods of thousands (Ahmed & Green, 1999:120). Their actions together with the massive displacement of people, civil war conditions and the drought that hit the country during that period, created severe famine conditions, which claimed the lives of an estimated 240 000 people (Menkhaus, 2010:323).

2.7 Independence of Somaliland and Puntland

Despite the fact that the Somali state ceased to exist, two regions in the north of the country, Somaliland and Puntland, declared themselves independent (Powell *et al.,* 2008:658). Even though these two territories are not recognized as states by the international community, they managed to distinguish themselves from south-central Somalia. Somaliland has also enjoyed impressive success with regards to economic recovery and maintains a high level of public security (Menkhaus, 2007b:91). Somaliland has also built up a modest but functioning state comprised of a legislature,

police force and municipalities (Menkhaus, 2007b:91). Even more impressive is the fact that the country has managed to hold multiparty democratic elections on both local and national level.

Considering only these aspects it is clear that Somalia and Somaliland are fundamentally different. Despite the fact that they were once one territory they might as well be worlds apart. It is therefore crucial to make a clear distinction between these territories as this study will focus mainly on south-central Somalia

2.8 Stateless Somalia

Once the state collapsed, rival warlords plunged the country into further conflict and violence as they wrestled for control of the state. This only led to further destruction and bloodshed. Somalia was faced with new conflict dynamics and new security and political challenges (Menkhaus, 2010:324). Throughout the 1990s political orders were enforced by war lords, supported by clan militias and wealthy businessmen (Hagmann & Hoehne, 2009:50). They ruled by means of violence and used military domination to rule over weaker groups. The nature of the violence also evolved from civil war to small scale fighting between opposing warlords.

Even though the collapse of the state left the country in the hands of the warlords, state collapse was not as devastating to the Somali people as one would expect. The people had been living under a repressive government for more than two decades, which had long since lost any sense of legitimacy and control over the population. The state was rather seen as "an instrument of accumulation and domination, enriching and empowering those who control it and exploiting and harassing the rest of the population" (Menkhaus, 2007b:87).

The fact that the state had also been unable and unwilling to perform the majority of the functions expected of a modern state meant that living conditions in Somalia actually improved after the collapse of the state in 1991. The collapse of the state also ushered in a new era in Somalia's history, where international actors as well as informal local structures stepped in to fill the political vacuum left behind by the collapsing state.

2.9 The Flawed creation of the TNG and TFG

In 2000, the Transitional National Government (TNG) emerged from the peace talks in Djibouti (Menkhaus, 2007a: 359). The Arta process, which led to the establishment of the TNG brought together some 3000 Somalis and became the largest "Somali-owned peace conference ever held" (Kasaija, 2010:264). People from different areas of Somali society were present including traditional leaders, civil society organizations, businessmen, academics and various professionals (Kasaija, 2010:264). One crucial group was however not present at the negotiations, the armed groups (Kasaija, 2010:264). Not incorporating this group into the process, marked one of the major downfalls of the Arta process. This group did not only include powerful individuals who had had a significant impact on the landscape of Somali politics, but ironically included the individuals and groups most likely to sabotage the creation of the "new government." Not incorporating the armed factions is understandable given the situation within Somalia, but the fact that the TNG was comprised mainly of Mogadishu based clans, namely the Hawiye/Haber Gedir/Ayr sub-clan, is not (Menkhaus, 2007a:359). Creating a government that is representative of all the clans and sub-clans within Somalia is not possible, however making sure that major clans throughout Somalia are given a voice in parliament and policy making may be the only way that future government initiatives can be successful.

The TNG was however never a long term solution and its mandate was meant to last only three years. During this short time, it faced many difficulties. The armed factions which had been excluded from the Arta process effectively blocked and confined the TNG's activities to a section in Mogadishu (Kasaija, 2010:264). Furthermore, Ethiopia also did not accept the outcome of the process and in an attempt to undermine the TNG, managed to convince some warlords, including Conel Hasan Mihamed Nur of the Rahanweyn Resistance Army to abandon the TNG (Kasaija, 2010:264). Ethiopia went on to publicly state that the Arta process was incomplete, which directly affected the legitimacy of the newly formed government. Ethiopia also backed the newly formed Somali Reconciliation and Rehabilitation Council (SRRC), a loose coalition of clans and other armed factions which opposed the TNG (Menkhaus, 2007a:359).

The TNG failed to become operational during its three year mandate and was later succeeded by the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) in 2004. The TFG was established in Nairobi and facilitated by the IGAD member states (Kasaija, 2010:265). The TFG was comprised of the four main clan-families of Somalia: Hawiye, Darod, Digil-Rahanweyn and Dir, and they shared power according to the 4.5 formula (Kasaija, 2010:265). In October 2004, Abdullahi Yusuf, president of autonomous Puntland and a close ally of Ethiopia, was elected president of Somalia by the parliament. From the onset however, problems were evident within the new government.

Allegations that the votes of parliament had been purchased by Ethiopian government money, immediately arose after the election of Yusuf as president (Menkhaus, 2007a:361). This cast doubt not only on the legitimacy of the president and the parliament, but also raised questions about the legitimacy of the leaders selected to represent the Somalis in the peace process (Menkhaus, 2007a:361). Furthermore, the distinct divide between the two groups within the government, namely the Mogadishu group and the SRRC, caused friction and infighting within government. The SRRC collation was fiercely anti-Islamist, enjoyed Ethiopian backing and based mainly in regions outside of Mogadishu (Menkhaus, 2007a:359). The Mogadishu group on the other hand had the support of the Arab world, was anti-Ethiopian, had various Islamist alliances and embraced a vision of a strong central government (Menkhaus, 2007a:359). The Mogadishu group had dominated the TNG while the SRRC took control of the TFG.

This second interim government was trouble-ridden, much like its predecessor. In late 2008, under immense international pressure, stemming mainly from the US, president Yusuf resigned (CIA-World Fact Book, 2011). The US, UN and other Western donor states had all committed themselves to the success of the TFG and so could not allow this interim government to fail after it had given it the stamp of approval. In their eyes, the TFG was Somalia's only option for a sustainable future.

During this time, the UN was involved in and sponsored talks between the TFG and the Re-Liberation Army (ARS) of Somalia. In January 2009, the two opposition groups merged to form a unity coalition government (CIA-World Fact Book, 2011).

Prospects for this new venture looked even more promising when the Ethiopian military forces withdrew from Somalia after nearly 3 years. The original TFG parliament was increased to 550 seats with an additional 200 ARS seats and 75 seats for civil society members (CIA-World Fact Book, 2011). The parliament elected Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed as the new president on 31 January 2009. The TFP parliament also amended the Transitional Federal Charter (TFC), which had been drawn up to establish the mandate for a new Somali constitution and included an outline for the transition to a new representative government, which was to follow the next national election. By parliament amending the TFC, it extended the mandate of the TFG until 2011, thus postponing elections and the hope of a new representative government for the Somali people (CIA-World Fact Book, 2011).

2.10 Conclusion

Most of the new threats that international actors face arise in countries with weak states or illegitimate governments. Understanding these failed states and the potential threat which they pose in the international system, with regards to security and stability, is more relevant today than ever before. What has become clear throughout this chapter is not only the danger that the implosion of a state can cause but rather the importance of the actor/actors who fill the void after state collapse. Once the state has collapsed it is only a matter of time before another actor will fill the vacuum. Whether or not the actor that finally fills this void will contribute to further destruction or help rebuild the state is up to chance. Actors such as the ICU show just how important non-state actors are in rebuilding the state, and prove that their role in African state building should not be underestimated.

The next chapter will focus on the role that international actors have played in stabilizing Somalia and filling the political void. The role played by the UN, the AU and neighbouring country Ethiopia will be discussed at length. Even though their effort to reinstate political order has not always been successful, these actors have shaped the political landscape of Somalia and should therefore be recognized.

CHAPTER 3
The role of external actors in stateless Somalia

3.1 Post civil war Somalia

The legacy of the Somali civil war is profound. It led to large scale destruction of the country, massive internal displacement of people and the death of thousands of Somali citizens. The nature of the conflict together with the drought that hit the country created a lethal cocktail. The consequences of the war and famine left the country in shambles.

3.2 Humanitarian intervention in Somalia

"The international community failed to achieve the very goal of humanitarian assistance: to ensure the most fundamental of human rights - that of survival" (Clark, 1993:114). The Somali people were victims who had suffered under a brutal dictator, endured a civil war, were struck by a severe drought and left to fend for themselves until the point of suffering reached a level simply too horrific to ignore (Clark, 1993:115). The international community looked on in horror as footage of the carnage, destruction and famine reached main stream media. International pressure mounted for the international community to intervene in Somalia as the severity of the post-civil war famine became clear (Menkhaus, 2010:324).

Up until 1991, very few external relief agencies were present in Somalia due to the wide spread violence and conflict. It was simply too dangerous for the relief agencies and their staff to operate in the country. By the end of 1991 however, the situation had been transformed as international aid agencies, NGOs and individual countries became actively involved in supplying Somalia with much needed aid resources. This ushered in a brief era in Somalia's history, which was completely dominated by humanitarian agendas and actors (Menkhaus, 2010:324).

Relief agencies could no longer deal with the situation that had developed in the country. Once in Somalia, the aid agencies had no choice but to rely on the clan militias and war-lords of the area for protection (Menkhaus, 2010:324). Even though agency personnel were rarely targeted, their aid resources, food, vehicles and housing materials were almost the only source of revenue and therefore highly sought after commodities. Much of the food aid was in fact being diverted to clan militias as a

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payment for protection (Menkhaus, 2010:324). Many aid agencies tried to hide the cost from their headquarters by reporting security expenses as "technical support" (Menkhaus, 2010:324). It was not long before this type of "protection" became a lucrative business opportunity for clan militias, while the food aid and NGO resources fuelled the war economy. Militia leaders used the stolen food aid to amass wealth which was used to purchase weapons and the loyalty of followers (Clarke & Herbst, 1996). Soon the entire country's economic and political systems essentially revolved around plundered food and aid resources (Clarke & Herbst, 1996). There was a clear trade-off between the price of "doing business" and saving lives.

3.3. United States intervention in Somalia, December 1992-May 1993

In December 1992 President Bush initiated a US-led, UN authorized, intervention to feed the famine victims in Somalia (Clarke & Herbst, 1996). The operation code named Operation Restore Hope (officially known as Unified Task Force for Somalia) was backed up by roughly 28 000 American troops and was intended to stop the theft of food by clan militias, war-lords, the unemployed and gangs of young men (Clarke & Herbst, 1996). President Bush emphasized that the mandate of the mission was specific and that the troops would only be involved in stabilizing security conditions, which would permit the feeding of starving Somali people. Once this mandate was completed, the US would transfer this security function to the UN (Bolton, 1994:60). The US position was clear. Get in and out as quickly as possible.

The most immediate impact of the operation was the dramatic stabilization of the country, which allowed humanitarian relief to reach communities in need (Menkhaus, 2010:325). With improved security and humanitarian access, food aid flowed without disruption bringing the famine to an end within weeks. The Unified Task Force was an initial success but the intervention of the US and their meddling in Somalia's social-economic network had a devastating impact in the long run.

By putting an end to the pillaging of food, the US troops disrupted the political economy of Somalia and found themselves "deep in the muck of Somali politics" (Clarke & Herbst, 1996). Instead of addressing the root causes of the famine, the US forces simply dealt with the consequences. The Somali famine was not just caused by the drought but rather the combination of the degeneration of the country's political

and economic system together with the social problems which the civil war had created. All the US managed to do was postpone the problems that logically followed the intervention.

UNITAF also failed to develop a plan to help restore the economy to normal. This failure had a long lasting impact on Somalia as the US was only concerned with addressing the symptoms of the problem and providing humanitarian aid, but it did not help implement development (Clarke & Herbst, 1996). The lesson that can be taken away from this mission is that the international community should discard the illusion that there does not need to be a connection between relief and development. Both these aspects are equally important and rely on each other for success. The US leaders never envisioned a long term solution and tried to get its forces in and out of the country as quickly as possible (Clarke & Herbst, 1996).

3.4 UNOSOM, May 1993-March 1995

The Unified Task Force operation in Somalia, headed by the US, was officially handed over to the United Nations in May 1993 (Crocker, 1995:4). UNOSOM II had a broader mandate than its predecessor and expanded its mission to include nation building. This ambitious nation building resolution, which the Security Council adopted, marked the major difference between the US and the UN missions in Somalia (Clarke & Herbst, 1996). The UN was called to the higher objective of stabilization and was expected to assist the people of Somalia in "rehabilitating their political institutions and economy by promoting political settlement and reconciliation" (Menkhaus, 2010:326). The UN was further mandated to assist in advancing political reconciliation by encouraging broad participation by all the sectors in the Somali society as well as by re-establishing the national and civil administration of the entire country. Furthermore, the UN was mandated to re-establish the Somali police force at local and national level with an overall mandate to "assist in the restoration and maintenance of peace, stability, and law and order" (Menkhaus, 2010:326).

These objectives constituted an unprecedented level of direct UN intervention in the core of political and security functions of any failed state. The mandate entrusted to the UN forces was intended to promote a long term solution to the Somalia crisis by

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setting in place the structures and re-establishing the institutions which would allow the Somali people not only to govern their own country effectively but also to reunite the different factions within Somali society.

The UN operation pumped an enormous amount of money into the country and helped establish employment and contract opportunities. Their efforts helped to stimulate and strengthen legitimate business ventures which steered economic activities away from the war economy (Menkhaus, 2007b:82). UNOSOM re-established, rebuilt and revived traditional sectors such as telecommunications, constructions, trade and services. It also managed to reshape local interest in security and rule of law, which in the process helped to restore local relations (Menkhaus, 2007b:82).

At a glance one would think that the UN intervention in Somalia was an enormous success, this however was simply not the case. In fact the long term implications of UNOSOM were devastating, not only for Somalia's peacekeeping operations, but for all UN interventions in the future. Not only was UNOSOM unsuccessful in rebuilding the state, it also failed to restore long term stability in the country. UN efforts to negotiate a cease fire between rival war-lords only managed to create more tension between the groups and eroded the UN's neutral position (Clark, 1993:115).

Violence in Mogadishu continued and UN efforts to stabilize the capital were met with fierce opposition from warring factions. On June 5 1993, forces under the command of General Aideed attacked UNOSOM troops, killing 24 Pakistani peacekeepers and wounding several others (Bolton, 1994:63). On the 6th of June the Security Council adopted Resolution 837 authorizing the arrest of General Aideed. US forces, who were meant to provide assistance to the UNOSOM troops, undertook violent operations in an attempt to catch Aideed (Clarke & Herbst, 1996).

Nevertheless, the attacks on the UN continued. Two months after the clash between the UN forces and General Aideed's troops the UN came under attack again. This time hundreds of Somalis were killed and 18 American Soldiers lost their lives (Hull & Svensson, 2008:17). The American Soldiers were not only killed, their bodies were

mutilated and dragged through the streets of Mogadishu (Hull & Svensson, 2008:17). Soon after pictures of the incident surfaced the US troops withdrew from Somalia.

Not only did the US decision to leave Somalia seriously affect the capacity of the UN forces, UNOSOM's mission to capture Aideed also did tremendous damage to the UN's reputation. Daily clashes between the UN/US forces and Aideed's Somali National Alliance (SNA) rendered large parts of the capital unsafe, which in turn eroded the UN's legitimacy in the eyes of the Somali people. By that time, the UN was considered part of the problem and not the solution by international actors. International pressure strained the relationship between different aid agencies and the UN troops stationed in Somalia. As a result of the UN's actions, the relations between humanitarians and UN political officers unravelled (Menkhaus, 2010:327).

By March 1995 the UN withdrew its troops from Somalia after suffering numerous casualties and after several costly battles (Kasaija, 2010:263 & Croker, 1995:2). The UN's operation was a failure and their departure put an end to their ambitious state building agenda.

3.4.1 Filling the Political Void

UNOSOM's ambitious mandate allowed the UN to get involved in the economic, political and social spheres of Somali society. The operation attempted to fill the political vacuum left behind by the collapsing state, but was unable to do so successfully. In effect the UN took control of all aspects of Somali society, leaving little room for indigenous and local forms of governance to develop and flourish. Even though they tried to implement a bottom-up approach to state building, they still dictated which actors would be involved in the negotiations, which in some instances produced very flawed councils and occasionally led to renewed armed clashes (Menkhaus, 2010:327).

The UNOSOM mandate should rather have focused exclusively on peacekeeping, peace building and providing humanitarian assistance to the people of Somalia, while local business groups, traditional authorities and civic leaders promoted a more organic form of public order and rule of law indigenous to the country. If the UN forces had only encouraged and supported the informal systems of adaptations which

were developing naturally within Somalia, the outcome of the UNOSOM missions may have been remarkably different.

3.5 External Peace initiatives

The international community has undertaken an astonishing 15 attempts to re-establish the Somali state, all of which have so far been unsuccessful. The actors involved have ranged from individual countries such as Ethiopia and Egypt to regional organizations including the International Government Authority for Development (IGAD), the continent's main peacekeeping body, the AU, as well as international actors such as the UN. These state building initiatives have been driven by external mediators in a desperate attempt to deliver Somalia out of its prolonged crisis. What these actors have failed to consider however, is that their interventions may fail, as well as the fact that their reconstruction efforts may in fact do more harm than good (Coyne, 2006:1). Attempts by external actors to establish a central government in Somalia have only managed to intensify conflict instead of producing an effective functioning state structure (Coyne, 2006:5).

3.6 Ethiopia

Ethiopia's and Somalia's fates have been intertwined from the very beginning. Throughout history Ethiopia and Somalia have had a strained and unstable relationship (Elmi & Barise, 2006:39). Even though these two countries are neighbours, they are fundamentally different with regards to their ethnicity and religious beliefs. Furthermore decisions made by European forces to transfer parts of Somali territory to Ethiopia's ownership have caused friction and conflict. In 1891, the then King of Ethiopia, Menelik, wrote to the European powers as they were carving up Africa amongst themselves and demanded that he be given his "share" (Elmi & Barise, 2006:39). To appease the king the European powers eventually gave the Somali region of Ogaden to King Menelik. In 1954, the British also gave Somalia's Hawd and Reserve Area to Ethiopia (Elmi & Barise, 2006:39). Needless to say, Somalis were outraged by the abuse of their territory. As a result, two major wars occurred between the countries in 1964 and 1977.

Relations remained poor as hundreds of skirmishes continued to take place along the border between Ethiopia and Somalia. Somalia has also been involved in supporting

armed opposition groups trying to overthrow the Ethiopian government (Elmi & Barise, 2006:39). Ethiopia has not been without blame and has also supported numerous Somali opposition movements and insurgency groups. It is no secret that Ethiopia has been a major actor in perpetuating Somalia's conflict. Its meddling has provided shelter and arms to insurgency groups, it has frequently sent weapons over the border, occupied towns in southern Somalia and has undermined and manipulated the Somali peace process in Kenya as well as the transitional government that was formed (Elmi & Barise, 2006:39).

3.6.1 Ethiopia 2006 intervention

Ethiopian forces invaded Somalia on the request of the TFG in 2006 with the support and the backing of the US (Hull & Svensson, 2008:21). Hardliners within the ICU had embarked on a systematic campaign to provoke the Ethiopian government. The ICU's actions included repeated calls for jihad against Ethiopia as well as several appeals to the Ethiopian people to rise up against their own government (Menkhaus, 2007a:378). The ICU also provided logistical support for the Oromo Liberation Front and the Ogaden National Liberation Front, two armed insurgency groups, in their opposition against the Ethiopian government (Menkhaus, 2007a:378).

After months of military build-up and small scale skirmishes between the two sides, a full scale battle erupted between the Ethiopian military and the ICU forces. The ICU forces sustained heavy losses, leading to the death of an estimated 1000 militiamen as the Ethiopian army advanced (Menkhaus, 2009b:225). The Ethiopian forces, together with US forces, who provided unspecified support to the Ethiopian military, pushed the ICU militia back into Mogadishu where clan and business leaders, furious with the hardliners who had set in motion the actions which eventually led them into a costly war with Ethiopia, forced the ICU to disband and disarm (Menkhaus, 2007a:382).

Ethiopia's occupation of the capital did not sit well with the Somali people. Centuries of fighting and conflict between the two sides, together with Ethiopia's deliberate actions to keep Somalia weak and divided, created resentment towards not only Ethiopia but also towards the fragile TFG who had asked for Ethiopian support. Ethiopia's decision to stay in Somalia until additional peace support operations could stabilise the situation, further deteriorated the legitimacy of the TFG in the eyes of the

Somali people (Hull & Svensson, 2008:2008). The TFG also had no administrative capability, demonstrated virtually no capacity to govern or provide law and order, even in the capital city, and suffered from serious internal splits as well as wide spread defections (Menkhaus, 2010:333).

The fact that Ethiopian forces remained in Somalia, together with the failing legitimacy of the flawed and weak TFG and president Yusuf's deep animosity towards all forms of political Islamism, culminated in the worst violence the country had seen in the past 16 years of war and turmoil (Asems, 2008:95). Ethiopia's presence in the country sparked a fierce armed insurgency and counter-insurgency pitting Ethiopian forces against an armed resistance led by Al-Shabaab, the radical Islamist group (Menkhaus, 2009b:224). The armed resistance was comprised of regrouped Al-Shabaab members, ex-ICU militias, clan militias and an array of other factions who shared a hatred for Ethiopia and anti-TFG sentiments. The fighting devastated the country and polarised Somali society even further.

The armed opposition group undertook daily attacks on the TFG and the Ethiopian army. The attacks were brutal and included mortars, roadside bombs, ambushes and several suicide bombings (Menkhaus, 2009b:226). The response from the Ethiopian and TFG forces was even more devastating. In some instances they attacked whole neighbourhoods killing hundreds of innocent people. The TFG was also accused of indiscriminate violence targeting civilians and using wide spread arrest and detention as a means to showcase their power (Menkhaus, 2009b:226). The TFG forces were particularly brutal and especially predatory towards civilians and on several occasions were reported to have engaged in looting, assault and even raping civilian women. The insurgency produced a massive wave of displacement in 2007, causing nearly 700 000 people to flee their homes (Menkhaus, 2009b:226).

The disastrous level of violence had various other repercussions. Not only did Somalia's already fragile economy collapse, thousands of Somalis become radicalised due to the treatment they received at the hands of the TFG and the Ethiopian forces. Many of the people who originally did not support the use of violence became either active or passive supporters as a direct result of the actions of the Ethiopian and TFG militia (Menkhaus, 2009b:226).

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Ethiopia's intervention in Somalia was disastrous on all levels. Its presence helped sparked the most brutal conflict since the civil war, it abused its position of power within Somalia, it radicalized civilians due to the harsh treatment they were subjected to and managed to diminish the legitimacy of the state while simultaneously doing irreconcilable damage to its own reputation. After countless clashes with armed militias, and much to everyone's relief, the Ethiopian Army finally withdrew from Somalia in 2009 (Menkhaus, 2009b:226).

3.6.2 Filling the void

Ethiopia's invasion of Somalia and the ousting of the ICU from power has drastically altered the direction of the country and the landscape of Somali politics. Even though Ethiopia was formally asked by the TFG to intervene and help keep the extremist factions at bay, its presence in the country led to more bloodshed and conflict. The Ethiopian forces stepped up to secure the security vacuum in the country on behalf of the weak TFG who did not have the military capacity to fully occupy the void. Regardless of Ethiopia's intentions and its personal reasons for invading Somalia, it was unable to successfully fill this void. The failure of the Ethiopian military only served to radicalize the Somali people and further damage the already fragile relationship between the two countries.

3.7 AMISOM

The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) was established in 2007 to replace the Ethiopian troops that had invaded Somalia in 2006 (Reuters-Africa, 2011). AMISOM's original mandate was meant to last only 6 months and would then be taken over by the UN. AMISOM was mandated to support the TFG in its efforts to stabilize the country, facilitate the provision of humanitarian assistance and create conducive conditions for long-term stabilisation and reconstruction in Somalia (Hull & Svensson, 2008:8). In order to fulfil its mandate, AMISOM was given a range of tasks including the protection of the TFG and its various institutions and infrastructure and assisting and training the Somali security forces (Hull & Svensson, 2008:8). It would also monitor the security situation in the country and help re-establish law and order. One of the major downfalls of the mandate however was the fact that it did not include the protection of civilians; this made it incredibly difficult for the AU forces to have an actual impact on the ground (Hull & Svensson, 2008:8).

Even so, the AMISOM operation was a very ambitious undertaking. The mission called for 8000 troops to be deployed in Somalia. By the time the troops were deployed in 2008, the total strength of AMISOM was at 2, 613 troops, far from the 8000 men that the mandate called for. The number of AMISOM forces in Somalia has only recently reached its original target with Uganda and Burundi committing an extra 2000 troops each in March 2011 (Reuters-Africa, 2011).

Even with limited staff and equipment, the volatile security environment and the ongoing conflict in Somalia, the AU forces have managed to make a considerable impact on the situation in the country. The AU forces have been attacked on numerous occasions and lost several soldiers and peacekeepers in the process, but continue to provide support to the government in Somalia. The UN-backed government still only controls a section of Mogadishu, but is slowly reclaiming territories held by Al-Shabaab (Guardian, 2011).

In January 2011, The AU extended its mandate for another year and in May relocated its civilian international staff and police to offices in Mogadishu. These are very encouraging signs that show not only the commitment of the AU forces, but also their faith in their abilities to help TFG forces regain control of the capital. In recent months, AMISOM has also made considerable gains on rebel positions. On 12 May 2011 AMISON launched a new military push and seized several strategic positions from Shabaab insurgents (Reuters-Africa, 2011).

Not only has AMISOM made some real progress with regards to reclaiming sections of the city and various other strategic points from the extremists, they are making a considerable difference at a grass root level. AMISOM, together with the support of village elders, has established a school in Jazeera, a village in southern Mogadishu, which provides free primary school education (AMISOM, 2011a). Initially only nine students signed up for the program, but within 30 days, the school roster had 97 names. The school now boasts over 200 students. Education became a luxury after the collapse of the Barre regime which left many poor Somali's and their children uneducated (AMISOM, 2011a). In fact education has been almost completely absent from the country in the last 20 years.

Even though AMISOM struggles to provide all the students with books, desks and other learning materials, the students are extremely grateful for this opportunity and are very eager to learn. The children are elated about attending this new school as one 9 year old girl said "The school is free. We don't pay anything. I want to study hard in order to get a job when I finish school" (AMISOM, 2011a). The school has also managed to attract adult students who are eager to study. Many adults have registered themselves to take advantage of the free public education. During the morning the children attend classes on the Quran and are taught English, mathematics and geography, while the parents and other adults attend similar classes in the afternoon (AMISOM, 2011a).

The latest AMISOM programme marks the beginning of the peacekeeping mission's attempt to battle illiteracy in Somalia. The country has been ravaged by illiteracy and only 24% of females between the ages of 15-24 can read (AMISOM, 2011a). The groundwork for similar schools has already begun in other areas of Mogadishu, by Maj Nelson Ahebwa, an AMISOM peacekeeper with the Civil Military Unit, who is one of the pioneers of the projects (AMISOM, 2011a). As more people become educated, it will unlock a world of opportunities and provide students with alternative lifestyles to what has become acceptable in Somalia.

It has not only been the education system that has suffered due to the decades of conflict in Somalia. The health infrastructure has also been a casualty of the prolonged conflict. In most parts of the country, modern health facilities are non-existent (AMISOM, 2011b). The medical facility initially set up to take care of the health needs of the AMISOM peacekeeping forces, is the only health care hope for many residents. The clinic has opened its doors to the public who are allowed to visit the facility on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays (AMISOM, 2011b). On these days, the medical staff attend to nearly 400 patients. The patients come in for a variety of illnesses and disease such as malaria, pneumonia and typhoid and the hospital has even treated gunshot wounds. Even though the facility is not equipped to treat more serious health conditions including certain types of cancers they have made a considerable difference in the lives of the Mogadishu residents (AMISOM, 2011b).

The hospital also has a psychiatric unit which deals with the mental needs of civilian patients. In a city like Mogadishu, where people have witnessed years of trauma, suffering and death, counselling is an essential health service, which the AMISOM hospital provides to Mogadishu residents (AMISOM, 2011b). The population is extremely grateful and appreciative of the services the hospital provides and often express gratitude for the treatment and drugs that are offered to them. Since AMISOM was deployed 3 years ago, the hospital has treated more than 60 000 patients (AMISOM, 2011b).

The AMISOM hospital is also currently treating woman who have developed fistulas. Difficulty in childbirth is normally the main cause of fistulas, however the condition can also stem from sexual assault and female genital mutilation, which is common practice in Somalia (AMISOM, 2011b). In general women who develop fistulas are abandoned by their husbands and rejected by their communities due to the condition's tell-tale symptoms, which include the persistent odour of urine and excrement (AMISOM, 2011b). These women are then forced to live the rest of their lives in isolation. Health officials suspect that hundreds of Somali women are suffering in silence with fistulas as they are unaware of the treatment that AMISOM provides for free. AMISOM has been working closely with the Coalition of Grassroots Women Organization (COGWO), which has now sent out volunteers to search in cities and villages for women who are eligible for treatment (AMISOM, 2011b). Recently 37 Somali women underwent surgery for fistulas at AMISOM's facility (AMISOM, 2011b). The surgeries were a huge success and have given these women a new outlook on life and hope for a better future.

AMISOM has also started an introductory course for police officers who will then start training and mentoring members of the Somali Police Force. The course officially opened on the 19th of February 2010 at the Kenya Wildlife Training Centre (AMISOM, 2011c). The police trainers were selected in 2009 following an assessment by the AU/UN selection team. The selection team travelled to four countries to conduct an evaluation of the officers who have been short listed to deploy in the AMISOM operation (AMISOM, 2011c). During this time another 600 candidates were selected and added to a database for deployment.

3.7.1 Filling the void

The AU has truly been instrumental in rebuilding Somali society. The AU forces and peacekeepers have embraced their mandate and are currently going above and beyond what is expected of them. The fact that AMISOM is involved in development and not just peacekeeping has also transformed the way in which Somali people see this external actor that has stepped in to fill the political void. The AU has not only been focused on security measures and protecting the TFG, it has infiltrated and met the needs of the ordinary Somali citizen. Helping to revive the schooling system in cooperation with elders in the community, is providing a crucial human right: education. The services provided by the AMISOM hospital have not only changed the lives of hundreds of Somali's, they have literally saved the lives of countless individuals. These two basic but crucial services should be managed and provided by an effective functioning state. As Somalia has not had a functioning state since 1991, the AU has managed to step in and fill this void.

Even though most of the country is still run by Al-Shabaab and other insurgent groups or clan militias, the AU forces have made a considerable difference within this war-torn country. Much still needs to be done with regards to security and setting up a legitimate, effective and functioning government, but AMISOM's efforts should not be overlooked. The AU troops and peacekeepers have managed to do something other external actors have failed to do in the past, namely win the respect and the trust of the Somali people. The AU has clearly recognized that peace building and state reconstruction cannot only focus on the state and state structures. The main and most important component that is required for state building is social trust. The AU is slowly starting to change the social and cultural attitudes of the people, which will help promote state building and hopefully even democracy in the future.

3.8 Conclusion

This chapter has looked at the key external actors who have stepped up to fill the political void in Somalia. This chapter only focused on 3 main actors, even though there are countless other organizations, states and NGO's that have played an important role in the country. Even though the impact and the consequences of their actions vary significantly, the roles these actors have played are crucial to understanding the circumstances in Somalia today. Despite the fact that the UN

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mission may have failed, it laid the groundwork for future peacekeeping missions and provided policy makers with crucial insights on how to deal with failed states. UNOSOM's mandate of stabilizing the country and rebuilding the state was an ambitious undertaking right from the start. The unprecedented level of direct UN intervention in the core of political and security functions of the state also compromised the UN's neutral position (Menkhaus, 2010:326). Every decision made by the UN created winners and losers among the Somali people and created dangerous tension with local militias as well. The UN's expanded political role also had several implications for humanitarian agencies. The operation attempted to fill the political vacuum left behind by the collapsing state, but was unable to do so successfully, which only led to further conflict, insecurity and destruction.

The second important actor with regards to the role it played in Somalia would be Ethiopia. The Ethiopian forces stepped up to secure the security vacuum in the country on behalf of the fragile TFG, which did not have the military capacity to occupy the void. Regardless of Ethiopia's intentions and its personal reasons for invading Somalia, it was unable to successfully fill this void. The failure of the Ethiopian military only served to radicalize the Somali people and further damage the already fragile relationship between the two countries. Its meddling in Somali politics and its occupation of the capital managed to bring more bloodshed and violence to the country.

While Ethiopia's invasion of Somalia may have been disastrous, the AU's involvement in the country has so far rendered very positive results. Despite the fact that AMISOM is still fighting Al-Shabaab forces and the country is still run by warlords and clan militias the AU has made a remarkable difference in the lives of ordinary citizens. Much still needs to be done with regards to securing and setting up a legitimate and functioning government in Somalia, but the role the AU has played in the country has been significant. AMISOM has provided citizens with a facility where they can receive medical attention and is also directly involved with starting up schools in the country. These two basic services should be managed and provided by an effective state, but as there is no state to fulfil these functions, AMISOM has stepped up to fill this void. AMISOM continues to assist development in the country and remains an asset to the people of Somalia.

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While this chapter has focused on the external actors, the following chapter will investigate the three most important local actors who have stepped up to fill the political void after the implosion of the state. The role played by the Islamic Courts Union together with that of Al-Shabaab will be discussed in great detail. The controversial role of the Somali pirates will also be addressed.

Chapter 4
Key Internal Actors

4.1 Local and informal systems of adapting

Somalia is not just a repository of lessons learned; it is rather a country at the forefront of a poorly understood trend (Menkhaus, 2007b:74). It showcases the rise of "informal systems of adaptation, security, and governance in response to the prolonged absence of a central government" (Menkhaus, 2007b:74). Somalis were not only able to survive and withstand the chaos that followed the collapse of the state in 1991, they managed to promote organic forms of public law and order more effectively than any other previous government.

Existing informal and local systems of governance enjoyed real success even before the collapse of the state and started taking up the functions of a state even while the Barre regime was still in power. During the 1990s however the role of these business people, neighbourhood groups, professionals and militiamen would be tested as the last remaining institutions crumbled. Most of these groups showed gradual shifts in the manner in which they looked to protect and advance their interests as the state was no longer present to ensure any public goods or provide any form of security (Menkhaus, 2007b:82). The trend that developed can only be described as an "organic local revival of governance" (Menkhaus, 2007b:82). The second half of the 1990s saw these groups become more structured and institutionalized as they settled into their role of "local government." These groups were made up of a coalition of clan elders, intellectuals and businessmen who financed, set up and administered the Sharia courts system (Menkhaus, 2007b:85). The Sharia courts system did not only play an instrumental role in the country with regards to restoring some level of law and order, it was also a springboard for some of the most influential groups in Somalia, which would later alter the history and the image of the country.

Even though these groups did not add up to anything resembling a state, and could therefore not be described as a natural state building initiative, these groups managed to provide governance to a country without a government (Menkhaus, 2007b:82). Despite the fact that the groups were not united in their vision for the country and would therefore not have been able to generate long term solutions to a country in

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turmoil, they did enjoy a high degree of legitimacy, something which Somalia's democratic government had not even been able to achieve. These indigenous forms of governance also highlighted another aspect of the Nirvana fallacy - that foreign intervention calling for national reconciliation conferences has not only failed, it has often undermined local politics and in the process done more harm than good. It also shows that local forms of governance can be more effective than externally imposed ideas, mechanisms and structures of how a state should function.

This is not however to say that external governments and organization should not step in and provide guidance to local forms of state building. On the contrary, external actors should get involved but they need to be extremely cautious when dealing with collapsed states, especially when these states house such strong civil societies that have stepped up to fill the power void left behind by the collapsing state. There is no doubt that Somalia desperately needs external direction and help if it is to reconstruct the state. The actors involved in the process should however be careful not to disregard the organic forms of governance in Somalia, and should not dictate their own perceptions of what constitutes a successful state and good governance.

Another crucial aspect to keep in mind is that not all of the local forms of governance that were born out of these chaotic times can be classified as "good." Many started off with the right intentions, but were later crippled by extremist tendencies. The circumstances surrounding the creation of these groups and the dire situation within the country often led to splits within these groups which not only undermined the legitimacy of the groups but also allowed extremist leaders to come to power. Al-Shabaab is one such group which splintered off from the broad based Courts movement. Al-Shabaab, roughly translated as "the youth", is now known for its hard-line Islamic motives and is responsible for various terrorist attacks in and around Somalia.

Al-Shabaab may not form part of the local organic forms of governance in Somalia, but it does represent a crucial aspect within the collapsed state genre. It is simply a matter of time before the power vacuum is filled within these states and if legitimate, effective institutions and structures are not reinstated, these powerful, often extremist groups will take advantage of the opportunities these voids provide.

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4.2 The Rise of the Islamic Courts

4.2.1 Origins of the Islamic Courts

The phenomenon of Islamic Courts first appeared in Somalia in 1994 (Barnes & Hassan, 2007:152). After nearly four years of turmoil and anarchy in Somalia, the first functioning Sharia courts were founded in north Mogadishu by Islamic clerics from the powerful Abgal sub-clan of the Hawiye (Barnes & Hassan, 2007:152). The establishment of the courts came as a natural response to the devastating situation in the country and as a desperate attempt to restore some form of law and order back into society (Le Sage, 2001:475). The courts were set up by specific clans and therefore only had jurisdiction within these certain clans and not between them (Vinci, 2006:81). Even though this limited the scope and the power of the Sharia courts, they were widely embraced and supported by the people.

The Sharia courts also did not adhere to any specific school of Islamic law and rather operated within Somali customs. They were considered moderate in nature and generally opposed radical interpretations of Islam (Menkhaus, 2007b:86). This, together with the fact that people could choose between customary law and Sharia law, further increased the courts' popularity. The decisions of the courts were enforced by the clan militias who also helped to restore some measure of security (Barnes & Hassan, 2007:152). Not only did the courts provide security, they were also a huge success in dealing with criminal activities. At times the courts were also able to provide some basic services to the people such as operating the piped water system, regulating the market place so that trade and commerce could take place, as well as collect modest levels of taxes to cover salaries (Menkhaus, 2007b:86).

Even though the courts enjoyed some real success in north Mogadishu the court system only started operations in the southern regions in 1998 (Barnes & Hassan, 2007:152). The primary obstacle to the court system in the south of the city was General Mohamed Farah Aideed, a well-known warlord-entrepreneur and a sworn enemy of Islamism (Barnes & Hassan, 2007:152). His death in 1996 provided the court system with a window of opportunity to infiltrate southern Mogadishu. The courts system flourished and the number of courts in Somalia rapidly increased. Initially all the courts were considered moderate, but even though they were all still

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rooted in local clan power, the south Mogadishu courts quickly took on a more radical persona (Mwangi, 2010:90). The southern courts were greatly influenced by strands of political Islam which came from previous members of Al-Itihaad Al-Islaam (Barnes & Hassan, 2007:152). These southern courts were seen as a new brand of Islamic courts and many were directly under the leadership of Sheik Hassan Dahir Aweys, the former military commander of the jihadist Islamist organization Al-Itihaad Al-Islaam (Mwangi, 2010:90).

In 2000 various independent Islamic courts joined together under Sheikh Hassan Mohammed Addeh and formed a Joint Islamic Courts Council (Barnes & Hassan, 2007:153). The coalition of courts also combined their militias to create the first significant non-warlord-controlled military force. This broad umbrella group of Islamists would eventually be known as the Islamic Courts Union/Council of Islamic Courts and would transform the landscape of politics in Somalia (Menkhaus, 2009a:7; Barnes & Hassan, 2007:152).

4.2.2 The Islamic Courts Union

With the new alliance of the courts system the Islamic courts aimed to extend its influence beyond the capital. Even though it managed to increase its sphere of influence its momentum was slowed down significantly with the creation of the TNG at the Arta conference in 2000 as businesspeople and other professionals shifted their support to the new government (Barnes & Hassan, 2007:152). The TNG however proved to be another stillborn government and the Islamic Courts system was strengthened once more. By 2003, Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, a school teacher frustrated with the lack of security in the country, revived the court system in north Mogadishu (Barnes & Hassan, 2007:153). A year later he was elected as the Chairman of all the Islamic courts operating in the north and south of the capital. He unified the moderate northern courts and the more radical southern courts which would later become the ICU.

By 2005, the ICU influence began to encroach upon the authority of the warlords, who had taken control of the capital after the collapse of the Barre regime. In June 2006 the ICU defeated the warlords and restored peace for the first time in 15 years (Mwangi, 2010:90). The first few months in power the ICU enjoyed success after

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success. It rapidly expanded its control over most of Mogadishu, earned the support of Somalis both in and outside the country and even managed to win over most of the international community (Menkhaus, 2007a:370). The ICU had done the unthinkable; it had transformed Mogadishu by re-establishing peace and security while uniting the Somali people (Barnes & Hassan, 2007:152). The ICU undertook ambitious and highly symbolic public actions. It delivered impressive levels of services, security and law and order to Mogadishu, removed road-blocks, cleared rubbish and debris from the streets and reopened seaports and the international airport (Menkhaus, 2009b:225). The ICU evicted illegal squatters and forced them to vacate government buildings. It also set up special courts to deal with damages of property and put a stop to illegal land grabs (Barnes & Hassan, 2007:155).

To many, the ICU represented an end to Somalia's "long national nightmare of state collapse, warlordism and criminal violence" (Menkhaus, 2009a:7). This non state actor had managed to fill the power vacuum which had left Somalia in turmoil and chaos for more than a decade (Ibrahim, 2010:284). It had the support of the international community who expressed cautious optimism of this new key actor in Somali politics. Furthermore the ICU seemed to enjoy wide spread support from within Somalia and promised to bring an alternative means of governance to the country. Not only did the ICU enjoy real support at home and abroad, it was seen as a legitimate form of governance that would finally end the decades of anarchy and conflict. The ICU also had the capacity and seemed capable of restoring peace to not only Mogadishu but to the country as a whole. This Islamic non-state actor had been able to do what warlords, foreign government state building initiatives and countless NGO's had failed to do, provide local-level security, restore law and order and provide basic services to the citizens of Mogadishu. The ICU proved that armed, non-state actors in a collapsed state can indeed play a meaningful role in security provision.

4.2.3 The end of the Courts

The ICU had everything going for it and appeared capable of catapulting Somalia into a new era of state revival and public order. But then things went wrong. Moderate Islamists were unable to gain control over the hardliners within the organization and a complex power struggle emerged within the ICU (Menkhaus, 2009b:225). The

hardliners within the ICU began pushing the organization into a more radical position which alarmed neighbouring Ethiopia as well as the international community. A serious ideological split was evident within the ICU with the moderate wing, led by Chairmen of the Courts, Sheikh Sharif, and the radical wing, led by Sheikh Aweys, clashing on policy implementation and the vision for the country (Barnes & Hassan, 2007:155).

The ideological differences did not only divide the group, but also did irreconcilable damage to the image of the ICU as an organization presenting itself as a movement committed to democracy (Menkhaus, 2007a:372). This was due to the fact that hardliners' actions revealed worrisome authoritarian tendencies seeking to mobilize military and political power. The statements and the policies coming from the ICU were often contradictory which further diluted its popularity and legitimacy. People did not know whether the moderate wing would be able to keep the hardliners in check or whether the hardliners would gain complete control of the ICU.

The ICU hardliners also did everything in their power to provoke a war with Ethiopia. The ICU hardliners declared jihad on Ethiopia, hosted two armed insurgency groups, which opposed the Ethiopian government, and enjoyed the support of Eritrea, Ethiopia's enemy (Menkhaus, 2009b:225). A further cause for concern was the powerful Al-Shabaab military wing of the ICU. Not only was the militia responsible for dozens of political assassinations in Mogadishu since 2004, the military wing was also known for its radical views, violent disposition and anti-Western sentiments (Barnes & Hassan, 2007:155). Al-Shabaab was also thought to be under the control of Aweys, although some questioned how much control he truly had over the radical militia.

By 2006 the ICU had become increasingly radicalised and the danger it posed to Ethiopia could no longer be denied. Signs also surfaced that hardliners within the ICU were now in control of driving and creating policies, were managing negotiations with the TFG, were at the forefront of decisions concerning safe havens for Al-Qaeda operatives in Mogadishu, as well as directing foreign policy (Menkhaus, 2007a:376). While the implementation of harsh Sharia law gained the ICU the most international attention, the ICU's fate was effectively sealed due to its foreign policies, which were

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reckless and designed to alarm international actors (Menkhaus, 2007a:377). The results of the extremist policies were frightening as hardliners closed down local cinemas and banned mixed sex social gatherings (Menkhaus, 2007a:377). Moderate ICU leaders continued to argue that these policies were not representative of the organization as a whole, but could do little to prevent further extreme policies from spreading throughout the city.

Relations between neighbouring Ethiopia and Somalia continued to deteriorate due to the ICU's foreign policies and its extremist tendencies. The friction between the two countries also led to a series of brief skirmishes, which created more friction and gave Ethiopia all the more reason to invade Somalia. Then on 24 December 2006, after months of military build-up, a full scale battle erupted between the Ethiopian military and the ICU forces (Menkhaus, 2007a:380). Ethiopia's US-backed military launched an offensive designed to oust the ICU from power. The ICU militia took on heavy losses and Ethiopian forces overcame the ICU within days. The leadership of the ICU disbanded and fled abroad, while the Al-Shabaab militia fled into the interior of the country (Menkhaus, 2009b:225).

4.3 The Rise of Al-Shabaab

The defeat of the ICU signalled the end of the Islamic Courts movement and ushered in a new era in Somali history. With the ICU ousted from power a security vacuum was created, which would soon be occupied by the more radical elements of the ICU military factions (Dagne, 2010:10). With most of the ICU leadership in exile, the Ethiopian troops made the fateful decision to remain in the capital to provide support and assistance to the weak and fragile TFG. Although the TFG enjoyed international recognition and support, it was seen by most Somalis as nothing more than an Ethiopian puppet. The situation in Mogadishu deteriorated further as uncontrolled TFG forces soon became the principal source of insecurity, engaging in kidnapping and assaults (Menkhaus, 2009a:8). Within weeks of Ethiopia's invasion of Mogadishu, a complex insurgency, composed of regrouped Al-Shabaab, ex-ICU militia members and other armed groups arose, targeting Ethiopian forces, TFG security militia, political figures, as well as any Somalis believed to be collaborating or supporting Ethiopian forces (Menkhaus, 2009a:8).

By mid-2007, the violence had reached catastrophic levels. The destruction of the conflict was devastating and the violent confrontations between the two sides left roughly 700 000 out of 1.3 million residents displaced, turning entire neighbourhoods of Mogadishu into ghost towns (Menkhaus, 2009b:226). The combination of massive displacement, violence, drought, hyperinflation, extreme insecurity and destruction unleashed a wave of anger and radicalism among the Somali citizens (Menkhaus, 2009a:8). Somalis quickly found themselves in what the UN called the worst humanitarian crisis in the world as nearly 3 million people where in desperate need of emergency relief (Menkhaus, 2009a:8). Somalis were furious and blamed the US, the UN, Ethiopia and the TFG forces for the situation in the country.

Al-Shabaab was able to exploit the circumstances within the country and use them to their advantage by emphasizing Somali nationalism and anti-Ethiopian and anti-Western sentiments in their agenda (Menkhaus, 2009a:8). They hoped their new approach would allow people to relate to their organization and their objectives. The plan worked. Al-Shabaab was able to generate considerable support from many Somalis who viewed the militia not as a terrorist organization but rather as a legitimate liberation front that would free them from Western influence and Ethiopian domination (Menkhaus, 2009a:8). During the struggle and armed insurgency against the Ethiopian army and TFG forces, Al-Shabaab grew from a small, loosely bound militia, once under the control of the ICU leadership, to a powerful autonomous political movement (Menkhaus, 2009a:8).

Over the course of 2007-2008 Al-Shabaab cemented its position in Somalia. It grew in numbers and strength as it gained internal support as well as financial and logistical support from neighbouring Eritrea. By early 2008, Al-Shabaab together with a few other Islamists movements came to control most of southern Somalia (Menkhaus, 2009a:8). The group's power and influence in Somalia was undeniable as it succeeded in attacking, and at times defeating, the Ethiopian military as well as the TFG forces. The victories that Al-Shabaab enjoyed was however not so much a reflection of the groups strength, but rather a reflection of the extraordinary weakness of the TFG, which received very little internal support (Menkhaus, 2009a:8). According to Menkhaus (2009a:8) "Shabaab was winning in large part because it was the only team on the playing field."

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Much of Al-Shabaab support was directly hinged on its anti-Ethiopian sentiments, which it shared with thousands of Somali citizens. Once Ethiopia withdrew its forces however, the militia lost its strongest argument. There was no longer an incentive for people to support Al-Shabaab and its tactics, which had become increasingly radical. Their tactics of political assassinations, roadside bombings and suicide attacks had alienated many Somalis (Shinn, 2009:3). This together with the fact that rival Islamist militia groups began to confront the radicalised and seemingly out of control Al-Shabaab militia, weakened the group even further. Ahlu-Sunna wal-Jama, a moderate Islamist brotherhood attacked Al-Shabaab in Mogadishu and took control of two other towns in central Somalia controlled by Al-Shabaab (Shinn, 2009:3).

Even though many question the true strength of the organization, the sheer size of the Al-Shabaab militia, which is now several thousand members strong, makes it a force to reckon with. Despite the group's growing unpopularity among the local population as well as international actors, its hatred for the increasingly corrupt and seriously dysfunctional TFG has only served to radicalise the group even further. Some sources reveal that Al-Shabaab is growing stronger as it consolidates its hold over much of the country (Aljazeera, 2011). Even though the militia has not formally merged with core Al-Qaeda movements, many of Al-Shabaab's major figures do have strong links with the terrorist organization (Strategic Comments, 2010). Al-Shabaab has also increased its sphere of influence beyond Somalia's border and is responsible for a number of terrorist attacks in neighbouring countries. These attacks have led to the deaths of hundreds of civilians, aid agency staff members and political leaders over the last five years (Ibrahim, 2010:286).

The rise of Al-Shabaab and other extremist groups in Somalia highlights the seriousness of state collapse and the possible consequences of such an event. The militia embodies the "worst case scenario" for international actors who have seen first-hand what damage statelessness can do. The gaping hole which a state leaves behind when it collapses is not easily filled and unfortunately some of the actors who do step up to fill this void can create even further chaos and destruction. What has also become clear is that Al-Shabaab has increased in strength and gained more internal support with each failing attempt by international actors to revive the state. Not only have the failed attempts increased their numbers they have also managed to

radicalize the group even further. As the more time passes and the group continues to consolidate its power, the more difficult it will be to restore peace and security to Somalia.

Once these organizations are in place, it becomes increasingly difficult to remove them and replace them with state structures and institutions that will fill the void and provide the basic and necessary public goods to the people. Another crucial aspect, which complicates the Somalia case even further, is the fluid loyalties of the people. In stateless Somalia, the people are so desperate that they will support almost any organization that promises to provide security and restore law and order. This is extremely dangerous as extremist and hardliner Islamist gain support in these dire situations.

What has also become clear is that removing Al-Shabaab will not solve the country's problems or bring peace and security to the Somali people or the region. This group will simply be replaced with another group aiming to fill the security vacuum. The country should therefore focus its attention on building up institutions that will effectively fill up the political void. Until these structural issues are addressed and plans for development put in place, conflict between the TFG forces and Al-Shabaab militia will only serve to increase their numbers and radicalize Al-Shabaab and other Islamic groups further. It is crucial that international actors involved in peace building and peace keeping realize the importance of development and filling the political void that was created in the absence of a central authority.

The absence of a central authority in Somalia has created an environment conducive to the proliferation of armed factions (Dagne, 210:4). Even though the country is no longer without a government it is still without central governance. The TFG may be Somalia's current government, but it has failed to achieve anything of importance since its establishment. Until the environment within the country changes, and there is no longer a need for people to put their security and trust in militant groups, such as Al-Shabaab, the conflict and violence will continue.

The most effective way in dealing with and containing the extremist problem would be to look for Somali-led solutions (Dagne, 2010:15). Most observers contend that the

TFG, Islamic Courts, Somaliland, Puntland and other moderate Somali forces should form a coalition, which would contain the advances of the most extreme elements of Al-Shabaab, both politically and military (Dagne, 2010:15). Such a coalition would gain more support from the Somali people as well as take away one of the most powerful justifications used by Al-Shabaab to wage war - the presence of foreign forces (Dagne, 2010:15). Somalia needs Somali-led solutions for its problems if there is to be any hope of ending the violence and bloodshed in the country.

4.4 The Piracy Factor

4.4.1 The Piracy Problem

In 2007 a new aspect of Somali society grabbed international attention. Although the phenomenon was not new to the country, the problem virtually exploded as the number of pirate attacks in the surrounding waters sky rocketed. By late 2007 the waters off the Somali coast were the "most pirate infested in the world" (Menkhaus, 2009a:9). Since 2008, there has been an unprecedented rise in pirate attacks in the Gulf of Aden, with Somali pirates carrying out attacks on over 111 commercial ships, while successfully hijacking nearly 40 vessels in 2008 (Dagne, 2010:13). In 2009 the number of attacks had increased drastically with a reported 217 incidents with 47 vessels hijacked (Dagne, 2010:13). Somali pirates exploit the fact that shipping companies have powerful reasons not to arm their ships and prefer to pay the ransoms rather than press for military actions against the pirates. This would be much riskier for their business as most vessels are fishing illegally in the Somali waters (Menkhaus, 2009a:9). They hoped that paying the ransoms would allow them to continue fishing in the area without drawing too much unwanted attention to their violation of international maritime laws (Tharoor, 2009).

4.4.2 Who are the Pirates?

The Somali pirates are generally young men drawn from the extensive number of poorly educated and unemployed youngsters living in Somalia (Gilpin, 2009). The exact number of pirates operating off the coast of Somalia remains unknown, but is estimated to be well over 1000. While there is a considerable increase in the number of pirates active in these waters, they do not seem to be a unified organization with any form of clear command structures (Dagne, 2010:13). Many of the pirates are

fishermen or former militia members of the Somali warlords. The majority of the pirates also come from the Puntland region of Somalia with membership cutting across clan boundaries. Some reports claim that the pirates are controlled by the Islamic insurgents in south-central Somalia, but there is no evidence of this (Dagne, 2010:13).

4.4.3 Understanding the Somali Pirates

There are a number of factors that have brought about the surge in piracy. The most obvious and prominent reason why people have turned to piracy is simply in order to survive. Poverty and unemployment remains exceptionally high in the country due to political unrest and the raging conflict between insurgency groups and the TFG/AU forces. After more than two decades without a functioning central authority and the country's history of war and insecurity, little remains of Somalia's formal economy. Reports claim that approximately 75% of Somali youth are without jobs (Gilpin, 2009). Many Somali's therefore have no choice but to get involved in criminal activities in order to provide for their families (Dagne, 2010:14). It would seem that the piracy problem is nothing more than a coping mechanism to deal with the dire circumstances in the country.

Many Somalis also argue that the fishermen have become pirates because their way of life has been destroyed by illegal fishing and the dumping of toxic waste in their waters (Dagne, 2010:14). According to a United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) report released in 2005, "there's uranium, radioactive waste, there's lead, there's heavy metals like cadmium and mercury, there's industrial waste, and there's hospital waste, chemical waste, you name it" (Dagne, 2010:14). The primary reason for the toxic dumping in Somalia is the cost. It is simply much cheaper to dump toxic waste in Africa than it is to dump it in Europe. The toxins and nuclear waste in the water have not only affected the fishing industry but have also directly impacted the coastal populations. Several reports surfaced of people becoming ill, suffering from strange rashes, nausea and women giving birth to malformed babies (Hari, 2009). The reason for these strange developments remained unclear until 2005, when after a tsunami dozens of barrels of toxic waste washed up on shore. Hundreds of people were affected and suffered from radiation sickness. The toxins and nuclear waste that washed ashore claimed the lives of more than 300 Somali people (Hari, 2009).

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Another UN report stated that the Somali waters have become a "free for all" with fishing fleets from around the world illegally fishing off the Somali coast (Tharoor, 2009). An estimated $300 million worth of seafood is stolen each year from the country's coastline. With no navy or coast guard to protect their waters and their livelihoods, fishermen, robbed of their income, have taken it upon themselves to apprehend these illegal fishing vessels. The pirates aim was to deter further illegal fishing activities by levying a tax on these vessels as compensation for their loss of income (Tharoor, 2009). Many of these "pirates" do not see themselves as bandits but rather as coast guards. With the implosion of the state in 1991, the fishermen took the law into their own hands in order to defend their fishing grounds. According to the pirates they are not criminals but simply coast guards patrolling the Somali seas (Gettleman, 2008). These "pirates" have come together under a number of names including the Central Somalia Coast Guard, Volunteer Coast Guards of Somalia and Somali Marines. They have also gained the support of local Somalis who agreed that piracy was an important form of their national defence (Hari, 2009).

These pirates emerged in the 1990s to protect the Somali waters against foreign trawlers and fill the void left by the collapsing state. With the disintegration of the state and its institutions, ships from around the world took advantage of the turmoil and the fact that the coast would no longer be patrolled and protected. The tuna-rich Somali waters were soon plundered by countries as far flung as South Korea, Japan and even Spain who have now been fishing illegally and without proper licences in the area for nearly two decades (Tharoor, 2009). With no state or government to protect its coastal waters from illegal fishing and the dumping of toxic and nuclear waste, the fishermen had no choice but to engage in piracy and fulfil the function of an effective state.

Although many initially turned to piracy to protect their livelihoods and serve as coast guards for their country, many others have made it a lucrative profession (Dagne, 2010:14). Piracy has become the only booming industry in Somalia. With few alternatives, many youngsters are turning to piracy purely for the easy money it can provide. The estimates of ransoms paid to Somali pirate networks in 2008 vary from $50 million to close to $130 million (Gilpin, 2009). The numbers are staggering and

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more and more poor people are looking to get involved in piracy as a means to improve their situations.

The piracy industry also quickly evolved to hijacking private boats and yachts and killing on-board passengers if necessary. Somali pirates are responsible for killing 4 Americans on a yacht in February 2011 in "one of the deadliest episodes since the modern day epidemic began" (Presse, 201). The pirates are now utilising automatic weapons and even grenades in their attempts to capture vessels (Stevenson, 2010:30). The boldness and the geographic adaptability of the pirates are also on the rise. In November 2009 they attempted to capture a Hong Kong-flagged oil tanker nearly 400 miles northeast of the Seychelles (Stevenson, 2010:30). Somali pirates have attacked merchant vessels 163 times in the first half of 2011, up nearly 60% over the same period in 2010 (CNN, 2011). The International Maritime Bureau's Piracy Reporting Centre has also confirmed that Somali pirates are currently holding 20 vessels and 420 crew members as of June 30 (CNN, 2011). In the most recent attack, 9 Somali pirates have seized a tanker ship in the Indian Ocean, and appear to be taking the ship back to Somalia (CNN, 2011). The attack took place on 16 July 2011 and 16 crew members are still on board.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter has investigated three of the most important local actors who have stepped up to fill the political void after the implosion of the state. The rise of the ICU in Somalia marked one of the rare windows of opportunity for the country. The group managed to bring about a degree of peace and security unknown to the capital for more than 15 years (Koko, 2007:8). The courts signalled the rise of informal systems of adaptation and promoted more organic forms of law and order (Menkhaus, 2007b:74). In short, it provided governance to a country without a government. Its success was however short lived as extremist elements slowly gained ground in the workings of the organization. With the ICU ousted from power by Ethiopian forces in December 2006 a security vacuum was created which was soon occupied by more radical elements of the ICU military factions (Dagne, 2010:10). Al-Shabaab took advantage of the security vacuum and quickly took control of the resistance movement against the TFG and AU forces. The hardliner Islamist insurgents continue to wage war against the newly formed government and its AU counterparts.

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While the country continues to battle against Al-Shabaab and other extremist groups, the world's governments have declared war on the Somali pirates whose numbers have increased dramatically over the last four years. The sheer volume and boldness of these pirate attacks present a grave threat to international security. This was not always the case. The first pirate gangs that emerged in the 1990's were established to protect against foreign trawlers (CNN, 2011). Without a government to protect the Somali waters, fishermen took the law into their own hands and became coast guards to defend their coastline. Although many pirates still claim to be fulfilling this noble cause, the majority of pirates are in the business today purely for financial reasons. The ransom money which they receive from hijacked vessels amounts to millions of dollars annually, which only serves to fuel the piracy epidemic further.

CHAPTER 5

Conclusion

5.1 Current situation

Multiple international actors have voiced their concern over the growing instability and dire humanitarian situation in Somalia. The situation continues to deteriorate as growing internal factionalism within Somalia's Islamist movement plunges the country into even deeper conflict and violence. The circumstances are exacerbated by the continuous fighting between Al-Shabaab and Somalia's transitional government (BBC, 2011c). The TFG has only contributed to the disorder and turmoil in the country since its creation. It is incompetent, increasingly corrupt and has achieved little of significance in the two years it has been in office (Crisis Group International, 2011). Its army is ineffectual and the government's survival is entirely dependent on some 8000 AU troops (Crisis Group International, 2011).

Given the inadequacies of the TFG it is not surprising that Al-Shabaab, who officially pledged its loyalties to Al-Qaeda last year, is still in control of large swaths of the country. The group is also now actively recruiting children into its forces. Most of the children who are taken to fight are between the ages of 12 – 18, while some report children as young as 8 have been spotted in Al-Shabaab's ranks (Times, 2011). While many of the children are recruited and lured into fighting by the promise of money and phones countless others are "recruited" by force. Al-Shabaab is known to raid schools and abduct children who are then forced to join the fighting. Young girls have also been taken from their homes and forced to cook and clean for the troops while some are forced into marrying Al-Shabaab gunmen (Times, 2011). Al-Shabaab has also increased its sphere of influence and is responsible for multiple suicide bombings in Uganda and Ethiopia in the last two years, claiming the lives of hundreds of people.

The sheer brutality of the tactics used by the group is also worrying. On the 25th of June 2011, Al-Shabaab beheaded two men in the Puntland region and left their bodies at the side of the road as a message to all those who oppose them (All Africa, 2011). This sort of behaviour is now commonplace for members of Al-Shabaab who have become increasingly radical over the last couple of years. The group remains a threat,

not only to Somalia and the TFG but also to its neighbours, the US and other Western Nations.

On top of all this, Somalia is also facing a growing piracy problem. Despite the international crack down on piracy, the problem has spiralled out of control with an unprecedented number of attacks and hijackings taking place in 2011. Piracy has now reached industry status in Somalia as the number of active pirates currently operating in the area reached an all-time high. Attacks are also escalating as the amount pirates receive for ransom increases. Another cause for concern is the fact that violence against seafarers and hostages is also on the rise. Since 2007, there have been 62 reported fatalities as a result of piracy (Times, 2011).

Recently however, Somalia has captured international attention for a very different reason. The combination of the ongoing war, conflict, poverty and drought in the area has led to one of the most severe famines the country has ever seen. Somalia is currently suffering the worst drought in more than half a century leaving millions on the brink of starvation (BBC, 2011b). More than 10 million people have been affected by the drought that has hit the Horn of Africa and are in serious need of humanitarian aid. Recent reports estimated that nearly 1300 Somalis are fleeing the country daily, some walking three weeks to get to the closest refugee camps (BBC, 2011c). Aid workers recently revealed that one child dies approximately every 6 minutes in Somalia (Jackson, 2011). This means that nearly 250 children under the age of 5 are dying daily in the country due to malnourishment. What makes this event even more tragic is the fact that the famine was largely man made and could therefore have been prevented.

5.2 Filling the Political Void

As discussed earlier, most of the new threats that international actors face arise in countries that have weak or illegitimate governments with strong societies, and Somalia is no exception (Chickering & Haley, 2007:59). The dangers emanating from a weak state, not only affect the people of the country in question, but pose a direct threat to regional and even international stability and security. Once a state implodes, the results are catastrophic and often lead to internal conflict and violence. It is therefore crucial to understand failed states, not only to prevent these circumstances

from replicating themselves in other countries, but to be able to rebuild and revive failed states in the future. This will not only save the lives of thousands, but will help retain international stability.

Somalia remains the iconic failed state and investigating not only the reasons why it collapsed but also the dangers surrounding the collapse of the state allows policymakers to make more informed decisions regarding other weak and failed states. The study focused on the mechanism of coping in stateless Somalia and highlighted the role which various actors have played in providing the services and fulfilling the functions of a central government. Two opposing groups were investigated throughout, namely internal and external actors. This study only focused on three main external actors, even though there are countless other organizations, states and NGOs that have played an important role in Somalia. Despite the fact that the impact and the consequences of the actors vary significantly, the roles these actors have played are crucial to understanding the circumstances in Somalia today.

The first prominent external actor that was addressed was the UN. UNOSOM's mandate of stabilizing the country and rebuilding the state was an ambitious undertaking right from the start. The UN troops were encouraged to get involved in the political, economic and social sphere of Somali society. In effect the UN took control of all aspects of Somali society, leaving little room for indigenous and local forms of governance to develop and flourish. The operation attempted to fill the political vacuum left behind by the collapsing state, but was unable to do so successfully, which only led to more conflict, insecurity and destruction. By the time the UN withdrew its troops in 1995, it was considered part of the problem and not part of the solution by international actors.

Ethiopia was the second major actor whose role was assessed in terms of the political void it attempted to fill. The Ethiopian forces stepped up to secure the security vacuum in the country on behalf of the weak TFG, who did not have the military capacity to fully occupy the void. Regardless of Ethiopia's intentions and its personal reasons for invading Somalia, it was unable to successfully fill this void. Ethiopia's military intervention in Somalia did not only produce undesired results, it provoked increased resistance from factions and groups within the country. It also managed to

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radicalize Al-Shabaab and other insurgency groups even further, as well as damage the already fragile relationship between Ethiopia and Somalia.

While Ethiopia's intervention in Somalia was disastrous on all accounts, the AU presence in the country has so far managed to render positive results. Despite the fact that AMISOM is still battling Al-Shabaab and other insurgent groups for control of the country, the AU is doing a remarkable job in meeting the needs of ordinary citizens. It has truly taken on the responsibilities of a state and is currently busy providing health care as well as education to the people of Mogadishu. These basic services, which the state is meant to provide and manage, have been absent in the country for nearly 20 years. AMISOM cannot be expected to fill this void over a long term period but it is currently doing just that. It is filling the void left behind by the collapsing state. Much still needs to be done with regards to reinstating an effective and well-functioning state, but the work AMISOM is doing in Somalia should not be overlooked. It has truly been influential and continues to be an asset to the people of Somalia.

While external actors have played a crucial role in filling the political void, the role that internal actors have played should not be underestimated. A number of non-state actors were identified in Somalia and the role they have played since the collapse of the state has been significant. As the Somali state has been unable to provide public services, Islamic non-state actors stepped up and provided many of these basic services themselves (Mwangi, 2010:88). The ICU is truly a testament to the importance of non-state actors and proves that local mechanisms of governance can be more effective than those imposed by international actors. The ICU also proved that armed local non-state actors can play an essential role in security provision, restoring law and order and basic service provision.

When the ICU was ousted from power by Ethiopian forces in December 2006 a security vacuum was created once more, which was soon occupied by more radical elements of the ICU military factions (Dagne, 2010:10). Al-Shabaab took advantage of the security vacuum in the country and quickly cemented its position in Somalia. Although the group did provide some public services, its radical ideologies and tactics made it unpopular with both the local population and international actors. Al-Shabaab

and other extremist groups in Somalia highlight the seriousness of state collapse and the possible consequences of such an event.

The role which the Somali pirates have played has been somewhat controversial to say the least. The Somali pirates emerged in the early 1990s to protect their waters against foreign trawlers and fill the void left by the collapsing state (Dagne, 2010:13). With the disintegration of the state and its institutions, ships from around the world took advantage of the fact that the coast would no longer be patrolled and protected. Many pirates claim that without a government to protect its coastal waters from illegal fishing and the dumping of toxic and nuclear waste, they had no choice but to engage in piracy and fulfil the function of an effective state. These "pirates" see themselves as coast guards merely patrolling the Somali waters. Although many of these "coast guards" initially turned to piracy to protect their livelihoods and serve their country, many others have made it a lucrative profession. Today piracy is driven by greed and is an industry wherein opportunistic fishermen and militia men now see an easy way to get rich.

What has become clear throughout this study is that removing actors such as Al-Shabaab or the Somali pirates will not solve the country's problems or bring peace and security to the people of Somalia. These groups will simply be replaced by other groups aiming to fill the security vacuum. External actors are also just a temporary solution to a long term problem. The state leaves behind a unique void, one which cannot be filled by any other actor. The country should therefore focus its attention on building up institutions that will effectively fill up the political void. Until these structural issues are addressed and plans for development put in place, the conflict and destruction will continue.

5.3 Recommendations

The future remains grim for the inhabitants of Somalia. Even if the state regains control of its territory and expels Al-Shabaab, Somalia's problems are far from over. The people are poor, unemployed, uneducated and split between warring factions and tribes. The state and its institutions need to be rebuilt from the ground up and reinstated to retake their rightful place in society. Only once an effective, capable,

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functioning and legitimate government is in place will there be an opportunity for Somalia to experience peace and stability in the future.

It would be unfair however to blame the TFG for the continued catastrophe in Somalia. At the core of Somalia's governance crisis is a "deeply flawed centralising state module" (International Crisis Group, 2011). The international community has not yet learned that re-establishing a Europe-style centralized state in Somalia is almost certain to fail. Such thinking brings us back to the Nirvana fallacy, which has proven that external government intervention and attempts at rebuilding a failed state can do more harm than good. In fact, attempts by external governments to establish a central authority in Somalia have only managed to increase the level of armed conflict in the country. Each failed attempt brings new insecurities and instability to the country and provides Somalis with yet another reason not to trust the idea of a centralized state, to which they already give little or no support, fearing it will only lead to domination.

Therefore local and informal system of governance, which societies are accustomed to, should be incorporated into the state structure, thereby constructing a Somali state better equipped to meet the demands of the people. Decentralizing the system would allow local levels of governance to become more involved in providing law and order and security (International Crisis Group, 2011). A compromise between local indigenous African societies and the modern state structure should be reached in order to create a hybrid form of state which allows "good governance" to flourish.

The important role that non-state actors play has also grown significantly over the last couple of decades as the limitation of the state has become clear (Ulimwengu, 2007:1). It is therefore crucial that non-state actors not only be recognized, but incorporated into the state structures, so that they can fulfil their role and contribute to a capable state in Africa (Ulimwengu, 2007:1). The most effective way to deal with the shortcomings of the state is in effect to look for Somali-led solutions. Most observers contend that the TFG, Islamic Courts, Somaliland, Puntland and other moderate Somali forces should form a coalition, which would gain support from the Somali people and help construct the first legitimate Somali government (Dagne, 2010:15).

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5.4 Trend or isolated incident?

According to the 2011 Failed State Index, African states still dominate the top spots for the most failed states in the world (Failed State Index, 2011:9). On the top of the list, for the fourth consecutive year, is Somalia. The combination of lawlessness, ineffective government, corruption, insurgency groups, terrorism, crime and lack of development makes Somalia the most failed state in the world (Failed State Index, 2011:9). Although other countries such as Chad, Sudan, Zimbabwe, The Democratic of Congo and Libya also rank high on the failed states list, they cannot match the situation in Somalia.

Although it is impossible to predict the futures of these countries, any one of the above mentioned states has the potential to end up like Somalia. Weak and Failed states are more sensitive to violence and unrest and may need just one incident to spark off internal conflict and instability. The spark may come from a variety of sources, such as elections, which have proven time and again to be a very unstable time, especially in countries that are conflict ridden (Failed State Index, 2011:21). Rising fuel and food prices have had similar effects in North Africa, forming part of the Arab-spring protest which led to the death of several people and landed many more in jail. Weaker states are prone to conflict and instability as the state is not strong enough to absorb the pressure and uncertainties. Chad, currently rated the number two failed state in the world, is threatened by both domestic and regional instability as rebel forces remain a destabilizing force in the country (Failed State Index, 2011:9). The humanitarian situation in the country is also exacerbated by the continued pressure for food and water. While the country's oil revenue has the potential to help reduce poverty and improve the situation in Chad, it is more likely that the illegitimate and unaccountable government will use the finances for their personal use.

Many other African states are dealing with similar problems. The situation in the Congo for example remains fragile as the country battles against widespread poverty, violence and instability (Failed State Index, 2011:10). In addition the Congolese security forces lack credibility due to their widespread human rights abuses. The need to address this issue and increase both the capacity and the legitimacy of the government security forces has become increasingly urgent. The current situation in

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Libya is also a cause for concern, as rebel forces continue to fight against Col Gaddafi and his army. With insecurity and instability on the rise, the future remains uncertain. Earlier this year, an ex-Libyan minister stated that he feared that the continued bloodshed could mean that Libya may turn into the next Somalia (CBC news, 2011).

Despite the fact that the reasons behind state weakness and failure remain complex, they are certainly not unpredictable. State weakness is a process of decay that can be slowed down and reversed. It is crucial that the international community not only understand the conditions that create weak and failed states, but also that they monitor these states closely (Failed States Index, 2011:8). This will allow the international community to prepare and take the necessary action to address the underlying problems and hopefully mitigate the effects of state failure.

Whether what we are seeing in Somalia is an isolated incident or a future trend, no one can know for sure. Will we see another country face complete state collapse? This could very well happen in the future. Hopefully the international community will be able to step in before the situation becomes too severe. However, the way in which international actors addressed and attempted to fill the void in Somalia has proven not only to be unsuccessful but managed to increase the violence and the conflict. Somalia has given policy-makers a unique opportunity to witness the very essence of state collapse. The lessons which they have learnt should be used to prevent other weak and failed states in Africa from experiencing state collapse.

5.5 Concluding Remarks

The circumstances in Somalia are grim and its future remains uncertain. All optimists have faded away in the wake of the famine, drought and ongoing conflict. This war-torn country has endured what very few others have; complete state collapse and 20 years without a central authority to provide public goods and protection. While no one can predict what will happen next in Somalia, one thing is certain. The situation cannot continue as it is. The country and its people have finally hit rock bottom. What the international system needs to do now is to provide assistance to the people of Somalia, so that they can create their own state and predict their own future.

The state needs to take up its position in Somalia and fill the void which was created more than two decades ago. What external actors need to realize is that state building itself is not doomed in Somalia, but rather that the kind of state that external actors strive to construct is unattainable and sets up Somali political leaders for failure (Menkhaus, 2007b:106). Local internal actors willing to cooperate with the state, need to be incorporated to create a state better able to meet the demands of the people. External actors should refrain from dictating what the state should look like and be wary not to fall prey to the Nirvana fallacy. Somalia will now need more help than ever before. This could either be a tremendous opportunity for the country to build and develop its institutions or it could be to the detriment of the state and its people. The international community needs to handle the situation delicately and help steer Somalia in the right direction.

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