REINTERPRETING ENVIRONMENTAL SCARCITY AND CONFLICT: EVIDENCE FROM SOMALIA

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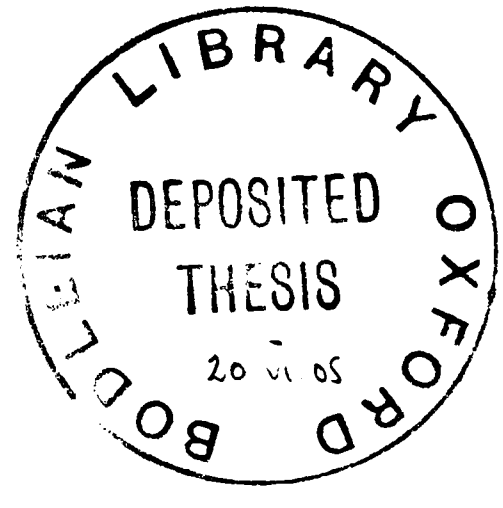

ABSTRACT

The thesis explores links between resources and conflict in contemporary Somalia. The central research questions were: Why did a society which is believed to be resilient and adaptive to its harsh environment become vulnerable? To what extent did environmental factors contribute to the emergence of conflict? How can natural resource scarcity and abundance be related to the existence of, or potential for, violent conflict, bearing in mind the historical, political, economic and cultural context of conflict? Can other determining factors such as power-relations, access to trade, or clan affiliation be linked to lower economic, institutional, and social performance and associated with higher levels of violent conflict? If a link can be made, this will help to forecast where conflict might take place. Because Somalia is largely an arid country, highly susceptible to natural disasters, and because its people have been victims of severe famine in recent decades, my starting point for this research was to investigate literature on the supposed environmental causes of conflict. Analysis of the literature which links environmental degradation and scarcity to state-collapse or civil war suggested, however, that such linkages are problematic. I argue instead that people engage in violent conflict in Somalia because they struggle to establish control over valuable resources. These resources are likely to be renewables, such as cash crops in the form of plantations in riverine areas, cereals in the Bay region, and charcoal in the coastal region of Brawa. Conflict arose over the struggle to monopolise these resources, and over the distribution of profits. Clan leaders sought to expand a source of 'tax' revenue by controlling trade networks, seaports and airports. This general approach may explain why southern Somalia has experienced continuous insecurity over the past decade.

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ACRONYMS

ACORD	Agency for Co-operation and Research in Development
ACTS	African Centre for Technology Studies
ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CEFA	Somalia European Committee for Agricultural Training
CIA	United States Central Intelligence Agency
CNN	Cable News Network
COGWO	Coalition of Grassroots Women's Organisations
COSV	Co-ordinating Committee for Voluntary Service
CRD	Centre for Research and Dialogue
DBG	Diakonia, Bread for the World, Germany
EC	European Commission
ECSP	Environmental Change and Security Project
ENCOP	Environment and Conflicts Project
EPS	Project on Environment, Population, and Security
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organisation
FEWS	Famine Early Warning System
FSAU	Food Security and Assessment Unit
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GSG-9	Grenzschutzgruppe 9
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IGAD	Inter-Governmental Authority on Development
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IRIN	United Nations Integrated Regional Information Network
ISRAACA	Pan-Somali Council for Peace and Democracy
JVA	Juba Valley Alliance
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PRIO	Peace Research Institute, Oslo
RAF	Red Army Faction
RRA	Rahanweyn Resistance Army
RVF	Rift Valley Fever
SACB	Somalia Aid Coordination Body
SAMO	Somali African Muki Organisation
SDM	Somali Democratic Movement
SNA	Somali National Alliance
SNF	Somali National Front
SPM	Somali Patriotic Movement
SRRC	Somali Reconciliation and Restoration Council
SSA	Somali Salvation Army
SSDF	Somali Salvation Democratic Front
Ssh	Somali shilling
SSNM	Southern Somali National Movement
SYC	Somali Youth Club
SYL	Somali Youth League
TNA	Transitional National Assembly
TNG	Transitional National Government
UN	United Nations

UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDOS	United Nations Development Office for Somalia
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNITAF	United Nations Task Force for Somalia
UNOSOM	United Nations Operation in Somalia
UNPOS	United Nations Political Office for Somalia
USC	United Somali Congress
WFP	World Food Programme
WSP	War-torn Societies Project
WTO	World Trade Organisation

NOTE ON SOMALI SPELLINGS

Somali names may be written in English. For ease of reading, I have tried to use the most common spellings in English, and have avoided the less common, but more accurate, formal Somali transliterations. I have therefore used, for example, Brawa, Rahanweyn and Ahmed, rather than Baraawe, Raxanweeyn and Axmed. However for Somali words and sayings, I kept with the formal Somali spellings, for example *xeer* rather than *heer*. Somali names and words in quotations are spelled accordingly.

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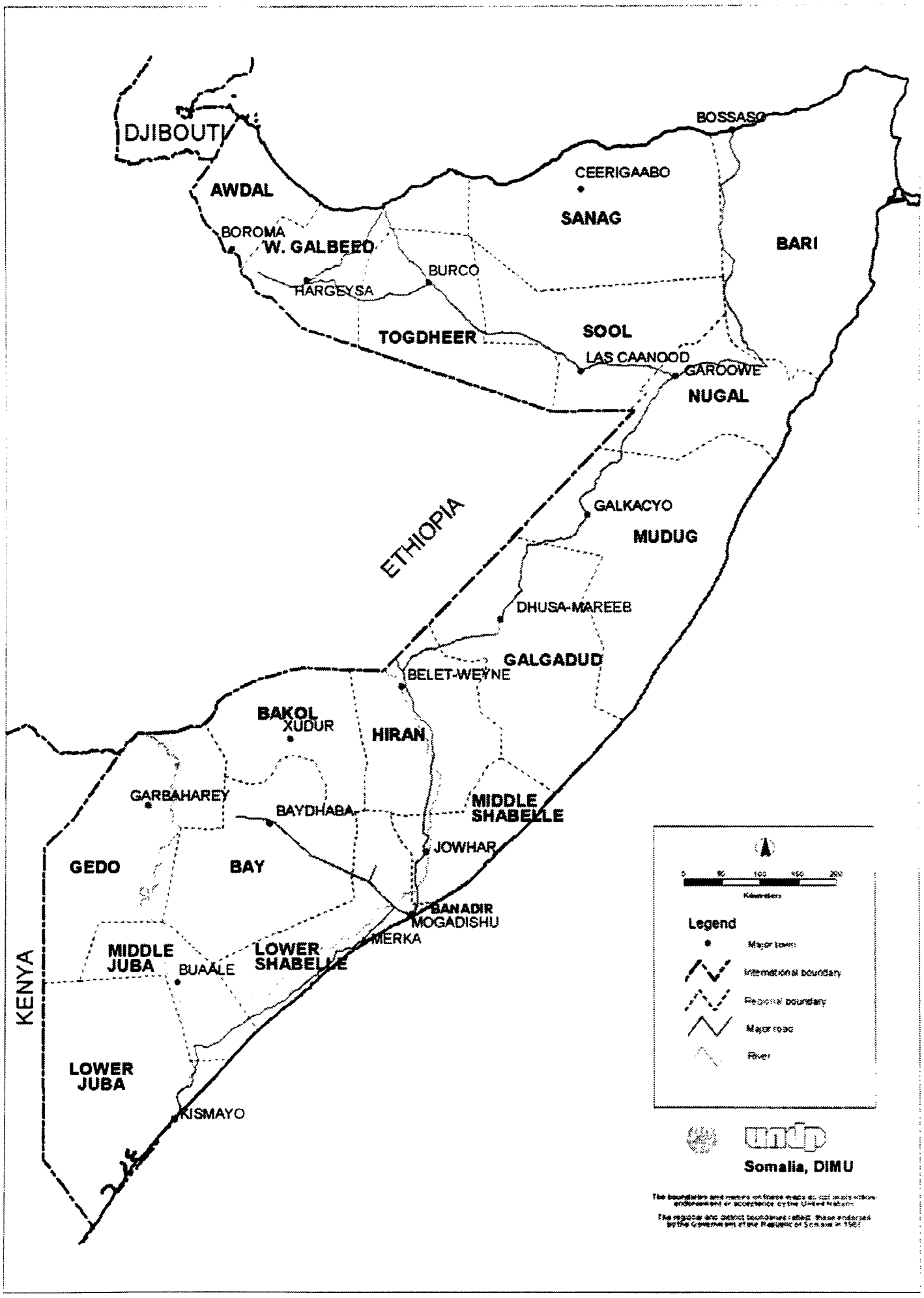
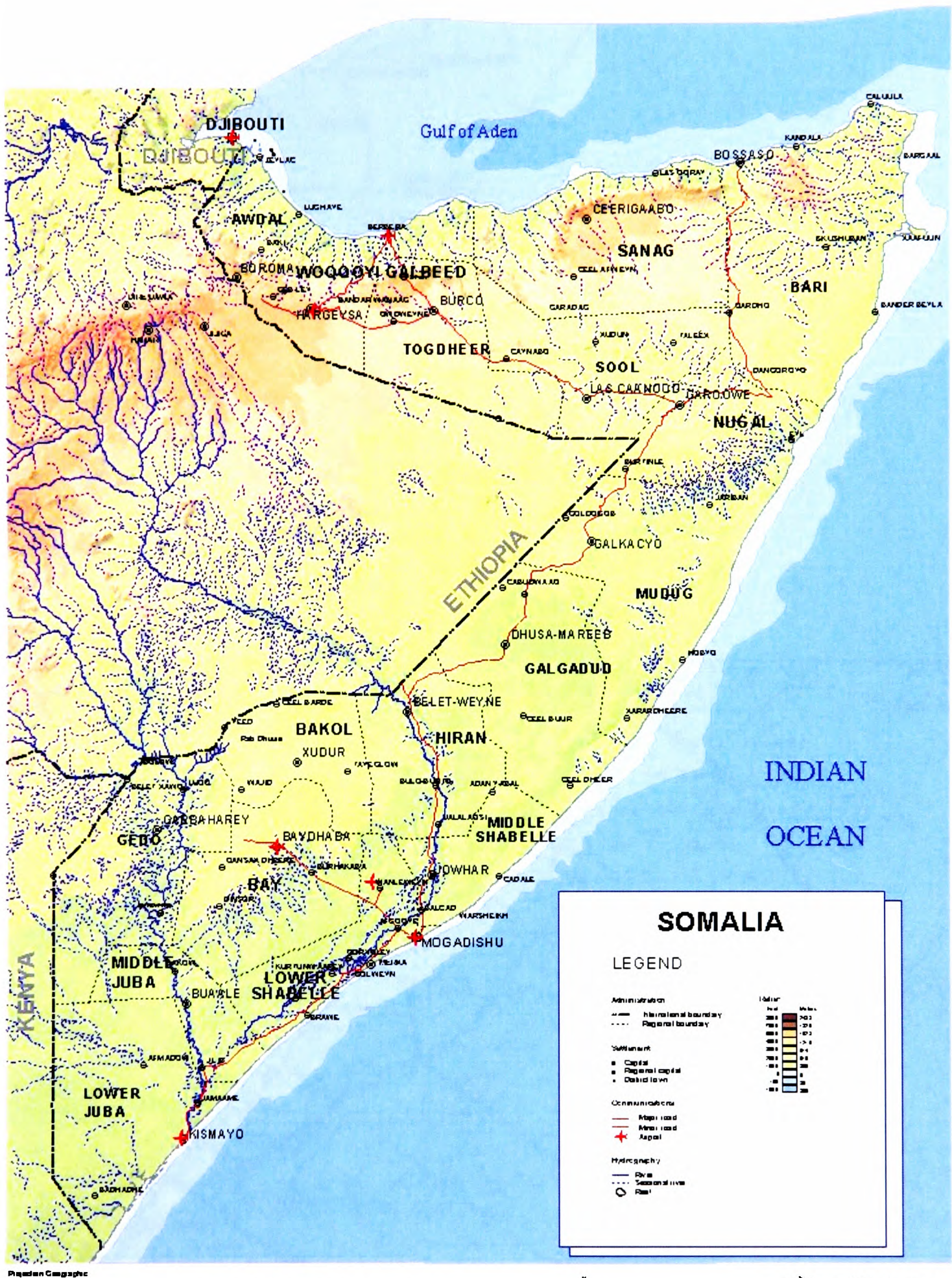
Map 1. Somalia – Political overview



Map 2. Somalia – Geographical overview



Projection Geographic
Spheroid Clarke 1866
Datum Clarke 1866
Units dms.
Elevation: DCW
Soundings: DCW
Roads, Topographic Maps Scale 1 / 50,000
Ministry of Defense Somalia Democratic Republic
1978 (re-projected, personal communication from Organizations working in Somalia
Administrative boundaries: Government of Somalia Democratic Republic 1988.

The boundaries and names on these maps do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

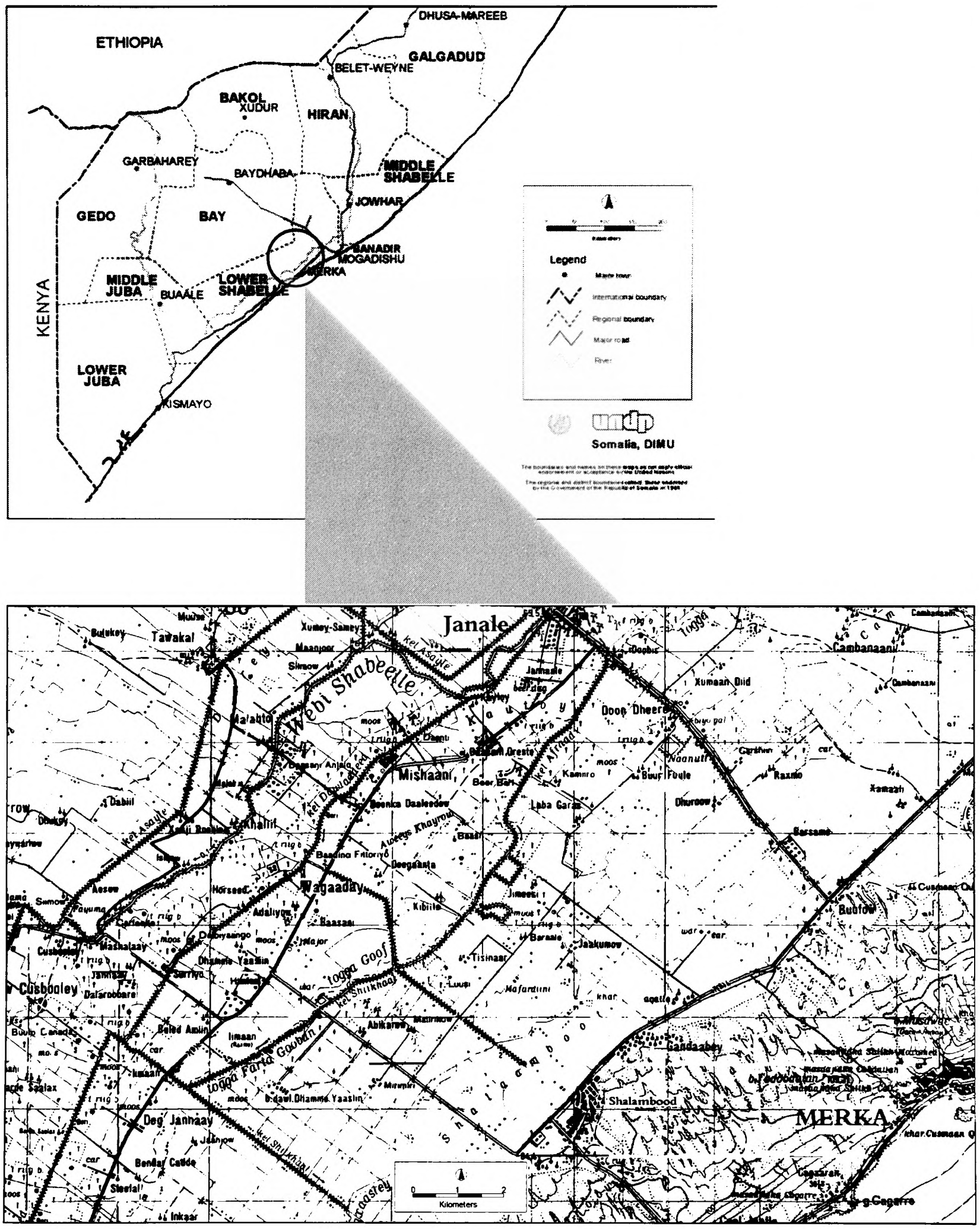
The regional and district boundaries reflect those enforced by the Government of the Republic of Somalia in 1988.

Kilometers

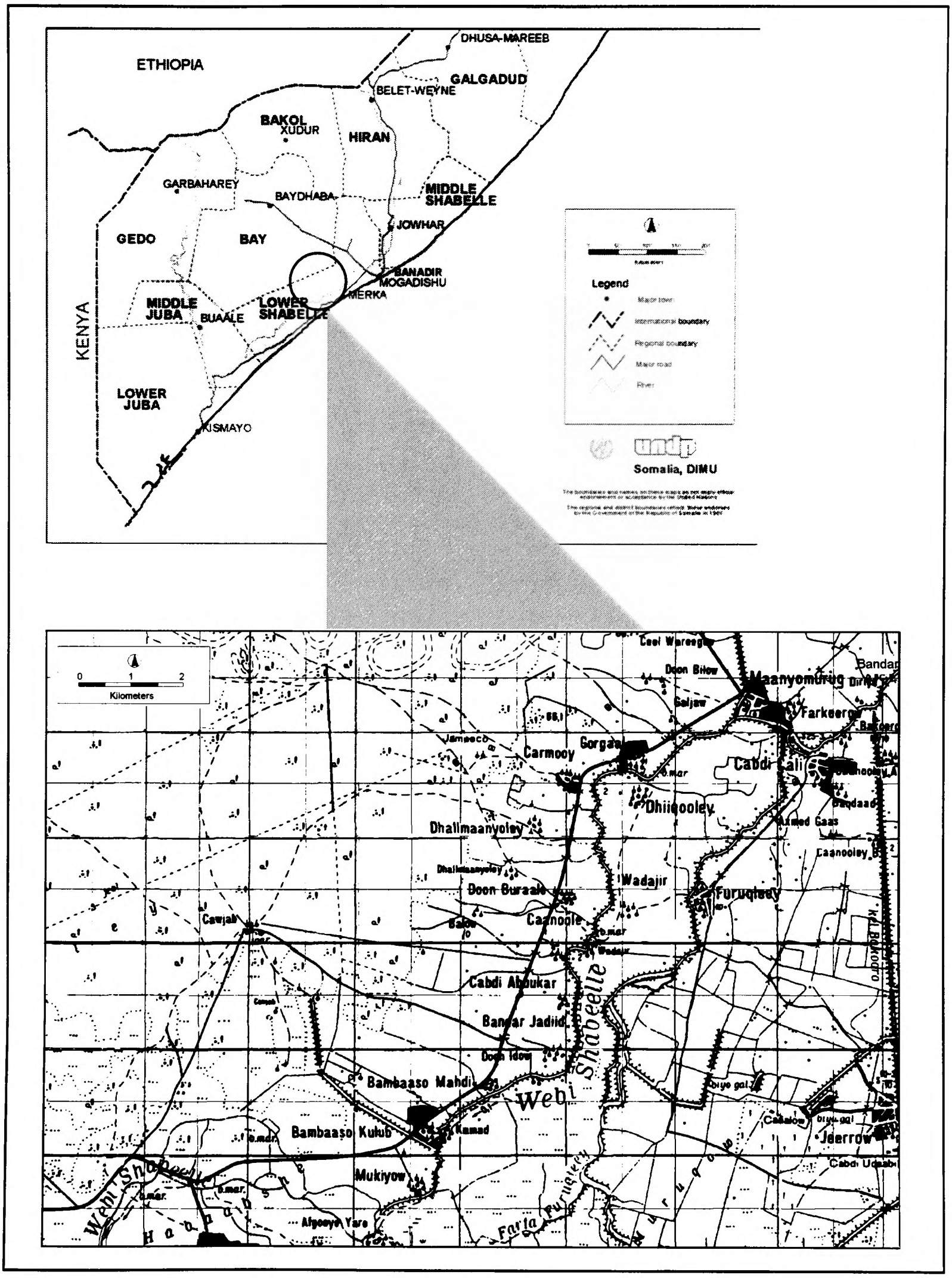
Somalia

Data and Information Management Unit
Geographic Information System Unit

Map 3. Study area with banana plantations and smallholder farms



Map 4. Affected area in Lower Shabelle region



CHAPTER ONE

Conceptual framework – Shrinking pie or honey pot?

1.1. INTRODUCTION

1.1.1. Conflict in Somalia

In January 1991 when Siyad Barre fled the Somali capital Mogadishu there was hope for restoring a society without oppression and clan patronage, and reversing economic decline. Instead, the government collapsed; civil strife resulted in starvation and up to 280,000 deaths in 1991-92.[1] Many observers were shocked by the scale of conflict and brutality in the Somali civil war lasting from 1988-93. Twelve years after this tragedy, violent conflict is still evident in contemporary Somalia, and we are left with the question of why a 'nation of poets' embedded in traditional and religious institutions turned to one of banditry and civil strife causing the Somali calamity. Africanists have asked whether Somalia constitutes yet another layer of the continent's worsening social, political and economic plight.[2] Scholars argue that ethnicity, so commonly invoked as an explanation of conflict in contemporary African states, seemed less relevant here.

But why did Somalia fall into a bloody civil war after the overthrow of Siyad Barre's dictatorial regime? Why did a society which is believed to be extremely resilient and adaptive to its harsh environment become vulnerable to natural disasters, such as droughts and floods? To what extent did environmental factors contribute to the emergence of conflict? These questions are important, but in addressing them, it is important to ask more general questions about the analysis of conflict and violence in the late twentieth century.

Because Somalia is largely an arid country, highly susceptible to natural disasters, especially drought and floods, and because its people have been victims of severe famine in recent decades, my starting point for this research was to investigate literature on environmental causes of conflict. In recent years, there has been a development of

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[1] Hansch, S., S. Lillibridge, G. Egeland, C. Teller and M. Toole, *Lives Lost, Lives Saved: Excess Mortality and the Impact of Health Interventions in the Somalia Emergency* (Washington D.C.: Refugee Policy Group, 1994), 24.

[2] Samatar, Ahmed Ismail, *The Somali Challenge: From Catastrophe to Renewal?* (Boulder, London: Lynne Rienner, 1994) 4.

comparative studies which link environmental degradation and scarcity to the collapse of states or the undermining of civic order. The meaning of scarcity in this context is twofold: On the one hand it refers to the actual effect on renewability of natural capital as measured by natural indicators of resilience and fragility. On the other hand it refers to the relationship between declining availability of natural resources and local power relationships, property rights, entitlements and prices, set against the ability to pay, and informational needs over conservation and redistribution. Analysis of this literature, and emerging critiques of it suggests, however, that such linkages are problematic.[3]

As a linked, but alternative position, I will test the argument that people engage in violent conflict because they struggle to establish control over valuable resources. In the case of Somalia, those resources are likely to be renewables, such as cash crops in form of plantations in riverine areas, such as Lower Shabelle, or cereals in Bay and Bakol region. Cash crops are easier to exploit and to control than dispersed resources such as livestock. In this respect, trade networks, seaports and airpfields are of strategic interest for clan leaders, as they seek to expand a source of tax revenue. This general approach may explain why the southern part of the country, which is considered to be relatively rich in resources, has experienced continuous insecurity over the past decade, while the relatively arid northern regions, in particular Somaliland, in which livestock are the main economic base, have been more stable. It will be argued that clan factions that overthrew Siyad Barre's regime in early 1991 used their military strength against one another to gain control over fertile land, cash crops, commercial centres, and valuable infrastructure. This view would concur with Cassanelli's claim that war in Somalia was not a means to defeat rival clan or faction leaders but to capture valuable resources:

> 'Warlords', it turned out, were not simply clan leaders intent on destroying their rivals but competitors using weapons, alliances, and propaganda to gain access to productive land, port facilities, and urban real estate, which in turn could be

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[3] Homer-Dixon, Thomas F. and Marc A. Levy, "Correspondence: Environment and Security," *International Security* 20.3 (1995). Levy, Marc A., "Is the Environment a National Security Issue?", *International Security* 20.2 (1995).

> used to sustain networks of patronage and support. In the process of redistributing resources, some groups benefited greatly while others suffered tragically. There was a brutal logic to all of this, and it derived from struggles over land and labour that were rooted in Somalia's recent past.[4]

The following thesis is divided into a theoretical and an empirical part. The theoretical part is contained in the first three chapters, and the empirical part in chapters four to eight. The remaining section of this chapter examines some of the explanations for violent conflict and state collapse that have emerged in recent literature. In particular, it explores critiques of the so called environmental security literature and attempts to evaluate whether there are elements of such environmental explanations which can be salvaged. Further it examines key ideas, such as social resilience and vulnerability. The second chapter is divided into two parts. The first part examines four theses explaining the collapse of the Somali Republic under the dictatorship of Siyad Barre. The second part concentrates on the post-Barre era in Somalia including the emergence of non-state administrations. This historical background serves as a basis for the following detailed case studies in chapter four, five and six. Chapter three contains a discussion of methodologies used, and offers an introduction to the region Lower Shabelle region in southern Somalia, in which the case studies are placed. The following three chapters are single case studies, each of them dealing with a specific primary commodity, chapter four with bananas and irrigated land, chapter five with water, and chapter six with charcoal. These chapters, placed in the historical context, demonstrate that causes of conflict in contemporary Somalia have changed over time and underscore a sequential causality of conflict in Somalia. This applies particularly to chapter four. In chapter seven, I will draw comparative evidence from two other regions in southern Somalia, Bay and Mogadishu. The concluding chapter relates findings on the local and regional level to the national and international level. An important part of the thesis is how the role of resources in conflict

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[4] Cassanelli, Lee V., "Explaining the Somali Crisis," *The Struggle for Land in Southern Somalia: The War Behind the War*, eds. Catherine Lowe Besteman and Lee V. Cassanelli (London, Boulder: HAAN Associates Publishing, Westview Press, 1996) 15.

on the regional level, i.e. in Lower Shabelle, Bay and Mogadishu, articulates with conflict at the national level, i.e. in the Somalia National Reconciliation Process. Understanding of obstacles to the peace process is enhanced by the evidence presented in the preceding detailed case studies. Further, a discussion of the ongoing Somali peace talks highlights the differences between expectations of the national political elites to form a new government and local political realities of already existing and functioning governance structures. A synthesis of the main findings will conclude the thesis in chapter eight.

1.1.2. Somalia's critical environment

Somalia is part of the East African savannah, which is part of the Sahel stretching from Senegal in the West, to Djibouti in the Far East. Its climate is semi-arid and hot reaching 45 degrees Celsius. This environment shaped the historical patterns of livelihoods and the predominantly pastoral life of the Somalis. It is a life where animals and humans live in mutual, interdependent relationship. One cannot live without the other. The semi-arid belt covers the whole of Somalia although particular riverine areas, such as the Lower Shabelle region or the Juba valley have fertile irrigated land. The precarious and competitive conditions of the savannah shaped Somali culture and traditions; precarious because of the unpredictability of rainfall and competitive because of scarce resources, such as water and grazing areas.[5]

Somalia is a country that is prone to droughts and erratic rainfall. Most farmers of the riverine and inter-riverine areas depend on rain-fed cropping. In Lower Shabelle – depending on the water flow if the Shabelle river – irrigated and flood irrigated farming constitutes an additional source of agricultural activity. In an environment where rainfall is low and unpredictable, local farmers and pastoralists are pushed to the limits of subsistence when external stress such as droughts or floods inflict on them. Additional anthropogenic factors, such as deforestation, depletion of the water table through

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[5] Drysdale, John, *Stoics without Pillows: A Way Forward for the Somalilands* (London: HAAN Associates Publishing, 2000) 2.

borehole drilling, and over-grazing can lead to a situation whereby environments become critical. Although I do not support the hypothesis that environmental criticality is a cause of violent conflict *per se* it is inevitably intertwined with the political causes of conflict in southern Somalia.

Environmental criticality refers to the depletion of minerals and renewable resources. Criticality is reached when non-renewable resources become scarce at the marginal costs of depletion. Whereas renewable resources become critical when resources are used at a rate exceeding the rate of renewal. As minerals play a marginal economic role in southern Somalia, the focus of environmental criticality is on renewable resources.[6] Kasperson *et alia* define criticality as "situations in which the extent and/or rate of environmental degradation preclude the continuation of current human-use systems or levels of human well-being, given feasible adaptations and societal capabilities to respond".[7]

The differences in the natural environment, the climate, the adaptation and response measures, and in the distribution of wealth and power makes it impossible to assess environmental risks on a global scale. In this respect, environmental criticality is closely linked with vulnerability and resilience (see 1.3). Human interference is likely to lead to criticality in situations that combine different factors, such as economies that are dependant on natural resources, societies that are vulnerable because of social and economic circumstances, and specific regions that are prone to natural hazards. Moreover, criticality must be analysed in a regional and cultural context.[8]

According to the above mentioned definition, Somalia is a critical region. Rainfall is low, unevenly distributed and irregular in southern Somalia. The rain pattern is bimodal

---

[6] Some sources indicate that minerals reserves exist in and north-east and north-west of Somalia but there is little evidence about the South. It has been stated that that fossil coal is present in coastal belt of north Puntland and Somaliland, along the Red Sea, in feasible quality and quantity. Bertolli, Lorenzo, *Emerging Opportunities to Develop the Processing and Manufacturing Industry within the Private Sector in the Puntland State of Somalia* (Nairobi: United Nations Development Programme, Somalia, 2000).

[7] Kasperson, Jeanne X., Roger E. Kasperson and B. L. Turner II, eds., *Regions at risk: Comparisons of Threatened Environments* (Tokyo: United Nations University Press, 1995) 25.

[8] Kasperson, Kasperson and Turner II, eds., *Regions at risk: Comparisons of Threatened Environments*.

normally having two rainy seasons per year. These rainy seasons are defined by the annual movements of the Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone, the longer lasting of the two, the *gu* from April to June and the shorter or *deyr* from October to December. In between the rainy seasons there is the *haga'a* (July-September) and the long *jilaal* (December-March) dry season. The mean annual rainfall stays below 500 mm per annum with localised rainfall patterns. Rainfall can vary in terms of duration and quantity in areas only a few kilometres apart in a given month, season or year. These uncertainties apply to both farmers and pastoralists alike. Crop failures occur on periodic intervals. As a rule of thumb, one in every five harvests will be a partial failure whereas one in ten is a complete write-off.[9] Apart from the 1926-29 and the 1973-74 droughts that affected the whole country, droughts occur in specific regions and normally last only for one season. About 18 droughts, however not confined to territory, occurred in the past hundred years in Somalia.[10] Rainfalls play such an important role for most Somalis that they are remembered by those affected with special names. Also, droughts are differentiated according to their severity. *Abaar* ('drought') *neebsooy* ('take a rest') refers to the failure of the *gu* or *deyr* rainy season so that farmers can stay at home and 'take a rest' from cultivating activities, while the more severe *abaar nuuhiyi* ('nothing is left') refers to the failure of crops, empty stores, no pasture and no livestock. Besides, farmers not only fear the failure of rainfall but are also plagued by floods. Though floods are important for irrigation they can become destructive when exceeding certain levels.

Living in one of the hottest area of the globe, known as the torrid zone, caused Somali pastoralists to develop exceptional skills to cope with his environment. Drysdale argues that pastoralism was the most likely livelihood to evolve in a semi-arid region,

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[9] Conze, P. and T. Labahn, "From a Socialistic System to a Mixed Economy: The Changing Framework for Somali Agriculture," *Somalia: Agriculture in the Winds of Change*, eds. P. Conze and T. Labahn (Saarbrücken: EPI Verlag, 1986).

[10] Wisner, Ben, "Jilaal, Gu, Hagaa, and Der: Living with the Somali Land, and Living Well," *The Somali Challenge: From Catastrophe to Renewal?*, ed. Ahmed I. Samatar (Boulder, London: Lynne Rienner, 1994).

such as the African savannah.[11] Water that was crucial for human survival in a hot climate. In the pastoral setting, mobility was important to increase social resilience to cope with the unpredictability of rainfall.[12] Animals provide meat and milk for daily food intake. Camels can go without water for several days, sometimes weeks, which enabled humans to walk long distances. The animals provided meat and milk and the means to transport water for human consumption. The development of this symbiotic relationship between pastoralists and their animals, which evolved over the past 8,000 years, led to an exceptional high level of social resilience to cope with the critical environmental conditions of the savannah.

Likewise, migration among farmers was an equally important coping strategy as storing grain. Helander argues that mobility among the Rahanweyn households in Bay region was essential to react to external shocks.[13] For instance during the 1998-99 drought, people migrated from Bay region to Lower Shabelle, where clan connections were strong.[14] Labour constraints led to the development of labour-sharing arrangements that required mobility to be effective. Further, people inherited property in which they might only hold partial rights; they could therefore use migration to redistribute property according to their needs. If their mobility was restricted either through war or legislation, it would increase their social vulnerability forcing them out of the farming sector into urban centres and wage labour. The fragility of the relationship between the Somalis and their environment together with population growth led to my preliminary assumption that the Somali conflict may be caused by environmental scarcity.

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[11] Drysdale, *Stoics without Pillows: A Way Forward for the Somalilands*.
[12] Little, Peter D., *Somalia: Economy without State* (Oxford, Bloomington & Indianapolis, Hargeisa: James Currey, Indiana University Press, Btec Books, 2003) 65.
[13] Helander, Bernhard, "The Hubeer in the Land of Plenty: Land, Labor, and Vulnerability among a Southern Somali Clan," *The Struggle for Land in Southern Somalia: The War Behind the War*, eds. Catherine Lowe Besteman and Lee V. Cassanelli (London, Boulder: HAAN Associates Publishing, Westview Press, 1996) 48.
[14] United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report, Somalia 2001* (Nairobi: United Nations Development Programme Somalia Country Office, 2001), 74.

1.2. CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF LITERATURE RELATING SCARCITY TO CONFLICT

1.2.1. Environmental security literature in the post-Cold War era

This section examines recent environmental security literature, asks why it has emerged, and discusses some of its problems. Particularly after the end of the Cold War, but also before it, an academic and policy debate has developed as to the contribution of environmental factors to conflict and the outbreak of violence. In this respect, Galtung argues that "wars are often over resources" and that the "destruction of the environment may lead to more wars over resources".[15] He suggests that the scarcity of resources, as a common source of conflict, has reached new dimensions through environmental degradation.

Others agree that a shrinking resource base eventually leads to violent conflict when renewable resources such as arable land become scarce. They claim that environmental degradation, scarcity of renewable resources and population pressures are an increasingly important new source of armed conflict, especially in developing countries.[16] For example, the 1987 report of the *World Commission for Environment and Development* contained a passage correlating environmental degradation and conflict, and developing an expanded definition of security:

> The whole notion of security as traditionally understood – in terms of political and military threats to national sovereignty – must be expanded to include the growing impacts of environmental stress – locally, nationally, regionally and globally.[17]

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[15] Galtung, Johan, *Environment, Development and Military Activity: Towards Alternative Security Doctrines* (Oslo: Norwegian University Press, 1982) 99.

[16] Major research studies have been undertaken by different projects: For example by the Environmental Change and Security Project (ECSP) at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington, D.C., the Environment and Conflicts Project (ENCOP), which is jointly run by the Center for Security Studies and Conflict Research at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich, and the Swiss Peace Foundation in Bern and the Global Environmental Change and Human Security Project, University of Victoria, Canada.

[17] Brundtland, Gro Harlem, *Our Common Future*, World Commission on Environment and Development (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987) 19.

Under the auspices of the NATO *Committee on the Challenges of Modern Societies*, a pilot study was undertaken in 1995 to examine the relationship between environmental change and security at the regional, international and global levels. It further aimed at addressing cross-border defence-related environmental problems.[18] The report on "Environment and Security in an International Context" found that environmental stress can be "a structural source of conflict, as well as a catalyst for conflict, or a trigger for conflict".[19] The report does not support the hypothesis of a strong relationship between environmental stress and scarcity, and conflict. However, it makes it clear as to why NATO has begun to examine such issues. The Alliance, so the report notes, "looks increasingly at threats from non-traditional sources" to "include an economic, and to a lesser extent, a social dimension to its conception of security".[20] My interpretation of such interest is that NATO seeks legitimacy for maintaining its military strength after the breakdown of the bipolar international political system.

In response to a request by US Vice-President Al Gore in 1994, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) established the 'State Failure Task Force' which examined the factors leading to the collapse of state authority. The study aimed at analysing the forces that have affected stability in the post Cold War era. In regard to environmental factors, the research findings state that "environmental change does not appear to be *directly* linked to state failure"[21] but environmental stress impacts on the quality of life. The research team identified that infant mortality is significantly related to environmental degradation. In this sense, indirect linkages were made between environmental problems, social problems, and internal conflict.

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[18] Carius, Alexander and Kurt M. Lietzmann, *Umwelt und Sicherheit - Herausforderungen an die internationale Politik* (Berlin: Springer Verlag, 1998) 9.
[19] Lietzmann, Kurt M. and Gary D. Vest, *Environment & Security in an International Context* (Brussels: North Atlantic Treaty Organisation: Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society, 1999): 11.
[20] Lietzmann and Vest, *Environment & Security in an International Context*, 9.
[21] State Failure Task Force, *State Failure Task Force Report: Phase II Findings* (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center, 1999), 64.

A range of academic studies, which do not have such explicit links with Western policy discussions, has developed in parallel. Some are clearly polemical – for example the often quoted article by Kaplan on "The Coming Anarchy", where he argues that overpopulation coupled with environmental scarcity, crime and disease are "rapidly destroying the social fabric of our planet".[22] A number have, however, involved careful statistical work, or comparison of a range of case studies. The Environment and Conflicts Project (ENCOP), which was jointly run by the Center for Security Studies and Conflict Research at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, Zurich, and the Swiss Peace Foundation in Bern carried out various case studies and published three volumes on environmental degradation as a cause of war.[23] Based on a large number of case studies *inter alia* in Bangladesh, Sudan, Nigeria, Jordan and Rwanda, ENCOP has generated a typology of conflicts strongly related to human-induced environmental degradation. This typology is subdivided into three categories: First, intra-state, second, intra-state but with inter-state aspects and third, inter-state conflicts.[24] Following this division, ENCOP defined seven different types: centre-periphery conflicts; ethno-politicised conflicts; regional migration conflicts; cross-boundaries migration conflicts; demographically-caused migration conflicts; international water conflicts and conflicts caused by global environmental degradation.[25] The strength of the project is the wide variety of different case studies that include regional conflicts, conflicts within states as well as non-violent types of conflict. Another valuable point is that human-induced environmental degradation is analysed in the context of social structures. The study takes economic as

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[22] Kaplan, Robert D., "The Coming Anarchy," *Atlantic Monthly* 2 (1994), 44.
[23] Bächler, Günther and Kurt R. Spillmann, *Kriegsursache Umweltzerstörung. Environmental Degradation as a Cause of War*, Regional- und Länderstudien von Projektmitarbeitern. Regional and Country Studies of Research Fellows (Zurich: Rüegger, 1997).
[24] Bächler and Spillmann, *Kriegsursache Umweltzerstörung. Environmental Degradation as a Cause of War*.
[25] The International Committee of the Red Cross dedicated its first *Forum* publication to the theme of "war and water". ICRC, *War and Water* (Geneva: International Committee of the Red Cross, 1998).

well as ecological scarcity into account, and acknowledges the development needs of the respective region or country.

The Project on Environment, Population, and Security (EPS), was conducted collaboratively by Homer-Dixon and his colleagues at the University of Toronto, and the American Association for the Advancement of Science, between July 1994 and December 1996. Homer-Dixon carried out case studies in Mexico, Palestine, South Africa[26], Pakistan and Rwanda.[27] The case studies examined the link between environmental scarcity of renewable resources such as cropland, fresh water, forests and fisheries on the one hand, and violence on the other hand. The key findings of the project state that scarcity can help to generate instability. It identifies an indirect causal relationship, while "migration, ethnic tensions, economic disparities, and weak institutions in turn often appear to be the main causes of violence".[28] Homer-Dixon distinguishes between three different types of scarcity: structural scarcity, demand-induced scarcity, and supply-induced scarcity.[29] These three categories can be helpful in defining "scarcity". In particular structural scarcity goes beyond usually accepted definitions to include analysis of poverty and exclusion as well as, for example, discriminatory pricing structures of renewables. In this sense, the institutional setting with respect to control of natural resources is recognised as a vital aspect of discussion. As relationships between ecological and political systems are complex the researchers rejected comparing case studies that did not display violence. For this reason, all of the case studies show some degree of violence. But the core finding by the group was that the

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[26] Percival, Val and Thomas Homer-Dixon, "Environmental Scarcity and Violent Conflict: The Case of South Africa," *Journal of Peace Research* 35.3 (1998).
[27] Homer-Dixon, Thomas and Jessica Blitt, eds., *Ecoviolence, Links among Environment, Population, and Security* (Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1998).
[28] Homer-Dixon and Blitt, eds., *Ecoviolence, Links among Environment, Population, and Security*, 223.
[29] Homer-Dixon, Thomas, *Environment, Scarcity, and Violence* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999).

bloody wars that exploded in African countries, such as Somalia and Rwanda after the Cold War constituted a new global threat: *ecoviolence*.[30]

A further study was jointly carried out by the International Human Dimensions Programme and the University of Victoria, Canada. The first research report of the Global Environmental Change and Human Security Project examined the links between environmental degradation and population displacement.[31] This project widens the focus on environmental degradation and conflict by adding the variable of migration. There have been some studies undertaken on how refugees impact on the environment but, they suggest, fewer on the impact of environmental scarcity or degradation on migration patterns.[32] The recommendations of the first report called for improved family planning and greater focus of agricultural activities. In this study, power relations, colonial heritage, poverty and political suppression are not mentioned as contributing factors of forced migration. Scholars of the International Peace Research Institute, Oslo (PRIO), have also contributed to the recent debate. The *Journal of Peace Research* that is associated with PRIO published a special issue on conflict and environment,[33] containing the results of a statistical analysis by Hauge and Ellingsen who found a significant impact from deforestation, soil degradation and freshwater access on political violence.[34]

Although environmental regulation has been the subject of international relations for many decades, the question arises as to why scholars are increasingly studying the correlation between environmental scarcity, population movement, global security and conflict. Elizabeth Hartmann claims that since the fall of the Berlin Wall, countries have

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[30] Homer-Dixon and Blitt's book *Ecoviolence: Links among Environment, Population, and Security* is the product of research programme in the field of environmental security and conflict. Researchers from the University of Toronto and the American Association for the Advancement of Science studied the links between environmental scarcity and violent conflict.

[31] Lonergan, Steve, *The Role of Environmental Degradation in Population Displacement* (Victoria, B.C.: Global Environmental Change and Human Security Project, University of Victoria, 1998).

[32] Black, Richard, *Refugees, Environment and Development* (Harlow: Longman, 1998). McGregor, J., "Refugees and the Environment," *Geography and Refugees*, eds. R. Black and V. Robinson (London: Belhaven Press, 1993).

[33] Diehl, Paul F., "Special Issue on Conflict and the Environment," *Journal of Peace Research* 35.3 (1998).

[34] Hauge, W. and T. Ellingsen, "The Causal Pathway to Conflict: Beyond Environmental Scarcity," *Journal of Peace Research* 35.3 (1998).

been forced to redefine their military policies.[35] The end of the Cold War period when global and regional conflicts were dominated by the interests of the two opposing superpowers, has resulted both in new sources, and new explanations for conflict. Military interventions in the 1990s were often legitimised by appeals to national interest based on issues other than political and economic systems. Hartmann argues that "while 'rogue states' such as Iraq have replaced the Soviet Union as the enemy, globalization has ushered in an era of more amorphous threats and environmental problems rank high among them".[36] Hartmann sees an explanation of environmental security studies in justifying military intervention in the affairs of sovereign states, and in maintaining large military expenditures in Western countries such as the USA and Canada.[37] The field of environmental security has been of particular interest in the United States and other authors such as Mutz and Schoch also explain this in relation to a shift in security policies of the US government. They agree with Hartmann that in a context where the major justification for the use of force has ceased to be perceived threats to international security by the two opposing global hegemonic powers, national interests have become the legitimate justification for the use of force.[38] Environmental security is invoked, they suggest, whenever national interests are threatened by conflicts with their roots in environmental degradation or forced migration. In a similar way, Barnett argues that "the environment-conflict thesis is theoretically rather than empirically driven, and is both a product and legitimisation of the North's security agenda".[39] He identifies the dominance of the literature that is mainly published in the United States, and states that the

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[35] Hartmann, Elizabeth, "Population, Environment and Security: A New Trinity," *Environment and Urbanization* 10.2 (1998). Elizabeth Hartmann is the Director of the Population and Development Programme at Hampshire College, Amherst, Massachusetts, USA, and a founding member of the Committee on Women, Population and the Environment.
[36] Hartmann, "Population, Environment and Security: A New Trinity", 113.
[37] The military intervention in the province of Kosovo and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in early 1999 was labelled by NATO as a 'humanitarian intervention' in order to protect human rights. We might see the justification of an 'environmental intervention' for aggressive military action in the future.
[38] Mutz, R. and B. Schoch, *Friedensgutachten* (Münster: LIT Verlag, 1995) 98.
[39] Barnett, Jon, "Destabilizing the Environment-Conflict Thesis," *Review of International Studies* 26 (2000): 271.

environmental security literature is predominantly concerned with resources of economic value.

Yet it would be a mistake to see recent emphasis on environmental security simply as a justification for continued funding and expansion of military establishments in the West. An earlier source for such concern emerged from a quite different source – environmentalists themselves. One way of alerting governments and policy makers to the importance of environmental issues globally was to invoke the possibility of conflict and violence. This strand in the literature goes back to key texts of the 1960s and 1970s environmental movement. It is present in such works as Ehrlich's *Population Bomb*[40] and *How to be a Survivor*,[41] in the Club of Rome report[42] and Ward and Dubos, *Only one Earth.*[43] In more dramatic volumes such as Warshofsky's, *Doomsday: the Science of Catastrophe*, a predicted "disordered earth" is seen in both ecological and social terms.[44] Galtung's book, *The True Worlds*, is a more measured account, which also predates the end of the Cold War.[45] He and other critics of the world order see the potential conflict over environmental resources resulting from inequity. He certainly predicts environmental crisis and the depletion of non-renewable resources, increasing pollution and population pressures in a finite environment. But he notes that "some people would have us believe that the root crisis is primarily a resource crisis, that our earth is not richly enough endowed to support us all with raw materials and energy".[46] He argues instead that the root cause of environmental crises and the threat of violence is to be found in the asymmetry of the existing world structure. Influential popular books on Africa such as

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[40] Ehrlich, Paul R., *The Population Bomb* (Cutchogue, N.Y.: Buccaneer Books, 1971).
[41] Ehrlich, Paul R. and Richard L. Harriman, *How to be a Survivor* (London: Ballantine Books Ltd: Distributed by Pan Books, 1971).
[42] Meadows, Donella H. and Club of Rome, *The Limits to Growth: A Report for the Club of Rome's Project on the Predicament of Mankind* (London: Pan Books, 1974).
[43] Ward, Barbara and René J. Dubos, *Only one Earth: The Care and Maintenance of a Small Planet: An Unofficial Report commissioned by the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment* (London: André Deutsch, 1972).
[44] Warshofsky, Fred, *Doomsday: The Science of Catastrophe* (London: Abacus, 1979).
[45] Galtung, Johan, *The True Worlds* (New York: The Free Press, 1980).
[46] Galtung, *The True Worlds*, 2.

Lloyd Timberlake, *Africa in Crisis*, have similar vantage point.[47] More generally, the invocation of environmental distress, such as droughts, is ubiquitous in historical literature on Africa as a means of helping to explain social conflict and rebellion. It is intriguing that environmentalist scholars, sometimes on the left, and scholars of global security, more often on the right, have both identified similar patterns of linkages and causes between scarcity and violence, although their methodologies and their recommendations about addressing these problems are not always the same.

The linkages made between environmental degradation and conflict in this literature, however, require critical examination. My focus will be on recent environmental security debates, where conflict itself, rather than the threat of conflict and social disorder is systematically examined. A key problem, which Gleditsch identifies, is that most of the case studies in the literature are selected on the value of the dependent variable – that is violent conflict.[48] A deductive model leading from environmental scarcity and population movement to armed conflict is epistemologically misleading as too many other variables have been omitted from the research design. A more effective approach would require inclusion of countries which had experienced environmental stress of some kind but had not experienced state collapse or civil conflict. In this respect, it would also be useful to compare countries with similar environmental and social backgrounds but which have had different experiences with respect to violent conflict. For example, both Botswana and Somalia have extensive areas of arid and semi-arid land, both have populations which are largely of one ethnic background and speak one language, both have agrarian economies in which cattle are very significant. But they have totally different political experiences in relation to civil war and violent conflict.[49]

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[47] Timberlake, Lloyd and Jon Tinker, *Africa in Crisis: The Causes, the Cures of Environmental Bankruptcy*, An Earthscan paperback (London; Washington, DC: International Institute for Environment and Development, 1985).

[48] Gleditsch, Nils Petter, "Armed Conflict and the Environment - A Critique of the Literature," *Journal of Peace Research* 35.3 (1998).

[49] See Samatar, Abdi Ismail, "Leadership and Ethnicity in the Making of African State Models: Botswana versus Somalia," *Third World Quarterly* 18.4 (1997).

If a more effective and complex model were to be developed, cases would have to be selected to control for other factors than environmental scarcity, which contribute to violent conflict. Therefore, researchers could compare cases with the same level of environmental scarcity and different levels of civil violence. With regard to the latter approach, the researchers on the EPS project argued that it would be very difficult to compare controlled cases because ecological-political systems are extraordinarily complex, and are characterised by large and unanticipated responses to small changes in the variables.[50] In some respects, their caveat amounts to an admission that it is almost impossible to test such linkages statistically, and it implies that a case by case approach may be most satisfactory.

Another problem with more quantitative approaches – even if they are based on large samples – is related to identifying the variables of greatest importance in proving the link between environmental factors and conflict. For example, even if infant mortality is a good signifier of overall material well-being, and is statistically linked to environmental stress and vulnerability, such a variable can only capture a small part of the contextual meaning of vulnerability or environmental stress, and it is difficult to relate it in any specific way to violence. Another example may be population growth. Some of the case studies identified by the Project on Environment, Population and Security anticipated environmental scarcity as a result of population growth as a source of violent conflict. The authors use a 'pie' metaphor in order to illustrate the causes of scarcity. The reduction of the resource base shrinks the pie, population growth increases the demand for resource usage per capita, and unequal income distribution divides the pie into pieces some of which are too small to sustain a livelihood. For example in Gaza in Palestine, environmental scarcity is caused by three factors: First, the depletion and degradation of water aquifers reducing the availability of water supply, secondly, population growth that

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[50] Homer-Dixon and Blitt, eds., *Ecoviolence, Links among Environment, Population, and Security.*

boosted demand, and thirdly, inequitable water distribution between Palestinian and Israeli settlers.[51]

However, Lipschutz, who is the co-editor of NATO's study on environment and conflict, argues that while researchers might have found a correlation between population growth and violence, this relationship does not justify an argument about causality.[52] Similarly the linkage between environmental scarcity, population movement or forced migration and conflict needs to be carefully examined. It is important to incorporate environmental factors in the analysis of population displacement.[53] But it is equally important to distinguish between the cause and effect, and to develop more complex explanations for the relationship between environmental scarcity, forced migration and violent conflict.

Besides, population growth is not necessarily a hindrance to environmental protection. Studies in Kenya have shown that density of population can reverse negative environmental trends. Tiffen, Mortimore and Gichuki demonstrate the reversion of land degradation and environmental destruction in spite of increased population density and scarcity of fertile land.[54] The study Machakos District in Kenya from 1930-90 explains how semi-arid areas have been transformed "from an apparently misused and rapidly degrading latent 'desert' into a partially capitalised, still productive, and appreciating asset".[55] The study is a synthesis and interpretation of the physical and social development path in Machakos. The analysis focuses on long-term change in economic and environmental decision-making by small farmers setting these in the context of population growth, environmental change, such as rainfall patterns, migration and income diversification. One explanation of this pattern of change derives from Boserup. She

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[51] Homer-Dixon and Blitt, eds., *Ecoviolence, Links among Environment, Population, and Security*, 224.
[52] Lipschutz, Ronnie D, "Environmental Conflict: A Values-oriented Approach", ed. Nils Petter Gleditsch (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic, 1997).
[53] Lonergan, *The Role of Environmental Degradation in Population Displacement.*
[54] Tiffen, Mary, Michael Mortimore and Francis Gichuki, *More People, Less Erosion: Environmental Recovery in Kenya* (Chichester: Wiley, 1994).
[55] Tiffen, Mortimore and Gichuki, *More People, Less Erosion: Environmental Recovery in Kenya*, 226.

suggests that technological change is fostered by population growth, and argues that scarcity of agricultural land induced by increased population density requires intensification of technologies already known that eventually lead to increased output per hectare.[56] Technological change, however, is only one of many factors determining environmental recovery in spite of Malthusian concerns. Three additional alternatives are presented by Tiffen *et alia*: Developing new land, which is usually of lower quality than the first settled, moving to a non-farm job, probably urban-based, and intensifying farming. The study suggests that income diversification is one of the factors stopping deforestation.

A further, more general problem with literature on environmental security is that it tends to be focussed on developing countries or non-Western countries. Only some researchers from the developing countries are vocal in the present debate. For instance, the former Minister for Defence of Rwanda, James K. Gasana, has written about natural resource scarcity and violence in Rwanda.[57] Further, the South African-based Institute for Security Studies has done research in the environmental security context, and the Nairobi-based African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS) has undertaken studies examining ecological sources of conflict in sub-Saharan Africa. The relatively small body of developing countries-based research suggests a bias in the focus of the literature. Two assumptions, which are often implicit in the literature, are: firstly, that higher levels of general economic well-being and lower levels of scarcity in Western countries reduce the likelihood of environmentally related conflict there; and secondly, that Western countries have mechanisms for resolving environmental scarcity peacefully.

Environmental security literature can be seen, in some senses, as clearing the ground for conflict avoidance, which is seen as a global responsibility. Clearly, in the era of

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[56] Boserup, Ester, *Population and Technology* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1981).
[57] Gasana, James K., "Natural Resource Scarcity and Violence in Rwanda," *Conserving the Peace: Resources, Livelihoods and Security*, eds. Mark Halle, Richard Matthew and Jason Switzer (Winnipeg, Manitoba: International Institute for Sustainable Development, 2002).

globalisation, both environmental problems and conflict can spill over from one country to another, and clearly there are environmental problems which are potential threats to the world as a whole.[58] Besides, the notion of environmental scarcity tends to focus on the decline of natural resources as a key element in providing potential for conflict rather than analysing environmental problems from an 'end-of-pipe' perspective, e.g. where human activities, in particular in industrialised countries, overload natural sinks that absorb human waste products. However, these assumptions should not lead to the conclusion that environmental scarcity in developing countries is the major risk and major cause of conflict. Nor should it be assumed that social mechanisms for resolving environmental shortage are absent in non-Western societies. In fact this is one of the major weaknesses of the literature to which I will return.

Lastly, the neglect of political and economic causes of violent conflict can lead not only to a simplified analysis but, some suggest, to the notion that violent conflicts are the almost inevitable result of global environmental problems. Modern conflicts within states might be labelled as 'green wars' focusing on the notion of environmental degradation and scarcity as the prime source of these conflicts leaving aside the responsibility of politicians, international corporations and politico-historical factors. The resource scarcity literature can give conflicting parties good arguments for evading responsibility for causing human suffering and could even be counterproductive in attempts to initiate mechanisms for conflict resolution.[59] In their article "Bringing Nature Back In", Deudney and Matthew argue that nature has always played a powerful role in politics but point to the fact that modern social sciences started from a paradigm that natural causes should be rejected as the main explanation of social behaviour.[60] I would agree that it is dangerous

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[58] Industrialised countries are actively involved in the negotiations of international conventions and treaties, such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity, or the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (Montreal Protocol).
[59] Fairhead, James, *Conflicts over Natural Resources: Complex Emergencies, Environment, and a Critique of 'Greenwar' in Africa* (Oxford: Queen Elizabeth House, 1997).
[60] Deudney, Daniel H. and Richard A. Matthew, eds., *Contested Grounds: Security and Conflict in the New Environmental Politics* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999).

to accept the assertion that natural forces explain civil war specifically in sub-Saharan Africa.

1.2.2. Environmental scarcity as a social construct

We are left with a dilemma. Broad statistical and comparative studies which include environmental scarcity as part of their explanations of violence have significant methodological weaknesses. But environmental issues seem to play a role in certain types of conflicts. Clearly it is necessary to analyse the overall political, economic-historical framework, and global linkages that make them significant. In his critical examination of Kaplan's "New Barbarism", Richards convincingly makes just such a case with respect to Sierra Leone.[61] He does not find a correlation between deforestation and war. He argues that after the end of the Cold War, the availability of valuable resources for patrimonial redistribution declined. As a result, the state's control over the country's periphery weakened, giving rise to rebel violence. Young men did not join the rebellion because of opportunism but as a result of terror and coercion. He concludes that the war in Sierra Leone "is a product of this protracted, post-colonial, crisis of patrimonialism".[62] This view is supported by Abdullah, who claims that there was a lack of an alternative political culture in the post-colonial era to the bankrupt the All Peoples Congress which gave rise to the Revolutionary United Front in Sierra Leone.[63]

Moreover, another way forward is to explore more thoroughly the question raised above in the discussion of Galtung: that of equity and exclusion. In this regard, it is important to note environmental scarcity is often less a problem of the absolute lack of resources, than one of distribution of environmental resources. Studies concerned with environmental scarcity hardly consider the question of equal distribution of resources

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[61] Richards, Paul, *Fighting for the Rain Forest: War, Youth & Resources in Sierra Leone*, African issues (Oxford, Portsmouth, N.H.: James Currey, Heinemann, 1996).
[62] Richards, *Fighting for the Rain Forest: War, Youth & Resources in Sierra Leone*, 18.
[63] Abdullah, Ibrahim, "Bush Path to Destruction: The Origin and Character of the Revolutionary United Front / Sierra Leone," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 36.2 (1998), 204.

between the North and the South and among present and future generations.[64] An analogy can be found in Sen's work which argues that in some famines, food was available but is unobtainable by some as a consequence of unequal distribution and not because of absolute scarcity. Sen's entitlement theory analyses the distribution of food from the demand side and identifies the lack of access of scarce resources as a cause of hunger and death:[65]

> However, starvation is a matter of some people not *having* enough food to eat, and not a matter of there *being* not enough food to eat. While the latter can be a cause of the former, it is clearly one of many possible influences.[66]

The entitlement approach tackles the problem of food supply from the demand side in contrast to neo-Malthusian argumentation about 'too little food for too many people'.[67] People acquire food by different means. Peasants produce food for subsistence on their own land and may sell surplus in production. In contrast, workers use part of their salary to acquire food. The price for each good is set by demand and supply in the market place – regulated by or liberated from interventionist measures of the state. Command over food is at the heart of Amartya Sen's entitlement theory. Sen calls the struggle to establish command over food the "acquirement problem".[68] According to Sen, neo-Malthusian pessimism has been disproved by an overall increase of food output per head.[69] There are problems with the entitlement approach, which tends to be ahistorical, and underestimates the historical development of societal structures leading to vulnerability or social resilience.[70] Nevertheless, it points to a critique of environmental

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[64] Pearce, D. W. and R. K. Turner, *Economics of Natural Resources and the Environment* (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1990).
[65] Sen, Amartya Kumar, "Food, Economics and Entitlements," *The Political Economy of Hunger: Selected Essays*, eds. Jean Drèze, Amartya Kumar Sen and Athar Hussain (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995).
[66] Sen, Amartya Kumar, "Ingredients of Famine Analysis: Availability and Entitlements," *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 96.3 (1981), 434.
[67] Malthus, T. Robert, *First Essay on the Principle of Population* (London: Oxford University Press, 1798).
[68] Sen, "Food, Economics and Entitlements", 51.
[69] Sen, "Food, Economics and Entitlements".
[70] Devereux, Stephen, *Theories of Famine* (New York; London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993).

scarcity as an absolute concept and hence potentially shifts debates about the explanations of conflict over environmental resources.

As in the case of the famine literature, environmental degradation and scarcity of resources may not be the critical underlying factors that contribute to the emergence of conflict compared to other factors which affect the distribution of, and access to natural resources, such as the power of capital and the nature of property rights, the interests and activities of local and multinational corporations, the flow of aid money, the type of regional and local power structures. Homer-Dixon and Blitt do accept that these institutional factors are of great importance. They argue that "if market failure, social friction, and capital availability prevent a society from supplying the amount of ingenuity that it needs to adapt to environmental scarcity, then five social effects are likely: constrained productivity, constrained economic productivity, migration, social segmentation, and disruption of legitimate institutions".[71] But this statement leaves itself open to an interpretation that people fail to adapt to environmental change, particularly in Africa. Although the authors claim that environmental scarcity is not the only factor to cause migration, social segmentation, and disruption of legitimate institutions, important political and economic factors, such as high national debt and economic structural adjustment programmes in Africa are not mentioned. In other cases, environmental processes, such as deforestation or environmental degradation, have been misinterpreted. For example, the interpretation of Guinée's landscape being 'half empty' with forests was not founded in historical data.[72] Instead, Fairhead and Leach's research suggests that a landscape 'half full' of forests exists.[73] They argue that farmers' land-use practices have enriched and increased Guinée's forest cover. To summarise, ideas such as environmental

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[71] Homer-Dixon and Blitt, eds., *Ecoviolence, Links among Environment, Population, and Security*, 9.
[72] Fairhead, James and Melissa Leach, "Rethinking the Forest-Savanna Mosaic: Colonial Science & its Relics in West Africa," *The Lie of the Land: Challenging Received Wisdom on the African Environment*, eds. Melissa Leach and Robin Mearns (London: The International African Institute, James Currey, Heinemann, 1996) 105.
[73] Fairhead and Leach, "Rethinking the Forest-Savanna Mosaic: Colonial Science & its Relics in West Africa", 105.

scarcity and population pressures require critical examination and should be analysed in a framework that includes political and economic factors, which include consideration of distribution.[74]

1.3. SOCIAL RESILIENCE AND VULNERABILITY

1.3.1. Introduction

In the following, the notion of social resilience and vulnerability will be discussed, as they are central to the question whether scarcity or abundance of resources are causes of conflict in Somalia. These theoretical concepts guided my empirical research and were helpful for the analysis of the following case studies discussed in chapter IV, V & VI. Moreover, the literature relating scarcity to conflict does not deal in sufficient detail with the two concepts. This relatively new body of literature hardly acknowledges the fact that people in poor countries developed sophisticated mechanisms to cope with environmental stress. In many African states, these mechanisms have been disrupted by civil unrest making the population vulnerable to environmental disasters.

1.3.2. The concept of social resilience

In environmental sciences, the term 'social resilience' is used in the context of risk assessment, and it is distinct from the meaning in ecology.[75] Social resilience is used to describe to the extent to which a community or group of people does cope with and adapt to external stress and environmental change. External stress means forced adaptation to the changing physical environment and the disturbance of individuals' or groups' livelihoods. Accordingly, the impact of natural disasters and environmental scarcity depends on social resilience. In other words, social resilience determines the level of social vulnerability. In this context, does social resilience reduce the risk of adverse

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[74] Le Billon has developed a political ecological framework for the analysis of resource-related armed conflict. See Le Billon, Philippe, "The Political Ecology of War: Natural Resources and Armed Conflicts," *Political Geography* 20 (2001).

[75] Resilience in ecology is used to measure the capability of an ecosystem to cope with external stress and environmental change, and to the ability to recover after an external shock.

impacts of extreme weather events? Does social resilience strengthen the society's capacity to distribute risk equally at the receiving end? Social and ecological resilience can be linked when people and their economic activities are dependent on natural resources of an ecosystem. If the ecosystem were not resilient to external stress or environmental change then this would affect the depending communities and their economic well-being.

Adger and O'Riordan identify three main proxy indicators for social resilience: Economic indicators, institutions, and demographic factors.[76] First, economic growth, income distribution, and variability of income sources influence social resilience. Economies that are dependant on single resources, such as minerals or natural products, are directly affected by changes in world market prices and cannot buffer financial losses through diversification of market products. If the economy relies on renewable resources, extreme weather events, such as floods or droughts, can increase the risk of high economic loss and as a consequence, decrease economic resilience. Second, the resiliency of institutions depends on different factors. Trust in the legitimacy of institutions plays a major role. If people are forced to adapt to a changing environment that jeopardises their livelihoods, institutions gain credibility by serving the people's needs to cope with change. This requires political emphasis on environmental risk management, response measures and adaptation strategies. Third, demographic factors indicate the level of social resilience. Migration can be a sign of stability and resilience; however, it depends on the type of population movements.[77] Migration can be caused by political instability, economic factors, such as high unemployment rates, and need not necessarily correlate with environmental change. Even conservation projects that aim to increase ecological resilience through conserving biodiversity can lead to displacement of indigenous

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[76] Adger, W. Neil and Timothy O'Riordan, "Population, Adaptation and Resilience," *Environmental Science for Environmental Management*, ed. Timothy O'Riordan (Harlow: Prentice Hall, Pearson Education Limited, 1999).
[77] Adger and O'Riordan, "Population, Adaptation and Resilience".

people.[78] Defining 'push' and 'pull' factors can give an indication about the motives of migrants. According to Adger and O'Riordan, migration can reduce the risk of resource dependency at the household level, and therefore, increase resilience. On the other hand, external stress and migration can indicate the breakdown of social resilience.[79]

1.3.3. The concept of social vulnerability

The concept of social vulnerability is essential in the context of violent conflict in southern Somalia, as it determines to what extent and why people are able to cope with external shocks. The assessment of vulnerability became important in defining the scale of risks, such as natural hazards, and man-made disasters. The factor of vulnerability indicates why people in specific geographical regions are more or less able to cope with these risks. A people-centred or anthropological approach is needed to identify the underlying social factors that increase social vulnerability. The term 'social vulnerability' emphasises the importance of focusing not only on measurable natural indicators, such as droughts, coast lines, geomorphic, and geographical factors but also does take social, political and economic indicators into account, such as poverty, property rights, entitlements, and access to decision-making processes.

In order to gain a better understanding of the term social vulnerability, it is useful to look at different definitions offered in the literature. It is worth considering the late Latin word *vulnerabilis* that was used to describe a soldier lying wounded on the battlefield, and therefore at a higher risk for further attacks.[80] This meaning implies that a vulnerable group or region must already have been weakened and is therefore sensitive to external stress. Three main elements are essential for the term vulnerability: The first element contains the present-day state of the individual or the group, the second is the extent of

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[78] Chatty, Dawn, *Mobile Pastoralists: Development Planning and Social Change in Oman* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996).
[79] Adger and O'Riordan, "Population, Adaptation and Resilience".
[80] Kelly, Mick and Neil Adger, *Assessing Vulnerability to Climate Change and Facilitating Adaptation* (Norwich: Centre for Social and Economic Research on the Global Environment, University of East Anglia, Norwich, and University College London, 1999).

external stress, and the third element refers to the ability to cope and adapt to external stress.

Along these lines, Blaikie and his colleagues suggest considering social, political and economic factors, taking the emphasis away from purely physical factors as determinants of vulnerability.[81] Some people have greater access to capital or the decision-making process in government institutions in order to mitigate the negative impacts of disasters. Social factors such as poverty can increase vulnerability but cannot be considered as a pre-requisite.[82]

In a similar way, economic and social entitlements, endowments and access to resources must be considered in the assessment of social vulnerability. In this respect, it is revealing to consider people's ability to gain and to control access to valuable resources. In a clan-based society such as Somalia, which is subsistence-oriented, social support networks are crucial for the survival of the individual. This society that depends mainly on natural resources in a subsistence economy was bound together by mutual interest based on reciprocity. The notion of reciprocity is an important component of Somali community, as they are confronted with the harsh living conditions of an semi-arid country.[83] In Somalia, these redistribution mechanisms play an important part within the clan structure. Any member of the same clan can claim support – either moral or material – from his or her kinship group. This form of 'moral economy' is based on mutual trust, egalitarian principles and tradition, all inherent to Somali society. Political scientists and anthropologists have relabelled these networks of reciprocity and social support as 'social capital'.

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[81] Blaikie, Piers, Terry Cannon, Ian Davis and Ben Wisner, eds., *At Risk: Natural Hazards, People's Vulnerability, and Disasters* (London: Routledge, 1994).
[82] Poor people as well as rich people might live in areas which are prone to natural disasters, but the poor do not have the choice to move into safer areas. Rich people may live at the top of steep valleys for the 'nice view'.
[83] Drysdale, *Stoics without Pillows: A Way Forward for the Somalilands.*

According to Coleman, social capital consists of three components: obligations and expectations, information channels and social norms.[84] It is apparent that the concept 'social capital' combines concepts deriving from sociology and economics. Sociologists would interpret society as a network of norms, values, expectations and obligations and their interplay. On the contrary, economists interpret society consisting of individuals who act according to the rational actor model in which humans maximise utility for selfish interest. The second component of Coleman's definition of social capital, information, can be linked to the economic concept of transaction costs influencing the level of social capital. However, the borrowing of certain elements from two distinct disciplines also has its pitfalls. Fine criticises the concept of social capital, as it neglects negative aspects of society.[85] Is it possible to explain the phenomena of criminal behaviour with the concept of social capital in a holistic fashion? Criminal potential, social disorders, or disabilities should be included in the account that constitutes social capital.

With reference to my research, social capital becomes relevant in accessing resources. The emphasis is on social networks that provide access to a group's resources. The outcome of social capital are economic benefits earned through participation in social networks.[86] Social capital becomes therefore a means of social connections to access resources. In this respect, the analysis of a group's social capital can help to illuminate its vulnerability to external shocks, in the case of Lower Shabelle region, coercive settlement, clan occupation, or natural disasters.

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[84] Coleman, J.S., "Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital," *American Journal of Sociology* 94.Supplement Organizations and Institutions: Sociological and Economic Approaches to the Analysis of Social Structure (1988).
[85] Fine, Ben, "Social capital?," *Development and Change* 30.1 (1999).
[86] Winter, I., *Towards a Theorised Understanding of Family Life and Social Capital*, 2000, Working Paper 21, Australian Institute of Family Studies, Available: http://www.aifs.org.au/institute/pubs/WP21.html, 12 May 2002.

1.4. ECONOMIC AGENDAS IN SOUTHERN SOMALIA

1.4.1. Going beyond environmental causes of conflict

Explanations of resource wealth or resource scarcity are incomplete without a detailed analysis of the political economy of war, particularly in Somalia. An exaggeration of the environmental causes of conflict understates the importance of power-relations, class stratification and distribution of strategic resources among political elites and clan leaders. The focus on different patterns of production can help to gain a better understanding of why the conflict in the South is different from the one in the North of the country. In addition, the struggle for land involves not only access to valuable resources but also territorial control to achieve political influence. I will argue that violence in Somalia has become a means to access markets, to pursue trade, or to participate in political decision-making processes. However, my research methodology will also attempt to explore how environmental factors can be introduced into the discussion of conflict.

Before examining some further general arguments about the nature of recent violent civil conflict in Africa, the Somali context should be briefly discussed (see also chapter II). The fall of Siyad Barre's regime in January 1991 did not bring about an alternative national government. The country sunk into a two-year long period dominated by roving banditry. In the years that followed, clan affiliation gained importance for individuals to be spared from violence.

In a similar way, clans became the subject of social and economic exclusion and this undermined the legitimacy of an effort to create a broad-based government. The legitimacy of a government can be measured by its acceptability and support among its people. It is embedded in the culture of the society mirroring social norms and values. In Somalia, participation in political decision-making processes is entrenched in egalitarian principles. When people feel excluded from political participation they might take up armed struggle against the ruling regime when other peaceful means of negotiation break

down. As happened in Somalia, when individuals excluded from participation resorted to violent conflict, the regime monopolising power resorted to misuse of political institutions and its monopoly of physical power, such as the army and the police. In Somalia, a culture of social or clan exclusion prompted the farming communities in Bay and Bakol to take up an armed struggle. Social exclusion severely affects individuals who do not belong to a powerful clan. Coastal inhabitants, especially Bantu farmers, were the most vulnerable to exploitation and violence, because they were not affiliated with dominant clan lineages that would have guarantied protection.[87]

Certainly, it would be misleading to describe the situation in Somalia as anarchic. Clan affiliation became a necessity for obtaining protection and support. Violence became meaningful where the moral economy broke down and clan-based forms of conflict prevention, such as *xeer* or customary rule, became inoperable. Barre's regime was replaced by a violent, patriarchal system wherein political elites competed for political representation and economic resources enforced by clan patronage and coercion.

Since the overthrow of the Siyad Barre regime in 1991 there has been no significant movement that would have represented the majority of the Somali people in establishing a functioning government. Rather, self-serving elites have established clan-based patronage networks resulting in a struggle over strategic resources. The resilience of the Somali economy without a regulating state is astonishing but it can be explained in the context of arguments discussed in chapter seven. Much of the trade and production is concentrated in a few powerful hands and leaders use military means to control arable land suited for export crops or the livestock trade to serve the international markets. It is supported by large inputs from remittances and international aid.

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[87] United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report, Somalia 1998* (Nairobi: United Nations Development Programme Somalia Country Office, 1998).

The evidence from Somalia suggests that economic interests are significant in the perpetuation of the civil war and some recent authors underline this point.[88] Keen emphasises that war may well be the continuation of economics by other means.[89] Small but influential groups thus come to have an economic interest in prolonged conflict. This viewpoint affirms that it can be misleading to associate war with complete collapse or breakdown of an economy – although it may certainly skew the development of an economy. However, two further points arise in respect of such analyses. Firstly, are the initial causes of violent conflict necessarily the same as the factors which perpetuate it? And secondly, to what extent are more conventional explanations of conflict in Africa, such as ethnicity, religion and economic inequality of relevance in this case? If economic agendas are key to the continuation of civil conflicts, then to what extent do religious and ethnic hatreds or grievances caused by economic inequality matter? A rebellion against a government might well be triggered by socio-economic problems but these may not be the main cause of its prolongation. The remainder of this section examines some general literature on these issues, with further reference to the Somali case.

In a recent wide-ranging article on conflicts in Africa, Collier distinguishes between what he calls 'greed' and 'grievance' as factors which are more likely to be linked to conflict. He argues that a grievance-led rebellion is based on different narratives from a conflict sustained by greed.[90] He defines grievance as based on ethnic and religious hatred, economic inequality, lack of political rights or economic incompetence on the part of governments.[91] Greed-related narratives by contrast relate to the wants and aspirations

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[88] Berdal, Mats R., David Malone and International Peace Academy, *Greed & Grievance: Economic Agendas in Civil Wars* (Boulder, London, Ottawa: Lynne Rienner Publishers, International Development Research Centre, 2000).
[89] Keen, David, "Incentives and Disincentives for Violence," *Greed & grievance: economic agendas in civil wars*, eds. Mats R. Berdal, David Malone and International Peace Academy (Boulder, London, Ottawa: Lynne Rienner Publishers, International Development Research Centre, 2000) 27.
[90] Collier, Paul, "Doing Well out of War: An Economic Perspective," *Greed & grievance: economic agendas in civil wars*, eds. Mats R. Berdal, David Malone and International Peace Academy (Boulder, London, Ottawa: Lynne Rienner Publishers, International Development Research Centre, 2000).
[91] Collier, "Doing Well out of War: An Economic Perspective", 96.

of political groups, militias and individual leaders. These can be satisfied by capturing or looting valuable goods, and in this context, violence becomes functional. An attribute of resource capture is the liquidity of the extracted resource as members of a rebel organisation have to be paid and weapons need to be purchased. However, a protection tax in kind, for example as a proportion of the production instead of cash, can be applied where the production of primary goods comes from households who are short of cash.[92]

Collier identifies three predictive variables that link with narratives of greed-related civil conflict. The first is the share of primary commodity exports in gross domestic product (GDP). The second factor is the proportion in the population of young men between 15 and 24, which affects the feasibility of rebellion. The third variable is the average number of years of formal education. Primary export goods can be more easily taxed than manufactured goods as the production of primary goods does not require a competitive environment involving high transaction costs. Therefore, the margin of profit between world prices and local prices are relatively high. In addition, trade routes are often long and vulnerable, thus exposing primary commodities to taxation during their transportation. Both governments and rebels can engage in predatory taxation. In addition, a weak state without control over its territory encourages arbitrage. For example, in Somalia, Kenyan cigarettes are imported illegally, then exported and sold on black markets back in Kenya. That trade routes are crucial for taxation explains the continuous struggle for the two most important ports in the South of Somalia, Mogadishu and Kismayo. In regard to the second influencing factor, young men, one has to take into account other opportunities available to them to earn an income. If there are more attractive and secure prospects for earning money, their willingness to join a rebellion will decrease. This fact links with the third variable, education, as he suggests that a better educational endowment generates more alternative opportunities.

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[92] This can be observed in Somalia in regard to the *qaat* trade, a narcotic that is chewed, where traders have to give up a certain portion of their load when crossing clan borders – a tax which has led to an increase in trading by small aircraft.

According to Collier the importance of economic agendas or 'greed' overrides that of religious, or ethnic 'grievance' as the major factor behind recent civil wars in Africa. He suggests in fact that there is little evidence that grievance contributes directly to civil war.[93] Collier's analysis provides an insight as to why civil conflict continues over several years and he takes the emphasis away from religious and ethnic causes of conflict. His work is important because, as in the case of those espousing environmental explanations, it does attempt to generalise about a widespread phenomenon. His general views have something in common with other recent analysts of specific cases, using very different methodologies, such as Keen in Sudan, and his argument is useful in examining the longevity of violent conflict, especially in southern Somalia. In this context, Fairhead's discussion of what are sometimes seen as environmental resistance movements in Africa might also be relevant. He offers the hypothesis that conflicts often concern "struggles over the means to exploit resources" such as controlling labour forces, capital, and access to international markets rather than the protection of the environment *per se*.[94] He points to the example of the Ogoni in Nigeria in their fight against international oil companies. There are clearly elements in this type of struggle which might be characterised as environmental resistance movements but such struggles could equally be considered as a 'struggle over the means to exploit resources'.

However, there are limitations to Collier's approach. The choice of predicting variables determines the outcome of his inquiry. With regard to his study, one could make different assumptions, for example that poor levels of educational provisions contribute more to grievances than to greed. This can be seen in Sierra Leone, where severe dissatisfaction about the poor educational services that are provided by the state is widespread among young people. More specifically, Collier does not adequately address the way in which socio-economic inequalities remain as underlying factors in longer term

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[93] Collier, "Doing Well out of War: An Economic Perspective".
[94] Fairhead, *Conflicts over Natural Resources: Complex Emergencies, Environment, and a Critique of 'Greenwar' in Africa.*

conflicts. Here Richard's approach to Sierra Leone is more convincing. The rebels have certainly been dependent on commanding particular economic resources such as diamonds. However, they have been able to recruit because of deep-seated poverty in the interior, and socio-economic inequalities between the small urban and political elite and the mass of rural people. This tension is exacerbated by the exposure of youths to global media.[95] A statistical model which concentrates on a relatively small number of identifiable and apparently quantifiable variables provides useful pointers for research. But it is unlikely to explain the links between the origins and longer term causes of conflict, the transitions in the nature of civil conflicts, nor the complexities of particular cases.

In Somalia there is a further problem. Statistical models rely on the accuracy and reliability of their sources, and the data contained in various reports on the country is inconsistent across space and time. Recent data on, for example, age-breakdowns of the population, infant mortality, and the quantity of remittances which come into the country is very uneven and it is unlikely that satisfactory data, which could be fed into models such as those that Collier uses, can be found. Research projects designed by different agencies in Somalia employ different methodologies. Furthermore, during the past few years, the main ports in the South, Kismayo and Mogadishu, remained closed and as a result, the difficulty of measuring the export of primary goods would undermine the validity of a statistical study. While my study will make an attempt to collate and evaluate the key statistical material that is available, inevitably I will be dependent on more qualitative assessments (see chapter III).

1.4.2. The logic of violence in civil wars

Much of the literature discussing recent civil conflict in Africa focuses more sharply on the incentives for war than the incentives for peace or rebuilding government institutions. Yet it is important to ask this inverse question. One approach which may be worth testing

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[95] Richards, *Fighting for the Rain Forest: War, Youth & Resources in Sierra Leone*, 105.

is Olson's highly conceptual, and rather general rational choice model of why bandits seek to become kings. This certainly accepts that there is a functional or instrumental use of violence, but it also points to the value, for leaders, of constraints upon direct application of violence.

Olson uses an analogy based on criminal activity to explain the difference between "narrow" and "encompassing" interests in a society.[96] He distinguishes between a stationary bandit as opposed to a roving bandit. While a roving bandit might initially secure wealth, Olson argues that he is better off in becoming a stationary bandit provided he is in control of his territory. As the monopolising criminal, he can benefit from imposing a protection tax. Olson writes, "a bandit leader [...] has an incentive to settle down, to wear a crown, and to become a public good-providing autocrat".[97] Providing public goods, means an increase in social cooperation and production, and can lead to more wealth within his realm of influence. In his book *Power and Prosperity* he argues that there are powerful economic incentives to produce and to benefit from the gains of social cooperation through trade and specialisation.[98] On the contrary, when a society is close to a Hobbesian anarchy, everyone tries to become an autocrat in the absence of a social contract and there is a general economic loss.

At a certain level Olson may be stating the obvious – although he does not test it – that peacetime economies tend to be more productive than those in periods of conflict. But in a territory with a weak state and without effective institutions, such as Somalia, there clearly exist economic incentives to maintain conflict by diminishing prospects of peace. In weak states, income inequality can lead to the privatisation of violence, undermining shared interests in a state monopoly of coercion and authority. Although

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[96] According to Olson, the individual criminal has a narrow interest or stake in the economic well-being of a society because his personal loss through theft is minor. His theft and, therefore the loss to society, has to be shared by every individual. This is why a criminal will ignore the damage he does to society. Olson, Mancur, *Power and Prosperity: Outgrowing Communist and Capitalist Dictatorships* (New York: Basic Books, 2000).

[97] Olson, *Power and Prosperity: Outgrowing Communist and Capitalist Dictatorships*, 10.

[98] Olson, *Power and Prosperity: Outgrowing Communist and Capitalist Dictatorships*.

outside observers, and even critics within such societies, might see the economic costs, or share a view about economic incompetence, and use this as an explanation as to why developing countries are poor; nevertheless, key actors within such political systems do not always have a similar perspective.[99] The latter may themselves make some progress towards becoming "stationary bandits" in the sense that clan leaders attempt to monopolise the economy of their regions. There is often a strong affiliation between local political and businesses elites. But in the shorter term, at least, this has not resulted in a national view. It may well be asked of Olson, that if bandits see their interests in becoming part of national, stable governments, why do they become bandits in the first place.

Although the emerging political elite involved in the Transitional National Government[100] (TNG) in Somalia might now be seeing themselves as having a more "encompassing" interest in stability, and in enhancing the economy as a whole this is not yet decisively the case. And Olson's model fails to explain why civil disorder lasted for so long, and why even now there are continuous clashes among sub-clans and pockets of insecurity in parts of the country. Clashes reoccurred not only in urban centres but also in rural areas where one would assume that faction leaders or members of the TNG have established themselves as "stationary bandits" and provide security according to Olson's theory.

Olson's ideas are also insufficiently developed to account for the operation of systems of justice even during period of intense conflict. Somali customary law was enforced through *diya*-paying as compensation for harmful acts throughout the war. Islamic courts cooperated with militias in rural areas to create a safer environment. Often,

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[99] Olson, Mancur, "Distinguished Lecture on Economics in Government: Big Bills Left on the Sidewalk: Why Some Nations are Rich, and Others Poor," *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 10.2 (1996).
[100] The 'bottom up' Arta peace conference in August 2000 resulted in the formation of the Transitional National Government with the hope of the re-establishment of a Somali state (see chapter VIII).

traditional leaders or clan elders negotiated agreements and compensation payments to resolve conflict between rival clan factions.

Again, this type of rational actor analysis, based on an utility maximising individual, misses historical narratives and appears simplified and static in its approach by reducing the complexity of the causes and context of conflict. Belief systems, norms and ideologies play a major role in shaping motives to rebel against the government. In addition, young people often join a militia or rebel organisation through coercion rather than their free will.[101] As a result, greed and grievance related motives are intertwined and it seems that a combination of both lead to violent conflict. The types of models deployed by Olson do offer ways of testing cases of peacemaking, but they also oversimplify the analysis of the resolution of conflict, because often there are multiple layers of authority involved, local, regional, and international, as well as religious organisations and special interests such as non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

We need to return to analyses which seek to explain the interests involved in perpetuating conflict. In order to understand the dynamics of war in Somalia, the logic of violence, as a struggle to capture valuable resources, is central. According to Keen, civil war violence does not serve to win a particular war but fulfils specific functions that make it profitable for certain groups to prolong the *status quo*. In his words, war is economics by other means. He argues that the perpetuation of violent conflict has five main functions.[102] The first function of violence is to provide financial support for militias or soldiers in order to sustain their military strength. For example, it is believed that in Bay region in southern Somalia, a region that is rich in cereal production, violence was deliberately used to distort the local economy and to bring prices down. Cereals were than bought by the controlling faction leader and sold at a higher price in the markets of Mogadishu. Controlling a territory is key to the second function of violent conflict,

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[101] Abdullah, "Bush Path to Destruction: The Origin and Character of the Revolutionary United Front / Sierra Leone".
[102] Keen, "Incentives and Disincentives for Violence", 29.

monopolising control over lootable resources and trade. This is well illustrated by the division of the former capital city, Mogadishu, into various districts that are controlled either by the Transitional National Government or faction leaders. Strategic areas, such as the International Airport and the port are controlled by different faction leaders. The third function is to demand a protection tax by faction leaders from those who hope to be spared from violence. In today's Somalia, political influence equals military strength, and armed forced must be equipped and trained. The fourth function is the exploitation of labour. Examples have been reported in the riverine areas in southern Somalia where coerced labour has been used to maintain cash crop production. In this respect, violence is often used to capture land that became inhabited through forced migration. The last and fifth function of conflict is the extraction of profits from international aid. At one level, this can involve the control of food and other famine relief which of necessity comes into the country through central points which can be controlled partly by militias. It can also involve more direct appropriation. When ten international staff were kidnapped at the end of March 2001 in Mogadishu, ransom was allegedly paid. Officially, the UN denies paying ransom for its kidnapped staff in order to avoid imitation. In another incident, a former local United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) staff member was abducted and held for 28 days. Consequently, the UN blocked all humanitarian activities in the region, which he thought was counter-productive. In the end, his family paid some ransom.[103] The withdrawal of the UN and other humanitarian agencies from insecure areas is common practise in order to make local authorities responsible for the safety of international and local staff.

1.5. CONCLUDING REMARKS

My initial research topic was to examine the relationship between environmental scarcity and conflict in Africa, using southern Somalia as a case study. However, during the

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[103] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 6 November 2002.

course of both general and specific reading, it became clear that this was too limiting as an analytical framework. This review of the literature on environmental security suggests that there is not strong comparative evidence for the argument that prolonged civil conflicts in Africa are caused by environmental scarcity. This view does not preclude the idea that moments of intense scarcity, such as acute droughts, can help to trigger civil conflicts.

However, the result of this reading has been to shift my thesis towards a more general explanation and discussion of civil conflict in Somalia. Here, the global context as well as an understanding of local clan and political systems as they emerged after independence will all come into play. But comparative reading, together with my preliminary research on the country, tends to support the assertion that the longevity of this and similar conflicts has not least been caused by a struggle to establish control over valuable resources. It is this aspect on which my research will focus most closely. Given the widely-made argument that 'greed' for sectional control over such resources is one of the main contributory factors to recent prolonged civil wars in Africa, I want to explore further the hypothesis that conflict is more likely to arise where there is abundance of resources, rather than scarcity. De Soysa argues that specifically mineral wealth correlates with armed conflict.[104] There are also, however, examples that contrast this view. For example in Botswana, where the existence of diamonds contributed to economic development, prosperity was facilitated by an effective government.

The agricultural regions in the Shabelle valley are considered one of the richest parts of the country. This is why I have chosen to conduct field work in the southern part of Somalia. Aside from livestock, the north and Puntland provided only a small proportion of the GDP before the collapse of the government. While I will remain sensitive to the potential role of environmental degradation, scarcity and environmental stress, this

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[104] De Soysa, Indra, "The Resource Curse: Are Civil Wars Driven by Rapacity or Paucity?" *Greed & Grievance: Economic Agendas in Civil Wars*, eds. Mats R. Berdal and David Malone (Boulder, London, Ottawa: Lynne Rienner Publishers, International Development Research Centre, 2000).

review of literature has attempted to show the complexity of factors involved in sustained conflict.

My synthesis of the research in Lower Shabelle concludes that absolute abundance of resources cannot be considered as a main cause of conflict. In parts of my thesis I explore the idea that it is unjust distribution of access to precious resources, such as land, water and agricultural production, such as bananas and charcoal which is causing grievances on the local level. Homer-Dixon defines this phenomenon as structural scarcity.[105] In addition, urban-based elites instrumentally use of the political unit clan to perpetuate power and military strength. I will refer to these issues in the conclusion of the thesis.

Whereas the literature on the political economy of war tends to focus on the perpetuation of conflict, it would be revealing to focus on the transition from war to peace and vice versa. This is why I will relate my research to the current Somalia National Reconciliation Process and its implications for peace in Somalia. In sum, the thesis argues that there is a need for more research into the links between resources and violent conflict. The primary focus with regard to Somalia is into social forces behind the origin and the continuation of violence, but I will also raise questions about the conditions that might contribute to peace.

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[105] Homer-Dixon, *Environment, Scarcity, and Violence*.

CHAPTER TWO

Explaining the Somali crisis

2.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims at scrutinising four theses most prominent in the literature for the collapse of the Somali state in January 1991. I first discuss the view that Somalia's state-collapse must be placed in a historical context taking into consideration the cultural heritage of Somali society and the legacy of the colonial past. The clan conflict thesis examines approaches which stress the significance of kinship and clan politics in the maintenance of sustained conflict. Thirdly, the modernisation thesis suggests that the social transformation of a largely pastoral society into a capitalist society changed modes of production. This facilitated the emergence of a powerful and influential elite who engaged in a violent competition over valuable resources. Lastly, the resource thesis which explains conflict in Somalia with the struggle for valuable resources. The literature in this section employs a similar argument as my own empirical findings suggest.

My approach draws on all these studies, I reject a single-cause analysis of the Somali calamity. The purpose here is to set the necessary historical and conceptual framework in which the proposed inquiry will take place. A clear understanding about the failure of the Somali state can shed light on the difficulties and constraints for contemporary Somalia, international aid agencies and NGOs to achieve political stability and economic development.

The second part of this section deals with the events after 1991 which opened a new chapter in Somalia's history with a decade of civil strife and continuous clashes in particular in the South of the country. A number of national reconciliation conferences were held, hosted by the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) and neighbouring states. It became apparent that these expensive conferences largely served the participants' interests. Signatories failed to implement peace accords, because they lacked the necessary political authority to implement them, a problem that continues today (see chapter VIII).

2.2. HISTORICAL THESIS

2.2.1. Culture and Identity

Today's young Somalis might not have knowledge of the institutions that preceded colonial rule and Siyad Barre's military regime more than hundred years ago. A sense of this past makes it easier to understand today's politics and to assess future options for peace. When artificial borders were imposed on the Somalis in the late nineteenth century, Somalia did not have a indigenous centralised form of government within a defined geographical area. There is no tradition of centralised statehood and no recognised hierarchy of offices. The chiefdoms and kingdoms found in some other parts in Africa have no equivalent in Somali society. Their culture was egalitarian in nature in emphasising the individual role in public assemblies – though women in general did not participate in political decision-making – and was deeply rooted in Islam and its institutions. However, religious leaders were excluded from authority in clan politics.[106]

The traditional form of Somali governance has been described by Lewis as a "pastoral democracy".[107] In this respect, Lewis refers in his writings to *ad hoc* deliberative forums, called *shirs*, where all men were entitled to participate. *Shirs* are lengthy deliberative and consensus-building processes in which all present have the right to express themselves. In theory, each male person is entitled to participate in these meetings but in practise these are dominated mainly by wealthy Somalis, those who are skilled in rhetoric or poetry, or warriors who participate in the consultations.[108] This makes traditional Somali peace-building relatively inclusive and open, and in this sense, one can talk about a "pastoral democracy". However, normative anthropological writings understate realities of social division in pre-colonial Somalia, a theme to which I will return in the following section

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[106] Lewis, Ioan M., *A Pastoral Democracy: A Study of Pastoralism and Politics among the Northern Somali of the Horn of Africa* (New York, N.Y: Africana Pub. Co. for the International African Institute, 1961) 225.
[107] Lewis, *A Pastoral Democracy: A Study of Pastoralism and Politics among the Northern Somali of the Horn of Africa.*
[108] Laitin, David D. and Said S. Samatar, *Somalia: Nation in Search of a State*, Westview profiles. Nations of contemporary Africa (Boulder, London: Westview, Gower, 1987).

(see 2.3). Samatar explains the Somali egalitarian society with "the absence of institutionalised state structures, and given the wide distribution of the means of livelihood, no household or lineage group could muster enough resources to dominate or exploit others".[109]

Kinship was an important factor shaping identity and influencing all levels of Somali life, politics and economics. According to Samatar, kinship consists of two essential components: "These were the rule of the *xeer*, and the ties that were either a product of genealogy (*tol*) or marriage (*xidid*)".[110] *Xeer*, a democratically constructed social contract, is the form of social contract reflecting values and norms of Somali society forming a moral order. It grants individuals and communities rights and demands duties respectively. In addition, Somali social identity is linked to forms of livelihoods. Somalis are highly mobile, a large proportion of the population is described as nomadic, without strong geographical allegiances. In the Horn of Africa, Somalia has the largest proportion of pastoralists in the population.[111] Pastoralists have in the past relied on traditional livestock production and extended grazing areas, which form their economic base. In this respect, identity is not bound to territorial allegiances and members of political groups see themselves affiliated by kinship rather than territory. Lewis noted that "since the term 'tribe' is generally taken to connote a stable political and jural group whose members are united in respect of common attachment to territory as such, it is inappropriate to speak of Somali 'tribes'".[112] Instead, as modes of production differ in the South compared to the North of the country, Somalis who have agro-pastoral or agricultural means of incomes in particular in the riverine areas, show affiliations with geographic areas.

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[109] Samatar, Abdi Ismail, "Destruction of State and Society in Somalia: Beyond the Tribal Convention," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 30.4 (1992), 630.
[110] Samatar, "Leadership and Ethnicity in the Making of African State Models: Botswana versus Somalia", 694.
[111] Markakis, John, *Resource Conflict in the Horn of Africa* (London: SAGE, 1998).
[112] Lewis, *A Pastoral Democracy: A Study of Pastoralism and Politics among the Northern Somali of the Horn of Africa*, 2.

In understanding social life in Somalia, it is important to consider Somali traditional institutions, processes and key actors. Somali institutions had their origins in precolonial times but are still recognisable and referred to by the same terms although they may have been affected by colonial rule. In this thesis, the term 'traditional' does not refer to invented traditions introduced by Europeans in Africa.[113] As mentioned above, Somalis were bound to *xeer* as a form of social contract in accord with customary law. Similar to Western ideas, such as Rousseau's *contrat sociale*, this social contract established rules, norms and obligations in the absence of a formal state and its institutions. Warfare was ideally bounded and controlled by social rules and conventions. Women, children, men of God, honoured guests, and community leaders enjoyed immunity from attack – *biri-ma-geydo* which translates into 'spared from the spear'.[114] The function of *xeer* was to establish *ad hoc* councils or *shirs*, in order to settle disputes and resolve conflict guided by *xeer* principles. *Xeer* and Islamic social norms were likely to overcome the potential divisiveness of genealogy. It specifically aimed at uniting groups of kinsmen. A further element of strengthening social bounds was inter-marriage. The lack of institutionalised authority created fluid political groupings in particular in northern Somalia and was one factor that prohibited the formation of a stable political coalition in the young Somali Republic after independence in July 1960. Even the agricultural South favoured an segmentary political culture.

The basic social unit controlling resources and managing common property was the household. The main economic base and the main means of income, livestock, was owned by the household. Political or spiritual leaders can influence decision-making, but they do not control access to grazing areas or water resources neither possess livestock. The critical environment and harsh weather conditions made it essential for households to

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[113] Ranger, Terence, "The Invention of Tradition in Colonial Africa," *The Invention of Tradition*, eds. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).
[114] ICRC, *Spared from the Spear: Traditional Somali Behaviour in Warfare* (Geneva: International Committee of the Red Cross, 1997), 2.

cooperate and help each other to maintain wells or water catchments. The development of this communal aspect of the Somali social fabric was correlated with ecological perturbations. Within the household, patriarchy is the form of governing common resources.

Adult men who participated in public deliberations and played a key role in conflict resolution were clan elders. The term 'elders' is quite a fluid category, meaning prominent males representing the lineage groups involved in public consultations or *shirs*. A modern Western concept of leadership, based on hierarchical position and formalised professional expertise, can hardly be applied to Somali society. Their position and influence was not inherited but based on merit in effective negotiation, trusted representation or wisdom. In contemporary Somalia, they could belong to the business class or were involved in political or religious affairs. Their essential role was the crafting of accords and the resolution of localised disputes between clans based on genealogical differences.

The concept of clan is deeply rooted in lineage. Each Somali belonging to a particular clan traces back the male line to a common ancestor. In the colonial and post-colonial era, clan elders were co-opted or replaced by the ruling regime, which offered them paid positions. During the prolonged civil war, marginalisation and co-optation of clan elders led to a power vacuum that was replaced by youthful free-lance militias and powerful faction leaders or 'warlords'. Nevertheless, clan elders continued to perform conflict mediation, arbitration, and punitive sanctions on a local level in particular in the northern parts of the country that were spared from heavy fighting and looting. However, the traditional role of elders was not the resolution or prevention of political or religious conflicts on the national or even the international level.

To ascribe the collapse of the Somali state to the failure of leadership, a theme to which I will return later, would understate the complex societal structures, such as the lack of hierarchical and formalised authority. The independence of a Somali nomad and

the understanding that each Somali is the master of his own actions and subject to no authority except that of God continued at least till recent decades.[115] This social feature contradicts a Western concept of democratic representation in a centralised government. The problem of leadership must be placed in a historical context and is an intrinsic component of the political culture where a common oral language with differing dialects from region to region informed a common Somali identity.

While clan lineage segmentation divided Somalis, a common language, culture, modes of production and Islam unified and promoted a pan-Somali awareness among most Somalis influencing future policies. Islam and trade shaped Somalia's historic attachment to the Arab world and in 1974 Siyad Barre's regime joined the League of Arab States. Islam became an integral part of Somali identity, most Somalis, who are sunnis, converted to Islam by the fifteenth century. In addition, Somali poetry was an essential unifying part of cultural life placing it in the same category as Islam. The highly developed art of poetry could be used as a strong social force both in initiating warfare and promoting peace. Somali poetry is deeply embedded in pastoral life and functions as a rhetorical device to convey normative messages, as in the following saying: *Nabad iyo colaadi isku caano dhiqis maaha* – milk tastes differently in times of peace and conflict.[116]

2.2.2. Establishment of colonial rule

In the Horn of Africa, the most problematic fragmentation of an ethnic group was inflicted on the Somali. In 1900, the Somali population was divided into five colonial minilands, British Somaliland, French Somaliland, Italian Somaliland, Ethiopian Somaliland and the Northern Frontier District of British Kenya. The dispute over

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[115] Burton, Richard Francis, *First footsteps in East Africa; or, An Exploration of Harar* (London: 1856). Lewis, *A Pastoral Democracy: A Study of Pastoralism and Politics among the Northern Somali of the Horn of Africa.*

[116] Bradbury, Mark, *The Somali Conflict: Prospects for Peace: An Exploratory Report for OXFAM (UK and Ireland)*, Oxfam research paper; No 9 (Oxford: Oxfam UK and Ireland, 1994).

frontiers was not primarily about land or grazing areas. It was mainly about people and land, as former Prime Minister Abdirashied A. Sharmarke pointed out:

> Our misfortunes do not stem from the unproductiveness of the soil, nor from a lack of mineral wealth. These limitations on our material well-being were accepted and compensated for by our forefathers from whom we inherited, among other things, a spiritual and cultural prosperity of inestimable value: the teaching of Islam on the one hand side and lyric poetry on the other [...] No! Our misfortune is that our neighbouring countries, with whom, like the rest of Africa, we seek to promote constructive and harmonious relations, are not our neighbours. Our neighbours are our Somali kinsmen whose citizenship has been falsified by indiscriminate boundary 'arrangements'. They have to move across artificial frontiers to their pasture lands. They occupy the same terrain and pursue the same pastoral economy as ourselves. We speak the same language. We share the same creed, the same culture and the same traditions. How *can* we regard our brothers as foreigners?[117]

This account summarises the thesis that the Somali crisis is deeply rooted in the historical past emphasising the imposition of colonial boundaries and state some of whose institutions where alien to the Somalis.

The British established settlements and ports on the north-eastern coast of Somalia with the opening of the Suez Canal in November 1869. Subsequently, British troops needed fresh food supplies for their service to India.[118] While the British were interested in the coast at the Gulf of Aden, the South of Somalia was strategically less important for the British, offering Italy a foothold in East Africa. Italy had been preoccupied with its own unification until 1870, and did not participate in early imperial expansion, but Italy then extended a protectorate on the Banadir coast and the north-eastern sultanates of Hobyo and Majerten. In contrast, Ethiopian colonialism was confined to the Ogaden and interior regions. European colonial rulers were mainly interested in the coastal regions and riverine areas of the country, while Ethiopia was largely interested in grazing areas in the interior of the country, leading to disputes and continuous political problems between Somalis and Ethiopians that started before the British and the Italian colonisation.[119]

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[117] Cited in: Drysdale, John, *The Somali Dispute* (London: Pall Mall Press, 1964), 8.
[118] Samatar, A., "The State, Agrarian Change and Crisis of Hegemony in Somalia," *Review of African Political Economy* 15.43 (1988), 31.
[119] Laitin and Samatar, *Somalia: Nation in Search of a State.*

Controlling the Ogaden meant also a strategic advantage putting Ethiopian forces in the vicinity of Somali major cities.[120]

Colonialism and the division of the Somali people gave rise to Somali nationalism. The first pan-Somali struggle against colonial rule, called the Dervish[121] under the leadership of Sayyid Muhammad 'Abdille Hassan (called 'mad mullah' by the British), targeted Ethiopian rule in the Ogaden and not the European colonial masters at the coast.[122] This was due to the fact that most of the Somali lived in the interior of the country, leaving them less traumatised by European invasion whereas Ethiopians expanded to the grazing lands of Somalia.

In the period of consolidation of colonial rule between 1920 and 1940, only Italy was interested in economic development of its colony. The fertile inter-riverine areas were well suited for plantations of Italian settlers run on a commercial basis. In contrast, the British were mainly interested in the Somali coast as a supplier for meat to the British garrison in Aden.

2.2.3. Struggle for independence and rise of Siyad Barre's regime

After the defeat of Italy in the Second World War, southern Somalia came under British colonial rule for almost a decade. In this period, Somalis drawing on the memory of the Dervish movement began to question colonial rule. The unification of the two Somalilands, improving education, an emerging urban elite, public humiliation by the colonial masters, and the lifting of a ban on public debate all constituted to expanding national political consciousness.[123] Out of this climate, a modern political party was founded in 1943 calling for independence and political unity that led the two Somalilands into independence, the Somali Youth Club, later in 1946 and better known as the Somali

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[120] Markakis, John, *National and Class Conflict in the Horn of Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 169.
[121] In 1900 the followers of Sayyid Muhammad 'Abdille Hassan named themselves the 'Dervish', from Arabic meaning one who is dedicated to God and community service. Laitin and Samatar, *Somalia: Nation in Search of a State.*
[122] Laitin and Samatar, *Somalia: Nation in Search of a State.*
[123] Laitin and Samatar, *Somalia: Nation in Search of a State.*

Youth League.[124] Their second political objective of political unity resulted in the Somali-Ethiopian war in 1977-78. One of the founders of the Somali Youth Club agreed that "one aspect of the political ambition was the idea of an African Union. The Somali Youth League made a proposal to Haile Selassie to have a federal [Somali] state under the condition that all five parts come together under this federal state. But Haile Selassie refused; this was in 1946-47."[125] This nationalistic campaign was certainly not a pan-Somali endeavour. The military campaign had its strongest backers in the northern and central regions, mainly from the Darod clan who had kin living abroad in Ethiopia. However, when the North was united with the South on 1 July 1960, southerners predominated in the civil service of the young Republic – a domination that nurtured tensions and antagonism among civil servants.

Independence was considered by many Somalis a bitter fruit, as they inherited the legacy of the colonial states dividing Somali society in different regions. Although the former British Somaliland and Italian Somalia were united in July 1960, many Somalis remained in northern Kenya, French Djibouti and the Haud and Ogaden in Ethiopia comprising some 600,000 square kilometres and almost the same size of the young Republic.[126] In addition, Somalis inherited two different bureaucratic systems. The civil service in the former Italian colony favoured individualistic and sectarian features of Somali society collaborating with Somalis on a more individual basis. There were no clear criteria for hiring, promotion and dismissal of civil servants. In contrast, the British colonial masters in the North introduced a highly bureaucratic structure including staff assessments, merit-based hiring, discipline and clear guidelines for length of contract.[127] In the years following independence, the two systems were merged. In the new administrative system, salaries of civil servants were relatively low without

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[124] Interview in Qorioley, southern Somalia, on 3 September 2002.
[125] Interview in Qorioley, southern Somalia, on 3 September 2002.
[126] Markakis, *National and Class Conflict in the Horn of Africa*, 169.
[127] Samatar, "Leadership and Ethnicity in the Making of African State Models: Botswana versus Somalia", 699.

acknowledging the meritorious basis of the salary scale. This opened the door to corruption and nepotism promoting the particularistic predisposition of the Somali elite. The new Republic had to overcome several technical problems, such as different colonial capitals, official languages (the English later became generally accepted), two territories and different legal systems.[128] In contrast, Somalis shared a common national consciousness to overcome these institutional hurdles.[129]

After the first general elections, Somalis in Somalia splintered into numerous political parties organised along clan lines to form a parliamentary democracy. In subsequent elections, consolidation of political parties did not take place. Parties were not formed to represent nationalist and collective values; they followed the pattern of individualistic and clan-based logic. Samatar argues that Somalia experienced a struggle between the forces of parochialism and individualism over those of nationalism and community:

> The parochialism of clanist tendency and the insecurity of politicians reinforces each other and created a formidable but destructive alliance. This alliance, despite its seductiveness, did not ride rough shod over the nationalist and communitarian tendency of the independence movement as indicated by the unification of the North and the South.[130]

In what was to be the last parliamentary election in 1969, there were 62 political parties with 1,002 candidates competing for 123 seats.[131] After the election, the main opposition group joined the governing party to form a 'single'-party state. After the elections, there was rising concern within the last civilian government, with Egal as Prime Minister and Sharmarke as President, about corrupt practices in the civil service. The government was aware of the volatile situation of the electoral process. The elite represented in Parliament often disagreed with the cabinet, the President and the Prime Minister. This made Egal

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[128] Samatar, Ahmed Ismail, *Socialist Somalia: Rhetoric and Reality* (London: Institute for African Alternatives, Zed Books, 1988) 61.
[129] Laitin and Samatar, *Somalia: Nation in Search of a State*, 73.
[130] Samatar, "Leadership and Ethnicity in the Making of African State Models: Botswana versus Somalia", 698.
[131] Samatar, "Destruction of State and Society in Somalia: Beyond the Tribal Convention", 634.

promise Members of Parliament material rewards for their loyalty. The failure of the governing elite to unite in favour of nationalistic or communitarian ideals enabled the growth of corrupt practices within the civil service.

Seven months after the elections, Major General Mohamed Siyad Barre staged a successful and bloodless *coup d'état* that overthrew the postcolonial democracy. The 25-man Supreme Revolutionary Council took power in Mogadishu comprising most major clans and regions.[132] Many welcomed the change in government and were supportive of a regime that represented a cross-section of the Somali society. Also, they hoped to end the corrupt practices of its predecessor and a revival of communitarian ideas. The socialist regime gained popular support in its first years of rule from 1970-76. The adoption of a Somali script, the introduction of mass literacy, the establishment of higher education institutions, the articulation of self-reliance as a national development strategy, the engagement in slum clearance and urban planning through self-help schemes, all added to the positive credentials of the new government.[133] In political terms, Barre headed the Supreme Revolutionary Council under the banner of 'scientific socialism'. However, the idea of 'scientific socialism' was never clearly articulated by Barre himself. It was vaguely defined as a commitment to equality, economic independence and economic growth. The artefact scientific socialism mainly served the purpose to access foreign aid in a bipolar world order.

More specifically, Barre's regime sought to eliminate the clan divisions embedded in Somali society: 'tribalism', it was thought, ought to be abolished through outlawing clan distinctions, ethnic differences and patron-client relationships in order to foster social equality.[134] Barre's regime tried to overcome national differences by using the existing pan-Somali ideology for his own means in order to supersede clan identity. Although

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[132] Markakis, *National and Class Conflict in the Horn of Africa*, 217.
[133] Laitin and Samatar, *Somalia: Nation in Search of a State*.
[134] Besteman, Catherine Lowe and Lee V. Cassanelli, eds., *Unraveling Somalia: Race, Violence, and the Legacy of Slavery* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999) 12.

Barre tried to overcome the clan patron-client system he used those systems to favour loyal clan families and distributed valuable resources accordingly. The problem of corruption and the somehow arbitrary management of the civil service undermined the legitimacy of the military regime.

The economic and political situation changed for the worse. From 1978, after the defeat in the Ogaden war against Ethiopia in 1977-78, it seemed that Siyad Barre tried to stay in power at whatever cost. This included the political shift from the Soviet Union seeking support from Western countries. On 18 October 1977, German special anti-terror forces liberated the hijacked Lufthansa aircraft 'Landshut' held at Mogadishu. The aircraft had been hijacked by Arab terrorists on 13 October 1977 in order to obtain German Red Army Faction (RAF) members' release. After long-lasting negotiations, the Somali government allowed the German Federal Border Guard (GSG-9) to storm the plane. Three hijackers died in the raid, while 86 hostages were freed.[135] The decision to allow Western forces to storm an aircraft that was hijacked by Palestinians marked a change in Somali foreign policy. This operation 'fire magic' (*Feuerzauber*) considerably changed the outlook of the Somali government seeking support from Western states. Germany then assisted the Somali government with their civilian police force.

A feature that weakened Barre's position was the somewhat arbitrary way in which the civil service was managed. The ruling Military Council was the only institution in a position to hire, dismiss or promote public servants. There was a clear lack of professionalism in the public sector, checks and balances did not exist. Important strategic decisions were left with the President without following considerable professional advice. Senior civil servants were hand-picked by the President and enjoyed his protection. Such impunity from a legal order promoted a rent-seeking behaviour among civil servants. They considered their offices as personal realm to be milked for personal gain. Those people opposed the regime openly were forced to flee across the

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[135] BBC, "History of Airliner Hijackings," *BBC News* 3 October 2001.

Ethiopian border. Here, Ethiopia gave refuge to Somalis who had divergent political views. Those who stayed showing an independent and critical mind were subject to abuse, kidnapping and killing.

After the Ogaden war failed, Barre faced strong opposition from Majerten officers. In April 1978, they attempted to stage a *coup d'état* under the leadership of Colonel Mohamed Sheikh Osman 'Cirro'.[136] The coup failed and Colonel Abdullahi Yusuf who escaped execution together with Majerten civilians founded in October 1981 the Somali Salvation Democratic Front with its headquarters in Ethiopia.[137] In parallel in April 1981, Isaq clan members in exile founded the Somali National Movement becoming the second important clan-based opposition group.[138] However, the opposition failed to unite in order to overthrow an increasingly brutal regime. Sectarian politics superseded the communitarian spirit of the early 1970s. The regime oppressed any political grouping that threatened it. When opposition troops based in Ethiopia stormed the cities of Hargeysa and Burao in 1988, the regime unleashed its brutal military machinery. Siyad Barre ordered to bombard both cities, disregard of the civilian population. Alone in May 1988, it is estimated that 50,000 Isaq clan members, largely civilians, lost their lives in the attacks.[139] An estimated 400,000 thousand escaped the hell across the Ethiopian border, and both cities were left in ruins.[140] This incident marked the beginning of the disintegration of the Somali state. A regime using its own military against its own people loses its legitimacy and it explains the concern suspicion of Somalis towards the establishment of a strong and centralised state. As a political consequence, the northern part of the country, the former British Somaliland, subsequently declared independence

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[136] Samatar, Said S., *Somalia: A Nation in Turmoil* (London: Minority Rights Group, 1991), 18.
[137] Krech, Hans, *Der Bürgerkrieg in Somalia (1988-1996): Ein Handbuch*, Bewaffnete Konflikte nach dem Ende des Ost-West-Konfliktes, ed. Hans Krech (Berlin: Verlag Dr. Köster, 1996) 228.
[138] Laitin and Samatar, *Somalia: Nation in Search of a State*, 93.
[139] Sahnoun, Mohamed, *Somalia: The Missed Opportunities* (Washington, D.C: U.S. Institute of Peace Press, 1994) 6.
[140] Gilkes, Patrick, "Somalia: Conflicts within and against the Military Regime," *Review of African Political Economy* 16.44 (1989), 55.

from the Republic of Somalia in May 1991. As an international response, aid money was frozen. This further weakened the economy already depending on aid and generated further unrest and potential for insurrections, as people started to vote with the gun. Potential traditional mechanisms for conflict management were already weakened through co-optation and marginalisation of clan elders by the Barre regime.

In the same way as the former civilian government, Barre failed to use the commonalities of Somali society to achieve a stable political environment. The preceding section suggests that the legacies of the somehow arbitrary erection of colonial borders, the establishment of a government where sectarian and individualistic features dominated based on a segmentary and fluid social system that had no traditional rooting are prime historical causes of the Somali conflict. The gap between traditional and modern institutions was filled with self-serving elites creating patronage networks. Clans were used as political platforms by aspiring urban elites. When Barre's regime was overthrown, a competition for valuable natural, economic and political resources resulted in even more violence, societal repression, and economic deprivation. This constitutes a central theme for the proposed inquiry.

2.3. CLAN CONFLICT THESIS

The young independent Somali Republic experienced less than a decade of a parliamentary democracy before it was succeeded by Siyad Barre's coalition. One key explanation of this process, and the subsequent Somali state collapse, is that the clan structure was incompatible with a representative government. Patron-client systems led to the domination of a coalition of clans exploiting those clan-families who were excluded from the government.

Two forms of concerted action can be identified in this very fluid segmentary society of individual pastoralists as Lewis described it in the 1960s. These are clans and *diya*-paying groups. In anthropological terms, Somali society is constituted of six main clan

families: the Darod, Dir, Hawiye, Isaq, Digil and Mirifle. The first four clans are mainly pastoral nomads whereas the last two settled in southern Somalia and were largely engaged in agro-pastoral activities.[141] Each clan family was divided into different levels of sub-clans and sub-sub-clans that have common genealogical roots. Some clans or sub-clans were headed by a Sultan who plays a nominal role. Sultans or *akils* usually relied on support from the council of elders where all men could participate. The clan sub-divisions can be broken down into primary lineage groups which traces descent through the male line, *diya*-paying groups and households (see chart 2.1).

Members of a *diya*-paying group are obliged to pay or entitled to receive blood compensation, *diya*, for harmful acts committed by a member(s) of the group. According to Lewis, "the members of a *diya*-paying group are pledged to support each other in collective political and jural responsibility, and in particular, in the payment and receipt of compensation in respect of actions committed by or against their group".[142] This basic political unit is a small lineage group or a coalition of minimal lineages varying from a few hundred to a few thousand in strength. Members of these groups have strong kinship ties, stretching over four to six generations from a common ancestor. Several *diya*-paying groups constitute a clan. Clans often have common trading centres and shared economic interests. They share same grazing areas, and in the dry season households collectively maintain wells.[143] The belonging to a specific clan defines a birth right to access social benefits according to a clan's wealth. Clan allegiance functions as a social safety net.

It is misleading to believe that traditional institutions had been severely altered by colonial powers marking the beginning of the Somali calamity. Rather, injustices inherent

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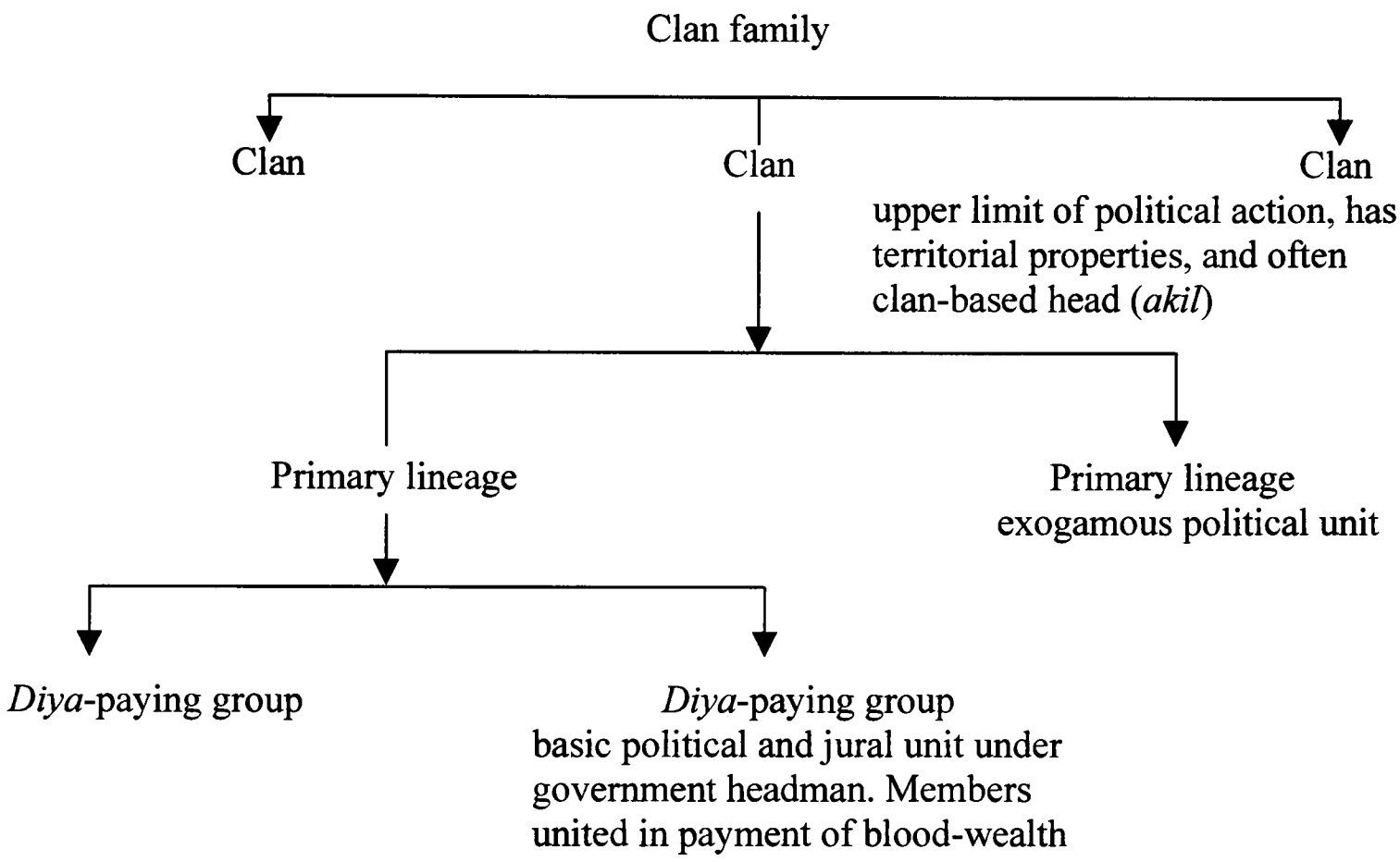
[141] Lewis, *A Pastoral Democracy: A Study of Pastoralism and Politics among the Northern Somali of the Horn of Africa.*

[142] Lewis, *A Pastoral Democracy: A Study of Pastoralism and Politics among the Northern Somali of the Horn of Africa*, 6.

[143] Lewis, Ioan M., *The Uncentralised Legacy* (Nairobi: United Nations Development Office for Somalia, 1995).

in the tribal system had led to conflict in the pre-colonial times. To ascribe peace and harmony to pre-colonial Somalia is an illusion.

Chart 2.1. Morphology and function of the segmentary lineage system of Somali society



Source: After Lewis, Ioan M. (1961): *A Pastoral Democracy: A Study of Pastoralism and Politics among the Northern Somali of the Horn of Africa*. New York, N.Y: Africana Pub. Co. for the International African Institute:
p. 5.

For example, the *diya*-system discriminated against small and weak genealogical groups. The rationale for compensation payments, such as *diya*, is the avoidance of revenge killings. However, if no agreement about the amount of blood money can be reached, vengeance remains an option within the rules about compensation. This system of pre-colonial Somali society produced injustices between conflicting clans, which differed in size and wealth as Schlee explains: "if vengeance or acceptance of bloodwealth are equally legitimate options, it is always the party which is in a position to exert vengeance that can shape the outcome of the negotiations by an effective latent threat of

violence".[144] In this respect, the struggle for a centralised or federal government can be considered as a constant source of conflict between clans. The selection of presidents and ministers, the formation of political coalitions, the distribution of public offices, the participation in the political decision-making process and the allocation of scarce resources (political, economic and natural) – these all depend on lineage lines and kinship of the most powerful clans.

As different clans vary in their genealogical stages, it has been argued that it makes it very difficult to establish a representative form of government.[145] In fact, this thesis about competition needs some explanation. In the early eighties, Barre came under threat and increasingly perceiving this, narrowed his base of support. Among the six main clans in Somalia, Barre's regime consisted of a shifting alliance of mainly three clan families, who came to be known as the MOD, that were loyal to his rule: Siyad's own clan, the Marehan; his mother's clan, the Ogaden; and the clan of his son-in-law, the Dulbahante. However, Siyad Barre's clan politics was more sophisticated. For some posts, he also employed members of the Isaq and Majerten clans. These clan members were not drawn from primary lineage lines and were hardly involved in Isaq and Majerten clan politics.[146] He preferred to appoint people who were less important in their clan families.

During this rule and until today, clan lineage lines became prime means to pursue business, to exercise power and to seek protection from oppression and exploitation. Following the collapse of Barre's coalition, patrilineal descent (*tol*) and contractual alliance (*xeer*) became the organising force for military alliances proving the existence of "transcontinuities".[147] Later, conflicts occurred within opposing clans and sub-clans as

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[144] Schlee, Günther, ed., *Imagined Differences: Hatred and the Construction of Identity* (Hamburg: LIT Verlag, 2002) 259.
[145] Laitin and Samatar, *Somalia: Nation in Search of a State.*
[146] Laitin and Samatar, *Somalia: Nation in Search of a State.*
[147] Schlee defines transcontinuities as "elements of a social structure, or a political system, which survive revolutionary alterations and always re-emerge, albeit perhaps under a different name and guise, whatever social ruptures may occur". Schlee, ed., *Imagined Differences: Hatred and the Construction of Identity*, 266.

well as between clan families. One can hardly think of a significant domestic or foreign political development without an underlying clan consideration.[148] In sum, this argument emphasises that tensions inherent to the model of segmentary lineage structure are considered as an explanation of conflict making the Somali society resistant to state-building efforts. Indeed it seemed almost inevitable that violent conflict would arise after Barre's regime was overthrown by members of those clans who were excluded from the political decision-making process.

By no means all scholars have accepted this scenario. Some argue that a focus on differences in clan lineage lines neglects the commonalities of Somali society, such as religion, language, and modes of production that can lead to stability. Samatar notes "that it is the instrumentalist accentuation of such differences and the failure to nurture shared cultural and social commonalities that is the essence of the Somali calamity".[149] Their emphasis is on the moral economy and traditional forms of conflict resolution, such as *xeer*, guided by Islamic principles. Others suggest that "political entrepreneurs" are responsible for the continuation of violent conflict using lineage solidarity as a means towards military ends.[150] It is therefore misleading to explain the recent Somali conflict with primordial clan antagonisms.[151] Samatar compares Somalia with Botswana, a country, which has similar climatic characteristics, the same dependencies on livestock, and linguistic homogeneity, but clan divisions played a minuscule role shaping Botswana's political trajectory. He says that "the innocuous nature of 'tribal' division in Botswana reaffirmed an anti-clanist and *nonessentialist* argument [...] regarding the

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[148] Lewis, Ioan M., *A Modern History of Somalia: Nation and State in the Horn of Africa* (Boulder, London: Westview, 1988).
[149] Samatar, Abdi Ismail, *Somalia: Investing in Shared Institutions & Values* (Berlin: Heinrich Böll Foundation, Horn of Africa, 1999), 182.
[150] Compagnon, Daniel, "Somali Armed Movements," *African guerrillas*, ed. Christopher S. Clapham (Oxford, Bloomington: James Currey, Indiana University Press, 1998).
[151] Turton argues along these lines with reference to the genocidal conflict between Hutu and Tutsi in Rwanda. Turton, David, "War and Ethnicity: Global Connections and Local Violence in North East Africa and Former Yugoslavia," *Oxford Development Studies* 25.1 (1997), 79.

causes of the Somali calamity".[152] Nevertheless he argues, Botswana's chiefs retained much of their authority during colonial rule and formed the basis of a legitimate dominant class from largely chiefly families. However, this view needs some qualification as Christian missionaries influenced the formation of this new elite. Samatar argues that "a key force that distinguishes successful from failed states is the social chemistry of the dominant class and the discipline of its leadership".[153] In this respect, one can argue that Barre's leadership prohibited a formation of a legitimate dominant class that transcended clan divisions providing public goods, such as political stability, economic prosperity, educational and health provisions, etc., in a professional manner.

In summary, clan loyalty cannot be considered as the main driving force behind state-collapse. Too many other intervening variables are missing. As Besteman notes, social stratification was also based on geographical, racial and economic dimensions.

> Over the past several generations a social order emerged in Somalia that was rooted in principles other than just a simple segmentary lineage organization – a social order stratified on the basis of racialized status, regional identities, and control of valuable resources and markets.[154]

Furthermore, a clan-based analysis reduces the emergence and perpetuation of violence to irrational forms of social behaviour. This can result in a de-politicised dimension of civil strife in Somalia suggesting that conflict is inevitable. Analysts could arrive at the conclusion that civil violence in Somalia is endemic due to a clan composition that prohibits a peaceful and competitive social environment.

Nevertheless, the collapse of the Somali state and subsequent fragmentation of the society into non-state administrations organised and controlled along clan lineage lines may suggest that the awareness of clan allegiance remained relatively intact and little affected by the imposed transformation of society during the military regime. Instead, and

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[152] Samatar, Abdi Ismail, *An African miracle: State and Class Leadership and Colonial Legacy in Botswana Development* (Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann, 1999) xiv.
[153] Samatar, *An African miracle: State and Class Leadership and Colonial Legacy in Botswana Development*, 6.
[154] Besteman and Cassanelli, eds., *Unraveling Somalia: Race, Violence, and the Legacy of Slavery*, 12.

my research demonstrates this, clan divisions have been politicised. Although clan identity is very fluid and cannot serve to create clan-based mini-states, clans must be recognised as a basis of a complex social system rooted in lineage structures. They must be understood as institutions, which are embedded in moral forms of decision-making and conflict resolution, constituting an essential part of Somali political life. The clan has become a means for Somali strongmen to mobilise, secure and perpetuate power. I argue that clan as an identity has been politicised by faction leaders in the struggle for power.

2.4. MODERNISATION THESIS

Thirdly, the modernisation process in Somalia played a significant role in shaping violence in Somalia. In contrast to the preceding section, scholars like Samatar argue that explanations of the Somali calamity must "begin by tracing the nature of the changes that had taken place in the social rather than in the genealogical order of this society".[155] The country went through a dramatic change from a precapitalist to a capitalist society whereby modes of production changed. The main social unit in traditional Somalia was the household. Livestock was owned by the household and access to grazing areas and water resources was not restricted. In the precolonial period, livestock was not produced for international markets and pastoralists were producers, consumers and traders at the same time. Precolonial pastoralism mainly supported producers whereas capitalist pastoralism had to support two additional social groups, traders and members of the state-elite who did not participate in the production process. According to Samatar, the commoditisation of the pastoral and peasant economy transformed the social composition of Somali society. He argues that the decomposition of the precapitalist communitarian Somali tradition began with the establishment of colonial rule in 1869.[156] The consequences were twofold: First, the colonial state created bureaucratic structures that

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[155] Samatar, "Destruction of State and Society in Somalia: Beyond the Tribal Convention", 631.
[156] Samatar, *Socialist Somalia: Rhetoric and Reality.*

enabled a small Somali elite to overcome spatial constrains in discussing Somali-wide issues. Second, this new configuration of political authority undermined the traditional form of decision-making processes, such as the kinship-based moral order, and generated patrimonial structures and nepotism.[157] Moreover, colonial rule imposed a new legal order under which each Somali had to belong to a group that was headed by a chief. In turn, this new system created incentives for authoritarian bureaucratic structures. As a consequence, social power became a function of clan identity and international relations.

A good example is Ali Mahdi who was proclaimed interim President after the ousting of Siyad Barre on the basis of his Italian diplomatic support and ability to arm his militia, not for his popular support of a particular community or clan.[158] The leadership of Somali politics lacked the attachment to either livestock and/or agriculture and had little experience in institutionalised party politics. Their failure to support the traditional sectors of the economy and to develop news forms of productive sectors made the state the most profitable source of funds.[159] I argue that throughout the past century social organisation did not change much, what changed were the social forces behind the process of state formation that hijacked clan identity for vested interests.

Also during the colonial period, increased demand from the Arab peninsula fostered the production of livestock on a commercial basis. This was due to commercial exploitation of oil in the Arab countries. When talking to elders, it was mentioned that even domestic consumption of meat increased steadily.[160] In the past, those families who could afford buying meat had to share an animal for private consumption. The government showed interest in the commercialisation of the livestock sector seeking additional tax revenue. The commercialisation of the livestock sector triggered the

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[157] Samatar, *Somalia: Investing in Shared Institutions & Values*, 183.
[158] Reno, William, *Somalia and Survival in the Shadow of the Global Economy* (Oxford: Queen Elizabeth House, 2003), 28.
[159] Samatar, "Destruction of State and Society in Somalia: Beyond the Tribal Convention", 633.
[160] Omar, Mohamed Osman, "Probleme der ländlichen Entwicklung in der Demokratischen Republik Somalia 1974-1980," Doktorarbeit, Freie Universität Berlin, 1982.

emergence of a new business class, traders and retailers. Gross returns of the retail value to producers fall below 50 per cent.[161] Pastoralists mainly spend their income on consumer goods, which they purchased from retailers in the urban centres. They deposited surplus from livestock sale in shops which were owned by their kinsmen. This favoured urban retailers who could invest capital from livestock producers. In turn, Somali traders invested in the borehole drilling and pumps. Increase in demand and the creation of new water holes by an emerging business elite led to overgrazing and desertification.

After independence, the government continued a policy of constructing boreholes. Another factor favouring overstocking was an improvement of veterinary services. This further upset a fragile balance between livestock and grazing areas. Unfortunately, reliable statistical data does not exist to the best of the author's knowledge, which could document the pressure on grazing areas at this time. The introduction of commercial animal food into the livestock sector led to a decrease of common grazing areas as traders started fencing fertile grounds. A last factor contributing to the deterioration of natural grazing land was a change in livestock composition reflected in a changing ratio cattle to camels. The increase in cattle compared to the number of camels meant increased pressure on grazing land as cattle are tied to wells and are therefore less wide ranging than camels, sheep or goats.

The argument that capitalist modes of production and surplus production led to the emergence of violent conflict contradicts Markakis's argument that resource scarcity embedded in the Horn's fragile environment leads to violent conflict. Given the social resilience of Somali society, the modernisation thesis suggests that greed-related motives triggered by changed modes of production lead to violent conflict. In this respect, commoditisation and the transition from one mode of production to another entailed a change in property relations and a transformation of social classes. During the dictatorial

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[161] Omar, "Probleme der ländlichen Entwicklung in der Demokratischen Republik Somalia 1974-1980" 59.

regime, a modern land law was passed, decreeing that a land title had to be acquired from the state by the person who 'owned' the land. This led to 'land grabbing' by civil servants. Many smallholders lost their entitlement to farm their land as they simply could not afford to register for land titles. Many villagers and Bantu farmers became rural labourers employed by internationally financed state farms.[162] This development already started under the colonial masters when large-scale plantations were set up in the early 1950s (see chapter IV). Also, violence was used to capture land that became inhabited through forced migration.

Somalia's ability to provide enough food for its inhabitants declined after the beginning of the seventies. The problem of access to natural resources became more acute under Barre's military regime. Somalia has a critical environment that is prone to natural disasters such as droughts and floods having a severe impact on its economy. This explains why environmental factors should be incorporated in the analysis of state-collapse. Pastoralists and smallholder farmers developed sophisticated systems to cope with the changing environmental conditions. Farmers diversified their crops and built up protections against floods in the riverine areas. Nomads' coping strategies were mobility and variation in the composition of herds in order to exploit as much vegetation as possible. Land conflicts were traditionally mediated between clans in accordance with *xeer* and *shari'a* law. Pastoral land used to be a common good and agricultural land was allocated by village elders according to customary law.

This change undermined their exceptional skills to maintain a fragile balance between humans, their animals and the natural environment. Some pastoral lands were enclosed and access to grazing areas restricted. Encouraged by demand from the Arabian Peninsula, borehole drilling became a widely adopted practice and privately constructed

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[162] Menkhaus, Kenneth and Kathryn Craven, "Land Alienation and the Imposition of State Farms in the Lower Jubba Valley," *The Struggle for Land in Southern Somalia: The War behind the War*, eds. Catherine Lowe Besteman and Lee V. Cassanelli (London, Boulder: HAAN Associates Publishing, Westview Press, 1996).

water tanks allowed herders to stay for a long period in the same area. Large irrigation schemes and increasing international demand for livestock and the opening of the market further upset this balance. As a consequence, with the increased levels of livestock and reduced mobility caused by government restrictions, over-grazing, and land degradation became apparent. Even more problematically, Somalis – once extremely resilient in the face of their harsh environment – became vulnerable.

Another contributing factor to the civil war was the availability of weapons, mainly small arms. In the 1970s with the support of the Soviet Union, Somalia had the largest standing army in Africa. Between 1976 and 1980, Somalia's arms imports accounted for 140 per cent of the country's export earnings for the same period.[163] When the civil war broke out in 1988, changing international political circumstances and misuse of foreign aid left a dangerous legacy. Somalia's geographically strategic situation in the Horn of Africa led to the highest amounts of foreign aid per capita in Africa between 1960 and 1990. By the mid-1980s, 57 per cent of Somalia's GDP derived from foreign aid.[164] Up to 50 per cent of GDP was spent on defence and security.[165] It was estimated that by the mid-eighties, the total development budget was external funded, and the recurrent budget was largely dependent on loans and grants.

After the Soviet Union withdrew from Somalia during the Ogaden war, the US did not show much interest in the stability of the country. In the absence of a hegemonic power and with massive weaponry provided by former patrons, Somalia experienced civil strife and banditry in an excessive scale in 1991 and 1992. Although the UN Security Council adopted resolution 733 on 23 January 1992 imposing an arms embargo on Somalia, the arms flow to Somalia factions continued. A report of the Panel of Experts on Somalia to investigate violations of the arms embargo found that weapons and

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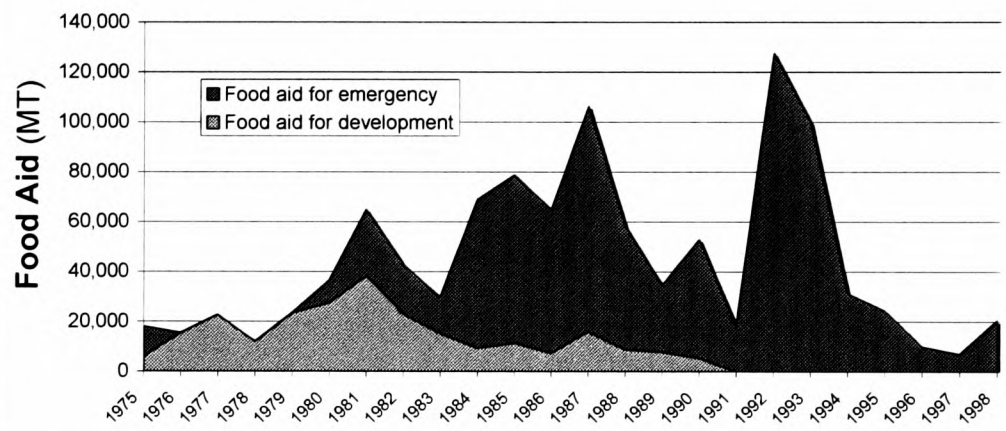
[163] Luckham, Robin and Dawit Bekele, "Foreign Powers and Militarism in the Horn of Africa: Part 1," *Review of African Political Economy* 11.30 (1984), 16.
[164] United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report, Somalia 1998*, 57.
[165] United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report, Somalia 1998*.

ammunition are supplied by several external states including Ethiopia, Eritrea, Yemen, Djibouti, Egypt and Sudan.[166]

Somalia has a long history of armed conflict over land and livestock dating back to pre-colonial times but today, the influx of small arms into Somalia is leading to increased numbers of casualties. Also, weapons are traded within the country. If a region achieves relative political stability, arms and ammunition are sold to more tense areas or stored.[167] Once small weapons were readily available, violence became a means to pursue trade, to get employment or to participate in political decision-making. Relief agencies, for example, were obliged to pay large sums for protection of their staff and the delivery of relief goods.

Figure 2.1. WFP Food Aid to Somalia 1975-1998



Source: Narbeth, S. *The targeting of emergency food distribution in Somalia vulnerability, redistribution, and beneficiary participation*. Nairobi: WFP, 2001

Compagnon notes that Somalis including civilians developed a culture of loot during the civil war. He explains that looting began long before the fall of Barre's regime and that the distinction between public and private goods vanished during his rule. Given the breakdown of the formal job market, looting became one if not the only source of income.[168] Today, the Somali state cannot rely any longer on foreign aid. This is illustrated by figures on food delivery between 1975 and 1998 (excluding food for

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[166] Hogendoorn, Ernst Jan, Abdoulaye M'Backe and Brynjulf Mugaas, *Report of the Panel of Experts on Somalia pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1425 (2002)* (New York: United Nations Security Council, 2003).
[167] Marchal, Roland, *A Survey of Mogadishu's Economy* (Nairobi: European Commission/Somali Unit, 2002).
[168] Compagnon, "Somali Armed Movements".

refugees). With the exception of 1991-93, food aid decreased steadily compared to massive foreign support in the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s (see figure 2.1).

With the introduction of structural adjustment policies in the late nineteen-eighties, aid was increasingly channelled through non-governmental organisations as the government was considered as an obstacle to development. The introduction of market oriented policies by the government coincided with the intensification of the civil war. In order to secure financial resources the government turned to other sources such as land to compensate for a decline in international aid (see chapter IV). In spite of this fact, the large influx of aid was the distortion of the local economy. Parallel economies (remittances, arbitrage trade, informal economy) gained in value and importance. International humanitarian assistance then decreased steadily during the 1990s (see figure 7.3).

The Somali case suggests that the transformation of commodity relations is fundamentally a struggle over valuable resources.[169] Certainly, the civil war further accelerated the struggle for land and valuable resources. Title deeds were replaced by the use of force and smallholders were forced to share their harvest with militias.[170] For example, it is believed that violence was deliberately used to distort the local economy and to bring prices down. Cereals were then bought by the controlling faction leader and sold at a higher price in the markets. It is said that faction leader Aideed used violence in Bay region in Southern Somalia, a region that is very rich in cereal production, as a means to reduce prices for grain in the local markets in order to sell it at a higher price in markets he controlled in Mogadishu (see 7.2.2).[171]

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[169] Samatar, Abdi Ismail, "Social Classes and Economic Restructuring in Pastoral Africa: Somali Notes," *African Studies Review* 35.1 (1992).
[170] Marchal, Roland, J.A. Mubarak, M. Del Buono and D.L. Manzolillo, *Globalization and its Impact on Somalia* (Nairobi: United Nations Development Office for Somalia, 2000).
[171] Author's fieldwork in Bay region, southern Somalia, in February 2002.

2.5. RESOURCE THESIS

Most analysts studying the Somali conflict have focused on the historical, the clan-conflict or the transformationist thesis in explaining the current political situation. Scholars paid little attention to the role of competition for resources, including land, primary commodities, infrastructure and aid money in Somalia's conflict. I regard the resource thesis useful, as it examines the social processes causing collapse of Barre's dictatorial regime, and explains why armed conflict continues until today. The struggle for valuable domestic resources including minerals and natural resources have caused armed conflict elsewhere in Africa. Le Billon argues that "with the sharp drop in foreign assistance to many governments and rebel groups resulting from the end of the Cold War, belligerents have become more dependent upon mobilising private sources of support to sustain their military and political activities".[172] Foreign assistance and patronage networks kept Barre's regime alive. Accordingly, Lyons argues that "artificial states without a strong social base of support, resources, or popular legitimacy often survived during the Cold War thanks to superpower patronage and international norms that favoured stability and sovereignty".[173]

According to Cassanelli, the Shabelle valley in Somalia already became the focus of resource competition in the 1970s.[174] He argues that five interrelated processes contributed to the intensification of the competition for resources in Somalia. First, agricultural land became more valuable compared to other forms of investment. The increasingly insecure environment in Somalia explains this development, which prevents investments in capital intensive industries. When hyperinflation occurred in 2001, sparked by the printing of counterfeit Somali shilling, it favoured those entrepreneurs

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[172] Le Billon, "The Political Ecology of War: Natural Resources and Armed Conflicts", 562.
[173] Lyons, Terrence and Ahmed I. Samatar, *Somalia: State Collapse, Multilateral Intervention, and Strategies for Political Reconstruction*, Brookings occasional papers (Washington, D.C: Brookings Institution, 1995).
[174] Besteman, Catherine Lowe and Lee V. Cassanelli, eds., *The Struggle for Land in Southern Somalia: The War Behind the War* (London, Boulder: HAAN Associates Publishing, Westview Press, 1996).

who invested in durable assets that are price elastic. Second, the increasing flow of remittances, cash earnings from the livestock sector, military financial support during the Cold War and access to foreign aid pipelines created a new wealthy class in Somalia. Some of those individuals who accumulated large amounts of foreign currency during the UNOSOM era are now capable of controlling seaports and airports with their own militia independent from any state authority, such as the Transitional National Government. Today, the business class has moved into more 'legitimate' long-term businesses, such as telecommunications, import/export trade, air travel and money transfer companies. Their loyalty to political or military groups is significantly weaker than in the early 1990s (see chapter VII). Third, the concentration of state authority in the hands of a small group of people led other parts of the society to seek alternative sources of income and wealth. Fourth, the militarisation of Somalia resulting from bipolar competition over ideological hegemony created an environment in which the transfer of resources by force became more common. Fifth, the urbanisation of the former Somali capital increased demand for food supply from proximate regions. Further, the urban population growth attracted more international agencies and hence, resulted in an increase of foreign aid. All these five processes converge in the analysis of the following case studies (see chapter IV, V & VI)

So far, to the best of my knowledge, there have been hardly any comparative studies of environmentally related conflict which include the Horn of Africa and, in particular, Somalia. However, three key books have been written on the country recently: Markakis on *Resource Conflict in the Horn of Africa*, Besteman and Cassanelli on *The Struggle for Land in Southern Somalia: The War Behind the War* and Lind and Sturman on *Scarcity and Surfeit: the Ecology of Africa's Conflicts*.[175] Markakis argues that environmental degradation leads to resource scarcity. In his view, the state plays a key role in the process of conflict generation.

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[175] Lind, Jeremy and Kathryn Sturman, eds., *Scarcity and surfeit: The Ecology of Africa's Conflicts* (Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, 2002). Besteman and Cassanelli, eds., *The Struggle for Land in Southern Somalia: The War Behind the War*. Markakis, *Resource Conflict in the Horn of Africa*.

> The state's involvement in the production and distribution of material and social resources in many developing countries does not only determine the pattern of wealth distribution and access to facilities. It also helps to determine the pattern of resource use which, in turn, affects the environment.[176]

For example in Somalia, irrigation schemes introduced for the production of cash crops for export purposes limited the available grazing areas for pastoral communities. Capital was solely invested in production of bananas and sugarcane in densely populated areas where cheap labour was readily available, a theme to which I return later in chapter four. The opening of the Arabian market for livestock, mainly sheep and goats, in the 1960s stimulated the state's interest in livestock marketing.[177] Consequently, the state promoted borehole drilling to satisfy the need for water resources for increasing livestock, but this practice had to be abandoned when the environmental consequences became apparent.

Besteman and Cassanelli analyse social relations, resource use and socio-economic change in the years before the breakdown of the centralised government in their writings. In keeping with Markakis, they emphasise the idea that "land tenure patterns are intricately intertwined with power relations".[178] Several sections of this edited book served as background material for my case studies in Lower Shabelle. Lind and Sturman's book contains a section which discusses the environmental and ecological dimensions of Somalia's civil war in regard to land ownership or *deegaan*.[179] The section adopts a multi-dimensional approach, and argues that "land and resources are embedded among many other inter-related factors, including conflict to control the state, engagement of third parties, including neighbouring governments, ineffectual or missing state institutions, and official policy that curried favour with minority groups through patrimonial favour but excluded most other groups".[180] The authors continue that "land

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[176] Markakis, *Resource Conflict in the Horn of Africa*, 3.
[177] Markakis, *Resource Conflict in the Horn of Africa*, 69.
[178] Besteman and Cassanelli, eds., *The Struggle for Land in Southern Somalia: The War Behind the War*, 7.
[179] Farah, Ibrahim, Abdirashid Hussein and Jeremy Lind, "Deegaan, Politics and War in Somalia," *Scarcity and Surfeit: The Ecology of Africa's Conflicts*, eds. Jeremy Lind and Kathryn Sturman (Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, 2002).
[180] Farah, Hussein and Lind, "Deegaan, Politics and War in Somalia", 25.

and natural resources are important to understand how different factions in Somalia compete and fight generally".[181] More specifically, a better understanding of *deegaan* or competing claims to living space sheds light on how contractual agreements are formed between clans. Though their research draws from the Juba valley in southern Somalia, I could see several parallels in my own research in Lower Shabelle region.

In addition, a recent publication by Brons who emphasises the role of social structures and resources rather than the state in the Somali conflict is worth noting.[182] She re-conceptualises the concept of security and sovereignty – commonly considered as state-based concepts in political science – from a societal perspective. Brons believes that the disintegration of the moral system and clan solidarity in Somalia is rooted in the following three aspects: Scarcity of resources for daily survival, a surplus of arms supplied by the former regime, and mistrust and hatred between clans, sub-clans and lineages.[183]

None of the publications employ statistical methods, Besteman and Cassanelli's book is an anthropological and historical approach explaining links between conflict and natural resources. They provide a satisfactory research method, a theme to which I return later in the following chapter. Given the non-existence of a central government, and therefore the poor availability, accessibility and reliability of data on Somalia for the past decade, it is not surprising that so few comparative publications contain material on the country. As statistical data for quantitative research is hardly available and reliable in Somalia, any study which did purport to compare it with better documented cases could be criticised on these grounds. In this respect, Somalia dropped out of the 1997 Human Development Report of the United Nations Development Programme because of the lack

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[181] Farah, Hussein and Lind, "Deegaan, Politics and War in Somalia", 25.
[182] Brons, Maria H., *Society, Security, Sovereignty and the State: Somalia, From Statelessness to Statelessness?* (Utrecht: International Books, 2001).
[183] Brons, *Society, Security, Sovereignty and the State: Somalia, From Statelessness to Statelessness?* 228.

of reliable data. In conducting my own research, I aim at contributing to the expanding body of literature on resource conflicts in Somalia.

2.6. FROM CALAMITY TO CATASTROPHE

2.6.1. Introduction

The various approaches demonstrate that the analysis of state-collapse, as Somalia's case shows, requires a multi-dimensional approach to finding an appropriate explanation. This means taking into consideration historical, socio-economic and political dimensions for undertaking social inquiry. The establishment of the colonial state and the installation of Barre's socialist regime weakened the traditional institutions that had previously governed Somalis in an effective way. However, this fact is not sufficient to explain the thirteen years of civil war that followed the collapse of the regime. In the course of the civil war, clan as an organisational force has become the vehicle for a radical fragmentation of the society. Today, largely in urban settings, traditional ways of mediating and resolving conflict as well as social contracts governing power-relationships and the allocation of valuable resources have in part become dysfunctional.

Forms of coercion and the barrel of the gun have subverted the older forms of governance. Kinship was used for political purposes or to mobilise military forces. Freelance militias consisting of young men were driven by opportunism rather than by political agendas. Above all, without a detailed analysis of various players in the region it is difficult to understand contemporary Somalia. The power vacuum left by the breakdown of the Barre regime and later by the UN troops was filled by several non-state administrations, none of which could reunite the Somali people providing peace and security. Most of these political leaders who fought against the former regime were trained in the military without a vision or a political agenda for a future socio-political system for Somalia. Their main objective was to overthrow the dictatorship. Many Somalis, when asked which political era they prefer, contemporary Somalia or the former

dictatorship, would probably answer with the latter. Somalia never had a nationalist movement with a leadership balancing clan interests.

2.6.2. The fall of Siyad Barre's regime and the era of international intervention – From hope to disaster

When Barre's troops fled the capital Mogadishu on 26 January 1991, Africa's longest standing military regime came to an end after 21 years. Those who overthrew Barre did not have a political agenda for the future of Somalia and as a result, the country disintegrated into clan fiefdoms. Traditional wartime codes of conduct were neglected and Somalia experienced unprecedented levels of violence, rape and coercion. Many considered the ousting of Siyad Barre as a battle between Somalia's two largest clan families, the Hawiye from south-central zones and the Darod clans from the Juba regions and the Ogaden. The inhabitants of Lower Shabelle were caught in between a battle for territorial control over the rich agricultural areas with strategic importance (see 7.2). The state of anarchy and violence sweeping through the country posed a serious challenge to neighbouring states who saw their national security interests threatened. The international community was confronted with the phenomenon of a 'failed state' and a looming humanitarian catastrophe. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) first used the expression 'failed state' in the context of Somalia.[184]

The situation worsened when a man-made famine swept through southern Somalia. De Waal argued that the famine in southern Somalia was highly selective: The people most affected by the famine were the inter-riverine communities and internally displaced persons (IDPs), a theme to which I return in chapter seven.[185] In 1992, the monthly death rate in Baidoa was 3,224, or 104 a day in August. In September, the figure increased to

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[184] See ICRC, *Somalia: ICRC Worldwide Consultation on the Rules of War* (Geneva: International Committee of the Red Cross, 1999).

[185] De Waal, Alexander, *Famine Crimes: Politics and the Disaster Relief Industry in Africa*, African issues (Oxford, Bloomington: Currey, Indiana University Press, 1997) 159.

5,979 people a month, or almost 200 a day.[186] The coupling of the 1990-91 drought with the civil war led to an estimated 240,000 to 280,000 people dying in 1991-92.[187] I agree with reports of Africa Watch that the impact of the drought was not an important factor causing the Somali humanitarian crisis.[188] One report, which was based on fieldwork gathered during two missions to southern Somalia in February 1992, reads: "The current famine that threatens Mogadishu and south-central Somalia is radically different in origin and impact. Drought has played only a minor role, and the main victims are poor townspeople, farmers, and rural labourers. Pastoralists are, at present, less affected."[189]

More importantly, harvests were plundered and disrupted, land lay idle and the export trade declined. This led to decreased domestic production in 1991, which was down by around 40 per cent.[190] Insecurity and numerous roadblocks where 'taxes' were demanded contributed to an increased demand in primary commodities. This favoured militia men who could sell goods at a higher price than pre-war on local markets. Thousands died or fled from advancing militias warring over the rich riverine and inter-riverine fertile land. This caused an estimated two million Somalis to flee their homes becoming either internally displaced or refugees abroad.[191]

Conditions for delivering humanitarian goods were becoming more and more difficult. Food convoys were targeted by militias, shipments of food attacked and warehouses looted. In a period of hunger and starvation food was used as a weapon either to feed ones militia or as exchange for fire arms. Faction leaders fought over the control of distribution routes and food inlets. International agencies were charged for the

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[186] Mukhtar, Mohamed Haji, "The Plight of the Agro-Pastoral Society of Somalia," *Review of African Political Economy* 23.70 (1996).
[187] Hansch, Lillibridge, Egeland, Teller and Toole, *Lives Lost, Lives Saved: Excess Mortality and the Impact of Health Interventions in the Somalia Emergency*, 24.
[188] Opletal, Helmut, "'Nicht der Krieg schuf das Desaster in Somalia' Ein Bericht von "Africa Watch" nennt die Ursachen für Hunger und Krieg am Horn von Afrika," *Frankfurter Rundschau* 14 May 1993.
[189] Africa Watch and Physicians for Human Rights, "Somalia: No Mercy in Mogadishu: The Human Cost of the Conflict & the Struggle for Relief," *Africa Watch and Physicians for Human Rights* 4.4 (1992), 19.
[190] Africa Watch and Physicians for Human Rights, "Somalia: No Mercy in Mogadishu: The Human Cost of the Conflict & the Struggle for Relief".
[191] Refugee Policy Group, *Hope restored? Humanitarian Aid in Somalia, 1990-1994* (Washington, D.C.: Refugee Policy Group, 1994).

'protection' of food convoys.[192] The level of looting assumed such vast dimensions that a report for the UN Security Council meeting on 25 November 1992 claimed that 70 to 80 per cent of relief food did not reach its destination. Africa Watch stated that the disruption of food deliveries – far more than the drought – was the factor causing human loss and suffering.[193] The escalating security situation caused all UN agencies to withdraw from Somalia by late 1991. By the beginning of the following year, the ICRC[194] was the only relief agency still operating in Somalia. For the first time in the organisation's history they were forced to employ armed guards.

In the light of deteriorating situation in Somalia, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 733 under Chapter VII of the charter *inter alia* imposing an arms embargo on Somalia in January 1992. This resolution was followed by resolution 751 in April establishing the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM I). This was to secure humanitarian supplies to those who needed it most. As looting of food and non-food items, intimidation of expatriate and local staff and attacks on convoys continued, it became more and more difficult to implement UNOSOM's mandate. As a response, the Security Council adopted resolution 794 on 3 December 1992 authorising "all necessary means to establish as soon as possible a secure environment for humanitarian relief operations in Somalia". The words "all necessary means" mirror the essence of Article 42 of Chapter VII of the UN Charter. Article 42 says if measures not involving armed forces prove to be inadequate, the Security Council "may take action by air, sea or land forces as may be necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security". The American

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[192] Food convoys were escorted by 'technicals', pick-up vehicles with mounted machine guns. The word 'technical' allegedly derives from the need of aid agencies to account for expenses spent for the hire of the services of armed groups who owned 'technicals'. Aid agencies accounted these costs for security as 'technical expenses'.

[193] Africa Watch, "Somalia: Beyond the Warlords: The Need for a Verdict on Human Rights Abuses," 5.2 (1993).

[194] This humanitarian crisis caused the ICRC to allocate 20 per cent of its world-wide budget on humanitarian assistance to Somalia. Africa Watch and Physicians for Human Rights, "Somalia: No Mercy in Mogadishu: The Human Cost of the Conflict & the Struggle for Relief", 2.

President George Bush initiated thereafter the 'Operation Restore Hope' sending 28,000 troops, which were led by the former US ambassador to Somalia, Mr Robert Oakley.

The policy decision by President Bush to intervene in Somalia needs some comment. Given a strong opposition in the administration to US intervention in Somalia in 1992, foreign policy analysts were left with the question why President Bush and General Powell agreed to deploy US troops. Western suggests that "the U.S. intervention in Somalia resulted from the political interplay of competing foreign policy elites, who held different normative beliefs about when and where the United States should intervene, and the cumulative pressure on the administration to act in both Somalia and Bosnia".[195] He states that antagonistic views of liberal humanitarian officials and interventionist policies of the administration led to a debate whether the US should intervene in Bosnia or Somalia. He argues that pressure groups in the US advocated a humanitarian intervention for both cases, Bosnia and Somalia. The media, in particular CNN, played a crucial role in shaping belief systems and normative arguments. When public pressure accumulated, President Bush decided on 25 November 1992 to intervene in Somalia. He believed the Somali mission was 'doable' and would mitigate the famine with a smaller military contingent than required in the Bosnian case. The campaign was named 'Operation Restore Hope' in order to guarantee public support of the mission. Others argue that the US had strategic interests in the Horn as the region remains critical to the stability of the oil-producing region.[196]

A few days after resolution 794 was passed by the Security Council, American-led forces of the United Nations Task Force for Somalia (UNITAF) landed on the coast of southern Somalia. UNITAF was expected to build up to 28,000 personnel drawing from military units from Australia, Belgium, Botswana, Canada, Egypt, France, Germany,

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[195] Western, Jon, "Sources of Humanitarian Intervention: Beliefs, Information, and Advocacy in the U.S. Decisions on Somalia and Bosnia," *International Security* 26.4 (2002): 117.
[196] Weil, Robert, "Somalia in Perspective: When the Saints Come Marching In," *Review of African Political Economy* 20.57 (1993), 104.

Greece, India, Italy, Kuwait, Morocco, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom and Zimbabwe. In the first months of intervention UNITAF forces had a positive impact on the security situation reducing the risk of looting and acts of extortion.[197] In fact, Somalis believed that foreign troops came to disarm them. Consequently, prices for AK-47 automatic rifles dropped by two thirds.[198]

In late March 1993, the Security Council passed resolution 814 establishing UNOSOM II to complete the task of UNITAF through disarmament and reconciliation. Violence mounted on 5 June when 24 Pakistani soldiers were killed and 56 others wounded.[199] It was estimated that 75 Somalis were killed and 350 injured.[200] The killings of the Pakistani soldiers trapped in a feeding centre and allegedly attacked by militia of the Somali National Alliance (SNA) followed the take-over by UNOSOM troops of Aideed's controlled Mogadishu Radio station. Within the same operation, five weapons' depots were inspected by UNOSOM II. This was seen as politically problematic as General Aideed's rival's (Ali Mahdi) depots had not been targeted. When Aideed's aide Colonel Abdi Qaybdiid received a copy of Major-General Montgomery's letter about the notification of SNA weapons' inspections, he responded with: "this means war".[201]

And truly, events changed from bad to worse. The UN under US military leadership was drawn into more hostilities with General Aideed's SNA who controlled the southern part of Mogadishu. When evidence mounted that Aideed was involved in the June attack, the Special Representative Admiral Jonathan Howe (Ret.)[202] ordered the detention of General Aideed who was unsuccessfully called to surrender peacefully. In an attempt to

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[197] African Rights, *Somalia Operation Restore Hope: A Preliminary Assessment* (London: African Rights, 1993). United Nations, *The Blue Helmets: A Review of United Nations Peace-Keeping*, 3 ed. (New York: United Nations Department of Public Information, 1996).
[198] Interview with Ali Mahdi in Eldoret, Kenya, on 8 November 2002.
[199] Drysdale, John, *Whatever Happened to Somalia?* (London: HAAN Associates, 1994): 182.
[200] Drysdale, *Whatever Happened to Somalia?* 182.
[201] Drysdale, *Whatever Happened to Somalia?* 181.
[202] Admiral Jonathan Howe (Ret.) replaced Special Representative Mr Ismat Kittani (Iraq) who, in turn, had replaced Mr Mohammed Sahnoun (Algeria).

'teach Aideed a lesson', helicopter gunships attacked a compound, known as 'Qaibdiid's house', where several SNA representatives and Haber Gedir clansmen were holding a meeting to discuss a renewal of the dialogue between the SNA and UNOSOM II. The mission 'succeeded' as planned, the roof of the meeting hall collapsed and those who tried to escape the rubble were either gunned down or captured. Howe claimed 20 deaths, the Red Cross 54 and the SNA published a list with 73 killed persons.[203] Certainly, these incidents reduced UNOSOM's credibility to fulfil their mandate stirring up hatred and grievances among Somalis.

On 3 October 1993, the hunt for Aideed and a number of his aides resulted in an eighteen-hour battle between US Rangers and members of the US Quick Reaction Force, who were not under UN command, in the South of Mogadishu – eighteen American soldiers were killed and 75 were wounded. On the Somali side, an estimated 500 to 1,000 people some of whom were civilians were killed during the fighting,[204] while the Red Cross estimated 200 deaths.[205] Support by the American people for the US role in Somalia further deteriorated when the dragging of one dead US pilot through the streets of Mogadishu by outraged Somalis was broadcast around the globe. Bush's successor, President Clinton, later announced a phased withdrawal of US troops from Somalia by 31 March 1994. With the US being the strongest force other Western military units saw themselves forced to leave with the Americans and UNOSOM II's mandate came to an end in March 1995.

The legacy of UNOSOM had a long lasting impact on Somali politics and the perceptions of foreign aid agencies operating in Somalia. In the attempt to capture Aideed, the mission, which started with a noble idea to secure the delivery of humanitarian aid, lost its neutrality and probably worse its impartiality. In addition,

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[203] Drysdale, *Whatever Happened to Somalia?* 204.
[204] Adam, Hussein and Richard Ford, *Removing Barricades in Somalia: Options for Peace and Rehabilitation* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, 1998).
[205] Cited in: Drysdale, *Whatever Happened to Somalia?* 211.

human rights violations were not only committed by Somali factions but also by UN troops. According to African Rights, UNOSOM military units were involved in "grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions".[206] Although it became clear that Aideed's faction, the SNA, was implicated in human rights violations and deadly assaults on civilians and journalists, UNOSOM lost moral ground in taking sides within Somali politics. In the late days of UNOSOM the Somali public regarded the mission as another faction and General Howe as another warlord.[207]

Besides UNOSOM's strategic mistakes and violations of human rights there was a lack of trust from the very beginning of the mission. The deployment of troops was late, the climax of the humanitarian crisis had passed and the relief efforts were too late for many Somalis. Adams and Bradbury criticise that "in Somalia, humanitarian objectives can become easily lost in the bureaucracy of military organisation".[208] The erosion of mutual trust between outsiders and Somalis lasts until today. Local networks of communication were not used and traditional forms of negotiation and decision-making ignored. It was a missed opportunity to work through these informal channels in order to earn respect and understanding among Somalis.[209]

On the economic side, UNOSOM created artificial monopolies over the supply of spare parts for vehicles or the import of relief goods. This created an artificial, externally driven economy mainly in Mogadishu distorting the local economy. Large amounts of foreign currency were injected into the local economy in a very short period of time. In average, the United Nations Development Programme estimated the cost in 1994 at US$ 2.5 million per day.[210] UNOSOM became the largest single employer in Mogadishu,

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[206] African Rights, *Somalia: Human Rights Abuses by the United Nations Forces* (London: African Rights, 1993), i.
[207] Narbeth, Simon, *The Targeting of Emergency Food Distribution in Somalia: Vulnerability, Redistribution, and Beneficiary participation* (Nairobi: World Food Programme, 2001).
[208] Adams, Mark and Mark Bradbury, *Conflict and Development: Organisational Adaptation in Conflict Situations* (Oxford: Oxfam, 1995), 34.
[209] Sahnoun, *Somalia: The Missed Opportunities*.
[210] Cited in: Narbeth, *The Targeting of Emergency Food Distribution in Somalia: Vulnerability, Redistribution, and Beneficiary participation*, 84.

making numerous families dependent on UN's paycheques. The rental of vehicles and the hiring of guards enriched many Somalis and with them their militias, a problem, which lasts till today.[211] In several cases UN staff members received death threats, and some international staff were killed because of employment related matters.[212] Upon departure of UNOSOM, income generation dropped dramatically creating room for coercive measures of income generation.

Before the departure of the UN mission, diplomatic efforts were undertaken to restore peace and to facilitate reconciliation. In March 1993, UNOSOM convened a national peace conference comprising of 15 Somali parties and movements, which resulted in the Addis Ababa accords. But faction leaders failed to implement the accords. The international community sponsored a dozen further conferences all of which failed to produce a lasting peace. Menkhaus argues that faction leaders either did not enjoy popular support or were unable or unwilling (or both) to implement the accords.[213]

2.6.3. Political consolidation or network wars?

The power vacuum left by the ousted General Barre was not filled by a political group or movement that could have turned things to the better. Instead, in the twelve years of civil war that followed, Somalia split into various zones of influence dominated by powerful individuals. In supporting these non-state administrations, the private sector and international aid agencies play an important role in the perpetuation of conflict. I will focus in this section on the years following 1991 and set the political context for my field studies (see chapter IV, V & VI).

Scholars and technical experts working on Somalia identified a trend of political consolidation of various non-state administrations.[214] This means that there has been a

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[211] In Baidoa, a guard at the UN compound is paid US$ 100 per month. This is half of the estimated annual GDP per capita. Personal communication in Baidoa, February 2002.
[212] I was told that the firing of a teacher and local guards was responsible for the killing of a 70-year-old Swiss woman in Lower Shabelle in March 2002.
[213] Menkhaus, Kenneth, "International Peacebuilding and Dynamics of Local and National Reconciliation in Somalia," *International Peacekeeping* 3.1 (1996).
[214] United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report, Somalia 2001*: 50.

process of emerging non-state administrations providing security and establishing public administration with different forms of governance. In the north-west and the north-east of the country, the Republic of Somaliland and – until recently – the State of Puntland developed forms of functioning governance and achieved relative political stability. In Bay and Bakol region, the Rahanweyn Resistance Army has established an administration on the regional, district and village level that enjoys public support among the Mirifle clans. In August 2000, the Somali National Peace Conference led to the formation of the Transitional National Government. In the Juba valley, the Juba Valley Alliance headed by Colonial Bare Aden Shire 'Hirale' from the Marehan sub-clan reer Dini established control over the rich agricultural riverine areas and the second largest port in southern Somalia, Kismayo. In today's Somalia, there is evidence that insecurity is confined to geographical pockets of contention, but the overall feeling by many analysts is that of a process of political consolidation.

In contrast, southern Somalia slowly disintegrated into small realms of influence governed by powerful individuals who benefited from continuous instability and poor social conditions, and who drew their organisational strength from their military capacity alone. In this context where coalitions were changing and regional polities were fluid, networks of military support and mutual interest dominated the political landscape of the South. Political coalitions and new forms of non-state administrations emerged in the absence of a strong hegemonic national power. For instance the 'East-Central' state headed by Mohamed 'Dhere' and consisting of Middle Shabelle and parts of Galgadud region.[215]

The emergence of these new political entities was accompanied by the emergence of competing social institutions. Council of elders, district councils and *shari'a* courts claimed to have moral authority and popular support. On the village level, systems of governance began to act independently from authorities set up on a regional level. On the

[215] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 8 November 2002.

national level, popular support and territorial control of various non-state administrations is contested. Convergence of interests appears mainly on the business spectrum. Even among the international community there is no unified policy towards the future of Somalia. The so called 'building block' approach envisages the formation of regional political entities converging into a confederal or federal form of government. At the time of writing in 2003, however, the views among representatives of the executive body of the Somalia Aid Coordination Body, the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and frontline states, who adopted this approach in the 1990s, diverge rather than converge.[216]

The emphasis within aid agencies is now on participatory forms of governance, which bear the danger of encouraging clanism and secessionism, as there is a wide-spread mistrust among Somalis in southern Somalia of forming any centralised form of government. Lately, there has been an effort by the UN Secretary-General to revive the formation of a national government through a national reconciliation process and peace-building. But before turning the attention to contemporary Somalia, it is important to gain a better understanding of the events that followed the collapse of the Republic of Somalia, a country once praised with a bright future and mistakenly considered as most 'unified' in the African continent with a single language, a single ethnicity and a single religion.

2.6.4. Formation of non-state administrations – Creating an alternative?

Once it became clear that the Transitional National Government could not act as a 'national' government, it became increasingly dependent on the Mogadishu-based business cartel and religious organisations such as *al-Islah* and *al-Ittihad*. Parallel political entities and alliances emerged on Somalia's political landscape. My focus will be on those political networks or non-state administrations, which operated in the triangle

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[216] The so-called frontline states comprise Kenya, Ethiopia and Djibouti. The Inter-Governmental Authority on Development comprises Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, and Uganda.

of the main political centres of southern Somalia, Mogadishu, Kismayo and Baidoa. Lower Shabelle region is situated in between the two ports Mogadishu and Kismayo, placing it between competing political zones of influence. The Rahanweyn Resistance Army in Bay and Bakol will be dealt with in chapter seven.

As a response to the establishment of the TNG in Mogadishu, the Somali Reconciliation and Restoration Council (SRRC) was formed in April 2001. It comprises several influential faction leaders who formed an opposition against the TNG in Mogadishu. The SRRC established a head office in Baidoa. Although it has a political programme and a written charter, the SRRC has not established a functioning administration. It draws support from the RRA leadership, several Mogadishu-based faction leaders and various other militia leaders, such as Mohamed Hersi 'Morgan' – nicknamed the 'Butcher of Hargeysa', as he commanded the bombing of Somaliland's capital – and Hussein Mohamed 'Aideed', the son of the late General Mohamed Farah 'Aideed'. The Council commits itself to reconciliation and restoration of peace calling for a National Reconciliation Conference. The Council is composed of 70 members, with a presidency and a rotating five-member chairmanship.

In opposition to the SRRC, Colonel Bare Aden Shire 'Hirale' from the Marehan clan established in June 1999 a regional alliance in the Lower Juba with the military and logistical support from the TNG.[217] The so called Juba Alliance aims at establishing a regional administration in the Juba valley but has failed to do so. Their leader, Bare 'Hirale' claims to have 'liberated' the Juba from General Morgan's troops and Harti domination. This regional political entity is worth noting, as it controls the second largest port in southern Somalia, Kismayo. In addition to tax revenue from Kismayo air- and seaport, the control over the lucrative charcoal trade to Osman and other Arab States present powerful economic incentives. Lower Shabelle region becomes strategically

[217] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 21 November 2002.

interesting, as the region connects Mogadishu with Kismayo in terms of logistical and technical military support by the Mogadishu-based TNG.

A third group, which attracted a lot of attention following the terror attacks on the United States, are Islamic movements, such as *al-Islah* and *al-Ittihad* (see 3.2.5). Somalia is the only country in the Horn of Africa which is almost entirely Muslim. In particular in the last decade, Islamist movements have increased in popularity and influence. Whereas *al-Islah* reflects more the moderate and urbanised Islam mainly confined to Mogadishu, *al-Ittihad* has a stronger political orientation seizing control of some ports and towns. Some members of *al-Islah* support political agendas, some have interests in international trading networks, others see it as a social network similar to the role Muslim brotherhoods have played in other sub-Saharan countries. In terms of the more radical *al-Ittihad*, there is little evidence that *al-Ittihad* cells have connections with radical Islamists movements such as Osama Bin Laden's *al-Qaida*. Islam (nearly all Somalis are sunni) plays an important role in shaping Somali identity but never overcame clanism.[218] Outside Somalia, Islam is a unifying factor when they find themselves in a minority. In Somalia, in particular in the past decade of civil war, *al-Ittihad* members established political power in certain areas and towns through the establishments of *shari'a* courts. The introduction of *shari'a* law mainly reflects the strong Somali preference for pragmatism over ideology, as it offers civic order in the absence of a functioning government. This is also why Mogadishu-based traders and business people supported *al-Ittihad* financially in 1997 in order to conduct their business in a secure and predictable environment as faction leaders failed to do so.[219] It is known that the management of the ports in Kismayo (Lower Juba) and Merka (Lower Shabelle) through *al-Ittihad* proved to be relatively honest and effective in managing international relief goods in contrast to their predatory militia leaders. For example in 1997, the Mogadishu-based business

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[218] Menkhaus, Kenneth, "Political Islam in Somalia," *Middle East Policy* 9.1 (2002), 119.
[219] Le Sage, Andre, "Prospects for Al Itihad & Islamist Radicalism in Somalia," *Review of African Political Economy* 28.89 (2001), 475.

community openly switched their support from faction leaders to the *shari'a* court system and militia. In 2000, the influence of the Islamic courts came to an halt with the establishment of the Transitional National Government.[220] Although the TNG leadership received support from *al-Ittihad* there is little concern that the Transitional Government's political agenda is coming under the influence of an Islamist agenda. However after 11 September, various faction leaders including the TNG leadership accused opponent Somali leaders of supporting *al-Qaida* in the hope of mobilising funds and international recognition from the Alliance against terrorism. Islamic movements play an influential role in the coastal regions and in the Kenyan-Somali border region but are less important in the inter-riverine areas of Bay and Bakol where the influence and dependency of the support of the Ethiopian government is paramount.

2.7. CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I intended to set the wider historical framework for the following case studies. The context in which I study links between resources and conflict is important, as it shaped political agendas. The relative richness of natural resources such as fertile land, grazing areas, fisheries and strategic resources, such as air- and seaports in Lower Shabelle led to my proposition that abundance of resources is linked to conflict rather than scarcity. However, one has to be careful in jumping to conclusions. There might be a correlation between violent conflict and the material richness of the area but this does not imply causality. Realism in international relations claims that interests shape individuals' and state-actors' behaviour. This can lead to bargaining and cooperation. Yet, scholars studying world politics often omit the notion of individual motivation from the equation. This also holds true in Somalia where vested interests in establishing control over valuable resources explain only part of the Somali calamity.

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[220] Marchal, *A Survey of Mogadishu's Economy*.

Identity politics embedded in history is the complementary layer of analysis that offers credible answers to the Somali plight. The historical background is important to understand contemporary conflict in Somalia. The Somali conflict must be put in the right historical context in order to explain individuals' behaviour. For instance, studies which favour the rational actor model appear to be too static. Reducing complexity is crucial for any social inquiry but this cannot justify the omission of historical material. More specifically, Somali elites employed history to justify their behaviour and to lobby for financial and military support. They used history to construct social boundaries by defining 'us' and 'others'.

In regard to the 'clan-conflict thesis', I reject the assertion that the fluid and segmentary nature of Somali society is an obstacle to modern state-building. However, I am less optimistic about the unifying effect and democratic potential of what Lewis called a 'pastoral democracy'.[221] Instead, clan identity was and is used by influential individuals as a political resource to gain power. Clan-loyalties are even stronger today than they were in the past. In this context, political leaders constructed the historical context in order to separate their followers from other clans and thereby established rights of existence and status.[222] Turton argues that ethnicity (or clan identity in the Somali context) is "an effective means of mobilising groups around common material interests precisely because of its non-material (i.e. symbolic) content, which masks or "mystifies" those interests for the group members themselves."[223] Faction leaders, business men and politicians alike have 're-discovered' the clan as an instrument to pursue their material interests and to seek power along major lineage lines on the expense of the majority of

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[221] Lewis, *A Pastoral Democracy: A Study of Pastoralism and Politics among the Northern Somali of the Horn of Africa*.
[222] Turton, "War and Ethnicity: Global Connections and Local Violence in North East Africa and Former Yugoslavia", 82.
[223] Turton, "War and Ethnicity: Global Connections and Local Violence in North East Africa and Former Yugoslavia", 82.

the Somali people. This became apparent at the Somalia National Reconciliation Process (see chapter VIII).

Alongside the argument of the 'modernisation thesis', I consider changes in state forms inflicted on Somali society and economic transformation central to the understanding of the current situation in Somalia. The search and competition for resources transformed a promising, even democratic society into an aid-dependent, war-torn society. The transformation from a pastoral economy to a capitalist one generated new sources of wealth for an urban-based elite representing the state but ignoring the needs of the vast majority, the Somali pastoralists and farmers. As Samatar states, "rather than safeguarding the public, the state became an arbitrary predator to be feared".[224]

Hence, the struggle for resources, stated in the 'resource thesis' was the result of unjust distribution and malfunctioning state institutions. When the regime collapsed, this struggle resulted into violence. I therefore argue that the violent struggle for resources observed in Lower Shabelle was rather an outcome of state collapse than the cause of the civil war. Resources include land, water, agricultural production, the control of trade routes and infrastructure, such as sea- and airports. Concentration of theses resources became flash points of violence. Somali elites started monopolising these pockets of wealth following the collapse of the former regime by excluding the majority of the population. Here, the clan became a criteria for protection, access to wealth and political power. Unjust distribution of the national wealth in forms of plantations, trading goods and foreign aid led to inequalities between groups (clans) or horizontal inequalities and hence, triggering violent competition over these resources. When foreign aid further decreased in the 1990s, Somali elites turned towards controlling domestic resources. I consider this approach most useful to explain the continuation of violence in the years

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[224] Samatar, "Destruction of State and Society in Somalia: Beyond the Tribal Convention", 636.

following Barre's regime. Most importantly, examining the role of resources in conflict can help to identify major obstacles to the peace process in Somalia.

CHAPTER THREE

Evidence from Somalia: Lower Shabelle region

3.1. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1.1. Introduction

The first section of this chapter discusses approach and methodology I employed to undertake the research whereas the second part of this chapter offers an introduction to the social, economic and political background of Lower Shabelle region. It became clear during my research that ways of testing hypotheses, commonly used in political science, are difficult to apply in the Somali context.[225] In order to verify or falsify proposed hypotheses, the researcher has to establish independent and dependent variables for designing the social inquiry. I will outline in the following paragraphs why this approach has limitations. For instance, statistical data on Somalia is hardly available, reliable and valid, and data contained in various reports is inconsistent across space and time.[226] Another constraint is the large number of intervening variables influencing the level of conflict. Whether scarcity or abundance of resources shape violent conflict, there are certainly further socio-economic factors that have to be taken into account.

I argue if quantitative methods fail, qualitative research methods have proven to be more revealing. In a country which has experienced civil war and destruction for the last ten years, written data has been destroyed or taken abroad. As the South of Somalia was hardest hit by the civil war and has experienced continued violence for the last ten years, most of the recorded information has been destroyed.

3.1.2. Methodological constraints

In collecting socio-economic, geographical and historical data, I had to rely on data that was produced by aid agencies, international and local NGOs and former government institutions. In this respect, a vast proportion of the literature has not been published but served as an important source of information. However, comparison of this data is

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[225] King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane and Sidney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).

[226] Somalia without an internationally recognised central government does not provide the necessary statistical data, and for that reason it dropped out of the 1997 Human Development Report of the United Nations Development Programme.

problematic, as research projects in Somalia administered by different agencies employ different methodologies. In the absence of a functioning government, data on basic statistical data is missing. Even pre-war data is subject to criticism for its accuracy and validity. For instance, population statistics have been controversial as up to half of Somalia's population is constituted of people who maintain a nomadic life and therefore, it is difficult to record information on a cross section of the population. In this respect, population movements make it difficult to estimate a reliable population figure when no system of registration is in place. In the case of the last census undertaken by the government in 1985, fertility and mortality data was only recorded for the settled population.[227]

In terms of economic data, conventional economic analysis using statistical data has its limitations in Somalia, as most of the public goods and services are provided by the private sector in a largely informal economy. Imports and exports are recorded in an inconsistent fashion as well as figures on income generation or expenditure. Formal taxation does not exist either. Another example is the problem of accurate figures on remittances, which are crucial for almost every family's survival and are channelled through informal banking systems. Remittances are estimated to have exceeded foreign aid four times in 2000.[228] The figure ranges from US$ 500 to US$ 800 million per year challenging any effort to calculate the figure on GDP per capita.[229]

Another concern is access. Collection and quality of data depends on access and ultimately security. There is a bias in quantity and quality of data in more secure areas, in particular the north-west and the north-east of the country, namely Somaliland and Puntland. In the southern parts, more information is available about settlements and less

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[227] Vaidyanathan, K. E., *Report of the UNFPA Consultant on Population Statistics of Somalia* (Nairobi: United Nations Development Office for Somalia, 1997), 2.
[228] Even if one takes the modest remittance figure of US$ 500 million per year it exceeds humanitarian assistance for the year 2000 ten times, UNOCHA, *Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Somalia* (Geneva: United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2000).
[229] Ahmed, Ismail I., "Remittances and their Economic Impact in Post-War Somaliland," *Disasters* 24.4 (2000).

about rural areas. Since security has temporarily improved in Bay and Bakol region through the establishment of the Rahanweyn Resistance Army, the quality of data collection has improved. Since the absence of a statistical department, data is mainly collected by UN agencies and NGOs, but the range of geographical and demographic coverage is limited to agencies' needs and resources.

With reference to existing studies, the following three main epistemological constraints are worth noting: The problem of base-line data, validity of the sampling framework, and cross-cultural differences.

In order to assess economic and political trends, reliable baseline data is essential to highlight changes. Base-line data functions as a benchmark against which to monitor recent data. Base-line data is often derived from population censuses or socio-economic surveys. The last population census in Somalia dates back to 1985, and as mentioned above, is disputed. Another population study was undertaken by a consultant of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in 1997 who based population projections on this last census, and tried to take into consideration mortality- and fertility rates and population movements. UN agencies in Nairobi adopted the projected UNFPA figure of 6.38 million total population based on the 1985 census and is reflected in the Human Development Report Somalia 2001.[230]

In terms of socio-economic surveys, UNDP Somalia conducted a survey in the mid-nineties and in 2001. The 2001 socio-economic household survey reflects income on the household level from which the GDP per capita was calculated.[231] This data has been also used to calculate UNDP's Human Development Index for Somalia. However, data on

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[230] United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report, Somalia 2001*, 37.

[231] In July 2001, the United Nations Development Programme embarked upon a socio-economic household survey in Somalia. This was the first such survey for several years. The purpose of the survey was to assess levels of development at national and regional levels. This was done by collecting data on household-level socio-economic and demographic characteristics, using a detailed questionnaire. In consultation with the Kenya Bureau of Statistics and Nairobi University, a sample size of 3,240 households in 300 clusters was decided upon, covering urban and rural environments. The first phase of the survey was completed in September 2001, by which time most regions of Somalia had been covered, with the exception of Puntland and the Juba regions.

export/import trade, utilities and services is not reflected in this survey. Findings of these reports must be handled carefully in order to avoid generalisations. Another aspect is the absence of accumulated knowledge, which is a prerequisite for any base-line data formulation. Data is collected by individual agencies using different methodologies making it difficult to compare various data sets. Some studies are based on pure guesswork or outdated data.

Although I did not use a questionnaire for my own research it is worth noting sampling problems in the Somali context, as some of the data used in my thesis derives from surveys. Again, in order to ensure validity of data, accurate population figures reflecting demographic and geographical distribution are essential in setting the sampling framework. Large areas of southern Somalia are difficult to access by road making any travel arduous. This leads to the tendency that agencies restrict their research to areas which are secure and accessible either by land or by aircraft. Consequently in the Lower Shabelle region, the district towns and the regional capital Merka have been more accessible to international aid organisations. In fact, during my second field visit to southern Somalia in September 2002 I stayed mainly in Merka town in the Co-ordinating Committee for Voluntary Service (COSV) guesthouse. This was necessary because of the deteriorating security situation throughout the region. Visits to other parts of the region were only possible with armed escort. This also affected my fieldwork.

As most of the Somalis do not speak English, interpretation is crucial for individual as well as for group interviews. Translation from Somali into a foreign language can lead to errors and false recording of responses. This is especially the case if the interpreter has a stake in supporting his clan by deliberately misinterpreting the responses of interviewees from other clans or sub-clans. Again, awareness of the social fabric is crucial to guarantee valid data. Interviewees' expectations and exposure to Western culture can influence responses, which equally applies to the researcher. The notion of

cross-cultural differences applies to concepts, too, as a researcher in the Somaliland administration puts it:

> Perhaps a greater challenge is how to incorporate a sociological understanding of Somali society into research and data collection. Stratifying Somali populations into categories of 'families' and 'communities', 'urban' and 'rural', 'wealthy' and 'poor' presents real conceptual problems. [...] A premature understanding of the culture can result in invalid assumptions and hurried inferences and flawed data. Indices such as 'personal distress' are based on proxy variables that may be valid in the West but cannot simply be cut and pasted to Somali culture.[232]

3.1.3. Fieldwork methodology

Noting the above mentioned general and the Somali specific methodological concerns, I had to adapt my research needs to the given environment. During my first field visit to Hargeysa, Somaliland and Baidoa, southern Somalia, my research process was mainly based on personal communication, semi-structured interviews and focus group interviews. Many of the variables in analysing issues of resource control, conflict, vulnerability, clan subjugation and exclusion are influenced by different perceptions based on cultural differences. Complex and dynamic social behaviour is difficult or impossible to measure objectively. It became clear that no single methodology would capture these complexities. The aim is to employ a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches. Interdisciplinary approaches can enrich both the theoretical and conceptual framework as well as the social inquiry itself. Participatory research methods, such as Participatory Rural Appraisal on the one side, and statistical enquiry, such as regression analysis, on the other side, are usually seen as opposite ends of data collection. There are both advantages and disadvantages on either side of the spectrum.

I have chosen to use qualitative research methods for primary data generation. This enables the researcher to see through the eyes of others, with an approach which is less rigid than questionnaire surveys or regression analysis. Semi-structured interviews are

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[232] The author, Vaughn Dutton, was seconded by the International Cooperation for Development to work as a technical advisor to the Department of Statistics in the Ministry of National Planning Hargeysa, in 2000.

more open-ended and flexible methods that allow room for people's reflection on their interests and concerns. However, I used descriptive statistical data when it promised to be valid and reliable in order to categorise regions according to scarcity or abundance of resources.

For a detailed historical analysis of Lower Shabelle region, the focus was on identifying key actors, such as business men, clan elders, religious leaders, faction leaders, ports authorities, representatives of aid agencies and the Transitional National Government in order to contextualise the role of natural resources in the history of civil war. In this regard, semi-structured interviews and an analysis of the transcripts were helpful. Furthermore, analysis of the social setting, the economy and power relations in this region provided further evidence to what extent resource competition is an integral part of conflict.

My research strategy began with reviewing literature in the Kenyan capital. This included desk study in the resource centre of the UNDP's liaison office for Somalia. The grey literature of UN agencies – notably the UNDP – and of NGOs was of great relevance and was largely available in Nairobi. In the latter respect, the War-torn Societies Project (WSP), with its offices in Mogadishu and Hargeysa, is particularly worth mentioning. Their Mogadishu office, the Centre for Research and Dialogue, facilitated housing and transport and provided me with useful contacts. Further, I was able to evaluate detailed transcribed and translated oral testimonials of the Nairobi-based Agency for Co-operation and Research in Development (ACORD) which conducted 22 interviews in Lower Shabelle in 2001. Although ACORD's research questions differed from mine, they supported in many respects my own research findings. Nairobi is a centre of research on Somalia where most of the large aid agencies have their headquarters or liaison offices, and that is why I started work there. Another reason for starting research in Nairobi is the lack of data available in Somalia.

The research also builds on my experiences during my four-month assignment with UNDP Somalia as an international consultant. I worked among other tasks on the analysis of the latest data available to be included in UNDP's National Human Development Report Somalia 2001. Further, I consulted with technical experts, academics and people knowledgeable in Somali political affairs. This included consultations with staff from the Food Assessment and Security Unit, Famine Early Warning System, UNDP Somalia, World Food Programme (WFP) Somalia, United Nations Children's Fund Somalia, WSP and ACTS.

Above all, my research benefited from meetings with several scholars in Somali studies, most importantly Ioan M. Lewis, emeritus Professor, John Drysdale, political advisor and analyst and Abdi Samatar, Professor at the Department of Geography, University of Minnesota. Although Somalia has not been a major case study in the environmental security literature, the broader political and economic context is in fact quite well covered in detailed secondary material.

Prior to my field research, I established working assumptions, which constituted an important component of the research process and influenced the design of the research project. The following assumptions shaped my research methods and approach in accessing southern Somalia.

Before leaving for East Africa, I established a link with the United Nations Development Office for Somalia to work as an independent researcher. Successful conduct of my research depended to some degree on the protection and credibility of a well-known and recognised organisation to gain access to the region and to key actors in the country. I was aware of the possible implications of cooperating with an UN agency, which is associated with the UN intervention in the early nineties. The overall feeling of Somalis about UNOSOM I/II was positive, in particular in Bay and Lower Shabelle region as UN troops provided some degree of security and humanitarian relief. However,

my affiliation with an UN agency raised expectations for possible humanitarian assistance and employment opportunities among the local population.

Access to Somalia, in particular to the southern part, is difficult and relatively costly. Since public transport is too insecure, foreigners must hire private vehicles including the driver and armed guards. Therefore, it was crucial either to have connections in the Somali community, built on trust and personal contacts, or to be affiliated with aid agencies. Some of my research was driven by intuition where careful planning was impossible. I conducted my first field visit in conjunction with the UNDP Somalia in the capacity of an international consultant. I used commercial means of transport for my second and third field visit, where it was important to organise transport (including armed protection) and accommodation in advance, as foreigners are subject to abuse, kidnapping or even killing. Even if private transport is available, I had to be aware of the regional clan composition.

During my first stay in Lower Shabelle, I was hosted by an international NGO. However, the head of the organisation who was Haber Gedir had close ties with the leadership of Mogadishu's Transitional National Government. I observed the NGO's loyalty towards the Haber Gedir clan whom many people considered as an occupying force. I hardly had privacy in my interview meetings, informants were hesitant to speak freely in the presence of my escort. For example, I had to wait until I travelled to Eldoret, Kenya, in order to speak to well-known figures of Merka's Bimal clan. This jeopardised the validity of my research. But escort was necessary, as the political situation in southern Somalia is extremely volatile and cultural or political insensitivity can quickly lead to an outburst of violence. For my second field trip, I was recommended a Mogadishu-based international NGO, called DBG (Diakonia, Bread for the World, Germany), which had mixed clan representation. Because of this, I was able to move to North and South Mogadishu, the parts divided by clashes between Hawiye's Abgal (North) and Haber Gedir (South) clan. Back in Merka, Lower Shabelle, I avoided staying with the NGO

which hosted me previously and moved to a Swiss-Somali couple. Because roads leading from major settlements to smaller towns and villages are poorly maintained and accessible only in the dry season, my interviews and observations were largely in urban centres.

There was one advantage however, when political hierarchies are limited, gaining access to political leaders and commoners is easier than in a Western society. This makes it less difficult to engage in an open dialogue. The egalitarian character of the pastoral society, which has to cope with harsh living conditions, promotes an open and opportunistic society where sharing of information becomes a matter of survival.[233] There is the saying that 'there is no secret in Somalia', and this also holds true for political and social affairs.

As a society where oral tradition is essential to pass on knowledge, any matter from family affairs over religious issues to politics is discussed over a glass of tea in open meetings. News about military developments at the front lines travels quickly into the remotest areas. At these meetings, any person is welcomed to join. As a matter of fact, I was advised to keep interview meetings with my informants open and not exclusive. I discovered a culture of debate and professionalism in conducting group discussions. Still, there is a caveat with regard to this tradition: views shift rapidly and oral or even written statements are often subject to change.

The social fabric of Lower Shabelle region is heterogeneous. Clan domination and subjugation is a common feature in this region resulting from accepted peaceful settlement and forced land occupation. Hence, objective results about the political situation through individual and focus group interviews may be difficult. As a consequence, additional contacts were sought in neighbouring regions, such as Bay, in Mogadishu, among the Somali diaspora living abroad and during the Somalia National Reconciliation Conference in Eldoret, Kenya. Prior to my research in Lower Shabelle, I

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[233] Drysdale, *Stoics Without Pillows: A Way Forward for the Somalilands*, 11.

visited Hargeysa in January 2001 and Bay region in February 2002 where I was able to speak to displaced members of the Bimal and Digil clan from Lower Shabelle. This was an important part of my field work as many political leaders and educated Somalis have left their home region because of political instability and clan intimidation. I travelled several times to Eldoret where I was able to interview most Somali faction leaders. I had free access to the conference premises where I met with my informants in informal *ad hoc* meetings. There, informants felt free to express their views in an environment that was free from oppression and insecurity. I also maintained contacts with exiles in the Somali part of Nairobi, called Eastleigh.

3.1.4. Research area and concluding remarks

For empirical evidence, I selected three case studies in Lower Shabelle region. This region has not been selected as a case study in the environmental security field and is generally under-researched compared to Mogadishu area or the Juba valley.

For comparative evidence, I refer to Bay and Banadir region (Mogadishu), which display similar environments but differ in modes of production and in historic levels of conflict. Lower Shabelle and Bay are both arid regions with rich riverine resources and have been affected by the same degree of environmental disasters, such as droughts or floods. Bay is known for its large-scale production of cereal, mainly sorghum, and livestock. With regard to violence, the two regions show different histories of violent conflict and pockets of vulnerability. Besides similar environments, demographics seem to be similar too, although clan composition in Lower Shabelle is more complex and fluid. The Rahanweyn clan in Bay and Bakol and the Digil clan family in Lower Shabelle, who outnumber any other clan, have similar genealogical roots and show strong mutual support.

Mogadishu or the Banadir region is the epicentre of recent conflict with the largest concentration of material wealth including the major sea- and airport. I focused on the business sector in Mogadishu since it is directly linked to the banana economy and the

charcoal trade. Equally, the political dynamics of the Eldoret Reconciliation Process will have critical repercussions for the capital. Since I include trade in the analysis of resource competition, Mogadishu as the centre of trade has to be included. In comparing these regions, one may well gain a better insight into the underlying causes of conflict. Whereas the literature on the political economy of war tends to focus on the perpetuation of conflict, I tend to focus on the transition from war to peace and vice versa.

In sum, the principal questions to be examined are as follows: Can a coherent definition of natural resource scarcity and abundance respectively be created through an interdisciplinary perspective regarding environmental criticality, vulnerability and social resilience? If so, how can this multi-dimensional definition be related to the existence of, or potential for violent conflict, bearing in mind the historical, political, economic and cultural frames for conflict, especially in Somalia? If not, can other determining factors such as the struggle over political decision-making, access to trade, or clan affiliation be linked to lower economic, institutional, and social performance and associated with higher levels of violent conflict? If a link can be made, this will contribute to attempt to forecast where conflict might take place and help to build in proactive forms of aid and training and management skills to assist more effective governance.

3.2. SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL BACKGROUND OF LOWER SHABELLE

3.2.1. Introduction

When I first conducted interviews in neighbouring Bay region with people who lived in Lower Shabelle before the civil war I was confronted with strong grievances about 'clan occupation' mainly by the Haber Gedir clan. However, it is easy to record grievances yet more difficult to find out if they are justified. Any sustainable reconciliation effort is hampered by multiple claims over valuable resources, such as agricultural land. In the pre-colonial period individual land ownership hardly existed. In the colonial period,

Italians had introduced plantation farming on land that was expropriated from farming communities. During Siyad Barre's dictatorship, all farmland became state owned according to the land law from 1975. Land had to be registered under the new legislation and changed hands again. After the collapse of the state, some of the clans who overthrew the former dictatorial regime expropriated land. As a result, this generated three different levels of property claims (see 4.4). As I will show in the following, the study area is very rich in agricultural resources and because of that prone to violent competition over land ownership. Nonetheless, two of case studies demonstrate that conflict resulted into violence for the control of export markets rather than land *per se* (see chapter IV & VI).

Competition over resources, however, is not limited to natural resources or land. It also includes competition for offices in administrative structures and strategic assets, such as seaports and airports. In Somalia, political offices are key to gaining access to available resources. Somalis hardly experienced an administration that was delivering public goods. Instead, nepotism and patrimonial networks dominated the former administrations.[234] Taxes were not re-distributed to the benefit of the community. Accountability and transparency were absent from these structures. This created a mentality that political posts are seen as a vehicle to access financial resources. As a consequence, only those clans who acquire political posts are capable of benefiting from the system. Resources are provided by NGOs, UN agencies and other religious and inter-governmental organisations. International organisations play a crucial role in the competition over resources, as I will explain in the following (see chapter VII).

Lower Shabelle is one of the contested regions in southern Somalia, so far no functioning administration has been established. Although the TNG claims to have

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[234] See: Szeftel, Morris, "Misunderstanding African Politics: Corruption & the Governance Agenda," *Review of African Political Economy* 25.76 (1998). Bayart, Jean-François, *The State in Africa: The Politics of the Belly* (New York: Longman, 1993). Bayart, Jean-François, "Africa in the World: A History of Extraversion," *African Affairs* 99 (2000). Chabal, Patrick and Jean-Pascal Daloz, *Africa Works: Disorder as Political Instrument*, African Issues (Oxford: The International African Institute, James Currey, Indiana University Press, 1999).

control over the region, clashes regularly occur over land, the cutting of trees, access to the river and its canals and other economic assets. Clashes occur because different groups have different ideological or historical claims to the land they farm. For example, on the one hand, members of the Haber Gedir clan control a large proportion of the region and have strong ties with the TNG. They justify their claim with their participation in the expulsion of the former dictator. On the other hand, the Digil farming communities have strong historical links with the Mirifle clans who have established their own regional administration in Bay and Bakol. The Rahanweyn Resistance Army that enjoys popular support among the Digil-Mirifle clan families aims at 'liberating' the Digil clan from clan occupation by the Haber Gedir clan (see chapter VII). However, the situation I was confronted with during my fieldwork is much more complex. Clan composition in particular in Lower Shabelle is more diverse than in Bay and Bakol, and over many decades local clans experienced peaceful settlement and migration. It is right that members of the Haber Gedir clan who moved to the region during the civil war expropriated land, whereas other members of the same clan lived peacefully among the indigenous community for more than hundred years. In fact, interviews with inhabitants of Merka town showed that old-settled members often mediated between armed newcomers and the original population.[235] I witnessed the case of a prominent Haber Gedir woman who had status and influence in the region and was called to mediate in local inter-clan clashes (see chapter V). The rich endowment of this region resulted in both, violent conflict and peaceful settlement and migration. Resource sharing between pastoralists and farmers was common and conducted in cooperative manner especially during the dry season.[236] However, any individual who occupies land in Lower Shabelle today can use legal instruments of a potential future government in order to legitimise his

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[235] Author's fieldwork in Lower Shabelle in September 2002.

[236] For a detailed study see Unruh, Jon D., "Resource Sharing: Smallholders and Pastoralists in Shalambood, Lower Shabelle Valley," *The Struggle for Land in Southern Somalia: The War Behind the War*, eds. Catherine Lowe Besteman and Lee V. Cassanelli (London, Boulder: HAAN Associates Publishing, Westview Press, 1996).

land claims. Land owners may also transform and develop occupied land for the better and claim property as part of usufruct rights.

Conflict in southern Somalia arises at all levels, at the local, regional and the international level. In order to give some sense of these different levels, I selected three case studies of resource competition at the local, regional and international level (see chapter IV, V & VI). I will demonstrate similarities in the different conflicts in order to generalise findings for other regions of the country. In this respect, I draw comparative evidence from other regions, Bay and Mogadishu. This will be the focus of my research helping to explain whether resource scarcity or abundance is a viably concept to explain conflict in southern Somalia.

3.2.2. Social setting of Lower Shabelle

Lower Shabelle, which became an administrative region in the 1960s, was divided into eight districts, Merka, Afgoye, Brawa, Qorioley, Awdhegle, Wanleweyn, Sablale and Kurtunwarey. According to the latest population estimates, Lower Shabelle's population is the third largest within southern Somalia (see table 3.1).

Table 3.1. Population estimates for southern Somalia 1988-2001[1]

Region	**1988**[2] **('000)**	**1995**[3] **('000)**	**1998**[3] **('000)**	**2001**[3] **('000)**
Hiran	357	226	239	254
Middle Shabelle	663	425	451	484
Lower Shabelle	**824**	**625**	**666**	**718**
Banadir	935	698	752	830
Middle Juba	306	194	206	220
Lower Juba	459	283	300	320
Gedo	586	335	358	384
Bay	1,020	652	699	762
Bakol	391	248	265	287
Somalia	8,500	5,520	5,893	6,367

[1] Population figures before the civil war are estimated to be too high as it was based on a controversial census.
[2] *Source*: Technical directorate & GTZ, *National Transport Master Plan*. Mogadishu, Ministry of General Planning and Juba Valley Development, 1990.
[3] *Source*: Vaidyanathan, K.E. *Report of the UNFPA Consultant on Population Statistics of Somalia*. UNFPA Consultant at UNDOS, 1997, Nairobi.

Lower Shabelle has been a region for newcomers and settlers for many decades. Historically, this region was not inhabited by one of the more powerful clan and this is why Lower Shabelle was and still is not widely represented in political bodies. In terms of modes of production, Lower Shabelle is distinct from other regions in southern Somalia, besides perhaps Lower Juba, as livestock production is less significant compared to other regions. Farming was considered by the more powerful nomadic clans as something inferior since livestock was seen as the major source of income and social standing. Compared to other regions, Lower Shabelle has the highest proportion of sedentary population and the lowest percentage of nomadic population (see table 3.2). Peaceful settlement to cultivate fertile land took place over centuries forming the social fabric of the inhabitants of Lower Shabelle, and it is important to distinguish, which land was expropriated and what land is legitimately owned.

Table 3.2. Regional distribution of population in southern Somalia 1988[1]

Region	Urban (%)	Rural (%)	Nomadic (%)	Total (%)
Hiran	15.0	17.0	68.0	4.2
Middle Shabelle	15.4	44.3	40.3	7.8
Lower Shabelle	**17.3**	**60.2**	**22.5**	**9.7**
Banadir	100	0	0	11.0
Middle Juba	12.9	42.7	44.4	3.6
Lower Juba	21.8	27.0	51.2	5.4
Gedo	12.1	19.9	68.0	6.9
Bay	16.3	30.0	53.7	12.0
Bakol	9.0	11.0	80.0	4.6
Somalia	23.9	24.0	52.1	100

[1] *Source*: Technical directorate & GTZ, *National Transport Master Plan*, Mogadishu, Ministry of General Planning and Juba Valley Development, 1990. Somalia's population is normally divided into urban, rural and nomadic (the 2001 Human Development Report for Somalia gives a breakdown of 24% urban, 17% rural settles and 59% nomadic). However, this can be misleading as nomadic or agro-pastoral is a description for livelihood strategies whereas pastoralism is a generic term. Nomadic people move with their livestock whereas pastoralists are more sedentary, plant crops as well as herd animals. Therefore, the figure for nomadic percentage of the population is believed to be smaller than indicated in the table.

Another important feature of the region is its affiliation with Islam. Islam is associated with earliest settlement in Lower Shabelle. At times, Islam became associated with

political movements or parties; at times it was part of a social network, most often embodied in Muslim Brotherhoods. At times during the civil war, Islamist movements such as *al-Ittihad* provided security in managing the seaport in Merka for the inlet of humanitarian relief goods. Similarly, *shari'a* courts contributed to fill a power vacuum left by the collapsed state.

In geographical terms, Lower Shabelle region lies between the main port cities at the coast, Mogadishu in the North, and Kismayo in the South (see map 1). Originally, Lower Shabelle was part of Banadir region meaning the 'Place of the Ports'. The Shabelle river, the Webi Shabelle[237], emanates from the Ethiopian highlands. The Ethiopian catchment area of its headwaters accounts for 90 per cent of the flow of the river(see map 2). Therefore, local rains are relatively inconsequential to river water levels. The Shabelle river enters Somalia near the town of Belet Weyne, meanders through the region before it terminates after 640 kilometres into a swamp in Lower Juba, about 30 kilometres from the Indian Ocean. In periods of flooding, it can overflow into the Juba river. The annual flow of the river is estimated at 1,800 million m^3 with a monthly flow ranging from 10-20 million m^3 in January to February to a peak of 385 million m^3 in September and October.[238]

The region can be divided into coastal land and riverbank land. The coastal land consists of immobile sand dunes that sustain vegetation, such as acacias and other bushes, and sand hills that move with the wind. In the rainy season, the sand dunes are grazed by herds, as they are free from malaria and do not carry tsetse flies. On the land between the dunes and the hinterland, sorghum and kidney beans can be grown in the rainy season. The riverbank land is mainly made up of clay. This area is valuable for agriculture although it is susceptible to flooding because the land is partly below the river level. A

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[237] Webi means river in Somali, Shabel means leopard – Webi Shabelle, the leopard river.
[238] Marchal, Roland, *Lower Shabelle Region Study on Governance* (Nairobi: United Nations Development Office for Somalia, 1997), 2.

third zone starts beyond the riverbank with less fertile land suited for herding goats and camels but dependent on rainfall.

When analysing the clan composition of Lower Shabelle, the region appears less homogeneous than others. It would be misleading to consider clans as clear segmentary and genealogical units. Their composition is much more fluid. For example, individuals of some ethnic groups, such as the Jareer (or African Bantu) who form the biggest single group, can belong to different clans. Whereas the *Gibil ad* or descendants from people outside Somalia, largely from Yemen and India[239], are considered as independent groups.[240] The most numerous clan, the one who claims to have settled first is the Digil. Members of the Digil clan largely engage in agriculture. The Bimal group largely inhabits Merka. Many of the newcomers are from the Hawiye clan family who have strong links with the current transitional government. Several clans including the Digil, Haber Gedir and the Bimal clan express ideological claims to administer the area. The following clans inhabit the four districts, which are relevant to the detailed case studies. This list is contested but remains the most comprehensive so far:[241]

Brawa district: Digil/Tunni, *Gibil ad*, Jido, Hawiye. There were also sections of Hawiye/Abgal, Haber Gedir (mostly Saad and few Ayr), Bimal, Hawiye/Sheikhal. Most of them have been integrated in the Tunni sub-clans.

Kurtunwarey district: The district was created in 1975 when the clans from the central and northern regions were settled there. Initially, the population was Digil/Jido, Digil/Tunni, Hawiye/Sheikhal, *Jareer*. Digil/Garre came to the area to graze their livestock and settled there at a later time. Newcomers settled among this old-settled

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[239] Marchal, *A Survey of Mogadishu's Economy*.
[240] The *Gibil ad* (meaning 'white skin') people settled at the Somali coast several hundred years ago. During my stay in Merka town, I found Arab inscriptions on doors dating back to 1327. The descendants of the Arab and Indian settler largely engaged in the business sector, mainly trading and producing textiles.
[241] After Marchal, *Lower Shabelle Region Study on Governance*, 4.

population, for example after the disastrous drought in 1974 in Central and Northern Somalia. They were Darod, Dir, Isaq, Hawiye/Haber Gedir. Rahanweyn/Hariin, Rahanweyn/Elay, and Rahanweyn/Leysan settled in this district to work in the agricultural areas.

Merka district: Bimal, *Gibil ad*, Digil/Jido, Hawiye (Sheikhal, Haber Gedir/Ayr, Haber Gedir/Saad, Abgal, Murosade), Dir, Darod, *Jareer*. Merka like many towns in Somalia has a heterogeneous representation of Somali clans.

Qorioley district: Digil/Jido, Digil/Garre, Digil/Begedi, *Jareer*, Digil/Dobe, Hawiye/Hawadle[242], Hawiye/Haber Gedir/Ayr. What is more, inhabitants of refugee camps arrived in this district in the late 1970s. The clan composition of those refugee camps is as follows. Camps 1 & 2: Garre, Degodie, Karinle, and Ajuran. Camp 3 with Ogadeni refugees existed until a few years ago.

As suggested by the above-mentioned list, the social composition of Lower Shabelle region is different from central, north and northeast Somalia. According to Marchal this lies in two fundamental characteristics of the region:[243] Lower Shabelle has always been a region of continuous migration from other regions. Typically, they involved small movements of clan families who attracted further migration of their kinsmen. It is fairly safe to assume that peaceful assimilation, resource-sharing and trading between pastoral immigrants and the sedentary farming community took place. Immigrants were integrated into the communities as clients or *sheegad* (see 5.2). The second difference lies in the mode of production. Agricultural land was cultivated by groups of kinsmen who were

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[242] Marchal states that the Hawadle community came long ago, may be in the nineteenth century. Their migration might be related to the emergence of an Islamic power in Bardhere and the growing influx of Darod to Gedo reaching the region through Hiran. See Marchal, *Lower Shabelle Region Study on Governance*, 4.

[243] Marchal, *Lower Shabelle Region Study on Governance*, 12.

dependent on membership in a corporate group. These "land holding units" granted individuals the right to farm it.[244] As people did not depend only on pastoralism, the focus of social organisation was on maintaining territorial solidarity in relation to farmland, wells and water ponds.

As a consequence of this long-standing pattern of migration, three different levels of social stratification evolved over time, which are the *dalad* (authentic lineal descendants), the *duhun* (long standing residents) and the *sheegad* (recent client recruits).[245] Another social group, which deserves attention, were slaves who were mainly brought from the East African coast of present-day Tanzania, Mozambique, Zambia and Malawi. In the 1800s, the importation of slaves made the expansion of agricultural activities possible in the region, and explains the high proportion of *Jareer* in the area today.[246] Slavery was prohibited by the Sultan of Zanzibar under the pressure from Western states in the late nineteenth century. At the beginning of the twentieth century however, only a small proportion of slaves had been liberated.[247] Many former slaves remained as bond servants with their masters. Their economic significance was never recognised and until today their descendants are subjected to political discrimination because segregation was and is still enforced by ethnic Somalis (see 5.2).

3.2.3. Economic background of Lower Shabelle

Compared to other regions in Somalia, Lower Shabelle has a rich endowment of natural resources, such as agricultural land, fisheries and livestock. 7.5 per cent of the region's total land area is agricultural land – the largest share within southern Somalia (see table 3.3). Then, the region links the hinterland with road networks. The region's economic

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[244] Marchal, *Lower Shabelle Region Study on Governance*, 13.
[245] Marchal, *Lower Shabelle Region Study on Governance*, 14.
[246] Cassanelli, Lee V., *The Shaping of Somali Society: Reconstructing the History of a Pastoral People, 1600-1900* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982) 148.
[247] See for more detail on Africa's slave-trade: Cooper, Joseph, *The Lost Continent: or, Slavery and the Slave-trade in Africa 1875, with Observations on the Asiatic Slave-Trade carried on under the Name of Labour Traffic* (London: Longmans, Green, 1875).

prosperity has benefited from the proximity to the main ports in southern Somalia, Mogadishu and Kismayo.

Table 3.3. Composition of agricultural land in southern Somalia 1989 ('000 ha)[1]

Region	Total area	Tilled irrigated	Tilled rain-fed	Fallow land	Total	Share of the total area
Hiran	3,400.0	2.0	15.9	26.3	44.2	1.3%
Middle Shabelle	2,080.0	19.9	62.6	52.7	135.2	6.5%
Banadir	80.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.3%
Lower Shabelle	**2,770.0**	**41.8**	**112.8**	**52.8**	**207.4**	**7.5%**
Lower Juba	4,900.0	18.1	15.3	17.9	51.3	1.0%
Middle Juba	1,870.0	21.6	23.6	12.1	57.3	3.1%
Gedo	4,540.0	7.1	23.6	12.1	57.3	3.1%
Bay	4,250.0	0.8	221.4	56.3	278.5	6.6%
Bakol	2,630.0	0.0	21.4	3.6	25.0	1.0%
Somalia	63,620.0	113.9	564.6	360.3	1038.8	1.6%

[1] *Source*: Ministry of Agriculture, Department of Planning and Coordination, Mogadishu, 1990. Calculated from data from FEWS-Somalia.

International demand boosted the cultivation of cash crops, mainly bananas. The river supplies irrigation schemes with water, and in the rainy season, flood irrigation is also possible. As mentioned earlier, Lower Shabelle has the highest proportion of sedentary population at 60%, compared to other regions in Somalia. 20% of Somalia's agricultural area is located in Lower Shabelle although the region only counts for 4.4% of the country's land area (see table 3.4). Although farmers and agro-pastoralists make up the majority in the region, pastoralism remains important. Cassanelli writes that "there is little evidence to suggest that the few large slaveholders in nineteenth-century Somalia ever became full-time agricultural entrepreneurs".[248] Livestock husbandry is also an important source of income on land along the coast and within the interior (see table 3.5). Many pastoralists also settled along the Shabelle river.

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[248] Cassanelli, *The Shaping of Somali Society: Reconstructing the History of a Pastoral People, 1600-1900*: 174.

Agriculture was an important source of income even before the colonial period. Sorghum and coffee were grown long before the Italians introduced large-scale irrigation schemes. International trade to Europe and the Arabian Peninsula increased in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. At this time, new crops were introduced, such as maize and cotton. In the second half of the nineteenth century, international trade was boosted through the invention of the steam ship and the opening of the Suez Canal in 1848.

Table 3.4. Number of districts, villages and farms in southern Somalia 1989[1]

Region	**Size ('000ha)**	**% of Somalia**	**Agricul-tural land ('000 ha)**	**Number of districts**	**Number of villages**	**Number of farms**	**Average size of farms (ha)**
Hiran	3,400.0	5%	44.2	5	95	11,994	3.69
Middle Shabelle	2,080.0	3%	135.2	4	162	23,922	5.65
Banadir	80.0	< 1%	0.2	13	n. a.	n. a.	n. a.
Lower Shabelle	**2,770.0**	**4%**	**207.5**	**8**	**715**	**69, 842**	**2.97**
Lower Juba	4,900.0	8%	51.3	4	177	22,026	2.33
Middle Juba	1,870.0	3%	57.3	4	151	14,604	3,92
Gedo	4,540.0	7%	60.9	6	204	19,128	3.18
Bay	4,250.0	6%	278.5	4	1,328	60,356	4.61
Bakol	2,630.0	4%	25.0	5	187	5,331	4.69
Somalia	**63,620.0**	**100%**	**1039,0**	**87**	**3,627**	**274,473**	**3.79**

[1] *Source*: Ministry of Agriculture, Department of Planning and Coordination, Mogadishu 1990. Certain data such as the number of districts dates back to 1984 and one cannot take more recent decisions into account: Sablale for instance became a district in 1985.

Later in the nineteenth century, agricultural goods, such as sorghum, maize, sesame and cotton, accounted for 70% of the total exports.[249] In addition, Somalis produced and traded durra and orchella.[250] Half a century earlier this proportion was made of ivory, aromatic goods and myrrh. The change in commodities was due to the development of

[249] Marchal, *Lower Shabelle Region Study on Governance*, 35.
[250] Cassanelli, *The Shaping of Somali Society: Reconstructing the History of a Pastoral People, 1600-1900*: 168.

the agricultural sector and the availability of cheap slave labour. Within the country, regional trade gained significance. The Oromo supplied slaves, ivory and coffee, the Boran traded ivory and slaves, while the Somalis sold livestock, gum and myrrh. In this respect, Luq in what is today Gedo became a centre of the regional trade.[251] In order to protect businesses, Somali clans and Arab families agreed to reciprocal contracts. This practise was common along the Shabelle river; another common bond was religion or protection offered by religious groups, which holds true until today.

Table 3.5. Livestock distribution in Somalia 1989 ('000 heads)[1]

Region	**Camels**	**Cattle**	**Sheep**	**Goats**
Northern[2]	*1765.42*	*340.69*	*7869.96*	*8315.58*
Central[3]	*1893.89*	*893.03*	*2506.75*	*7278.24*
M. Shabelle (a)	237.02	448.74	411.77	937.96
L. Shabelle (b)	**338.76**	**449.26**	**114.04**	**260.54**
Banadir (c)	1.15	25.84	7.73	24.74
Bakol (d)	221.99	117.47	102.26	356.95
Bay (e)	418.55	299.55	71.22	250.12
Total a+b+c+d+e	*1217.47*	*1340.47*	*707.02*	*1830.32*
Gedo (f)	906.47	620.25	623.24	944.48
M. Juba (g)	254.32	429.95	31.17	937.97
L. Juba (h)	256.68	1011.45	87.25	165.44
Total f+g+h	*1417.46*	*2061.65*	*741.66*	*2047.90*
Somalia	**6298.24**	**4636.23**	**11825.40**	**19472.04**

[1] *Source*: Ministry of Livestock, Forestry and Range, Department of Planning and Statistics, Mogadishu, July 1990.
[2] W. Galbed, Awdal, Togdheer, Sool, Sanag, Nugal, and Bari
[3] Mudug, Galgadud, and Hiran

When the main colonial powers decided to abolish the slave-trade in the 1870s, many farmers lost the work force upon which their economic prosperity was based. The period of colonialism was characterised by the introduction of new cash crops, such as bananas and sugar cane for the Italian and European markets (see 4.2).

When the British took over from the Italians, they tried to devolve more power to the Somalis in handing over land, which was confiscated by Italian settlers. Following the end of World War II, southern Somalia and with it Lower Shabelle came under Italian

[251] Marchal, *Lower Shabelle Region Study on Governance*, 35.

UN-trusteeship. This resulted in the continuation of cash crops and the development of irrigation schemes. When Somalia gained independence in 1960, a number of Italian settlers left Lower Shabelle. With their departure, the beginning of economic recession in the agricultural sector followed.

The take-over of an elected government in a bloodless coup in 1969 and the introduction of scientific socialism by Siyad Barre affected the economic system in various ways. In terms of agricultural policy, the new regime started to concentrate on large-scale farming, setting up parastatal companies for the production of cash crops. Centralisation and planning of the production, and marketing by the state began to control the supply of goods and services. In 1971, law 51 established the Agricultural Development Corporation enforcing the nationalisation of the grain market.[252] This had a negative effect on agricultural productivity, as the production of grain and cash crops stagnated. The country became more dependent on food aid and concessional food imports. In reaction, several smallholder farmers tried to bypass these new regulations by changing their production of unprofitable goods, such as sorghum and maize to vegetables and fruits that did not fall under the regulations of the Agricultural Development Corporation.

Another important change was the introduction of land registration law 73 of October 1975.[253] This law placed all land under the authority of the state ignoring customary land tenures. Individual farmers who wished to register their land had to go through complicated and expensive administrative proceedings.[254] Once registered, the law granted individuals usufructory rights through leasehold titles which lasted for fifty

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[252] Marchal, *Lower Shabelle Region Study on Governance*, 38.
[253] Besteman, Catherine, "Local Land Use Strategies and Outsider Politics: Title Registration in the Middle Jubba Valley," *The Struggle for Land in Southern Somalia: The War Behind the War*, eds. Catherine Lowe Besteman and Lee V. Cassanelli (London, Boulder: HAAN Associates Publishing, Westview Press, 1996) 30.
[254] Marchal, *Lower Shabelle Region Study on Governance*, 40.

years.[255] The law intended ceilings of 30 hectares for irrigated land and 50 hectares for rain-fed land per household.[256] Banana plantations were limited to 100 hectares though there were no limitations for corporates, parastatal companies, and independent agencies hence opening it up to abuse.[257] In the initial years, the law had little effect since most farmers did not register their land (see table 3.6).

Table 3.6. Land registration in southern Somalia 1984 and 1989 (ha)[1]

Region	irrigated land (1984)	rain-fed land(1984)	total (1984)	irrigated land(1989)	rain-fed land (1989)	total (1989)
Hiran	3,792	36	3,828	18,648	798	19,446
M. Shabelle	19,277	1,002	20,279	70,189	801	70,990
L. Shabelle	**58,278**	**1,038**	**59,316**	**172,747**	**17,285**	**190,032**
L. Juba	1,730	329	2,059	15,043	4,435	19,478
M. Juba	6,878	4,148	11,026	23,944	4,284	28,228
Gedo	3,808	n. a.	3,808	13,547	38	13,585
Bakol	n. a.	n. a.	n. a.	n. a.	n. a.	n. a.
Bay	n. a.	n. a.	n. a.	n. a.	n. a.	n. a.
Somalia	n. a.	n. a.	n. a.	326, 420	88,909	415,329

[1] *Sources*: for 1984, T. Labahn, "The development of cultivated areas of the Shabelle River and the relationship between small holders and the State", in P. Conze and T. Labahn, *Somalia. Agriculture in the wind of change*, Mogadishu, Ministry of Agriculture and GTZ, 1986, 141; for 1989, *Yearbook of agricultural statistics 1989/90*, Mogadishu, July 1990, Ministry of Agriculture and GTZ, 41.

This was due partly to the prohibitively high cost of registration. Although the registration itself was free nonetheless real costs such as travel to Mogadishu, bribes and payment of witnesses were incurred. Farmers were unable to fulfil these imposed conditions. For example, the law prohibited leaving the land idle or limited each household to cultivate one parcel. Yet farmers preferred to own two or three parcels on different agricultural zones in order to cope with climatic variabilities. As a consequence, many indigenous poorer farmers failed to complete the process.

In the following years, many indigenous farmers were dispossessed as the ruling elite registered their farmland. Among those who registered land were newcomers who seized

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[255] Besteman, "Local Land Use Strategies and Outsider Politics: Title Registration in the Middle Jubba Valley", 31.
[256] Marchal, *Lower Shabelle Region Study on Governance*, 40.
[257] Marchal, *Lower Shabelle Region Study on Governance*, 40.

the economic opportunity. This created major grievances among the local population so that Siyad Barre had to establish a Commission of Enquiry into these issues. By the 1980s when liberalisation of the markets was partly implemented as part of structural adjustment programmes, donors made large investments to extend plantation programmes. In parallel, land registration of irrigated land increased almost threefold between 1984 and 1989 (see table 3.6). Banana exports grew steadily up to the early nineties and, together with livestock, became the backbone of Somalia's export industry (see table 4.1). Massive foreign investments in this growing export business led to further opportunistic behaviour to purchase land by legal or illegal means. The privatisation process according to structural programmes had fatal consequences for Somalia's political future fostering nepotism and corruption.[258] Grievances about these agricultural policies last until today and partly explain the general mistrust among Somali farmers of state regulations.

Today, the agricultural potential is far from being fully utilised. Lower Shabelle region is dependent on political developments in its surrounding areas. In this respect, the re-opening of Mogadishu's sea- and airport alongside a revival of the reconciliation process bears tremendous opportunities for the region. As this might occur in the near future it is pointless to invest in the Merka port for banana exports. However, the prosperity of the region is linked to cash crop production and as a consequence, the rehabilitation of irrigation canals and the road network is the focus of development. At the moment, an Italian NGO, the Somalia European Committee for Agricultural Training, is rehabilitating canals. Others argue that the rehabilitation of canals might lead to an increase of large irrigated farms. As evidence shows, plantation farmers are less likely to engage in a mutual beneficial relationship with pastoralists that migrate to the region in

[258] Interview on 27 November 2002, in Eldoret, Kenya.

the dry season.[259] Besides, improvement of the well-being of the poor is marginal (see chapter IV).

3.2.4. The civil war in Lower Shabelle

In order to gain a better understanding about today's political situation in Lower Shabelle it is crucial to consider the years immediately following the collapse of Barre's dictatorship. At first, there was minor fighting in Lower Shabelle compared to the urban centres and other regions, but this changed during the course of the war. Although the war did not hit all districts with the same intensity, insecurity through roving militias plundering grain stores and any valuable equipment was a major problem. The following 1991 drought particularly affected the rain-fed areas in the Shabelle region and the situation was as bad as in Bay and Bakol (see chapter VII). Farmers and IDPs were among the most vulnerable. ICRC nutritional reports found by July 1991 "near-normal levels of nutrition among pastoralists and most townspeople, but alarmingly high rates of undernutrition among farmers along the Juba and Shabelle river valleys."[260] Their assets were not mobile prohibiting them to flee the fighting. Security improved with the arrival of UNOSOM troops when many militia men or *mooryaan* retreated to the urban centres. Those without agricultural skills who seized farmland in the region returned to the towns and many agriculturists fell back on subsistence farming. During the fighting many of the irrigation canals and flood dams were damaged and the road network deteriorated. This made it more difficult to market goods in the nearby urban centres (see chart 4.1).

The fact that Lower Shabelle was not affected too seriously when the war started might be due to its historical position in Somali politics. The local political elite did not engage in high politics in Mogadishu. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s Mogadishu was the centre of political affairs and those who had political ambitions rushed to the capital. Furthermore, the clan composition of the region was more heterogeneous than anywhere

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[259] See Unruh, "Resource Sharing: Smallholders and Pastoralists in Shalambood, Lower Shabelle Valley".
[260] De Waal, *Famine Crimes: Politics and the Disaster Relief Industry in Africa*, 159.

else making it more difficult to mobilise a united force. Lastly, Lower Shabelle has a large farming community who are traditionally excluded from the political sphere. Somalis whose identity is closely related to pastoralism generally despise smallholder agriculturalism. This prejudice towards farming communities in Lower Shabelle and other regions such as Bay and Bakol made them subject to oppression and exploitation and led to terrible crimes against them in the course of the civil war.

Another problem, which made the people in the riverine zone subject to arbitrary violence, was clan segregation and disputes between major indigenous clan families. The Hawiye who swept through Mogadishu in early 1991 benefited from internal dissent within the Digil-Mirifle communities. Before the war, political power was balanced 50 to 50 between the two. During the war, this was disputed, as it was argued that the Digil had seven sub-clans while the Mirifle had eight plus nine sub-clans and that political representation should be shaped accordingly. Until today, Lower Shabelle remains a region that is caught between centres of political power, Mogadishu, Kismayo and Baidoa. Since the Mirifle clans established their own administration with the help of the Ethiopians, the divide between the two clans widened.

As the clans of Lower Shabelle generally did not take up arms against the ruling elite and as the opposing clans were mainly from the central and northern regions, Siyad Barre first escaped to Lower Shabelle on 26 January 1991. He and his troops then moved further South to Brawa and Kismayo still looting grain stores and vehicles close to the main roads on their retreat from the former capital. On their way, his troops destroyed buildings, equipment and food storage in order to prevent other militias moving up behind his. According to Marchal, there were enormous differences in the involvement of clans in the looting.[261] Some clans, largely pastoralists, focused on equipment, such as cars and heavy weaponry, others with an urban background searched for household items, such as furniture and consumption goods. It is worth noting that most people participated

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[261] Marchal, *Lower Shabelle Region Study on Governance*, 59.

in looting particularly of former government buildings, across clan lines and regardless their social status.

When Barre's troops retired to the South, Hawiye militias swept through Lower Shabelle leaving a second path of destruction and killings. They were looking for any weaponry and vehicles that escaped the first wave of looting. Districts that were less accessible by road such as Qorioley or Merka town remained more peaceful during the first two months of fighting. Some places remained under the control of the retreating troops of the former regime, mainly Darod. For example, the town Brawa remained under the control of Siyad Barre's forces for a full year. There, General Morgan, Barre's son-in-law, established a military base for former military personel and militias of the Somali Patriotic Movement. When forces of the United Somali Congress (USC) took over Brawa, there was looting, killing and rape, as the inhabitants were accused of collaborating with the Darod. Lower Shabelle became a battleground between the two major clans fighting each other, the Hawiye and the Darod.

In summer 1991, the newly elected President Ali Mahdi Mohamed tried to set up an administration in the region but failed. He could not control the militias, and was lacking financial resources and popular support among the local communities.[262] His 'presidency' went unrecognised internationally.[263] In an effort to mobilise clan alliances against the Darod, two military movements were formed: The Southern Somali National Movement representing the Dir and the Somali Democratic Movement claiming to integrate Digil-Mirifle. Disagreement over the leadership of these two factions mirrored the tensions in Mogadishu where General Aideed and Ali Mahdi fought for supremacy in a future government. Eventually, this led to the formation of the so called 'green line' in Mogadishu between the two rival Hawiye sub-clans. Between November 1991 and March 1992 an estimated 14,000 people died in the clashes.[264] In April 1992, despite a cease-

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[262] Marchal, *Lower Shabelle Region Study on Governance*, 60.
[263] United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report, Somalia 2001.*
[264] Krech, *Der Bürgerkrieg in Somalia (1988-1996): Ein Handbuch* 56.

fire, Darod forces attempted an offensive on Mogadishu failed completely. In reaction, General Aideed's forces and his allies advanced through Kismayo up to Gedo region and finally controlled large areas of southern Somalia including Lower Shabelle, Lower and Upper Juba by February 1993 and Bay and Bakol by the end of 1992.

3.2.5. Sources for conflict after the civil war

The political constellations in the whole of Somalia subsequently impacted on Lower Shabelle. In 1995, the main aim of General Aideed's newly formed government was to set up a new 'state apparatus' and to review all existing local administrations in the area he controlled. Most political leaders in Mogadishu based their legitimacy on clan affiliations and personal relations. This fact made it more difficult for Aideed's clan, the Haber Gedir, to set up a clan-based administration, as Lower Shabelle is much more heterogeneous than other regions in terms of clan composition. Although communities from the Haber Gedir had settled in this area for many decades, they could not claim that the region belonged to them. In this respect, General Aideed did not learn a lesson from the failed patronage politics of the former dictator Siyad Barre. The rationale of the new state apparatus was to establish control over major resources in the region close to Mogadishu, both in the agricultural and in the trade sector. This was to increase revenue to pay militias and political allies. In spite of the richness of the Shabelle valley Mogadishu remained the epicentre of continued clashes, because most of the income generation and arbitrary taxation benefited those who were in control of the former capital. For example, taxes for Merka port had to be paid in the former capital. This was also true for Ballidoogle airport, generating more income for Aideed's government than any taxation system except that of the banana trade. After the formation of a new government by General Aideed in 1995 there was some hope for peace in Lower Shabelle, but Aideed's government did not last and was again left without a functioning administration although the Mogadishu based Arta group or Transitional National Government later claimed territorial control over it.

The first source of what was from within the ruling clan itself, the Haber Gedir. In Lower Shabelle, tensions rose between two sub-clans of the Haber Gedir, the Saad and the Ayr. The Ayr is in the majority, but the Saad had the political power, and tried to suppress the moves for autonomy in other districts of the region. Even within the Haber Gedir sub-clan Ayr there was competition over resources and political influence. During my fieldwork in Lower Shabelle, fighting broke out between these two sub-clans on 10 September 2002. The Haber Gedir/Ayr who support the TNG versus the Haber Gedir/Saad who have strong affiliations with Hussein Aideed's political objectives within the Somali Reconciliation and Restoration Council. However, in contemporary Somalia one can no longer mobilise military or political support simply along clan lines. The situation is very dynamic.

Secondly, the domination of newcomers in the region over indigenous clan families is another feature of tension. Lower Shabelle has experienced migration for centuries. Many different clans settled in the area, some of the most important being the Bimal, the Digil (Tunni, Garre, Jido, Geledi, Bagadi, Shanta Alemod), Wacdaan, Haber Gedir, Sheikhal and *Gibil ad* (white skin clans more known as *reer* Brawa and *reer* Merka who originally came from the Arabian Peninsula and India). There always existed a peaceful form of settlement in Lower Shabelle yet the fragile balance between clans has been upset by the civil war. Today, the more powerful clan, i.e. with most armed vehicles and militiamen asserts oneself against rival clans. Analysts argue that the issue of land tenure and property rights must be addressed first before one can move on to reconciliation and peace building (see chapter VIII).

The third potential source of tension was the revival of Islamic organisations. Lower Shabelle has long been a region with close ties to Arabic culture and Islam. Muslim brotherhoods developed and expanded during the nineteenth century. It is difficult to access the political power of Islamic fundamentalists in Lower Shabelle. Since the Ethiopians invaded areas in Hiran, Gedo and Galgadud in 1996 to sweep alleged

strongholds of Islamic military organisations, members of *al-Ittihad* are known to have fled to Lower Shabelle.[265] Similar divisions as within sub-clans exist within fundamentalist groups such as *al-Ittihad*, which has resorted to violence over the distribution of resources. For example, Merka port was managed during UNOSOM by Islamic organisations who greatly benefited from the off-loading of relief goods. This was confirmed by a Bimal politician: "Merka has been a base for Islamic extremist groups [...] from 1990 up to 1994. *Al-Ittihad*, and other Islamic extremist groups have been focusing on Merka because they wanted to use the port's facilities as an economic resource."[266]

The fourth source of tension ties into aspects of warfare between factions belonging to the sedentary, the nomadic and the urban population. Many Somalis describe the civil war of the early nineties as a struggle between the urban elite and the rural poor.[267] Indeed, Mogadishu was overrun by a force that recruited their militia largely from the nomadic tribes. A Somali from the diaspora points to the military strength of the nomadic tribes: "Mostly the people with nomadic background [are the ones] who are more clannish and who are more military minded, they are the ones who are aggressive against sovereign communities, farming communities, Banadir communities, coastal communities, who have physical assets or perceived wealth."[268] Some see a picture of "barbarity" that young, uneducated men from the 'bush' imported their customs of livestock raiding, pillaging and looting everything in sight. In contrast, those who lived and worked for the former government are those who largely benefited from the productive sectors, such as livestock or crop production. It seems explicable that the marginalised and neglected class of the rural poor demanded their fair share, which

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[265] See International Crisis Group, *Somalia: Countering Terrorism in a Failed State* (Nairobi, Brussels: International Crisis Group, 2002).
[266] Interview in Baidoa, southern Somalia, on 9 February 2002.
[267] A similar development can be observed in Sierra Leone, see Richards, *Fighting for the Rain Forest: War, Youth & Resources in Sierra Leone*..
[268] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 27 November 2002.

resulted in the destruction and looting of the city. As Menkhaus observes: "From this view, the looting and destruction which followed the downfall of the Barre regime represented populist 'discourse of rage' against city and state. Far from being the source of 'barbarity', the rural nomadic population is viewed either as the repository of traditional virtues, or as an outraged underclass rising up against the oppressive state, while the urbanites are seen as the source of endless political scheming and destructive conflicts."[269] These young men who fought in the cities along clan lines at the beginning of the war are still considered a major obstacle to peace and state-building. Largely underpaid (and if then only with the narcotic drug *qaat*) or not paid at all, faction leaders lost control over them in an environment with ever decreasing resources. One senior official from the TNG considered them as a "lost generation that never experienced a Somalia with a government".[270] Most of these young men have never attended a formal school. A Somali from Merka calls this a "generation gap" and expressed his concerns about the young generation in Somalia.[271] Once rooted in the clan system and the family, they were traumatised in the course of the civil war, losing respect for traditional authority and values. Even the powerful faction leader Osman Atto confessed: "You can control them to a certain degree, but you can not control a 100 per cent."[272] These so called *mooryaans*[273] learned that the rule of the gun was more important for their daily survival than devotion to their sub-clans. The phenomenon of *mooryaans* is not confined to Lower Shabelle region. They can be found in all regions of southern Somalia. Many former *mooryaans* are now employed as guards for international aid agencies and businesses. In Somaliland, these young men were integrated into the national army after

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[269] Menkhaus, Kenneth, *Study on Governance in Gedo Region* (Nairobi: United Nations Development Office for Somalia, 1998), 47.
[270] Interview in Mogadishu on 15 December 2002.
[271] Interview in Merka, southern Somalia, on 18 September 2002.
[272] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 22 November 2002.
[273] The term *mooryaans* translates into 'poor people, ignorant gun men'.

the end of the civil war. Demobilisation and reintegration experts also see this as a viable solution for southern Somalia.

Lastly, tensions arose over the distribution of humanitarian aid. Somalis regularly accused NGOs and UN agencies of favouring one clan in their employment policies. At the beginning of the civil war large sums were paid for protection and security to deliver aid. Observers were confronted with the phenomenon of a war economy. At the same time, economic development was hampered by the volatile political situation making it impossible to invest in long-term projects.

In order to manage and to mediate these potential tensions within clan or other political groups, traditional customary law, *xeer* has been fairly successful in the rural areas. This does not necessarily apply to urban centres, such as Mogadishu. Mogadishu-based faction leader Mohamed Qanyare Afrah[274] said about the use of *xeer*, the Somali customary law: "*Xeer* does not play an important role, we do not use customary law, we live in a modern world. Customary law has been used for land before civilisation, people in the bush use it."[275] What is more, during the period of the civil war there was no regulating authority so that Somalis largely in the rural areas fall back to inherited customary law. *Diya*-paying groups were responsible for compensating for material damage or personal injury and death. *Diya* indicates to what extent there is a balance of power between neighbouring clans. For example, a member of the minority Midgan clan of Lower/Middle Shabelle claims that loss of live of his clan is compensated with 50 instead of 100 camels compared to the *diya*-payment for members of larger and more influential clans.[276] The payment of blood money is based on the principle of reciprocity. This means that any clan in a particular region receives the same amount of compensation

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[274] Mohamed Qanyere Afrah (Hawiye/Murosade) as Chairman of United Somali Congress claims controlling parts of Mogadishu, Daynile airport and parts of Galgadud. According to him, the USC owns an estimated 55 to 60 'technicals' and commands 1,500 militiamen.
[275] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 22 November 2002.
[276] Interview in Nairobi on 24 August 2002.

for the same crime committed. This balance has been weakened throughout the civil war when guns replaced the skilful negotiation techniques of local elders.

3.2.6. Conclusion

Evidence from Lower Shabelle region presented in the following three chapters supports the argument that abundance of resources is linked to violent conflict. Yet, competition over the plenty is as much an outcome than a cause of the disintegration of the Somali state. In this respect, neither the scarcity nor the abundance thesis can hold true in comprehensively explaining today's violent clashes in southern Somalia. Environmental disasters, such as the 1991 drought in southern Somalia, did not play a significant role in causing famines as in 1991-92. Rather, social vulnerability of the riverine population, their proximity to the main battlefields, and their lootable agricultural assets were contributing factors causing the Somali calamity.

After the regime-collapse in 1991, conflict largely arose over securing export markets, land ownership and the struggle for political posts. As a result, resources became scarce, in particular irrigable land, but also foreign currency channelled through NGOs, UN agencies and other bilateral governmental agencies. Political offices and NGOs were targeted by the Somalia elite to access aid. Here, I agree with Markakis that "the role of the state is a key variable in the process of conflict generation".[277] Accordingly, another bone of contention (particularly during the Somalia National Reconciliation Process) is the struggle to establish power-sharing arrangements (see chapter VIII). As most non-state administrations are based on clan, it is paramount for any group to be affiliated with clan. This led to movements of self-determination within sub-clans for political representation (see chapter V).

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[277] Markakis, *Resource Conflict in the Horn of Africa*, 3.

CHAPTER FOUR

Fighting for the plenty

4. DIVIDING THE CAKE – THE BANANA TRADE IN SOUTHERN SOMALIA

4.1. Introduction

My analysis starts when the banana trading regime was still intact before the collapse of Barre's regime. My argument is that the relative plenty of Lower Shabelle agriculture attracted and often fed hostile militias at the first phase of conflict. Then high profit margins on the retail level and potentially high tax returns led to armed conflict between militias supporting one of the two international firms that were involved in marketing and selling agricultural produce in the world market. But mounting insecurity, as well as other factors, pushed both competing foreign companies out of southern Somalia, leading to an agricultural crisis in the banana sector. Conflict arose over the control of the export trade, i.e. over distributional issues. On the regional level, armed conflict had adverse effects on 'high potential' farming areas in the Shabelle valley leading to scarcity of natural resources, such as precious farm land and irrigation water. As a consequence, conflict developed on the local level over issues of access to, and fair distribution of these resources.

The following case study is based on a historical survey and on interviews in Mogadishu and in Shalambood area, a resource rich agricultural region 110 kilometres south of Mogadishu and 13 kilometres inland from the district capital of Lower Shabelle, Merka. The Shabelle and Juba valleys together with Bay and Bakol region are considered the bread basket of the country. The study site comprises three villages, Deg Jannaay, Jaanjow and Shalambood (see map 3). In this area, smallholder farmers grow largely maize (*Zea mays*) and sesame (*Sesamum indicum*), whereas large-scale farmers cultivate bananas on plantations. The availability of water and fertile land has attracted both Somali migrants and foreigners.

Before the colonial era, communities in the Shabelle valley had long-standing traditions (*dexda*) and local knowledge about soils, irrigation, agriculture and land

measurement (*jibaal, darab* and *moos*).[278] Somali farmers owned land collectively. All members of the community belonging to the same clan, sub-clan or lineage were entitled to usufruct rights to land. Respected clan leaders were responsible for the distribution of land and inter-clan bargaining mechanisms were employed to negotiate land rights.[279] Land transactions were approved by traditional judges (*qaaddi*). The indigenous farming population who have been cultivating the land for centuries established a sophisticated system of resource sharing based on customary codes of practice and exchange relationships with pastoral communities.[280]

During the colonial period, especially during the 1930s, irrigation schemes were extended and developed by the Italians. It was one of the few areas in Somalia with fertile land and water from the river. The coastal hinterland of southern Somalia is unique within East Africa in having the only fertile riverbed situated parallel to the coastline. Large farms, or so called *aziendas,* were established on the fertile land between the river and the primary canals. The colonial state promoted the establishment of commercial plantations rather than smallholder agriculture. After independence, the Italians faced increasing opposition from Somalis who were claiming their fair share of the lucrative banana trade. Many Italian settlers left their *aziendas* after independence.[281] Subsequently, the socialist government attempted to expropriate unclassified and communal land in declaring it 'state land'. This was made possible through provisions of the 1975 land reform. In particular in the 1980s, elites connected to the government of Siyad Barre participated in land-grabbing, largely by the Marehan and Dulbahante of the Darod clan family. This constituted a turning point in the agricultural development. With

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[278] IGAD, *Somalia National Reconciliation Conference, Eldoret, Kenya: Committee III: Land and Property Rights. Draft Report* (Eldoret: Inter-Governmental Authority on Development, 2003), 8.
[279] Farah, Hussein and Lind, "Deegaan, Politics and War in Somalia".
[280] Unruh, Jon D., "Nomadic Pastoralism and Irrigated Agriculture in Somalia: Utilization of Existing Land Use Patterns in Designs for Multiple Access of 'High Potential' Areas of Semi-arid Africa," *GeoJournal* 25 (1991).
[281] Unruh, "Resource Sharing: Smallholders and Pastoralists in Shalambood, Lower Shabelle Valley", 117.

the departure of Italian settlers and because of lack of skills and expertise, the irrigation infrastructure deteriorated.

In 1987, the density of the small-scale farming population was high leaving approximately 0.3 hectares of land per person. Arable land was a precious good and smallholder producers owned farm land of an average size of 2.24 hectares.[282] Smallholder subsistence farmers accounted for 60 per cent of land-use in the study area (see map 3).[283] I believe that this figure has increased in recent years, since export markets for cash crops collapsed. The allocation of irrigation water was based on complex exchange relationships and related to off-farm activities. Even before the war, it was reported that there was strong competition between large-scale plantation owners and small-scale farmers.[284] During and after the civil war, the irrigation system was further damaged and as a consequence, large areas of fertile land became fallow, and irrigated land scarce. In the absence of a functioning government, farmers started using violent strategies to extract water for their farms.

Today, areas of fertile land, which used to be covered by large banana plantations, lie idle or have been converted into maize and sorghum fields. The area where Unruh gathered data in the 1980s, including my study site, covers some 8,500 hectares of variably irrigated land.[285] It is estimated that only 20 to 30 per cent of the area is still used for irrigation agriculture. Newcomers from the central regions occupied plantation farms and expelled their owners but because they lack expertise to grow cash crops, land suited for irrigation was left uncultivated.

Further, demand from the European Union (EU) for bananas decreased dramatically due to the liberalisation of import markets and the repeal of African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP) import quotas set for the year 2008. In parallel, conflict

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[282] Unruh, "Resource Sharing: Smallholders and Pastoralists in Shalambood, Lower Shabelle Valley", 117.
[283] Unruh, "Resource Sharing: Smallholders and Pastoralists in Shalambood, Lower Shabelle Valley", 117.
[284] Unruh, "Resource Sharing: Smallholders and Pastoralists in Shalambood, Lower Shabelle Valley", 117.
[285] Unruh, "Resource Sharing: Smallholders and Pastoralists in Shalambood, Lower Shabelle Valley", 116.

arose on two levels: firstly, over securing export markets on the international level leading to clashes known as the 'banana war' in 1995-96; and secondly between small-scale farmers and plantation owners over water and irrigation infrastructure on the regional level. The violent clashes of 1995-96 were caused by the desire of powerful faction leaders to secure supremacy in the export markets rather than over land. In the following, I will focus on the banana economy dating from pre-independence period until today.

4.2. The Somali banana economy

Throughout the colonial period, the banana economy was dominated by Italian settlers. In 1919, the Italians selected the Shabelle valley for plantations and started building irrigation infrastructure.[286] The arrival of Prince Luigi Amedeo of Savoy, Duke of Abruzzi, and the technical assistance of the fascist administration under Governor Cesare Maria de Vecchi de Val Cismon underpinned political support. The Shabelle valley was chosen by the Italian administration, as the river had sufficient water and was suited for gravitation irrigation throughout the year. In 1924, local elders and Italian officers negotiated and signed 50-year leasehold agreements.[287] Along the Shabelle valley, the Societa Agricola Italio-Somalia, an agricultural consortium, managed to get an estimated 30,000 hectares under cultivation.[288] The Italian intention in signing the treaties was to contain the residents' struggle against subjugation. The first export crop was cotton, whereas bananas and sugar were first produced for local consumption.

Banana production for export was introduced in Janale area in 1926 by Italian settlers.[289] Janale was chosen to become an agricultural experimental centre, as the town was close to sea outlets and the regional capital Merka. In this period, the first large

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[286] Lewis, *A Modern History of Somalia: Nation and State in the Horn of Africa*, 93.
[287] IGAD, *Somalia National Reconciliation Conference, Eldoret, Kenya: Committee III: Land and Property Rights. Draft Report*, 4.
[288] Laitin, David D. and Said S. Samatar, "Somalia and the World Economy," *Review of African Political Economy* 11.30 (1984): 60.
[289] Marchal, *Lower Shabelle Region Study on Governance*, 44.

irrigation canals were constructed: the primary and secondary canals (Primary canals (*kel*): kel Asayle, *kel* Dawlaaddeed; secondary canals: *kel* Shiikhaal, *kel* Afraad; see map 3). In 1928, there were canals stretching over 55 kilometres, irrigating some 18,000 ha.[290] These days are remembered by Somalis for atrocities committed by the colonial power. It has been reported that many Somalis died while digging the main canals, especially *kel* Asayle.[291] An informant from Lower Shabelle claimed: "The colonial Italian administration used cruelties up to the extent of imposing forced labour on our population [to dig] the major canal Asayle. The canal of the mourning, as it became known in English, which has taken the toll of many lives."[292] Smallholder farmers were forced to abandon their plots in order to work on the plantations. Those who stayed on their land lost the competition with large irrigated farms and had to return to subsistence farming. The colonial period was the beginning of land dispossessions and forced labour. Some, mainly the Bimal, reacted by changing the emphasis on livestock.

When the world market for cotton collapsed in 1929, the export of bananas gained importance. In 1927 and 1930, the Italian Parliament passed laws imposing tariffs on all non-Somali bananas. Somali bananas were not competitive in price and quality compared to those being imported from the Canary Islands and in the following decades, Somali bananas never became competitive on international markets. The protected Italian market guaranteed Somali producers a steady income but did not encourage them to increase quality. Before the defeat of the Italians in World War II, banana exports were controlled by the Royal Banana Plantation Monopoly.

In order to overcome shortages in labour, the Italians employed coercive measures guaranteeing the provision of cheap and sufficient manpower since ethnic Somalis refused to work on the plantations for wages. This was because during colonialism land

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[290] Marchal, *Lower Shabelle Region Study on Governance*, 37.
[291] IGAD, *Somalia National Reconciliation Conference, Eldoret, Kenya: Committee III: Land and Property Rights. Draft Report*, 8.
[292] Interview in Baidoa, southern Somalia, on 9 February 2002.

was relatively abundant in the riverine areas and therefore, the local population had the choice either to work on the plantations for wage labour or to continue smallholder farming. In fact, it has been argued that the population of the riverine areas did not experience extensive land alienation during the colonial era in contrast to some other arable and fertile agricultural areas in Africa.[293] Initially, the colonial powers did not extent their influence beyond the coastal settlements, and even though the banana plantations expanded from the 1930s, the actual hectarage involved was relatively small.[294] The refusal of ethnic Somalis to work on plantations led to the development of coercive measures of involuntary conscription of villagers, largely Bantu people, to labour on the farms in order to overcome shortages of labour. Some of the ethnic Somali clans, such as the Bimal, cooperated with the Italians enabling them to conscript *Jareer* (Bantu), descendants of former slaves who lived as adopted members among the Bimal, for their plantations.[295] Systems of bonded labour were abandoned when the British expelled the Italians from southern Somalia after their defeat in World War II.

After World War II, and under Italian UN trusteeship, the Royal Banana Plantation Monopoly (Regia Azienda Monopolio Banane) was reconstituted as the Banana Plantation Monopoly (Azienda Monopolio Banane) in order to revitalise the neglected export business. Banana production grew from 3,975 hectares in 1936 to 7,400 hectares in 1955 producing 94,000 MT of bananas.[296] Another source states that in 1954, 10,000 hectares were under banana cultivation.[297] Bananas still accounted for only 16 per cent of total Italian land concessions comprising 45,300 hectares in 1955.[298] The remaining land was partly used for cotton and sugarcane. Later, Somalis were given quotas in the banana

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[293] Menkhaus, Kenneth, "From Feast to Famine: Land and the State in Somalia's Lower Jubba Valley," *The Struggle for Land in Southern Somalia: The War Behind the War*, eds. Catherine Lowe Besteman and Lee V. Cassanelli (London, Boulder: HAAN Associates Publishing, Westview Press, 1996) 141.
[294] Menkhaus, "From Feast to Famine: Land and the State in Somalia's Lower Jubba Valley", 141.
[295] Interview in Merka on 22 September 2002.
[296] Somalinet, *Somalia: The Colonial Economy*, 2003, Somalinet, Available: http://somalinet.com/, 2 May 2003.
[297] Laitin and Samatar, "Somalia and the World Economy": 61.
[298] Somalinet, *Somalia: The Colonial Economy.*

trade. In Lower Shabelle, Societa Azionaria Concessionari Agricoli, a joint enterprise, was responsible for external marketing of the crops holding a *de facto* monopoly.

Banana production continued to receive subsidies after independence. Commercial agricultural production became the focus of economic development in the young Republic. 20 per cent of its development expenditure was spent in this sector.[299] In comparison, only three per cent went to animal husbandry. Capital was invested to improve and to expand the production of bananas providing the state with revenue and foreign exchange.

Shortly after Siyad Barre established his regime, banana production and the export trade was nationalised. This included export companies owned by Somalis and foreigners such as Societa Azionaria Concessionari Agricoli in Shalambood.[300] Barre created the National Banana Board, when banana production increased steadily from 145,000 MT in 1970 to 168,000 MT in 1973, while the area under cultivation grew from 6,500 hectares to 9,500 ha. From 1973 onwards however, the area under banana cultivation fell so that by 1981 it was less than 50 per cent of its peak in 1973 only amounting to 3,600 ha.[301] Production dropped sharply, too. The share of the banana production in export value dropped from 26 per cent in 1972 to 8 per cent in 1978.[302] The drastic decrease in production can be attributed to several factors: lack of professional expertise due to the departure of Italian settlers, soil salinity due to inefficient drainage systems and low fertiliser application.

In 1981, in response to structural adjustment policies, the Somali parastatal and the Italian De Nadai group merged in a joint venture called Somalfruit which replaced the dysfunctional National Banana Agency. The liberalisation of the economy had a positive impact on the agricultural sector, especially the banana economy. But it led to corrupt

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[299] Markakis, *Resource Conflict in the Horn of Africa*, 69.
[300] IGAD, *Somalia National Reconciliation Conference, Eldoret, Kenya: Committee III: Land and Property Rights. Draft Report.*
[301] Marchal, *Lower Shabelle Region Study on Governance*, 45.
[302] Markakis, *National and Class Conflict in the Horn of Africa*, 221.

practices when public assets were transferred to private hands – as Mohamood Abdi Noor, a Senior Agricultural Specialist of the World Bank, explains:

> And the West, the IMF, the World Bank, said you should liberalise the economy. We liberalised the economy, this brought lots of positive and negative things. Among the positive things was liberalised marketing, or farmers could sell their goods in the market. But then, here you have a government which controls everything from utilities, to banks, to factories, to property, to export, everything. [...] You liberalise these public assets, the private sector can compete with them and they will die on their own. But if you transfer public assets to the private sector, what happens? Insiders take over. And this was a very bad [...] effect. So, people became rich over night because of public assets, this caused nepotism, this caused corruption, it generated an attitude that 'it's ok to take public assets,' and outsiders wanted to [benefit and] came and fought [the government].[303]

Nevertheless, through improved services, such as the provision of fuel at reasonable prices, the means of transport and productivity improved. Besides, Somalfruit offered credit schemes for producers to enable them to afford the necessary inputs. Each producer was assigned a specific quantity of bananas by Somalfruit. The government's share in Somalfruit was reduced from 40 per cent in 1983 to 20 per cent in 1989. It has been suggested that the 20 per cent share is held by the President Barre himself, even beyond state-collapse in 1991.[304] Plantation owners could become partners holding a joint total of 29 per cent share of the firm's equity. The remaining 51 per cent was held by De Nadai. This was possible as the military government was under increasing pressure to liberalise its markets.

The structural adjustment policies had a positive impact on overall production. While banana production fell sharply in the mid-1970s under the National Banana Board, export figures for bananas grew again from 34,256 MT per year in 1981 to 75, 631 MT per year in 1990 accounting for 6 and 26 million US$ respectively in export earnings. According to pre-war government figures between 1981 and 1990, bananas accounted for the second highest figure in export earnings after livestock (see table 4.1).

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[303] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 27 November 2002.
[304] ION, "Now they're shooting for Bananas," *The Indian Ocean Newsletter*.658 (1995).

Table 4.1. Agricultural exports by commodity in Somalia 1980-1990[1]

Year	Banana export[2] (MT)	Bananas (million US$)	Live animals (million US$)	fish products (million US$)	Total exports (million US$)
1981	34,256	6.00	98.00	2.50	114.00
1982	52,646	14.00	105.00	2.50	136.90
1983	57,448	15.00	72.00	1.30	100.70
1984	48,702	14.10	33.10	3.70	62.00
1985	45,321	13.00	66.00	3.30	92.00
1986	57,942	17.00	62.40	2.90	100.00
1987	64,004	20.50	73.20	3.20	104.00
1988	73,368	23.50	43.80	7.80	85.00
1989	68,516	22.80	43.50	11.50	85.00
1990	75,631	25.60	39.50	11.50	85.00

[1] *Sources*: Data prior to 1986, World Bank Agricultural Sector Review, 1987. Data after 1987, FAO Agrostat database estimates.[2] Banana exports data from Somalfruit. Inconsistencies are numerous but the trend is the same.

In 1990 and at the peak of production, banana exports of 25.6 million US$ accounted for 30 per cent of export earnings and De Nadai's turnover was estimated as substantially larger. The banana industry not only supplied the country with hard currency, it secured the livelihoods of many people, too. It is estimated that some 10,000 people were employed in banana production and related activities.[305] An increase in banana exports was important to compensate for the sharp decline of livestock export from 1983 to 1984. In the 1980s, stiff competition from Australia and other countries for the market in the Gulf States, mainly Saudi Arabia, reduced the volume of Somali total livestock exports over the years. Moreover in 1983, Saudi Arabia imposed a ban on Somali cattle in response to unwarranted concerns about rinderpest in southern Somalia.[306] The consequences were dramatic, and livestock export figures plunged from 72.0 million US dollars in 1983 to 33.1 million US dollars in 1984 (table 4.1). The cattle sector was worst affected, showing a dramatic annual decline in cattle exports from 157,000 in 1982 to less

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[305] Marchal, *Lower Shabelle Region Study on Governance*, 46.
[306] Little, Peter D., "Rural Herders and Urban Merchants: The Cattle Trade of Southern Somalia," *The Struggle for Land in Southern Somalia: The War Behind the War*, eds. Catherine Lowe Besteman and Lee V. Cassanelli (London, Boulder: HAAN Associates Publishing, Westview Press, 1996) 97.

than 8,000 in 1984.[307] The regions of Lower Shabelle and Lower Juba were particularly affected, as cattle in these areas outnumber camels, goats or sheep (see table 3.5).

4.3. Somalia's 'banana war' and the collapse of the banana economy

The civil war had a deep impact on the banana sector in various ways: first, property changed hands during the civil war; second, taxes were collected by General Aideed's government; third, there was unprecedented competition between Somalis and the two foreign firms; and finally, the ACP-EU agreement faced strong opposition from the US and the private sector.

When the civil war broke out banana production was suspended. Somalfruit's management retreated to Kenya but continued to pay wages to Somali employees.[308] Most banana growers abandoned their farms and as a consequence, the plantations and the irrigation infrastructure deteriorated. Besides, irrigation infrastructure, such as pumps and tractors, were looted by advancing militias. Extortion, forceful expropriation of land and insecurity became common in southern Somalia after 1991. Land was confiscated without fair compensation for the original owners, mainly former government officials and foreigners. In 1991, Hawiye clan militia 'liberated' farms previously 'owned' by Darod clan families. They saw it as their moral right to take over previously state-owned farms since they defeated the former regime, as one Jido clan elder explains: "The farms the Darod left the Hawiye took over by force. When we asked them, they told us that their people died for it."[309] Although the majority of landowners were Marehan and Dulbahante, some landowners were also Majerten, business men from all clans, and even minority clans, such as the Bantu, were represented in the class of landowners.[310]

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[307] Little, "Rural Herders and Urban Merchants: The Cattle Trade of Southern Somalia", 97.
[308] ION, "Now they're shooting for Bananas".
[309] ACORD interview in Kurtunwarey, southern Somalia, on 16 April 2001.
[310] Omaar, Rakiya and Alexander De Waal, *Land Tenure: The Creation of Famine and Prospects for Peace in Somalia* (London: African Rights, 1993), 4.

In other areas of the country also, most state-owned farms were looted, such as Fanoole Rice Farm and Juba Sugar Project in the Juba valley.[311] In Lower Shabelle, farms were occupied by newcomers largely from the central regions and dominated by the Hawiye clans. Members of the Hawiye clan were largely interested in irrigated land in the hope to acquire profitable cash crops, says a local elder:

> We were pushed to the extent of being told that rain-fed land is 'yours' and the irrigated land is 'ours'! We were not prepared for the war; it came from above. It continued for some time and we tolerated it and persevered the problems. Even before [the civil war], the government had taken our farms saying that anyone without documents of ownership cannot claim the farm. That's how our farms were taken away and irrigation schemes were created and *danwadaag* [communities] were settled by force.[312]

But newcomer clans often lacked both the skills and expertise both to produce or to market their produce. As a consequence, some of the new farmers ruined the plantations and returned back to the cities or their home areas.

A prominent Bimal woman describes the post-war situation in Lower Shabelle: "In the past, land was seized with the pen, today, land is seized by gunpoint."[313] This notion is reiterated by a Somali employed by the World Bank. He stated that "the last ten years of the military government, injustice was done using the pen, using government machinery. But in the last twelve years, injustice was done using guns."[314] He believes that "the key to conflict is injustice. And inequitable, non merit based use of resources."[315] Accordingly, he argues that "injustice was the main accentuating [force] but now appears as if it is a resource conflict".[316] Looting, rape and murder became common in southern Somalia after the collapse of the former regime in 1991, as one Jido elder remembers:

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[311] Menkhaus and Craven, "Land Alienation and the Imposition of State Farms in the Lower Jubba Valley," 173.
[312] ACORD interview in Kurtunwarey, southern Somalia, on 16 April 2001.
[313] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 9 November 2002.
[314] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 27 November 2002.
[315] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 27 November 2002.
[316] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 27 November 2002.

> Livestock rustling started, women were raped, and then there was looting. It became difficult for people to stay in their houses. [...] In the town when people sleep at night, you will hear women screaming. If you attempt to rescue them, armed with a gun, you will find people in an ambush. So you cannot help them. [...] If you transport a bag of cereals it will be looted from you. If you take an animal to the market, the money from the sale of the animal will be looted from you. The people who loot your property are the same who settled with you and are known to you, and some from other areas are unknown to you. Both treat you the same. There is no system to address these problems. If you inform their elders about the issue they say: 'This one is mad.'[317]

Given the recorded incidents of looting, killing and rape, there is little evidence for specific conflicts over the occupation of land. Roving militias were more interested in valuable assets and food items. Advancing militias largely occupied banana plantations owned by the former elite and foreigners who had fled the area.[318] Riverine communities and minority groups even sided with anti-government forces of the United Somali Congress in 1991 since some of the largest instances of land grabbing were for government projects.[319] Several of the farms listed in a report of the land and property rights committee of the Somalia National Reconciliation Conference are former government projects or farms owned by foreigners.[320] The report also emphasises on land grabbing in the colonial period in order to avoid passing a judgement on current land ownership. A Bimal politician from the Shabelle region argued that unjust practices of land tenure and unequal resource distribution were rooted in the colonial regime:

> After independence, the Italians have tried their best to introduce the element of [...] giving [people] land titles. The colonial settlement policy was substituted by another national settlement policy following the administrations which succeeded the Italian colonial administration. The local population has been deprived of everything, they have been deprived of political representation through electoral fraud, they have been deprived of having access to the economic resources of the nation. There was a policy specifically engineered for their marginalisation. After 1969, the socialist regime also followed the same path covering itself with ideological colours. And when that period was over at the beginning of the 1990s, the Hawiye invasion took place spearheaded

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[317] ACORD interview in Kurtunwarey, southern Somalia, on 16 April 2001.
[318] Marchal, *Lower Shabelle Region Study on Governance*, 25.
[319] African Rights, *Land Tenure, the Creation of Famine, and Prospects for Peace in Somalia* (London: African Rights, 1993), 4.
[320] IGAD, *Somalia National Reconciliation Conference, Eldoret, Kenya: Committee III: Land and Property Rights. Draft Report.*

> specifically by the Haber Gedir leading to the deprivation of the local population both in the Lower Shabelle region as well as in the Juba regions.[321]

In 1994, when banana production resumed in Lower Shabelle, the American firm Dole challenged De Nadai's near monopoly worth nearly US$ 100 million; the latter's banana plantations covered some 6,000 hectares.[322] With two international firms operating, both through local subsidiaries, Dole-Sombana[323] and De Nadai-Somalfruit[324], banana production recovered. Somalia's banana production reached 80 per cent of the pre-war production in 1997, with an estimated 9,000 people benefiting financially from the crops.[325] But this resurgence was accompanied by intensified conflict. Linked to distribution was the second key development in the post-war era of the banana economy, the contentious issue of taxation. General Aideed, who had agreements with Dole, received approximately 5 US cents per 12.5 kg packed and exported bananas when the trade resumed after the war and 4 US cents in 1996 when Dole shut down its activities.[326] The same source estimated the monthly amount raised by banana taxation at US$ 150,000 excluding the months of July and August when beach ports such as in Merka were inoperable.[327] Another source estimates that Aideed received a tax of 4 US cents for each crate of bananas shipped abroad and 3 US cents from the banana growers themselves.[328]

The overall impact of such levies are difficult to judge as Somali businessmen sought to escape the imposition, and Aideed's capacity to impose a levy was probably uneven. Nevertheless, it is no secret that Aideed was able to finance his powerful militia through

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[321] Interview in Baidoa, southern Somalia, on 9 February 2002.
[322] ION, "Now they're shooting for Bananas".
[323] Sombana is a subsidiary of the US multinational firm Dole set up in 1991 in the US state of California. The company employed 45,000 workers with an annual turnover of US$ 3.4 billion in 1995. Sombana was set up by Dole Middle East with its head office in Yemen in order to penetrate the Somali market. The Somali company is represented by Ahmed Duale Haaf and his deputy Aden Mohamed Iman. ION, "Banana Wars Continued," *The Indian Ocean Newsletter*.660 (1995).
[324] Once Somalfruit, a firm owned by an Italian family who held a 51 per cent share of the firm's equity, the remaining capital was split 29 per cent for Somali producers and 20 per cent for the Barre's family. ION, "Now they're shooting for Bananas".
[325] Marchal, *Lower Shabelle Region Study on Governance*, 47.
[326] Marchal, *Lower Shabelle Region Study on Governance*, 48.
[327] Marchal, *Lower Shabelle Region Study on Governance*, 48.
[328] ION, "Aideed tops up the Kitty," *The Indian Ocean Newsletter*.688 (1995).

the export of bananas; and they certainly contributed to the intensified conflict over transport and export. The Norfolk Education and Action for Development Centre estimates a figure of US$ 40,000 that the General allegedly spent per week to maintain his militia.[329] Aideed's Somali National Alliance, had military supremacy in Lower Shabelle during the years of the 'banana war'. This is why he chose Merka port for the export of bananas. Because Merka did not have a deep sea port, packed bananas were loaded onto barges and further shipped to anchored vessels and dhows. In order to escape taxation, traders largely from North Mogadishu started using the beach port El Ma'an situated in the North of the former capital.[330]

Aideed authorised agreements for foreign companies to operate in the riverine areas. Foreign firms which cooperated with him, for example Dole-Sombana, had to pay for protection in addition to the export levy. Sombana director Ahmed Duale Haaf is believed to have paid General Aideed at least US$ 8,000 from his private accounts for dinners and the renovation of the 'House of Peace' where the SNA was holding meetings.[331] Here, a direct link between agricultural production and conflict can be established. Since margins were highest at the export level, however, it seems understandable that warlords tried to monopolise the export trade rather than controlling land. This view is shared by Ali Mahdi Mohamed who was a powerful business figure in Mogadishu:[332]

> Somalia – even though our country is listed one of the poorest countries in the world – has resources, natural resources; in agriculture we are very rich, we have livestock, we have a 3,333-kilometre marine coast. If we develop all three of them, this is more than enough for Somalis. Besides, we know, we have minerals, we have oil in the country, we have gold, we have a lot of minerals in the North, [...] everybody wants to monopolise this wealth for tomorrow.[333]

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[329] Norfolk Education and Action for Development Centre, "Banana Wars in Somalia," *Review of African Political Economy*.64 (1995): 275.
[330] Marchal, *A Survey of Mogadishu's Economy*.
[331] ION, "Now they're shooting for Bananas".
[332] On 29 January 1991, Ali Mahdi was announced 'interim president' by the first reconciliation conference after the ousting of the Siyad Barre.
[333] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 8 November 2002.

In 1994, competition over control of lucrative banana plantations, the export market of bananas and the port of Merka spilled over to conflict between Aideed's Haber Gedir and the Hawadle clan (both Hawiye) with the Hawadle loosing.[334] In Merka town, where a large proportion of the produce was exported, the indigenous Bimal clan was pushed out of the profitable export trade by the more powerful Haber Gedir clan.[335] The African Observer reported in its May issue that heavy fighting erupted in Merka in March 1996 when businessman Osman Hassan Ali 'Atto' demanded a share from Aideed's profits (both are Haber Gedir/Saad).

Further, there was tough competition between the two Somali counterparts of the new competitor US subsidiary Dole and the old Italo-Somali De Nadai group, Sombana and Somalfruit. When Sombana came to southern Somalia in March 1994, they made four-year exclusive contracts with Lower Shabelle farmers, who were now farming no more than 1,500 hectares, prohibiting them from selling their produce to any other company.[336] Somalfruit followed and contested the agreement. According to one Mogadishu-based business man, the trade conflict intensified when Somalfruit raised the price per box of an average twelve bananas from US$ 2 to US$ 4.[337] Dole manager Mehrdad Radseresht, an Iranian holding a US passport, complained about the additional 70 US cents which Somalfruit was paying per carton.[338]

Aideed's central role in benefiting from the situation, rather than arbitrating tensions between the two competitors, became obvious. When a decree was signed on 13 October 1994 in his own hand decontrolling both the market and the price, in order to ease tensions between the two firms, he undermined Sombana's case. Yet, the decree stated that any commercial contract would be subject to Aideed's approval and any conflict

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[334] Menkhaus, Kenneth and John Prendergast, *Prospects for Governance and Economic Survival in Post-Intervention Somalia* (Washington, D.C.: The Center for Strategic & International Studies, 1995).
[335] Menkhaus and Prendergast, *Prospects for Governance and Economic Survival in Post-Intervention Somalia.*
[336] ION, "Now they're shooting for Bananas".
[337] Interview in Mogadishu on 19 December 2002.
[338] Birnbaum, Michael, "Überleben in der Schlangengrube," *Süddeutsche Zeitung* 24 November 1994.

would be arbitrated and enforced by Aideed's Somali National Alliance. In addition, all banana plantations formerly belonging to Barre would be available to Somali banana producers.[339] Somalfruit protested and persuaded local producers to break their contracts with Sombana on 9 November 1994.[340] Mohamed Hussein Guarre, Secretary of the Banana Producers' Committee, justified the producers' position that "Dole's procedures are dishonest [and] the promised investments never materialised".[341] Then on 3 December 1994, the SNA suddenly declared Somalfruit's competition 'illegal', declaring that compensation had to be paid to Sombana.[342] Finally, 37 producers exported 185,000 boxes of bananas in December 1994, worth of US$ 1 million. The trade dispute between the two companies led to serious divisions within the Haber Gedir clan, largely between the Saad and the Ayr (see 3.2.5).

Consequently, there were clashes between the companies' militias developing over production and marketing. A newspaper reported about new checkpoints on the way to the port; farmers were forced to harvest their produce.[343] Local conflicts were replicated in Mogadishu in what was called Somalia's 'banana war'. Both companies accused each other of recruiting and arming militia men in order to block off access to the deep-sea port in Mogadishu. On 10 January 1995, a small group of militia men in armed 'technicals' drove past Dole's lodgings of their Filipino employees in Mogadishu, opened fire and left one guard dead.[344] Later on 2 February, fighting broke out between the companies' militia in the port area.[345] One UNOSOM commander confirmed that the militia close to Dole blocked off access to the port to prevent its rival company De Nadai from unloading their trucks. Several people were injured in this incident. Later on the

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[339] ION, "Now they're shooting for Bananas".
[340] ION, "Now they're shooting for Bananas".
[341] Norfolk Education and Action for Development Centre, "Banana Wars in Somalia": 275.
[342] Norfolk Education and Action for Development Centre, "Banana Wars in Somalia": 275.
[343] Birnbaum, "Überleben in der Schlangengrube".
[344] ION, "Now they're shooting for Bananas". Norfolk Education and Action for Development Centre, "Banana Wars in Somalia": 274.
[345] ION, "Now they're shooting for Bananas".

same day, heavy machine-gun fire from the city was directed at a Dole freighter anchored in the port.[346] On 9 February, an Italian journalist, Marcello Palmisano, was shot dead when De Nadai's convoy was attacked by militia men close to Dole-Sombana director Ahmed Duale Haaf. The case went to an Italian court in Venice where representatives of five banana producers associated with De Nadai accused Haaf and his brother-in-law, Mohamed Farah Badane, with being responsible for the killing.[347] When the Italian media claimed "Palmisano killed by Dole" in April 1995, Dole Italy published a long statement of denying any responsibility.[348] However, it remains uncertain if he died in a deadly confrontation between the two firms' militias or was deliberately shot dead.

Eventually in 1996, Dole scaled down their activities and by late 1996 they shut down when their Somali counterpart left the joint-venture due to disagreements over the payment of militias.[349] In an interview, Ali Mahdi confirmed this view that it was the cost of security that were to blame for the departure of the two foreign firms:

> The banana [plantations] are there, even the past three, four years, bananas were not exported because of two new companies, one Italian, one American. They stopped the exportation because there was no peace. They had to pay a lot of money for their guards. So they stopped. But in the future, they can export bananas any time if they can find some peace.[350]

In reality, Mahdi opposed the 'taxation' of the banana trade, as he could not get his share, while its profits strengthened militias close to his rival Aideed. On 30 September 1995, Mahdi (who controlled the northern part of Mogadishu) and Atto (who controlled parts of South Mogadishu) declared that vessels belonging to the two multinational corporations would no longer be allowed to dock in Somali ports.[351] Mahdi's supporters then fired at a banana ship in October 1995 in order to prevent it from docking. Mahdi and Aideed well knew how to increase profits by inducing conflict in areas they controlled. Reno argues

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[346] ION, "Banana Wars Continued".
[347] ION, "Dole ducks the Question," *The Indian Ocean Newsletter* 669 (1995).
[348] ION, "Dole ducks the Question".
[349] Marchal, *Lower Shabelle Region Study on Governance*, 48.
[350] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 8 November 2002.
[351] ION, "Aideed tops up the Kitty".

that Ali Mahdi owed his position and influence to his well established connections with Italian diplomats and international business and not to his Abgal clan.[352] Insecurity forced foreign companies to pay protection fees and enabled warlords to maintain large militias. Accordingly, Marchal argues that Mahdi had tried to damage Aideed's business ambitions by provoking the closure of Mogadishu port in 1995.[353] Problems at the port made it more difficult to export the delicate fruits to Europe and the Middle East since there was not another suitable deep sea port equipped with storage facilities. Subsequently, the willingness of the two foreign firms to pay for protection fees decreased.

Lastly, the disagreement between the two companies, Dole being an American multinational firm and De Nadai being an Italian, also reflected the trade war between the US and Europe over import quotas. When the EU was forced to reduce ACP import quotas in 1997, foreign investors stopped their activities in the region. Before 1996, the EU banana regime was fragmented. National trade systems favoured former colonies of some EU countries – for example Italy imported bananas from Somalia. In order to harmonise national trade regimes under a common EU agricultural and commercial policy, a new banana regime was created. This new regime introduced three types of licences: 65% of licences were allocated to traditional operators involved in dollar bananas ('A' licences), 30% of licences were allocated to traditional importers of EU and ACP bananas ('B' licences) and the balance was allocated to newcomers. This formula discriminated against some Latin American countries. First, the size of the low tariff quota was smaller than their former exports to the EU and second, Germany applied import tariffs for the first time. In response, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico and the United States handed in a complaint under the rules of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in 1996. It is surprising that the US supported the complaint since America does

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[352] Reno, *Somalia and Survival in the Shadow of the Global Economy*, 21.
[353] Marchal, *Lower Shabelle Region Study on Governance*, 49.

not produce bananas. The US action was allegedly based on potential discrimination against US national companies, such as Dole. In fact, Dole lobbied in Brussels against discriminatory restrictions enabling it to secure a 5,000 tonne quota for Somali bananas over three months up to January 1995.[354] In September 1997, the WTO Dispute Settlement Body ruled that the EU was violating WTO rules, particularly on import licensing procedures. The WTO ruling authorised the US to suspend concessions it offered to the EU. Temporary sanctions were initiated to the value of US$ 191 million. In the long term, the European Union had to phase out the tariff quota regime favouring Somali bananas under the ACP-EU Lome Convention in the year 2006.

Moreover between October and November 1997, severe floods destroyed large parts of the remaining 3,500 hectares cultivated agricultural areas. The road network in Lower Shabelle region further deteriorated, most notable the road between Afgoi and Shalambood which connected Mogadishu with Merka. *Deyr* rains started excessively in October, continuing until the beginning of January. Flood control systems, such as reservoirs and dams further upstream were dysfunctional allowing an unhindered flow of water. Since many floodgates are broken or poorly maintained, canals got silted and crops were destroyed through excessive flooding (see chart 4.1). This is why the irrigation system must be managed on the regional level rather leaving it to smaller communities. Consequently, approximately 700 hectares or 20 per cent of the cultivated land was destroyed.

The floods had serious repercussions on food security and availability. People who were working on the farms lost their income, leading to low purchasing power and higher malnutrition rates. After the floods destroyed much of the farmland and in combination with the Geneva WTO ruling, foreign firms hesitated to re-start their investments, above all within an insecure environment. As a result in 2002 there were no large-scale commercial banana exports; a senior business man in Mogadishu explains:

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[354] ION, "Now they're shooting for Bananas".

> Today, 70 per cent of the banana trade collapsed. Small amounts are exported to Dubai or Djibouti. There are two problems: the lack of markets and the lack of investment. Bananas have to harvested every fifteen days since there are no facilities for cooling. There is demand but the quality of bananas is poor, this needs investment. Demand is there, from the Arab States and European countries. Consumers in Dubai or Djibouti are more concerned with taste than with appearance. In terms of investment, a good road network is needed. The banana business is a sophisticated one, for example, the banana plants have to be inspected every day. The business community tried to open the port [in Mogadishu] but some of the faction leaders resisted.[355]

Bananas, are still produced but largely serve the regional market. They are trucked to Somaliland and Puntland. Besides, there are also reported plans to export to Arab countries, for instance Egypt.[356] Though Libya signalled interest in importing bananas, there are no international investors who would take the risk of engaging in a capital intensive industry.[357] Many people whose life depended on the banana trade lost their income. The banana sector employed people in production, transport, marketing and export. Alternative income opportunities are limited. Seasonal workers suffered most by the collapse of the banana industry. In Lower Shabelle, Merka town has been severely affected by the collapse of the banana export business, as most of the bananas were exported through Merka port when the main port in Mogadishu closed in 1995.[358] Imports decreased, too, as flood-affected roads made traders to switch to El Ma'an port in North Mogadishu.[359] Since 1998, Merka port was only used by the WFP and ICRC to deliver emergency food to southern Somalia.[360] Increasing demand from Arab countries will revive the commercial importance of Merka's port although the risk of violent conflict remains.

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[355] Interview in Mogadishu on 19 December 2002.
[356] IRIN, "'Banana war' leaves eight dead," *United Nations Integrated Regional Information Network* 24 November 2003.
[357] According to a Somali Member of Parliament, there was one shipment to Libya in 2002. Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 17 November 2002.
[358] Interview in Merka, southern Somalia, on 30 August 2002.
[359] Marchal, *A Survey of Mogadishu's Economy.*
[360] Marchal, *A Survey of Mogadishu's Economy.*

Most recently in November 2003, there were renewed clashes between the two sub-clans of the Haber Gedir, between the Ayr and Saad over the control of Merka port, 110 km south of the former capital Mogadishu. At least eight people were killed and over ten wounded in the clashes which broke out in the southern coastal town, according to local sources.[361] According to the report, Yusuf Muhammad 'Indha-ad', an Ayr militia commander who is allied with the Transitional National Government and the Juba Valley Alliance, imposed taxes on all imported and exported goods passing through Merka port, including bananas. Saad business men opposed the move sent their militia to a checkpoint in Shalambood from where they advanced to Merka. The source quoted an aid worker explaining the commercial interest in Merka port: "They were planning to export huge quantities of bananas to Arab countries, and therefore wanted to take control of the port. This is all about bananas and money. You can call it a 'banana war'. But neither side is in control of the port."[362]

In this insecure business environment, Somali traders resorted to increased export of charcoal in order to compensate for the loss in foreign exchange. In a parallel development, the decrease in banana plantations has brought some benefits to small-scale farmers. They were able to move on to former plantation land where they are now able to grow cereals, such as maize and sesame. In 2002, Lower Shabelle's maize output accounted for 72 per cent of the overall regional *Gu* maize production.[363] Sesame emerged as a new cash crop, substituting for bananas and opening a window of opportunity for small-scale farmers since the production of sesame is less capital intensive than bananas. Besides, the domestic market for bananas remained limited, and the international market was difficult to penetrate. In sum, the civil war and the following

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[361] IRIN, "'Banana war' leaves eight dead".
[362] IRIN, "'Banana war' leaves eight dead".
[363] Food Security and Assessment Unit, *2002 Gu Season and Food Security Implications for Somalia in the Coming Year* (Nairobi: FSAU, Somalia, 2002).

period of insecurity contributed to the destruction of the plenty and to mounting conflict between stakeholders of the region, although there have been some beneficiaries.

4.4. The consequences of diminished production

After 1997 banana production declined significantly. This section discusses some of the consequences in relation to land and conflict in the banana growing areas. In the context of declining production and resources, disputes over land have played a more significant role in the continuation of political instability in southern Somalia (see 8.1.5). In particular I will look briefly at the relationship between older farming communities, plantation owners and newcomers who settled in the region after the collapse of the former regime.

The issue of land tenure and access to resources have continued to be of great significance in this region. In Lower Shabelle, there exist multiple claims over land. Farmers' lack of legitimate ownership means that they have neither the means nor the incentive to invest and to improve irrigable land. The issue of land tenure is interrelated with the banana economy, the relationship between small-scale and large-scale farmers and their exchange relationships with pastoralists. It also affects marginalised groups in the riverine areas, such as the Bantu or *Jareer* a theme I will return in the following chapter.

In terms of distribution of land, elders of the farming communities traditionally allocated land to young men or newcomers. Over time elders became landowners themselves, undermining their neutral role as peace brokers. Often the more powerful clans in southern Somalia did not use to cultivate land and hence, do not represent the constituencies of smallholder farmers. They may have their own vested interests in restoring their title deeds they were able to obtain during the Barre regime. Consequently, the question of who should decide to allocate land became disputed in contemporary Somalia. This view is echoed by Berry who argues that "under the plural legal systems that African states inherited from their colonial predecessors, citizens and politicians have

argued not only over who should get access to land, and on what terms, but also over who should decide, on what basis".[364]

The period of the civil war created a further change to the tenure system when state farms and land owned by foreigners was occupied. These changes over time created three categories of people who have competing claims over land: the indigenous riverine farming population ('farmers'), those who obtained landholdings mainly for commercial use ('landowners'), and parties of the competing military groups that forcibly seized land in the early 1990s (self-styled 'liberators').[365]

The farmers lived in the periphery of the canal system and who owned small plots. They produce for the local market or engaged in subsistence farming. Their crops include maize, accounting for about 50 per cent of land-use, with fruits, vegetables, sorghum, beans, peanuts, bananas and sesame accounting for most of the rest.[366] The second group of landowners used to have large plantation farms in the vicinity of the main canals, the primary and the secondary canals, in particular around the primary canal (*kel* Dawlaaddeed) of the study area. In a third wave of events, those farms in the hands of foreigners and former government officials were 'liberated' by forces of the United Somali Congress. Clans opposing the government believed that they were being denied their fair share of the national resources.

Indigenous farmers including Bantus and ethnic Somalis supported the advancing United Somali Congress in 1991 in the hope of regaining control over their farmland.[367] This was especially the case of the Digil and Mirifle clans who earlier suffered from land-grabbing during Barre's regime in the 1980s and therefore, considered an alliance with the United Somali Congress as an opportunity to fight Darod supremacy.[368] The USC

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[364] Berry, Sara, "Debating the Land Question in Africa," *Society for Comparative Study of Society and History* 44.4 (2002): 639.
[365] Omaar and De Waal, *Land Tenure: The Creation of Famine and Prospects for Peace in Somalia.*
[366] Ombai, Margaret, *Report of the PRA Training for the Staff of CEFA-Merka* (Nairobi: Somalia European Committee for Agricultural Training, 2002), 24.
[367] Omaar and De Waal, *Land Tenure: The Creation of Famine and Prospects for Peace in Somalia*, 4.
[368] De Waal, *Famine Crimes: Politics and the Disaster Relief Industry in Africa*, 165.

factions saw themselves as the successor of the former government, hence provided with the legitimate right to occupy former state-owned farms. Some of the newcomers returned to their homelands or to the cities when they realised that they were not able to cultivate the land, particularly the banana plantations. It requires sophisticated techniques, including field levelling, irrigation, drainage, application of pesticides, careful selection and controlled density of seedlings, in order to sustain banana production.

To understand the dynamics of the banana economy on the local level it is important to disaggregate the multiple causes of conflict over access to land and water apart from identifying the constituencies involved. During my fieldwork in September 2002 I participated in a fourteen-day workshop in Merka town organised by the Somalia European Committee for Agricultural Training (CEFA).[369] The workshop consisted of theoretical and practical sessions. For the practical sessions, we travelled to various villages including Deg Jannaay, Jaanjow and Shalambood. There, workshop participants facilitated discussions with farmers. Data was collected by CEFA staff from farmers during three consecutive meetings in the study area. Using cards written in Somali, the participants constructed a problem tree, which was then presented to representatives of all farmers who drew water and benefited from canal Shiikhaal in a fourth consultative meeting in Shalambood (see chart 4.1). The problems were raised in brainstorming sessions, collected and put in order. The problem tree is a tool to identify and visualise the main problems of farmers, and gives an indication of possible causes. This Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) exercise had the purpose to "show once again, the *cause and effect* relationship, of the farmers' problems and to further discuss their solutions, including the fact that with intervention at the 'root cause level' and with maintenance of the outcomes of such interventions, the other problems – effects – would resolve themselves".[370]

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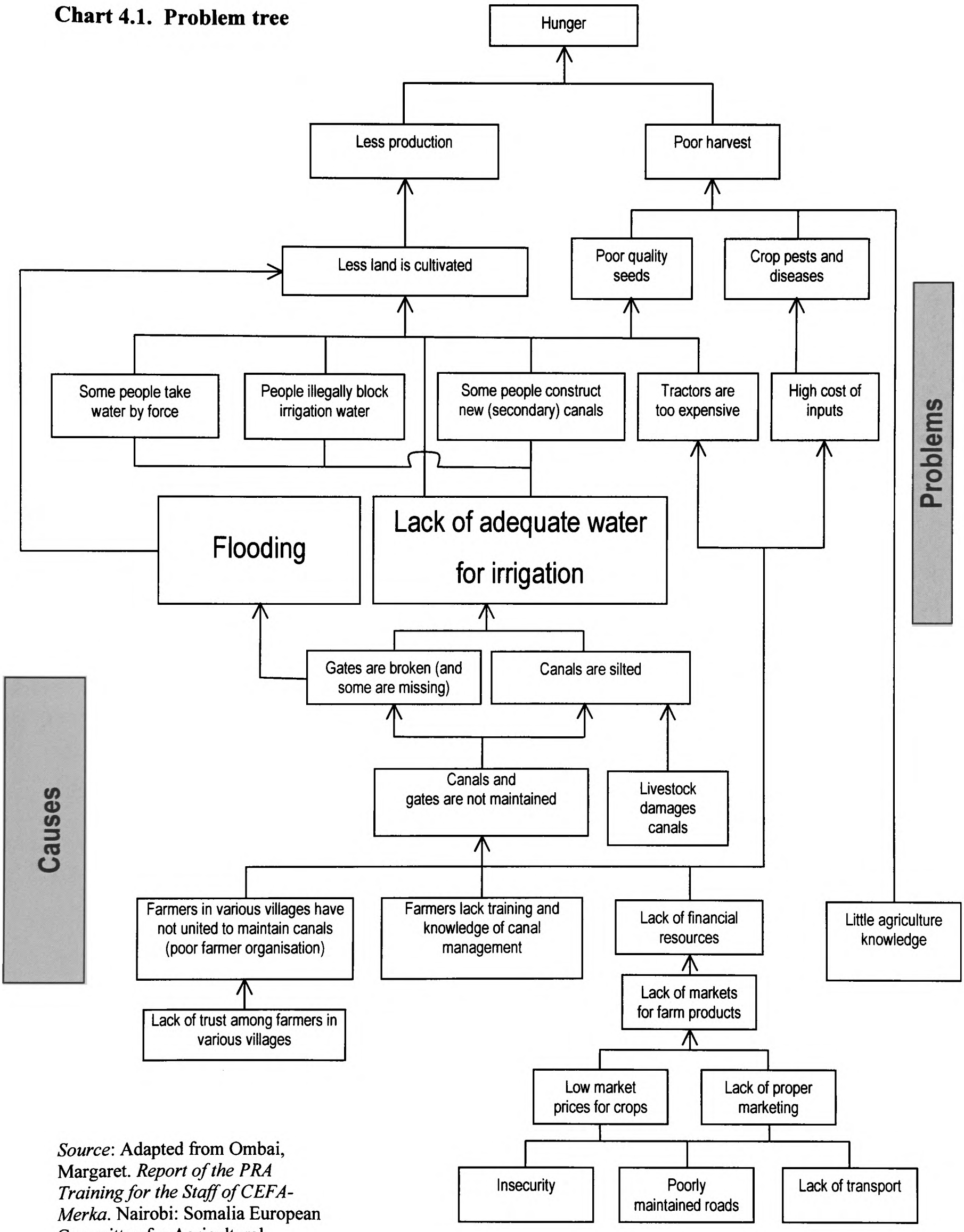
[369] Ombai, *Report of the PRA Training for the Staff of CEFA-Merka.*
[370] Ombai, *Report of the PRA Training for the Staff of CEFA-Merka*, 4.

Chart 4.1. Problem tree



Source: Adapted from Ombai, Margaret. *Report of the PRA Training for the Staff of CEFA-Merka*. Nairobi: Somalia European Committee for Agricultural Training, 2002.

Two main problems are worth noting, flooding and the lack of irrigation water. Participants of the Participatory Rural Appraisal exercise identified silted canals and broken flood gates as immediate problems causing the above mentioned. In both ranking exercises, farmers ranked silted canals first and broken flood gates second (see table 4.2 & 4.3). Both problems are interrelated. In the rainy season, water from Ethiopian catchments carries large amounts of sediment which silt up canals fairly quickly when floodgates are dysfunctional in preventing the sediment to enter canals.

According to the problem tree, poor community organisation, the lack of training and knowledge of canal management and lack of capital were considered as direct causes of silted canals and the inavailability of adequate water for irrigation. Since the collapse of the government canals were rehabilitated and excavated only on a case-by-case basis by international agencies as forms of emergency humanitarian assistance. Underlying causes of agricultural failure were mistrust among farmers of various villages and few markets to sell their agricultural produce. Poorly maintained roads and lack of transport were seen as equally important.

In the brain-storming session, the deteriorating security situation was also mentioned. But poor security was not ranked as a concern of prime importance (rank 9) in the pair-wise ranking exercise (see table 4.2). The result differed significantly (rank 3) when problems were ranked according to the proportional ranking method (see table 4.3). This result reveals that affected farmers do not feel free to express their security concerns in an open debate. Often, farmers told me personally about violent forms of water extraction and forced 'taxation', but they did not raise the issue in general discussions. This attitude can partly be explained with the dominance of Haber Gedir clansmen represented in the Somalia European Committee for Agricultural Training which was seen by the indigenous population to promote the interests of the occupying Haber Gedir clans. Here, oral testimonials collected by another NGO shed light on the current situation: A Darod

women who stayed in Kurtunwarey after the collapse of the former regime explains how forced 'taxation' works:

> They [armed militia] position themselves at every inlet and outlet channels and demand: 'That canal, that canal, we need a million [Somali shilling] from them [the farmers] for each canal. This canal one million, that a million. There are seven canals, so we need seven million, some people will pay.' Those who are powerful do not pay this money. Once they reach the canal, they use the power of their gun to irrigate their fields. Who lacks the power of the gun is forced to pay the money. The money can even be collected from you twice to compensate for those powerful ones who don't pay.[371]

A Jido elder from Kurtunwarey agrees and expresses his concerns: "We have problems bringing our cattle to the canal because the canal water is being sold and still today the sale of the canal water goes on."[372] Insecurity has a significant effect on the storage and selling of grain. If looting is a problem farmers try to avoid storing their harvest. Also, insecurity limits long-term investments in food-processing facilities.

Further, participants of the workshop mentioned the lack of a central organisation that could manage the rehabilitation of canals or controlling river levels keeping agricultural productivity low. Before the war, it was the government which excavated canals and maintained the infrastructure, I was told. Since the canal system is not managed on a regional level anymore, many canals – even some of the primary ones – silted up. As a consequence, water to irrigate farms became scarce, and conflict arose over accessing it.

In addition, several interviewees stated that there was very little cooperation between small-scale and plantation farmers within the region to solve the stated problems. When I attended a meeting of smallholder farmers in Shalambood on 19 September 2002, none of the plantation owners was present. Here, farmers raised concerns about cooperation largely with reference to the excavation of canals. Conversely, when I participated in a meeting with a plantation owner on 18 September 2002, the discussion took place outside

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[371] ACORD interview in Kurtunwarey, southern Somalia, on 16 April 2001.
[372] ACORD interview in Kurtunwarey, southern Somalia, on 16 April 2001.

the village and without participation of smallholders guarded by his militia. This was the case in Jaanjow village which depends on irrigation water from canal Shiikhaal that runs in parallel to the primary canal (canal Dawlaaddeed, see map 3). Canal Shiikhaal is used by 90 per cent of small-scale farmers.[373] Smallholder farmers signalled their interest in the rehabilitation those canals which bypass the primary canals in order to become less dependent on large-scale farmers, through whose land some of their water runs.

Table 4.2. Pair-wise ranking of problems (voting by consensus)[1]

Problem	Poor community organisation	Silted canals	Broken gates	Poor roads	Lack of pumps	High cost of inputs	Lack of crop diversification	Marketing problems	Hunger	Insecurity	Score	Rank
Poor community organisation	-	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	5	**5**
Silted canals	1	-	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9	**1**
Broken gates	1	0	-	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	8	**2**
Poor roads	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	**8**
Lack of water pumps	0	0	0	1	-	0	0	0	1	1	3	**7**
High cost of inputs	0	0	0	1	1	-	0	0	1	1	4	**6**
Lack of crop diversification	1	0	0	1	1	1	-	1	1	1	7	**3**
Marketing problems	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	-	1	1	6	**4**
Food shortage	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0	**10**
Insecurity	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	1	**9**

[1] *Source*: Adapted from Ombai, Margaret. *Report of the PRA Training for the Staff of CEFA-Merka.* Nairobi: Somalia European Committee for Agricultural Training, 2002.

Moreover, villagers accused banana growers of deliberately blocking water from reaching the secondary canals.[374] They complained that a short canal passing through a banana plantation providing water for canal Shiikhaal and connecting it with the main canal Dawlaaddeed had very limited water flow. Other farmers complained they had to pay a levy to armed militia for the extraction of water. In order to prevent armed militias from

[373] Author's fieldwork in Lower Shabelle in September 2002.
[374] Field visit to Jaanjow village, southern Somalia, on 23 September 2002.

controlling irrigation water, farmers deliberately destroyed floodgates. This in turn led to further destruction of the existing infrastructure. Then, farmers themselves resort to the use of arms to extract water for irrigating their fields. Although violence constituted a day-to-day experience, hardly any farmer who participated in the PRA exercise mentioned the specifics of the conflict. This could be largely due to the lack of trust within the wider community. A local Garre from the Digil clan family, who works as an agricultural extension officer, commented: "The nature of the civil war is to be silent."[375]

Table 4.3. Ranking of problems related to agriculture (proportional piling method)[1]

Problem	Size of pile (based on number of votes)	Rank
Poor community organisation	12	**2**
Silted canals	27	**1**
Broken gates	12	**2**
Poor roads	0	**7**
Lack of water pumps	0	**7**
High cost of inputs	3	**5**
Lack of crop diversification	1	**6**
Marketing problems	6	**4**
Food shortage	0	**7**
Insecurity	9	**3**

[1] *Source*: Adapted from Ombai, Margaret. *Report of the PRA Training for the Staff of CEFA-Merka.* Nairobi: Somalia European Committee for Agricultural Training, 2002.

In addition, livestock herders cross and damage canal and river embankments without sanctions. This is because water reservoirs designed for watering livestock have been converted into farms. Herders could not be fined or punished if they were armed. Above all, high 'taxes' collected at numerous checkpoints, unusable roads and high transaction costs inhibit traders from reaching markets for their produce. One informant told me about the trade between Jowhar[376] in Middle Shabelle and Mogadishu. He claimed that the transport of one goat of the value of 100,000 shillings costs him 30,000 shillings in 'taxes'. Similarly, he must pay 20,000 shillings for one sack of maize of the value of

[375] Interview in Merka, southern Somalia, on 18 September 2002.
[376] 90 kilometres north of Mogadishu.

70,000 shillings. In Merka, a cup of camel milk was sold for 2,500 shillings and sold for 5,000 shillings in Mogadishu.[377] Rice and sugar, once locally produced, had to be imported at high cost. In an environment where the rule of force has become common, conflict and war destroyed the plenty of these 'high potential' areas leading to environmental scarcity. Only improved security, infrastructure and marketing on the village level can help smallholders to increase productivity.

Although there was a lack of community organisation, I found that farmers from Shalambood had formed a farmers' association of 3,000 members named Somali-TACAB[378] in order to overcome their organisational problems.[379] In one group discussion, a member of TACAB claimed that about 80 per cent of the farmers in the region would be willing to participate in an organisation if the conditions improve.[380] What was lacking was the organisational strength to rehabilitate canals, level fields and market the produce including appropriate storage and port facilities.

Large-scale farmers, whose plantations are in the vicinity of the main canals are not represented in this association, and see no moral obligation to cooperate with smallholders who live at the periphery of the irrigation system. Plantation farmers cultivate land between the river and the primary canals. They grow other fruit trees in areas less suitable for intensive banana production. Since ownership over land is often disputed plantation farmers hardly find it worthwhile to invest in capital intensive activities, such as excavating canals. Uncertainty diminishes the incentive to cooperate with smallholders. When I was visiting a large farm which changed ownership after the war, the owner expressed interest in excavating the primary canal without considering secondary or tertiary canals. The meeting took place outside the village Deg Jannaay under the guardianship of his militia men. According to my observations, he acted as

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[377] Interview in Merka, southern Somalia, on 18 September 2002.
[378] The full version of TACAB was not available.
[379] Author's fieldwork in Lower Shabelle, September 2002.
[380] Interview with local small-scale farmers in Shalambood, southern Somalia, on 19 September 2002.

gate-keeper preventing villagers or farmers from expressing their grievances.[381] It is common in Lower Shabelle that large-scale plantation farmers maintain their own militia to protect their property and business activities.

When the banana growing industry was still intact, and in the years that followed the collapse of the banana regime, the trade was economically beneficial only for a small urban-based elite. It should be recognised that banana production had two main social implications. Firstly, large farms relied on wage labourers who often lived in villages close to the plantations or onsite. The work on the plantations is highly labour intensive. The cultivation of bananas requires several different tasks ranging from levelling the fields, planting of seedlings, controlling density of the seedlings, trimming and watering to harvesting. The majority of these tasks are done by female children aged between eight and fifteen.[382] The wages were so low that most males were unwilling to work. Average wages were believed to be as low as US$ 0.10 per day with average working hours beginning at 7:30 in the morning until 8:00 in the evening.[383] But since unemployment was extremely high, plantation owners can hire hungry children. Menkhaus and Craven confirm that children, especially young girls, were the predominant causal labour in the banana plantations who worked for a daily wage as low as US$ 0.25.[384] Besides children, the landless class of Bantu people work in the plantations for a dollar per day. One source estimated their daily income ranged between one and four US dollars when Dole and de Nadai had contracts with plantation owners in the mid-1990s.[385] It is probable that competition between the two international firms briefly led to an increase of wages.

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[381] Interview near Deg Jannaay village, Merka district, with plantation owner on 18 September 2002.
[382] Samatar, Abdi Ismail, "Empty Bowl: Agrarian Political Economy in Transition and the Crises of Accumulation," *The Somali Challenge: From Catastrophe to Renewal?*, ed. Ahmed Ismail Samatar (Boulder, London: Lynne Rienner, 1994).
[383] Samatar, "Empty Bowl: Agrarian Political Economy in Transition and the Crises of Accumulation", 84.
[384] Menkhaus and Craven, "Land Alienation and the Imposition of State Farms in the Lower Jubba Valley", 168.
[385] Menkhaus and Prendergast, *Prospects for Governance and Economic Survival in Post-Intervention Somalia.*

Secondly, banana plantations exclude hundred per cent of the transhumant livestock. In the dry season, pastoralists were able to obtain freely crop residuals from farmers. Where maize and sesame is grown, land is available to transhumant herders on a seasonal basis. In exchange, farmers obtain milk, meat and skins from pastoral communities. According to Unruh's research findings, owners of large farms held a smaller percentage of fodder-producing land available to transhumant herders.[386] He explains this with reference to large-scale farmers being 'outsiders' to the region without the longstanding knowledge of smallholder farmers about the reciprocal exchange relationships that had bound farmers and herders. Besides, owners of large farms, such as banana plantations, are more likely to produce for the export and urban market, and hence are less dependent on local consumers to sell their produce. With no organised group to manage transhumant populations, permission to access land was given on an individual basis.

In the past, the overall problem of the banana sector was not stagnation. The sector had recovered steadily until the beginning of the civil war. Instead, the critical question remains, in which way the scarce and precious land suited for irrigation is used and how economic benefits are distributed among traders, farmers and workers. Here, a stronger state based on efficiency and accountability, could act as a coordinator and facilitator. Bringing back multinational companies cannot alone solve the Somali agricultural crisis since most of the export earnings remain in the foreign hands and as a result, the net economic impact on the accumulation of national capital remains limited.[387] Further, it is unlikely that the material situation of wage labourers will improve since margins at the production level used to be less than two per cent of the overall retail price.[388]

In summary, I argue for the revival of the banana sector under certain conditions. Due to the collapse of the banana economy, wages have fallen and a large proportion of the Bantu population lost their income and subsequently increasing their social

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[386] Unruh, "Resource Sharing: Smallholders and Pastoralists in Shalambood, Lower Shabelle Valley".
[387] Samatar, "Empty Bowl: Agrarian Political Economy in Transition and the Crises of Accumulation", 87.
[388] Samatar, "Empty Bowl: Agrarian Political Economy in Transition and the Crises of Accumulation", 86.

vulnerability. If local authorities enforce labour standards, and property and land rights are undisputed, a healthier banana sector will improve the overall export position and bring in the capital investment to help restore the infrastructure. Maintaining irrigation canals is capital intensive and demands the financial muscle of a state or multinational corporation. Smallholder farmers would benefit, as they rely on maintained primary canals to water their fields. Cooperation between all stake-holders is important in order to run a functioning irrigation system. In addition, agricultural development should focus equally on sectors in which smallholders have a greater stake, producing for both the domestic and the export market, such as sugar cane, rice, peanuts, beans and sesame. The provision of water on the peripheries of irrigated farm blocks is also important both for transhumant pastoralists and for the farmers whose land they now traverse.

4.5. Concluding remarks

In conclusion, it seems that conflict did not directly arise over land ownership. Moreover, conflict was related to distributional issues in terms of taxation and marketing by political factions and traders respectively. This chapter demonstrates that the rich agricultural areas in the Shabelle valley and the taxation of export trade of cash crops became the bone of contention and triggering violent conflict causing the two multinational corporations to pull out Somalia. Clearly, taxes collected from multinational corporations involved in the banana sector financed militias of various factions, particularly United Somali Congress factions. This supports one of the main arguments of this thesis that violent conflict is rarely linked to absolute scarcity or abundance of resources. Rather, it is linked to the distribution of these valuable assets. What is more, formerly sophisticated systems of resource-sharing between smallholder farmers and large-scale farmers as well as between nomadic people and sedentary farmers have become dysfunctional. In addition, lack of foreign direct investment and government involvement, changes in the international trade regime, coupled with natural disasters have resulted in the collapse of the banana trade. Although the banana sector employed several thousands of people, it is

unlikely that its development and expansion would alone improve the workers well-being. Benefits from growth are more likely to enrich those who are already well-off, urban nationals and international traders, limiting welfare effects for the region and the country as a whole.

The collapse of the banana sector freed numerous labourers who had to look for alternatives. The charcoal production opened new forms of income (see chapter VI). Though the long term costs may be great, the pursuit of immediate benefits prevails. Environmental problems such as tree cutting, sand due encroachment and the loss of grazing areas are consequences of the charcoal boom. Moreover, the local population feels excluded from the business activities surrounding the trade. In parallel to the case study in chapter six, armed conflict arose over unjust distribution of potential high margins of the lucrative export trade.

In the absence of law and order, land and property changed hands through forceful means over the past twelve years. This assumption has been considered at the ongoing peace talks in Kenya led by the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (see 8.1.5). The issue of "land disputes, return of property and modalities for settlement of past abuses" have to be addressed in a meaningful and constructive way if peace should prevail. However, a formal system of land tenure issuing title deeds as being practised in Somaliland would be less desirable in the Shabelle valley as individual ownership of land hardly exists and would disrupt the historical reciprocal exchange relationships between pastoralists and farmers. Above all, addressing land tenure would improve social resilience as Omaar and de Waal argue: "The traditional foundation of communal solidarity and the institution of the elders is land holding and allocation. Hence,

addressing the land tenure issue is likely to have a positive impact on other elements of social rehabilitation."[389]

[389] Omaar and De Waal, *Land Tenure: The Creation of Famine and Prospects for Peace in Somalia*, 7.

CHAPTER FIVE

The struggle of the marginalised

5. FACTIONAL FIGHTING IN THE SHABELLE VALLEY

5.1. Introduction

The second case study analyses a localised inter-clan conflict between two ethnic groups, the Jido and the *Jareer* in Qorioley and Kurtunwarey district in the Shabelle valley. The area where the fighting occurred is diverse in clan composition. Similar to the preceding case, conflict arose over taxation of water but on a local level. In this particular case, the armed struggle was not related to the banana trade but to the extraction of water at the river and canal banks and fishing activities. The armed struggle also reflects the political and economic exclusion of the *Jareer* community. *Jareer* or Bantu farmers had to pay for access to the river and the main canals, which are situated in proximity to their villages. Predergast argues that the farming communities were targeted because of their vulnerability and weaknesses and because "of valuable farmland coveted by other clans – a problem which pre-dated the civil war and intensified during it".[390]

Moreover, this case study of conflict offers insights into identity politics. Here, conflict is linked to the struggle for self-determination of marginalised groups, such as the *Jareer*. Most importantly, clan identity is not necessarily related to state formation, the mobilisation and assertion of a distinct identity is more about making claims within states, particularly in states which have become predatory and oppressive in nature.[391] In the past, Somalis experienced a state apparatus whose elites decided who should gain access to land and other valuable resources. Doornbos and Markakis claim that "throughout Africa, whatever the ideology of the regime, the state controls the production and distribution of material and social resources. The struggle for resources, therefore, is

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[390] Prendergast, John, "The Forgotten Agenda in Somalia," *Review of African Political Economy* 21.59 (1994): 68.
[391] Salim Said, Zuleikha, "State Decomposition and Clan Identities in Somalia," M.Phil., University of Oxford, 2002, 96.

waged through the agency of the state, because access to state power provides access to resources."[392]

But because they are one of the most numerous groups in Lower Shabelle, different political groups lobby for the support of the *Jareer* possible with an eye on future political settlement. In this respect, I aim at demonstrating how clan identity is instrumentally used by faction leaders to deploy and perpetuate power in order to access resources. Faction leaders deliberately use ethnic differences between the *Jareer* and other Somali clans to maintain their power. This highlights the relational aspect of clanism or ethnicity creating a sense of identity and defining the enemy.[393] Besides, physical power became the means to acquire material wealth and security. Mariam Arif Gassem observes a link between power, wealth and security:

> Somalia's [...] deadly disease is the struggle for power. One of Siyad Barre's worst legacies is power addiction. The dark culture of his dictatorial regime injected into the minds of every single Somali the appetite for power, whether for the individual or for the tribe. Power in Somalia is synonymous with wealth, freedom and personal security.[394]

As a parallel but linked development, I found that the radical fragmentation of society questions the organising principle of the political unit of the clan for the purpose of state formation in Somalia. This organising principle was proposed by the Arta process in 2000 and the Somalia National Reconciliation Conference in 2002. (see chapter VIII). I am convinced that strategies to use clan loyalty to mobilise force for military support, or to base emerging non-state administrations on clan is doomed to failure. The fragmentation of the Somali society became apparent in all aspects of life. The following case study demonstrates that disagreements over political issues, such as reconciliation, go down to even the family level. This view was reiterated by a member of Somalia's Transitional

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[392] Doornbos, Martin and John Markakis, "Society and State in Crisis: What went wrong in Somalia?," *Review of African Political Economy* 21.59 (1994): 84.
[393] See Turton, "War and Ethnicity: Global Connections and Local Violence in North East Africa and Former Yugoslavia".
[394] Gassem, Mariam Arif, *Hostages: The People who kidnapped themselves* (Nairobi: Central Graphics Services, 1994) 137.

National Government: "Today, people from the same clan family are fighting each other."[395] A Somali proverb captures the potential for radical fragmentation:

> Me and my clan against the world
> Me and my family against the clan
> Me and my brother against the family
> Me against my brother[396]

Nevertheless, clan and statehood in Somalia are complementary. But clan as an organising principle cannot work in a state that is highly centralised and highly authoritarian as it has been the case in Somalia's colonial and post-colonial history. Doornbos and Markakis describe the Somali post-colonial state as "highly centralised, it sought to impose a uniform set of rules and policies of alien origin on highly differentiated societies. Highly authoritarian, it stifled normal political competition which reflects the balance of domestic social forces, and created explosive opposition pressure that could only be contained by force."[397]

The following incident of inter-clan fighting took place in districts neighbouring that of the preceding case study. Here, conflict materialised in the struggle by the *Jareer* demanding their fair share of precious land and participation in politics. Berry writes that "struggles over land in postcolonial Africa have been as much about power and the legitimacy of competing claims to authority, as about control of property *per se*."[398] Somalia's Bantu population has suffered from racial discrimination and *de facto* apartheid. Their social vulnerability is due to their lack of control over physical force, i.e. local militias who engage in looting and predatory behaviour. Further, as most of the *Jareer* are descendants of former slaves they were integrated into the clan system by being taken into the clan family that owned their parents, they became divided among

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[395] Interview in Merka, southern Somalia, on 31 August 2002.
[396] Others interpret this proverb as a sign of the fluidity of the Somali lineage politics. See Menkhaus, Kenneth, *Studies on Governance in Lower Jubba Region* (Nairobi: United Nations Development Office for Somalia, 1999), 30.
[397] Doornbos and Markakis, "Society and State in Crisis: What went wrong in Somalia?" 84.
[398] Berry, "Debating the Land Question in Africa": 639.

different clans. A third reason for their weak standing in the region was the lack of an educated leadership that could represent their interests in the political arena. Since few Bantu own land they have been dependent on wage labour largely working on the plantations in the Shabelle valley. They have been poorly paid, coming last in the Somali social hierarchy. Racial discrimination is based on physiological stereotypes and descent. Although they account for a large part of the overall population, in particular in the riverine areas, they are considered a minority by Somalis. They live as adopted members or *sheegad* under 'ethnic' Somali clans.

The notion of a over-arching 'Bantu' identity developed in the 1990s, when international aid agencies identified Bantu communities as the most vulnerable groups in the famine. As Menkhaus explains: "the term quickly caught on, in part because of the perceived political and economic gains for 'vulnerable groups' in the context of a massive humanitarian intervention".[399] Somali clans with large Bantu-client populations, in particular the Bimal, Dabare and Geledi in Lower Shabelle, reject the term Bantu because they see the danger of their Bantu members breaking away making political and economic claims, a theme to which I return later.[400] Yet, making claims within the society or state are considered the constructive elements of clan identity. So far, little academic work has been dedicated to the relationship between the *Jareer* or Bantu and ethnic Somali clans in relation to land and conflict. The following case study aims to go a little way in filling this gap in the literature.

Local accounts date the inter-clan fighting back to 1993 when there was a large number of casualties. I have information about clashes only from January 2002 that left 15 people dead and 20 wounded. Moreover, four villages were burned to the ground forcing hundreds of people to flee.[401] It was reported that that "the fighting was between the Jido and *Jareer* sub-clans, which normally coexist relatively peacefully, and was

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[399] Menkhaus, *Studies on Governance in Lower Jubba Region*, 28.
[400] Menkhaus, *Studies on Governance in Lower Jubba Region.*
[401] BBC, "Somalia Fighting 'leaves 50 dead'," *BBC News* 26 January 2002.

sparked off by a dispute over land in the drought-hit valley of the Lower Shabelle River".[402] The same incident was mentioned during a consultative committee meeting of the Somalia Aid Coordination Body (SACB) in Nairobi. The minutes of the SACB meeting mentions about 10 people killed and 20 wounded in the Qorioley area.[403] In August 2002, sporadic fighting reoccurred between the Jido and the *Jareer* in several villages in Qorioley and Kurtunwarey district.

5.2. The historic-social context

One of the most numerous clans in Qorioley and Kurtunwarey district is the Digil. According to anthropological writings the Digil clan is divided into seven sub-clans (see chart 5.1). The Jido is one branch of the seven sub-clans of the Digil. Within clans, in particular in the riverine areas, there are further social boundaries. One of them is between ethnic Somalis and descendants of former slaves, the *Jareer*. The continuity of the segmentary clan system depends on the maintenance of social boundaries. They entail "criteria for determining membership and ways of signalling membership and exclusion".[404] *Jareer* usually do not consider themselves as ethnic Somalis because they are not part of the Somali genealogy. They are largely adopted client members of a Somali lineage. Yet, they see themselves as Somali citizens. Adopted clan status or *sheegad* is practised by minority groups including Bantu people seeking the protection of more powerful clans. In declaring *sheegad* the adopted member takes on client status within the lineage of the adopting clan. This practice allows the peaceful integration of newcomers into resident clans. Further, it adds to the complexity of lineage identity in the riverine areas, such as Lower Shabelle or the Juba region. In the riverine areas, Bantu people were permanently incorporated into the adopting clan through *sheegad* as Menkhaus notes: "In some cases (typically, in agricultural communities), *sheegad* status

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[402] BBC, "Somalia Fighting 'leaves 50 dead'".
[403] Somalia Aid Coordination Body, *Draft Summary of Proceedings* (Nairobi: SACB, Consultative Committee Meeting, 2002).
[404] Barth, Fredrik, *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1969) 15.

becomes permanent incorporation into the dominant clan; in other cases (typically, in pastoral settings), *sheegad* status can be renounced and old clan identity revived."[405]

This distinction between 'ethnic' Somalis and the Bantu is mainly based on racial stereotypes, according to which adopted members, the *Jareer*, display more pronounced 'African' features. The term for the Somali Bantu namely *Jareer* translates literally into 'hard' meaning people with hard and curly hair. What matters is physical appearance. The origins of a common ethnic Bantu identity did not develop until the start of the civil war at the beginning of the 1990s. Menkhaus claims that the term 'Bantu' was not commonly used in Somali language before the war: "Ironically, it was the ethnic Somalis who were more likely to treat all Bantu as a common group, using terms like *Jareer*."[406] Other derogatory terms used by Somalis for Bantu people include *adoon*, which can be translated as 'slave' or *oggi*, which in Italian means 'today'. This term refers to the believe that Somali Bantu only live for the moment without the ability to think beyond their immediate needs. These derogatory terms indicate the degree of discrimination against the Bantu community.

Intermarriages between the *Jareer* and the Somali are hardly practised. In Somali society, married women link the clans of their fathers and brothers to whom they belong to the clans of their husbands to whom their children belong. Nomadic clans practised a form of exogamy-marriage outside clans in order to strengthen strategic alliances between clans or help to mediate disputes over water and pasture. The social exclusion from intermarriages with other Somali clans – although polygamy is socially accepted – prevent the *Jareer* of accessing protection, social and legal rights that clan affiliation bring. In particular in Lower Shabelle, the Bantu constitute a strong demographic component of the population.[407] However, their estimates vary greatly. Lewis estimated

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[405] Menkhaus, *Studies on Governance in Lower Jubba Region*, 24.
[406] Menkhaus, *Studies on Governance in Lower Jubba Region*, 28.
[407] Marchal, *Lower Shabelle Region Study on Governance*, 109.

80,000 Bantu living along the Shabelle and Juba rivers in the 1980s.[408] In the same period, van Lehman and Eno estimated the total Bantu population in southern Somalia at about 600,000 out of a total Somali population of 7.5 million.[409] Many *Jareer* speak a different language, some practise a non-Muslim religion and can claim a separate ethnic descent. As most Digil clans, the *Jareer* speak Af-may which is related to Af-mahad, the language of the northern Somali clans. They are not mutable intelligible.[410] At the southern coast of Brawa some speak Swahili dialects. In this respect, it is worth noting that Somalia is less homogeneous in terms of ethnicity, religion and language, in particular in the South than claimed by some Somali scholars.[411] Mukhtar explains why this myth has survived: "The monoculture [...] is extrapolated mainly from the study of the northern part of the country where most of the field research about Somali culture was undertaken."[412] In particular the civil war has widened the gap between different social groups. The 2001 UNDP National Human Development Report claims that "civil war has led to a questioning of a single Somali sovereignty and has revealed the heterogeneity of Somali society and culture."[413]

Menkhaus points out that ethnic Somali clans are not the first inhabitants of the fertile riverine land. Swahili speaking Bantu farmers are believed to have migrated along the East African coast and settled in the Shabelle valley before the arrival of 'ethnic' Somali tribes which migrated from southern Ethiopia moving to the northern and central regions of present-day Somalia. From there, ethnic Somali clans moved southward to the riverine areas.[414] What is not clear is to what extent the Bimal, Geledi and other Somali

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[408] Lewis, *A Modern History of Somalia: Nation and State in the Horn of Africa*, 7.
[409] Van Lehman, Dan and Omar Eno, *The Somali Bantu: Their History and Culture* (Washington D.C.: Center for Applied Linguistics and Cultural Orientation Resource Center. Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration of the U.S. Department of State, 2002).
[410] Mukhtar, "The Plight of the Agro-Pastoral Society of Somalia".
[411] See Samatar, *Somalia: A Nation in Turmoil.* Laitin and Samatar, *Somalia: Nation in Search of a State.*
[412] Mukhtar, Mohamed Haji, *War of Resources: The Plight of the Agro-Pastoral Society of Somalia, Paper presented to the 6th International Congress of Somali Studies* (Berlin: Savannah State University, 1996), 2.
[413] United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report, Somalia 2001*, 34.
[414] Menkhaus, *Studies on Governance in Lower Jubba Region*, 23.

clans took up farming and to what extent they exploited the labour of client-cultivator groups who had settled in the region much earlier.[415]

Most of the Bantu living in contemporary southern Somalia are descendants of enslaved Bantu by the Sultanate of Zanzibar of 18th century.[416] Their ancestral tribes came largely from present-day South Tanzania, North Mozambique, Zambia and Malawi. As slaves they were shipped along the East African coast to serve labourers in the agricultural sector, mainly on plantation farms. It is estimated that between 25,000 to 50,000 East African slaves were assimilated into to riverine areas between 1800 and 1890.[417] The expansion of this sector in the 18th century along the Shabelle river made the growth of the slave-trade possible. Slavery and the introduction of the cash economy resulted in the breakdown of intertribal economic and social networks. Accordingly, many Africans lost social resilience in times of severe droughts. In foreseeing a better future, they accepted promises by Omani Arab traders of wage labour in southern Somalia or elsewhere.[418] The Italian administration started to free the first slaves at the end of the nineteenth century. Then, at the beginning of the twentieth century, the Italian administration officially abolished slavery according to the Belgium Protocol.

After slavery, the *Jareer* were subordinated under that Somali clan that had owned their parents. Others joined settlements of fugitive Bantu slaves in Lower Juba where they retained their ancestral religion and language. In order to serve the labour needs of the agricultural industry, the Italian administration passed labour laws to conscript freed slaves into the plantations. Freed slaves became economic slaves through forced conscription and with the help of former Somali slave owners. A British official noted: "The conception of these agricultural enterprises as exploitation concessions engendered under the [Italian] fascist regime a labour policy of considerable severity in theory and

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[415] Cassanelli, *The Shaping of Somali Society: Reconstructing the History of a Pastoral People, 1600-1900*, 163.
[416] Cassanelli, *The Shaping of Somali Society: Reconstructing the History of a Pastoral People, 1600-1900.*
[417] Van Lehman and Eno, *The Somali Bantu: Their History and Culture.*
[418] Van Lehman and Eno, *The Somali Bantu: Their History and Culture.*

actual brutality in practice. It was in fact indistinguishable from slavery."[419] Later under British rule, many *Jareer* established themselves as smallholder and subsistence farmers. Others migrated to towns and cities where they became manual labourers and petty traders.

Today, segregation between Somali clans and the *Jareer* is still enforced by ethnic Somali clans. This segregation is based not only on racial differences but also on different livelihoods. Jido are traditionally nomadic herders. *Jareer* maintain their livelihood from causal labour and smallholder farming. Pastoralists consider agriculturists as lower class in society. However, it would too simplistic to classify the inter-clan conflict as a conflict of a pastoralist versus an agricultural community, a theme to which I return in chapter seven.

The *Jareer's* exclusion from the political decision-making process is constituted in their lack of political representation in official bodies. Analysing the clan distribution of the district council both in Qorioley and Kurtunwarey it seems that grievances expressed by the *Jareer* about political representation are justified. In the two districts affected by the clashes, the *Jareer* did not hold any of the key administrative posts. In Qorioley district, the District Commissioner is Haber Gedir. The *Jareer* had only three members in a 35-member District Council, which was appointed in 1999. In all the preceding local administrations since 1991, no *Jareer* were nominated for either one of the two most important posts, the District Commissioner or Mayor. Only during the time of UNOSOM, one *Jareer* man was appointed general secretary of the administration. A Garre man was appointed District Commissioner. However, the new District Council faced strong opposition from Aideed's Haber Gedir clan who were not represented in the Council. Members of Aideed's clan did everything in order to sabotage the local administration which was set up by a UNOSOM political delegation in Merka. In November 1993 and

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[419] Cited in: Van Lehman and Eno, *The Somali Bantu: Their History and Culture.*

after the US lost eighteen soldiers in an attempt to capture Aideed, his faction of the Somali National Alliance appointed a new 32-member District Council.[420]

Although the *Jareer* were legally allowed to participate in politics, they had neither the economic means nor the educational skills to defend their interests. This is also rooted in the colonial period. The Italians were not interested in providing educational services; rather they "came to southern Somalia because they were mainly interested in cultivating their farms in the riverine areas. This is why Italians did not promote educational skills. They tried to integrate only in the sense to understand politics in order to counter uprising."[421] In the period of the civil war and thereafter the *Jareer* continued to be subjected to discrimination. They have been victim to famine, forced migration and the diversion of humanitarian aid. Menkhaus remarks: "In times of war or humanitarian crisis, the distinction between 'being Somali' and 'being Bantu' is not academic – it can make the difference between living and dying."[422] As an ethnic group, they are confined to their constructed social borders.[423] In peace negotiations and emerging non-state administrations they have been allocated little political representation.

Besides, their stalemate was due to internal divisions and lack of political leadership. Leading figures of the *Jareer* founded the Somali African Muki Organisation (SAMO) in 1986.[424] The term *Jareerweyn* was introduced in order to create a common identity. After its foundation, the organisation split amongst political factions. Soon in 1991, SAMO/SNA as well as SAMO/SSA and other groups emerged. More than ten years later in 2002 during the Somalia National Reconciliation Process in Eldoret the present Chairman of SAMO, Mowlid Ma'ane Mohamoud, also Chairman of the Leaders

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[420] Marchal, *Lower Shabelle Region Study on Governance*, 93.
[421] Interview in Merka, southern Somalia, on 30 August 2002.
[422] Menkhaus, *Studies on Governance in Lower Jubba Region*, 27.
[423] See Barth, *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*.
[424] Interview with official Chairman of SAMO, Mowlid Ma'ane Mohamoud, at the Somalia National Reconciliation Process in Eldoret, Kenya, on 9 November 2002. Another source cites the year 1992 for the establishment of SAMO (here Somali Africans Muki Organisation) as a Bantu political party. See Menkhaus, *Studies on Governance in Lower Jubba Region*, 28.

Committee, became very vocal in claiming representation of all *Jareer*. He was elected Chairman of the Leaders Committee since the *Jareer* are not considered to constitute a military power and this was seen to put him in a position to mediate between warring factions. In addition, he had good relations with the international community. Mowlid Ma'ane Mohamoud has come a long way to try to build a *Jareer* movement. However, his leadership was disputed among many delegates and *Jareer* I talked to in Mogadishu. His critics accused him of favouring members of his sub-clan for the nomination of the official SAMO delegation. Some delegates claimed that he was protected and promoted by SNA leader Hussein Aideed, one of the influential faction leaders. The case of Mowlid Ma'ane shows how individuals try to monopolise the political leadership of one ethnic group, in this case the *Jareer*. He instrumentally uses grievances on the local level to fulfil his personal ambition for power and influence.

5.3. The factional conflict

Anecdotal evidence tells that the most recent factional fighting was triggered by the murder of a Jido man after he participated in a wedding dance.[425] This Jido man and two *Jareer* were killed when his house was set on fire. The two *Jareer* were guests in the Jido's house. In total, an estimated twelve people were killed during a period of a year. When interviewing members of both clans, it was argued that the assault was triggered by Jido taxing *Jareer* who were fishing at irrigation canals and on river banks. In fact, fish does constitute one source of income for the *Jareer* who to a large extent used to work for wage labour in the banana plantations. Since the collapse of the banana economy in 1997/8, they have had to pursue other sources of income and subsistence farming. Other accounts mention illegitimate taxation of *Jareer* farmers for water extraction from the river and canals. "The situation escalated when a member of the Jido clan demanded taxes from members of the *Jareer* who were using a canal for fishing," I was told.[426]

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[425] Interview in Merka, southern Somalia, on 28 August 2002.
[426] Interview in Merka, southern Somalia, on 28 August 2002.

Demanding 'taxes' for watering livestock or extracting water became common after the collapse of the former regime: "Herders pay fees for water, and even household containers like *ashuun*[427] and *aag*[428] are charged a fee," a Jido clan elder explains.[429] A Darod woman from Kurtunwarey complained: "the nearest source of water is the river. At the river itself there is business going on. There are people at every in/outlet. One of my farms is irrigated at a cost of 500,000 shillings. We used to pay 5000 shillings during the previous government."[430] Flood gates are controlled by armed militia who told the woman: "Per hectare we demand 40,000 Somali shilling or else you will not see water."[431] She added: "if you open the inlet someone will lock it immediately. So do you go to the farm and back to your homestead the whole day? It will force you to pay the 40,000 shillings. Some people will even not be allowed to open the inlet," she concluded.[432]

Access to water played an important role since all the affected villages are situated at either a primary canal or the river Shabelle (see map 4). A Bantu woman from Sablale confirms the difficulties in gaining access to extract water along the river:

> The other day when canal rehabilitation was being undertaken, we were denied access to canals. Now our farms are ready, we have used our hands to cultivate it, but there are no canals and the rain has not come. We have no water pump and the water level of the river is low. Even drinking water is now a problem. There is no one who will allow us even water for *berked*[433], no water was allowed for it. If only you could have seen the water we drink, leaving alone drinking you could not even have used it to wash your legs.[434]

Others argue that the murder was politically motivated.[435] One interviewee claimed that politicians who largely lived in towns contributed to the destabilisation of the region.

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[427] Container made of clay.
[428] Container made of wood, plastic or other material.
[429] ACORD interview in Kurtunwarey, southern Somalia, on 16 April 2001.
[430] ACORD interview in Kurtunwarey, southern Somalia, on 16 April 2001.
[431] ACORD interview in Kurtunwarey, southern Somalia, on 16 April 2001.
[432] ACORD interview in Kurtunwarey, southern Somalia, on 16 April 2001.
[433] Water storage facility/tank, water reservoir, cistern.
[434] ACORD interview in Sablale, southern Somalia, on 14 April 2001.
[435] Reconciliation meeting in Qorioley, southern Somalia, on 29 August 2002.

They remained disconnected from the conflict ridden areas, he added.[436] Another informant whom I met in Eldoret, Kenya, stated: "the fighting among the communities were intended to [split] the Jido and the *Jareer*. In this conflict which started in 1993 some hundred people died. We experienced a lot of situations where farmers had to pay for irrigation water. [...] Behind this conflict are resources. This region is the most fertile what is called the 'bread basket'."[437] Accordingly, farmers were severely affected by the clashes, as one resident explains: "One week off the season are four months lost of living!"[438] Due to climatic variability displaced farmers can lose a full harvest where dependent on rain-fed agriculture. Further, they depend on a social network to overcome labour constraints inherent in their system of agro-pastoral production. If "the people affected by the fighting are brothers, neighbours and friends"[439] – as one resident claimed – social resilience of local communities to cope with the harsh environment is likely to decrease. One displaced resident raised concerns that "personal property will be looted while being expelled from home," he argued.[440]

In the following weeks, the conflict spilled over to other areas leaving several villages burned. Their inhabitants had to flee their homes to relatives and towns and became internally displaced. The affected relatively small twelve villages in the region were: Cabdi Cali, Furuqleey, Maanyomurug, Farkeerow, Gorgaal, Carmooy, Doon Buraale, Cay Carto, Dhallimaanyoley, Bambaaso, Afgooye Yare, Bandar (see map 4).[441] Following the clashes clan elders tried to mediate between the warring factions. At the end of August 2002, I travelled several times to the district capital Qorioley where I met with members of the reconciliation committees, which were set up to resolve the hostilities. I had discussions with the local District Commissioner, with elders of both

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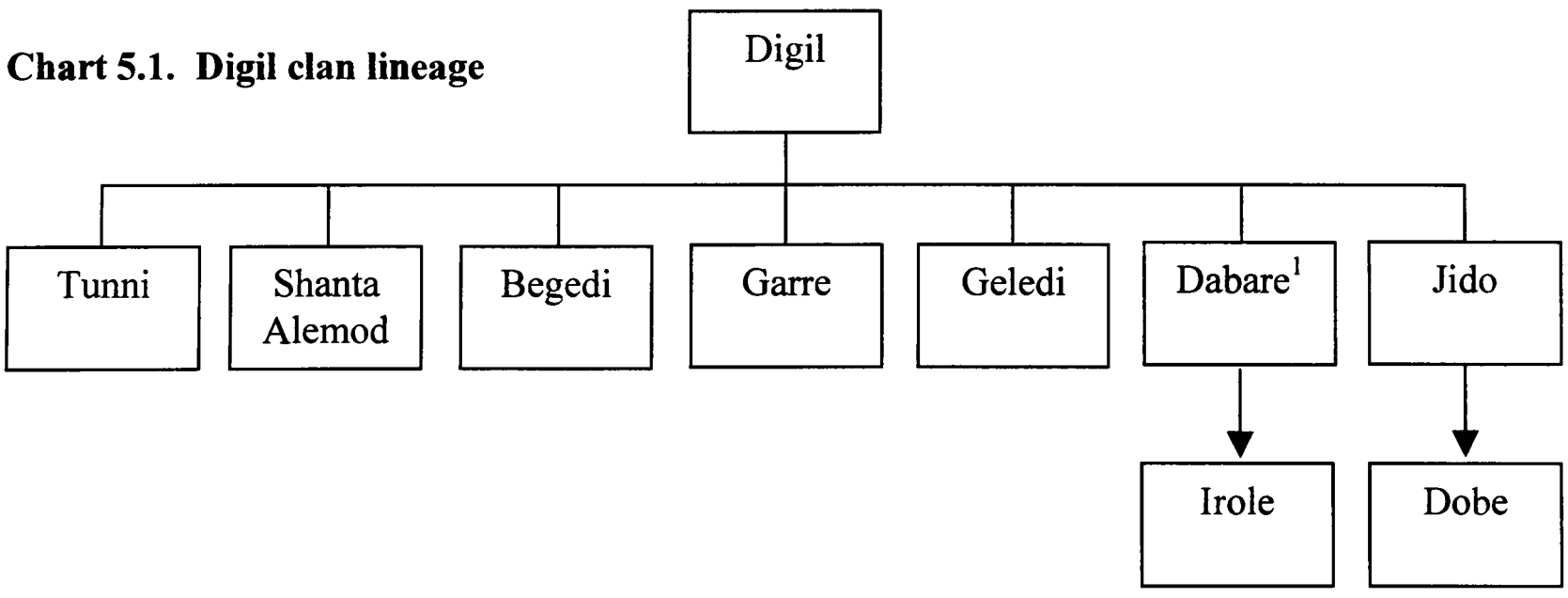
[436] Interview in Qorioley, southern Somalia, on 3 September 2002.
[437] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 9 November 2002.
[438] Interview in Qorioley, southern Somalia, on 3 September 2002.
[439] Interview in Qorioley, southern Somalia, on 3 September 2002.
[440] Meeting with farmers in Qorioley, southern Somalia, on 1 September 2002.
[441] However, the Jido faction did not consider the village Bandar as being affected by the fighting as it represents only *Jareer*.

clans, the *Jareer* and the Jido and their respective Sultans. Through observations and individual interviews it appeared that the *Jareer* were not a unified community. Within the *Jareer* of this region, there exist three sub-groups who live in the affected area.

The first grouping, which was the most radical, sought secession from other Digil clans, and demands to reunite all *Jareer* living in the region in the Dobe-Digil clan. The Dobe claim to be the eighth clan of the Digils (see chart 5.1). The second group of the *Jareer* are considered moderate, claiming equal rights for the *Jareer* without seeking secession from the Jido. In other words, this group is in favour of establishing a *modus vivendi* with the Jido. The third group would prefer maintaining the *status quo* to remain under the *xeer* of the Jido. This group considers itself as *mudug* and *afaf*. The former term means 'hut' or 'main pillar' whereas the latter means 'house' or 'house entrance'. *Mudug* and *afaf* describes the peaceful exchange relationship between pastoralists and farmers. However, borders between these three groupings are fluid and very dynamic. The two *Jareer* groups on the opposite side of the political spectrum are represented by Sultans, Sultan Mohamed Haji Omar 'Taresho' representing the radical movement within the *Jareer*, and Sultan Sheik Abow Mohamed Nur representing the conservative strand of the *Jareer*.

Chart 5.1. Digil clan lineage



[1]The Dabare is the only Digil clan with representation in Bay region.
Source: Author's fieldwork in Lower Shabelle region in September 2002.

According to Luling's historical analysis about the Geledi of the Digil clan, only Sultan Sheik Abow Mohamed Nur can legitimately use the title of a Sultan.[442] His lineage can be traced back to the first Geledi Sultan Ibrahim of the eighteenth century. In the nineteenth century, the Geledi became the strongest power in the region. Their sultanate controlled the trade with the coastal cities, such as Mogadishu and Merka, which had strong links with the Omani empire and the Sultanate of Zanzibar. However, the Geledi were in constant rivalry with the Bimal clan inhabiting the land around Merka. When the Geledi's charismatic leader Yusuf died in 1848, the sultanate gradually lost its supremacy in the region.[443]

At the beginning of September 2002, at least six months after the first recorded incident, members from the affected community gathered in Qorioley to discuss a peaceful solution of the localised clashes. Following consultations with third parties, i.e. non-Jido or *Jareer* clan members, it was agreed to establish a committee of seven people in each village who could ensure the return of displaced persons and to monitor a peace agreement. Two of the committee members were selected from the Jido, two from the *Jareer* and three from other clans represented in the region.[444] The conflicting parties were asked to provide a list of the affected villages with their nominees respectively.

At first, it was Sultan Mohamed Haji Omar 'Taresho' who proposed a list of twenty-four villagers to the reconciliation committee without consultation with Sultan Sheik Abow Mohamed Nur representing the moderate group of the *Jareer*. In the end, both Sultans each put forward a list of twelve representatives. In one village, both *Jareer* representatives were brothers each supporting a distinct *Jareer* movement, demonstrating the fragmentation of the Somali society.[445] After extensive consultations, the Sultan of the Jido, Sultan Asano Ali Ibro 'Furuqle' and the two *Jareer* Sultans signed the proposed list

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[442] Luling, Virgina, *Somali Sultanate: The Geledi City-State over 150 Years* (London: HAAN Associates Publishing, 2002) 27.
[443] Luling, *Somali Sultanate: The Geledi City-State over 150 Years*, 24.
[444] Interview in Merka, southern Somalia, on 28 August 2002.
[445] Author's fieldwork in Lower Shabelle in September 2002.

on 3 September 2002. I later learned that most internally displaced persons returned to their villages.

Tragically, the main mediator who negotiated the peace accord with the warring factions of the Jido and the *Jareer*, a prominent woman from the Haber Gedir/Ayr clan, was murdered in Nairobi on 24 October 2002. It was not clear if the murder was politically motivated or with robbery as motive. I undertook several trips with her to the area affected by the fighting. Some praised Starlin Abdi Arush for her humanitarian engagement, and even saw her already as the next President of Somalia.[446] In Merka, she was Country Representative of an Italian non-governmental organisation, named Co-ordinating Committee for Voluntary Service. She was a well-known public figure and strongly opposed a clan-based government. It was during one of several conversations and interviews I had with her that she expressed her belief that clanism as a political concept could not work.[447] She believed that clan affiliation cannot cater for merit. Most importantly, it cannot be a criteria for guilt. In the first interview when I met her in Merka, Lower Shabelle, she said: "Today, many Somalis do not distinguish between individual and clan-based guilt. A woman who was selling tea in Mogadishu was killed 'just' because she was Darod. The civil war is often seen in a simplified way in such way that it is a war of the Darod against the Hawiye. But in contrast, all major clans were represented in the former dictatorship benefiting from the corrupt system."[448] Nevertheless, she was aware of the importance of clan affiliation claiming that "today, clan is protection".[449] In her view, conflict in Somalia should be analysed on the local, national and international level. Besides, conflict has political, economic and ecological dimensions; there were conflicts over grazing areas and over political offices as happened in Baidoa in July 2002.[450] In my last meeting with her, she claimed that "in 1991, killings

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[446] Murphy, Tim, "Nachruf auf Starlin Abdi Arush," *Süddeutsche Zeitung* 9 November 2002.
[447] Personal communication with Starlin Abdi Arush in Merka, southern Somalia, on 1 September 2002.
[448] Interview in Merka, southern Somalia, on 28 August 2002.
[449] Interview in Nairobi on 9 October 2002.
[450] Interview in Merka, southern Somalia, on 28 August 2002.

happened in anarchic situations and then, war was economics and today, it turned political."[451]

Others were more critical about her role, being a member of an influential Ayr clan family. She had good relations with the President of the Transitional National Government, Abdiqasim Salad Hassan, and other members of the TNG. Although her family settled in Merka, Lower Shabelle, before the civil war started, non-residents accused her of supporting the oppressive policies in the region of her own sub-clan.

5.4. Greed or grievance?

It was difficult to assess the underlying causes of conflict. This was partly due to restrictions on my movements. I was told by local guards of the NGO that hosted me, that continuing insecurity would make follow-up visits to the affected villages impossible. I suspected this restriction was deliberate in order to prevent me in gathering primary data. Most key positions within the NGO were occupied by members of the militarily strongest clan, the Haber Gedir. I found during my fieldwork that the *Jareer's* vulnerability to arbitrary taxation was linked to their inability to participate in the political decision-making process. Consequently, and in an environment where the use of force becomes a means to an end, it seems logical that marginalised groups have no option but to resort to the use of force.

A related aspect to the fighting is the struggle for self-determination of the *Jareer*. In an increasingly insecure environment, clan affiliation gained added importance. This assertion is confirmed by a Bantu woman, a view which is widely shared among the Bantu community:

> Everything is based on clanism. If relief food is brought then it is based on clanism. When it comes to cultivation of the farm, again, clan plays a role. Whatever comes up, it's clanism. If we are the *Jareer*, we are not allowed anything. If a woman works, she works for them. The man works for them.[452] If

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[451] Interview in Nairobi on 9 October 2002.
[452] The Bantu have to earn their living by working as farm labourers.

> it comes to supplement and reinforce[453] then they said: 'Mursal[454], you have this number of family clans, so you should bring this amount of contribution'.[455]

In the absence of an effective administration that could redistribute wealth it seems understandable that the *Jareer* take up arms to demand their share. During a meeting of *Jareer* men, one person complained that the *Jareer* are not enjoying equal rights because they are unarmed.[456] Clanism gained importance as it became the means of making claims within the state. There was a similar process amongst the Mirifle clans of Bay and Bakol who armed themselves with the support of the Ethiopians, expelled Hussein Aideed's militia from the region in 1999, and restored a regional administration (see 7.2).

There is considerable evidence that powerful clans who settled in the area after the disintegration of the Somali Republic in 1991 encouraged grievances of the *Jareer* to counter opposition from powerful indigenous clans. Newcomers, mainly of the Hawiye/Haber Gedir clan, supported the *Jareer* militarily in order to weaken the Jido clan.[457] On one occasion, a prominent member of the Haber Gedir/Ayr clan who mediated between the warring factions in the reconciliation process paid *diya* on behalf of both the *Jareer* Sultans, Taresho and Abow. They refused to attend a joint *Jareer*-Jido meeting and as a consequence, they had to pay compensation to the Jido. The same person allegedly paid *diya* on behalf of the *Jareer* for the murder of a Jido woman and a Jido man. The Jido elders argued that these incidents were jeopardising the position of the Haber Gedir clan member of being a mediator in the conflict.

A member of the Digil clan in Baidoa, asked about the main conflicts in Lower Shabelle, stated: "[Another] case of conflict in Qorioley district was mainly caused by the infiltration from Abdiqasim's militia, which is an armed group who wants to divide the inhabitants of the area – one against the other. Infiltration comes from the central zones,

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[453] Material contribution necessary to participate in the Arta peace conference.
[454] Bantu village elder from Sablale who participated in the Arta peace conference in the year 2000.
[455] ACORD interview in Sablale, southern Somalia, on 14 April 2001.
[456] Interview in Qorioley, southern Somalia, on 1 September 2002.
[457] Meeting with Jido elders in Qorioley, southern Somalia, on 29 August 2002.

for some time they have been living there and there was a consensus to accept [them] but later they have created this problem."[458] Abdiqasim Salad Hassan is the President of the Transitional National Government in Mogadishu and a Haber Gedir/Ayr clansman. The brother of the local Jido Sultan, Ibrahim Alio, reiterated the divide and rule strategy of the Haber Gedir clan: "The Jido and the *Jareer* lived as brothers. If a *Jareer* kills a Jido, the *Jareer* would pay money for compensation. *Jareer* were treated as friends, even intermarriages were possible. After 1991, the Hawiye clan invaded all the country. They started to divide the clans. This land is yours [*Jareer*] and not the one of the Jido."[459] An interview with delegates of the Digil community from Lower Shabelle in Eldoret confirmed this assertion: "Problems between the *Jareer* and the Jido are created from the outside, especially by the Haber Gedir/Ayr clan. They use a 'divide and rule' strategy. [...] In order to capture the area they induce conflict between the people living in the area. [...] Water must be bought from the Haber Gedir clan; everyone who opposes is being killed. They control the area by force."[460]

In other cases, violence served purely economic purposes. Violence became a means toward the acquisition of fertile land in the riverine areas. A Digil clansman told me that he lost of 84 hectares to Haber Gedir clansmen.[461] Non-residents from the central regions who lack the expertise to cultivate the land then rent the land to local farmers. The farmer wondered why the international community did not help although it was aware of the injustices: "When two people struggle, one is below and the other above, we know to help the person who is below and to overthrow the person who is on top."[462] In some incidents, farmers had to pay taxes at river banks, canals and bridges. Yet, the collected 'tax' is hardly used for maintenance or service. Moreover, money provided by international aid agencies which is earmarked for the rehabilitation and maintenance of

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[458] Interview in Baidoa on 12 February 2002.
[459] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 18 November 2002.
[460] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 7 November 2002.
[461] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 7 November 2002.
[462] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 7 November 2002.

canals and river banks was often diverted to private accounts and away from local communities. Machmoud, a *Jareer* representative from Merka, told me in one meeting, "today, people do not listen to you if you do not have a gun. At the moment there are individuals who are taxing people at river banks and bridges. But if the bridge collapses, this person would not pay for repairing the bridge. That is why taxes should be collected collectively, and should be used within the community."[463] He also suggested that "conflict arises over competition for foreign aid".[464]

The huge influx of foreign aid under Barre's regime and later in the UNOSOM era created rent-seeking behaviour among Somali elites. Between December 1992 and October 1993 donors spent US$ 2 billion on Operation Restore Hope.[465] De Waal writes that "the very fact of such an enormous action transformed Somali politics by feeding inflated expectations of the return of the aid machine that has sustained Siyad Barre".[466] This has created expectations that aid pays for anything and political groups started compete for lucrative rents. When humanitarian assistance to Somalia decreased in the late 1990s, competition for foreign assistance increased. As a result, the *Jareer* were excluded from employment on aid programmes. For example in Qorioley, only a small percentage of *Jareer* were employed in the local polio-eradication programme although they constitute a large demographic group.[467] The same applies to local clans, such as the Digil, as one Jido elder explains: "if a development agency proposes a project such as canal rehabilitation, they [Haber Gedir] are the only beneficiaries. For us, we dig our own canals manually."[468]

A similar conflict has taken place in Merka where the *Gibil ad* group did not participate in politics during the dictatorship and thereafter. As a consequence, they

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[463] Interview in Merka, southern Somalia, on 30 August 2002.
[464] Interview in Merka, southern Somalia, on 30 August 2002.
[465] De Waal, *Famine Crimes: Politics and the Disaster Relief Industry in Africa*, 185.
[466] De Waal, *Famine Crimes: Politics and the Disaster Relief Industry in Africa*, 185.
[467] Personal communication in Qorioley, southern Somalia, on 1 September 2002.
[468] ACORD interview in Kurtunwarey, southern Somalia, on 16 April 2001.

turned to business activities. Political posts were distributed on the basis of patronage systems and not with respect to clan representation in the region. But in a state where corruption was endemic, those who were excluded were able to enter the political decision-making process through the back door. This option was not available to the *Jareer* who lacked access to higher education institutions as well as economic assets. As a result, the *Jareer* are more vulnerable to exploitation and oppression compared to the *Gibil ad*, who could use their economic power. Nevertheless, both the *Jareer* and the *Gibil ad* are at the mercy of a stronger, militarily armed clan. They are referred to as "*looma ooyo looma aarow*", mirroring their social vulnerability.[469]

Merka district administration is an example for this phenomenon: shortly after the breakdown of the former regime, Ali Mahdi, who was elected at the first internationally sponsored peace conference in Djibouti in February 1991, appointed a governor from the Bimal. When General Aideed toppled Mahdi's government he appointed a new governor loyal to his interests who started working together with the International Committee of the Red Cross in the management of the port to off-load emergency food. When UNITAF arrived in Somalia in December 1992 a district council was set up. The clan-distribution was as follows: Twelve Bimal, two *Gibil ad*, one Hawadle, one Murosade, two Haber Gedir, two Dir and one Digil. The clan distribution clearly favoured the Bimal upsetting the *Gibil ad* who felt to be under-represented. The Digil group argued along these lines that although they represent a large proportion of the population in the district they were only given one post. In this respect, the district council resembled rather a city council than representing clans in demographic terms. A new district council was formed in 1997 differing significantly from the previous one: five were from *Gibil ad* (including the District Commissioner), four Bimal (including the first Deputy Commissioner and the District General Secretary), seven Haber Gedir (including the second Deputy

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[469] Saying referring to the Bantu and the Brawaani communities. Literally it means: "If they die, you need not cry and you need not compensate for their lives." ACORD interview in Brawa, southern Somalia, on 20 April 2001.

Commissioner), two Dir, two Murosade, one Abgal, one Garre and one Sheikhal. The *Gibil ad* were able through economic power and educational skills to carry through their candidates whereas the Digil clan got only one post offered.[470] In contrast, the *Jareer* had to take up arms if they wanted to be heard.

5.5. The regional context

While this sequence of factional fighting was confined to a local area, namely to Qorioley and Kurtunwarey district, it must be placed in the regional picture. Opposing alliances in southern Somalia compete for the loyalty of the *Jareer* as they hold demographic majority in the studied districts: Qorioley, Kurtunwarey and Sablale. In a clan-based government as adopted by the Transitional National Government and proposed for the Somalia National Reconciliation Process, the Jido would face a major setback in their political representation, as they would become a minority in the region without their adopted members. Another dimension to the conflict is the lobbying of different non-state administrations for political support of the *Jareer* suggesting a different form of political power for the *Jareer*. However, leaders of non-state administrations supported by clans of stronger military power, such as the Haber Gedir, seek to ally with local clans in order to gain knowledge about local power structures and sources of wealth.

The *Jareer* were caught in between the power struggle of the two main political powers in southern Somalia, the Somali Reconciliation and Restoration Council and the Transitional National Government. For instance, an influential figure supporting the secessionist movement of the *Jareer*, Yusuf Muhammad 'Indha-ad', an Ayr militia commander who is allied with the Juba Valley Alliance paid a visit to Sultan 'Taresho' in autumn 2002. In a similar move, the President of the TNG, Abdiqasiin, invited Sultan 'Taresho' for talks in Mogadishu. Both political figures were from the Hawiye clan who tried to recruit *Jareer* to gain control over the region. At the beginning of the civil war in Lower Shabelle in the early nineties, local clans allied along the Darod-Hawiye divisions

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[470] Marchal, *Lower Shabelle Region Study on Governance*, 88.

in order to seek protection as one Bantu woman from Sablale explains: "When the fighting broke out, there were Kamasle Hawiye[471] and Kamasle Darod[472]. Tunni were Kamasle Darood and *Jareer* were Kamasle Hawiye. After Kamasle Darood left, Kamasle Hawiye settled. [...] We have been beaten because of them and we were killed because of them. Our children's suffering was mainly due to being aligned with Hawiye."[473] The same Bantu woman explains the alliance between the Jido, the Tunni and the Darod clan:

> The Darod, Tunni and Jido were allies. We came to learn that whenever Darod enter a town, the Jido would come in also to loot. When the Haber Gedir leave the town and the Darod enter, the Jido will come to loot. When the Haber Gedir come to town, the Jido will leave. So, aren't they[474] Kamasle Darod? People like the Jido with whom we have been leaving together, with whom we have been brothers and sisters will, whenever Darods are in town, come to you and tell you: 'Bring what you have!' Aren't they Kamasle Darod? When the Hawiye come, they will leave you in peace[475]. They were causing us problems; that is how we learnt about it [how the Jido were allied with the Darod].[476]

On both sides, militarily stronger clans instrumentally used local clans to exploit the resources of the region as another Bantu farm labourer from Sablale explains:

> When the Haber Gedir ousted the Darod, we were relieved though we had no property left. [...] We had no differences with the Tunnis. But the assumption was that the *Jareers* are supporting the Hawiye, they are the allies of the Hawiye. The Tunnis believed they were Darod. They saw us as Hawiye and them as Darod. Now all our property is gone. The Darods had no idea of our wealth and what we are, but the Tunnis were leading them to us, and looted all our wealth. All our maize and the sesame was looted.[477]

Besides, the region has been affected by internal divisions within the leadership of the Rahanweyn Resistance Army (RRA) of the neighbouring regions Bay and Bakol and their struggle to establish a state of their own, the state of Southwest Somalia, based on three major clans, the Dir (Bimal), the Darod and the Digil-Mirifle clans (see 7.2). This state would geographically include Lower Shabelle. However, the declaration of a

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[471] Clans allegedly allied with the Hawiye.
[472] Clans allegedly allied with the Darod.
[473] ACORD interview in Sablale, southern Somalia, on 14 April 2001.
[474] The Jido.
[475] By the Jido.
[476] ACORD interview in Sablale, southern Somalia, on 14 April 2001.
[477] ACORD interview in Sablale, southern Somalia, on 14 April 2001.

Rahanweyn state by RRA Chairman, Shatigadud, was more a political move to be heard at the Somalia National Reconciliation Conference in Kenya than aimed at improving the local political realities. Consequently, in declaring a new state of Southwest Somalia, Shatigadud challenged the legitimacy and territorial control of the Transitional Government. Consequently, there was open disagreement among the RRA leadership about the formation of this new state, soon thereafter turning into armed conflict.

One informant from Kurtunwarey accused the Rahanweyn Resistance Army of providing land mines to local communities to stop outsiders from raiding the areas. He argues that local people "have no knowledge of these mines, they were brought to them from Ethiopia, and the mines were planted in their areas. They were unaware of the danger of these mines because they are farmers and pastoralists who have been incited to plant the mines so that other rival clans from the Rahanweyn Resistance Army cannot invade the area."[478] In one incidence, a girl and a man were killed and two men were wounded while leading a bull to the local market.[479] Another oral testimonial contains a dialogue between a Jido and a Haber Gedir elder, the latter accusing the former of assisting the RRA: "Jido are not our brothers. You are allowing the RRA to pass through your territory to attack us."[480]

Then in July 2002, heavy fighting broke out between militias close to the RRA Chairman Hassan Mohamed Nur 'Shatigadud' and his two Deputy Chairmen, Sheik Aden Madobe and Mohamed Ibrahim Habsade. As a result, the Rahanweyn Resistance Army split down the middle along clan lines. At that time, Habsade (Mirifle/Siyeed/Leysan) and Madobe (Mirifle/Sagaal/Hadama) entered into negotiations with the Juba valley Alliance and the TNG. In this context, Habsade paid a visit to a religious settlement in Qorioley district, Sheikh Bananey, which was founded in the 1950s, and where some 8,000 Leysan settled. The Leysan are Habsade's clan belonging to the Mirifle clan family. On the other

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[478] ACORD interview in Kurtunwarey, southern Somalia, on 16 April 2001.
[479] ACORD interview in Kurtunwarey, southern Somalia, on 16 April 2001.
[480] ACORD interview in Kurtunwarey, southern Somalia, on 16 April 2001.

hand, Shatigadud remained close to the SRRC lobbying for the foundation of the state of Southwest Somalia. Shatigadud confirmed that the division of the RRA reflects the "rift between the African (Ethiopia) and the Arab (Egypt) strategy".[481] I met Shatigadud in Soy, Kenya, in November 2002 where he participated in the Somali peace talks. In an interview he confirmed the Ethiopian involvement in the formation of the Rahanweyn Resistance Army: "In 1996 and 1997, the Ethiopian government gave us some ammunition to protect us against Hussein Aideed. [...] By June 1999, with the help of the Ethiopians, the RRA captured Baidoa."[482] It has since then temporarily restored a good degree of security and stability to its area of control.[483] Yet, Ethiopian officials opposed his vision of a state of Southwest Somalia and therefore, froze their support, they would prefer a puppet government in a weak centralised Somali state. The *Jareer* of this region are caught in the midst of this power struggle.

Neither greed nor grievance is a sufficient factor to explain conflict in Qorioley and Kurtunwarey district. Rather, it is the instrumental use of grievance and employment of constructed identities that enable faction leaders to deploy and perpetuate power. Where structures of political representation have become dysfunctional, strong but accountable leadership is desirable. Yet, through the personalisation of politics, political representation becomes a means to an end, that is the fulfilment of personal greed. Accordingly, self-styled leaders, such as Mowlid Ma'ane, constitute one of the major obstacles to a peaceful political solution for southern Somalia. The importance of competent leadership is encapsulated in a Somali proverb: people know your leaders, leaders know your limits.[484] In comparing Botswana and Somalia, Samatar stresses both the destructive and constructive force of political leadership:

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[481] Interview in Soy, Kenya, on 10 November 2002.
[482] Interview in Soy, Kenya, on 10 November 2002.
[483] IRIN, "Focus on Vulnerability in Bay and Bakol," *United Nations Integrated Regional Information Network* 18 October 1999.
[484] Cited in: Cassanelli, *The Shaping of Somali Society: Reconstructing the History of a Pastoral People, 1600-1900*, 84.

> This comparison between Botswana and Somalia demonstrates that social cohesion of the elite – the legitimacy, discipline and consciousness of its leadership – are the key factors responsible for either divisively magnifying cultural and social differences between communities, creating conditions in the public realm that exacerbate vulnerability and heighten fear, or striving to further collective interests by judiciously and fairly managing public institutions and resources.[485]

In Somalia, a small – mainly urban-based – elite lacks popular support and struggles for the distribution of the spoils of war, such as land, trade and foreign aid provided through the acquisition of political posts. This is how vulnerability and fear is exacerbated among the rural poor in the riverine areas.

5.6. Conclusion

In conducting my fieldwork, local people told me about the widely used contemporary Somali saying: *Dawiad xun dawiad la'aan bey dhaantaa* – a bad government is better than none. But I was surprised how little consensus existed among clan members, politicians, religious leaders, elders and commoners alike about the form, functions and the composition of an administration whether at the local, regional or national level. The understandings about which individual/clan/political or religious group has the legitimate right to represent his/its/their constituency differed enormously.

First and foremost, in reaction to the exclusion from profitable clientele and kin networks, groups of the society who were formerly marginalised, tried to unify and organise their resistance to claim their legitimate share in the case of the *Jareer*. This resulted in several cases in violent clashes with rising death tolls. Small groups fought over access to basic resources such as water. This could be observed in the clan clashes in Qorioley and Kurtunwarey. Competition over water resources was also central to the analysis of the preceding case study in Merka district. Both cases demonstrate that conflicts over land and water intensified in the years following the breakdown of the former regime. Again, the struggle for resources such as water was a consequence rather

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[485] Samatar, "Leadership and Ethnicity in the Making of African State Models: Botswana versus Somalia": 688.

than the cause of the civil war that started in southern Somalia in 1991. Though land grabbing of the former government elite was definitely a contributing factor to fight for regime change. The social forces behind the clashes are similar, too. In all observed districts, the inherited social contract or *xeer* was overruled by the rule of force. In an environment where moral values deteriorated it is not surprising that Somalis turn to *shari'a* law when other moral authorities, such as elders, failed to reconcile warring parties.

Secondly, this research in Qorioley and Kurtunwarey district demonstrates to what extent the Somali society is fragmented. Differences about political representation go well beyond the sub-clan level. The fragmentation of society can even be observed on the family level as indicated in this case study. The fragmentation of the Somali society started well before the disintegration of the Somali Republic. The last unifying movement that united most of the clans including the ones in the South was the struggle for independence materialising in the establishment of the Somali Youth League. Since then, the fragmentation has continued. One of the main failures of the democratic regime of the late-sixties was the splintering of the parliament into several dozens of political parties. At the beginning of the civil war, observers considered the civil war as a fight between clan members of the Hawiye against the Darod. This perceived dichotomy changed in the first months of the war. Alliances shifted and fighting broke out between sub-clans of the victorious Hawiye, the Abgal and the Haber Gedir. The broad alliances of 1991-92 lost their importance. Over the next decade, sporadic fighting broke out both within and between clans and has tended to be localised.[486] The essence of this shows that clan cannot function anymore as a proxy for equal distribution of resources.

Furthermore, this chapter suggests that how clan identity is used as a political resource by militarily stronger clans to gain control over local communities. Here, the

[486] For example, clashes occurred in North Mogadishu in September 2002 between sub-clans of the Abgal, the Warsan-Geli and the Agon-Yare of the Harti-Abgal sub-clan.

Jareer's distinct ethnic identity is instrumentally used by newcomer clans, such as the Haber Gedir, to strengthen their strategic position within southern Somalia. By defining 'us' and 'the enemy', faction leaders mobilise support from local constituencies in order to maintain their military power. Whereas local clans have to pay 'taxes' or contribute manpower to emerging non-state administrations they are excluded from the political sphere.

The notion of political exclusion of local communities is also reflected in the final report of the land and property rights Reconciliation Committee of the IGAD peace talks (see 8.1.5). As demonstrated above, access to land and common resources, such as water, was at the root of the *Jareer*-Jido conflict. Although the report defines a disputed area as an area "where indigenous occupants were marginalised and intimidated by invading or expansive elements,"[487] it has no provision for meaningful participation of indigenous residents like the Bantu or elders in the reconciliation process. The report suggests that the Head of State shall name a committee consisting only of government officials that would handle disputed and occupied regions without participation of local forces. The appointment of officials by a centralised authority has caused severe political disturbances within Somalia in the past, and it is unlikely that this will change to the better under a new government. Moreover, the report states that occupied and disputed regions "require a quick solution if another civil war is to be avoided,"[488] an objective that contradicts Somali tradition of localised conflict resolution.

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[487] IGAD, *Somalia National Reconciliation Conference, Eldoret, Kenya: Committee III: Land and Property Rights. Draft Report*, 34.
[488] IGAD, *Somalia National Reconciliation Conference, Eldoret, Kenya: Committee III: Land and Property Rights. Draft Report*, 34.

CHAPTER SIX

The plenty of the insecure

6. THE CHARCOAL TRADE

6.1. Introduction

Charcoal is the major source of fuel in Somalia but is also exported to the Gulf States generating income for producers, traders, retailers and wholesalers. Since the collapse of a functioning government, which restricted the trade in the past, charcoal, known to many as Somalia's black gold, has become one of the major pillars of the Somali informal economy. Charcoal production was started by the Italians in the 1920s for establishing a railway service. Today, the train service has disappeared but charcoal remains.[489] The environmental effects are disputed.

In Lower Shabelle and Bay region, charcoal production and trade has resumed on a large scale. Local analysts claim that the charcoal trade only favours powerful business men and faction leaders without benefiting local communities. A conference report makes a similar assertion "that the beneficiaries in the charcoal economy are traders in Mogadishu and the United Arab Emirates. What trickles down to the society in terms of taxes and remuneration is almost negligible."[490] This also applies to other sectors of the business.

Parts of this chapter explore issues of inequality as a cause of conflict – both horizontal inequalities or inequalities between groups. Bradbury stated that "the impressive generation of wealth by entrepreneurs in the transit trade, remittance companies or telecommunications, appears to mask a general decline in living conditions for the majority of households who are unable to participate in these parts of the economy".[491] Several informants mentioned that non-resident clans, mainly Hawiye, monopolise several of the business activities including transport, trade and fisheries. An

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[489] Interview in Merka, southern Somalia, on 31 August 2002.
[490] Gurre, Ibrahim, "Deforestation and Charcoal Burning: Specific Case Studies from the Southern and Central Regions of Somalia," *Resource based conflict, proceedings of the fourth regional workshop* (Bannano boarding school, Dubat village, Gashamo district, Somali regional state, Ethiopia: 2003), 48.
[491] Feldman, Stacy and Brian Slattery, "Living Without a Government in Somalia: An Interview with Mark Bradbury," *Journal of International Affairs* 57.1 (2003): 213.

informant from Lower Shabelle region who moved to Baidoa confirms this view: "We do not have the freedom of accessing the river. We do not have the freedom of using our own grazing areas. We cannot exercise free trade in our own traditional areas."[492] This holds true for Brawa, the most southern district of Lower Shabelle region, situated at the coast. Brawa is the district capital. Several interviewees claimed that in particular in the southern region of Somalia even fruit trees, such as mango, are cut down for the production of charcoal jeopardising the local population's livelihoods.[493]

Since there is continued demand from the Arabian Peninsula, and exports generate much needed foreign currency, it is unlikely that the charcoal trade will be restricted in future. The Transitional National Government has placed a ban on the export of charcoal but lacks power and/or the political will to enforce it. Trucks loaded with charcoal freely move through Mogadishu heading for the nearby beach ports on the coast of the Indian Ocean. A UN report published in 2001 suggests that total charcoal production including internal consumption and export stands at 112,000 tonnes per year and is expected to reach 150,000 tonnes over the next five years.[494] In 2003, El-Ma'an port north of Mogadishu and Kismayo port in the South were the major exit points for the trade in southern Somalia. These observations are supported by data gathered by a Somali local NGO (see table 6.1). El Ma'an port was used by the ICRC during the civil war to provide emergency food.[495] Charcoal production is not a new phenomenon, it dates back to the colonial era. What is new is the extent to which charcoal is produced for the export market.

6.2. Commodity chain analysis

In this particular case study, a commodity chain analysis provides insights into who benefits from the trade, how benefits are distributed and where external pressure could be

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[492] Interview in Baidoa, southern Somalia, on 9 February 2002.
[493] Author's fieldwork in Lower Shabelle in 2002.
[494] Aden, A., *Mission Report on Environmental Assessment for Somalia* (Nairobi: United Nations Development Programme, Somalia, 2001).
[495] Marchal, *A Survey of Mogadishu's Economy.*

constructive to minimise the charcoal export trade. A commodity chain consists of a series of relations through which a traded good passes. This ranges from extraction, production, trading, distribution and finally consumption by rural, urban or users abroad. Ribot uses this approach as a method for analysing the conduits through which commercialised natural resources, such as charcoal, pass. "It is a tool for understanding who benefits from natural resources, how they benefit, and how those patterns of benefits' distribution might be changed."[496]

Charcoal is produced by cutting trees, piling and stacking green tree trunks and branches, covering them with soil and setting fire so that oxygen and the flow of air is limited. This process transforms wood into charcoal. 80 per cent of the trees used for charcoal production in Somalia are acacia species. Traditionally, charcoal was produced for the local market by cutters using hand axes. In Somalia, charcoal is largely used for cooking. Recently, demand has increased from Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States, where charcoal is used for smoking tobacco, grilling meat and providing charred aromas. The Arab states, which imposed restrictions on domestic production, are benefiting from the lawlessness of Somali internal affairs.[497] Since there is no Somali government, neither domestic production nor export figures have been established in the past twelve years.

The main areas of production are the riverine zone between Brawa and Kismayo. In 2002, Kismayo was the main exit point in the South, through which an estimated 200,000 bags of charcoal were exported per month. Kismayo port is the only deep-sea port with proper loading facilities in southern Somalia. Respectively, a trader told United Nations Integrated Regional Information Network: "The best quality comes from Kismayo for the simple reason that it is loaded from the lorry directly into the ship, from a normal port.

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[496] Ribot, Jesse C., "Theorizing Access: Forest Profits along Senegal's Charcoal Commodity Chain," *Development and Change* 29.2 (1998): 308.
[497] Somalia Watch, *Focus on Charcoal*, 2000, Internet Forum, Somalia Watch, Available: www.somaliawatch.com, 27 October 2000.

Here, we have to dump it into a boat, load it again into the big ship, and by the time it gets to Saudi Arabia, it is broken into small pieces."[498]

El-Ma'an port north of Mogadishu is one of the numerous beach ports along the Somali southern coast. Ahmed Mohamed Ibrahim, economist and researcher at the Centre for Research and Dialogue (CRD) in Mogadishu, noted that "many Somali businesses are exploiting national forest reserves. This form of informal trade functions like a black market. There are no regulations, no guarantees [for producers]."[499] It is easier to transport and load charcoal compared to wood, as it is much lighter than the original tree trunks and branches. The charcoal is packed and wrapped in plastic sacks and trucked to the ports. Transport depends on small boats and barges which commute between the beach and the ships. This is why it is important that the charcoal is packed in plastic in order to avoid water contact. In order to manage large quantities of cargo, El Ma'an port even has mobile cranes. When under full operation, the port employs an estimated 5,000 workers.[500] I witnessed the loading of charcoal at El-Ade beach port north of Mogadishu on the way to Esaley airstrip. One day, I counted eleven trucks, some with trailers which waited close to the shore to be unloaded.

Out of the total charcoal production, up to 80 per cent of the charcoal produced is consumed in the Gulf States including Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Yemen and Qatar. Demand from the Gulf States can partly be explained with their own bans on domestic charcoal production. Export figures vary greatly, and even in the past, government figures were disputed. Given the clandestine nature of the charcoal trade and export bans imposed on it by the TNG and the Puntland authorities, official figures are hardly reliable if available. A local NGO has estimated the exports from the main five sea ports (see table 6.1). Charcoal production varies according to season. In the dry season, e.g. December to March (*Jilaal* dry season), charcoal production is at its peak (see figure

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[498] Somalia Watch, *Focus on Charcoal.*
[499] Interview in Mogadishu on 18 December 2002.
[500] Marchal, *A Survey of Mogadishu's Economy.*

6.1 and 6.2). This is partly due to the release of farm labour, and partly due to favourable climatic conditions to burn and harvest wood.

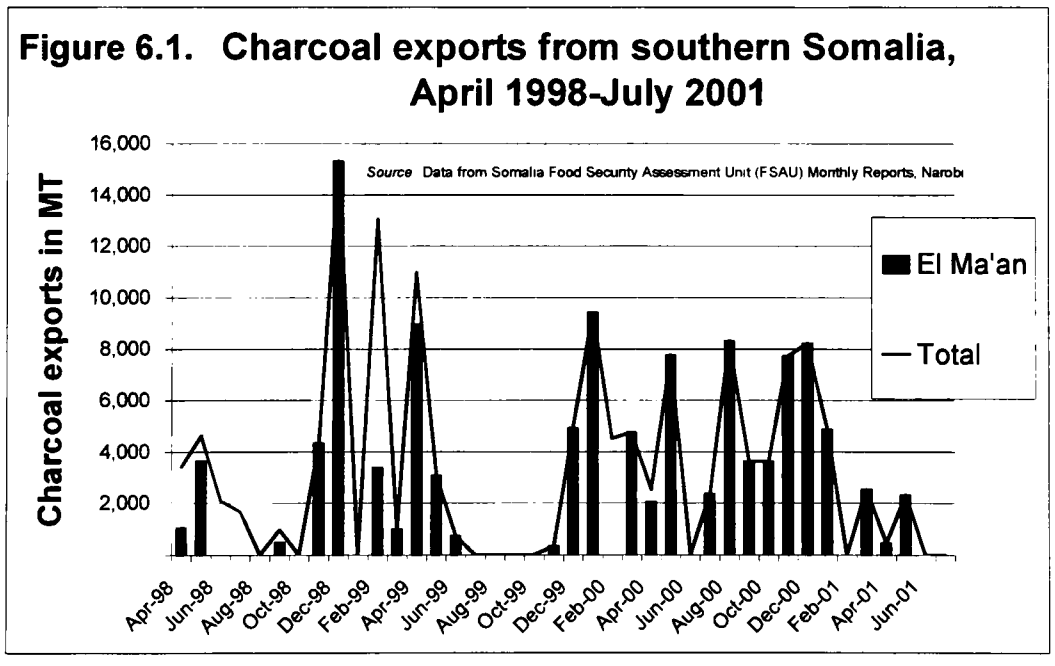
Table 6.1. Charcoal exports from southern Somalia, September 1999-June 2000

Export port	Ships	Dhows	Sacks of charcoal
El Ma'an	9	14	1,706,000
Gesira	11	17	1,760,000
Merka	0	4	78,000
Brawa	0	2	38,000
Kismayo	17	23	3,157,000
Total	37	60	6,739,000

Source: SOCEP – Somali Centre for Environmental Protection. *Environmental Protection/Awareness Workshop on Somalia.* 8-9 September, 2000, UNESCO-PEER Conference Hall, Nairobi, 2000.

The wood is harvested in all regions of Somalia. There are some patches of closed broadleaved forests to be found in the riverine areas, in particular south-east of Kismayo. Open tree savannah occurs in west and north-west of Mogadishu. The figures for total forest cover vary considerably in the literature depending on the definition of forests used. Forest cover that can be used for timber production is relatively small compared to forest that can be used for firewood, charcoal, construction or browsing. According to Hussein and Abdi, *Acacia commiphora* bushland is the prime form of vegetation in Somalia.[501] Out of 637,657 km^2

Figure 6.1. Charcoal exports from southern Somalia, April 1998-July 2001

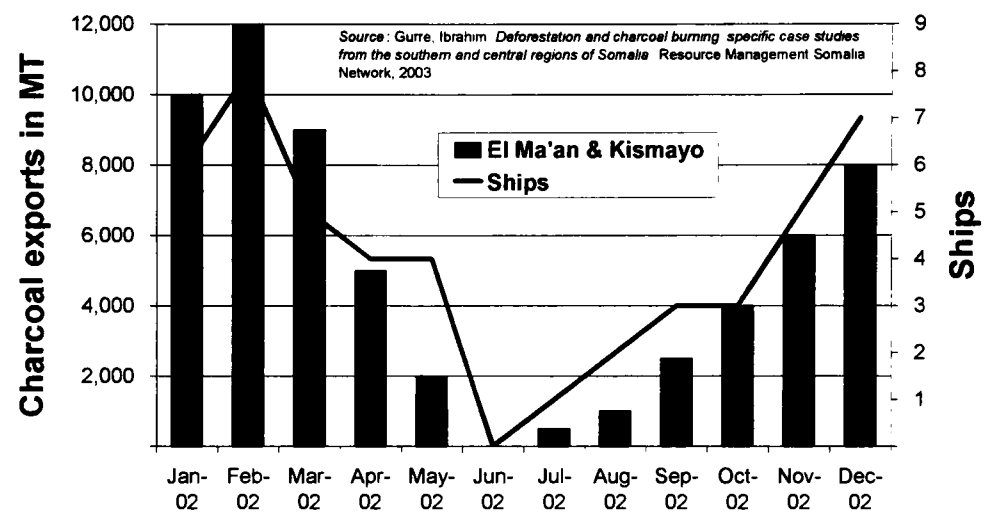


[501] Hussein, Y. and M. Abdi, *Forest Situation in Somalia. FAO/UNEP Sub-Regional workshop on Forestry Statistics IGAD Region* (Nakuru: FAO/UNEP, 1998).

of total land area, only 52,000 hectares is dense forest, but 7.4 million hectare are woodlands of which 77 per cent is characterised by low vegetation coverage.[502] This would classify 12 per cent as forest and woodlands out of the total land coverage. The figure given by the former government in the late 1980s was 14 per cent.[503] The Food and Agricultural Organisation provides a similar figure of 12 per cent of forest and woodlands cover for 2001.[504]

In terms of domestic demand, about 20 per cent of the overall charcoal production is consumed locally. Charcoal is used by 39 per cent of households (urban and rural) for cooking; this percentage is higher in urban settings where charcoal is the main source of fuel accounting for 74 per cent.[505] The quality of the locally consumed charcoal is poorer compared to charcoal destined for export. Mogadishu alone with an estimated population of one million accounts for an estimated 150,000 tonnes per year.[506] Another source estimates that 316,680 tonnes are consumed per year by an estimated 330,000 families who live in

Figure 6.2. Charcoal exports from southern Somalia, January-December 2002



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[502] Hussein and Abdi, *Forest Situation in Somalia. FAO/UNEP Sub-Regional workshop on Forestry Statistics IGAD Region.*
[503] Somali Yearbook of Agricultural Statistics, 1988. Cited in: United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report, Somalia 2001.*
[504] Food and Agricultural Organisation, *Global Forest Resources Assessment 2000*, 2000, Available: http://www.fao.org/forestry/fo/country/, 21 April 2003.
[505] World Bank and United Nations Development Programme, *Socio-Economic Survey 2002 Somalia* (Washington D.C., New York: World Bank, UNDP, 2003), 46.
[506] Soussan, J., *The Government of Somalia Technical Committee for Energy Final Report on Alternative Energy Sources for Urban Areas*, 1990, Overseas Development Administration, Available: http://www.odi.org.uk/fpeg/greylit/fuelwoodpdfs/SOUSSAN.pdf, 20 February 2003.

Mogadishu.[507] Charcoal has been the main fuel for cooking (see table 6.2). Most of the petroleum that is imported is further exported – sometimes illegally – to Kenya and Uganda. Even before the war, less than 5 per cent of the households used kerosene, liquid petroleum gas or electricity as alternative sources of energy. After the war in 2002, this percentage is even smaller, namely 2.4 per cent.[508] Kerosene and electricity were largely used for lighting and electricity for refrigeration in high-income households.

Table 6.2. Primary energy supplies in Somalia 1988

Item	**(000 tonnes of oil equivalent)**
Crude oil	58
Petroleum products	230
Primary electricity	3
Fuelwood	1475
Agricultural residues	40
Total	1798

Source: Soussan, J. *The Government of Somalia Technical Committee for Energy Final Report on Alternative Energy Sources for Urban Areas.* Overseas Development Administration, London, 1990. Mission estimates based on a variety of sources.

In order to understand the profit margins of production and distribution, it is useful to consider pre-war figures. Under Siyad Barre, charcoal production and distribution was regulated through the National Range Agency, and export was banned in 1969.[509] The law to ban charcoal and firewood exports was amended in 1972 to create an export monopoly held by the National Commercial Agency.[510] The trade was organised and managed through production and distribution cooperatives. The price was negotiated between these three bodies. According to table 6.3, the retailers' margin was 14 per cent of the official price. To increase this margin, retailers bought charcoal on the informal market from unlicensed producers bypassing cooperative fees and export taxes.

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[507] Gurre, "Deforestation and Charcoal Burning: Specific Case Studies from the Southern and Central Regions of Somalia".
[508] World Bank and United Nations Development Programme, *Socio-Economic Survey 2002 Somalia*, 46.
[509] Interview in Merka, southern Somalia, on 31 August 2002.
[510] Markakis, *Resource Conflict in the Horn of Africa*, 156.

Moreover, the market price of charcoal was higher than the rate set by the government due to the lack of fuel alternatives. As wood used for charcoal production is considered a free good, low producer margins are unlikely to change in the near future. Table 6.3 shows a high figure for transport and equipment (together Ssh 960 per 100kg charcoal), both items reflect foreign currency costs and are therefore susceptible to fluctuations of the world financial and fuel markets. The exchange rate to the US dollar was at 100 Somali shillings in early 1988. By June 1988 it had fallen to 181 shillings to the dollar, at the end of 1988 the rate was 273, in May 1989 it had declined to 385 and in July it was over 500 Somali shillings to one US dollar, and was still falling. The official inflation rate was at 104 per cent in June 1989 exceeding the 100 per cent for many months.[511]

Table 6.3. Official charcoal costs and margins in Mogadishu, July 1988

Item	**Ssh per 100 kg charcoal**
Labour	600
Supervisors	152
Transport	700
Equipment	260
Taxes	15
Cooperatives Fees	169
Producer Margin	80
Retailer Margin	310
Official Price	2,300

Source: National Cooperatives Office; cited in Soussan, J. *The Government of Somalia Technical Committee for Energy Final Report on Alternative Energy Sources for Urban Areas*. Overseas Development Administration, London, 1990.

Since there are no longer official taxes imposed on imported goods, such as trucks or fuel, recent profit margins are believed to be far higher than during the Barre regime. In 2000, the price per sack of charcoal inside Somalia was at US$ 3-4, and it was sold on the Gulf market for approximately US$ 10.[512] A Puntland resident confirms this figure and

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[511] Soussan, *The Government of Somalia Technical Committee for Energy Final Report on Alternative Energy Sources for Urban Areas*.
[512] Somalia Watch, *Focus on Charcoal*.

explains why the trade is so lucrative: "Because, they [traders] do not pay for the trees. They sell a sack of charcoal for about US$ 10 while the cost of production and transport is less than US$ 3."[513] This meant that a ship carrying 100,000 sacks could bring in a turnover of between US$ 600,000 and 700,000.[514] These excessive margins can explain the reluctance of some business people to support the formation of a functioning government which could restrict and regulate the trade.

The export of charcoal is kept as a clandestine business that is managed by a small business elite. Several regional administrations demand local taxes on this lucrative trade, e.g. the Juba Valley Alliance administration in Kismayo. The collection of import/export taxes supports their security apparatus rather than balancing socio-economic externalities of the trade. During a meeting with the Chairman of the Juba Valley Alliance, Bare Aden Shire 'Hirale', I learned that the regional administration levies US$ 0.4 per hundred kg of imported or exported goods.[515] Exported goods include livestock, fish, charcoal and agricultural produce. Rice, sugar, fuel and manufactured goods are imported. Besides, revenue is raised from the management of Kismayo airport. But it is unlikely that the professional services of more than a few 'technicals' are offered to clients for the paid 'taxes'. This also applies to El Ma'an port. The Port Authority charged US$ 1,333 for vessels exceeding MT 2,000 and US$ 333 for smaller ships in 2002. In addition, a loading/unloading fee of US$ 0.40 must be paid for each sack of any commodity.[516]

The economic benefits for the producers and labourers seem to be minimal. One source estimated the daily wage at about US$ 0.8.[517] Since there are very few job opportunities, workers have little choice but to work in this sector. One business man operating 80 production sites even claimed to employ highly trained people in his 4,000-

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[513] Gurre, "Deforestation and Charcoal Burning: Specific Case Studies from the Southern and Central Regions of Somalia", 51.
[514] A shipload takes between 70,000 to 100,000 sacks.
[515] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 21 November 2002.
[516] Marchal, *A Survey of Mogadishu's Economy.*
[517] Maykuth, Andrew, "Somalia is Sacrificing its Trees for Profit," *The Seattle Times* 24 March 2002.

man workforce: "I have doctors working for me. I have employed some colonels."[518] Whether this true or not, even regular meals are sufficient to attract workers to the charcoal sector, but it is unlikely that the trade improves the well-being of the labourers. Research of the Resource Management Somalia Network has revealed that internally displaced persons, unemployed youth and former civil servants of Siyad Barre's regime are among the main groups of wage labourers who produce charcoal.[519] The real benefits are generated outside the country by foreign import companies in the Gulf States and by local export companies.

Above all, the increasing demand for charcoal domestically and internationally constitutes a serious problem to Somalia's ever decreasing woodlands. For example, harvesting methods have become increasingly damaging. Both young and mature trees are felled upsetting the natural regeneration process. Besides, the usage of trees for fuelwood and charcoal is exceeding the incremental growth. Acacias grow relatively slowly which inhibits rapid replacement. Both factors have led to the decrease of Somalia's forests.

In areas of political instability, charcoal production dropped due to continued fighting. In Bay region, continued clan fighting and political insecurity forced charcoal producers out of the area permitting regeneration of some acacia types, such as *Acacia bussei*.[520] Domestic demand is fostered by population growth and rapid urbanisation, international demand will continue through restrictions of domestic production in the Gulf States. But after all what are the driving forces behind domestic charcoal production?

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[518] Maykuth, "Somalia is Sacrificing its Trees for Profit".
[519] Gurre, "Deforestation and Charcoal Burning: Specific Case Studies from the Southern and Central Regions of Somalia", 46.
[520] Linkenback, Laura, "Analysis of the Socio-Economic Drivers behind the Charcoal Trade in Somalia," M.Sc., University of Edinburgh, 2001.

6.3. Driving forces behind charcoal production

There are numerous often interrelated factors leading to the production of charcoal. The livelihoods approach argues that most households depend on a web of income sources and social support. Their survival depends on a number of coping strategies to manage external stress, such as droughts or insecurity. In order to sustain their livelihoods, families depend not only on physical and natural capital but also on a web of social relationships or social capital.[521]

Charcoal production in southern Somalia complements other income sources of the family. It increases social resilience to external stress and accordingly, reduces social vulnerability. Most importantly, it requires little financial capital, and only basic skills or knowledge. It can also serve as a buffer for poor harvests and climatic variability. Linkenback identifies the following drivers behind the production of charcoal: poor harvests due to climatic uncertainty, livestock export bans, devaluation of the Somali shilling, change in land tenure, weak governance, and urbanisation.[522] According to her analysis, poverty coupled with population growth cannot in itself account for rapid deforestation in Somalia.

As a rule of thumb, one in five harvests is a complete write off. Somalia has experienced many droughts over the past decades. For example, the poor 1999/2000 *Deyr* and 2000 *Gu* rains resulted in an increase of charcoal production. Most smallholder farmers are subsistence farmers who have to buy cereals from other markets when their grain stocks are depleted. Here, charcoal production offers an alternative income to compensate for the loss of stocks. What is more, major floods in October and November 1997 destroyed most of the irrigated farmland in Lower Shabelle region. This freed additional labour who found employment in the charcoal sector.

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[521] Putnam, Robert D., *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Touchstone, 2000). Coleman, "Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital".
[522] Linkenback, "Analysis of the Socio-Economic Drivers behind the Charcoal Trade in Somalia".

The second driver is livestock bans imposed by Saudi Arabia and other Gulf States. Livestock was long seen and still is the prime export earner in the Somali economy. A livestock ban was imposed temporarily by Saudi Arabia in February 1998 following the 1997-98 floods which led to the outbreak of Rift Valley Fever, a lethal hemorrhagic disease, among livestock in Somalia.[523] Experts associated the floods with the El Niño weather phenomenon.[524] The import ban was lifted after nine months, but when in September 2000 over 100 people died in Yemen and Saudi Arabia from contracting Rift Valley Fever, the Gulf States imposed a strict import ban on livestock from all countries in the Horn of Africa. In May 2001, the United Arab Emirates lifted the ban on chilled meat products. Before the ban, between January and June 2000, Saudi Arabia accounted for 80 per cent of the export trade from Berbera port whereas 18 per cent was exported to Yemen and only 2 per cent to the United Arab Emirates.[525] The Saudi ban was partly justified since the collapse of the Somali state made veterinary services impossible. Without a recognised government Somalia cannot become a party to any international protocol governing veterinary standards for exporting livestock. But the livestock ban may be in part politically motivated and influenced by influential livestock importers who preferred cheaper chilled meat from Australia.[526] A Somali trader who now lives in Yemen accused Australia of having triggered bans in the 1980s.[527] The consequences of these bans were severe, it is estimated that the Somali economy lost at least US$ 120 million annually from livestock trade.[528] Local authorities experienced shortfalls in tax revenues and prices of other imported household items rose. Further, shortfalls in foreign currency led to the devaluation of the Somali shilling, while households involved in the

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[523] Steffen, Philip, A. H. Shirwa and Sidow I. Addou, *The Livestock Embargo by Saudi Arabia: A Report on the Economic, Financial and Social Impact on Somaliland and Somalia* (Nairobi: Famine Early Warning System/Somalia, 1998), v.
[524] United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report, Somalia 2001*, 98.
[525] United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report, Somalia 2001*, 99.
[526] Nair, K.N.S. and Faisal Abdulla, *Somalia 1997-98: A Status Report* (Nairobi: United Nations Development Office for Somalia, 1998), 8.
[527] Interview in Soy, Kenya, on 10 November 2002.
[528] United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report, Somalia 2001*, 98.

trade were forced to sell their stock at a lower margin. As a coping strategy, many people, including pastoralists in the north-eastern region, resorted to the production of charcoal.

The third force behind the production of charcoal is the weakening value of the Somali shilling. The shilling devalued gradually throughout the years of the civil war (see figure 7.2). At the end of 2000, the shilling weakened further due to the livestock ban. Since the early 1990s, faction leaders injected counterfeit shillings into the Somali economy. It is estimated that Somali shillings to the value of US$ 32 million were brought into circulation between 1992 and 1998 and by 1999, 40 per cent of the Somali currency used was new money.[529] In spite of the renewed printing of money, the shilling remained relatively stable throughout the early 1990s due to good export figures in the livestock sector, the need to replace old notes and a gradual 'dollarisation' of the economy. By August 2001, Somalia experienced hyperinflation sparked through the printing of large amounts of Somali currency by Mogadishu-based business men and Somali faction leaders leading to an exchange rate of more than 20,000 Somali shillings against the dollar (see figure 7.2). Somali faction leaders and business men alike started to print Somali currency in 1996.[530] It is worth noting that this new currency technically cannot be called counterfeit since there does not exist an authority that could define an official Somali currency.

Hussein Aideed succeeded in ordering 160 billion Somali shillings from officials of the British American Banknote Company, a subsidiary of Quebecor, Montreal, and a first shipment of 30 billion Somali shillings was delivered to Balidogle airport north of Mogadishu in May 1997.[531] Because Hussein Aideed did not replace old notes with new ones, the letter of credit for covering printing costs issued by a Malaysian Bank was

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[529] Del Buono, M. and J. Mubarak, *The Macroeconomy of Somalia: A Conceptual View* (Nairobi: United Nations Development Office for Somalia, 1999), 7.
[530] Hogendoorn, M'Backe and Mugaas, *Report of the Panel of Experts on Somalia pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1425 (2002)*, 40.
[531] Hogendoorn, M'Backe and Mugaas, *Report of the Panel of Experts on Somalia pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1425 (2002)*, 41.

cancelled. Hussein Aideed managed to salvage a second shipment of approximately 30 billion Somali shillings before a consortium of Mogadishu business men succeeded to take over the remaining 100 or so billion Somali shillings in September 1999.[532] The subsequent introduction of massive amounts of new currency led to rampant inflation and devaluation of the shilling in the year 2000. Members of this group of business men were Mohamed Deilaf, Hussein Goley and Saeed Nur all from the Haber Gedir/Ayr sub-clan. The availability of new funding for the Ayr clan upset the power balance between Hussein Aideed's Saad and the Ayr clan to which the TNG's President Abdiqasim Salad Hassan belongs. It is worth noting that the printing of new money was both economically and strategically motivated. In economic terms, factions who control such new currency can satisfy their essential expenditures on militias, and obligations to supporters. In strategic terms, the introduction of a large consignment of new currency and subsequent rampant inflation can serve to undermine the legitimacy of emerging non-state administrations. The devaluation of the Somali shilling affected largely petty traders, smallholder farmers and wage labourers who use the Somali shilling for cash and do not hold foreign currency savings. As a result, prices for transport, fuel and imported goods, such as rice and sugar, rose. In particular farmers could not afford to hire tractors or to buy fuel for planting. The short term benefits for engaging in charcoal production began outweighing the costs of farming.

Fourth, land tenure in Somalia is linked to the charcoal trade. Since land tenure has been mentioned in chapter four, I will concentrate on aspects relevant to the charcoal trade. In the past, land was managed on a communal basis relying on sophisticated reciprocal exchange relationships between farmers and pastoralists. After independence land was declared 'state land' by the Barre regime, then grabbed by government officials and later 'liberated' by clans from the central regions. As a result, business men from the

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[532] Hogendoorn, M'Backe and Mugaas, *Report of the Panel of Experts on Somalia pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1425 (2002)*, 41.

urban centres and militia men took over large areas of farmland. Since the profits of charcoal were largly at the retail level, new land owners resorted to charcoal production rather than farming. Since property rights are disputed, land owners avoid large investments in capital intensive infrastructure, e.g. in irrigation systems.

Fifth, since the collapse of the formal government, restrictions are hardly in place. There were temporary restrictions when General Aideed controlled most of the southern regions. He imposed a ban on charcoal export. Following his death and when his son, Hussein Aideed, was elected Chairman of the United Somali Congress/Somali National Alliance in August 1996, he did not maintain this ban.[533] Even with a ban, officials often lack power to enforce it. In Puntland, officials of the Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF) banned the export of charcoal with little success. A Puntland resident explains: "Although Puntland banned the charcoal export it could not apply appropriate regulations to the production of charcoal. This is because there are no state policies and the Ministry of Environment is not functioning properly."[534] Smugglers continued with the illegal export using small vessels. In May 1997, armed conflict between smugglers and SSDF militia resulted in two deaths.[535] The illegal export of charcoal led to a shortfall in domestic supply as smugglers can earn more by exporting charcoal to the Gulf States. Business men and faction leaders alike take advantage of the lawlessness since there are no restrictions on the trade and profit margins are especially high at the retail and export level. Abdulkadir Yahya Ali, Director at the Centre for Research and Dialogue in Mogadishu, explained: "because of the lack of a central authority, illegal deforestation has become big business. It's a lucrative way for gangs to make money. They are making money from the collapse of a state."[536]

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[533] Maykuth, "Somalia is Sacrificing its Trees for Profit".
[534] Gurre, "Deforestation and Charcoal Burning: Specific Case Studies from the Southern and Central Regions of Somalia," 51.
[535] ION, "Bosaso Charcoal," *The Indian Ocean Newsletter*.764 (1997).
[536] Lacey, Marc, "To Fuel the Mideast's Grills, Somalia Smolders," *New York Times* 25 July 2002.

In 2001, the TNG's Ministry of Livestock issued a directive banning charcoal export.[537] Minister Abdiwahhab Ma'alin Muhammad claims that those who are involved in the trade would "face the full force of the law".[538] He also warned foreign companies who send their ships to the Somali coast to load the precious goods, that "they risk arrest, fine or both if they are caught".[539] In 2002, there were no reported arrests, and the trade continued outside an effective governmental jurisdiction. In another interview, the TNG Minister of the Environment, Abukar Abdi Osman, lamented his powerlessness to enforce the ban on charcoal export.[540] He estimates the charcoal export at 350,000 to 600,000 tonnes per year, and argues that "the increase of the charcoal is due to the collapse of the export market of bananas".[541] The trade with charcoal resumed in 1997-98 coinciding with the collapse of the banana trade regime, he explains. Although he issued a decree on 17 April 2002 banning charcoal export, it continues unhindered. This is because of the lack of political power of the TNG which controls only a small part of Mogadishu and parts of Lower Shabelle region. Most of the beach ports where charcoal is exported are controlled by other political factions. Others argue that officials of the Transitional National Government in Mogadishu are themselves involved in the trade and therefore have little incentive to stop the lucrative export business. Clearly, TNG officials are financially dependent on Mogadishu's business elite who helped to finance the police force, renovated buildings and offered office space. Enforcing seriously a charcoal export ban could directly result in a shortfall of the TNG's financial resources.

In terms of adverse environmental consequences of the charcoal trade, the TNG Minister mentioned overgrazing on river banks and in the riverine areas during the dry season, soil erosion leading to salinisation and sand dune encroachment on road

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[537] IRIN, "TNG announces Charcoal Ban," *United Nations Integrated Regional Information Network* 7 September 2001.
[538] IRIN, "TNG announces Charcoal Ban".
[539] IRIN, "TNG announces Charcoal Ban".
[540] Interviews in Merka, southern Somalia, on 31 August 2002 and in Eldoret, Kenya, on 29 October 2002.
[541] Interview in Merka, southern Somalia, on 31 August 2002.

infrastructure and arable land.[542] Before 1991, government institutions promoted community participation in forest management and conservation, initiated dune stabilisation programmes and provided training and capacity training through government controlled cooperatives. Because Somalia lacks effective governance institutions to respond to widespread human insecurity and the ensuing environmental degradation, the unsustainable exploitation of its natural resources continues. Today, only NGOs can assist at the community level though few resources have been earmarked for sustainable forest management projects.

Sixth, rapid urbanisation is posing an immediate threat to the fragile environment. Soussan estimated the annual charcoal consumption in Mogadishu was at 155,000 tonnes for 1988 whereas the official record shows a total of 57,307 tonnes annually.[543] The higher figure accounts for the several unlicensed producers. Soussan's figure for Mogadishu alone equals one tenth of the highest export figure of 15,316 tonnes at El Ma'an port in December, recorded 1998 by Somalia's Food Assessment and Security Unit (see figure 6.1). As in many other African countries, urban population growth is high, estimated at 5.8 per cent annually between 1960 and 1990.[544] Since closely integrated systems of cooking, by which fuel is produced and consumed locally, are common in rural areas but difficult to practice in urban areas, charcoal as a commodity remains the only viable option. There is an access problem as well, since the majority of households in urban areas are too poor to afford alternative fuels, such as petroleum, kerosene or liquid petroleum gas.

Finally, the collapse of the banana trade regime in the late 1990s freed large numbers of wage labourers who are seeking employment in the growing charcoal business (see chapter IV). "When the banana export collapsed following the departure of UNOSOM,

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[542] Interview in Merka, southern Somalia, on 31 August 2002.
[543] Soussan, *The Government of Somalia Technical Committee for Energy Final Report on Alternative Energy Sources for Urban Areas*.
[544] United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995) 161.

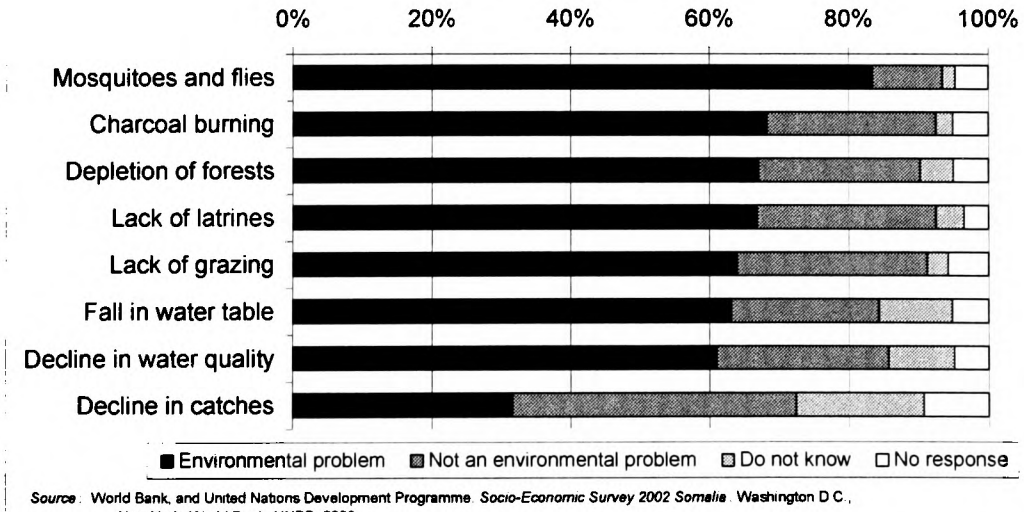
many Somali business men started harvesting wood; exploiting the forests. A lot of farm labour was released due to the collapse; and there is a lucrative market in Saudi Arabia," argued CRD researcher Ahmed Mohamed Ibrahim.[545] There are also new land owners without the expertise to grow crops, such as bananas, who may consider charcoal production as viable alternative. Others recognise that their property rights are disputed and as a result prefer engaging in profitable short-term businesses like charcoal production.

6.4. Charcoal and conflict

The commodity chain analysis reveals that the charcoal trade promises large profits for wholesalers, retailers and exporters. Local producers gain little but suffer most from adverse environmental consequences, such as deforestation and encroachment of dunes. Charcoal production is considered by 68 per cent of Somali households as an environmental problem (see figure 6.3). Only the infestation of mosquitoes and flies is seen as more serious. In Brawa district in southern Somalia, I argue that local clans (Digil/Tunni) engage in violent conflict with newcomer clans (Hawiye/Haber Gedir) who gained control over the transport, wholesaling, retailing and export business of the charcoal trade. Local communities only marginally benefit from the profits.

Another potential source of grievance at the local level is the unplanned and unregulated exploitation and management of forest and woodlands. There is no regulating

Figure 6.3. Perception of environmental problems in Somalia 2002



Source: World Bank, and United Nations Development Programme. *Socio-Economic Survey 2002 Somalia*. Washington D.C., New York: World Bank, UNDP, 2003

[545] Interview in Mogadishu on 18 December 2002.

authority who could control the cutting of trees. Forest is cleared for firewood, crop and charcoal production. John Miskell, a CARE International team leader who has worked in Somalia for nearly three decades, highlights the high profit margins in the charcoal business, and predicts a ominous future for Somalia's forests: "They're making such an enormous profit. They're cutting acacias. They're taking everything."[546] He further blamed the never-ending demand of the Gulf States: "The Arabs turned their trees into charcoal a long time ago," he said. "Now they're working on Somalia's."[547] Somalia's Resource Management and Network reports that "for the local communities concerned with co-conservation, constant conflicts have erupted between the traders and their contracted labourers who apparently use force to bring down trees for charcoal burning".[548] The 2003 report mentions the death of two agricultural extensionists, one from Kunyo and one from Gerndeshen village in Lower Shabelle.[549] This incident occurred while the community was resisting the forceful felling of trees by charcoal traders. The report confirms another case in Lower Shabelle when an environmentalist was killed in a conflict between local people trying to protect their forest and armed charcoal traders.[550] Further circumstances remained unknown.

Further, the decrease of forest cover leads to dune encroachment and loss of grazing area for livestock that feeds on acacia trees. The loss of rangeland for pastoralists can in turn intensify conflicts with farming communities whose capacity for transhumant livestock is limited. There are reports that mangrove forests are cleared on the southern coast leading to sand dune encroachment. Above all, river banks, which were protected by the former government, are progressively cleared for agricultural land and charcoal

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[546] Maykuth, "Somalia is Sacrificing its Trees for Profit".
[547] Maykuth, "Somalia is Sacrificing its Trees for Profit".
[548] Gurre, "Deforestation and Charcoal Burning: Specific Case Studies from the Southern and Central Regions of Somalia," 48.
[549] Gurre, "Deforestation and Charcoal Burning: Specific Case Studies from the Southern and Central Regions of Somalia," 49.
[550] Gurre, "Deforestation and Charcoal Burning: Specific Case Studies from the Southern and Central Regions of Somalia," 49.

production.[551] This leads to the erosion of nutrient-rich soil changing the course of rivers. Insufficient fodder, consequent soil erosion and soil fertility decline can lead to low production of milk and meat, shortage of woodfuels, loss of biodiversity and decline of wildlife habitat. The loss of wildlife habitat has increased competition of wildlife with domestic animals for the search of food leading to poaching of wild animals, such as the dik dik.[552] Pre-war figures estimated 14 per cent of Somalia's land as forest and woodland.[553] Since the annual deforestation rate is estimated at 0.1 per cent this small percentage declines as the charcoal production grows.[554]

Conversely, some argue that environmental change in southern Somalia cannot be explained by charcoal production alone. For example, invading species, which were imported to stabilise sand dunes were left unchecked, and are now used for charcoal production though they are difficult to harvest and of lower quality. In other areas of Lower Shabelle, a tree species introduced by the Japan Volunteer Commission in the late 1970s, which became known as *cali garoob* was of little use including charcoal production and has spread at a high rate at the expense of indigenous species causing environmental degradation.[555]

Ahmed Mohamed Ibrahim from CRD suggests that grievances of the local communities resulted into conflict: "Local communities are resisting the practices of the charcoal export. In Brawa, there was conflict between the Tunni and the Haber Gedir

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[551] The former government made it illegal to clear land within hundred metres of the river. IRIN, "Without Controls, Desertification Increases," *United Nations Integrated Regional Information Network* 18 June 2001.

[552] Wildlife, such as gazelles, lions, leopards, gitas, elephants and giraffes were common in southern Somalia in the nineteen century. However, sport hunting became popular in northern Somalia at the end of the nineteenth century. Also, the spread of automatic weapons contributed to a decrease of wild life. Somalis always considered wild animals as a threat to their livestock and hence, killed wild life in order to increase domestic stock. Today, wild animals are shot even if they do not pose a direct threat to livestock. In a war-torn society like Somalia, wildlife would be hardly considered as an asset to attract tourism. For example, when we sighted a hyena during a visit to Qorioley village, the guards securing the vehicle attempted shooting it but apparently missed the animal.

[553] United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report, Somalia 1998*, 206.

[554] United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report*, 189.

[555] IGAD, *Somalia National Reconciliation Conference, Eldoret, Kenya: Committee III: Land and Property Rights. Draft Report.*

because of the charcoal trade. There is even evidence that mango trees are being cut down for charcoal production."[556] The assertions need some qualification as to whether exclusion from a lucrative business and the cutting of trees for charcoal production is a necessary or sufficient factor to trigger clashes between the local Tunni clan and non-residents of the Haber Gedir clan in Brawa district. It is difficult to assess the dimensions of the clashes in 2001/2002 that left several people dead.

Tensions between the Hawiye and the local clans in Brawa district date back to the 1970s. Then, still under the leadership of Siyad Barre, several thousands of nomadic people from the central regions (largely from the Abgal and Haber Gedir clan families) and the Ogaden were resettled in the Brawa region when a severe drought – still remembered as *daba dheer* or the 'long tailed' among Somalis – hit the country in 1973-74. In 1975 and with the help of the foreign assistance, some 90,000 nomads were brought to the agricultural and fishing cooperatives in the South.[557] The Soviet Union provided modern fishing vessels. Some 300,000 displaced nomadic people found a temporary home in the southern regions. The state appropriated land from the local sedentary population thereby triggering resource competition – although half of the displaced persons returned to their homelands or abroad after several years.[558] However, the land remained in the hands of Barre's government. This resettlement scheme was only one action that reinforced already existing cultural cleavages to the disadvantage of the indigenous coastal and riverine population.[559] When clans from the central and northeastern regions overthrew the former regime, they then instrumentally used clan lineage solidarity to gain control of the trade, agricultural production and the fishing industry. A person from Brawa claimed that "the resettlement programme by Barre in

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[556] Interview in Mogadishu on 18 December 2002.
[557] Laitin and Samatar, "Somalia and the World Economy": 64.
[558] Downs, R. E. and S. P. Reyna, eds., *Land and Society in Contemporary Africa* (Hanover; London: University Press of New England, 1988).
[559] Cassanelli, "Explaining the Somali Crisis".

Brawa was politically motivated".[560] Barre adopted a divide and rule strategy by trying to create tensions between clans, in Brawa between the Hawiye and Digil clans, who were marginalised in his government.

The following sequence of events can be directly linked to the conflict between indigenous clans (Tunni), and newcomer clans (Haber Gedir) over the distribution of the benefits of the charcoal trade and its adverse environmental effects. In 2001, land mines were placed on the strategically important Mogadishu-Kismayo road. When I travelled from Merka to Brawa on this road, I saw the remains of one of the mini-busses that was hit by the land-mines. For this particular field trip, security arrangements were tighter compared to travel within Merka district. This might have been due to the fact that I was accompanied by Haber Gedir clansmen, who are considered as occupiers by the local communities in the area of Brawa. In Brawa town, my movements were restricted and access to the local population limited. Some four guards (all Haber Gedir) accompanied me when I visited Brawa on foot shortly after our arrival. My request to interview some of the inhabitants received a negative response. Besides, most locals observed the small group more anxiously than with open curiosity. The following quote from a Tunni woman who is from Brawa well explains the fears of the local population:

> I was living with my children, when the conflict started, my father was slaughtered and all the livestock looted. The children were away with camels and after some time we got information that they have been killed. The girls were raped there. Three of my children died as a result of hunger. Now in Brava we have nothing, this cloth I am wearing, Muslims gave it to me. Our homeland is in dispute, are the problems few? No.[561]

Although there was no sign of recent conflict, our hotel was guarded night and day by our own security guards. This precautionary measure was necessary since members of the Haber Gedir family allegedly committed crimes as mentioned by the same Tunni woman:

> Problems are not few for us. There was an incident where a whole household of seven people including the father and mother were slaughtered. Who did it? It's

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[560] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 3 December 2002.
[561] ACORD interview in Brawa, southern Somalia, in April 2001.

> human beings who did it. Those who occupied our land and are administering us are the ones who did it. Whatever job opportunities come up you cannot get it. You have no chances yet it's your home district.[562]

This view is shared among the local communities as another Tunni woman points out who works as causal labour:

> The Darod, Hawiye and the Girgir[563] looted our livestock. We had 200 sheep and goats, cattle and camel were many. All the eight bomas[564] of the homesteads were looted. [...] They looted all what we had. For instance, there was a time we went to the bush to collect wild fruits for eating and to sell. We were carrying loads of the fruit on our back to take to the market in Brava. On our way from the bush people stopped us and took all the wild fruits we had collected. We were told to come back while pointing guns at us. When we came back, they led us to where they camped. The girls were raped.[565]

The United Nations Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN) reported about the landmine incident whose remnant I saw on my way to Brawa. According to IRIN, a minibus travelling on the Mogadishu Kismayo route hit a land-mine at Erile close to Brawa on 11 July 2001.[566] In this incident, five people are believed to have died. This source confirms that this was the fourth such incident in this area within the same week.[567] On 15 July 2001, five people travelling in a mini-bus were injured when a land-mine detonated not far from the previous incident. These tragic events have contributed to the Tunni-Haber Gedir conflict.

Far from Brawa and only in the secure environment of a Kenyan hotel in Eldoret at the Somalia National Reconciliation Conference, a member of the TNG told me about the charcoal trade:

> In Brawa, conflict between the Tunni and the Haber Gedir arose over the cutting of trees [for the production of charcoal]. Today, the main port for charcoal export is Kismayo which is closer to Brawa than Mogadishu. Import goods are mainly rice and sugar; charcoal is exported to Egypt, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Yemen. Charcoal can be used for water-pipes or even for burning perfumes.

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[562] ACORD interview in Brawa, southern Somalia, in April 2001.
[563] A conglomerate of Hawiye clans.
[564] Villages (Swahili).
[565] ACORD interview in Roboow village, southern Somalia, in April 2001.
[566] IRIN, "Land-Mine Incidents blamed on Charcoal Trade," *United Nations Integrated Regional Information Network* 19 July 2001.
[567] IRIN, "Land-Mine Incidents blamed on Charcoal Trade".

> Regarding the charcoal trade, there was a reported clash between Haber Gedir and Tunni at the beginning of 2002 in Brawa district. The Tunni killed two to three people of the Haber Gedir. In retaliation, two to three villages inhabited by Tunni were burned.[568]

The Pan-Somali Council for Peace and Democracy (ISRAACA) reported about the fighting on their website on 31 August 2001. ISRAACA is an US-based advocacy organisation that promotes "justice, the de-institutionalisation of clanism, gender and social equality, unity, human rights and the peaceful co-existence of the Somali people".[569] In their open letter to the Transitional National Government they wrote that "these conflicts, which resulted from the uprising of the local communities whose livelihood and habitat have become under threat, led to the displacement of vulnerable nomads and their communities as their villages and grazing land have been turned into a war zone".[570] Among the villages reportedly affected by the fighting are Garas Weyn, Heejmaxaad and Kuunyo-Barrow, all of which are in Brawa district.

Several interviewees who are from Brawa region complained to me that newcomer clans, largely Hawiye, monopolise most of the business activities including the transport sector, health-related activities, the fishing industry and the charcoal trade. Besides livestock, fisheries and farming, people in Brawa are known for leather products and the Alindi cloth, a locally produced hand woven fabric. But local clan members are driven out of their traditional livelihoods, as one Tunni woman explains: "Tunnis were farmers and they had livestock. They also engaged in business. But now they are not allowed to do any. The businessman, his wealth has been looted, the farmer, his farm has been taken and the pastoralist, his animals have been looted. Women with cloths, they were taken from them."[571]

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[568] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 17 November 2002.
[569] Pan-Somali Council for Peace and Democracy, *Illegal Charcoal Trade from Somalia - Open Letter to the TNG*, 2001, ISRAACA, Available: www.israaca.org, 31 August 2001.
[570] Pan-Somali Council for Peace and Democracy, *Illegal Charcoal Trade from Somalia - Open Letter to the TNG.*
[571] ACORD interview in Brawa, southern Somalia, in April 2001.

With respect to the charcoal trade, it is facilitated by truck owners who buy the produce and sell it at high margins to Arab traders.[572] According to the Resource Management Network-Somalia, truck owners and traders in Mogadishu and the United Arab Emirates are among the main beneficiaries.[573] In most regions of southern Somalia, the transport sector is dominated by Haber Gedir kinsmen. Business people, for instance Deilaf who runs a trucking business in Mogadishu, rely on local support and good relations with militia leaders in order to protect their business activities (see 7.3.4). The loaded trucks escorted by young militia men must pass through numerous road blocks on the outskirts of Mogadishu manned by competing militia out for a cut in the trade until they reach one of the numerous beach ports. Here, clan became an important instrument to protect one's business interests. And Mogadishu's 'warlords' have done well out of this lucrative business, as one trader complains: "A lot of money goes on transportation to the El-Ma'an port in Mogadishu. The port charges a fee, then a fee is charged for loading the ship. That's after the road blocks, too. It becomes very expensive by the time we load it [the charcoal]."[574]

At least one influential business man in Mogadishu who is involved in the management of El Ma'an beach port told me that his business does not get involved in the charcoal trade. Abdulkadir Abukar Adani is working for an import/export company named Ramadan General Company. The company imports sugar from Brazil, rice from India, and gas and petroleum from the Gulf States. The export business is smaller compared to imports, largely consisting of livestock and fruits. He did not mention charcoal arguing that it was an unsustainable and environmental damaging activity.[575] The truth is maybe the wariness among Mogadishu's businessmen to talk about the trade,

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[572] Gurre, "Deforestation and Charcoal Burning: Specific Case Studies from the Southern and Central Regions of Somalia".
[573] Gurre, "Deforestation and Charcoal Burning: Specific Case Studies from the Southern and Central Regions of Somalia".
[574] Somalia Watch, *Focus on Charcoal.*
[575] Interview in Mogadishu on 19 December 2002.

as it involves high risks: "The Mogadishu charcoal Mafia must pay not only in terms of money but also lives. Militia men and drivers have been shot at road blocks, and trucks trying to deliver the load to the beach port have sparked off fire-fights and inter-clan conflicts."[576]

In an environment where physical power is essential to engage in business, it is crucial to belong to a powerful clan, such the Haber Gedir. This is why clan affiliation became paramount in contemporary Somalia, as a Jido agro-pastoralist explains: "The reason why people support tribalism is that maybe the clan has more weapons or more people. So if you are attacked or killed, somebody else[577] will be killed in revenge. That is why people are loyal to their clans, but the clan will not take anybody to heaven. It is pride between clans. I would say: 'if you kill me, I am not without people'."[578]

It is therefore no coincidence that Deilaf is from the same sub-clan, the Ayr, as Brawa's District Commissioner, Abdulahi 'Halane'. Halane has been living in Brawa for 28 years. When I interviewed him about his administration's legitimacy, he claimed that the administration was based on the local community and steered by elders. It is difficult to believe this. Halane argues that although there were conflicting parties in the area, elders had the means to mitigate conflict.[579] He echoed the widely accepted belief that Somali factions based on clan cannot bring peace and stability to the region. He points that "factions cannot form a government. There are no political parties. These are armed gangs, factions. Political parties and armed militias are different. Political parties are not armed, they use ideas and have offices. But armed militias are groups engaging in war and [...] are based on clans."[580] Further, he identifies the problem of leadership:

> The [faction] leader engages [armed militias] in war by telling them to loot anything you want, and once they start, he has no control over them. He cannot stop them from looting since that was what he used to lure them into the gang

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[576] Somalia Watch, *Focus on Charcoal.*
[577] From the aggressor's side.
[578] ACORD interview in Sablale, southern Somalia, on 14 April 2001.
[579] Interview in Brawa, southern Somalia, on 12 September 2002.
[580] ACORD interview in Brawa, southern Somalia, in April 2001.

> and they have no other source of income. That is what the country is facing today. The fault in Somalia is the ways or methods which faction leaders use in an attempt to attain leadership and that is the cause of the problem.[581]

On the other hand, the role of the elders is not always undisputed and neutral, as a Bimal man from the diaspora explains: "When there is conflict, there is also business as elders who negotiate must be paid for accommodation, food and transport. Many victims prefer to give up their claims because they cannot longer afford the mediation. Elders are prospering from land disputes."[582] His view is supported by a Jido elder from Kurtunwarey: "While the blood money is being raised, any person involved in the negotiations over the blood money has to be taken care of as a guest. It usually amounts to 500,000 shillings per night and that is not included in the blood money."[583] The Bimal clansman claimed to be a member of the Bimal Royal Family which settled in and around Merka. He left Lower Shabelle in 1975 for the United States to become a fire protection engineer. Since then, he has travelled to the region several times. In his opinion, the Haber Gedir clan attempted to occupy Merka:

> Most of the gunmen are Haber Gedir or *mooryaans* [the terms translates into 'poor people, ignorant gun men']. Some businesses or NGOs are using the political unit clan to manipulate, harass or discourage drivers of commercial vehicles or fishermen so that they cannot do their work. Or they form a non-governmental organisation in order to run development projects creating new forms of dependencies. Similarly, they provide security and shelter to donors and foreigners. Those who occupy [land] are in large business men who benefit from the situation.[584]

In Mogadishu I was told elders became landowners in the course of the civil war thus undermining their role of arbitrating land and property disputes as well as allocating land to young men and newcomers.[585] In Lower Shabelle, elders and community leaders are believed to collaborate with traders in the production and trade of charcoal.[586]

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[581] ACORD interview in Brawa, southern Somalia, in April 2001.
[582] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 27 November 2002.
[583] ACORD interview in Kurtunwarey, southern Somalia, on 16 April 2001.
[584] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 27 November 2002.
[585] Author's fieldwork in Mogadishu in December 2002.
[586] Gurre, "Deforestation and Charcoal Burning: Specific Case Studies from the Southern and Central Regions of Somalia".

Even the health sector in Brawa was dominated and managed by non-residents. The only mother-and-child health clinic was run by a Merka-based NGO which was headed by an influential and politically active Ayr woman. Accordingly, recruitment of staff, the procurement of drugs and payment of staff were dependent on the Hawiye management of the NGO. In Merka, the same NGO trained former militia men in fishing by providing boats, fishing lines and nets.[587] These activities were funded through the EC demobilisation programme which started in May 1997.[588] For each course the programme enrolled 150 young militia men. The weapons, which the militia men surrendered, were kept in a locked storage room on the NGO's premises, adding to the weaponry of the employed guards. The disarmed men, who were eager to become fishermen, only increased competition among the few local fishermen. Donors in the international community praised this project as a success without understanding the power-relationship between non-residents and the local community. While I was in Baidoa, a prominent Bimal clan member mentioned this case:

> Under the scheme of demobilisation in Merka, IIDA[589], COSV[590] are funding the maintenance of seven hundred militia men who have come from the central regions for the exploitation of the region's resources. So, where is their neutrality, where is their impartiality, they are acting in the interest of whom? [...] And they are feeding militia men. And this has given them the opportunity of having access to more economic resources in order to reinforce the clan occupation which is perpetrated by their own sub-clan. And no-one else from the [indigenous] population of the area has got that freedom to have any contact with the NGOs or to have the freedom to work with the NGOs.[591]

Consequently, local clans built up resistance to demand their fair share of these activities. Overall, humanitarian sources ascribe the violence to economic rather than to environmental reasons. "The Tunni want a cut in the charcoal business, currently

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[587] Author's fieldwork in Mogadishu in December 2002.
[588] Adam, Nasri H., "Activist Note: Perspectives on a Demobilization Center in Merka, Somalia," *Peace & Change* 25.2 (2000): 283.
[589] IIDA Women's Development Organisation, *Iid* means to celebrate in Somali.
[590] COSV (Co-ordinating Committee for Voluntary Service) is an Italian non-governmental organisation situated in Merka, southern Somalia and Nairobi, Kenya.
[591] Interview in Baidoa, southern Somalia, on 9 February 2002.

dominated by the Abgal and Haber Gedir clans. It is not a question of environment but one of money," the United Nations Integrated Regional Information Network reports.[592]

The relationship between non-residents and local people worsened during the civil war. Before the war, migrants from other regions were integrated in local communities by accepting the local *xeer* or customary rule, as a prominent civil society leader explains:

> In the past, any foreign clan which migrated to the riverine area and wanted to become one clan of the area, had to adapt to and to accept their system, and to [arrange] themselves with the locals, in order to have the same right, their property protected [...] on the same footing as the locals. But the situation changed through the war. Armed people from the [nomadic] clans poured into the riverine areas, especially the fertile lands, Shabelle, Lower Juba, Middle Juba. These armed people broke with the covenant of the past. They try to subjugate the local people. Sometimes also to replace them. [...] This is a new feature brought by the civil war, armed forces of other clans oppressing other clans, weaker clans.[593]

Above all, the described conflict has a political dimension. Accordingly, these localised conflicts must be placed in the regional picture of competing regional non-state administrations, namely the Somali Reconciliation and Restoration Council versus the Transitional National Government and the Juba Valley Alliance respectively. Since 1999, the so called Juba Valley Alliance took over control in Kismayo, the major exit port for charcoal in the South. The Juba Valley Alliance (JVA) constitutes an alliance of Darod (Marehan) and Hawiye (Haber Gedir) clansmen. The JVA closest ally is Abdiqasim Salad Hassan's Transitional National Government. Abdiqasim being from Hawiye/Haber Gedir/Ayr supports the JVA militarily against General Hersi 'Morgan' (Darod/Majerten) who claims popular support in the region. Morgan received support from the Chairman of the Rahanweyn Resistance Army, Colonel Hassan Mohamed Nur 'Shatigadud'. In order to weaken Morgan's position, Colonel Bare Aden Shire 'Hirale', Chairman of the JVA, allegedly supported Shatigadud's rivals, Sheik Aden Madobe and Mohamed Ibrahim Habsade. The motivation both of the JVA and of General Morgan is largely economic.

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[592] IRIN, "Land-Mine Incidents blamed on Charcoal Trade".
[593] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 30 October 2002.

Their main objective is to gain control over the sea port and to monopolise the rich agricultural Juba valley. At the time of writing the JVA makes large profits out of the charcoal trade: "Everybody is free to import and to export," was the answer of the JVA regarding restrictions on charcoal.[594] The JVA benefits from the charcoal export through the collection of taxes. Juba Valley Alliance spokesman Abdirahman Haji Waldirah justifies the collection of taxes: "If people want security and other services they have to pay for it, and paying taxes is the way," he pointed out.[595]

On the contrary, members of the Tunni clan are known for their support of the Somali Reconciliation and Restoration Council.[596] Supporters of the SRRC who seek making their presence felt in the area are therefore suspected of having laid the landmines which caused the deadly incidents in July 2001. But humanitarian sources believe in economic factors overriding political ambitions: "Whatever else is involved, the real issue is charcoal and nothing else."[597] The involvement of the JVA in the charcoal trade is evident; however, the TNG which has close ties with the JVA is itself indirectly involved in the profitable trade, as it depends on the financial support of the local business elite.[598] This would explain the TNG's reluctance to take the ban on charcoal export seriously. The strong relationship between the TNG and the local business community has been well described by Le Sage.[599] He claims that senior government officials drawn from the Hawiye clan "use their private sector connections to wield power by controlling the flow of trade in Mogadishu and financing large standing militias under the guise of business protection".[600] (see 7.3).

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[594] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, with representatives of the JVA on 21 November 2002.
[595] IRIN, "Freelance Militias disarmed in Kismayo," *United Nations Integrated Regional Information Network* 2 September 2003.
[596] IRIN, "Land-Mine Incidents blamed on Charcoal Trade".
[597] IRIN, "Land-Mine Incidents blamed on Charcoal Trade".
[598] Pan-Somali Council for Peace and Democracy, *Illegal Charcoal Trade from Somalia - Open Letter to the TNG.*
[599] Le Sage, Andre, "Somalia: Sovereign Disguise for a Mogadishu Mafia," *Review of African Political Economy* 29.91 (2002).
[600] Le Sage, "Somalia: Sovereign Disguise for a Mogadishu Mafia": 137.

6.5. Conclusion

Trade in charcoal has gained importance during the past ten years. Local communities who belong to militarily weaker clans, such as the Tunni or the *Jareer* have been trying to build up their resistance to the Haber Gedir strongmen in the southern regions. It is likely that they received material and logistical military support including land-mines from the Somali Reconciliation and Restoration Council who in turn received support from the Ethiopian government. These strategic interlinkages are important in assessing links between resources (i.e. charcoal) and conflict in Somalia (see chapter VIII).

With reference to the above mentioned strategic interests, it may be inaccurate to see the environmental factors, such as deforestation and soil erosion as a sufficient factor to trigger armed conflict. However, in combination with strategic and economic interests of local communities, the charcoal trade serves as a necessary factor for triggering violent conflict in the region. The main accentuating force behind the localised conflict is economic exclusion. Accordingly, local communities in the rural areas of Brawa and elsewhere hardly benefit from the trade since the highest margins are at the wholesale and export level. But they are mainly affected by the adverse environmental affects, such as sand dune encroachment, loss of grazing areas and environmental degradation. In particular the export to the Gulf States is lucrative, as the production of charcoal is relatively cheap. Retailers and traders do not have to calculate the cost of raw material. Wood is considered a free good in many parts of Somalia, and communal land rights and land-use practices are undermined by the rule of force.

In order to overcome economic exclusion, and this applies also to other sectors of the economy as mentioned in the previous paragraphs, affiliation with armed clans gained importance. This led to horizontal inequalities in the Brawa corridor. Although charcoal bans have been placed in several parts of the country, authorities lack the power and sometimes the political will to enforce them. Regarding domestic consumption,

alternatives are not economically feasible. Ultimately, the banning of charcoal export would need the cooperation of Arab countries and Somali businesses.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Resource competition – A comparative perspective

7.1. INTRODUCTION – A REGIONAL AND NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

In the following chapter, I will draw comparative evidence from Bay region and Mogadishu. I visited Bay region and Mogadishu in February and December 2002 respectively. Here, I will demonstrate that the events and processes discussed in the preceding local case studies are not isolated but reflect general trends in Somalia's contemporary political history.

In 1989, agricultural production and the scale of the livestock economy in Bay region was as large as in Lower Shabelle (see table 3.5). Bay and Bakol regions are considered the 'bread basket' of Somalia, accounting for a large percentage of overall cereal production. In addition, Bay and Lower Shabelle display similar environmental and climatic conditions. Further, both regions have been directly affected by natural disasters, such as droughts or floods. Demographics seem similar, too. But the two regions display different types of natural resource endowments, modes of production and food economy groups. Above all, contemporary histories of conflict differ in Bay and Shabelle region. In comparing them, I hope to explain more about the underlying causes of conflict within the region in relation to the role of agricultural land, trade and foreign aid. The critical question remains as to whether the nature of conflict in Bay region can be ascribed to similar variables as those in the Shabelle region.

Mogadishu (Banadir region) is the centre of trade and commerce and the epicentre of violent conflict that has affected the country in the past twelve years. Since two of the detailed Shabelle case studies focus on agricultural commodities suited for export trade, notably bananas and charcoal, I aim at emphasising the role of trade in conflict beyond the regional level. Local production is directly linked to retailing, marketing and selling of the produce. Accordingly, the banana economy and charcoal trade have to be put into perspective, for instance when analysing commodity chains or patron-client relationships. Further, understanding individual actors and their role in Somalia's war economy is essential to the understanding of conflict. This assertion leads to a set of questions. What

are the processes leading to the formation of the new business class that in part employed force as an economic instrument? What are the social consequences of this development? I therefore will concentrate on the business class in Mogadishu and its role in shaping levels of violent conflict in southern Somalia.

7.2. BAY REGION

7.2.1. Introduction

Bay region produces roughly 70 per cent of the sorghum in the country. The situation changed rapidly after the breakdown of Barre's regime. Barre's troops retreated to Lower Shabelle, Bay and Bakol, plundering the areas of its stores of cereal. In the early nineties, Baidoa, the regional capital came to be known as the 'city of the walking dead' when famine ravaged the region. Previously, it was known as 'Baidoa the heaven'. The worst stage of the famine ended just before the UNOSOM II started in March 1993 (see 2.6.2). A short period of relief followed. In 1995, the Digil-Mirifle Supreme Governing Council was formed to administer the region.

The Rahanweyn, consisting mainly of Digil-Mirifle clans, were able to appoint their own district governors for the first time. This community, which traditionally is engaged in rain-fed agriculture and in agro-pastoralism, had been neglected by the Mogadishu regime for the past few decades. Most Rahanweyn speak a different language, namely Af-may that is related with Af-mahad, which is spoken in the central and northern regions. Af-mahad was made the official Somali language when the Latin orthography was adopted in 1972.[601] The distinction of speech between the Digil-Mirifle and the nomadic clans of the central and northern regions is part of a wider cultural, geographical and social primary division. Only the dominantly nomadic Hawiye, Darod, Dir and Isaq clan families comprise the 'Samale' clan families constituting the Somali nation whereas

[601] Cassanelli, "Explaining the Somali Crisis", 17.

the agro-pastoral Digil-Mirifle are considered 'Sab'.[602] In this respect, it is misleading to speak of one culture, one language and one religion that are shared by Somalis. The society is diverse rather than homogeneous as often claimed in the literature (see 5.2).[603]

But the Digil-Mirifle Governing Council was toppled by forces of General Aideed in September 1995. By contrast, the General's son, Hussein Aideed, claimed that his father's forces liberated the area from Siyad Barre's cronies:

> You have the Digil-Mirifle who were abused very badly during the rule of Siyad Barre who [retreated] to the Digil-Mirifle territory and parts of Lower Shabelle and stayed there from 26 January until 29 April 1991. He was abusing these minority groups. My father [General Aideed] formed the Somali National Alliance and liberated these farming and fishing tribes, and used the resources of the Saad who are from Mudug region in terms of money, in terms of manpower to help them to control their area. [...] Because under Italian occupation, these farmers never owned their land. The [land] was owned by their masters from Puntland, from Somaliland, the rich class, the elite.[604]

Soon after Hussein Aideed's occupation, the Rahanweyn Resistance Army was formed, and succeeded with the help of the Ethiopian government to install its own administration in May 1999. Security then improved, but the RRA has yet to transform itself into an accountable and effective public administration. The RRA is one of the non-state administrations or factions opposing the Transitional National Government, although the Rahanweyn participated in the Arta conference in 2000, only to withdraw soon after the TNG was formed in Mogadishu. In July 2002, the RRA split into two factions led by the RRA Chairman Colonel Hassan Mohamed Nur 'Shatigadud' and his deputies, Sheik Aden Madobe and Mohamed Ibrahim Habsade. In the course of the clashes, the regional commercial capital Baidoa changed hands several times. Up to the time of writing in 2003, the conflict between the two continued.

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[602] Lewis, *A Modern History of Somalia: Nation and State in the Horn of Africa*, 6.
[603] Laitin and Samatar, *Somalia: Nation in Search of a State*. Lewis, *A Pastoral Democracy: A Study of Pastoralism and Politics among the Northern Somali of the Horn of Africa*.
[604] Interview in Soy, Kenya, on 18 November 2002.

7.2.2. Political economy of war in Bay region

During the man-made famine in 1991 and 1992, thousands of people died of starvation in the region. Large parts of fertile land became idle and farmers started consuming their harvest before crops matured in order to forestall looting by roving militias.[605] According to a UN report food prices increased by 800 to 1200 per cent in the urban centres in southern Somalia in spring 1992.[606] In neighbouring Bakol region, the price for one kilo of sorghum went up from 1,000 Somali shillings pre-war up to 25,000 Somali shillings in the mid-nineties.[607] In contrast, the exchange rate of the Somali shilling against the US dollar remained relatively stable (see figure 7.2). The increase in prises for cereal in urban centres benefited Aideed's militia, as he controlled some of the main markets in Mogadishu where looted food from Bay and Bakol was sold at high profit margins. Emergency food targeted for Baidoa often never reached the region. It was looted on the way by Aideed's militia, trucked back to Mogadishu and sold there. When the United Nations decided to airlift food to Baidoa, Aideed captured the airstrip, and demanded US$ 5,000 landing and security 'fees' per flight.[608] De Waal claims that the inhabitants of the inter-riverine regions were most affected by the civil war because of three reasons: First, the regions were battlefields of the conflicting parties in a number of occasions in 1991-92. Second, the local people were poorly armed; and third, the rich agricultural land attracted militias who could sustain themselves by looting. This led to the development of a war economy.[609] This sequence of events supports the argument of this thesis that the relative plenty of the inter-riverine regions including Bay region rather than environmental scarcity led to increased violence and conflict.

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[605] Africa Watch and Physicians for Human Rights, "Somalia: No Mercy in Mogadishu: The Human Cost of the Conflict & the Struggle for Relief".
[606] Natsios, A.S., "Humanitarian Relief Interventions in Somalia: The Economics of Chaos," *International Peacekeeping* 3.1 (1996).
[607] Rogge, .J. R., *The displaced Population in South and Central Somalia and Preliminary Proposals for their Re-Integration and Rehabilitation* (Nairobi: United Nations Development Programme, 1992).
[608] Mukhtar, Mohamed Haji and Abdi Mohamed Kusow, *The Bottom-Up Approach in Reconciliation in the Inter-River Regions of Somalia* (Nairobi: United Nations Development Office for Somalia, 1993), 17.
[609] De Waal, *Famine Crimes: Politics and the Disaster Relief Industry in Africa*, 163.

Bay was hard hit by the civil war in the early nineties. As in Lower Shabelle, the inter-riverine areas are rich with natural resources but inhabited by unarmed relatively weak clans, the Digil clans in Lower Shabelle and the Mirifle clans in Bay and Bakol. The people of Bay region, being engaged mainly in the agricultural sector, were more vulnerable to insecurity than herders. Herders could flee with their livestock and were armed to protect their livestock whereas farmers could not take much of their material wealth if they fled. If farmers decided to stay, to protect their possessions, it was likely that their possessions were plundered and their families killed.

Baidoa is situated between Mogadishu, the stronghold of the insurgent United Somali Congress and Gedo, the home of Siyad Barre's clan. As a result, villages and towns changed hands over a two-year period, retreats and advances of Barre and USC forces respectively resulted in killings, rape, looting and destruction of villages. As one farmer of a family of four tells about the early years of the civil war:

> When they came to my house, my children were scared and were sobbing and my wife was struggling to keep them quiet. The militia men, without asking, opened the silos and started to load my small but essential food reserve and two goats used to provide the children's milk. I was boiling with anger, but was also aware that the slightest reaction on my part would cost my life. After taking everything we had produced by our hard labour, they next decided to go into the hut and look for money and valuables. I tried to convince them that we were poor people, that they had already taken all that we owned and that we had neither money nor any other valuables. Their boss, then nervously ordered them to carry me away. [...] After hours of very fast walking and running, I finally approached our home, only to find that it had been burned to the ground. There was nothing left but charred, still smoking stumps of the house frame. [...] At last, an old fellow mustered the courage to tell me in a few words, that my family was dead, all three of them cruelly burned alive by the militia while imprisoned in our hut. Their unrecognisable bodies had been buried in the morning.[610]

Anything which was associated with the former regime, such as government buildings or parastatal company buildings were left in ruins. After Barre was ousted there was mounting dissatisfaction about succeeding forces, but internal divisions within the Digil and Mirifle communities hindered the formation of an effective resistance movement.

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[610] Gassem, *Hostages: The People who kidnapped themselves*, 116.

Though the Digil and Mirifle formed a military organisation, the Somali Democratic Movement in 1990, they became divided between pro-Ali Mahdi and pro-Aideed United Somali Congress factions in the course of the civil war.

The situation in Bay worsened again with the occupation of Aideed's forces. In one incident – during the phase of conflict shortly before the RRA took control of Baidoa in 1999 – the village Dooy Nuuney, situated approximately 20 kilometres outside Baidoa on the road to Mogadishu, was completely destroyed in mid-May 1999 by Hussein Aideed's advancing troops. Its strategic location on the road between Mogadishu and Baidoa became the villagers undoing. I was told that one day some 60 young and elderly men were captured, sent to Baidoa where 47 of them were executed in only one day.[611] They were accused of ambushing Hussein Aideed's troops. After the incident, 13 men were released. Survivors of this horrible incident told me about the mass execution. In one interview, a 30-year-old man, who survived the execution, told us:

> I lived in the village during Aideed's occupation. The militia of Aideed arrived in the early morning. All male persons were taken outside the village to a waiting bus. Then, the village was burnt. I was taken to Juba Bank [in Baidoa]. The men were divided into groups of ten. Those groups were being taken in pick-ups to be executed. I was in one of the groups when fire was opened at the captured men. Heavy machine-gun fire started. One bullet cut my leg, another my hand. In my group, two survived with severe injuries. All dead bodies were taken away to the graveyard. Me and the other person were put on a wheelbarrow and taken to a garbage dumping site. The militia left us bleeding, without 'wasting' more bullets. After darkness, I was able to make it to a nearby house where I was taken care of. I was then sent to Merka where I recovered though my right leg had to be amputated. My co-survivor lives in a nearby village.[612]

Young women, who could not escape were either raped or forced to marry militia men, as one woman recounts a traumatic experience:

> I had a tea shop in the village. I was asked to marry one of Aideed's militia men. After I rejected, I was shot. Three bullets were fired, and as a consequence, my arm had to be amputated. Also, all my property was looted. This happened in late 1998.[613]

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[611] Personal communication with villagers of Dooy Nuuney village, Bay region, on 13 February 2001.
[612] Personal communication with villagers of Dooy Nuuney village, Bay region, on 13 February 2001.
[613] Personal communication with villagers of Dooy Nuuney village, Bay region, on 13 February 2001.

The situation in Lower Shabelle was different, with lower reported death rates during the civil war. The main fighting took place on the road between Mogadishu and Kismayo. Towns, such as Shalambood and Bulo Marer, which were situated on this important trade route, were severely affected. On the contrary, cities like Merka and Brawa were off the main road situated at the coast (see 3.2.4). In addition, Lower Shabelle was more easily accessible for international aid agencies, who started to supply the regions with emergency food.

The advancing USC forces were not viewed as liberators in either region, Lower Shabelle and Bay, as looting of their livestock and killing of their people continued. Thousands of people fled Bay, and today, most internally displaced persons in Mogadishu originated from the riverine areas. It was not until Ethiopia took the initiative in January 1997 to hold a conference in Sodere that the Rahanweyn Resistance Army became a strong military movement.

Some interpreted the massive killings in Bay and Bakol as genocide. Mukhtar points out that the famine in Baidoa was neither rooted in environmental disturbances nor was the immediate result of the civil war. He claims that the famine was deliberately induced by Hawiye and Darod forces, and argues that "the only reason behind the massive suffering of the Digil and Mirifle clans was nothing but genocidal, to remove them from their land through whatever means, even if that meant the total extermination of clans through subjecting them to starvation".[614] Others argue that the rich inter-riverine areas gained importance in terms of pastoral production for nomads from the northern and central regions due to problems of desertification in the North.[615]

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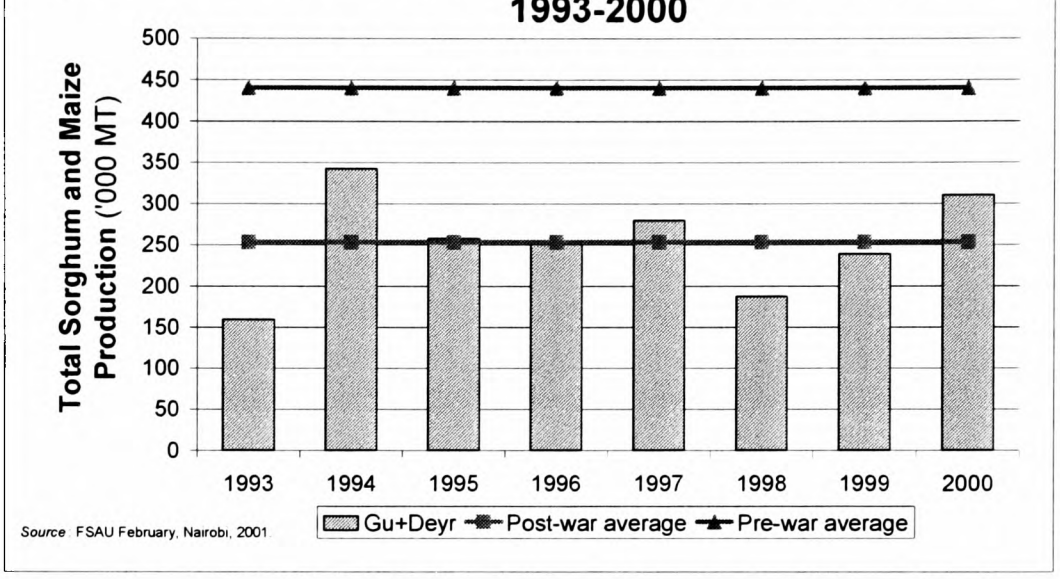
[614] Mukhtar and Kusow, *The Bottom-Up Approach in Reconciliation in the Inter-River Regions of Somalia*, 15.

[615] Kusow, Abdi Mohamed, "Peace and Stability in Somalia: Problems and Prospects," *Ufahamu Journal of the African Activist Association* 22.1 & 2 (1994). Cited in: Brons, *Society, Security, Sovereignty and the State: Somalia, From Statelessness to Statelessness?* 225.

7.2.3. The Rahanweyn Resistance Army – Creating a better future?

Food security has improved in the region since 1999, and access for international aid agencies has been possible in the three years that followed. The production of cereal stabilised by 2000 but was well below the pre-war average (see figure 7.1). Until recently, the RRA provided security to the inhabitants of Bay. All social services ranging from fresh water distribution to education and health were provided by the private sector and international aid agencies. People who are involved in the business sector or work for international aid agencies are obliged to 'contribute' to sustain militia force of an estimated 4,000 men. During my stay in Bay in February 2002, fighting broke out in Bardera between the Juba Valley Alliance headed by Colonel Bare Aden Shire 'Hirale' (Marehan/reer Dini) and the militia of the RRA. Somalis who were working for the World Food Programme at this time were asked to contribute one barrel of fuel or an equivalent of US$ 70.[616] The amount to be paid was graded according to income. I was told that three different taxation categories existed. The RRA demanded 'contributions' from local aid workers, business men and traders.

Figure 7.1. Cereal Production in Southern Somalia 1993-2000



Source FSAU February, Nairobi, 2001

The formation of the RRA was an encouraging development, interpreted by analysts as a sign of political consolidation in the region. Yet, the RRA remained a military organisation with weak institutions. As with many other prominent Somali figures,

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[616] Personal communication with UN security officer in Baidoa on 10 February 2002.

Shatigadud served in the former regime as a Somali army colonel and a member of the former National Security Service. As in the case of Lower Shabelle clans, his RRA fought for equal representation based on a federal political system:

> The RRA is in a different position from other Somalis because the RRA is a community that has some differences based on culture. It is different from the other main clans. The Digil-Mirifle land has been invaded and the people subjugated. [...] We want Somalia to adopt a federal system. To achieve this goal what I think is that Somalia should be built from the ground. Not from the top down. We have first to build regional authorities. Also, our clan is ill treated by other clans. For 30 years the other Somalis have marginalised them.[617]

Before the most recent clashes within the RRA broke out, Shatigadud declared the formation of a new political entity that stretches beyond the geographical borders of Bay and Bakol region, namely the state of Southwest Somalia, composed of Bay, Bakol, Gedo, Upper and Lower Juba, Lower and Middle Shabelle region. This was not a new idea. In January 1995, a five-month conference started to discuss issues related to clan unity and security initiated by the Digil and Mirifle clans. This process resulted in the formation of a supra-regional administration, the Supreme Governing Council for the Digil-Mirifle community. This newly formed administration officially considered Bay, Bakol, Gedo, Lower Shabelle, Lower and Middle Juba region to be part of the Digil-Mirifle territory. This announcement faced strong opposition from the Hawiye clans and in September 1995, the newly established 'government' was overthrown by Aideed's forces.

Here, it is worth considering the special political characteristics of the Rahanweyn in terms of hierarchy and territorial identity. Anthropological writings state that the Rahanweyn have a long history in assimilating northern clans who then adopted cultivation. The different mode of production of agro-pastoralists produced a society that was based on fixed territory, largely between the rivers, whereas herders organised society around pasture and water points developing a lesser degree of territorial stability.

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[617] IRIN, "Interview with Hassan Mohamed Nur 'Shatigadud'," *United Nations Integrated Regional Information Network* 4 February 2002.

For nomads mobility and opportunism was important to cope with a scarce environment favouring individualism rather than clan solidarity. The southern clans developed more hierarchical political structures: each clan family selected a malaq (king) who would take decisions in accordance with the elders of the sub-clans for the welfare of the individual clan. He was bound to the customary law *xeer* and the Islamic law (*shari'a*). The highest respected leadership among the Digil and some of the Mirifle clans was traditionally the Sultan of the Geledi.[618]

Lewis argued that a social system in which moveable property is the focus of corporate interest, and in a critical environment where pasture and water is scarce and irregularly distributed due to varying rainy seasons, favours the evolution of the individual pastoralist with his stock and militias against the formation of large and stable corporate political units.[619] Hence, authority is minimal and fluid. Herders are faced with fewer situations that require sustained and intense cooperation. In that case, one could argue that an agricultural society with stronger territorial ties would favour the formation of a regional administration based on hierarchy and cooperation. Among agriculturists, cooperation is essential for sustaining their livelihoods. Above all, since economic assets are not moveable, solidarity among clans becomes important to defend and maintain their property against enemy incursions.

This is an interesting thesis that has been largely neglected in contemporary Somali writings. A UN report states that "the resulting heterogeneity of southern Somali clan structures [...] tends to foster a wider and more diversified solidarity. There [...] are the factors which encourage the expansion of southern political solidarity to the level of the clan, which give the clan as a territorial and politico-legal unit a notable degree of solidarity, and which promote the development of a more hierarchical and more stable

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[618] Mukhtar and Kusow, *The Bottom-Up Approach in Reconciliation in the Inter-River Regions of Somalia*, 26.

[619] Lewis, Ioan M., *Making History in Somalia: Humanitarian Intervention in a Stateless Society* (London: London School of Economics, The Centre for the Study of Global Governance., 1993).

authority system within it."[620] The implications of this analysis seems obvious: In theory, regions that are populated by farming communities such as the Mirifle and the Digil clans should have better prospects to build and sustain a regional administration than the nomadic clans from the central or northern regions.

Nonetheless, the political reality is quite different. My argument is that sedentary communities in southern Somalia are more susceptible to conflict because of increased social vulnerability. Besides, other intervening variables, such as external involvement, and political and economic exclusion, destabilised the regional administration in Bay and Bakol as witnessed in the year 2002/2003. The view of the preceding paragraph would also contrast the political realities in Somaliland and Puntland. Somaliland in particular enjoys political stability and has a functioning regional administration although pastoralism is the dominant form of livelihood.

Moreover, the earlier mentioned lineage fragmentation shown in the preceding case study analysis has also affected the Mirifle clans in Bay. The civil war has affected clan solidarity. This caused great instability and reduced social resilience of the Rahanweyn to absorb external shocks. Brons agrees with this view that one major obstacle to the creation of a functioning administration in Bay and Bakol is continuous violence and warfare.[621] Further, she mentions the continuing occupation by Darod and Hawiye factions as a problem to state formation, and lastly that political realities have been created over time, circumstances that are increasingly difficult to alter or to correct the longer they exist.[622]

Further, some northern regions with a largely pastoral and nomadic population have experienced improved security compared to some southern regions. For example, the self-declared Republic of Somaliland, which has enjoyed political stability for several

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[620] Wiebe, Menno F., Meshack L. Mwera and Ahmed M. Warfa, *A Case Study on Bay Region* (Nairobi: United Nations Development Office for Somalia, 1995), 10.
[621] Brons, *Society, Security, Sovereignty and the State: Somalia, From Statelessness to Statelessness?* 264.
[622] Brons, *Society, Security, Sovereignty and the State: Somalia, From Statelessness to Statelessness?*

years, would falsify this environmentally deterministic argument. There, livestock is the main economic base and clan composition is relatively homogeneous. Besides, it is questionable to divide the population in two distinct social groups, namely pastoralists and agriculturalists. In particular in Bay region, income derives from several sources including agriculture, herding of animals, services and production.[623] Fewer people work in the rural areas but have moved to the urban centres, where wage labour is the main source of income.

It seems unlikely that the conflict was about physical resources, such as land and agricultural produce. It was rather the manifestation of a struggle for political power within the RRA leadership. But political power in turn offers the opportunity to tap into economic resources. This is why most of the fighting occurred in and around Baidoa, as the city is an important transit point for the inter-state and domestic trade. Baidoa is situated on the main trading route leading from Mogadishu via Baidoa and Luq to Kenya. Whoever controls Baidoa automatically controls the Mogadishu-Baidoa-Luq trade route. The tarmac road leading from Mogadishu to Baidoa is still in good condition. There are numerous checkpoints on the road, where travellers and goods are taxed. Most of the agricultural produce, largely sorghum, is trucked from Baidoa to Mogadishu. Bay itself does not produce any primary commodities suited for export in comparison to Lower Shabelle. The trucks then return with rice, sugar and petroleum.

In a nutshell, I am convinced that the violence was rather the outcome of weak RRA leadership and poorly developed institutions that could have balanced power and the distribution of the perceived wealth of the region within the leadership than of scarcity of natural resources.

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[623] See Helander, "The Hubeer in the Land of Plenty: Land, Labor, and Vulnerability among a Southern Somali Clan".

7.2.4. Conclusion

To conclude, it is difficult to identify root causes of contemporary conflict in Bay. Whereas the clashes of the early nineties were associated with the struggle for self-determination of the Rahanweyn clans, it is less clear in the most recent cases. The Rahanweyn Resistance Army was originally formed to liberate the region from outside subjugation. When this objective was achieved in 1999, the common denominator for power-sharing ceased and a gradual fragmentation of the diverse alliance between the Mirifle and the Digil clans prevailed. What was missing was an institutional basis, on which an effective administration could have been built. The Somali Reconciliation and Restoration Council with its headquarters in Baidoa was not in a position to fulfil this role. Members of the Council were more divided than ever before making it impossible to play a mediating role in the current conflict. Above all, the latest clashes occurred while their leaders attended the IGAD peace talks. Consequently, analysts had their doubts about the executive power of the RRA leadership. Others would argue that violence became a means to be heard and taken seriously in the talks, for example in order to secure a seat in the Leaders Committee of the IGAD peace talks (see chapter VIII).

7.3. MOGADISHU – AN ECONOMY WITHOUT A STATE

7.3.1. Introduction

When analysing links between conflict, trade and foreign aid, it is important to examine the role of the Somali business class. As discussed in the previous chapters, mainly urban-based elites benefit from the profitable banana economy and the charcoal trade. Nevertheless, potential links between conflict, trade and foreign aid are ambiguous. Whereas trade can trigger conflict in producing areas and along transport routes, it can build trust among the business elite in the urban centres. Today, there is a thriving economy largely based on trade and arbitrage rather than production without a

functioning state in Somalia. As a result, business elites have gradually taken over basic functions of the modern state.

Before turning to more recent developments of Mogadishu's economy, the period following the collapse of Siyad Barre's regime should be briefly discussed. In 1991, heavy fighting erupted between supporters of Ali Mahdi (Abgal) and General Aideed (Haber Gedir) resulting into massive killings, the destruction of the city and the division of Mogadishu into two parts demarcated by the so-called 'green line'. Indiscriminate shelling and the use of all kinds of heavy weapons targeted at residential areas led to hundreds of deaths, injuries and displaced persons.[624] Later, faction leaders like Atto, Aideed, Mahdi, Qanyare, Musa Sudi, Omar 'Finish', to name just a few, established their realms of influence in the city. Although they promised to restore security and reopen the main port facilities, the situation did not improve. Their respective militias collected 'taxes' at one of the numerous road blocks from public transport vehicles and trucks transporting goods to and from Mogadishu's markets. Gunshots were regularly exchanged, ambushes and killings of civilians travelling on public transport have been taken place.[625] If drivers refused to pay the 'tax', armed militia would not hesitate to fire at public transport vehicles. Passing the destroyed cathedral of Mogadishu in a private vehicle in December 2002, I was asked not to take pictures in order not to provoke any clashes. Besides, there were freelance militias who organised kidnappings and ambushes on a commercial basis. The security situation did not improve over the years, Mogadishu remained one of the most dangerous cities in the world.[626] The exchange of gunfire, shelling, car hijacking are daily occurrences. Within one week in December 2002, the following incidents were reported: "Uncontrolled militia increased. Six people were killed [...] when a vehicle owned by Nation Link (a communication company) was

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[624] United Nations Development Office for Somalia, *Regional Profile of Mogadishu - Benadir* (Nairobi: United Nations Development Programme, 1999), 27.
[625] United Nations Development Office for Somalia, *Regional Profile of Mogadishu - Benadir*, 26.
[626] Since the kidnapping of several international UN staff in April 2001, Mogadishu has become a no-go-area for UN international staff.

ambushed. Sheikh Ali Mohamoud 'Dhere', head of the regional court, was attacked in his house killing five people. (When I met him shortly after the incident took place, he was hesitant to comment on political issues.[627]) Five people were killed in an ambushed vehicle. Three people were killed when two militia men had a dispute. Two people killed during Eid holiday. Kidnappings increased in Bakara and Karan market. Car hijacking increased."[628] This insecure environment has affected the private sector in several ways. Residents moved to areas which they considered as safe. As a consequence, previous smaller scale markets like Bakara and Karan expanded.[629]

More generally, in countries where government institutions are absent, security, social services, such as education and health care are often privatised.[630] This is a typical development in southern Somalia. In Mogadishu, the business class has taken over utilities, health services, the education sector, telecommunication networks and 'public' transport. A weak adherence to the notion of 'public goods', the functioning of the Somali non-state administrations and the 'free market' model of Dubai are all elements in a discussion about the role of the business class in a re-emerging Somalia. Today, there is greater awareness among Somalis about the role the private sector could play in a more stable setting in enabling Somalis to enjoy economic prosperity. Many basic social services, such as education and health provision have been provided on a cost-recovery basis by the private sector, and it is unlikely that benefits resulting from economic growth are evenly distributed.

In the absence of a functioning government, a vibrant business sector can only be sustainable if there is commitment towards social responsibility. Therefore, the business class should have a stake in the well-being of the Somali people through providing tax revenues for redistribution or creating job opportunities disregard of political affiliation,

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[627] Interview in Mogadishu on 16 December 2002.
[628] Minutes of weekly meeting on security and social activities on 11 December 2002 compiled by Mogadishu-based local and international NGOs and UN agencies.
[629] United Nations Development Office for Somalia, *Regional Profile of Mogadishu - Benadir*, 27.
[630] De Waal, *Famine Crimes: Politics and the Disaster Relief Industry in Africa.*

religion or gender.[631] This requires an effective administration, which has the capacity to enforce laws, to demand taxes and to monitor the activities of the private sector. In the absence of an effective government and as a result of past experiences with a predatory regime, the business community took the initiative to create such an enabling environment.

7.3.2. Characteristics of the Somali economy

The civil war promoted a radical liberalisation of the economy. Trade has been liberalised, exchange rates freed, government intervention or protectionism became absent, subsidies ended, markets have been deregulated and parastatal companies either looted, destroyed or privatised. Under the regime of Siyad Barre, the Somali economy was centrally planned according to socialist economic models. By the late 1970s, the economy was performing badly and heavily dependent on foreign aid. The lost Ogaden war in 1978 only further weakened the economy. The Somali regime then adopted structural adjustment programmes under mounting international pressure in the late nineteen-eighties. Despite neo-liberal policies, the state continued to subsidise parastatal companies, foreign aid was controlled by the government, private sector initiatives dependent on patronage networks. Embezzlement of national resources, the use of state-owned assets to reward loyalty of kinsmen close to the regime, the repression of private sector initiatives, a brutal security apparatus and rampant corruption have planted mistrust in the business class against government institutions. For example, the collapse of the Somali Commercial and Savings Bank in 1989 was due to corruption and mismanagement.[632] Accordingly, institutions of contemporary administrations, which could implement fiscal or monetary policies, face strong opposition from the private sector. State intervention is seen by many Somali business men as an obstacle to economic recovery and prosperity. Most interviewees from the business class saw the

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[631] For a detailed discussion, see chapter three in: United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report, Somalia 2001.*

[632] United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report, Somalia 2001*, 141.

state's main role as monopolising physical force and restoring law and order. The Deputy General Manager of Telecom Somalia expressed his interest in cooperating with a new government as long as it would deliver security.[633] Mohamed Deilaf, one of the most powerful business men in Mogadishu who supported the TNG, believed that "the benefits of peace are greater than in the circumstances of conflict".[634]

The business elite developed strong ties with the political leadership of various administrations and faction leaders mainly in the urban centres like Mogadishu and Kismayo in order to protect their interests. In Mogadishu, influential business men began supporting the TNG financially, strengthening the symbiotic relationship between politics and the business class. However, this changed over the years. The business class lost confidence in the political groups, as they did not live up to their promises to improve the deteriorating security situation. As a result, business men created their own system of security often based on reciprocal arrangements: "There is a rule among business partners of mutual protection based on territorial control. The system stretches from Mogadishu to Kismayo," a local business man explains.[635]

It was a private initiative to rehabilitate roads leading to the satellite airports of Mogadishu independently from the support of any political group. Since the closure of the international airport in Mogadishu, local business men and faction leaders alike have established their own airstrips on the periphery of Mogadishu. For example, K-50 airport[636], which is operated by Haaf (Hawiye/Haber Gedir/Saad), is used by the largest commercial carrier Daallo Airlines. Security at the airport is provided by Haaf, transport to the city centre by Daallo Airlines.[637] Although I passed through numerous checkpoints on my way from the airport to the city centre of Mogadishu using the 'airport shuttle', we

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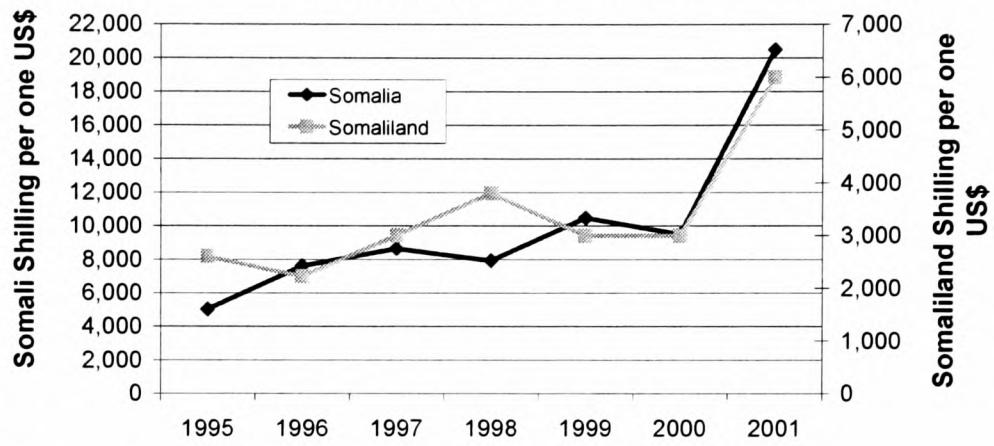
[633] Interview in Mogadishu on 17 December 2002.
[634] Interview in Mogadishu on 16 December 2002.
[635] Interview in Mogadishu on 19 December 2002.
[636] The name of K-50 airport derives from the distance between the city centre and the airport which is 50 kilometres away.
[637] Author's fieldwork in Mogadishu in December 2002.

were not stopped or checked. This was made possible through a web of reciprocal arrangements of private business men.

An example of Somalia's efficient economy in the absence of a functioning government is Somalia's exchange rate, which remained relatively stable without hyperinflation for the last six years of civil war (see figure 7.2). This can be explained with the resilience of Somalia's economy to cope with political, social and environmental changes.[638] The shilling started to drop in 2001 when business people from Mogadishu flooded the economy with newly printed Somali shillings. However, this development also reflected the trend at the international financial markets as currencies of most developing countries weakened during this time. This again benefited those who were in the possession of hard currency discriminating against small traders and shop owners who were mainly using the shilling.

Figure 7.2. Depreciation of Somali and Somaliland Shilling against US Dollar 1995-2001



Source FEWS NET October, Nairobi, 2001

Three processes are important to mention in order to understand the role of the business sector today: the legacy of the former government, the high influx of foreign aid and the informalisation of the private sector. These developments have been partly due to the collapse of Barre's dictatorship.

During Barre's regime the economy came under state control and was centrally planned. Companies were state owned, agricultural land suited for cash crops belonged to

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[638] Little, *Somalia: Economy without State.*

the state. Parastatal companies received subsidies and foreign aid was channelled through ministries. Access to valuable resources was controlled by state agents. Patronage networks secured the distribution of these resources. It was not until the defeat in the Ogaden war in 1978 that the Somali government turned to the West for financial support claiming that it was fighting communism since the Soviet Union had abandoned Somalia for Ethiopia.[639] Economic performance decreased in the late-seventies and the military defeat against the Ethiopians further weakened the economy. Somalia's dependence on food imports increased and in 1981, the country imported 390,000 tons of grains and cereals compared to about 450,000 tons produced domestically.[640] Corruption and nepotism was rampant favouring kinsmen largely drawn from the ruling Darod clan. This created a deep mistrust against any formal intervention from the side of the government. The notion of a predatory state has influenced the perception of any newly established formal government.

Before and after the end of the Cold War, Somalia benefited from large influxes of aid. In the 1980s foreign aid consisting of humanitarian and development assistance made up more than 60 per cent of the government's resources.[641] Somalis who had a political career in the government knew that their posts opened doors to international financial assistance that was already in the pipeline. 100 per cent of the development budget was externally funded.[642] Little of this aid was used for humanitarian purposes or economic development; rather, it sustained the Barre's dictatorship long after his regime would otherwise had fallen.[643] The rural poor hardly benefited from foreign assistance. "Foreign aid was only confined to Mogadishu, and it ended up in the pockets of the city person," a Somali author explains.[644] Although some of the money was embezzled, funds were

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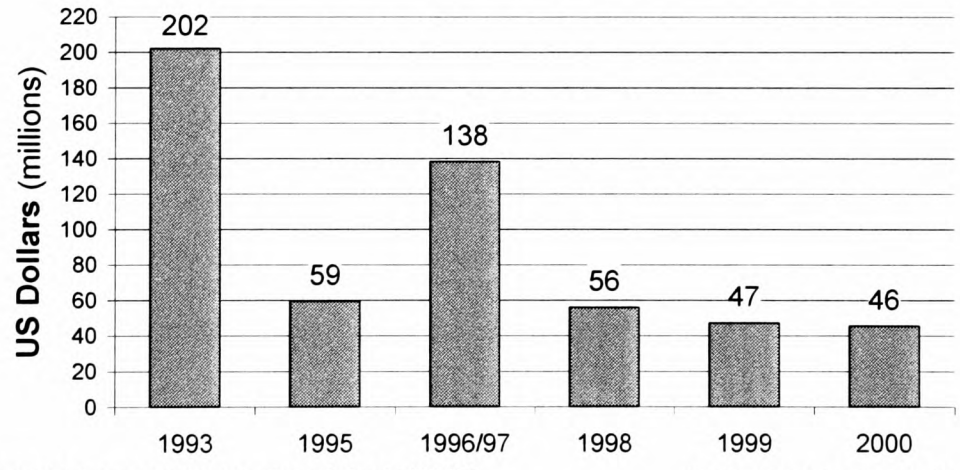
[639] De Waal, *Famine Crimes: Politics and the Disaster Relief Industry in Africa*, 162.
[640] Narbeth, *The Targeting of Emergency Food Distribution in Somalia: Vulnerability, Redistribution, and Beneficiary participation*, 74.
[641] United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report, Somalia 1998*, 57.
[642] United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report, Somalia 1998*, 57.
[643] De Waal, *Famine Crimes: Politics and the Disaster Relief Industry in Africa*, 162.
[644] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 10 November 2002.

granted because of geopolitical reasons. Criteria of accountability, efficiency and effectiveness were hardly applied. This led to a persistent attitude that foreign aid should pay for everything creating a legacy in southern Somalia that foreign aid should be granted without conditions. The flow of foreign aid declined in the late eighties due to the change in the geopolitical order and the intensification of the civil war. This coincided with the adoption of structural adjustment policies and growing support for non-governmental organisations. The international humanitarian intervention in the early nineties reversed this trend. In the era of UNOSOM's intervention large amounts of money were paid to Somali 'entrepreneurs', for instance guards escorting food convoys or for food storage. In the year 1993 alone, UNOSOM's annual budget amounted to US$ 1.5 billion, though only 4.5 per cent went into the local economy.[645] Since the withdrawal of UNOSOM the influx of aid money decreased significantly (see figure 7.3). This decrease of foreign assistance created room for a functioning competitive market involving more and more traders and wholesalers. Still, expectations towards the delivery of aid agencies are still very high as foreign aid is one of the only sources of foreign currency besides the influx of remittances from the Somali diaspora.

Figure 7.3. Humanitarian Assistance to Somalia 1993-2000



Source: OCHA, *Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeals for Somalia*, 1993-2000. Note: Figures are based on available data

[645] Bradbury, Mark and V. Coultan, *Somalia Inter-Agency Flood Response Operation Phase I November-December 1997: An Evaluation* (Nairobi: UNICEF Somalia, 1998).

Informalisation is the third element of the Somali economy, a development similar to other contemporary African states.[646] The informal sector grew steadily in the aftermath of the collapse of the former regime. The informalisation of the economy started in the late seventies with urbanisation and the growth of demand for wage labour. The development of a formal private sector was impossible during the socialist regime, but even after the change of political orientation in the late 1970s most companies remained state-owned. This forced many small traders and business people into the informal sector. Partly through falling figures in international aid, informal economic networks and remittances gained importance, and thrive in the vibrant private sector of today's Somalia. Certification of livestock or the regulation of the health and educational sector is non-existent, which are obstacles to sustainable economic recovery. Proper certification of livestock to be exported could improve the export situation to the Gulf States, with up to 80 per cent of livestock exported to Saudi Arabia alone in June 2000.[647] Saudi Arabia and other Gulf States imposed livestock bans due to the outbreak of Rift Valley Fever, for quality reasons, geopolitical and commercial interests between 1983 and 1988, in 1998 and in September 2000.[648] However, to contain outbreaks of Rift Valley Fever, strategies in both exporting and importing countries are required. In terms of the health sector, pharmacies can be opened by anyone who has the necessary financial means, outdated medicines are sold regularly. Students who graduate from higher learning institutions have their degrees questioned when applying abroad. The absence of a legal formal framework or any law enforcement agency makes it difficult to overcome nepotism and patronage.

7.3.3. The emergence of a new business class

These processes offered tremendous opportunities for a newly emerging business class to accumulate wealth. In Somalia, it was conflict and the absence of a formal government

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[646] Chabal and Daloz, *Africa Works: Disorder as Political Instrument*.
[647] United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report, Somalia 2001*, 98.
[648] United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report, Somalia 2001*, 98.

that guaranteed many business people a generous income. One example is the extremely high profit margins in the tax-free import/export sector. Sugar, rice, manufactured goods, electronics, cigarettes and petroleum are imported tax-free, some of these goods are then smuggled to neighbouring states, such as cigarettes to Kenya. Wholesalers buy oil products and diesel on Dubai markers, whereas petrol is supplied from Kenya facilitated through Indian-Kenyan agents.[649] I observed how Brazilian sugar and rice from United Arab Emirates was further exported to the Kenyan capital Nairobi. Rice is also imported from India, Pakistan, and Thailand.[650] Even cloth which used to be produced in Somalia is now imported from Indonesia.[651] A sarong sells on the local market for US$ 10 but is imported for as less as 2-3 US$.[652] Another revenue generating activity for business men and faction leaders alike is the charcoal export without being much affected by violence in the rural areas caused by the trade (see chapter VI). The collection of 'fees' and 'taxation' at roads and airports is a common source of income. Road blocks can be found on the outskirts of every town and major settlement in southern Somalia. Road blocks are manned by competing militias, sometimes only by a single armed man. Faction leaders in collaboration with business men engage in sectors of the economy that would be otherwise controlled by the state, such as drug trafficking and money printing.

The most visible changes occurred in Mogadishu from 1991 onwards. Some people started to sell looted property to foreign countries. The Chamber of Commerce in Dubai recorded significant higher import figures for scrap metal, copper and machines.[653] As one Somali economist complains: "Many of the public assets, were dismantled and exported as scrap. Many of our factories were exported as scrap, many of our power

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[649] Marchal, *A Survey of Mogadishu's Economy.*
[650] Marchal, *A Survey of Mogadishu's Economy.*
[651] Coastal craftsmen produced the distinctive cloth locally known as *tomonyo* or *toob Banadir*. It was not only sold locally but also shipped to markets of the Red Sea and Egypt where it was know for its durability. Cassanelli, *The Shaping of Somali Society: Reconstructing the History of a Pastoral People, 1600-1900* 167.
[652] Author's fieldwork in Mogadishu in December 2002.
[653] Dubai Chamber for Commerce and Industry. Available: http://www.dcci.org.

stations, many of our bridges; anything of value was stripped and exported."[654] Besides national assets, such as government factories, telecommunication equipment, marine vessels, national schools and offices, even national monuments were dismantled and exported.[655] This included the statue of Sayyid Muhammad 'Abdille Hassan, leader of the Dervish movement and a symbol for Somali nationalism. National aircraft were exported as scrap metal. Munia Saiid, a business man from Brawa who now lives in Yemen, was working for the Somali High Seas Fishing company when the regime collapsed. He fled to Yemen with five marine vessels which remain in Aden. He is still fishing off the Somali coast but did not return to Somalia.[656] Other business men accumulated wealth during the UNOSOM time. Aid workers, UN personnel and journalists alike had to pay huge amounts for housing, transport, and most importantly, security: "payments for everything from hired gunmen to hotel rooms were counted in increments of hundred-dollar bills. This was, after all, a *war* economy."[657] Others set up local NGOs in order to tap into the abundant resources available.[658] In this respect, control of urban space and even education and health facilities were critical.

A prominent business man, Osman Hassan Ali 'Atto' (Hawiye/Haber Gedir/Saad), is alleged to have sold much of the industrial assets, although he claimed: "this is only rumour. I have never sold anything of the national assets. And nobody can prove that. Yes, I have been assisting General Aideed, but I have never sold anything of the national assets."[659] Before the war, Atto was already a wealthy business man. From his early teens, he worked in the construction industry, and he became General Manager of a Somali oil company. He supplied oil companies with equipment. He acquired trucks and

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[654] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 27 November 2002.
[655] IGAD, *Somalia National Reconciliation Conference, Eldoret, Kenya: Committee III: Land and Property Rights. Draft Report*, 16.
[656] Interview in Soy, Kenya, on 10 November 2003.
[657] Peterson, Scott, *Me Against my Brother: At War in Somalia, Sudan, and Rwanda* (New York, London: Routledge, 2001) 26.
[658] United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report, Somalia 2001*, 144.
[659] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 22 November 2002.

heavy machinery, participated in the banana business and owned property in Mogadishu. At the beginning of the civil war, he was the financier of General Aideed only to turn away in 1994 to support his rival, Ali Mahdi. Atto switched sides several times when it suited his economic interests. During UNOSOM, he stored heavy weaponry and owned several workshops where ordinary pick-ups were transformed to battle wagons, the so called 'technicals'. Atto uses passports from Kenya, the United States and possibly Italy.[660] Atto is a good example of a businessman who acted behind-the-scenes and benefited from general lawlessness, violations of the UN arms embargo and misuse of foreign aid. Atto was invited to the Somalia National Reconciliation Conference with ten delegates. I met him at the beginning of the conference in Eldoret in November 2002. At the meeting, I asked for his opinion about self-styled leaders who lack popular support within the country but were participating in the talks. He answered that "at the moment, there is no way that such leaders can be denied access to the conference. But eventually, they should be considered by their weight, by their territory, by their support, by their own armed militia."[661] Atto insisted that his USC/SNA faction draws support from Mogadishu, Mudug region and largely the central regions and claimed that he controls strategic parts of South Mogadishu. Asked about the role of the traditional leaders in the peace process, he answered: "At the moment, you need traditional leaders and rules, but you also need the factions who are armed. There are certain things the traditional leaders are not able to do and there are certain things the politicians are not able to do. [...] Perhaps some of the traditional leaders want to increase their power and automatically, they can easily become 'warlords', or how do you call them?"[662]

Another group of business people, medical doctors and academics were Somali migrants and refugees who returned after the worst clashes ended in the mid-1990s. Some

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[660] Hogendoorn, M'Backe and Mugaas, *Report of the Panel of Experts on Somalia pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1425 (2002)*, 35.
[661] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 22 November 2002.
[662] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 22 November 2002.

came back to work in private universities, others in the booming telecommunications sector or hotel business. There were also several medical doctors who returned to Somalia for personal as well as for financial reasons. One example is the radio and television station Horn Afrik which was established in 1999 by three Somalis from Canada. Horn Afrik was the first independent, commercially run station in Somalia reporting on poverty, the Somali peace process, human rights issues. The station provides services to Mogadishu and neighbouring areas. The management is providing training to journalists and reporters on investigative journalism. One of the managers, Ahmed Abdisalam Adan, stated that the station was making profits and served the public.[663] In Somalia, where illiteracy is nearly 83 per cent, radio and television programmes can substantially contribute to rebuild the education system. It is not clear to what extent the station is independent from political factions. Adan is from the same sub-clan as the President of the TNG, the Ayr, and has been accused of serving as the President's mouthpiece. Despite this criticism, Horn Afrik is a promising example of how Somalis in the diaspora can positively contribute to a transition to peace and economic recovery.

Interviews with business people in Mogadishu revealed that some companies offer training and education but largely to fulfil their own recruitment needs. Although most business men claimed to support hospitals and schools, I was confronted with the opposite when talking to hospital staff. I visited Al Hyat hospital, a private hospital in Mogadishu, where several medical doctors complained that "neither the political groups nor the business is supporting the hospital. However, medical doctors are at risk, they need to be escorted."[664] In fact, reports stated several cases of violent abductions of medical staff including several killings. Public schools or hospitals are hardly supported by the wealthy business class. They operate on a cost-recovery basis.

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[663] Interview in Mogadishu on 17 December 2002.
[664] Interview with medical staff at Al-Hyat hospital in Mogadishu on 15 December 2002.

7.3.4. The Somali war economy with special reference to trade and transport

Today, although humanitarian aid has decreased dramatically, little revenue is raised from productive economic activities. Instead, 'fees' and 'taxes' charged at airports and checkpoints of strategic importance, aid agencies have to pay large amounts for the delivery of food aid to remote regions. Lorry drivers established a truckers' association to ensure safe transport to Mogadishu. This even resulted in the rehabilitation of some road sections.[665] The *qaat* trade is another important component of the Somali war economy which will be briefly discussed in this context. Besides, Somali politicians, members of the Transitional National Government in Mogadishu, became dependent on Ayr business people who provided them with transport facilities and real estate.

In the course of the past twelve years, physical force became a means to participate in business activities. Yet, high profit margins have to be balanced with security costs and other externalities. Since 'warlords' or more legitimate administrations, such as the TNG, proved to have failed in the provision of public goods, especially security, the businessmen started building up their own security forces. Every influential business person required his own militia to guard his goods and premises. The owner of the well-known Ramadan Hotel and manager of the Sahafi Hotel, Abdirashid Shire (Hawiye/Haber Gedir/Saad), visited his farm in Lower Shabelle with an escort of two 'technicals' loaded with armed militias. When asked about potential links between conflict and resources, he refused to comment. He seemed to be under threat and was not able to speak freely about his business activities. When I visited Deilaf, one of the most influential business men in Mogadishu, in his office in Bakara market, I found guards armed with machine guns and automatic weapons at the bottom of the staircase. Several business men I interviewed in Mogadishu were willing to pay taxes provided an effective government is established which could provide security.

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[665] Marchal, *Lower Shabelle Region Study on Governance*, 43.

In order to improve security in the region, Deilaf and other influential business men initiated the establishment of *shari'a* courts in South Mogadishu and Lower Shabelle region in the 1990s.[666] The first *shari'a* court in South Mogadishu, Medina Islamic Court, was established in early 1993.[667] Important Hawiye traders and hotel owners felt relieved about this initiative since Mogadishu's warlords and faction leaders failed to provide a secure environment for trading and investment. Besides, militarily weaker clans, such as the Banadiri or the *Gibil ad* who were primary victims of the civil war, supported the establishment of the Islamic courts.[668] However, while there is no state authority, negative externalities, such as unemployment or environmental pollution, are hardly mitigated. There have been several reports of toxic waste dumping off the coast of Somalia though supporting evidence has not yet been produced. Fishermen repeatedly accused foreign vessels of exploitative fishing practices off the Somali coast or discarding oil and other waste into the coastal waters with the help of Somali faction leaders.[669]

When the business community supported the TNG in the first years of its existence, several business men benefited from the new government. Some business people provided transport and housing to members of the TNA.[670] In turn, they received returns in form of international aid from Libya and Saudi Arabia. Le Sage argues that "even if the Saudi and Libyan donations are only one-off gestures of support, that is more money than businessmen ever received from the likes of Hussein Aideed or Osman Atto".[671] In fact, the TNG received US$ 15 million from Saudi Arabia and US$ 3 million from Qatar, which was used to pay businessmen and salaries of government officials.[672] These figures were confirmed by a senior TNG official who I met in Merka.[673] In this respect, the Saudi

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[666] Le Sage, "Somalia: Sovereign Disguise for a Mogadishu Mafia": 136.
[667] United Nations Development Office for Somalia, *Regional Profile of Mogadishu - Benadir*, 40.
[668] United Nations Development Office for Somalia, *Regional Profile of Mogadishu - Benadir*, 41.
[669] Salih, Mohamed M. A. and Lennart Wohlgemuth, "Somalia: State and Society in Turmoil," *Review of African Political Economy* 21.59 (1994): 81.
[670] Le Sage, "Somalia: Sovereign Disguise for a Mogadishu Mafia".
[671] Le Sage, "Somalia: Sovereign Disguise for a Mogadishu Mafia": 137.
[672] Interview in Mogadishu on 15 December 2002.
[673] Interview in Merka, southern Somalia, on 31 August 2002.

money provided a new source of revenue for those who invested into the emerging administration. Le Sage adds that amounts charged for individual services provided were much higher than the real cost incurred.[674] This meant high net profits for those who initially provided services to Members of Parliament although there was no security that investments would be amortizable. Possible future payments to a new government raise the notion of co-optation of the likes of Aideed or Atto. If they are excluded from the benefits of these payments they might opt for the continuation of violence.

A second example for this symbiotic relationship between the TNG and a group of business men was an auction that was held by the TNG to buy newly printed bank notes.[675] Over the last decade and in absence of a central bank, Mogadishu based business men (including Deilaf) and faction leaders printed new notes in Canada and Malaysia for the Somali market.[676] This led to hyperinflation and the public outcry to stop the drastic devaluation of the Somali shilling in the year 2001 (see figure 7.2).[677] Part of the Saudi money was then used to buy these notes from those business men who had close ties with the new government at an extremely favourable rate. This symbiotic relationship will make it difficult to intervene in business activities in order to raise public revenue. For example, one government official told me that he would like to see the remittance banking systems formalised in order to be able to demand taxes.[678] Though it is questionable that the business community will agree to interventions that would minimise profit margins.

'Taxes' and 'fees' charged by faction leaders and business people alike at airstrips do not relate in a realistic way to services or maintenance expenses, which in large are not provided at all. Esaley airstrip controlled by Bashir Rage (Hawiye/Abgal) is a good

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[674] Le Sage, "Somalia: Sovereign Disguise for a Mogadishu Mafia": 137.
[675] Le Sage, "Somalia: Sovereign Disguise for a Mogadishu Mafia".
[676] Hogendoorn, M'Backe and Mugaas, *Report of the Panel of Experts on Somalia pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1425 (2002).*
[677] Le Sage, "Somalia: Sovereign Disguise for a Mogadishu Mafia".
[678] Interview in Mogadishu on 15 December 2002.

example for arbitrary taxation. The 2,300 metres-long airstrip in North Mogadishu has no lighting installations, no fuelling facilities, no air-traffic control, no cargo facilities and only a small airport building with a few rooms. Although airport facilities are non-existent, 'fees' for the use of the airport resemble those of a professional one. According to latest figures, one Somali air carrier pays US$ 300 for a landing fee, US$ 200 per flight for a security fee, a passenger tax of US$ 20 and US$ 0.15 tax per kilogram cargo.[679] The same reports estimates that "for an air carrier providing twice-weekly service to Mogadishu North, these payments amount to yearly expenses in landing and security fees of $52,000 (based on an average passenger load per flight of 90 people), passenger fees of $187,000, and cargo fees of $156,000 (based on average cargo of 10 tons per flight). The total yearly cost to the flight operator amounts to some $395,000 just for one flight service."[680] Bashir Rage's airport operations generate revenues of an estimated US$ 1.2 million.[681] Esaley airstrip is also used by humanitarian flights of the EU on a regular basis. To the best of my knowledge, at least the passenger fee of US$ 20 was paid to Bashir Rage's airport manager. Similar 'fees' have to be paid at the other small airports. I was charged US$ 25 passenger fee for entry and US$ 20 for exit at K-50 airstrip, also frequented by humanitarian flights of the EU. The case of Esaley airport demonstrates how profitable it is to monopolise these important exit and entry points. Here, the border between criminal activities and business becomes blurred. What is more, international aid agencies continue financing Somali strongmen often without critical examination.

The *qaat* trade is another source of income for faction leaders and business men based on transport. Despite logistical difficulties (it is imported from Kenya for southern Somalia), and because of its considerable high profit margins, the *qaat* trade has become

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[679] Hogendoorn, M'Backe and Mugaas, *Report of the Panel of Experts on Somalia pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1425 (2002)*, 43.
[680] Hogendoorn, M'Backe and Mugaas, *Report of the Panel of Experts on Somalia pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1425 (2002)*, 43.
[681] Hogendoorn, M'Backe and Mugaas, *Report of the Panel of Experts on Somalia pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1425 (2002)*, 43.

a main pillar of Somalia's war economy. The use of the narcotic drug *qaat* in southern Somalia has significantly increased since the collapse of the former regime. Young militia men began chewing to cope with fear, fatigue and hunger. Others including women adopted the habit as a means to combat anxiety, traumatic experiences, unemployment and insecurity. The drug is an important component of Somalia's war economy. The green and unprocessed leaves are imported to Somalia on a daily basis by small aircraft because the active agent of *qaat* loses the desired stimulating effect within 24 to 48 hours. Grown and harvested in the Nyambene Hills east of Mount Kenya it is transported by pick-up trucks mainly to Nairobi's Wilson Airport. From there, it is flown to various destinations within Somalia. According to a UN report, the largest carrier operating from Nairobi is Bluebird Aviation, with approximately 250 flights each month to Somalia in 2002, next is Knight Aviation with 60 to 70 flights per month, followed by Capital Airlines with 50 to 60 flights.[682] Half of an estimated US$ 100 million[683] are retained in Kenya including air transport, the remainder represents profits at various stages of the distribution network within Somalia (see table 7.1). Another source estimates annual *qaat* production in Kenya alone at US$ 300 million at wholesale prices.[684] Nevertheless, the largest profit margins are estimated at the import level.

Table 7.1. Breakdown of cost per bundle of *qaat* from production to sale, February 2003 (in US$)

Destination	Unit cost	Shipping costs	Taxes/ surcharges	Wholesale price	Retail price
Mogadishu	0.50	0.50	0.2	3.0	3.5-6.0

Source: Hogendoorn, Ernst Jan, Abdoulaye M'Backe and Brynjulf Mugaas.: *Report of the Panel of Experts on Somalia Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1425 (2002)* (New York: United Nations Security Council) 2003.

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[682] Hogendoorn, M'Backe and Mugaas, *Report of the Panel of Experts on Somalia pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1425 (2002)*, 37.

[683] Hogendoorn, M'Backe and Mugaas write that "according to the *Observatoire géopolitique des drogues*, the value of Kenyan *qaat* exports to Somalia was estimated at $100 million in 1993" Hogendoorn, M'Backe and Mugaas, *Report of the Panel of Experts on Somalia pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1425 (2002)*, 37.

[684] Green, Reginald Herbold, "Khatt & the Realities of Somalis: Historic, Social, Household, Political & Economic," *Review of African Political Economy* 26.79 (1999): 36.

Since the closure of Mogadishu International Airport, several small airstrips have emerged around the city. Daynile airport is one of the existing five airports, situated in the West of Mogadishu and controlled by faction leader Mohamed Qanyare Afrah from the Hawiye/Murosade sub-clan. In 2002, he levied each bag of *qaat* with a 'tax' of US$ 12.5, and demanded US$ 200 landing 'fees' for a small aircraft and US$ 700 for a large aircraft. Hogendoorn, M'Backe and Mugaas calculate that "given an average of six flights per day, carrying an average of 60 bags of *qaat* each, revenues from *qaat* flights to Daynile alone amount to nearly US$ 6,000 per day or US$ 170,000 per month".[685] Marchal estimated the value of a plane's cargo carrying between 45 and 50 bags of *qaat* with US$ 17,800 in May 2002.[686] On their way back *qaat* planes carry electronics, food items, illicit drugs destined for Kenya's black market. Besides, they take passengers, sometimes illegal immigrants, to the Kenyan capital. I flew twice with a *qaat* aircraft from K-50 south-west of Mogadishu to Wilson Airport for which I paid US$ 100 each.

The former financier of General Aideed's USC faction, Osman 'Atto' (Hawiye/Haber Gedir/Saad), is another important merchant whose *qaat* trade contributes toward his estimated US$ 100 million turnover.[687] He acquired a stake in Bluebird Aviation in the early 1990s and controls at least one airstrip in Mogadishu suited for the *qaat* trade.[688] Ironically, international aid agencies, including the UN, the EU and NGOs who are confronted with the social consequences of *qaat* consumption became agents in laundering *qaat* money. They have to buy Somali shillings in order to pay local staff and meet other local expenses. Consequently, agencies pay Somali merchants in Nairobi in US dollars for the needed transactions in Somalia. Likewise, Somali *qaat* wholesalers and retailers are paid in local currency but must pay their Kenyan counterparts in hard

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[685] Hogendoorn, M'Backe and Mugaas, *Report of the Panel of Experts on Somalia pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1425 (2002)*, 39.
[686] Marchal, *A Survey of Mogadishu's Economy*.
[687] Green, "Khatt & the Realities of Somalis: Historic, Social, Household, Political & Economic": 43.
[688] Hogendoorn, M'Backe and Mugaas, *Report of the Panel of Experts on Somalia pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1425 (2002)*, 36.

currency. The same merchants dealing with aid agencies in Nairobi are also involved in the *qaat* trade.[689]

Another worrying business activity is the weapons trade. Despite the UN arms embargo, large quantities of ammunition and weapons reach the markets in Mogadishu and elsewhere (see 2.4). Faction leaders use weapons as cash deposits; if cash is needed they sell one piece of heavy weaponry or ammunition. In order to avoid paying supporters in cash, warlords distributed AK-47 rifles at the end of meetings. Even the Transitional National Government has been accused of providing small arms and ammunition to would-be supporters in May 2002 when heavy fighting erupted in the city.[690] In 2002, the price for an AK-47 was US$ 250 and $US 25 for a M16.[691] The price difference can be explained with the relatively low cost for AK-47 ammunition compared to a M16. *Cir-toogte* is one of Mogadishu's weapons markets where an AK-47 can be bought in open stalls. *Cir-toogte* translates into 'shoot in the air' as potential clients prefer testing rifles before purchasing them.[692]

The evidence seems compelling that some key individuals gain from the continuous conflict whereas the majority of Somalis suffer from continued insecurity, poor health and educational standards and exclusion from job opportunities. The absence of secondary education and universities makes it particularly easy for the militia to recruit amongst the younger male generation. The notion of an emergence of an alternative or parallel economy is a key concept in understanding the growth of the private sector sustained at very high social costs. The problem of access should be discussed, too. In addition, long-term investment in for example, the manufacturing industry, is unlikely to occur in the near future. Hardly any business person would like to invest in such an insecure environment. Accordingly, investments hardly exceed a few thousand US

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[689] Green, "Khatt & the Realities of Somalis: Historic, Social, Household, Political & Economic": 44.
[690] Marchal, *A Survey of Mogadishu's Economy.*
[691] Author's fieldwork in Mogadishu in December 2002.
[692] Marchal, *A Survey of Mogadishu's Economy.*

dollars.[693] However, there are some small-scale factories in Mogadishu producing pasta, sweets, mineral water, hides, skins, foam, soap, detergent, aluminium products, packaging material and fishing boats.[694] Security would be needed for a desirable diversification of the economy in order to reduce economic vulnerability. Mainly telecommunications, intra- and inter-state trade, utilities, construction and the provision of security constitute the main sources of income of the powerful business elite.

A good example for this development is Mohamed Deilaf. As a protégé of the Djibouti business man Abdurahman Boreh, he accumulated wealth in the sugar and cigarette import business.[695] He imported Brazilian sugar to Somalia, and then exporting it further to East African countries without paying duty. Deilaf (Hawiye/Haber Gedir/Ayr) became one of the most influential business men when he started to provide storage facilities for international aid agencies, such as the World Food Programme and CARE, in Mogadishu and Merka. In addition, he is engaged in the transport industry providing trucks for international aid agencies for the delivery of emergency aid. His wealth enabled him to employ his own small standing army, it is estimated that he commands 20 'technicals' and 400 militia men.[696] This allows him to operate independently from any faction leader in Mogadishu. But not all his business activities are seen as legitimate. According to a UN report, he financially supported the take-over of Hussein Aideed's banknote production in Canada.[697] By accessing these funds he strengthened not only his own position but also contributed to the hegemony of his sub-clan within the Mogadishu business community. Consequently, Hussein Aideed's sub-clan, the Hawiye/Haber Gedir/Saad, lost influence in the business community. His kin (Hawiye/Haber Gedir/Ayr), being from the same sub-clan as the TNG President

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[693] Marchal, *A Survey of Mogadishu's Economy.*
[694] Marchal, *A Survey of Mogadishu's Economy.*
[695] Hogendoorn, M'Backe and Mugaas, *Report of the Panel of Experts on Somalia pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1425 (2002)*, 35.
[696] Author's fieldwork in Mogadishu in December 2002.
[697] Hogendoorn, M'Backe and Mugaas, *Report of the Panel of Experts on Somalia pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1425 (2002)*, 35.

Abdiqasim Salad Hassan, provides him the necessary security network and business connections. In an interview he rejected this assertion: "To do business depends on honesty and reputation, clan is not important."[698] He stressed that he does not maintain links with the faction leaders of Mogadishu, relying on his personal business connections and trust. He added: "Trust within the business community is based on personal relationships."[699] Being asked if the business community is concerned with the delivery of public goods, he claimed that his business supports two hospitals in the city and the educational sector. Deilaf's movements are not restricted; he maintains business connections with the commercial centres in Europe and Dubai.

Although he expressed his interest in peace, Deilaf must be considered as a prime facilitator and beneficiary of the current political situation in southern Somalia. With a regulating authority and without lucrative contracts with international aid agencies, Deilaf's capacity to maintain his present business interests would quickly melt in an era of peace and stability. A prominent Bimal clan member argued along these lines:

> Mr Deilaf is a sub-contractor of a number of NGOs as well as the ICRC and the WFP. And the major international donor agency in Somalia is WFP. So whoever gets the contracts of the WFP can be the richest person in Somalia and can be the first warlords of all warlords. How can we therefore disassociate the international agencies from what is happening in Somalia. Or we can keep them far from our own brides? Are they innocent? No.[700]

7.3.5. Business, clan and politics in Mogadishu

Although several business men downplayed the importance of clan, kinship networks became a necessity in an environment where contract law was not enforced and transaction costs prohibitively high. Kinship became the medium in political discourse and functions as a social safety net. Correspondingly, Drysdale asks:

> But why this emphasis on clans? Can they be eradicated, as many Somalis vehemently advocate? They believe that Somalia's political problems are entirely due to clanism. Siad Barre tried to bury it, literally by staging a funeral,

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[698] Interview in Mogadishu on 16 December 2002.
[699] Interview in Mogadishu on 16 December 2002.
[700] Interview in Baidoa, southern Somalia, on 9 February 2002.

> then used it protect his political interests. To eradicate it is easier said than done because much of economic life, based on mutual trust, depends on lineage loyalties.[701]

The relationship between kinship and business is embedded in the informalisation of the Somali economy.[702] While the formal economy was at the brink of collapse in the late 1980s, the informal economy developed in scale and importance. Its structuring force was kinship. This is how remittances channelled through informal banking systems became an important pillar of the Somali economy. The remittance banking system relies on trust and kinship, because of the absence of a formal legal system. Marchal states that "the whole understanding of business, tax avoidance, and building patron-client networks which were needed to keep this second economy functioning were, in one way or the another, based on the mobilisation of clan loyalties".[703] Clan loyalty becomes especially important in building a customer base and in the protection of property and business activities. Business men started to employ guards and militia from their kinsmen, when the security situation deteriorated after the collapse of the dictatorship. Another way of seeking protection is paying *diya* (blood money) on behalf of a clan or religious institution to a clan with influential and recognised clan leaders. This strategy is similar to a practice used during pre-colonial times, when trade caravans had a guardian when travelling through areas of hostile clans. The guardian was selected according to status and strength of his lineage. During the civil war, small business men, traders and even international aid agencies employed this strategy to protect their material interests. A third strategy, *caddeeyen ama soo caddee*, involves the provision of goods to relatives without making any profit on the goods he sells.[704] Lastly, commodities are supplied to a relative but the profits are shared.[705] A Somali economist describes the functioning of the economy in the South as follows: "In Mogadishu where you have lawlessness because

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[701] Drysdale, *Whatever Happened to Somalia?* 97.
[702] United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report, Somalia 2001*, 148.
[703] United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report, Somalia 2001*, 148.
[704] United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report, Somalia 2001*, 148.
[705] United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report, Somalia 2001*, 148.

people who are ruling have moral codes. [In business], one is the moral code, the other one is the traditional code, the third one, if we will have a government, is the secular code [formal laws] that people respect."[706]

7.3.6. Conclusion

In providing tax revenues for redistribution or creating job opportunities without regard to political affiliations, religion or gender, the business class has a responsibility for the well-being of the Somali people. The call for more political stability by the new business class in Mogadishu can be explained by its encompassing interest in a prospering society. On the other hand, petty traders and craftsmen, even larger companies suffer from insecurity and conflict. They must pay large amounts for security and sometimes with their lives for doing business in Mogadishu. The exchange of gunfire at road blocks is common; trucks loaded with precious goods are manned with armed militia.

My research suggests that the business class has a stake in a stable society that offers skilled labour, law and order, credit schemes and low transaction costs. Providing public goods can result into an increase in social cooperation and production, and in turn can lead to more wealth within the business realm of influence. It has been argued that there are powerful economic incentives for cooperation.[707] Accordingly, the Chairman of the Somali Business Council, Sharif Ahmad Shino, supports the establishment of a politically stable government for economic reasons: "It would be good for business. Now, we pay for our security, electricity, water. This means a lot of overhead costs for businesses, which cut into our profit margins. We would rather pay taxes and leave all that to the government."[708] A manager of a prominent radio and TV station in Mogadishu explains that decentralised, merit based businesses are more successful: "The new businesses are

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[706] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 27 November 2002.
[707] Olson, *Power and Prosperity: Outgrowing Communist and Capitalist Dictatorships*.
[708] IRIN, "Business Community demands Role in Peace Process," *United Nations Integrated Regional Information Network* 23 April 2003.

co-operatives with sub-offices everywhere. They are more successful because they cut across clan lines, religious and political lines."[709]

In the absence of government regulation it is paramount that the business class provides public goods, as income or business taxes are hardly paid. Providing public goods, means an increase in social cooperation and production, and can lead to more wealth within the business realm of influence. Olson argues that economic incentives can foster production, and that business people can benefit from the gains of social cooperation through trade and specialisation.[710]

On the contrary, when a society is close to a Hobbesian anarchy, everyone tries to become an autocrat in the absence of a social contract and there is a general economic loss. At a certain level this may be stating the obvious that peacetime economies tend to be more productive than those in periods of conflict. But in a territory with a weak state and without effective institutions, such as Somalia, there clearly exist economic incentives to maintain conflict by diminishing prospects of peace. In weak states, income inequality can lead to the privatisation of violence, undermining shared interests in business cartels rooted in the monopoly of coercion and authority. Although the emerging new business class throughout Somalia might now be seeing themselves as having a more encompassing interest in stability, and in enhancing the economy as a whole this is not yet decisively the case.

In 2003, analysts believed that without the support of the business class for the current Somalia National Reconciliation Process, a new government is not viable. Correspondingly, Shino argues that the involvement of the business community in Somalia's ongoing peace process could bring pressure and influence political leaders since they had members from all clans.[711] In Somalia, the re-establishment of the formal

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[709] Interview in Mogadishu on 17 December 2002.
[710] Olson, *Power and Prosperity: Outgrowing Communist and Capitalist Dictatorships*.
[711] IRIN, "Business Community demands Role in Peace Process".

economy, still in its preliminary phase, could provide tax revenue and attract foreign investment.

7.4. TRENDS IN ARMED CONFLICT IN SOUTHERN SOMALIA

The analysis of Bay region and the business class in Mogadishu led to the following findings. First and foremost, both cases show that in comparison with Lower Shabelle region conflict is largely confined to urban centres, such as Mogadishu and Baidoa. This 'urbanisation' of war supports the argument that urban-based elites struggle over resources, as they are losing control in maintaining their patronage networks. This assumption is supported by evidence shown in the following chapter, where I argue that Somali faction leaders are on the brink of economic exhaustion and for that reason, agreed to participate in the Somalia National Reconciliation Conference currently held in Kenya.

Secondly, the war in Somalia was not caused by surfeit or scarcity in absolute terms, while it seems unlikely that perceived economic wealth *per se* in the inter-riverine areas triggered the war. Rather, it was unjust distribution of this wealth in favour of the ruling clan families close to Barre. During the civil war, political factions financed their militia in looting valuable economic assets, including cereals as shown in Bay, government assets, scrap metal, machinery, copper, etc as happened in Mogadishu. Both, private and national assets became the spoils of war. A further source of income was the large influx of humanitarian aid in the early 1990s. Business men benefited from the state collapse, a new business class emerged. In order to protect their accumulated wealth and business activities, some business men formed their own militia independently from Mogadishu's warlords.

In the years that followed the civil war, observers were confronted with a war economy. Arbitrary 'taxation' and the payment of 'fees' for poor or non-existent services became the main source of income for faction and business leaders in Mogadishu and

elsewhere. In this insecure environment, foreign investment is unlikely to occur. Outsiders cannot rely on formal legal standards, contractual trust on the operational level is largely confined to Somali kinsmen. Further, the volatile security situation makes it unrealistic to invest in long-term-businesses. This also applies to the manufacturing and industrial sector, which need large investments.

New elites did not adopt old institutional frameworks that could have reduced the radical fragmentation demonstrated in the preceding chapters. Customary law and clan elders lost in political weight. New institutions, such as NGOs and foreign peace initiatives or globalised organised crime posed new threats to local governance in Somalia. Hence, Somalia's case supports Reno's hypothesis: "When elites adapt old informal institutions to maintain an old state or build a new one, the risk of fragmentation is lower. New institutions and channels of resources such as roundtables, national conferences, NGO aid and outside military intervention can increase security dilemmas, offer new niches for political entrepreneurs, and thus increase risk of political fragmentation."[712]

In this struggle, the indigenous sedentary population in both Bay and Lower Shabelle was more vulnerable than the pastoral people in the central and northern regions and as a consequence, was subject to oppression, exploitation and killing. As a result, farming communities started to establish armed resistance. The armed struggle was directed against the hegemony of the Hawiye clan in both Bay and Lower Shabelle, triggered by economic inequalities between groups (see chapter V & VI). Accordingly, the following chapter aims at shedding light on the most recent Somali effort to reconcile warring parties in addressing *inter alia* the issues of land, property rights, war crimes and transitional justice.

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[712] Reno, *Somalia and Survival in the Shadow of the Global Economy*, 7.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Prospects for peace

8.1. BARGAINING FOR THE SPOILS OF WAR – THE SOMALIA NATIONAL RECONCILIATION PROCESS

This chapter examines the Somalia National Reconciliation Process. The objective is to analyse potential linkages to resource competition on the national and the international levels. In this respect, the reconciliation conference offered an unique opportunity to test the argument whether regional conflicts over resources, such as land, trade and foreign aid, are localised events, and how competition over resources is articulated at the national and the international level. Therefore, it is crucial to identify key players, their motives and political agendas. Nevertheless, this fourteenth reconciliation process remains fluid making it difficult to identify fixed political alliances.

Besides, the following section discusses some of the problems of state formation in Somalia. The critical question remains how important is state formation as opposed to economic factors and identity politics as both an explanation for causing violence and its perpetuation. The preceding chapters highlighted the importance of statehood to regulate trade or redistribute wealth. In the Somali context, Doornbos and Markakis argue that "the clan came to rival the nation. This was the pattern of the civil war during the 1980s, and remains the pattern of the current conflict. In the struggle for positions in the state of the future – this is what the internecine struggle is about – the clan is the invariable controlling element."[713] Respectively, conflict in Somalia can be interpreted as a struggle for political posts. This became apparent during the Reconciliation Process at all stages of the negotiations.

Further, this chapter sheds light on motives and hidden agendas of participants of the Somali peace talks. The desire to form a government based on clan is not always a genuine one. Many faction leaders, some of which are labelled 'warlords', are at the brink of economic collapse with marginal returns. They were losing credibility among those whom they are claiming to represent. The business class turned its back to the faction

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[713] Doornbos and Markakis, "Society and State in Crisis: What went wrong in Somalia?" 86.

leaders organising their own militias.[714] Lucrative businesses, except the charcoal trade are in decline. This applies to the livestock sector as well as to the banana trade (see chapter IV). Remittances are channelled through informal banks, which are protected by private militias and hence are protected from predatory and oppressive action of Mogadishu's warlords. Most people in southern Somalia are living in poverty, leaving little room for predatory behaviour and real taxation. While domestic resources are drying up, warlords are begging for military assistance from neighbouring countries. In Eldoret, several Somali leaders hope to tap into new sources of wealth. This also applies to the TNG, which had to note a drop in foreign assistance over the last few years (see figure 7.3). The TNG's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Yusuf Hassan Ibrahim, explains: "The TNG received financial and humanitarian support from Libya and Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries. Eventually, the assistance became less and less, in particular in the year 2001. One of the reasons why everybody is willing to compromise is because nobody can survive without the assistance from outside. So it is better to reconcile."[715]

8.1.1. A new beginning – the Arta peace process?

The most comprehensive 'bottom-up' peace initiative after the beginning of the civil war is commonly referred to as the Arta peace process. In September 1999, Djibouti's President Ismail Omar Guelleh used his speech to the fifty-fourth session of the United Nations General Assembly to express his concern about continued human rights violations, absence of government structures and continued clashes in Somalia. He lobbied for support among neighbouring states, the IGAD, the former Organisation of African Unity, Somalis themselves and the Somali diaspora. The Somali National Peace Conference eventually took place between May and August 2000 in Arta, Djibouti. This peace initiative was in many ways different from earlier peace conferences. The process of participation was more driven by Somalis rather than outsiders, drawing participants

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[714] In Mogadishu I was told that business men use each other's security apparatus. They have joint security agreements with cooperating partners allowing each other's use of secure trade routes.
[715] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 22 November 2002.

from women's and minority groups.[716] This conference was the most inclusive and representative peace initiative since 1991. All major clans were represented from the beginning although faction leaders from Mogadishu did not participate.

On the morning of 8 August 2000 when the conference concluded, many observers already saw that of the peace initiative had failed. In the course of the meeting, Somaliland and Puntland withdrew their delegations, as it became clear that the conference did not serve their interests. When the proposed location of the Transitional National Assembly (TNA) was changed from Baidoa to Mogadishu, the RRA leadership withdrew their support. In spite of these setbacks, the Somali National Peace Conference enjoyed backing from the UN Security Council, the United Nations Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS), the African Union, the League of Arab States, the Organisation of Islamic Conference, the European Union and some African states including Djibouti, Egypt, Libya and Eritrea. The TNG enjoyed support from influential Mogadishu-based business people and some Arab countries. There were confirmed reports that Libya sent a ship load of weapons to the former capital in early 2002. Also, Saudi Arabia and Qatar financially supported the TNG.[717] A member of the Transitional Government confirmed this assertion who claimed that Saudi Arabia gave US$ 10-15 million, Qatar US$ 3 million and Libya US$ 2 million to the TNG.[718] But there were also very critical voices of the Arta process, for instance by the renowned Somali scholar, I. M. Lewis, who is concerned that a Somali political elite of the former Barre government may hijack the conference for vested interests. He argues that...

> ...what the UN calls a government has not been legally elected by the Somali public. It is merely an idiosyncratic selection of participants, belonging to – but not actually representing – different clans, from the Djibouti conference bazaar, whose protracted proceedings were dominated by ex-ministers of the discredited

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[716] United Nations Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Somalia S/2000/1211* (New York: United Nations, 2000).
[717] Interview in Mogadishu on 15 December 2002.
[718] Interview in Merka, southern Somalia, on 31 August 2002.

> regime of the corrupt dictator General Mohammed Siyad Barre – many of whom Somalis accuse of war crimes.[719]

In spite of the shortcomings of the conference, a 245-member Transitional National Assembly with a President and Prime Minister and a 25-member cabinet was inaugurated in October 2000 in Mogadishu, and was overwhelmingly welcomed in Mogadishu. The TNG succeeded in achieving formal representation in the UN General Assembly, the League of Arab States, the African Union, forming the first Somali representation for a decade.

The mandate of the Assembly was to establish an administration, judiciary, police, law and order in southern Somalia within a three-year period which expired in August 2003. By then it had achieved very little. It controlled only parts of south-Mogadishu. Strategically important locations and assets, which generate revenue, such as the international airport and the seaport, remain closed. The TNG struggled in attracting sufficient funds to sustain their ambitious policing, demobilisation and rehabilitation programme. Donors adopted a 'peace dividend approach' only giving money to regions that enjoy peace and stability which does not apply to most of the areas the TNG claims to control. The recent Secretary-General's report of 2002 expressed reservations to opening an UN office with international staff in Mogadishu because of the volatile situation. On 21 February, the UN Secretary-General reported to the Security Council that "Somalia remains one of the most dangerous environments in which the United Nations operates. [...] Under these circumstances, a comprehensive peace-building programme cannot be launched in Somalia."[720] An earlier report dated 11 October 2001 did not dismiss the peace-building programme but indicated its reservations for setting up an office in Somalia, in particular in Mogadishu: "A security assessment of Mogadishu undertaken in late February, 2001 concluded that the security situation did not make it

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[719] Lewis, Ioan M., *UN 'Peace Conference' creates new Somali Warlord and re-ignites Somali Wars*, 2000, Internet Forum, Somaliwatch, Available: www.somaliwatch.org, 31 October.
[720] United Nations Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on the Situation in Somalia S/2002/189* (New York: United Nations, 2002).

possible to deploy a peace-building office in the country. Since then, the Secretariat has also reported to the Council in informal consultations that the security situation in Somalia has not improved and remains, by and large, the same today."[721] The reprinting of local currency by business people and faction leaders led to hyperinflation and street protests resulting in mistrust of the TNG. The TNG enjoyed public support in the first year, but it seems that a Somali-wide support has diminished.

The TNG hoped to mobilise more bilateral and multilateral funds and aid from the Bretton Woods institutions through international recognition. This is unlikely unless the TNG shows progress in the reconciliation process. Several faction leaders, some of whom belong to the Somali Reconciliation and Restoration Council with its headquarters in Baidoa oppose the TNG. They are linked with faction leaders in Mogadishu and the former President of Puntland, Colonel Abdullahi Yusuf.

8.1.2. Reconciling differences – The Somali peace process

At the last IGAD summit in January 2002, its members agreed to urge the three 'frontline states' Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya to accelerate the peace process in Somalia. This initiative later to be known as the Somalia National Reconciliation Process came after no less than thirteen unsuccessful Somali national reconciliation efforts. This reconciliation effort was designed to bring together the so called frontline states, the EU, the US, the League of Arab States, all important military and political groups, individual warlords, traditional leaders and members of 'civil society' groups.

The term 'civil society' in the Somali context needs some qualification. The Somali term for 'civil society' bears the meaning 'unarmed groups'.[722] Since there is no Somali government it seems less meaningful to divide the society into a public sector, a private sector and civil society. Hence, the use of the term 'civil society' embraces all groups outside the political sphere including religious groups, traditional elders, members of the

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[721] United Nations Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on the Situation in Somalia S/2001/963* (New York: United Nations, 2001).
[722] Interview in Merka, southern Somalia, on 31 August 2002.

diaspora, NGOs, academics and business associations. Civil society leaders at Eldoret continuously accused political groups of site-lining their interests. When civil society members of the Leaders Committee were denied access, a fight started between Mowlid Ma'ane Mohamoud, Chairman of the Somali African Muki Organisation, and a civil society member. In a later incident on the same day, a prominent civil society member was beaten up close to the conference site.[723]

The claim of civil society leaders for legitimacy is disputed. Many of the civil society members do not enjoy authority and they have no means of establishing their representative credentials within Somalia. The question of the role and composition of civil society during the negotiations has made the peace process more complex: "The commitment of donors like the EU Commission to promoting civil society's role in the conference has complicated the issue further by creating competition for aid resources while increasing the suspicion of faction leaders," as an ICG report states.[724] It then continues: "The term [civil society] is problematic at the conference where some to whom it is applied are respected figures [...], while others have no greater claim than a custom-made business card or the funds to buy a return ticket to Eldoret."[725] A formula for their incorporation remained elusive.

The role of the Ethiopians as one of the three frontline states is crucial for successful diplomatic negotiations. As one diplomat explained: "There is no political solution for Somalia without Addis Ababa."[726] The prospects that Ethiopia would play a more constructive role are linked to the role of Islamist organisations, such as *al-Ittihad*, within Somalia and in a prospective government. Ethiopia's leadership expressed concern about

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[723] IRIN, "Fighting breaks out at Peace Conference," *United Nations Integrated Regional Information Network* 28 January 2003.
[724] International Crisis Group, *Negotiating a Blueprint for Peace in Somalia* (Mogadishu, Brussels: International Crisis Group, 2003), 3.
[725] International Crisis Group, *Negotiating a Blueprint for Peace in Somalia*, 16.
[726] Personal communication with German Embassy in Nairobi, in April 2002.

militant Islamists since Egypt and the League of Arab States have backed the Transitional National Government.

Ethiopia had a long-standing interest in supporting a potential government that would not challenge the Ogaden border in the South of the country. Ethiopia sees herself threatened by Somali military activities. The Ogaden war against the Somali junta in the late 1970s made Ethiopia aware of the danger of a strong Somali state. The Ethiopian Somali National Regional State or Ethiopia's Zone Five hosts a population of around 3.5 million people. Even today, the ambition of a pan-Somali state continues to enjoy support among Somali leaders. In February 2002, USC faction leader Hussein Aideed publicly expressed his interest "to bring back the Ethiopian and Kenyan Somalis," however "through peaceful means".[727] He claimed: "I want Zone Five (in Ethiopia) to be part of Somalia."[728]

Another source of concern is political Islam in Somalia. Somalia has long been considered by the Ethiopian government as a base for fundamentalist Islamic movements attempting to secure a foothold in Ethiopia. The Ethiopian Government blamed bomb blasts in hotels in Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa on *al-Ittihad*, an organisation which became increasingly influential following the disintegration of the Somali state. As a reaction to these terrorist acts, Ethiopian troops advanced in 1996 to Luq in Gedo region close to the Ethiopian/Kenyan border, and defeated *al-Ittihad* strongholds.

According to an ICG report, about a dozen of MPs have publicly announced their affiliation with the Islamist group.[729] Moreover, the TNG's first security committee included some well-known *al-Ittihad* members. In Lower Shabelle, particularly in Merka, *al-Ittihad* members were active in managing the port, as one delegate noted: "Islamic extremist groups have been focusing on Merka [as] they wanted to use the ports facilities

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[727] IRIN, "Interview with Hussein Aideed," *United Nations Integrated Regional Information Network* 3 February 2002.
[728] IRIN, "Interview with Hussein Aideed".
[729] International Crisis Group, *Somalia: Countering Terrorism in a Failed State*, 18.

as an economic resource. Actually we can say in the South, Merka was the first place of *al-Ittihad* and Islamic extremist groups."[730] Unless more members of the government and Parliament distance themselves from *al-Ittihad* members, chances for meaningful negotiations appear dim.

In spite of looming diplomatic setbacks, the three frontline states decided to hold a meeting in mid-April 2002, which was ultimately postponed to the end of September. When the EU indicated its financial support, the conference went ahead on 15th of October 2002. The purpose of the meeting was to deepen the process of reconciliation between competing non-state administrations. IGAD extended its invitations to the Somali Reconciliation and Restoration Council, the Transitional National Government, the Juba Valley Alliance, the Puntland administration, Hiran, Gedo, the Rahanweyn Resistance Army and the Jowhar administration.

Notwithstanding, the President of the TNG, Abdiqasim Salad Hassan already indicated that he wanted to see the focus on a renewed dialogue between the administrations of Somaliland and Puntland.[731] This mirrors the TNG's early resistance to enter into a meaningful dialogue with opposing factions or the SRRC. This might explain the President's absence from Eldoret. After the Arta conference, the TNG's political power decreased and by 2003, the TNG was competing for power with regional non-state administrations. The TNG tried to extend its sphere of influence in the past months but failed to establish community-based administrations in neighbouring regions. When a delegation of the TNG headed by the Minister of Interior Dahir 'Dayah' arrived in Merka in late August 2002, inhabitants of Merka opposed the speedy move of the TNG to establish a regional administration.

Behind the scenes it was clear that the TNG had to demonstrate progress in establishing regional administrations if it wants to claim a significant proportion of the

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[730] Interview in Baidoa, southern Somalia, on 9 February 2002.
[731] ICG interview in Mogadishu on 20 February 2002, cited in: International Crisis Group, *Somalia: Countering Terrorism in a Failed State*, 23.

seats during the IGAD peace talks ultimately aiming at international political recognition. Controlling only the southern part of Mogadishu without access to the main seaport, the international airport and Parliament buildings, it clearly faced a crisis of political legitimacy. The TNG delegation that stayed in Merka for more than a week finally did not succeed in establishing a district council. In the end, only the district judge was appointed who is from the less powerful Digil sub-clan Garre. Observers said the mission was doomed to fail from the beginning as the proposal made by the Minister of Information, Abduraman Haji Aden 'Ibbi', was unacceptable to the local community.

In the absence of a functioning government, processes of localisation took place shaping their own but locally accepted institutions. Even where regional administrations are functioning, day-to-day political authority tends to be carried out on the municipal, village or even family level. As the 2001 Somalia National Human Development Report states: "Clan elders, *shari'a* courts, business coalitions, militia leaders, prominent social and religious figures and selected or self-proclaimed political leaders collectively form the mosaic of polities that shape local governance."[732] Somalia's long period of civil war has forged a typically localised identity. Somalia was known for having a strong nationalist identity in Africa, yet Somali society is now organised along clan lines that tend to be exclusivist and sectarian in nature. In the absence of a government over the past decade clan affiliation gained importance in providing security, job opportunities, and access to valuable resources in an increasingly insecure environment. Over the past few years, several non-state administrations emerged.

The process of radical localisation is reflected in the EU's approach to support the formation of a decentralised government based on existing non-state administrations, such as the TNG, RRA, JVA, Jowhar Group and Puntland, better known as the 'building block' approach.[733] The building block approach acknowledges the political reality in

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[732] United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report, Somalia 2001*, 134.
[733] For a detailed discussion see Bryden, Matt, "New Hope for Somalia? The Building Block Approach," *Review of African Political Economy* 26.79 (1999).

southern Somalia. Emerging non-state administrations are seen as 'blocks' of a federal system of governance. This pragmatic recognition of existing administrations has shaped the debate at the IGAD peace talks in Kenya. In theory, potential blocks could be Somaliland dominated by the Isaq clan, a Majerten polity in Puntland, and a Digil and Mirifle territory in Southwest Somalia. However, basing potential building blocks on clan is not sufficient to form a viable federal state. State formation has to go beyond the question of power-sharing of Somali faction leaders. Bryden argues "what matters most is what cannot be shown on maps: the quality and legitimacy of national and sub-national leadership; the effectiveness of local administrative arrangements; the restoration of basic human rights and the rule of law".[734] Yet, at the time of writing in the year 2003, it seems unlikely that such an building block approach is feasible. Instead, in the absence of strong and accountable federal institutions the re-emergence of a strong and centralised state could be a likely scenario. This development can be observed in neighbouring Ethiopia.

The most politically stable and economically viable block, Somaliland, declared its independence on 18 May 1991 shortly after the outbreak of the civil war in southern Somalia, and since then has sought international recognition. In theory, negotiated re-unification of Somaliland with southern Somalia in a federal or confederal framework is a likely scenario. However, it is far from being practical. Somaliland's administration would only accept a confederation of two equal parties as the minimum acceptable arrangement. But given the trend of federalism in the South, this would imply a fairly complex formula for asymmetrical sovereignty.

Puntland's peaceful political transition under an elected President, Colonel Abdullahi Yusuf, has swiftly descended into political instability and violence when his democratic mandate expired in June 2001. He did not recognise his successor, Jama Ali Jama, leading to upheaval in the north-eastern part of the country. Jama Ali Jama recalls his defeat: "Yusuf was elected President in 1998 until June 2001. Elections were held on 14

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[734] Bryden, "New Hope for Somalia? The Building Block Approach": 136.

November 2001. On 18 November 2001, I took over the presidency but on 21 November 2001, Yusuf attacked my residence with 500 [militia men] and 14 'technicals' and killed eleven of my staff. I escaped through a miracle. I fled to Bosasso. Yusuf attacked Bosasso in May. I preferred leaving and to avoid the armed struggle."[735] Today, Yusuf is the *de facto* leader but maintains his grip with force rather based on popular support.

In a similar way in May 2002, the leadership of the Rahanweyn Resistance Army under Colonel Hassan Mohamed Nur 'Shatigadud' announced the formation of the political entity of Southwest Somalia. This led to a violent dispute between 'Shatigadud' and his two deputies Sheik Aden Madobe and Mohamed Ibrahim Habsade in July 2002. Further, the state of Southwest Somalia shall include Bay, Bakol, Gedo, Upper and Lower Juba, Lower and Middle Shabelle region going far beyond the RRA's jurisdiction. It is therefore questionable how this building block can become a political reality.

Likewise, the chairman of Jowhar administration, Mohamed Omar Habeeb 'Dhere', claims to represent the East-Central Somali state consisting of Middle Shabelle and parts of Galgadud region. It appears that the only functioning building block is Somaliland, and its administration distanced themselves from the Somalia National Reconciliation Process.

This process of localisation stands in contrast to the Somalia National Reconciliation Process in Eldoret which comprises only invited key figures from the military, politics and the civil society to participate. It is hard to believe that reconciliation is successful on the international level between a few powerful individuals. Even if reconciliation takes place, it is uncertain if these forces can build and promote good governance. The International Crisis Group argues that "although those at Eldoret represent significant military and factional forces, it is by no means certain that they collectively possess the capacity to establish a functional national administration".[736] Yet, reconciliation can be

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[735] Interview with Jama Ali Jama in Eldoret, Kenya, on 17 November 2002.
[736] International Crisis Group, *Negotiating a Blueprint for Peace in Somalia*, 3.

conducive to the peace process if reconciliation between individual faction leaders can take place.[737] For this reason, IGAD invited those faction leaders and representatives of non-state administrations in southern Somalia who are most powerful.

8.1.3. Structure and purpose of the reconciliation process

In September 2002, former Kenyan President Daniel Arap Moi presented a three-phase plan for the reconciliation conference to the IGAD Council of Ministers. This plan envisaged the participation of some 300 Somali military, political, traditional and civil society leaders who would agree to a cessation of hostilities and would form a decentralised all-inclusive government. From the beginning, it had been argued that Somalis should take ownership of the process started with the help of IGAD. The three phases of the Somalia National Reconciliation Process would be managed by the frontline states under Kenya's chairmanship. Analysts believed that Kenya would have little vested interests whereas Ethiopia and Djibouti's national interest would cancel one another out.

The first phase of the process began on 15 October 2002. At the time of writing in July 2003, the conference was still taking place. For phase one, IGAD invited Somali military, political and civil society leaders who would discuss and endorse two core issues in plenary and special committee sessions: first, to endorse the rules of procedure for the conference; second, to sign a "Declaration on Cessation of Hostilities and the Structures and Principles of the Somalia National Reconciliation Process".[738] The second phase is designed to form so called 'Reconciliation Committees', which would address six different sets of core issues. Expected outcomes of the second phase of the reconciliation process were *inter alia* the development of principles for land and property rights and the development of principles for addressing the concerns of frontline states and regional security. The former addresses an issue which is crucial for the fair

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[737] For example between the two warring faction leaders of the Abgal/Daud sub-clan, Omar 'Finish' and Musa Sudi. Musa Sudi Yalahow (Hawiye/Abgal/Wacbudan/Daud/Quebys) supports SRRC militarily. He fought against Omar 'Finish' (Hawiye/Abgal/Wacbudan/Daud/Irobe) over territorial control in Mogadishu who used to be his former militia commander in Mogadishu.

[738] Unpublished framework document of the Somalia National Reconciliation Conference.

distribution of valuable domestic resources, whereas the latter takes Kenya and Ethiopia's security concerns into consideration.[739] The third phase will focus on structures and mechanisms for implementing the agreements concluded by Somali parties. The expected outcome would be a federal government based on a power-sharing arrangement.[740]

Although expected outcomes are clearly defined in IGAD press statements, there is little clarity about what these outcomes mean. For example, the term 'federal' means different things to different people. Some Somalis interpret 'federal' as a political entity based on one or a few major clans. This is the case in the self-declared independent Somaliland and Puntland. The regions are more homogeneous in terms of clan composition compared to regions in the South, such as Lower Shabelle or Bay region.

Others allege the dominant Hawiye clan of opposing a federal system because they want to expand their dominance on a national level. In this context, Hussein Aideed representing the Hawiye/Haber Gedir/Saad clan and Chairman of the Somali National Alliance argues that possible southern federal blocks are too heterogeneous to be based on clan:

> When we say federal we do not mean a federal state of small states in the South. We mean the British and the Italian colony. You cannot sub-divide these former colonies because we have one culture, one language. What type of federal [state] will you have? For example Lower Shabelle, if the Digil form a federal block, if the Mirifle form a federal block, if the Hawiye form a federal block, this is impossible because, in the South, the economy, the culture is mixed. In tribal terms, only the Isaq and the Majerten from Puntland have their own state. Any new region you create will create new problems; there might be even civil war.[741]

Accordingly, the International Crisis Group states that "unless unitarians can prove otherwise, clan-based 'protectionism' (federalism) will remain popular among non-Hawiye clans".[742] A good example is the experience of the TNG. Many Somalis consider the TNG as a vehicle to advance the President's sub-clan's, the Haber Gedir/Ayr, own

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[739] Unpublished framework document of the Somalia National Reconciliation Conference.
[740] Unpublished framework document of the Somalia National Reconciliation Conference.
[741] Interview in Soy, Kenya, on 18 November 2002.
[742] International Crisis Group, *Negotiating a Blueprint for Peace in Somalia*, 6.

interests. The TNG's claim to represent the whole of Somalia was interpreted by non-Hawiye clan members as an effort to legitimise the Haber Gedir's military expansion, in particular in Mogadishu, Lower Shabelle and the Juba valley. Further, the TNG has a weak record of devolving power to the local level. Regional autonomy as a cornerstone of the transitional charter but has not been implemented. These different perceptions of political concepts have to be addressed before the third phase of the conference can commence.

The first phase concluded relatively rapidly on 27 October 2002 when the Declaration, became to be known as the Eldoret Declaration, was signed by 22 Somali 'leaders'. The signatories committed to the following main principles:

- Creation of federal governance structures
- Creation of a Charter or Constitution
- To abstain from the conduct of hostilities
- Use peaceful means in the resolution of all disputes
- Implementation of UN arms embargo (UN resolution 733 of 1992)
- Guarantee safe access for humanitarian agencies
- To combat all forms of terrorism
- Monitoring and implementation of the agreed accords

The signing ceremony in the presence of diplomats and other dignitaries, most notable President Moi, created hope to overcome the protracted crisis in southern Somalia. Doubts about the commitment of the signatories emerged after fighting erupted in Gedo, some parts of Mogadishu and in the Juba valley. Fighting that erupted in July 2002 in Baidoa among the leadership of the RRA continued. At the beginning of December, Puntland leader Abdullahi Yusuf left for north-eastern Somalia to strengthen his supremacy while the legitimately elected President of Puntland, Jama Ali Jama, remained in Eldoret. The Declaration paved way for the formation of the Leaders Committee, which comprises most of the signatories though its composition was neither comprehensive nor representative. Important eminent Somali figures, such as Jama Ali Jama and Sheik Aden Madobe (RRA) were absent. As we shall see in the following section, the exclusivity of the consultations and negotiations blocked progress in Eldoret.

Though expectations among Somalis living in Somalia were low, the turnout of Somalis at the conference in Eldoret was larger than expected. Although the official allocation of seats was 300, proposed in the framework document, some 1,000 Somalis showed up at the conference site. Through corrupt practices and forging of official batches, the official number reached 800, costing the organisers some US$ 80,000 per day to feed and to accommodate the delegates.[743] For some delegates, may be a free meal and a hotel room was sufficient for participation. Thus, it is difficult to detect real commitment. Many of the participants are self-appointed without the legitimacy to represent their people in Somalia. An ICG report reiterates this view that "whatever their differences, the faction leaders and civil society representatives at Eldoret share a common trait in that they are almost without exception self-appointed".[744] This contradicts Somali custom, where representation is determined by asking local communities to elect a representative giving him or her a clear and defined mandate. This did not happen in Eldoret, and this is seen by analysts as one of the major obstacles to a successful outcome.

After the signing of the Declaration, the delegates had to identify participants of the six Reconciliation Committees comprising 75 delegates who would discuss core issues of the second phase of the reconciliation process. These include constitutional matters and broad-based governance (1), peace-building, disarmament, rehabilitation and reconstruction (2), land disputes, property and minority rights (3), institution building and resource mobilisation (4), regional and international relations (5) and reconciliation, human rights and ethics (6). In a revised version of the framework document, the important issues of minority rights and human rights were taken off the agenda. Representatives of Amnesty International paid a visit to the conference expressing concern about the inclusion of war criminals in a new government. This concern is real,

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[743] International Crisis Group, *Salvaging Somalia's Chance for Peace* (Nairobi, Brussels: International Crisis Group, 2002), 4.
[744] International Crisis Group, *Negotiating a Blueprint for Peace in Somalia*, 15.

since there are several 'leaders' involved in the conference who are accused of war crimes and crimes against humanity. Among these, the most notable was General Hersi 'Morgan', son in law of the former dictator and responsible for the 1988 bombing of Hargeysa. Consequently, a specific committee dealing with war crimes was set up. By mid-2003, the following committees had completed their draft reports: Federalism and provisional charter (1), demobilisation, disarmament and reintegration (2), land and property rights (3), economic recovery, institution building and resource mobilisation (4), regional/international relations and monitoring arrangements (5) and conflict resolution and reconciliation (6). Land and property disputes are among the most grievous obstacles to a successful settlement (see 8.1.5). Although most of the papers represent a genuine effort to tackle difficult issues, hardly any committee can claim that their report was based on a broad consensus.[745] Besides, a wider Somali audience was not able to participate in the deliberations of the conference papers.

The missing provision in the framework document for minority rights is worrisome, too. For example the *Jareer* as illustrated in chapter five, who earn a living, as wage labourers or subsistence farmers in the riverine areas are considered a minority, although numerically speaking, they are not, especially in the South. They have been subject to discrimination and exploitation for the past decades resulting in a large number of internally displaced persons and refugees. A recent newspaper article confirmed the resettlement of 10,000 Somalis in America. The refugees, who found temporary refuge in Kenyan camps, are *Jareer* or Bantu who fled from the inter-riverine areas.[746] The omission of minority rights reflects the weak position of these groups to lobby for the accommodation of their interests.

The final proposal to form the Reconciliation Committees suggests a total number of 23 members for each committee. There is hope that the committees can extend the debate

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[745] International Crisis Group, *Negotiating a Blueprint for Peace in Somalia.*
[746] Njeru, Mugo, "10,000 Somali Refugees Fly to the US Next Month," *The Daily Nation* 20 January 2003.

beyond the question of clan distribution and power-sharing and refocus the deliberations on the core issues of the conference. The second phase also aims at involving Somali and international technical experts who can accomplish the substantive part of the process. Analysts hope that they can compensate for the shortcomings in the overall leadership of the conference.

The last and third phase, would amend and endorse the conclusions and recommendations presented by the six Reconciliation Committees. Only then negotiations over power sharing would start, placing it last within the conference framework, rather than first, as it had been in previous deliberations. It became clear in the first months when disputes over the distribution of seats blocked process, how important it was to take the emphasis away from the issue of power sharing in order to let the debate of technical issues prevail.

After the Eldoret Declaration was signed, delegates and IGAD's Technical Committee debated the allocation of seats. In some cases political leaders received invitation letters before the deliberations started but had to realise that the figure stated in the original invitation letter did not correspond with the records of the secretariat. The criteria for the allocation of delegates were somewhat arbitrary and non-transparent. Once the number was way above the original 300 delegates, it took months to reduce the number of delegates. One member of the Technical Committee admitted that there was no master list for issued conference batches. As a consequence, illegally forged or traded batches could not be distinguished from official ones anymore.

When numbers were to be reduced, a dilemma arose whether the allocation of seats should be according to political faction or to clan. Both criteria were mutually exclusive. The factional representation suggested 262 seats to be distributed among sixteen factions with 100 additional seats allocated to the civil society.[747] The sixteen political groups did

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[747] International Crisis Group, *Salvaging Somalia's Chance for Peace*, 4. A previous proposal suggested 268 seat distributed among nine political groups including Somaliland and a discretionary quota of 32.

not match with the signatories of the Eldoret Declaration, some were added whereas others were omitted with seemingly little logic. The factional clan allocation favoured certain clans with approximately 140 seats for the Hawiye, 90 for the Darod, 60 for the Digil-Mirifle and 20 for the Dir. This roughly corresponds with a list of 21 "Somali Leaders" issued by the secretariat including eight Hawiye, eight Darod, two Digil-Mirifle, two Dir and one Bantu. The choice of factional representation already triggered several localised conflicts within Somalia increasing the destructive level of radical fragmentation (see chapter V).[748]

Conflict even became an instrument in order to be heard in the negotiations. This assertion was confirmed by a statement given by a Bimal clan leader: "Now, we are up in arms, the Bimal, the Digil and the Banadir people, the traditional communities of the area, we are up in arms to defend our own rights. And I think we are right that we are taking up arms; and we hope the international community will address the reasons why we have to resolve to that kind of struggle."[749] The violent struggle of the *Jareer* for self-determination can be interpreted along these lines (see chapter V). In the run-up to the conference, there were frequent armed clashes, including Puntland, Bay region, Mogadishu, Middle and Lower Shabelle region. The promise to form a delegation at the Somalia Peace Process led to the creation of several new non-state administrations. Even faction leaders were designated with a certain number of delegates, Osman 'Atto' was invited with ten delegates.[750] This did not go without violence and killings as the case of Baidoa clearly demonstrates where forces loyal to the Rahanweyn Resistance Army disintegrated in warring factions in July 2002 lasting for several months. It seemed that one major criteria to be heard at the reconciliation process was to be in a position to

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[748] The mini-state around Jowhar with Mohamed 'Dhere' as Chairman draws support from the Abgal sub-clan Warsangeli. While these mini-states can create security for the region, they are often exclusive in nature based on patronage networks. Besides, it is unlikely that newly emerging administrations are economically viable to exist disconnected from urban areas.
[749] Interview in Baidoa, southern Somalia, on 9 February 2002.
[750] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 22 November 2002.

exercise physical force. Several observers criticised IGAD for this attitude, especially representatives from the unarmed factions, such as the coastal people or certain minority clans, as the Midgan.

Clan representation was based on the 4.5 formula that enjoyed wide support among delegates. This formula was used in the Arta process to allocate seats of the TNA in 2000. This means that a parliament that consists of 450 members would comprise 100 MPs each from the four major clans, the Darod, Hawiye, Digil-Mirifle, Isaq, Dir, and 50 MPs from minority clans. One of the proposals envisaged a total of 400 delegates with 84 seats allocated to the four major clans, 42 seats to minorities and 22 additional seats filling a discretionary quota. The clan system had the advantage of being more just in the distribution of seats among major clans compared to factional representation. On the contrary, there is the danger that attention is diverted from substantial issues of reconciliation and disarmament towards an over-emphasis on clanism. Another constraint was that the militarily strongest clan, the Hawiye, saw their position jeopardised by a reduction of seats from 140 to 84. Others argue that a clan-based administration would select candidates on the basis of clan rather than merit. A prominent Bimal politician reaffirms this view claiming that the Hawiye do not possess the political skills to run a government, calling it an educational gap.[751] In fact, one delegate said that the quality of teaching in the former regime was very low despite a broad literacy campaign. But "there is a difference between literacy and knowledge," he concludes.[752]

It was one of the major shortcomings of the Kenyan organisers not to have set clear criteria for the reconciliation process. It could have saved vast resources and time. Before discussing obstacles to the peace process, I will concentrate in the following on motives and political agendas of the delegates, the frontline states and other actors.

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[751] Interview in Soy, Kenya, on 9 November 2002.
[752] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 10 November 2002.

8.1.4. Motives and hidden agendas

During several interviews, informants explained that the main motive for reconciliation is the worsening security situation in southern Somalia. Most delegates reiterated the need for a formal government, thus echoing the desire of the general public. The truth is, that mounting pressure from outside, especially from the front-line states, IGAD, the EU and the United States, led to the first round of reconciliation talks. UN Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia, Ambassador Winston Tubman, reiterates this view: "The UN went to Somalia to invite most of the political leaders. There has been a lot of pressure. Others did not want to be left out. [...] I do not have the impression that faction leaders came because they could gain in short terms in participating in the peace process. The main motive was that there is a stalemate in the country."[753] The Chairman of the Somali Patriotic Movement, General Aden Abdullahi Nur 'Gabiyow', mentions reconciliation: "The main reason is to establish a government and to solve disagreements."[754] The Chairman of the USC, Mohamed Qanyare Afrah, argues along these lines: "We have no separate motives, because [we long for] reconciliation, for peace in Somalia. The Somali problem is not about the economy; Somalia has a problem with security."[755]

In fact, the security situation in southern Somalia deteriorated further in the year 2002. The once promising regional administration of Bay and Bakol region, the RRA, split along clan lines into two camps. The regional capital Baidoa changed hands several times leaving many people dead and thousands displaced (see 7.2). Mogadishu experienced heavy clashes leaving 60 people dead when Musa Sudi Yalahow's militia clashed with forces of the Transitional National Government on 24 May 2002.[756] In only one week during my stay in the capital clan clashes left six people dead, several more

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[753] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 8 November 2002.
[754] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 7 November 2002.
[755] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 22 November 2002.
[756] IRIN, "Over 60 killed in latest Mogadishu Fighting," *United Nations Integrated Regional Information Network* 28 May 2002.

people died in ambushes and revenge killings.[757] With reference to kidnappings, I learned about a case where two children were abducted by a close relative. The demand for ransom was based on the unwillingness of the victims' father to financially support the kidnapper's clan, to which he belonged too. Some kidnappings even serve the purpose of collecting dept. The debtor is kidnapped while his family has to pay for the debt and the cost of the kidnapping.[758] The levels of insecurity also increased in the riverine areas, namely Lower Shabelle and the Juba valley.

Only, 'political leaders' are hardly affected by increased insecurity. This may explain the general public's low expectations of the peace process. At the beginning in October 2002, with the signing of the Declaration on Cessation of Hostilities, Somalis were still optimistic, which was mirrored in a strengthening of the Somali shilling in Mogadishu's Bakara market. While enthusiasm inside Somalia soon faded away. Despite the signing of the Declaration in Eldoret violent clashes continued throughout southern Somalia. In March 2003, renewed clashes occurred between two Mogadishu-based warlords, Omar Mohamoud Mohamed 'Finish' and Musa Sudi Yalahow. According to United Nations Integrated Regional Information Network, more than fifty people – many of them civilians – were killed in Medina district in Mogadishu.[759] Ten months since the beginning of the reconciliation process, public confidence in the peace process is close to zero.

In order to gain a seat in IGAD's Leaders Committee, faction leaders instrumentally use the political unit 'clan' in order to claim legitimacy. Clan identity was strong factor to mobilise military support during the civil war and before. One delegate rightly claimed that putting "the civil war on a tribal basis is a cover for political leaders".[760] Root causes,

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[757] Minutes of weekly meeting on security and social activities on 11 December 2002 compiled by Mogadishu-based local and international NGOs and UN agencies.
[758] Marchal, *A Survey of Mogadishu's Economy.*
[759] IRIN, "Militias on Looting Spree as Mogadishu Death Toll tops 50," *United Nations Integrated Regional Information Network* 4 March 2003.
[760] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 22 November 2002.

such as unjust distribution of resources, politics of exclusion or economic decline were neglected in the discourse of clan hatred. In a similar way, this applies to factional representation when self-styled political leaders claim legitimacy without having neither territorial control nor popular support. The conference chairman and former Kenyan Foreign Minister, Elijah Mwangale's correspondence diplomacy had excluded all those delegates, who were not part of the Leaders Committee by abolishing plenary sessions. This fostered a spirit of secretiveness and hindered an open dialogue among conflicting parties. Furthermore, this strategy decreased the level of transparency, a common concern among many delegates.

As a consequence of Mwangale's authoritarian style and the change of government in Kenya, he has been replaced by Ambassador Bethwel Kiplagat, a career diplomat experienced in conflict resolution in the region. Taking the mounting criticism into account, Mwangale's replacement was expected by observers. Kiplagat's appointment was welcomed by both Somalis and non-Somalis who are hopeful that this would re-vitalise the reconciliation process, told United Nations Integrated Regional Information Network.[761]

On the state-level, Djibouti and Ethiopia had clear but hidden agendas. The conference dynamics were much influenced by the polarisation between the TNG and the SRRC with Djibouti and Ethiopia lining up behind their proxies. Ethiopia and Djibouti have divergent interests in the process and outcome of the peace process. Ethiopia considers a strong Somalia as threat to its national security. The 1977-78 Ogaden war is a powerful example for potential threats that can originate from a militarily strong Somali government. When Djibouti backed the TNG, Ethiopia provided military assistance in form of training, personnel, equipment and arms to the SRRC. For instance, Ethiopia militarily supported the illegitimate rule of Colonel Abdullahi Yusuf in Puntland. In

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[761] IRIN, "Kenya appoints new Special Envoy for Peace Talks," *United Nations Integrated Regional Information Network* 20 January 2003.

terms of extremist Islamist groups – a major concern for the Ethiopians – there is little evidence that organisations, such as *al-Ittihad*, were able to maintain their military strength and political influence in the past two years. Western diplomats see the establishment of a government as a chance to monitor and to stop terrorist activities in the Horn of Africa. At Eldoret, neither *al-Ittihad* nor *al-Islah* groups were vocal in the peace talks.[762] In contrast to the Arta conference in 2000, the Eldoret talks offered little opportunity for religious organisations and leaders for meaningful participation since they came under pressure from other countries because they were suspected of having affiliations with radical military movements, such as *al-Qaida*. Conversely, Islamic humanitarian agencies are common in contemporary Somalia but are largely involved in educational and health services, building on a long-term strategy for permanent engagement.

The strong diplomatic engagement of Ethiopia in favour of the SRRC was observed by many delegates. Daniel Yifru, Director for Political and Humanitarian Affairs of IGAD explains: "Ethiopia's security concerns are real; it would be naive to believe that Ethiopia will give up on it."[763] Besides, many Somalis consider for good historical reasons the Ogaden as part of a greater Somalia (see 2.2.2). One delegate suggested that "if the people in Ogaden have equal opportunities within Ethiopia, it can ease tensions between Somalia and Ethiopia".[764] This deepened the already existing polarisation of the delegates and led to the formation of an anti-Ethiopian coalition, the so-called Group of Eight (G-8) whose members did express their sympathy for the TNG.[765] Several delegates

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[762] International Crisis Group, *Salvaging Somalia's Chance for Peace*, 6.
[763] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 31 October 2002.
[764] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 19 November 2002.
[765] The G-8 consists of Colonel Abdirizak Isak Bihi, Chairman of the Somali National Front (SNF), Mohamed Qanyare Afrah, Chairman of the United Somali Congress, Osman Hassan Ali 'Atto', Chairman of USC/SNA (United Somali Congress/Somali National Alliance)/SRRC Nakuru, Omar Mohamoud Mohamed 'Finish', Chairman of USC/SSA (United Somali Congress/Somali Salvation Army), Jama Ali Jama (Puntland), Colonel Bare Aden Shire 'Hirale', Chairman of the Juba Valley Alliance, Sheik Aden Madobe, 1st Deputy Chairman of the Rahanweyn Resistance Army. Ahmed Omar Jess (Somali Patriotic Movement) replaced Mowlid Ma'ane Mohamoud, Chairman of the Somali African Muki Organisation (SAMO)/SRRC Nakuru. Correspondingly on 2 December 2002, a joint declaration by the TNG and political groups formerly close to the SRRC was signed to end hostilities between factions and the TNG in

raised their concern about Ethiopia's strong influence in IGAD's Technical Committee, which held executive powers in the peace process. Ali Mahdi, first interim president after Barre's regime, stated that: "the Technical Committee is monopolised by the Ethiopians".[766]

Conversely, Ethiopia seeks a constructive dialogue in terms of economic cooperation, as one Somali journalist explains: "After the secession of Eritrea, the policy of Ethiopia [toward Somalia] takes a new direction. Today, Ethiopia needs Somalia for commercial purposes. Eritrea's secession came during Somalia's civil war in 1994-95. It seems that Ethiopia supports a federal structure [in Somalia]; that's why Ethiopia is more involved. Some of the explanations of Islamist extremism posing a threat to Ethiopia do exist."[767] He concludes that "Somalia is a victim of the conflict between Egypt and Ethiopia. Somalia is caught in between".[768] Some argue that Ethiopia supports a federal structure with Abdullahi Yusuf heading the new government. This could lead to renewed fierce fighting to "a war we have not yet seen," Ali Mahdi warns.[769]

Kenya has long-standing historical ties with Somali population and today, Kenyan-Somalis have become an integral part of Kenya's political and social culture. Apart from the large influx of Somali refugees, illegal immigrants and cross-border organised crime, Kenya does not have a direct interest in Somalia and accordingly, is considered neutral. Besides the frontline states, the League of Arab States, Egypt, the EU and the USA[770] sent their envoys to the conference. Only Italy sent an Ambassador to Eldoret on a permanent basis. Representatives from the League of Arab States, like Egypt, are present but rarely engage openly in the deliberations. This is similar in the case of the EU who is

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the capital Mogadishu. This was rather an effort of some faction leaders to criticise Ethiopia's role in the reconciliation process than creating peace in the former capital city.

[766] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 8 November 2002.

[767] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 19 November 2002.

[768] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 19 November 2002.

[769] ICG interview in Mogadishu in January 2003, cited in: International Crisis Group, *Negotiating a Blueprint for Peace in Somalia*, 4.

[770] There was a general feeling among delegates that the US was represented on a lower diplomatic level than one would have hoped. Personal communication with conference participants at Eldoret, Kenya.

the main sponsor of the reconciliation process. The EU member states have an interest in a functioning Somali government not only for security reasons but also for practical ones. The EU, the UN and the Bretton Woods institutions need governments to operate in a similar way, as colonial governments needed chiefs to operate. Where there were no chiefs, colonialists invented them.[771]

8.1.5. Land disputes and property rights

One major obstacle to the peace process is the issue of land and property. This contentious issue is directly linked with the role of resources in conflict in Lower Shabelle. Among the six Reconciliation Committees, one committee was established to deal with land disputes and property rights. The terms of reference for this committee include "a detailed proposal on legal mechanisms for the settlement of disputes," and the "resolution of political disputes over occupied land and property" through clan and regional efforts.[772] The final report was submitted for consideration to the plenary of the Somalia National Reconciliation Conference in July 2003.

The committee wisely categorised the various land and property disputes in its report rather than passing judgements on which historical period to consider.[773] Focusing only on the period after the collapse of the regime would neglect land grabbing by government officials turning them into legitimate owners of the disputed land. Several interviewees within southern Somalia mentioned disputes over land ownership, which were not limited to the past twelve years. As one Somali aid worker stated: "In terms of land disputes, there are multiple claims. For example in Merka district, the Sheikhal, Bimal and *Gibil ad* claim to have first settled in the region. The problem of land disputes started during Siyad Barre. He neglected the central regions and as a consequence, people migrated to Lower Shabelle."[774] This migration has been relatively peaceful. Lower Shabelle also became a

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[771] Ranger, "The Invention of Tradition in Colonial Africa".
[772] IGAD, *Somalia National Reconciliation Conference, Eldoret, Kenya: Committee III: Land and Property Rights. Draft Report*, 2.
[773] International Crisis Group, *Negotiating a Blueprint for Peace in Somalia*, 7.
[774] Interview in Merka, southern Somalia, on 23 September 2002.

focus for settlement schemes of those affected by droughts. The 1973-74 drought led to settlements in Kurtunwarey, Sablale and Brawa district in Lower Shabelle. Notably after the Somali-Ethiopian war in 1978, further refugees were settled in the region. Today, some of these areas are now occupied by non-resident militias. Since the breakdown of a central authority, only those clans moved into the rich agricultural areas of Lower Shabelle who had the support of their militia. A Hawiye clan member argued that "the Haber Gedir took over land because they were armed; others like the Bimal would have done the same but with more harm".[775] The land and property rights committee refrains from specifying clans and people as victims or occupiers. Though it states that "human rights violation and forceful alienation of land and property is the norm".[776] Further, the report list a number of farms of both Somalis and foreigners which remain occupied by armed militias including banana farms in Lower Shabelle.

Yet, it is difficult to draw the line from which date to start with land disputes. Disputes dating back to the former government hold the disadvantage of investigating titles awarded under former governments since much of the pre-war documentation has been destroyed. Going even further back to colonial times would bear the risk of opening irreconcilable claims and counter claims.[777] Yet, the committee's draft report considers "issues regarding land and property rights, whether farmland, pastoral land, residential or business property, to be the root of the conflict between the colonists and the Somalis, and also among the Somalis themselves in the civil war".[778]

Land disputes mainly over grazing areas and water points in the central and northern regions have been arbitrated following a more traditional pastoral norm. Competing claims to living space (*deegaan*) addressed rights to access water and pasture.[779] Today,

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[775] Interview in Merka, southern Somalia, on 23 September 2002.
[776] IGAD, *Somalia National Reconciliation Conference, Eldoret, Kenya: Committee III: Land and Property Rights. Draft Report*, 14.
[777] International Crisis Group, *Negotiating a Blueprint for Peace in Somalia.*
[778] IGAD, *Somalia National Reconciliation Conference, Eldoret, Kenya: Committee III: Land and Property Rights. Draft Report*, 40.
[779] International Crisis Group, *Negotiating a Blueprint for Peace in Somalia*, 7.

disputes over traditional clan territory involves clear political and economic interests. Most clans have a clear idea about territorial claims in towns and villages. These territorial claims are often linked to identity in particular in the coastal towns of Lower Shabelle. An elder of the *Gibil ad* or *reer* Merka community in Merka justified territorial claims of *reer* Merka people with being the 'original inhabitants' of Merka: "Before the Italians came, the town had three doors which were shut [during the night] and everybody who was not invited had to leave the town. Then, the Bimal clans settled from the North, possibly Ethiopia. They arrived in the region in 1520. They were told to settle outside Merka; they used to come in the morning to sell their milk."[780] Over time, clear clan boundaries, as once existed in Merka, have shifted through peaceful migration and changing ownership over land. As a consequence, clan-based land disputes have became complex making it difficult to agree on points of reference.

A network of social relations, remained important to access land and resources in an area that goes beyond the clan's or family's *deegaan*.[781] This applies largely to pastoralists and to a lesser extent to agriculturalists. Sharing resources, information and labour was essential to Somali herders and agriculturalists alike to cope with the variability and uncertainty of ecological conditions. This system of resource sharing and negotiating agreements to use land has been altered over the past twelve years. Farah, Hussein and Lind argue that after the collapse of the dictatorship competition for land and natural resources increased: "From 1991, with no central authority to distribute resources and mediate competing claims, rights to access, use and own land and resources became increasingly fragmented as competing clans asserted their claims to different land and natural resources."[782] In defending their claims to *deegaan*, clans and sub-clans acquired arms often resulting in violence. Customary rights to access, use or control land and

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[780] Interview in Merka, southern Somalia, on 22 September 2002.
[781] Farah, Hussein and Lind, "Deegaan, Politics and War in Somalia".
[782] Farah, Hussein and Lind, "Deegaan, Politics and War in Somalia".

resources lost importance and became inconsequential.[783] Consequently, less powerful clans passed alliances with stronger and armed clans. Accordingly, the *Jareer* might have sought a strategic alliance with the Haber Gedir clan in order to oppose economic exploitation and political exclusion by resident clans, like the Jido (see chapter V).

In order to avoid recent conflict over land and property, the designated Reconciliation Committee has given priority to colonial land tenure practices and its social and economic impact. Certainly, a discourse about colonial land practices and the call for reparation payments is acceptable to most delegates. Only, the pressing issue of land occupation by armed militias and the demand of their withdrawal from the agricultural areas in the South has received little attention by experts and faction leaders alike. People who are affected by oppressive policies of armed non-resident clans hardly speak out because of fear and terror. These root causes of the conflict ought to be addressed sooner than later if a peaceful solution for Somalia is sought, as an ICG report states: "The Lower Shabelle and Lower Juba are unlikely to know lasting peace as long as their leaders impose themselves by force."[784] The committee report acknowledges the problem that those who occupy land illegally would lose their livelihoods. As they are largely from the pastoral areas the report recommends to enable them in productive activities through development programmes, such as restocking, range management, livestock marketing, small-scale irrigation and the establishment of crafts and industries.[785] This view is reiterated by the Speaker of the TNG, Abdalla Derow Isak: "The only solution is a government which can effectively release the land to the legitimate owners, [illegal occupants] have to be returned but with assistance."[786] He continues that the type of needed assistance "depends on the area, whether livestock or

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[783] Farah, Hussein and Lind, "Deegaan, Politics and War in Somalia".
[784] International Crisis Group, *Negotiating a Blueprint for Peace in Somalia*, 8.
[785] IGAD, *Somalia National Reconciliation Conference, Eldoret, Kenya: Committee III: Land and Property Rights. Draft Report.*
[786] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 3 December 2002.

fishery is important. For example in Bakol, you can improve the health of the animals, construct waterholes."[787]

8.1.6. Conclusion: Prospects for peace

A successful outcome of the conference depends on several factors. First and foremost, it depends on political will of the delegates to cooperate and to form a prospective representative government, whether its structure will be federal, confederal or central. In this respect, the question of effective leadership is crucial. When asking Mohamood Abdi Noor, a Senior Agricultural Specialist of The World Bank, about the role of institutions, he answered: "Who runs institutions? Human beings, right? [...] Institutions are really weak in Africa. We need strong leadership."[788] This view is echoed by some experienced Somali politicians, among those the former Prime Minister Abdirazak Haji Mohamed, who would prefer the establishment of a strong central government with an effective and accountable leadership rather than a weak decentralised clan-based government.[789] In addition, a federal state is likely to consist of several mini-states where eventually one major clan would dominate each mini-state economically and politically.

Secondly, it depends to what extent IGAD's Technical Committee is capable of managing the conference in a conducive manner preventing corruption. At one stage, reports suggested that the conference was on the verge to collapse due to corruption.[790]

Thirdly, it depends if the proposed strategy can work to co-opt military leaders and warlords into a civil government. Many analysts have their doubts if warlords can become civil servants. To counter-balance the influence of faction leaders, the second phase was especially designed to bring professionals and academics on board who can carve out the principles and mechanisms, which input to an all-inclusive government. In the second phase, political and military leaders would only be granted observer status.

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[787] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 3 December 2002.
[788] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 27 November 2002.
[789] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 9 November 2002.
[790] Barasa, Lucas, "Kalonzo to meet IGAD Ministers to save Somalia Talks," *The Daily Nation* 14 January 2003.

Above all, it depends to what extent Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya and members of the League of Arab States can overcome their differences, and are able to form a united and firm position regarding the core issues of the reconciliation process.

In achieving fair representation of all clans, the delegates adopted the clan formula of 4.5. Many analysts argue that this formula cannot work since the Somali society is too fragmented. This relates to evidence given in the second detailed case study of this thesis when even close relatives could not agree on the formulation of local reconciliation committees (see 5.3). This notion is reiterated by Dr Sharif Salah Mohamed Ali who speaks on behalf of the civil society at the Somali peace talks:

> Today the major problem in Somalia is not clan reconciliation. The major clans, the Darod, Hawiye, Rahanweyn, Isaq, Dir clans were fighting at the beginning of the 1990s. There were clashes [between clans]. Today you have conflict within the Harti Abgal, actually today the process of reconciliation starts from the ground. [...] Musa Sudi and Omar 'Finish' are almost relatives. This kind of generation who has two brothers fighting each other like Cain and Abel. This is a terrible thing. [...] This is a trajectory down to the level of brother. They cannot stop because their militia is there. But they do not have any contact with them. Their militia can do anything, they can come to Musa Sudi's home and tell him to stay at home.[791]

His last comment touches on a problem that can diminish the prospects of peace, namely the political legitimacy of some of the delegates who signed the Declaration on Cessation of Hostilities. Many of the invited delegates are self-styled leaders with little popular support or real power in the country. Some of the delegates are from the diaspora or refugees from neighbouring countries. Further, clan identity or ethnicity has been hijacked by urban-based political elites to succeed in the scramble for resources and power. Clan has become an instrument to mobilise resources in order to deploy, and to maintain power.

Other important players were absent. A good example is the leading business elite based in Mogadishu and other urban centres (see 7.3.3). They support the creation of a formal government, which could serve their interests. Today, influential business leader

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[791] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 30 October 2002.

are disconnected from political factions. They maintain their own security forces including security arrangements with other business men to use trade routes in a reciprocal way. They provide public goods, such as water and electricity, "all the things a government is supposed to do", noted Muhammad Jirde Husayn, an executive member of the Dubai-based Somali Business Council.[792] They argue, they were denied any support, such as the provision of public goods, by any political group including the TNG. They would, however, support the creation of a formal government provided it is powerful enough to provide security and can fulfil basic administrative functions, such as regulating the financial markets.[793]

8.2. SYNTHESIS

This thesis has sought to analyse links between resources and conflict. The starting point of my research four years ago was to examine links between environmental scarcity and conflict with evidence from Somalia. In the course of the literature review and my own research, I found that those links are problematic. To ascribe conflict largely to environmental factors would be too simplistic. Further, incorporating environmental factors in models, as found in the environmental security literature, to explain conflict can lead to the deterministic view that conflict is inevitable and beyond human control. In fact, natural disasters, such as the 1990-91 drought did not play an important role in causing the severe famine in Bay and Lower Shabelle region. Rather, the devastation inflicted upon the inter-riverine population was rooted in their inability to defend themselves based on historical power-relations. Moreover, the fertile inter-riverine land attracted looters and militias: a war economy developed. Lastly, aid deliveries were disrupted, and never reached the people in need. Certainly, an economy which relies on the export of primary commodities, such as livestock, bananas, sorghum, maize and fish

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[792] IRIN, "Business community to support all-inclusive government," *United Nations Integrated Regional Information Network* 27 May 2003.
[793] Interviews with business men in Mogadishu in December 2002.

is vulnerable to environmental disasters, such as droughts and floods. Other variables such as low incomes, low GDP and poor educational standards can also weaken the economy.[794] A fresh look at the role of resources in the Somali conflict takes the emphasis away from convential explanations of conflict in Somalia, such as clanism or historical explanations.

The studies in Lower Shabelle suggest that the probability of conflict rises when communities which are believed to be resilient (such as the Digil-Mirifle clans) to external stress, such as floods and droughts become vulnerable through warfare. Weak clans in the inter-riverine areas became subject to arbitrary violence, land occupation and exploitation of their resource base. Domestic resources gained importance since the decrease in foreign aid could not sustain old patronage networks anymore. In a situation of statelessness national resources (such as charcoal) are plundered irrespectively of customary social and environmental practices.

The three detailed case studies have provided empirical material which helps to answer the research questions. All three case studies have in common that resource competition – often resulting in violence – was focused at the level of marketing and export. The civil war has reduced the resources available, including foreign aid, export markets, domestic renewable resources, such as grazing areas and land suited for irrigation. Consequently, people moved either peacefully or by force into areas with perceived wealth, notably the riverine regions. Unarmed and without clan affiliation with stronger clans, the population in Bay and Lower Shabelle became more vulnerable to exploitation and occupation. The shrinking resource base resulted into a distributional struggle which has affected the agro-pastoral farmers of the Digil and Mirifle communities, including the Bantu, one of the most vulnerable communities in southern Somalia. Respectively, original causes of the Somali conflict, such as an oppressive and

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[794] Collier, "Doing Well out of War: An Economic Perspective".

corrupt regime, changed over time and differ from the causes that perpetuate violence in contemporary Somalia as shown in chapter four.

To begin with, regions with a concentration of resources, such as Lower Shabelle, Bay and Mogadishu became flash points of conflict. This can help to forecast where conflict might take place. However, it is not usually absolute scarcity or abundance that leads eventually to armed conflict. It is often unjust distribution of the benefits that lead to conflict (for example *Jareer*-Jido conflict, Tunni-Haber Gedir conflict). My research mirrors the emergence of 'elite wars' where a small urban-based elite struggles to access valuable resources. Conflict arises when national elites are competing for key pockets of wealth, such as the production and marketing of cash crops. In turn, violent conflict led to diminished domestic production and foreign assistance thus creating scarcity. When domestic economic and natural assets become scarce, divergent views of the elite result into a struggle for power to access these critical resources. In absence of an internationally recognised government, which could generate wealth from outside, Somali elites started focusing on domestic resources. It became clear during my field research that those who benefit from the short-term profits of resource extraction, such as charcoal production, large-scale irrigation of cash crops, diversion of foreign aid, and controlling strategic assets, such as air- and seaports lived outside of the rural areas. Conflict largely arose over taxation of either export crops, such as bananas and local resources, such as land and water. Here, the war has destroyed the plenty of the region, exacerbating existing tensions between small-scale and large-scale farmers over the distribution of scarce resources, such as water as demonstrated in the first case study. In addition, traditional institutions of resource sharing among farmers and pastoralists became dysfunctional. This reduced the social resilience of local communities in coping with external shocks, such as droughts, floods or market failures.

In the second place, the thesis demonstrated that individuals have a stake in the continuation of violence in southern Somalia. Some business men and faction leaders

benefit from the lawlessness in Somalia, they do well out of war in particular with regard to the charcoal export business. Others including hotel managers and shipping agents make large profit margins with aid contracts. At airports, fees are charged for humanitarian flights without offering services. Foreign companies as well as aid agencies have to calculate up to half of their budget for security services. In this respect, they must be aware of their role in shaping conflict in Somalia. Aid money is often diverted and used for the acquisition of arms and ammunition. Many of the business men, largely from the Hawiye clan, enriched themselves during the UNOSOM era in the early 1990s. Above all, there are countries that participate in the arms trade and have little interest in politically stable Somalia.[795] Rather, some countries deliberately jeopardised peace processes in the past. Unless a forthcoming national Somali government proves that it does not pose a threat to neighbouring countries neither harbouring members of *al-Ittihad* within its cabinet, countries such as Ethiopia are likely to continue obstructing the reconciliation process.

Moreover, the thesis revealed the instrumental use of ethnicity in conflict. For faction leaders, businesses men and political leaders alike, clan identity became an instrument in the pursuit, employment and perpetuation of power. These mainly urban-based elites hijacked clan identity for their vested interests. Recruiting a clan constituency can help to gain access to resources as shown in chapter five where the Haber Gedir allied with the *Jareer* to control local clans and their sources of wealth. Given the right historical conditions in southern Somalia ethnicity or clanism became a powerful tool in the hands of faction leaders. In this respect, ethnicity became a resource for political leaders. In the absence of a functioning government which could have distributed wealth and power, clan affiliation became a *conditio sine qua non* for daily survival. Being *Jareer* or Haber

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[795] Hogendoorn, M'Backe and Mugaas, *Report of the Panel of Experts on Somalia pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1425 (2002).*

Gedir could decide over dying or living. In this context, individuals benefited from this lawlessness using the political unit 'clan' to mobilise military force and support.

Further, my research revealed the radical fragmentation of Somali society. The broad-based clan alliances of the early nineties have fragmented into sub-sub-clan units. Today, conflicts are articulated within clans rather than between clans. The fragmentation of the society can be observed even on the family level as demonstrated in the second case study. The Somali society is complex in clan composition, ethnicity, cultures and languages. In foreseeing a scenario for the way forward for southern Somalia, it is worth noting that an administration rooted in a clan-based power sharing arrangement as adopted at the Arta conference and the Somalia National Reconciliation Process has its limitations. The rationale behind this assumption is twofold: First and most important, the advanced social fragmentation of the Somali society has made it difficult or even impossible to base an administration on clan representation. Today, personal economic interests override clan affiliation, as a Somali development worker rightly observes: "Somalis are only loyal to their own interests."[796] Second, as I demonstrated in the case studies, the creation of an administration by a small urban-based elite would exclude those clans who lack the political or economic means to access valuable resources (such as the Digil-Mirifle or Bantu) meaning that the probability of renewed civil conflict remains.

In spite of the radical fragmentation of society, however, kinship remains important in Somali politics. Clan representation can also mean a fairer power-sharing arrangement between all major six clans plus the minority clans. For this reason, a functioning administrative arrangement has to be based both, on constitutional or formal rules that are widely accepted as well as on 'traditional' forms of representation. Any formal government has to be complemented by a forum that draws its legitimacy from

[796] Interview in Nairobi on 15 August 2002.

authorities based on kin, age, sex, experience and expertise. This could be in form of an Upper House of elders that already exists in Somaliland.[797]

Furthermore, my research shows that those who are politically and economically excluded in the absence of a functioning government have responded to this situation. When excluded from profitable kin and patronage networks, social groups began claiming their fair share – often resorting to violence as shown in the second and third case studies. In other cases, political exclusion led to the emergence of localised governance with astonishing resilient institutions. In this respect, the notion of land disputes and occupation has been noted by the current Reconciliation Process in Kenya. Although the proposed solutions of these root causes of the Somali conflict are questionable as again, urban government elites will be entrusted with arbitrating land disputes.

Western prescriptions for conflict resolution and peace-building are often doomed to fail because Somalia is unique in its social fabric and history. It displays contradicting features like Somali-wide ideas and values, such as Islam, on the one hand, and the pursuit of insular and individual interests on the other. Many people see southern Somalia at the brink of chaos and anarchy. But there are also signs of hope. Individual initiatives are creating hope for many people. Doctors are willing to work in provisional hospitals, the Somali diaspora supports many people, traders guarantee the availability of food items and fuel. It is a private initiative when streets are lit at night in the war-torn city of Mogadishu.

To conclude, the political future of Somalia remains uncertain. The emphasis is on traditional peace-building mechanisms succeeding in resolving or preventing conflicts. It is now argued that they are more appropriate than international 'first track' diplomacy,

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[797] In the case of the Republic of Somaliland, the sudden death of the former President, Mohamed Haji Ibrahim Egal, in April 2002 was a critical test for the fragile administration. The Vice-President, Dahir Riyale Kahin, who represents a minority clan, the Gadabursi (Darod sub-clan), became acting president in summer 2002. Although several analysts predicted a collapse of the fragile administration, the government of Somaliland remained functioning and hence, gained political credibility.

and more familiar and trusted by local populations. The promising case of Somaliland demonstrates that traditional conflict resolution mechanisms can survive severe civil disruptions and social transformation and play a useful part in peace-building efforts. Unfortunately, this hardly applies to southern Somalia. Here, I agree with Reno's hypothesis: "When formal and informal institutional frameworks favour old informal patronage networks and clandestine economic channels over the interests of new or outsider elites, the successful intervention of clan (or ethnic) entrepreneurs is less likely, reducing the risks of violence."[798]

A prosperous economy and the opening of trade with neighbouring countries can build trust between traders, and eventually between neighbouring populations. In this respect, the position of the Somali economy in livestock and other primary commodities will remain important. In sum, if at any point in the future, a government will be formed; it has to deal with the legacies of the colonial past, the period of military rule and the civil war that lasted more than a decade. The seaports and airports and the rich agricultural areas in the South will remain flash points of conflict until a lasting political solution for the whole of Somalia is found.

Many Somalis are persuaded that only an international military intervention can disarm Somalia. Many Somalis expressed their wish even for an American intervention as the former interim President Ali Mahdi:

> Somalia did not have a government for eleven years. I remember one day in 1992. I spoke with the American Ambassador [..], I asked him to assist my government. After three hours of discussion he lost his diplomatic fashion and said: 'Look Ali, Somalia will not have a government for the coming years.' I do not know if 'for the coming years' for the Americans means 10 years, 20 years or 30 years. [...] And I think if the international community does not want to establish a government for Somalia, it does not want to help the Somali people [...]. The international community will come one day, seek peace for Somalia and it will be very, very difficult because Somalia is situated in the Horn of Africa, it's a large country it might be the cover of terrorists in this country. And if the terrorists are trained in this country, their problem will not stop in Somalia, will not stop in the Horn of Africa, will not stop in Eastern Africa, it might spread to all over the world. [...] I am appealing again to the international

[798] Reno, *Somalia and Survival in the Shadow of the Global Economy.*

> community to help Somalia to bring peace and stability and establish the government of Somalia. Just to have peace. [...] This is what I want.[799]

This view stands in sharp contrast to the notion that a debate about a new Somali government should come from within the country. A possible federal system which is imposed by outsiders cannot serve the interests of the wider local communities. The risk remains that federal institutions will come under the thumb of a ruling elite as experienced in Ethiopia undermining the principle of decentralisation and devolution of power. Ultimately, only those people who truly represent their people and are able to deliver peace and economic prosperity can claim legitimacy and authority.

Inside Somalia, it is common that 'political leaders' lack popular support and confidence among the population, such as the leadership of the Rahanweyn Resistance Army. Living conditions in Bay and Bakol have not improved. Public goods are not being provided by the RRA. Piped water has to be contracted from a private business in Baidoa. It is therefore questionable whether they possess the necessary legitimacy and authority to implement an agreement and to deliver peace. The International Crisis Groups warns that "unless this is resolved, there is a real risk that the current negotiation will produce another 'government in exile', unable to provide a working administration inside the country that represents the general will".[800] Although there were provisions in the signed peace accord to target individuals who would breach the accord with 'smart' sanctions, there was little effort made by neither the frontline states nor the international community to put pressure on them to end the clashes.[801]

Perhaps the way forward is to accept Somalia's position of statelessness. The past twelve years led to the development of stable forms of non-state administrations and decentralised forms of organisation that have proven to be fairly resilient. While some non-state administrations have created wealth and power for some Somalis,

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[799] Interview in Eldoret, Kenya, on 8 November 2002.
[800] International Crisis Group, *Negotiating a Blueprint for Peace in Somalia*, 16.
[801] International Crisis Group, *Negotiating a Blueprint for Peace in Somalia.*

vulnerabilities, inequalities, poor health and educational standards remained as paramount social problems. Development in Somalia depends on localised institutions. They must be an integral part of the international efforts to reconstruct the country. "Given the limited aid programme in Somalia it is not difficult to conclude that development processes in Somalia exist not as a result of official development assistance, but in spite of it."[802] As a consequence, Bradbury suggests: "We may need to recognise statelessness in Somalia, therefore, not as a 'failure' but as a response to social, economic and political exclusion."[803] Statelessness is a "response", but most Somalis pledge for the creation of a government that can reverse social, economic and political exclusion. A nation without a state in a world of ever increasing interdependencies is neither politically nor economically viable in the long term. The challenge of a national government, whether centralised, federal or confederal, will be the just distribution of wealth and power. And without a continued dialogue between the conflicting parties, prospects of peace will diminish. As a Somali saying foretells: *Aan wada hadalno waa aan heshiinno* – let us talk means let us reconcile.

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[802] Feldman and Slattery, "Living Without a Government in Somalia: An Interview with Mark Bradbury": 217.

[803] Bradbury, Mark, "Living with Statelessness: The Somali Road to Development," *Conflict, Security & Development* 3.1 (2003): 23.

Appendix 1. None-state administrations invited for the Somalia National Reconciliation Process

Transitional National Government (TNG) (40 seats)

Key individuals: Abdiqasim Salad Hassan (Hawiye/Haber Gedir/Ayr/Absiye) President Hassan Abshir Farah (Darod/Majerteen/Osman Mahmoud) Prime Minister Abdalla Derow Isak (Mirifle/Geledle) Speaker of the Transitional National Assembly

Military strength: TNG military (estimated 4,000 trained military personnel from different clans and 20 technicals) and police force (estimated 1000 trained personnel drawn from former police and militia and 20 technicals). Some degree of command and control exists. All TNG members are dependent on military support from key business people largely from Hawiye clan. For example, the President can draw military support from his own sub-clan.

Political claims: TNG considers itself as the only legitimate transitional national government for Somalia. However, it only controls parts of Mogadishu and provides security in surrounding districts. The TNG claims legitimacy based on the Arta peace process. The TNA is based on clan according to the 4.5 distribution formula. Its constitution acknowledges regional autonomy.

Somali Reconciliation and Restoration Council (SRRC) (40 seats)

Key individuals: Five Chairman: Abdullahi Sheikh Ismail (Dir/Bimal) Chairman of SSNM/BIREM Hussein Farah Aideed (Hawiye/Haber Gedir/Saad/Jalaf) Co-Chairman of SRRC Colonel Hassan Mohamed Nur 'Shatigudud' (Mirifle/Siyeed/Hariin) Chairman of RRA General Aden Abdullahi Nur 'Gabyow' (Darod/Ogaden) Chairman of SPM (Somali Patriotic Movement) Hilowle Imam Omar (Hawiye/Abgal) Co-Chairman of SRRC (Brother of traditional leader of Abgal, Imam Mohamud Imam Omar)

Military strength: Except of Aided (estimated 15 technicals and 150 standing militia) and 'Shatigudud' (estimated 20 technicals and 2,000 military personnel) no military troops. Musa Sudi Yalahow (Hawiye/Abgal/Wacbudan/Daud/Quebys) (Chairman of USC/SSA/SRRC) supports SRRC militarily. He fought against Omar 'Finish' in Mogadishu being his former militia commander in Mogadishu. He owns estimated 25 technicals and 1,000 standing personnel. He fought against the TNG in north Mogadishu and expelled the TNG from there.

Political claims: Strong opposition to the TNG. Aims at reconciling main Somali factions. Supported financially and militarily by the Ethiopian government. Only alliance at the moment that plays a significant international role. However, on a local level, the SRRC is split into smaller entities. Its chairmanship frequently changes.

Rahanweyn Resistance Army (RRA) led by Hassan Mohamed Nur 'Shatigudud'
(20 seats)

Key individual:
Colonel Hassan Mohamed Nur 'Shatigudud' (Mirifle/Siyeed/Hariin)
Chairman of RRA

Military strength: estimated 2,000 military personnel, 20 technicals, artillery, rockets, and land mines, military support from Ethiopia who are alleged to have provided training and military equipment.

Political claims: Liberated Bay and Bakol inhabited by Mirifle clan from Hawiye clan domination. Claims to be President of the State of South-West Somalia including Bay, Bakol, Lower Shabelle, Gedo, Lower Juba and Middle Juba. In real terms he controls only Bay region.

Rahanweyn Resistance Army (RRA) led by Mohamed Ibrahim Habsade and Sheik Aden Madobe
(20 seats)

Key individuals:
Sheik Aden Madobe (Mirifle/Sagaal/Hadama)
1st Deputy Chairman of RRA
Mohamed Ibrahim Habsade (Mirifle/Siyeed/Leysan)
2nd Deputy Chairman of RRA

Military strength: estimated 2,000 military personnel, 20 technicals, artillery, rockets, and land mines, military support from Ethiopia who are alleged to have provided training and military equipment.

Political claims: Aim at bringing together Mirifle and Digil clans under RRA leadership. They oppose the idea of a State of South-West Somalia. They largely control Bakol region.

Juba Valley Alliance (JVA) (20 seats)

Key individuals: Colonel Bare Aden Shire 'Hirale' (Darod/Marehan/Reer Dini) Chairman of JVA Yusuf Aden Serar (Hawiye/Haber Gedir/Ayr) Vice-Chairman of JVA 'Waldire' (Darod/Ogaden) Speaker of JVA

Military strength: estimated 1,000 standing military personnel (largely drawn from Marehan clan) and 20 technicals, and mortars.

Political claims: Liberated Juba Valley from the Majerteen led by General Hersi 'Morgan'. Today, JVA controls most parts of Lower and Upper Juba.

Nakuru signatories (20 seats)

Key individuals: Mohamed Qanyare Afrah (Hawiye/Murosade) Chairman of USC (United Somali Congress) Osman Hassan Ali 'Atto' (Hawiye/Haber Gedir/Saad/Reer Hilowle) Chairman of USC/SNA (United Somali Congress/Somali National Alliance)/SRRC Nakuru Omar Mohamoud Mohamed 'Finish' (Hawiye/Abgal/Daud/Irobe) Chairman of USC/SSA (United Somali Congress/Somali Salvation Army) Mowlid Ma'ane Mohamoud ('other minorities'/Bantu) Chairman of SAMO (Somali African Muki Organisation)/SRRC Nakuru Mohamed Aden Wayel Chairman SPM/Nakuru

Military strength and political claims: Mohamed Qanyere Afrah as Chairman of USC controls parts of Mogadishu, Daynile airport and parts of Galgadud. The USC owns estimated 55-60 technicals and commands 1,500 militiamen. Osman Hassan Ali 'Atto' claims to control parts of Mogadishu and parts of Mudug region. He owns estimated 10

technicals and commands 100 militiamen. Mohamed Omar 'Finish' claims controlling Medina district of Mogadishu, owns estimated 15 technicals and commands 300 militiamen. Mowlid Ma'ane is not armed, claims to represent Bantu population in Hiran, Middle Shabelle, Lower Shabelle, Benadir, Middle and Lower Juba.

Jowhar group (8 seats)

Key individual:
Mohamed Omar Habeeb 'Dhere' (Hawiye/Abgal/Harti/Warsangeli)
Chairman of Jowhar Administration

Military strength: estimated 300 standing military personnel, 20 technicals, and mortars.

Political claims: Controls Middle Shabelle except Balcad district, which is controlled by Musa Sudi. His own clansmen (Abgal/Harti/Agonyare) who live outside Jowhar allegedly placed landmines to protect the boundaries of Middle Shabelle. The Agonyare sub-clan is represented by former SSA Chairman Ali Mahdi and the Interior Minister of TNG, Dahir 'Dayah'. Mohamed Omar 'Dhere' participated in Arta and became MP. He defected at the beginning of 2002 from the TNA because his request to be appointed as Minister was rejected. Instead, the post (Minister of the Prime Minster's Office) was given to a woman of his own sub-clan, the Warsangeli. In consequence he sold property in Mogadishu for estimated US $ 300,000, which he used to arm himself. He then captured Jowhar seeking assistance from Ethiopia. Ethiopia allegedly provided minor military assistance in form of training, ammunition and weaponry (M30 artillery, and 120 mm rockets). He is also accused of attacking the TNG's Interior Minister's home in Mogadishu.

Appendix 2: Declaration on Cessation of Hostilities and the Structures and Principles of the Somalia National Reconciliation Process

Somalia National Reconciliation Process
Eldoret, Kenya

Declaration on Cessation of Hostilities and the Structures and Principles of the Somalia National Reconciliation Process

WE, the undersigned,

GUIDED by the common desire of the people of Somalia for peace;

AWARE of the prevailing poverty of the Somali people and their humanitarian needs;

DESIRING to bring an end to the continuing conflict in Somalia;

COMMITTED to the improvement of regional security for all Somalis and the regional states;

WELCOMING the commitment of the international community to respect the sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and unity of Somalia;

HON. E.W. MWANGALE, EGH.

OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL
ENVOY FOR SOMALIA.
P. O. Box 30551,
NAIROBI.

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS NAIROBI

APPRECIATING the leading role of the IGAD Frontline States (Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya) in this process;

APPRECIATING further the efforts of the international community in promoting national reconciliation in Somalia;

ACKNOWLEDGING that the Somali authorities have the primary responsibility for ensuring the well being of civilians in Somalia;

HEREBY SOLEMNLY UNDERTAKE the following commitments:

Article 1
Federalism

1) To create federal governance structures for Somalia, embodied in a Charter or Constitution, which are inclusive, representative, and acceptable to all the parties

2) To endorse the principle of decentralization as an integral part of Somalia's governance structures

3) To ensure the rights, representation and protection of all Somali individuals and groups

Article 2
Cessation of Hostilities

1) To abstain from the conduct of hostilities in Somalia from 27 October 2002 and to maintain this state of affairs during the peace process, its implementation and subsequently

2) To use only peaceful means in the resolution of all disputes between political, military and other groups and the communities they represent

HON. E.W. MWANGALE, EGH.

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ENVOY FOR SOMALIA.
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MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS NAIROBI

3) To ensure that all political, military and other groups maintain only defensive military positions and capabilities, and refrain from any military provocations

4) To implement fully the United Nations Arms Embargo for Somalia (UN Security Council Resolution 733 of 1992)

5) To invite the international community to undertake field-based and remote monitoring of the arms embargo, and to guarantee their representatives unimpeded and safe access

Article 3
Enhanced Safe Access for Aid

1) To respect the rights of the people of Somalia to receive humanitarian assistance

2) To guarantee the security of all humanitarian and development personnel and installations, including those of the United Nations Agencies, non-governmental organizations, ICRC and donor governments and organizations

3) To ensure that the safe access to aid for all the people of Somalia is enhanced

Article 4
Endorsement of Outcomes of the Peace Process

1) To undertake political negotiations and technical discussions in good faith and in a spirit of cooperation during each phase of the Somalia National Reconciliation Process

2) To abide by the conclusions resulting from the Somalia National Reconciliation Process

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MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS. NAIROBI

3) To implement all the resolutions of the Process in good faith and in a timely way

Article 5
Combating Terrorism

1) To combat all forms of terrorism, and to cooperate with the international community in the fight against terrorism pursuant to UN Security Council Resolution 1373 of 2002

2) To prevent the use of Somali territory as a base for any terrorist activities

Article 6
Monitoring of the Declaration

1) To invite IGAD, the African Union and the international community to support and monitor the implementation of this declaration and all further agreements reached

2) To support the establishment of enforcement mechanisms for the safe delivery of humanitarian aid and implementation of this declaration and all further agreements reached in the interest of the people of Somalia.

DONE at Eldoret, Kenya, on Sunday, 27 October 2002.

HON. E.W. MWANGALE, EGH.

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NAIROBI.

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, NAIROBI

SIGNED by:

Hassan Abshir
Prime Minister of Transitional National Government

Abdullahi Yusuf
President of Puntland State of Somalia

Abdalla Derow Isak
Speaker of the Transitional National Assembly

Hussein Farah Aideed
Co-Chairman of Somalia Reconciliation and Restoration Council (SRRC)

Col. Hassan Mohamed Nur
'Shatigudud', Chairman of RRA

Mohamed Qanyare Afrah
Chairman of USC

Col. Hassan Abdulla Qalad
Chairman of HPA

Mowlid Ma'ane Mohamoud
Chairman, SAMO/SRRC Nakuru

Musa Sudi Yalahow
Chairman of USC/SSA/SRRC

Omar Mohamoud Mohamed
'Finish', Chairman of USC/SSA

Osman Hassan Ali 'Atto'
Chairman of USC/SNA/SRRC Nakuru

Mohamed Sayyid Aden
Chairman of SNF/SRRC

Col. Abdirizak Isak Bihi
Chairman of SNF

Gen. Mohamed Siad Hersi
Morgan, Deputy SPM Chairman

HON. E.W. MWANGALE, EGH.

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MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS NAIROBI

Bare Aden Shire
Chairman of JVA

Mohamed Omar Habeeb 'Dhere'
Chairman of Jowhar
Administration

Abdullahi Sheikh Ismail
Chairman of SSNM/BIREM

Hilowle Imam Omar
Co-Chairman of SRRC

Abdulaziz Sheikh Yousuf
Chairman of SSNM/SNA

Gen. Aden Abdullahi Nur
'Gabiyow', Chairman of SPM

Mohamed Aden Waycl
Chairman SPM/Nakuru

Dr. Sharif Salah Mohamed Ali
On Behalf of Civil Society

HON. E.W. MWANGALE, EGH.

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WITNESSED by:

H.E. Hon. Elijah W. Mwangale,
H.E. President Daniel arap Moi's
Special Envoy for Somalia and
Chairman of the IGAD Technical
Committee

Dr. Atalla Al-Bashir
Executive Secretary of IGAD

H.E. Amb. Ismail Goulal
Boudine
Ambassador of the Republic of
Djibouti to Somalia

H.E. Amb. Abdulaziz Ahmed
Special Envoy of the Federal
Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
for Somalia

IN THE PRESENCE of:

Amb. Carlo Ungaro
Special Envoy of Italy (Chair of
IGAD Partners Forum for
Somalia)

Amb. Mohammed Salim Al
Khussaibi
Special Envoy of the League of
Arab States

Amb. Mostafa Khedre
Deputy Assistant Minster for
Foreign Affairs of the Arab
Republic of Egypt

Mr. Glenn Warren
Embassy of the United States in
Kenya

Dr. Walid Musa
European Union and European
Commission Delegation in
Kenya

Amb. Winston Tubman
UN Representative of the
Secretary General for Somalia

HON. E.W. MWANGALE, EGH

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MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

DISTRIBUTION OF SOMALI CLANS AND NEIGHBOURING PEOPLES

Scale 1/5,000,000

0 50 100 150 200 MILES

International Boundary

Limit of Wet Grazing area

Limit of Somali Nation

Afar (Danakil) ... Saho

Bantu groups

Neighbouring Peoples ..... OROMO

DIGIL MIRIFLE 'Autonomous region'

Map based on I.M. Lewis, ***Peoples of the Horn of Africa***, 1st edition 1955. Since then, especially in 1980s and 1990s, there has been some further expansion of northern Darod and Hawiya groups southwards, at the expense of earlier inhabitants.

Numerical key to CLAN FAMILIES

1	Darod (*Ogaden Branch*)
2	" (*Mijertein Branch*)
3	" (*Other Branches*)
4	Dir
5	Ishaak
6	Hawiya
7	" Associated Tribes
8	Rahanwein
9	Digil
&	
10	Somali Arab
11	Bantu

Alphabetical Key to SMALL CLANS
(*The numbers refer to the Clan Families.*)

A	Begeda	8
B	Hintere	6
C	Geledi	8
D	Hillivi	6
E	Abgal Daud	6
F	Mobilen	6
G	Hawadle	7
H	Kabole	11
I	Murosade	6
J	Wadan	6
K	Abgal Matan	6
L	Shan Dafet	7-8
M	Rer Dumal	8
N	Asheraf	10
O	Garwale	8
P	Lisan	8
Q	Komal	8
R	Disso	8
S	Eimit	8
T	Wangial	8
U	Ialalle	8
V	Harau	8
W	Tuni Torre	11-9
X	Helleda	8
Y	Hober	7
Z	Yantar	8

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