Somalia:
A Political Economy Analysis

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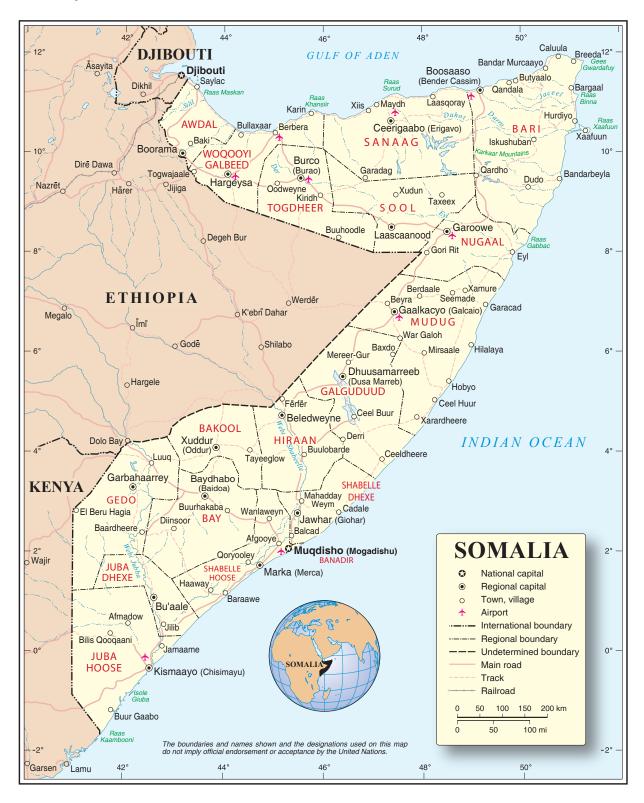*Stig Jarle Hansen*
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Map of Somalia

Map of Somalia showing regions, towns, and boundaries.

Labels include: DJIBOUTI, GULF OF ADEN, Caluula, Breeda, Gees Gwardafuy, Bandar Murcaayo, Boosaaso (Bender Cassim), Butyaalo, Bargaal, Raas Binna, Āsayita, Djibouti, Saylac, Raas Surud, Qandala, Jaceel, Raas Maskan, Dikhil, Raas Khansiir, Xiis, Maydh, Laasqoray, Hurdiyo, Raas Xaafuun, Karin, BARI, Xaafuun, AWDAL, Bullaxaar, Berbera, Ceerigaabo (Erigavo), Iskushuban, Baki, SANAAG, Qardho, Boorama, WOQOOYI GALBEED, Garadag, Dudo, Bandarbeyla, Karkaar Mountains, Dirē Dawa, Togwajaale, Burco (Burao), Xudun, Hargeysa, Oodweyne, Kiridh, Taxeex, Nazrēt, Hārer, Jijiga, TOGDHEER, SOOL, Garoowe, Buuhoodle, Laascaanood, NUGAAL, Degeh Bur, Gori Rit, Eyl, Raas Gabbac, Werdēr, Berdaale, Xamure, Seemade, Megalo, Beyra, Gaalkacyo (Galcaio), Garacad, K'ebrī Dahar, MUDUG, Īmī, War Galoh, Godē, Shilabo, Baxdo, Mirsaale, Hilalaya, Mereer-Gur, Hargele, Dhuusamarreeb (Dusa Marreb), Hobyo, Ceel Huur, GALGUDUUD, Fērfēr, Ceel Buur, Xarardheere, Beledweyne, INDIAN OCEAN, BAKOOL, HIRAAN, Derri, Dolo Bay, Xuddur (Oddur), Tayeeglow, Buulobarde, Luuq, Ceeldheere, Garbaharrey, Baydhabo (Baidoa), SHABELLE DHEXE, KENYA, GEDO, Mahadday Weym, Cadale, El Beru Hagia, Buurhakaba, Wanlaweyn, Diinsoor, BAY, Jawhar (Giohar), Baardheere, Afgooye, Balcad, Qoryooley, Muqdisho (Mogadishu), BANADIR, JUBA DHEXE, Haaway, SHABELLE HOOSE, Marka (Merca), Wajir, Bu'aale, Baraawe, Afmadow, Jilib, Bilis Qooqaani, Jamaame, JUBA HOOSE, Kismaayo (Chisimayu), Isole Giuba, Buur Gaabo, Raas Kaambooni, Garsen, Lamu, ETHIOPIA

SOMALIA

- ⊛ National capital
- ⊙ Regional capital
- ○ Town, village
- ✈ Airport
- International boundary
- Regional boundary
- Undetermined boundary
- Main road
- Track
- Railroad

0 50 100 150 200 km
0 50 100 mi

SOMALIA

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

Somalia, Map No. 3690 Rev.10, December 2011, UNITED NATIONS

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About the report

In June 2016, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) commissioned NUPI to provide political economy analyses of eleven countries (Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Haiti, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Somalia, South Sudan and Tanzania) deemed important to Norwegian development cooperation. The intention was to consolidate and enhance expertise on these countries, so as to improve the quality of the MFA's future country-specific involvement and strategy development. Such political economy analyses focus on how political and economic power is constituted, exercised and contested.

Comprehensive Terms of Reference (ToR) were developed to serve as a general template for all eleven country analyses. The country-specific ToR and scope of these analyses were further determined in meetings between the MFA, the Norwegian embassies, NUPI and the individual researchers responsible for the country studies. NUPI has also provided administrative support and quality assurance of the overall process. In some cases, NUPI has commissioned partner institutions to write the political economy analyses.

List of acronyms

AMISOM	African Union Mission in Somalia
ASWJ	AhluSunna WalJama
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DFID	UK Department for International Development
EU	European Union
ICG	International Contact Group
ICU	Union of Islamic Courts
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
MRM	UN Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NISA	Somalia's National Intelligence and Security Agency
RVI	Rift Valley Institute
SDG	Somali Donor Group
SFF	Somalia Special Financing Facility
SFG	Somali Federal Government
SFG	Somali Federal Government
SNA	Somali National Army
TNG	Transitional National Government
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UN OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNOSOM	United Nations Operation in Somalia
WHO	World Health Organization

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

The situation in Somalia has improved steadily over the past 10 years, although there has been deterioration in security over the last six months. Warfare is less common today, and institutions are being rebuilt. World Bank data show improvements in overall life expectancy and an increase in GDP figures, but mixed results as to educational attainment (World Bank, 2017). All the same, an entire generation has grown up without experiencing stability, liberal freedoms, human rights or economic prosperity. This in turn entails several risks, such as support for radical Islamist groups like al-Shabaab that pose a threat to domestic and international security, support for criminal networks, and many people fleeing the instability and conflict in Somalia. Peacebuilding and stabilization efforts along with economic and social development can assist in alleviating these problems.

This political economy analysis (PEA) aims a systematic presentation of information that can strengthen the general understanding of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and relevant embassies of the political, economic and social power structures, and actors, in Somalia. It is meant to contribute to a broader understanding of the country context: key political, economic, social, cultural, historical factors, security issues, corruption, human rights and gender equality. Further, it identifies opportunities and constraints, including a risk assessment concerning implementation of Norway's priority initiatives and achieving the country's and Norwegian development goals. Ultimately, the aim is to strengthen Norway/Somalia bilateral relations.

1.2 Choice of methods, and delimitations/ limitations

With its unique historical trajectory, highly complex political and economic system, and constantly changing actors, Somalia requires a special approach. In order to address the ToR of this PEA, it was necessary to delimit the scope of study. The emphasis of this PEA is on conflict and stabilization, two areas that are central to Somalia's future development. In addition come other country-specific factors, such as the political situation, the economic situation, and human rights issues. Certain other issues, such as humanitarian situation and needs, risk analysis, and environmental issues, are also examined, but in less detail.

According to the UK Department for International Development (DFID), a political economy analysis is 'a powerful tool for improving the effectiveness of aid. Bridging the traditional concerns of politics and economics, it focuses on how power and resources are distributed and contested in different contexts, and the implications for development outcomes. It gets beneath the formal structures to reveal the underlying interests, incentives and institutions that enable or frustrate change' (Department for International Development, 2009, p. 1). A PEA can help development strategies to be more effective, by not only providing a better understanding of not just the formal and visible structures of politics and economics of a country, but also shedding light on informal actors, their interests, power and relations to formal actors. Thus, a PEA can 'contribute to better results by identifying where the main opportunities and barriers for policy reform exist and how donors can use their pro-

gramming and influencing tools to promote positive change' (ibid.).

Further, this PEA aims to foster a better understanding of the country context while identifying opportunities and constraints for areas of development. It examines how political and economic power is constituted, exercised and contested, and who are the 'winners' and 'losers' of the struggle for political and economic hegemony. The study is structured accordingly, analysing formal and informal domestic as well as international actors, their relations, interests, and power. We view development in a broader sense, considering Somalia as a political and economic entity. Some actors make political decisions for economic reasons, whereas others may fall back on clan or religious identities. The failure of a central government in 1991 generated powerful actors with vested interests, largely economic but also political, in continued institutional failure (Menkhaus, 2014). This PEA also aims to identify long-term trends shaping the broad framework of power.

This study is based on empirical research, largely employing qualitative research methods, including semi-structured and unstructured interviews in Somalia, in Kenya (Nairobi), and in Norway. Several potential respondents were identified in consultation with local Somalis, key stakeholders, political figures, and representatives of the Norwegian and international community working on Somali political and economic affairs. We have used Browne and Fisher's (2013) article 'Key actors mapping: Somalia' as a basis for mapping the key actors in Somalia. These authors see those who can mobilize communities and can have an influence on the political outcomes as being the key actors in Somalia. They also hold that, in Somalia, power lies with individual actors also within formal institutions such as the Somali Federal Government (SFG) and regional states (Browne & Fisher, 2013). Our research methods include triangulation of data to verify facts and figures.

Access to Somalia is a challenge. Insecurity and poor infrastructure make it difficult to undertake research beyond the capital city, Mog-

adishu – or, notably, the main airport: considerable interaction between Somali stakeholders and foreign officials goes on at Mogadishu's international airport. To overcome these limitations, the commissioned party teamed up with the Rift Valley Institute (RVI) for the empirical part. Field research was conducted by an RVI-employed Somali researcher in April 2017 in Mogadishu, Kismayo, Bohol Garas, Garowe, Boosaaso and Doloow (the latter three by telephone). Interviewees included local elders, politicians, social activists, members of civil society, youth, business people, remittance workers and members of the returned diaspora. Eighteen in-depth interviews, following an interview guide, were conducted in Somalia by the RVI in close collaboration and consultation with the commissioned party. A few interviews were carried out in Kenya and Norway, largely covering issues related to Norwegian development assistance (Kenya) and the Somali diaspora (Norway). In Norway, semi-structured interviews (some by telephone) were conducted with Somali politicians, elders, youth and members of the Somali diaspora. All the information gathered through has been critically analysed and is presented in this report. Face-to-face interviews lasted for 60 to 90 minutes, whereas telephone interviews lasted around one hour. Informal conversations were conducted in local Somali languages and English.

Somalia is a very dynamic place. Actors may gain or lose influence quickly; new institutions are formed frequently, while established structures disappear. That has also affected this PEA, as some of our findings may be outdated by the time of publication. This report has also benefited from desk research on the existing literature; and local-language Somali news websites have been consulted.

1.3 Brief historical background

Somalia has experienced through a quarter-century of instability, severe conflict and power struggles, from state collapse to civil war, the emergence of Union of Islamic Courts and eventually al-Shabaab (Mahlasela, 2016). These prolonged conflicts have caused innumerable

civilian casualties, millions of internally as well as internationally displaced persons, enormous economic losses and severe destruction of the country's infrastructure – and deep mistrust among people (Farah, 2011).

Most importantly, these endless conflicts have produced a young generation that has grown up without a functioning government that could provide public goods, such as security, education, or health facilities. On the other hand, Somalia has not experienced total anarchy. In the north, in Somaliland, there has been peace for more than 21 years, and institutions have grown in complexity (Hansen & Bradbury, 2007; Johnson & Smaker, 2014). Doctor coverage is now better than the pre-war situation, although it is profit-based. In Puntland there have been minor clashes on the periphery, but the core areas have not seen war since 2003.

Since 1991, there have been several peace-building attempts – locally, regionally and internationally. Arta, Djibouti (2000), Mbagathi, Kenya (2003) and the Djibouti peace process (2008) are among examples of these peace reconciliation conferences. In his article 'Warlords and Peace Strategies: The Case of Somalia,' Hansen classifies these peace-building strategies into four categories according to the extent of centralization of the peace negotiations and the depth of involvement with the local community (Hansen, 2003).

With the first strategy, termed the 'building-block approach', resolutions can be reached by involving traditional clan leaders and traditional mechanisms of conflict resolution. The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the United Nations developed this approach in 1997; this strategy has been used in Somalia, for example, in the formation of Somaliland and Puntland, where it proved quite productive. Further, this approach achieved a federal system, as centralization was hard to achieve without the creation of peace locally. However, this approach also seems to have had some weaknesses, especially in southern Somalia, where it enabled local warlords to gain more power and financial resources.

The second approach identified by Hansen is the centralized top–down strategy applied to the whole country to find a solution by concentrating on the leaders of the various factions, the warlords, with less attention being paid to the clan leaders and civil society. This approach was used by the UN-sponsored Addis Ababa Conferences (1993) and later in the Ethiopian-sponsored Sodere talks (1996–97) in addition to ten other major conferences. It is often associated with the second United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II) (Hansen, 2003, p. 62). Centralized dialogues involving the warlords were seen as an effective way of bringing peace to Somalia because the warlords, with their military power, appeared to be the only group capable of creating peace.

The third approach, the dynamic approach, was developed by the first leader of UNOSOM I, Mohammed Sahnoun. This approach shifted the focus from the warlords to more legitimate structures where the traditional Somali clan negotiation structures and local governance were involved. Working together with the Swedish Life and Peace Institute, Sahnoun brought together civil society leaders in a meeting in 1992, the Seychelles Consultation, to find a strategy that would enable Somalis to achieve a lasting peace.

Fourthly, there is the centralized bottom–up approach. This approach, which gave scant consideration to the warlords and factional leaders, produced the Transitional National Government (TNG). Hassan Guled Abtidon, former president of Djibouti, introduced this approach in 1998. Then came the Arta Conference (2000), where traditional clan leaders, women's organizations and Somali NGOs were invited to participate. Abdulkasim Salad Hassan was elected as president of the Transitional National Government.

Although some of these efforts achieved some minor successes, none resulted in a lasting peace. Hansen (2003) also notes that inter-organizational and regional disputes have severely hampered centralized processes in Somalia, which is among the reasons why the centralized top–down approach failed. Moreover, the top–down approach gave legitimacy to the warlords, who

used it to achieve ad hoc agreements but never respected them, wasting enormous amounts of money and resources. The building-block strategy had some comparative advantages over the top–down approach, but it too failed because of the involvement of warlords who lacked trust in each other – and who lacked traditional legitimacy and were unable to prevent fragmentation within their own groups. Assessing the dynamic approach is difficult, because Sahnoun was removed from his position as the UN Secretary-General's special envoy in October 1992.

All these peacebuilding and state building efforts have clearly not been successful, as there is still fear and mistrust among competing clan interests in Somalia (Menkhaus et al. 2009). One reason for the failure of these efforts could be, as Menkhaus (2007) argues, that state-building efforts have produced conflict rather than assuaging it. The stakes of local actors have been extremely high because, historically, the state in Somalia has been the primary source of power and wealth (Menkhaus, 2007).

Another reason could be these efforts were donor-led peacebuilding initiatives, a top–down approach with the international community and the regional states taking a leading role. Outsider influence is also seen as a reason for conflict. For example, the former Transitional Federal Government was able to defeat the Union of Islamic Courts (ICU) with the help of Ethiopian troops. As a consequence, al-Shabaab was formed out of the remnants of the military wing of the ICU (Norad, 2017).

And finally, there has been an exaggerated focus on Mogadishu. As noted by Menkhaus (2007), the capital city was the locus of the effort of the international community, and continues to be their main focus: thus, those in control of Mogadishu have controlled most of the funding. This also partially explains the many al-Shabaab terror attacks in Mogadishu, with the most severe in recent times taking a death toll of over 500 in October 2017.

This study argues that the decentralized use of the traditionally egalitarian clan system and the use of traditional forms of communication

between clan elders and sultans have proved to be successful approach to conflict elimination and stabilization in Somalia. Within clans, decisions are historically taken by councils of men, often irrespective of age, affluence, or seniority. However, among clans, major lineage groups, such as the Habargidir, have sought to dominate other, smaller clans. As most Somalis share the same basic ethnicity, religion, a common language, and an egalitarian clan system, all these factors should serve as a predisposition for developing a modern nation state (Webersik, 2004). One example is how Somaliland mediated among its various clans when it was formed (Hansen, 2003). Gruener and Hald (2015) support the argument that local peace-building initiatives are likely to create some kind of government; examples include Somaliland and Puntland, which managed to create autonomous states with help of local elders and traditional reconciliation mechanisms (Gruener & Hald, 2015).

However, there are great variations within the Somali clan system. It is stronger, and thus easier to draw on, in the north. Nor is the clan system perfect: it discriminates against women, who are to a certain extent seen as being 'in-between clans'; and it treats minority clans unfairly, as settlement for crime is a product of the balance of power between clans, and clan elders may be subject to bribes. As argued elsewhere in this study, clan affiliation has also been used instrumentally, to lobby for political and military support. Political leaders and warlords engage in clientelism or clannism, allocating resources, providing employment, or ensuring security for members or perceived kin. This has excluded several Somalis from political involvement, economic activities, and civil protection, in turn making them more receptive to joining religious armed groups that offer membership beyond clan affiliation. On the other hand, the clan system provides stability, and functions as a social safety net for many, providing public goods (mostly security and access to services, in Western countries normally provided by government institutions) – hence, undermining formal political authority. In Somalia, where formal political

authority is not able or willing to provide public goods, the clan system has become essential for day-to-day life. The same applies to the role of religious organizations, the private sector, and the diaspora.

The power vacuum in Somalia has been also used by radical Islamist groups to rally popular support. Al-Shabaab gained importance when the Union of Islamic Courts (ICU) was defeated with the help of Ethiopian troops, and in 2010 the military wing of the ICU formed al-Shabaab (Healy & Bradbury, 2010). In Mogadishu, al-Shabaab has not held territory since 2011, although terrorist attacks are frequent. It does not control any major cities, and armed conflict between the nascent regional states and the central government or other states has generally been avoided. There are however, several structural problems remaining that strengthen the al-Shabaab presence. First, as Elmi and Barise (2006) note, the large numbers of unemployed youth in Somalia have provided competing greed-driven elites and other agents of power with readily available young recruits, and this problem persists. Second, institutions are young, and plagued by corruption and lack of funds. Third, the exact structure of the relationship between regional states and the central government remains unclear. Moreover, some marginalized clan families, such as the Digil and Mirifle, present in the fertile riverine areas by the Shabelle River, have been excluded by clans dominating the political and economic life in Mogadishu. Here, al-Shabaab has found popular support.

1.4   Norway/Somalia relations

Apart from the presence of Norwegian humanitarian and development organizations working in Somalia, Norway has become increasingly engaged in Somalia in supporting democratization, stabilization, good governance, human rights, and education, while seeking to mitigate corruption, climate-change impacts and environmental degradation. This involvement is partly due to the large Somali diaspora living in Norway (Fabricius, 2014), and to Norway's protracted interest in promoting stabilization and peace in

Somalia. Norway was one of the troop-contributing countries for UNOSOM II in 1992 (Ku & Jacobson, 2003). As to the role of the Somali diaspora, the Norwegian government, like many other European governments, has been promoting policies aimed at addressing out-migration from Somalia. As one interviewee explained:

> After UNISOM and until 2004 the relationship [with Norway] was mainly based on humanitarian assistance. Later when Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed was elected as the president of Somalia, the Norwegian prime minister at that time, Kjell Magne Bondevik, met him after his election in Nairobi. Since then, Norway's engagement to Somalia was transformed from humanitarian engagement to peace, security, stabilization, governance and democracy engagement, and the Norwegian portfolio has expanded.[1]

In 2012 a new government was established in Somalia, leading to greater Norwegian engagement. This also marked the start of the International Contact Group (ICG), founded by Norway together with the USA. In addition, Norway established the Somali Donor Group (SDG) together with the other Scandinavian countries.[2]

From 2010 to 2015, Norway was among the largest four bilateral donors; the other three were Sweden, the UK and the USA (Norad, 2017). Another Norwegian initiative is the Somalia Special Financing Facility (SFF) set up in 2013, to provide rapid funding in support of the new Federal Government of Somalia for salary payment and for government projects. A positive review of the SFF, conducted by the G7+, showed that Somalia's government institutions can be used for the delivery of public goods, while at the same time assisting in mitigating corruption (Norad, 2017).

Hearn and Zimmerman (2014) point out that the formation of the Special Financing Facility (SFF) is also a key Norwegian contribution

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1   Interview via telephone with international embassy staff. 15.05.2017
2   Interview via telephone with international embassy staff. 15.05.2017

for countering Somalia's political and economic challenges. In particular, the SFF has become an important international instrument for channelling financial support via Somali administrative institutions. The SFF is a 'quick fund' intended to help the government to meet its basic needs expenditures. This mechanism has proven that risk-tolerant funds are indeed possible in the case of Somalia (Hearn & Zimmerman, 2014).

The March 2015 appointment of Victor Conrad Rønneberg as Norwegian ambassador to Somalia also marked the starting point of a new diplomatic relationship between the two countries (Abdirahman, 2015).

More recently, in July 2016, Norway launched a three-year bilateral stabilization programme in Somalia (Norad, 2015) through the Nordic International Support Foundation (NIS). Norway has also been engaged in de-radicalization programmes, as well as in efforts to get al-Shabaab leaders removed from the organization.

Apart from political engagement, there are Norwegian commercial interests in Somalia, concerning the presumed oil and gas deposits off the coast of Somalia. In 2014 DNO ASA, a Norwegian oil and gas operator, listed on the Oslo stock exchange, announced the two-year extension of an exploration agreement with the Somaliland government. This has been disputed by the federal government, which claims ownership over all oil and gas reserves on Somali territory. Still, active operations have not started yet in southern Somalia at the time of writing.

Members of the Norwegian-Somali diaspora have also played major roles in Somalia. The Speaker of the House, Mohamed Osman Jawari, elected first on 28 August 2012, later re-elected on 28 January 2017, but resigned on 9 April 2018, holds Norwegian citizenship, as does the Somali Minister of Education, Abdirahman Dahir Osman, appointed on 21 March 2017. Jawari left Somalia in 1991 for Norway and returned to Somalia in 2000s. Prime Minister Hassan Khaire also holds a Norwegian passport; he worked with the Norwegian Refugee Council before joining an oil company and later becoming prime minister. A Norwegian Somali, Fatima Madar, has been crucial in building up the largest opposition party in Somaliland. There is a considerable Somali diaspora living in Norway who have maintained their interest in Somali affairs, remit money to Somalia, and keep up regular exchange between the two countries.

2. Political situation

Somalia is a fragmented society. After decades of conflict, there is still no formal legitimate authority in place that has complete control over the entire territory. There are concerns that political processes like elections are controlled by traditional, informal power structures, which may obstruct more inclusive politics. The picture is a mix of formal and informal power structures, formal and informal economic activities, and formal and informal local authorities, creating challenges to formal politics, for domestic and international actors alike. Moreover, formal government institutions, paralysed by infighting, are delivering virtually no public goods to the people they are to represent. Indeed, the Federal Government of Somalia scarcely has control over the most populous city, Mogadishu, and has only nominal control over southern Somalia. A group of informal gatekeepers known by Somalis as 'black cats' (Menkhaus, 2014, p. 161), is profiting from lawlessness and state failure. Corruption at all levels – formal and informal – is rampant. As regards military power, the government security forces are essentially private paramilitaries that answer to informal militia leaders (Menkhaus, 2017). The lack of functioning state institutions has led to the privatization of all public goods. In sum, then, the high levels of corruption, the lack of a formal government in control of the means of physical force, disillusioned youth faced with unemployment – all this has resulted in a group of militia leaders, politicians, warlords, and mere criminals that have scant interest in developing or promoting political and economic processes that could lead to peace and stability. The agents holding power in Somalia are not opposed to government institutions *per se*: they are opposed to government institutions that are strong and accountable, able to enforce law and order.

In this setting of insecurity and political turmoil, clannism has become a major informal structure of governance. In the absence of a strong state, clan leaders have been important peace mediators and problem solvers in Somalia. Clan structures have provided justice in the Somali countryside, and have been central in selecting the current federal parliament, the South West regional state parliament and the Somaliland upper house. Indeed, regarding the latter, the role of clan elders is enshrined in the Constitution; and in Puntland the parliament is made up of clan elders. Clan elders usually enjoy some form of local legitimacy, but the system also has drawbacks, like disputes over the exact legal relations among clans, over fabricated traditional leaders, and human rights for women and minority clans.

On the other hand, there are formal governing structures that resemble those of the modern nation-state, with judiciary, executive and legislative branches. Somalia today consists of a range of regional state authorities: there are first-generation regional entities established in the 1990s (Puntland and Somaliland), second-generation regional entities established between 2005 and 2015 (Jubaland and the South West regional state), and third-generation entities established more recently (Hirshabelle and the Galmudug state of Somalia).

The regional states of the oldest generation have well-constructed institutions, and have managed transfers of power between presidents. Somaliland has held democratic elections, and Puntland's president is also an actor in southern Somali politics.

The second-generation federal states are generally able to maintain some institutions in their main cities, but al-Shabaab is dominant in the countryside. There are conflicts between the regional leaders and their own constituencies, and institutions are weaker. However, the leaders of these states – Ahmed Mohamed Islam (Jubaland) and Sharif Hassan Sheikh Adan (South West regional state) – have so far had stable positions, and been involved in power politics also in Mogadishu.

The situation in the most recent generation of regional states is more troubled, with little regional authority. President Ali Abdullahi Osoble 'Amor' in Hirshabelle and Duale Gelle ('Xaaf'), in Galmudug, the latter the only regional president contested by militias other than al-Shabaab.

On 20 August 2012 came a political turning point for Somalia: it marked the end of the Transitional Federal Government's (TFG) interim mandate and the start of a permanent federal government. After eight years of TFG, the new Somali Federal Government (SFG) took office, with Hassan Sheikh Mohamud as its first president. The SFG developed its Vision 2016, a political roadmap setting out several tasks to be completed in four years' time – most importantly, completing and translating the Federal Constitution, and establishing a multiparty political system with national elections (one man/ one vote) by 2016 (Bryden & Thomas, 2015). None of these tasks have been completely fulfilled, and the situation is not stable. During Hassan Sheikh Mohamud's four years as president, there have were 47 suicide bomb attacks, killing 19 MPs and 37 journalists (Hordhac24, 2017).

Recently, the country has experienced a political transition where the new Upper House, Lower House, and a new president have been elected. However, the 2016 vision of one man/one vote remained unachievable. After negotiations and meetings between the SFG and regional states including Puntland, Jubaland and Galmudug, it was agreed that this vision is to be realized in 2020 and the 4.5 system (see below) will be used in this election (FP, 2016).

The 4.5 is a clan-based power-sharing formula that gives equal political representation to the four main clans in Somalia: the Darood, Hawiye, Digil/Mirifle and Dir (4), while the remaining smaller clans get half representation (0.5). It was also agreed that 54 members of the Upper House will be nominated by the regional states, while 275 Lower House members will be elected by 14,025 Somali citizens. These 14,025 were selected by 135 traditional elders representing all clans. (By contrast, in the 2012 elections, the 135 traditional elders were called upon to distribute those seats.) Each member of parliament will need 51 electors from his/her clan to get elected. Both Houses will then elect the federal president (Onyulo, 2016).

Thus, the 2016 elections were a step forward towards democracy, as each elder was asked to convene a group of 51 electors of his clan to vote for each of the 275 seats (New African, 2016). Our respondents indicate that the process was marred by problems, as some clan elders were told to change the elector lists without the possibility to consult with the entire clan or subclan.[3] The form of selection meant that there were struggles over the amount of power granted to the subclan. Moreover, leaders of clans and subclans did not achieve the 30% quota for women: As Menkhaus (2017) argues, leaders of stronger clans were not willing to give up their seats to female candidates, so clan leaders started to bribe or to pressure weaker subclans and minority groups to nominate female candidates. Yet, in the end the elections were held, and on 8 February 2017, Mohamed Abdullah 'Farmajo' was chosen as federal president by an elected parliament.

The involvement of clan elders made regional political dynamics interact with national politics. Members of parliament were proposed by clan elders and political leaders with popular support based on economic and military power. The elections were close: the previous president led the first round, but then lost votes in the second round. Many in the diaspora and urban Somalis saw the result as a nationalistic vote, against Ethi-

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3   Interview via telephone. 07.04.2017

opian involvement in Somalia, and as an anti-corruption vote, as Faramajo had a good reputation for implementing anti-corruption measures when he was prime minister (Aglionby, 2017).

The new president chose the Norwegian-Somali Hassan Ali Khaire as a prime minister. This choice could be also seen as an anti-Ethiopian move, as Khaire had lost a nomination to IGAD due to Ethiopian resistance. Also, this can be interpreted as a rivalry between the Habargidir and Abgal subclans of the Hawiye: Khaire comes from the Murosade clan, and was hence seen by many as a compromise candidate of the two clans. He is also related to the presidential family by marriage. Parliament quickly confirmed the appointment of Khaire. However, his cabinet was criticized for not following a proper clan distribution, and was contested by Mohamed Osman Jawari, the Speaker of the House. The cabinet was approved, but in May 2017 parliamentary opposition formed around a group of more than 100 MPs, protesting what they saw as the cabinet's unwillingness to engage in constructive dialogue. Generally speaking, the current regime represents the political and economic elites of Mogadishu, the diaspora, and other regional states – but does not reach out to the rural farming and herding communities, where al-Shabaab enjoys significant popular support.

3. Economic and humanitarian situation

Somalia is one of the poorest countries in sub-Saharan Africa, due largely to the prolonged armed conflict. Decades of conflict have destroyed most infrastructure as well as the trust in formal government institutions. The October 2017 truck bomb in Mogadishu, which caused more than 500 deaths, was followed by large street demonstrations, expressing the loss of trust in formal governance structures. Somalis felt the current administration had left them unprotected.

Half of the population in Somalia is living under the international poverty line (World Bank, 2016). Most affected are youth, women and children; two thirds are unemployed, and literacy rates are low, especially among young women (UNICEF, 2016). According to UNDP, only 30% of school-age children attend school, and of these only 40% are girls (UNDP, 2015). Access to health facilities is limited, often requiring fees. More than 1 million Somalis have left the country, with approximately the same number internally displaced (UNHCR, 2016).

However, there are elements of a functioning private sector and assistance from the diaspora. In addition, Somalia is rich in resources, including oil and gas: here it will be essential to investigate how these resources can be applied to improve the economic situation rather than fuelling and prolonging the armed conflict. Climate-change impacts may exacerbate the fragile situation even further, threatening an agrarian-based economy though flooding and prolonged drought, leading to famine – which is often shaped by conflict parties, limited coping mechanisms, and has in some cases brought aid dependencies. Moreover, limited access to humanitarian aid and food production has become a great challenge due to insecurity, as one respondent noted:

People are dying in places no one can reach. Those who want to leave are told by al-Shabaab not to leave, and we can do nothing for them. Famine is recurring because [only] few regions are producing food. People have stopped farming and farms are abandoned. They can't farm now because they don't have the means to clear the land. The [area of] land farmed [has been] really reduced. Many people have gone to the towns for their children's education, many have moved to towns to get aid.[4]

At the time of writing, Somalia is again in a famine situation. UN OCHA (the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs) Somalia estimates that some 6.2 million Somalis are in need of aid, and that 739,000 have been displaced by drought since November 2016 (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2017a). Of this figure, 3.3 million require life-saving assistance, in drought-affected rural areas where people are heavily dependent on agriculture and livestock. Since livestock have died and the crops been destroyed by the drought, hundreds of people, including children, have already died from malnutrition. Furthermore, outbreaks of watery diarrhoea (AWD)/cholera and measles have killed dozens of people, especially women and children. The drought has caused major displacement in Somalia, and the new federal president has declared this a national disaster (United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia, 2017).

Part of this can be ascribed to climate change. In June 2017, rainfall was estimated to be 30% less than normal, and rainfall patterns in some areas have been unusually low for two years (United

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Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2017c). The unprecedented drought has spanned consecutive seasons, with the last feeble *Deyr* (October–December) rains in 2017 (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2017a). The La Niña phenomenon will probably result in a fifth poor rainy season in 2018, further impacting on the food security situation. Moreover, poor planning of aid delivery, corruption, poor roads – all increase the problems. Moreover, in some areas, al-Shabaab has obstructed aid convoys, as witnessed during the drought in 2011 (Majid & McDowell, 2012; Maxwell, Haan, Gelsdorf, & Dawe, 2012).

Limited water sources and grazing areas brought communal violence from May to August 2017, when inter-clan conflicts resulted in 175 civilian deaths in Hirshabelle state and the Galguduud region (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2017a). Crop and livestock losses, conflict, displacement, and disease burden – all exacerbate existing vulnerabilities, especially among women, children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2017a). Further, affected populations moving to urban areas put additional pressures on cities to cope with disease outbreaks, sanitation, and food security problems.

Coordinated planning and assisting people to purchase and produce food helped to avert a famine in 2017. However, more droughts will come in the future: here it should be noted that only six years have passed since the start of the previous drought that led to the deaths of more than a quarter of a million people – half of them children. Today there are improvements in dealing with drought, including better coordination between Western aid actors and Muslim charities mostly from the Gulf area, as well as with the government (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2017b). The United Nations has defined the nutritional situation as critical in Awdal province, Sool and Sanag, the Puntland, Galmudug, Lower Shabelle and Benadiir, with the Sool, Bay and Bakool regions designated as the 'most critical'

areas (defined as the most individuals in a state of emergency). Somalia has also had drought refugees from Ethiopia, particularly in the Hiraan Valley (in Gedo, by contrast, Somalis flee to Ethiopia). The region and food prices in Somalia have also been affected by drought-induced regulations on food exports from Uganda and Tanzania, although rainfall in Tanzania this year has been above average in the central areas.

Drought will return to Somalia, yet there is little thinking in the regional states and in the central government of building up resilience over time – by introducing new types of drought-resistant grain, building up reserves for bad years, working on early warning systems, etc. Distribution is also hampered by favouritism and clannism. Various groups have a hard time accessing food aid, for example minority clan groups, such as the Jareer (Bantu) even though they make up the majority in some of IDP camps, as in Kismayo in Lower Juba. Other small clans, like the Tumal, Midgan, Boon and Wardaay, dare not even approach the food distribution centres, for fear of being turned away by gatekeepers who divert the needed assistance.[5]

Corruption also contributes to the problem, as well as lack of access. A high-ranking official of the Jubaland regional state claims that he had to bribe ministers and there is a widespread feeling that any service has a price, so paying bribes is becoming normal practice.[6] In this sense, a good governance agenda must also be part of an agenda for dealing with the recurrent droughts and other development challenges in Somalia. Access is another major challenge. In 2017, there were about 150 reported incidents of violence against humanitarian organizations, making access in most of southern Somalia not only difficult but also dangerous. In addition, the lack or inadequate quality of road and sea transportation hampers the distribution of humanitarian goods (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2017a).

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5   Interview. Kismayo, 17.04.2017
6   Interview. Kismayo, 23.04.2017

As a recommendation for all developmental and humanitarian actors, it is paramount to include transparency rules in programming. Further, all those concerned must be made aware of corrupt practices which could ultimately compromise their personal security, as well as the efficiency and effectiveness of aid and humanitarian programmes.

4. Conflict and stabilization

Much has been written about the root causes of Somali conflict. I. M. Lewis, leading scholar and author of the most widely-cited study of Somali society, holds the view that the Somalia clan system is not only a significant social structure that dispenses important social services, but has also proved to be a source of division and conflict in Somalia (Lewis, 1994). Wam and Sardesai (2005) added clannism and clan segmentation as major sources of conflict, as these have been used to divide Somalis, to mobilize militias, and even fuel rampant clashes. However, this argument of clan factionalism as a source of conflict has been criticized by other scholars. Kapteijns (2004) for example argues that the commoditization of the pastoral and peasant economy transformed the social fabric of society by eroding the communitarian Somali tradition – a transformation that started during colonial rule, and has continued.

Factional clannism has long been a source of conflict. The central government of former head of state, Siad Barre (president of the Somali Democratic Republic from 1969), stood in contradiction to the kinship system; eventually, in 1991, he was ousted from power (Norad, 2017). This marked the beginning of a decades-long civil war lasting until today. The Republic of Somaliland, however, declared its independence in 1991. It remained relatively peaceful but failed to gain international recognition. Puntland declared itself autonomous in 1998 (Norad, 2017).

As Somalia is of considerable geo-strategic importance, the conflict there must be understood within the framework of the strategies and rivalries of the regional actors that have/have had border-conflict issues with Somalia. Especially salient here are the 1977/78 Ogadeen war between Somalia and Ethiopia, the need for mar-

ket expansion, the existence of natural resources, and issues of prestige. Moreover, regional actors have continued to secure and extend their geo-political power and interests in order to influence Somali politics (Hansen, 2013b).

Elmi and Barise (2006) have listed three factors as the causes of Somali conflicts: the colonial legacy, rivalry for power and resources, and state repression. According to Nduwimana (2013), the Somali conflicts have resulted from structured violence arising from complex and inter-related political, social and economic factors; he further notes the rise of Islamist movements as a significant source of Somali conflict.

Bradbury (1994, p. 20) concluded that Somali conflict is the result of a mixture of many factors, including the legacies of European colonialism, a schismatic kinship system, the contradictions between a centralized state and a pastoral culture, East/West Cold War politics and militarization, underdevelopment and uneven development, ecological degradation, the lack of power-sharing, corruption, and violations of human rights. Viewed from a PEA perspective, conflict in Somalia has become self-perpetuating (Menkhaus, 2014). Since the failure of the state in 1991, powerful actors have emerged, with their own economic and political interests. The actors have changed over time: what has not changed are the structures opposed to the building of a functional nation state. Business actors benefit from the virtually non-existent state taxation; other spoilers are motivated by criminal interests, a class of 'gatekeepers' who 'tax' or diverting humanitarian aid for personal gain (Menkhaus, 2014). The vehicles for gaining power are fear, insecurity, clientelism, neo-patrimonialism and corruption. In order to bring more stability to the

country, the state will need to contain, neutralize or co-opt these spoilers. Those actors do not necessarily reject a central government outright; however, the weak state allows the system of corruption, clientelism, and neo-patrimonialism to continue.

In order to stabilize Somalia, an African Union peacekeeping force (the African Union Mission in Somalia, AMISOM) was deployed in 2007, backed by the UN Security Council. Even though it weakened al-Shabaab, the terror organization remains capable of mounting high-profile attacks within Somalia and abroad. Since 2005, the volatile security situation and military incapacity of the federal government have contributed to the rise of piracy in the Indian Ocean. Piracy incidents off the coast of Somalia peaked between 2009 and 2011, but have been decreasing since (Norad, 2017).

Al-Shabaab remains a threat and continues its episodic attacks. The devastating truck bombing that left more than 500 people dead on 14 October 2017 was allegedly carried out by al-Shabaab, but the organization has not claimed ownership as it fears a loss of popular support due to the high death toll. In 21 March 2017, a car bomb suicide explosion near the Presidential Palace in Mogadishu left five people dead and several others wounded. One of the most recent deadly incidents was the Kolbiyow attack on 27 January 2017, which killed dozens of Kenyan soldiers and wounded many others. Al-Shabaab claimed that it killed 57 soldiers in this attack, but the Kenyan authorities dispute this figure. The Dayah Hotel attack on 25 January 2017 was another deadly incident, killing 28 people: an explosives-packed car crashed through the hotel gate, and armed men then stormed inside, exchanging gunfire with security guards. The Beerta market attack on 26 November 2016 killed more than 20 civilians and wounded more. All these incidents show that al-Shabaab remains powerful, a major threat to security in Somalia (see Agnon, 2017).

A major issue in Somalia today is that of semi-territoriality: a state where AMISOM and the Somali Army fail to secure the countryside permanently, only sending patrols into rural areas. As these normally remain in their bases, al-Shabaab can simply wait, and come back to the villages and roads once the AMISOM and Somali National Army's patrols have returned to their bases. In such cases, al-Shabaab may demand financial contributions from villages; indeed, villagers will often send their sons to al-Shabaab or even marry their daughters to its commanders, to prevent al-Shabaab fighters from attacking them. All this enables al-Shabaab to generate a substantial income from checkpoints, and be embedded in the local context, surviving for the foreseeable future.

During the 2017 presidential elections, al-Shabaab threatened to disrupt the elections and issued warnings to the participants including the elders. Indeed, with the execution of Osman Ali Dini, a 82-year-old traditional elder, it seems that al-Shabaab has followed up on its threat of killing anyone who takes part in the elections (Dhacdo, 2017).

In sum, Somalia has been involved in a complex power game featuring external actors and regional formal and informal players with vested political interests. Access to economic assets is often linked to political power, whether through formal government offices or informal ways of taxation, for example imposed at road blocks. Further, external regional actors have been involved in Somalia due not only to its strategic location along the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden and the associated shipping lanes but also to the country's membership in organizations with diverging policies. Its twofold membership in the African Union and the Arab League has made Somalia vulnerable to the influence of other member states of these organizations (Center for Research and Dialogue, 2004).

Today, there are various internal and external actors, and formal and informal power structures with different interests/incentives, that all exert influence on the political, social and economic situation of Somalia. Internal formal actors include the Somali Federal Government (SFG), and regional states (Puntland, Somaliland, Jubaland, Galmudug, Hirshabelle, and South West State). Domestic informal power structures

include clan power, with its traditional elders; religious militias (al-Shabaab) and religious groups such as Ahlu-Sunna Wal-Jama (ASWJ), Al-Islah, Damul Jadid; civil society groups; and the private sector. External formal actors include regional actors (Ethiopia, Kenya) and the Gulf States, multilateral organizations (the UN, the EU,) Turkey and the USA (Browne & Fisher, 2013). The most dominant group among these external informal actors are the diaspora.

The involvement of multiple actors, internal and external as well as formal and informal, with differing interests has made Somalia's peacebuilding initiatives and stabilization almost impossible. Likewise, achieving an all-inclusive political agreement in the near future will be difficult. The underlying structures of widespread corruption, clan-based politics of clientelism, and the need to maintain neo-patrimonial networks all affect how these actors relate to each other, as well as

how they might work towards common goals aimed at conflict mitigation and stabilization. What unifies most powerful individuals of the domestic actors are the promising rents in forms of grants, foreign aid, and other paid services that the state must offer, rather standing as the provider of impartial, professional, and fair implementation of policy (Menkhaus, 2014). Here, agency of individual actors is disconnected from the structure of historical developments in Somalia. Clan still serves as a structure within which each individual must operate. However, most political and economic interests have been using clan structures to perpetuate a failed and de-institutionalized state in order to maintain corrupt practices, illegal activities, and resource grabbing.

We now examine the actors in the formal and informal domestic and international structures of governance, economic and social life, to make clear the challenges facing Somalia.

5. Formal domestic actors

5.1 Somali Federal Government

According to the Provisional Constitution of the Federal Republic of Somalia, 'Somalia is a federal, sovereign, and democratic republic founded on inclusive representation of the people and a multiparty system and social justice.' The Constitution explicitly states that two or more regions may join and form a regional federal state (Elmi, 2014). This arrangement provides the joining federal states with some degree of autonomous power. Although much still remains to be settled, it would probably be a significant challenge if the Somali Federal Government (SFG) should fail to give full autonomy to the federal state members (Balthasar, 2014).

When Farmajo was elected as new SFG president in February 2017, he enjoyed considerable popular support; hundreds of thousands of Somalis thronged the main streets of Mogadishu, enthusiastically celebrating the election results. The populace together with the security forces were hoping that this president would be the one to unite the country, bring economic prosperity, and build a strong Somalian army. The elections had proceeded rather smoothly. Major conflict had been avoided, and most importantly, power had been transferred from one government to another (Menkhaus, 2017).

It should not be forgotten that in 2010/2011 Farmajo was prime minister. During his term in office, he established a strong relationship with the Somali security forces by paying them regularly; he spoke out against corruption, and called on UN agencies based in Nairobi to relocate their Somalia headquarters to Mogadishu. Nevertheless, due to the pressure from the international community, especially Ambassador Augistine Mahiga of Tanzania, and as part of the Kampala Accord, Farmajo was forced to resign in June 2011, due largely to political infighting over whether to hold presidential elections in 2011 between the incumbent President and the Speaker of the Parliament.

During the election campaign, Farmajo made many promises: these included dealing with the famine, tackling insecurity, cracking down on corruption, building a strong national army (and paying them regularly), improving the intelligence services, opening talks with al-Shabaab, promoting reconciliation and rebuilding the country. As the new president enjoyed political legitimacy and people's expectations were extremely high, it could be argued that if the new president should fail to fulfil his election promises that would lead to a loss of public confidence and the erosion of support for formal elections and government institutions.

Farmajo had pledged to give priority to paying the salaries of the security forces and government employees, but on 12 March 2017, the Somali national army protested, blocking the main streets of Mogadishu for hours because of unpaid salaries. The army complained that they had not been paid for 15 months (A. Sheikh, 2017). This is but one indication of some of the unfulfilled promises made by the president.

Regardless, the new leadership of the SFG faces many challenges. These include containing al-Shabaab, addressing the status of Somaliland, rebuilding the security forces and state institutions, fighting corruption, mitigating conflict between and within federal member states, and unifying the country (ICG, 2017). Further challenges are civic education, distribution

of resources between the state and the sub-national governments, and the status of Mogadishu. Speaking at Chatham House in London, the former president of Somalia, Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, noted the many issues that need to be agreed upon: 'if we do not put those tools and instruments in place then federalism will create more problems', he concluded (IRIN, 2014).

Another challenge facing the SFG faces is reaching agreement on the form of the state, the depth of federalism and decentralization through constitutional negotiations (Hearn & Zimmerman, 2014). Some actors from the regional states emphasize that these issues must be settled by dialogue. A leader of the South West regional state argued in an interview for this report that the commanders of the security forces as well as well influential positions in the cabinet were shifted in favour of Hawiye and Darod dominance.[7] This clan structure, he went on to say, stands in contrast to the clan composition in other areas, and could be seen as 'an occupying force.'

Moreover, the exact balance of responsibilities between the state and federal levels has not been settled, although the London conference in May 2017 might have solved some of the problem. As one respondent explained:

> The courts, the police, the immigration service are all confused [about who holds legal authority]. The police in Mogadishu is still operating under the old unitary system while all states have their own police forces operating independently.[8]

Overall, the new Somali Federal Government has limited state capacity, in military and administrative terms. The national military is weak, and cannot provide security in the political centre, Mogadishu, as demonstrated by the devastating truck bombing in October 2017 where more than 500 people died. In terms of administrative capacity, it has limited funds to pay civil servants; and little capacity to provide public goods. For example, aid flows are currently ten times higher than the government's own resources, which are less than 2% of GDP, which significantly restricts its financial capacity (Norad, 2017).

Notwithstanding, it seems that in the Somali case, the risk of not holding elections and keeping a dysfunctional government in office was greater than that involved in electing a new federal government. Even though the elections were imperfect, indirect, and non-constitutional, rival political elites work together and fragmentation became less likely (Menkhaus, 2017). Other positive signals were the pull-out or defeat of several warlords and a 25% seat allocation for female MPs.

5.2 Regional Federal States

According to the Federal Constitution of Somalia, all regions are to be equal in status, representation and power. Currently, however, there are six regional federal states that are not equal in terms of existence and power status. Puntland, Jubaland, Galmudug, Hirshabelle, and South West State are all part of the current set-up. Somaliland has no interest in being part of a federation, but it has representatives in the Somali Federal Government (SFG). From the perspective of the SFG, Somaliland belongs to the territory of Somalia, with some degree of autonomy. Among Somaliland's prominent figures that are/were part of the SFG are former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs H.E. Fowsiya; current deputy prime minister Mohamed Omar Arte; Minister of Air Transport and Aviation, Ali Ahmed Jama Jangali; and Abdirahman Duale Beyle, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Somalia, re-appointed as current Minister of Finance of Somalia. Similarly, Somali Prime Minister Hassan Ali Khaire named lawyer Mahdi Ahmed Guled from Somaliland as his deputy. Besides the cabinet, Somalilanders have their quota in both Houses of Parliament.

The federal arrangements are contested, at times by clans feeling that regionalization weakens their clans due to the dominance of other clans over-represented in the federal institutions. Others express concerns that a federal system could weaken national unity by creating several

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7   Interview. Mogadishu, 12.4.2017
8   Interview. Mogadishu, 15.04.2017

mini-states, which could be of interest to for-eign forces seeking to weaken the integrity of the country.[9] Yet others are more positive, arguing that devolution of power is necessary to make institutions work.[10] Within the federal states, power and resources also need to be passed on to the district level, to avoid the concentration of power on the leadership level.[11]

Within the federal states, there are undeniable conflicts over control of territory. For instance, Sool and Sanaag regions are disputed territories of Puntland and Somaliland. Recently, 'Kha-tumo' state representing Sool and Sanaag regions declared itself an autonomous regional state, fur-ther complicating the situation However, Kha-tumo state has been struggling to declare itself as an independent administration partly because of military and political pressures from Somali-land and Puntland. Also the status of the federal capital, Mogadishu, has yet to be decided (HIPS, 2017).

Another recent conflict has involved Puntland and Galmudug regional state in central Somalia over Galkayo. Despite the peace deal signed in December 2015, clashes have continued, result-ing in several hundreds of causalities as well as internal displacements (Istiila, 2016).

Not only are the provisions of the Federal Constitution still ambiguous: the dispersion of power among states remains ambiguous as well. Federalism was adopted to reduce the power of the central government, due to the mistrust among the various Somali clans, and the undemocratic and oppressive political system inherited from the former central government (HIPS, 2015).

Regarding power relations, Somaliland and Puntland are the only entities to have taken advantage of the collapse of the central govern-ment. They might be regarded as the only states that have significant power, compared to the rest of the federal regional states. Both consolidated their power while the rest of Somalia was hard-hit by conflict and political instability.

5.2.1 Puntland

Puntland is relatively peaceful compared to the rest of Somalia. Unlike Somaliland, where a multiparty system exists, political system is clan-based in Puntland. It was founded in 1998 using a bottom–up approach: the traditional authorities (elders) elect the members of the parliament, but rule is fairly democratic. On the other hand Punt-land is known as the most pirate-affected region of Somalia, and the main pirate areas are located in regions that Puntland governs fully or partly: Sanaag (contested between Somaliland and Punt-land), Bari (fully governed by Puntland), Nugaal (fully governed by Puntland) and Mudug (partly governed by Puntland) (Hansen, 2009).

It is worth mentioning that Puntland was established before the current SFG, and sees itself as the only 'mature' federal member state in Somalia. This helped it to become the most influ-ential actor in the drafting and reviewing of the current Provisional Constitution of the Somali Federal Government, putting its weight strongly behind the establishment of a federal system. As an active current actor in Somalia, Puntland has hosted two constitutional conferences: Garowe I and Garowe II (HIPS, 2017). Further, Puntland has previously signed agreements with the federal government including Galkayo I and Galkayo II agreements, reached in Puntland. These agree-ments revolved around the distribution of aid received on behalf of the Somali nation, issues of natural resources, building a national and all-inclusive Somali army, and formal recogni-tion of Puntland-issued educational certificates (Villa-Puntland, 2015).

On the other hand, Puntland has had an armed conflict with Somaliland as well as with Galmu-dug, mainly about border issues. As noted, Sool and Sanaag regions are among the territories dis-puted by Somaliland and Puntland. The creation of Khatumo state is also part of the problem, as it has declared sovereignty over these two disputed regions. Puntland and Galmudug have a his-tory of rivalry over territorial control and border issues. The presence of the two clans, Majeerteen and Habargidir, splits Galkayo between the two administrations south and north of Galkayo.

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9   Interview via telephone. Mogadishu, 07.04.2017
10   Interview via telephone. 02.04.2017
11   Ibid

Puntland's political influence should not be underestimated, as it was among the key actors in the introduction of the Federal Constitution, a signatory to the road map that resulted in the national constitution, and the formation of Jubaland. Puntland has supported the formation of Jubaland and provided political and financial support for the Kismayo Conference. As Puntland is home to the Harti subclan of the Darood, it has initiated a genealogically-based alliance known as Kablallah that brings together Absame (Ogaden and many others) and the Harti (Bryden, 2013).

5.2.2 Galmudug regional state
Galmudug regional state was formed in 2006 (Berge & Taddia, 2013). Mohamed Ahmed Alin, and former warlord and former TFG chief of police Abdi Hassan Awale Qeybdiid, preceeded Abdikarim Hussein Guled as leaders of Galmudug regional state. In 2015, Guled, a former Minister of Interior of the SFG, a significant member of Damul Jadid (see 6.3.3), and close friend of the former president of the SFG Hassan Sheikh Mahmoud, was elected President of Galmudug regional state of Somalia.

On 10 January 2017, Galmudug state parliamentarians passed a no-confidence motion against Abdikarim Guled. Guled refused to accept this, declaring the vote to be unconstitutional. Nevertheless, due to political pressure and health issues, he stepped down on 25 February that year (GoobjoogNews, 2017).

Galmudug controls the southern part of Galkayo, Hobyo and Harardheer, well-known pirate hubs in the Mudug region. In the Galgaduud region, Galmudug controls Gelinsoor, Adado, the capital of the Galmudug regional state, and some other villages. Although Galmudug governs only parts of Mudug and Galgaduud regions, it does not fulfil the requirements set by the Constitution for two or more regions to unite and form a state. Further, in July 2014, the state of Himin and Heeb, populated by the Saleban subclan of Habargidir that governed Adado and surrounding villages, united with Galmudug and Adado, becoming the new capital of Galmudug regional state of Somalia (Abtidoon, Hassan, &

Omar, 2012). Like Puntland, Galmudug is one the most pirate-infested areas in Galkayo, Hobyo and Harardheer, where pirates bring and hold kidnaped persons for ransom.

5.2.3 South West regional state
South West regional state, founded in November 2014 in Baidoa, is one of the new regional federal states formed as part of the federal political system in Somalia. Former Speaker of the Parliament of the TFG (2004–2007 and 2011–2012) and former Minister of Finance Sharif Hassan Sheikh Adan was elected as president. It consists of three regions: Bay, Bakool and Lower Shabelle provinces. The South West regional state administration controls mainly Baidoa town, whereas al-Shabaab wields semi-territoriality outside Baidoa. As it controls only one city, South West regional state is designated as a city state (Omar, 2016).

5.2.4 Hirshabelle regional state
Hirshabelle regional state was established in October 2016, as part of the state-formation process. Ali Abdullahi Osoble was elected as its president; the capital is Jowhar, 90km distant from Mogadishu.

The last federal state to be formed, Hirshabelle consists of Hiiraan and Middle Shabelle regions. Al-Shabaab controls many rural areas in Hirshabelle; the regional state administration controls only a small territory in Hiiraan and Middle Shabelle.

5.2.5 Somaliland
The self-proclaimed Republic of Somaliland was founded in 1991 by local elders and local politicians. The situation there has been relatively peaceful compared to Somalia otherwise, and there is a multiparty political system. The people of Somaliland have managed to establish law and order on their territory and free and fair elections have been held. Somaliland is by far the most stable entity among the existing federal state members. Somaliland appears to have benefited from the collapse of the former central government and little external intervention, as it adopted a system of governance anchored in the

clan-based political culture. The egalitarian character of Somali society seemed to assist in forming a democratic form of governance. Through *Shir beeleedyo* (clan meetings), all local clans have attended state-building conferences in Somaliland. The people of Somaliland have managed this through bottom–up peacemaking initiatives. As noted by Hansen (2003), 'three such grand clan congresses, all named after the respective locations where they took place, were held: the Bur'ao Shir Beeleed in 1991, the Borama Shir Beeleed in 1993, and the Hargeysa Shir Beeleed 1996-97'. The first Shir Beeleed declared independence, the second one elected the now-deceased president Mohamed Ibrahim Egal, and the last one re-elected Egal as President of the Republic of Somaliland.

These conferences also resulted a new structure, known as the Beel. In the Beel system there was an elected president, non-elected Upper House elders and elected Lower House representatives. Seats in the former were for clan elders, who elected the president and vice president. However, this system has since been transformed into a fully fledged democratic governance structure, with regular and peaceful democratic elections (Sand, 2011). Traditional leaders have veto power over the selection of representatives to the upper house 'Guurti' , who are defined as clan elders, and have been incorporated within the Somaliland parliament (Richards, 2009).

However, there have been recent accusations that the government of Somaliland supports al-Shabaab. Somalilanders are the majority of those at the Serendi Rehabilitation Centre in Mogadishu, aimed at de-radicalization and re-integration, hosting former al-Shabaab fighters. In 2015 al-Shabaab carried out an attack on a police station in Bosaso, in which three al-Shabaab members were captured and two others were killed. Searching the dead bodies and those who were captured alive, Puntland officials found Somaliland currency in the attackers' pockets. However, it should not be forgotten that Puntland has had a border conflict with Somaliland (Madote, 2015). In late 2016, a car explosion attack at the Siinka-dheer checkpoint (some 18km northwest of Mogadishu) was carried out in a vehicle bearing Somaliland registration plates (Radiodalsan, 2016).

6. Informal domestic actors

6.1 The role of clan authority

Acharya et al. (2017) argue that clan authority serves as basis for insurance system which guarantees its members less risk involved in trading and herding in a setting characterized by violations of grazing rights, animal theft, and reneging on loan agreements. Clan power has significant advantage over the other formal actors with regard to conflict resolution and civil protection. According to Webersik (2004), the clans were the only safety net in Somalia after the collapse of the central government, but the militarily stronger clans took advantage of clan identity to gain control over local communities. Clan structure is a vital element in Somali society: a source of solidarity, protection and access to political and economic power. Thomas (2016) points out that clan-based systems have remained in place in Somalia for long time, used as a means of conflict resolution: today each Somali clan sees itself as a nation, and is not necessarily willing to comply with the rulings of a central government.

Elders can resolve conflict by using traditional legal systems or customary law known as *Xeer*. Clan unity is maintained in part by *Diya* (paying blood compensation) where the clan as a whole has collective obligation in backing its members with regard to political and juridical responsibilities. Individual action becomes collective action on the part of the whole clan (Oguna, 2016).

Acharya et al. (2017) also note that clan structures were predominant in Somali society even before the time of Mohamed Siad Barre, and the country returned to this form of traditional authority after the collapse of his regime in 1991. Today clanship remains the central basis of security in Somali society (Acharya et al. 2017).

According to Bakonyi and Stuvøy (2005), clan remained the foundation for recruitment top the armed forces as well as for organizing economic and financing of the numerous armed groups.

Thomas (2016, p. 13) argues that clan as such is not problematic in Somalia – it is *clannism*, a concept that he defines as 'application of clan interests into the political system for three reasons: one, to gain more than others, two, to push your clan to be the dominant political actor in the country, and third, to mobilize clan members to show power', which has resulted into Somalia's failure.

A recent study (Gardner & el-Bush, 2017) concludes that clan authority has remained a key mechanism for managing and mitigating conflict, but also for generating conflict. The authors hold that clans select clansmen to represent them in matters affecting the lineage, including negotiating and building alliances, declaring war and peace, and exercising authority based on the interpretation of customary law (*Xeer*).

The role of clans in Somalia is ambiguous, especially concerning the authority, legitimacy, capacity and political settlement among the elite holding power, in the private, public and international spheres. As Menkhaus (2017, p. 133) sums it up: 'clan loyalties dominate political life.' Somalia's elites are preoccupied with clan-based proportional representation (the '4.5' formula). However, Menkhaus also notes that 'minority' and politically weaker clans have today outnumbered some of the four major clan groups due to demographic developments.

With the rise of al-Shabaab and fears of 'ungoverned space', Western donor states and Middle Eastern Arab governments started pump-

ing massive funding into state-building efforts. Political, clan and business leaders found themselves struggling to engage in state building, as holding a political office once again became a lucrative vehicle for personal gains. Elites, high-level politicians, well-known business people, and militia leaders all contended for political representation. Given the fixed clan representation, vote-buying was widespread in the 2016 elections, with the price for one place in an electoral college ranging from US$ 1000 to twenty times this amount (Menkhaus, 2017, p. 140).

Once elected, politicians divert public money to pay back their 'clients', those who voted for them. This makes anti-corruption measures difficult to implement among MPs and other political representatives. The clan becomes a source of financial support; in turn, political representation will reward loyal clan interests, not on the basis of merit or need. Linking clan representation to access to funds, wealth and political representation ultimately serves to corrupt the functions of clan in reconciliation and peacebuilding efforts.

6.2 Al-Shabaab

Al-Shabaab, or the *Harakat al-Shabaab*, is a radical Islamic organization based in Somalia, operating with militants trained in Afghanistan as well as in Kenya and Nigeria (Hansen, 2013a). It has now become one of the most powerful internal actors seeking to overthrow the Somali Federal Government and its allies, seeking to establish a society based on its inflexible interpretation of Sharia law.

The military emergence of al-Shabaab can be linked to the defeat of the Union of Islamic Courts (ICU) that gained much control over southern Somalia in 2006. Members of what became al-Shabaab were recruited largely from the militant wing of the former ICU (Healy & Bradbury, 2010). Aimed at establishing an Islamic state in Somalia, the organization is funded through 'taxation' and extortion, collecting an estimated 70 and 100 million US$ dollars a year (Segun & Felix, 2015). Some of the attacks on Mogadishu's hotels and restaurants may have resulted from owners refusing

to pay protection money (Menkhaus, 2016). Over the years, local Somali elites have turned against their fellow anti-al-Shabaab militias and made strategic alliances with al-Shabaab groups when this suited their political and economic aims. This has puzzled Western governments and their allies in the fight against al-Shabaab (Menkhaus, 2016).

The group began with local attacks – assassination, suicide bomb attacks, and road bombings (Stanford University, n.d). In 2010, it showed itself capable of carrying out high-profile attacks outside Somalia as well: on 11 July, a suicide bombing attack in Uganda killed 74 people (Griffiths, 2016). Al-Shabaab has been carrying out local as well as international high-profile attacks targeting government officials, civilians, civil society workers, UN and international diplomats, like the Westgate shopping mall attack in Kenya in 2013, the Djibouti attack in 2014, the Garissa University College attack in 2015, and the Mandera attack in 2016 (the latter two in Kenya). Al-Shabaab gained global attention when al Qaeda announced its affiliation with the group in 2012. Subsequently, Somalia became one of the largest al Qaeda operations globally (Ahmad, 2015). Al-Shabaab's global recruitment, also in Europe and the USA, has become a major security issue (Stanford University, n.d). Locally, al-Shabaab has been fairly successful in exploiting local grievances to recruit among the marginalized and 'minority' clans (Menkhaus, 2016). Thus far, al-Shabaab has attacked only states deploying forces in Somalia.

In September 2012, al-Shabaab was forced out of much of its territory, including the capital, Mogadishu, and Kismayo. The loss of these territories was a heavy blow, but al-Shabaab has to a certain extent managed to offset the economic losses by collecting fees at roadblocks, and still collects taxes on goods going into Kismayo (around Jilib). With the help of US air strikes, Somali security forces and AMISOM soldiers killed the former group leader, Aden Hashi Ayro, in 2008 and his successor, Ahmed Abdi Godane in September 2014 (BBC, 2016). Ahmad Umar, also known as Abu Ubaidah, is the current

leader of al-Shabaab. Today, the group controls a reduced territory in south and central Somalia, exercising complete control over some rural areas. However, its periodic attacks and assassinations in major cities such as Mogadishu are what make the headlines.

6.3 Religious groups

6.3.1 Al-Islah

Al-Islah in Somalia, the only Islamic organization that is a member of the Muslim Brotherhood organization, has been politically active since the collapse of the central government 1991. It works to influence and support the harmonization of Islamic values, indigenous Somali culture, and the rule of law in the political system. Abdurahman M. Abdullahi (Baadiyow) is a prominent scholar, an al-Islah leader and 2012 presidential candidate. He argues (Abdullahi, 2008) that al-Islah is not a political party seeking political power, nor a social organization focusing on purely social issues; rather, it is a movement for reviving Islamic faith and encouraging national consciousness in Somali society. Further, he holds that it considers itself part of the emerging civil society movement in Somalia, partly because of its proven record in promoting civil society values such as protection of human rights, democratic values, and women's political rights.

The group has been involved in several peacebuilding attempts aimed at establishing a central government, most notably the Arta (or Djibouti) Process, which resulted a Transitional National Government (TNG). Further, al-Islah is known for its contribution to mediating clan-based conflicts and its work aimed at furthering the development of education and humanitarian efforts in Somalia while the country had no functioning, powerful, central government (Hansen, 2017). Unlike al-Itihad, which took a militant direction, al-Islah took a path promoting peace, reconciliation and social services, particularly in the education sector (Abdullahi, 2008). With Western countries worrying that al-Islah might sympathize with radical Islamic movements, its political role shifted: for instance, it had no significant presence during the 2002 Mbagathi peace talks (Webersik, 2014).

6.3.2 Ahlu Sunna WalJama

Ahlu Sunna WalJama (ASWJ) is a moderate Islamic, Sufi-aligned, anti-al-Shabaab group that governs parts of Galgaduud region, including Guri-el, Elbur, Dhusamareb, and Abudwak. ASWJ has had good relations with the SFG, AMISOM, and Ethiopia, but is a rival to the Galmudug regional state. It has been active in many peacebuilding conferences in Somalia, and stood up against al-Shabaab's attempt to capture the central regions of Somalia (Geeska-Afrika, 2015). Dominated by the Ayr Habargidir subclan, ASWJ remains a serious contender to the Galmudug regional state.

6.3.3 Damul Jadiid

Damul Jadiid (the name translates as 'new blood' or 'young blood') is an active, powerful political actor in Somalia. The group split off from the former al-Islah during the rule of the Union of Islamic Courts in 2006: the old al-Islah remained nonviolent whereas Damul Jadiid joined the Union of Islamic Courts, and took part in the armed resistance against the Ethiopian presence in Somalia.

Damul Jadiid benefited from the fragmentation and achieved its highest recognition when one of its members, Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, became the president of Federal Republic of Somalia after the elections in 2012. The group has had powerful figures within the SFG, including former Minister of Justice Farah Abdulkadir and former Minister of Interior Abdulkarim Hussein Gulled.

Critics argue that despite the name ('new blood'), the group has never come with new ideas or strategies; on the contrary, it applies old-fashioned politics in pursuit of its interests (Hansen, 2017; Tadesse, 2009). Its exact organizational structure is unknown, but members have maintained that there is one. The election of Faramajo as President of Somalia seriously weakened the group, which had been included in the cabinet; likewise with the change of the president in Galmudug.

6.4 Civil society organizations

Today there are hundreds if not thousands of civil society organizations (CSOs) working actively in Somalia – for example, supporting social justice, and registering human right violations including the rights of women and children, participating in humanitarian aid, and empowering people in education and vocational training. CSOs have participated in several peacebuilding conferences locally, as well as internationally. The role of civil society in state-building revolves around rebuilding trust between the state and citizens, reducing social exclusion, promoting a new role for the diaspora, and building reliable and sustainable governance systems that allow for the representation of all societal actors (ECO3, 2012).

Some CSOs are old and experienced, and have successfully partnered with outsiders for years, as with Cogwo in Mogadishu, or Candela in Somaliland. Many new organizations have been created, often dominated by members of the diaspora. Additionally, there are the for-profit CSOs established solely to land contracts and make profit; and several large business companies in Somalia also have affiliated CSOs.[12] CSOs are often established to compete with other formal administrations and actors for aid resources. Some have authority and legitimacy within Somalia, whereas others have self-appointed leaders with vested financial interests (Webersik, 2014).

CSOs can also be hijacked in local clan rivalries, as an MP from North Gedo claims:

> Aid agencies have been based in Luuq and Dolo for many years. The employees of the international aid organizations, the local NGOs and the private contractors working for aid organizations, were mainly from the same clan, the Marehan. To counter this, the other communities, especially the Dir, excluded all these organizations from accessing their land because they saw it as benefitting their enemies more than it was benefitting them.[13]

Overall, the role of civil society organizations in Somalia is ambiguous. Some CSOs are not inclusive, favouring certain clan affiliations over others. CSOs are often seen as a means of tapping into aid, undermining the work of formalized administrations in their delivery of public goods.

6.5 Private sector

The unregulated economy and the 'ungoverned space' (Menkhaus, 2016, p. 112) in Somalia has given the private sector extraordinary opportunities to make enormous profits without having to consider tax burdens or corporate social responsibility. Somali business actors are strong in finance and livestock, and have also invested heavily in property in neighbouring Kenya. Charcoal and contraband sugar smuggled into Kenya and Ethiopia are the largest illicit export sectors. *Khat*, weapons, textiles, electronics and cigarettes are imported consumer goods (Hagmann, 2016). At the large Bakaara marketplace in Mogadishu most of the counterfeit products and currencies enter the market (Luther, 2015) as there is no regulation or restriction on the supply of notes. However, once the purchasing power of the largest Somali denomination reached that of the cost of its production, Somalis enjoyed a currency with relatively stable purchasing power (Luther, 2015).

After the collapse of the central government, the private sector in Somalia has not only filled the gap concerning the provision of basic goods and services but offered everything from export/import, financial services including banking and money transfer *(hawala)*, telecommunications enterprises, private schools, private hospitals, electricity and energy, transportation and housing (Nenova, 2004). Somalis have now also access to the formal banking system through Master Card partnering with Premier Bank.

There are countless private sector enterprises that are profitable, and some of the larger companies have gone global (for example Dahabshil), and regional. According to Cassanelli (2010), even though the private sector contributed to economic development in the country they are also hindering lasting political stability in the country. There are incentives to avoid taxation,

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12 Interview. Mogadishu, 14.04.2017
13 Interview. Mogadishu, 15.04.2017

and a functional taxation system is not yet in place. Businesspeople react to the poor distribution of services:

> We pay our taxes in Mogadishu, but the region is not benefiting from that tax. The [city] state is the most populous and productive state in the country benefiting greatly from the port of Mogadishu's income. We need to share the revenues of Mogadishu's port since we pay a large portion of its operational costs.[14]

The regional states are today dependent on port and airport taxes. The private sector is also informally taxed by government forces at checkpoints, although few of these fees are accounted for. However, there is also a private-sector interest in security, to avoid crime (largely theft), as well as checkpoints. Checkpoints are sometimes manned by unpaid government troops, adding to the scepticism towards the government: 'The major problem we face is the bad roads, federal government forces (really thugs in uniforms), and al-Shabaab. Both federal government forces and al-Shabaab tax us heavily.'[15] Businessmen interviewed for this report highlighted the poor infrastructure that hindered business, the volatile security situation, and the lack of proper roads and electricity.

 The private sector in Somalia is today one of the most powerful informal actors, due to its economic and military power. It can operate in an unregulated business environment. Some entrepreneurs own their own, private militias, making this the fastest growing sector in Mogadishu (Menkhaus, 2016). Those who work as contractors for international aid and humanitarian agencies, hotel businesses, and transportation business, can charge premiums for guaranteeing safety for aid workers in terms of accommodation, or safe passage of humanitarian aid. Businesspeople use their clan networks to recruit militias. However, the costs are enormous. In 2008, when insecurity was at a peak in Mogadishu, Hormuud, a major telecommunications company, accounted half of its total hiring to

security personnel (Menkhaus, 2016). Local, armed guards are in fact less effective for providing actual security than the security gained by providing paid employment. Major hotels invest heavily in security for government meetings and hosting international guests. Secure transport from Mogadishu's airport may easily cost more than a two-night stay at any of those hotels. There are many private security firms operating in the city, but corruption occurs also in the private firms: thus, high-ranking officials often prefer to hire family members among the police or the military (Menkhaus, 2016).

Over the years, members of the business elite have strengthened their ties with politicians, enabling them to have access to decisionmaking processes. In some cases, the business elite has paid for housing and transport of MPs, at least in the past (Webersik, 2006). The business sector benefits from there being little regulation or taxation, but has a strong interest in peace and security. Research conducted in Mogadishu has shown that local businesses are willing to pay taxes if they could receive public goods in return – most important security, infrastructure, education and utilities (Webersik, 2006). This highlights the contradiction in the demands of the business sector – between the interest in avoiding taxation (thus weakening state institutions), and also having an interest in security and orderly security forces (Hansen, 2008). To foster the will of the private sector to pay taxes, it is essential to provide security. Once the newly elected government delivers, the business class will be more willing to pay taxes and to support stabilization efforts.

This can also explain the support of the business class for the Islamic courts. As early as 1994, the Mogadishu-dominant Hawiye clans invested in the courts to reduce their business-related transaction costs (Ahmad, 2015). In the absence of a functioning state, faith-based organizations can span tribal, ethnic, or clan divisions. However, the Islamic courts remained divided along clan lines, making policing across a larger territory more difficult. This changed with the establishment of the Islamic Courts Union (ICU),

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14   Interview. Kismayo, 17.05.2017
15   Ibid

challenging the military supremacy of Somalia's warlord system. By reducing security costs, the Somali business elite see an opportunity in supporting the ICU (Ahmad, 2015). Arguably, the costs of security were lower under the ICU than those charged by clan warlords. However, the Ethiopian-led military defeat of the ICU in 2007 led to a strengthening al-Shabaab, establishing control over the countryside, and collecting levies from Kismayo port and strategic roads. In Mogadishu, Bakaara market became a main target of extortion. It is estimated that al-Shabaab was able to extort approximately US$ 60 million per year from the town's Bakaara and SuuqBaad markets (Segun & Felix, 2015).

Menkhaus (2007) argues that state building is determined by the economic base. Somalia's economy is heavily dependent on remittances that have been central to the remarkable growth in private money transfers and telecommunications companies, commercial imports of consumer goods, the transportation sector, real-estate investment and housing construction, and a range of service industries. The main hubs for doing business with Somalia are Nairobi and Dubai. However, this has worsened the urban–rural wealth gap in the country (Menkhaus, 2007).

There are also international commercial interests in Somalia. Before the war, international corporations were involved in the banana and fishing business. Fish has a great potential, also for Norwegian expertise in fish farming. In the telecommunications sector, local firms have teamed up with international corporations like Sprint (USA) and Telenor (Norway) to provide the network for landlines as well for mobile use (Word Bank, 2005). Moreover, there are indications of oil and gas deposits off the coast of Somalia. Royal Dutch Shell and Exxonmobil had been operating in Somalia before 1991, but ceased their operations due to security concerns (Dick-Godfrey, 2015). With al-Shabaab now under control in the major cities, with the opening of Mogadishu port and the decline in piracy activities, the prospects for future exploitation activities have increased. However, rampant corruption, insecurity, and weak legal structures are the main obstacles to re-starting operations. Also, as witnessed in other African countries, oil and gas development can produce more rifts between the nascent federal states, as well as diverting investments away from agriculture, trade and the service sector that remain important for the Somali economy.

7. Formal external actors

The current political situation in Somalia must be understood in the context of the past, and earlier efforts to establish functioning authorities. Several peace negotiations have failed, due largely to lack of legitimacy and popular support inside Somalia. Mapping the main external players of these processes, their interests, motives, and power base can serve as an important analytical tool. What roles do external actors play in influencing power structures and dynamics, including international institutions (UN), neighbouring countries (Kenya, Ethiopia, Yemen, Djibouti), regional powers (Turkey, United Arab Emirates), Western countries and/or other relevant actors? What are the unintentional and intentional consequences of their involvement?

7.1   Kenya and Ethiopia

Kenya and Ethiopia have been part of the Somali conflict, the peacebuilding processes, and the war against al-Shabaab. It should be taken into account that Kenya and Ethiopia, playing a leading role in AMISOM, have had armed conflicts with Somalia and the Somali people including its security forces. Somalis are deeply sceptical to these countries, due to the current and historical border conflicts, especially with Ethiopia (Hansen, 2013b).

7.1.1 Kenya

Avis and Herbert (2016) note that Kenyan intervention in Somalia is indeed ambiguous. The massive influx of more than half a million Somali refugees has compromised security in Kenya. In turn, Kenya took an interest in AMISOM in order to defend its national interests, and to legitimize intervention. However, the Kenyan intervention in Somalia was also a response to the deteriorating security situation along the border. Kenyan interests have included establishing a 'buffer zone' and the formation of a semi-autonomous regime in Jubaland. Some of these interests might serve to worsen divisions with local militias, regional political interests, and the federal government in Mogadishu.

Research conducted by Journalists for Justice indicates that Kenyan forces have been involved in human rights abuses, military strikes targeting livestock and wells, and corrupt business practices with the Jubaland administration and al-Shabaab, particularly in the illicit trade in sugar and charcoal (Avis & Herbert, 2016). Al-Shabaab is active inside Kenya, especially in Boni forest and in the North East. There are also many returned al-Shabaab fighters now residing in Kenya.

In addition to the arrest, torture and deportation of Somalians, Kenya has also carried out arrests of Somali diplomats, including MPs (BBC, 2014). The recent maritime border tension has also been part of the Somali–Kenya conflict. There are indications that the border area in the Indian Ocean is rich of fossil fuel deposits, and both countries are claiming these as their own. Somalia asked the International Court of Justice in The Hague to determine the maritime boundary between the two countries (Calcuttawala, 2016). In February 2017, the Court rejected objections raised by Kenya, approving the maritime delimitation between Somalia and Kenya in the Indian Ocean.

7.1.2 Ethiopia

In their report *Conflict Analysis South-Central Somalia Phase II*, a team from the Center for Research and Dialogue (CRD) team critically

investigated the strong Ethiopian influence in Somalia. They found that explanations for this influence could include the presence of a huge Somali/Ethiopian community in Ethiopia, the hundreds of thousands of Somalis in Ethiopia who have fled from conflicts, and not least the open borders between the countries (Center for Research and Dialogue, 2014). The CRD team underlines that the Ethiopian influence has been driven by self-defined security concerns. Al-Shabaab had a unit inside Ethiopia in 2007, and has attempted to stage several attacks there. There are historical fears of Somalia partly because of the frequent skirmishes and the 1977/ 1978 war between the two countries (Hansen, 2013b).

Further, there has been conflict between Somalia and Ethiopia over the Shabelle River, dating back to the 1950s. After the events of 1991, Ethiopia took advantage of the fragmentation of Somalian society and began developing water resources, building large dams on the Shabelle River. This could provide Ethiopia with the power to control rivers downstream towards Somalia, possibly fuelling conflict between Somalia and Ethiopia (Center for Research and Dialogue, 2004). As a result of the Ogadeen war in 1977/78, as well as border skirmishes in the 1960s, many Somalis perceive Ethiopian intents as hostile. Indeed, the election of Faramajo can be ascribed partly to his being viewed as standing up against Ethiopian interventionist interests. Addis Ababa is seen as being interested in a fragmented and weak Somalia, to keep Ethiopia's control of the Somali-inhabited Ogaden region from being challenged (Hansen, 2013b).

Ethiopia has been a dynamic political actor in Somalia since 1991. Though not accepted by all Somali actors, the 1993 Addis Ababa Agreement was one of the first peacebuilding attempts for Somalia. In supporting the first Transitional Federal Government which enjoyed international recognition, Ethiopian forces entered into Somalia and fought against the Union of Islamic Courts and al-Shabaab. Nevertheless, the Somali people have been sceptical to the presence of Ethiopians in Somalia, which they perceive a politically motivated invasion of their land; some see federalism as a part of an Ethiopian strategy to keep Somalia weak.

7.2 African Union Mission in Somalia

According to Williams and Hashi (2016), there are conflicting perceptions of the contributions of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) to peace and security in Somalia. Somali citizens including the Somali National Army (SNA), CSOs and diaspora groups hold negative perceptions. By contrast, the international community holds that AMISOM has made progress in ensuring security, and feel that the AMISOM presence will contribute to further improvement of the security situation in the future. Although AMISOM helped to drive al-Shabaab out of Mogadishu and several other major towns, many Somalis still perceive the AU mission as pursuing its own interests. Perceived negative aspects of AMISOM include its lack of legitimacy from the local population, its being seen as barrier to the building of an effective Somali army, lacking the ability to protect civilians while focusing on the protection of government officials, killing of civilians rather than protecting them, sexual exploitation, and not least creating sources of power-dependence for the Somali government (Williams & Hashi, 2016).

A recent Daily Nation report accuses the Somali police, SNA and AMISOM in killing civilians and people they see them as a threat rather than of security providers. According the report, AMISOM killed 37 civilians in four months in 2016, whereas Somali police and SNA killed 55 civilians. The report concludes that AMISOM together with Somali national army killed 92 civilians, whereas al-Shabaab was responsible for the deaths of 91 civilians in the same period (Daily Nation, 2017).

Today, AMISOM consists of 22,126 uniformed personnel, including troops and police. The military component has been contributed by Burundi, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Sierra Leone and Uganda; the police component comes from Burundi, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Uganda and Zimbabwe (AMISOM, n.d).

In 2016 the EU agreement in reducing AMISOM's payment by 20%, from $1,028 to $822 per soldier per month, together with sanctions imposed on the Burundi government and payment delays, gave rise to many controversies regarding the sustainability and unity of AMISOM. Leading figures in several AMISOM troop-contributing countries have threatened to withdraw their troops – including Burundian president Pierre Nkurunziza, Kenyan president Uhuru Kenyatta, and Ugandan government officials (Williams & Hashi, 2016). It is highly likely that AMISOM will scale down in the future.

7.3 Multilateral organizations

Since the overthrow of Siad Barre in 1991, many multilateral actors have been active in Somalia, supporting stabilization and peace-building initiatives. Basically, they have focused on processes of state formation, the rule of law, youth employment, protecting human rights, the war on terror and on humanitarian concerns.

7.3.1 United Nations

The UN plays a significant role in Somalia, with several of its organizations and agencies present and working on the ground. UNDP is working to help bring stability and long-term peace-building initiatives based on inclusive political leadership, economic opportunity, and empowerment of women. The World Food Programme focuses on food supply and food insecurity in times of drought, UNICEF works mainly on children's issues, and the WHO works to promote better health.

7.3.2 The European Union

As the largest donor to Somalia, the EU has been actively engaging in Somalia for many years. The EU supports Somalia at the diplomatic, political, humanitarian and security levels, following its commitment to the stabilization of Somalia. One example is the Brussels Conference of 23 April 2009, aimed at soliciting contributions. Further, the EU has supported and pledged millions of euros for training the Somali police, through the UNDP Rule of Law Programme. The EU also pays the salaries of AMISOM personnel (EU

Council Secretariat, 2009). An important goal of Western governments was to hold indirect elections in 2016 (Menkhaus, 2017). They feared that federal states could distance themselves from the central federal government, and there was agreement of the importance of curbing the practice of vote-buying.

7.4 The USA

The US engagement in Somalia over the past three decades includes the 1992 Operation to Restore Hope in Somalia. This operation was led by US President George H.W. Bush and then his successor President Bill Clinton and continued until 1994. When Clinton called for full withdrawal of US troops, also the UN withdrew forces. The mission succeeded as a short-term humanitarian mission but had less success in state-building and restoration of law and order in Somalia (Poole, 2005).

Recently, the US role in Somalia has focused on counter-terrorism and drone strike policy. There has been little support in terms of training Somalia's National Intelligence and Security Agency (NISA). Like other countries, the USA is trying to restore full diplomatic relations with Somalia – mainly because of Somalia's coveted long and strategic coast, but also its unexploited energy and other natural resources and massive rebuilding needs. Somalia's potentially lucrative emerging market cannot be underestimated (Arman, 2013).

7.5 The Gulf States, Turkey, and Egypt

The Gulf States, including Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and United Arab Emirates, have been actively involved in the political and economic arena in Somalia. Although they have participated, hosted and facilitated several peacebuilding conferences, Saudi Arabia and Qatar have been blamed for financing al-Shabaab – allegations they have dismissed as baseless (Shiferaw, 2016). The 2007 Doha Communiqué emerged from a peacebuilding conference where Qatar succeeded in bringing together the TFG and ICU.

Qatar remains an important external actor in Somalia. It has engaged not only in humanitar-

ian efforts but also in mediating various Islamist factions, often taking sides. Qatar has engaged in Somalia through personal networks, diaspora and religious networks as well as through other governments. Importantly, it was through pressure from Qatar that Ethiopian troops withdrew from Somalia in 2016. Qatar's engagement in Somalia has extended to supporting various projects, including building up social infrastructure like schools, supporting hospitals and funding other humanitarian efforts, often through local Muslim Brotherhood CSOs and the diaspora (Hansen, 2013c)

The Qatari/United Arab Emirates (UAE)/ Saudi Arabia rift will have an effect on Somalia. Both Somaliland and Puntland have taken a pro UAE stand in the conflict, whereas Mogadishu has remained neutral – in reality, a defeat for UAE/Saudi Arabia, who attempted to pressure the Somali government in a more anti-Qatar direction (Hansen, 2017), and who did not support the president elect (Menkhaus, 2017). It should be noted that an Emirates company now runs both Berbera port and Bosasso port, and that the Emirates are building up a military base in Somaliland. The withdrawal of Qatari forces from the Eritrea/Djibouti border can also have implications for Somalia.

Turkey's involvement in Somalia has produced some positive results. The visit of Recep Tayyip Erdogan in Mogadishu in 2011 and his decision to open an embassy there was seen as heralding the restoration of bilateral diplomatic relations. Turkey has been supporting humanitarian relief and development projects in many areas including health, education, livelihoods creation and building infrastructure in Somalia. Moreover, President Erdogan re-visited Mogadishu in January 2015, to show Turkey's long-term commitment to Somalia. Mention should also be made of the hundreds of Somali students who have received scholarships for study in Turkey, and of the schools being built in Somalia. However, according to a Reuters report, after the attempted coup in Turkey in 2016, the Turkish government asked the Somali government to close two schools and one hospital for being affiliated with Fethullah Gulen, the cleric whom Erdogan has blamed for the attempted coup (Sheikh, 2016). The Somali government followed the recommendations, mainly in order to avoid jeopardizing bilateral relations. One should critically examine whether the role of Turkey in Somalia is entirely humanitarian, or in pursuit of potential business opportunities.

The UAE, Egypt and Saudi Arabia have a long history of involvement with Somalia which seems set to continue, partly because of the solid historical ties based on cultural and religious affinity. However, in recent years, Saudi Arabia and the UAE have increased their sphere of influence in the Horn of Africa. Piracy and the threat of Islamic terrorism were among the major threats that led to this intensification (Huliaras & Kalantzakos, 2017). The United Arab Emirates, especially Dubai, have become a centre for Somali trade. Since 1990 approximately US$ 800 million of Somalia's trade exchange has been shifted from Europe to Dubai, making it the third largest trade partner among Arab League countries and number one on the entire African continent (Center for Research and Dialogue, 2004).

Egypt's role in Somalia since 1950s has been largely cultural and educational, as many Somalis travelled to Egypt for educational purposes and returned having espoused the Brotherhood ideology. This was a significant base in establishing Islamist organizations like Al-Nadha in the late 1960s in Somalia. Most future leaders of Islamic organizations had contact with this organization, which opened up a large Islamic book collection to the general public (Hansen & Mesøy, 2009).

8. Informal external actors

Also informal actors play a key role in Somali politics and economics. Somalia has a considerable diaspora in the USA, Canada and Europe. What role do diaspora communities (in Norway and in general) play in the power relations and power dynamics in Somalia?

8.1 The role of the diaspora

The role of the Somali diaspora in political and economic aspects cannot be underestimated. Apart from the annual flow of US$ 2 billion in remittances, the millions-strong Somali diaspora has played a key role in humanitarian aid, promoting education, healthcare, public infrastructure and private enterprise (Hammond, 2012).

> Almost 60% or 70% of Somalia's economy is dependent on diaspora because of their role of supporting close families' livelihood through remittance. These remittances are further used to pay children's school fees, healthcare and other basic needs.[16]

In addition, contributions from diaspora communities have ranged from covering basic needs to contributing to economic growth.

> The diaspora creates businesses in Somalia and through business creation they create job opportunities, which is part of economic growth.[17]

However, there are also concerns about unregulated trade and commerce with old, counterfeit, or illicit products entering the Somali market.[18]

The Somali diaspora continues to practise clan fragmentation also abroad. Their engagement in terms of positive or negative contributions concerns power relations. Due to their economic power, various diaspora groups have been changing the local balance of power to pursue their personal interests, either supporting or opposing Somalia's political system (Galipo, 2011). And as one respondent claims, the Somalia diaspora has been contributing to conflict, directly or indirectly:

> The diaspora has fuelled Somali conflict through sending a lot of money to fellow clan members, and this money has been used to buy weapons, to mobilize clan youth and to take up arms.[19]

Within Somalia, anti-diaspora sentiment has been increasing due to the diaspora's dominance of important institutions in the central region.

Sheikh and Healy (2009) underscore that the Somali diaspora is a double-edged sword engaging in both conflict and peacebuilding – by supporting their clans financially in times of conflict, and also supporting local peacebuilding and state-building initiatives. These authors also argue that diaspora involvement in support of local peacebuilding and reconciliation has been a significant ingredient for success, particularly in Somaliland and Puntland.

A source interview for this report notes that diaspora groups actively engage in the economic development of their home countries through remittances. For instance, the Somali diaspora has been significantly involved in economic development, societal and political affairs. This can take place through the transfer of skills and

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16   Interview. Fredrikstad, 30.03.2017
17   Ibid
18   Interview. Oslo, 15.05.2017
19   Interview. Oslo, 13.05.2017

knowledge, or business networks available to the diaspora.[20] For instance, many members of the diaspora are politicians today – notably the president, the prime minister and the speaker of the parliament of Somalia. Further, the diaspora can transfer core democratic values learned from the host countries to their homeland (Safia, 2017).

However, the diaspora is also problematic. Somalia's current government is dominated by diaspora ministers, and they are by many seen as aloof from ordinary Somalis, and lacking in cultural sensitivity.[21] Somalis who spent the civil war years in Somalia may now perceive diaspora returnees as blocking their access to positions within politics and administration.

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20   Interview. Ås, 12.05.2017

21   Interview. Kismayo, 23.04.2017

9. Human rights situation

In the past decades, most parties involved in the conflict have committed gross violations of human rights. It should also be noted that the clan system itself leads to discrimination. The clan law, *Xeer*, is based on the relative strength of the clans, so small clans will receive less compensation for crimes, and have less protection, as long as the clan justice system remains dominant in rural areas, standing in contrast to international standards of criminal law. Some larger clans, like the Rahanwhein, have traditionally been viewed as inferior, but have produced militias that have changed this situation to a certain extent. Other clans, like the Ajuran, have been strong but are now weakened, and are also discriminated against. The very lowest strata in Somalian society are occupied by clans with non-Somali origins (like the Jarir, Benadiri or Bajuni), or clans historically associated with specific types of labour (Midgaan, Tumal).

The police forces in southern Somalia are paid only sporadically, and are highly vulnerable to bribery. Human rights training is lacking; and older policemen (and legislation) are adapted to the procedures of the Barre dictatorship, where human rights violations occurred on a large scale.

According to Human Rights Watch, the main victims of human rights violations are the weak and vulnerable, internally displaced persons, women, children and the elderly (Human Rights Watch, 2017). According to the UN Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM), 1202 children were recruited by armed groups in southern and central Somalia alone in 2017 (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2017a). Also journalists have been killed in recent years. The current Somali Federal Government has failed to address these violations.

UNOCHA reports that 76% of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) incidents were linked to internally displaced persons (IDPs) (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2017a). In Mogadishu alone, there are some 400 000 internally displaced persons, who are subject to rape and forced evictions, according to Human Rights Watch (2017). Women and girls are at high risk, accounting for the vast majority of GBV incidents. The UN reported allegations of AMISOM soldiers accused of rape, but an AMISOM investigation stated that these allegations were unfounded (Human Rights Watch, 2017).

Human rights violations are committed by various types of actors, including the government, allied domestic forces, and al-Shabaab. The latter is known for targeted killings, beheadings, and executions of people allegedly working for the current government, and has also been accused of forcibly recruiting children (Human Rights Watch, 2017). In the past, al-Shabaab blocked supply routes for humanitarian actors, causing famine in parts of Somalia in 2011 (Majid & McDowell, 2012; Maxwell et al., 2012). Gross violations of human rights also undermine the legitimacy claimed by informal actors such as al-Shabaab, as witnessed in the devastating truck bombing in Mogadishu in October 2017. Foreign forces engaged in air strikes have also caused civilian casualties. Ethiopian forces are accused of having killed 14 civilians in July 2016 (Human Rights Watch, 2017).

For Norway as a development partner in Somalia, this poses clear challenges to operating in Somalia. However, there are also opportunities for positive intervention, especially with relation to protection of vulnerable communities. Protec-

tion and justice for victims can be relevant for stabilization efforts in Somalia, providing legitimacy to the current central administration (which has established a national human rights commission), and the administrations of the regional states. Such efforts need to include communities subject to Gender-Based Violence, child recruitment and early marriage, and forced property and land evictions. Special attention must be given to the complex power relations, in particular the 'gatekeeper system' (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2017a) that makes access and implementation of protection programmes difficult. The system is complex, as government forces, al-Shabaab, and clan militias all extort payment from civilians and aid convoys at checkpoints (Human Rights Watch, 2018). Another issue is access, which is hindered partially by insecurity, and partially by restrictions imposed by foreign actors, like the US government's counterterrorism legislation that sees humanitarian aid as support for terrorism when aid agencies operate in al-Shabaab-controlled territory (Human Rights Watch, 2018).

A human rights-based approach to stabilization efforts and to violations of human rights can enable recipients of humanitarian and development assistance to be transformed from passive recipients of aid to active rights-holders (Broberg & Sano, 2018). In addition, such rights-holders must be able to exercise this right against another party, generally a public authority, the state. There may be challenges in the Somali context, as the state is weak and not functioning properly. On the other hand, this could be also seen as an opportunity for development cooperation, to strengthen the capacities of the state, as well as to make the rights-holder aware of the certain rights, like the right to food or to a healthy environment (Broberg & Sano, 2018). Applying a human rights-based approach to development may lead to changes in how donors deal with certain issues. For example, a human rights-based approach would consider discrimination and inequality as the main causes of poverty. That in turn would re-direct the focus for development assistance to marginalization and vulnerability (Broberg & Sano, 2018), central factors in the Somali context. It has long been argued that al-Shabaab recruits and maintains popular support from marginalized clans and rural populations. On the whole, shifting to a human rights-based approach to development would be a significant contribution to stabilizations efforts in Somalia.

10. Synthesis and conclusions

Power and resources are distributed in Somalia among a range of formal and informal, domestic and international actors. These actors operate in various contexts, with differing consequences for development cooperation. This country analysis has aimed at shedding light on the interests, incentives and institutions linked to these actors that may enable or challenge societal change, stabilization and economic prosperity in Somalia.

In terms of politics, domestic and international informal interest groups – clans, Islamic extremist groups, religious groups, and the diaspora – have competing claims over rights and resources with formal interest groups, largely the current Somali Federal Government (SFG) and the regional federal states. Overall, the power of the formal regional federal states and the SFG is weak; and with more than 100 of the 275 Lower House representatives coming from the diaspora, it is questionable whether the current government represents the Somali people (Menkhaus, 2017). The focus on the '4.5 formula' of clan representation is insensitive to recent demographic changes, leaving a growing proportion of the population unsupported by such clan bloc voting. This will further erode popular support for the current government. The real power lies with individuals, powerful clan militias, and al-Shabaab, who control the sub-contracts for humanitarian aid, import/ export businesses, and the illicit trans-border trade. Armed clan paramilitaries are the most powerful forces in Somalia, and they largely oppose the concept of a strong, centralized government (Menkhaus, 2016). The main challenge here lies in the blurred boundaries between formal and informal domestic actors: for example, in the security sector, police and military personnel work for clan militias and private security companies. There are countless actors with access to physical force. The weakness of formal institutions (and the absence of a monopoly of physical force) is exemplified by the security situation in Mogadishu. Despite its being the political and military centre of the SFG, and enjoying the support of AMISOM troops, serious and devastating attacks by al-Shabaab cannot be contained. This also shows the high level of corruption and lack of trust within the security and armed forces of the formal administration.

The economic processes that generate wealth in Somalia are linked to how political decisions are made. The business community in Mogadishu and elsewhere in Somalia has considerable leverage on political outcomes. Although the private sector benefits from the absence of rule of law in some areas, it is also willing to pay taxes for the provision of public goods, such as electricity – and, most importantly, security. Political offices are seen as vehicles to generate wealth. This has created a set of dynamics that influence development, with rampant corruption, particularly during elections. And since political actors have access to funds, al-Shabaab has begun targeting their salaries for protection. Private entrepreneurs are no exception to this 'business model' where a potential security threat becomes an instrument for paid protection (Menkhaus, 2016). This illustrates the interrelationship between representatives of formal organizations and informal actors in Somalia. Civil society organizations are often no exception, and are sometimes headed and manned by individuals working solely for personal gains.

Somalia's war economy has brought insecurity to Mogadishu, seen as the main hub of commerce and aid. Whoever controls Mogadishu also con-

trols the money to be earned and allocated in the private sector, the public sphere, and in the bilateral and international aid structures. To exercise control, Mogadishu's district commissioners draw on powerful clan paramilitaries recruited from the police and the military, technically with no legal authority. Without paying protection money, virtually no major hotel, business, or service provider can operate in the capital city. This is also symptomatic for the entire country: the war has generated an elite of business people, warlords, politicians, and religious leaders, all benefiting financially from insecurity. A stable, functioning national, regional and local administration is not in their interest, as that would diminish the base for their business model: insecurity. The borders between formal and informal actors are blurred. For example, al-Shabaab tends to dress its suicide bombers in military uniforms, further adding to the confusion (Menkhaus, 2016). Petty traders, small business owners, teachers and doctors suffer from insecurity and conflict, as they have to pay bribes and protection money for security, and risk their lives when doing business, teaching students, or providing health services in Mogadishu and elsewhere in the country.

Apart from domestic actors, regional and international formal and informal actors with vested interests have contributed to both conflict and stabilization in Somalia. Turkey, for instance, has invested large amounts in infrastructure, and has shown strong political support and presence in Somalia, in hopes of winning a political ally as well as securing business opportunities for Turkish interests. Powerful international actors have provided financial support to their preferred candidates in recent elections. With Qatar currently in conflict with its Arab neighbours, Turkey and Qatar backed the successful presidential candidate Farmajo, while Ethiopia, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates backed the incumbent candidate (Menkhaus, 2017). These elections also demonstrated the power of the diaspora, which lined up 16 of the 24 presidential contenders, and with the top three elected political leaders coming from the diaspora. This also entails risks, as the diaspora may have little understanding of

or linkage to the local elites in charge of powerful paramilitaries. Most of the international actors have formal institutions but they display different values and ideas, ranging from political ideologies to religious and cultural beliefs that have had an impact on Somali politics. International actors, such as the African Union, the United Nations, individual nation states, or supranational institutions like the European Union, need recognized governments to work with. That in turn affects how the international community addresses politics and stabilization efforts.

Given the complex system of gatekeepers in Somalia, and a war economy that is self-perpetuating, there are great risks in engaging in Somalia politically and economically. As per the 'do no harm' work of Mary Anderson (Anderson, 1999), there is recognition that aid may serve to undermine stability and be diverted for other purposes. Here a Political Economy Analysis can assist in avoiding possible negative impacts of aid. A major risk of operating in Somalia is the high level of corruption. For example, food redistribution is common: people entitled to food aid may lose one-third to one-half of their share to gatekeepers, through 'taxation' (Maxwell et al., 2012). Those receiving commodities or cash benefits are often subject to corruption, such as school fees for children, fishing boats, food aid, or building materials (ibid.) Where gatekeepers are armed and have more power than the local administration or the humanitarian agency, humanitarian and development actors are unable to exercise adequate control (Jaspars & Maxwell, 2008). Even if corruption occurs, the partnership is not terminated, because there are no alternatives (Maxwell et al., 2012).

On the other hand, the absence of international intervention in terms of aid, as well as reconciliation efforts from the outside, has helped Somaliland, and to some extent Puntland, to achieve some degree of stability and economic prosperity: That stands as a lesson learned for southern Somalia. What Weinstein (2005) calls 'autonomous recovery' can be observed in the northern part of Somalia, where functioning state institutions have emerged. While internal

intervention relies on questionable tools of external influence such as aid, sanctions, or conditionality, autonomous recovery can offer internal incentives for strong leaders to engage in lasting institution-building.

This does not mean that informal forces in Somalia – the clan leaders, religious groups, businesses, or the diaspora – are ultimately the most powerful. Today, the clan cannot work as an instrument to distribute resources equally, as fighting within subclans has become increasingly common. Somalis have not experienced a lasting peace for many decades, and have remained locked into a system of patron–client relationships based on clannism. On the other hand, clan affiliation can also be a perceived means of protection and access to resources. What is lacking is the trust in rights and obligations that could result into a social contract respected by all Somalis, irrespective of background, lineage, political affiliation, or economic status. Without such social contract, and the will to make reconciliation work, the prospects for peace and statebuilding will remain bleak.

In sum, conflict in Somalia is dynamic, and actors, their interests, and their power relations have changed over time. The Somali conflict is the result of a mixture of factors that include the legacies of colonialism, a kinship system used for political and economic purposes, the contradictions between a modern, centralized government and an egalitarian culture, East/West Cold War politics and the war on terror, underdevelopment and urban/rural income inequalities, corruption, and violations of human rights (Bradbury, 1994).

It is essential to restore trust in formal institutions that recognize the existence and importance of informal actors, managing to integrate both. Other drivers of conflict and stabilization (corruption, fiscal stability, human rights situation, the role of aid, climate change impacts, etc.) all play central roles in making institutions work. What is needed is a social contract to avoid a situation where everyone in power aims at becoming an autocrat: instead, the goal should be to engage in 'co-production' (Ostrom, 1996).

Somalia today is at a crossroads. The current government has created great expectations – but its inability to contain al-Shabaab, to provide public goods, to limit human rights violations, and basically to represent the Somali people, has shattered the hopes for a stable and prosperous future.

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