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A Lost Cause Recouped: Peace Enforcement and State-Building in Somalia

STEPHEN BURGESS

A constitutional convention with representation from clan elders adopted a new constitution for Somalia on 1 August 2012, which paved the way for the election of a federal parliament and a new president of the Federal Republic of Somalia. This article examines two opposing explanations for this progress in a country long dismissed as a lost cause. Bottom-up stability, with grassroots equilibrium, is argued to be more likely to bring representation and renewal. The counter-hypothesis emphasizes security from the top down as more likely to lead to representation and renewal. Both hypotheses are evaluated here based on peacebuilding theory and evidence from Somalia and other relevant cases, including Afghanistan and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). This review concludes that top-down security was possible and desirable in Somalia, paving the way for continued security efforts and stability work. The strategy of the African Union, European Union, and United States – supporting Burundi, Kenya, and Uganda with high-salience peace enforcement in Somalia – succeeded in bringing greater top-down security. The article explains that a combination of international assistance and training and increased combat effectiveness forced Al Shabaab out of Mogadishu and other urban centres. Western governments and international organizations continue to pursue top-down security as the best hope for ending war and restoring peace in Somalia. Top-down security, if properly implemented, can pave the way for bottom-up stability efforts and renewal and representation in Somalia, Africa, and elsewhere.

It has been argued that representation and voice from the ‘bottom up’ are key factors in attempting to bring about sustainable security and renewal. A lack of representation coupled with interethnic competition and poor governance have played significant roles in causing intrastate conflict, particularly in Africa over the past two decades. In the process of peacebuilding in war-torn states, the approach of the United Nations (UN) and other entities has been largely ‘top down’. The international community has attempted to rebuild the state in order to provide peace and security and to promote democratic institutions in order to advance representation. This approach has brought about peace and security as well as representation and renewal in Cote d’Ivoire, Liberia, and Sierra Leone, but not in the Central African Republic (CAR) or the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). In some instances, the problem has been the state itself, which proved incapable of providing security, much less representation and renewal.¹

Peacebuilding and state-building have often been implemented without representation from civil society. Séverine Autesserre found that in the DRC, war continued in the east of the country partly because the top-down peacebuilding methods of the UN

and other agencies failed to work with local communities and deal with disputes over land, minerals, and other issues.² She contends that bottom-up representation by local people and appropriate responses by UN and nongovernmental organization (NGO) officials are needed in peacebuilding operations in order to resolve the numerous local conflicts that underlie civil wars. Autesserre concludes that if peacebuilders work from the bottom up and involve local communities and civil society, conflicts will be resolved more rapidly and more holistic security and sustainable renewal would be achieved.³ Synthesizing 11 peacebuilding cases, Thania Paffenholz summarizes the contributions that civil society makes to peacebuilding from the bottom up: protection of civilians; monitoring and advocacy; as well as socialization, social cohesion and facilitation, and service delivery.⁴

In this article, peacebuilding is defined as an activity that is intended to permanently establish peace and security in a country. 'Top-down security' is state security primarily achieved through the establishment of a government with military and police forces that can monopolize the use of force. The process of implementing top-down security involves peace enforcement and state-building. 'Bottom-up stability' means equilibrium achieved through the attainment of a balance of power among conflicting societal forces, not necessarily secured through the efforts of a sovereign state. Representation is defined as conveying the input of the people through institutions, elections, and delegates. Renewal means the successful rise and consolidation of state and society from the aftermath of conflict through peacebuilding.

In some cases, top-down state-building is part of the problem and not part of the solution. Pierre Englebert has argued that state sovereignty and recognition tend to be used by the most powerful groups, which exclude other groups and monopolize the state for their own advantage and enrichment.⁵ Therefore, attempting to reconstitute the state after civil war is likely to bring power monopolization and fail to provide representation. For example, the DRC is such a large country, misruled by Mobutu Sese Seko for more than three decades and lacking infrastructure, that it has proven most difficult to achieve representation and effective governance. Instead, President Joseph Kabila has used state sovereignty and recognition to benefit his inner circle from mining revenues, foreign aid, and other sources, while excluding other groups.⁶ As a result, Transparency International rates the DRC as one of the most corrupt states in the world.⁷ Given the negative influence of the state, Englebert recommends that sovereignty be withheld from recovering failed states, such as the DRC and Somalia, and alternatives be found to provide effective governance, such as federation or partition or outright dismantlement. He concurs with Jeffrey Herbst that some states are too large to be governed effectively and that smaller units, perhaps at the ethnic or language group level, could be relied on to provide effective representation and governance.⁸

Englebert points to Somaliland, which has prospered as a largely stable entity for the past two decades and a democracy for the past decade, despite lack of state recognition, because the ruling elite has to cater to representatives of the people to achieve support and legitimacy.⁹ In Somalia's first three decades as a sovereign state (1961–1991), Somalilanders were excluded from ruling circles. In the last

two decades, they have enjoyed the benefits of peace and relative prosperity without recognition as a non-recognized entity. Given the record of the past five decades, one would expect that Somaliland will not reunite with a reconstituted Federal Republic of Somalia (FRS).

If and when security is established, a major issue that has been debated for more than a decade is the time in which representation, in the form of electoral democracy and representative institutions, can be established.¹⁰ If established too soon after conflict, elections and representation have tended to inflame ethnic tensions and block the development of good governance, setting back renewal efforts and endangering security. Also, the weakness of governance institutions can lead to degeneration and renewed conflict. If established too late, elites often establish pacts which limit representation and grassroots voice. Another issue concerns power-sharing agreements, which are often a necessary alternative to majority rule, but which can degenerate and collapse if maintained too long, leading to renewed conflict. A final issue relates to the durability of representation, renewal, and security. Post-conflict African states have the tendency to degenerate into the same patterns of poor governance and ethnic favouritism and violence that caused the conflicts in the first place.¹¹ It is quite likely that countries like the CAR and the DRC will face prospects of poor representation and governance as well as the possibility of degeneration into conflict for decades to come.

One of the most important issues facing Africa and its Western partners is how to bring an end to the conflict in Somalia and generate security, representation, and renewal.¹² The Republic of Somalia failed and collapsed in 1991, and attempts to revive it have failed until September 2012, when it was reborn. In the past decade, Somalia has become a growing security threat, especially with the rise of Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujaheddin. Al Shabaab ('The Youth' in Somali) is an Islamist militia and Al Qaeda affiliate that has attacked civilian targets in Uganda, supported attacks by affiliates in Kenya, and threatened to attack Western targets, as well as enlisting supporters in the United States and Europe. Al Shabaab arose as a threat in 2006 as a radical wing of the Islamic Courts Union (ICU). Al Shabaab rejected ICU involvement in the Djibouti peace process and became a formidable military force in the wake of the December 2006 Ethiopian invasion. From 2007, the militant organization's forces fought Ethiopian forces and occupied most of South-Central Somalia and much of the capital, Mogadishu. In August 2011, Al Shabaab was driven out of Mogadishu by African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) peacekeepers from Uganda and Burundi as well as Transitional Federal Government (TFG) forces – the Somalia National Armed Force (SNAF).

Somalia could be the most difficult of all failed states to reconstitute with a top-down security approach. The state collapsed over two decades ago, and a number of armed groups oppose its reconstitution. In terms of state security, Somalia ranks at the bottom of the failed states list, as it has lacked state institutions for more than two decades.¹³ The Transitional Federal Government, founded in November 2004, was supposed to pave the way for the reconstitution of government in Somalia, but it has been corrupt, limited in its capacity to govern, and at times heavy-handed. A 2012 UN report on the TFG found the following:

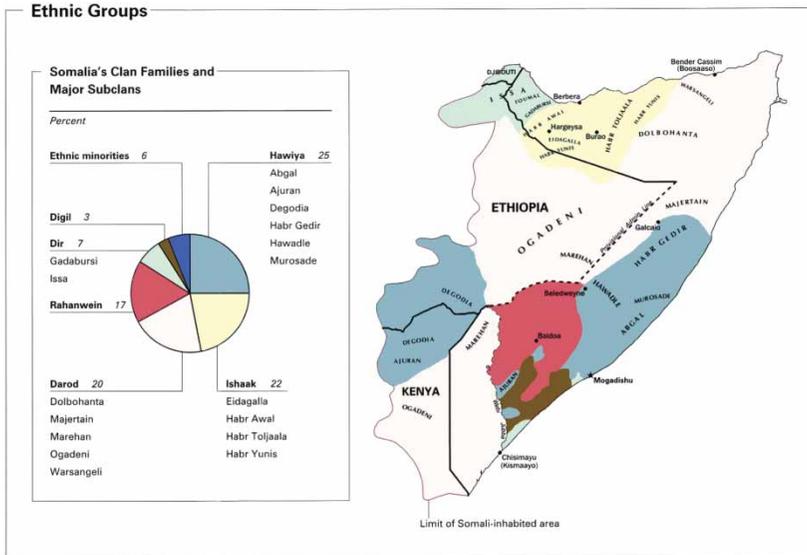
In addition to the reports on the link between some pirate kingpins and members of government, reports of massive corruption have emerged alleging that key leaders of the transitional federal government (TFG) are involved in misappropriating \$7 out of every \$10 received by the TFG in 2009/2010. These findings are not new, as a World Bank report released in May 2012 found that \$131 million – 63% of total recorded revenue – was unaccounted for in the TFG revenues in 2009/2010. The UN report suggested that a further \$40 million could be missing in 2011. Although there has been increased international attention concerning the levels of corruption in Somalia, it is not a new phenomenon. With the period of political unrest and the lack of state structures and oversight frameworks, corruption could only increase.¹⁴

In regard to state failure and elite corruption, Somalia is comparable to the cases of Afghanistan and the DRC. All three have experienced considerable difficulties in achieving security, representation, and renewal through a top-down security approach. Given the difficulties of a top-down security approach, a bottom-up peacebuilding approach has been put forward as a viable alternative.

Policy circles in African and European governments, the United States, as well as in the African Union (AU), European Union (EU), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and United Nations have debated the feasibility of a top-down security approach for Somalia versus a bottom-up stability approach, which takes into account representation from clans and inter-clan dynamics (Figure 1).¹⁵ For more than five years, these actors have pursued a policy of attempting to establish state security in Somalia, so that Al Shabaab can be defeated and the processes of peacebuilding, renewal, and representation can begin to take hold throughout the country. State security, it is widely accepted, is essential before renewal and representation can fully develop.

In trying to enforce peace so that the state could be reconstituted, Ugandan and Burundian AMISOM peace enforcement troops and the Somalia National Armed Force fought to gain control of Mogadishu from 2007 to 2011. The 2011 offensive by AMISOM and the SNAF that pushed Al Shabaab out of Mogadishu was accompanied by the entry of Kenya and Ethiopia into the fray, led to the takeover of other Al Shabaab power centres in South-Central Somalia, and ended Al Shabaab's lucrative hold on the port city of Kismayo. TFG forces were trained with the goal of forming a new military for Somalia and eventually taking over the lead role in Somali security from AMISOM. The TFG has handed over power to a federal government, which is working to develop the institutions necessary to run a modern state that can earn the confidence of its people, is legitimate and democratically elected, and can engage in the long-term effort to provide for a better standard of living for the Somali people.¹⁶ Recent donor conferences, including ones in London and Istanbul in 2012, have promised to reinforce the top-down approach with additional funding. A constitutional convention with representation from clan elders adopted a new constitution for Somalia on 1 August 2012, which paved the way for the election of a federal parliament in mid August and the election of Hassan Sheikh Mohamud as president of the Federal Republic of Somalia in September.¹⁷

FIGURE 1
SOMALI CLANS



Source: Somalia Summary Map, Central Intelligence Agency, 2002, http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/africa/somalia_ethnic_grps_2002.jpg

In opposition to the top-down security approach, there are two positions. Constructive disengagement contends that top-down state-building should be abandoned, based on the calculation that reconstituting Somalia was virtually impossible.¹⁸ Less radical is a bottom-up stability position, based on the presumption that AMISOM and the Transitional Federal Government cannot defeat Al Shabaab, stabilize South-Central Somalia, and build a functioning federal government. The process of trying to defeat Al Shabaab, moreover, would upset the balance of power among the Somali clans and lead to a new civil war.¹⁹ A large proportion of Al Shabaab's fighters come from the Rahanweyn clan, and attacking Al Shabaab would weaken that clan and embolden other clans to take advantage of the power vacuum.

Evidence for the bottom-up argument was found in the nature of Somali society and clan-based militias, which have dominated South-Central Somalia for more than two decades. The militias have entrenched, and any attempt to impose a strong federal government and army would be rejected. In addition, stability proponents have long contended that AMISOM and the SNAF have been too weak and Al Shabaab too strong to bring about top-down security, and they have viewed the Transitional Federal Government as dysfunctional and corrupt.²⁰ Therefore, for 'stability' advocates, the best that South-Central Somalia could do was to generate grassroots stability by enabling local-level institutions, such as the Islamic courts, to develop and function and to encourage international engagement with the various clans in order to maintain a balance of power.²¹ Stability advocates criticized the African

and foreign governments for pushing too hard for an end to the eight-year transitional government period in August 2012, because it would have granted power to Transitional Federal Government leaders of questionable legitimacy and transparency who would restrict representation and hamper the peacebuilding process.²²

The alternative received support from Bueger, Stockbruegger, and Werthes, who concluded that a comprehensive approach needed both top-down and bottom-up approaches. They endorsed international efforts to work through the TFG (although they noted its weakness), as well as Somaliland and Puntland. The latter two *de facto* states have built society from the bottom up and solved clan divisions through locally driven mechanisms. One of their suggested approaches was engaging in a dialogue with local organizations, clans, and governance structures.²³ Matt Bryden and other experts have warned, however, against international efforts that focused too much on reviving the central government and argued for the independence of Somaliland and autonomy for Puntland.²⁴

This article examines two opposing hypotheses. One is that the establishment of bottom-up stability, with grassroots equilibrium, is more likely to bring representation and renewal than a top-down security approach. The counter-hypothesis is that the establishment of security from the top down is more likely to lead to representation and renewal than a strictly bottom-up approach. Both hypotheses are evaluated based on peacebuilding theory and practice, as well as evidence and analysis from the case of Somalia and other relevant cases, such as Afghanistan and the DRC.²⁵ The argument is that top-down security was possible and desirable in Somalia and that the creation of a state has paved the way for continued top-down security efforts and bottom-up stability work. The strategy of the African Union, European Union, and United States in supporting Burundi, Kenya, and Uganda with high-salience peace enforcement in Somalia succeeded in bringing greater top-down security. The article explains that a combination of international assistance and training and increased combat effectiveness by AMISOM and the SNAF led them, against expectations, to drive Al Shabaab out of Mogadishu, Kismayo, and other urban centres. The article explains why Western governments and international organizations continued to pursue the top-down security approach against difficult odds. It also explains why security is essential for representation and renewal in the process of ending war and restoring peace in Somalia. It explores the prospects for a new government in Somalia and the continuing role of clan politics. The article demonstrates that top-down security, if properly implemented, can pave the way for bottom-up stability efforts and renewal and representation in Somalia, Africa, and elsewhere.

The ‘Stability’ Hypothesis and the Case against a ‘Top-Down Security’ Approach

Policy and academic experts who have argued in favour of the stability option tend to have a detailed knowledge and understanding of Somali clans, inter-clan dynamics, and power balances. They have also expressed scepticism about the capabilities and intentions of AMISOM and the SNAF and the effectiveness of the Transitional Federal Government as a future government of Somalia. Matt Bryden observed

that Somalis were deeply suspicious of efforts to revive the central government, given their experience with the corrupt and repressive Siad Barre regime, 1969–1991:

International efforts to rebuild Somalia have historically focused on the restoration of central government. However, restoration of state institutions represents both an apparent solution to the conflict and its most obvious underlying cause. The predatory, corrupt and often brutal nature of pre-war institutions has instilled Somali society with a profound suspicion of the state's coercive power. Successive initiatives aimed at reviving Somalia's central government have all too often prompted even greater violence.²⁶

Furthermore, according to Andre Le Sage in 2010, '[t]here is a danger that building a strong Transitional Federal Government military capability will drive nonaligned groups into a defensive posture that opposes TFG and international interests'.²⁷ This scepticism about the TFG and its military forces stems from past experience in which the SNAF suppressed sections of civil society and favoured one external supporter, such as Ethiopia, or one clan over others.²⁸ Therefore, the argument has been that it is possible that the military forces of the TFG and its successor would not stabilize South-Central Somalia but rather cause a new outbreak of fighting.

Clan politics are such that top-down national security will be difficult to achieve in Somalia, and stability may be the most that can be attained. In 2010, it seemed there was a chronic inability of foreign military and governance support to advance the transition to a Somalia government and army. Instead of a top-down security approach, Le Sage argued for diplomacy with the various clans to degrade Al Shabaab capabilities:

A detailed assessment of the current situation reveals opportunities for the TFG and its international supporters to drive additional wedges between the insurgent groups, degrade their capabilities, and extend TFG control in Mogadishu and other parts of south-central Somalia. Rather than disengaging or rushing toward military action, this requires international pressure on the TFG to engage in political deal-making that co-opts key sub-clans and elite actors, and lays the groundwork for effective security operations at a later stage.²⁹

The essence of the stability argument is that bottom-up peacebuilding and diplomatic engagement with the clans must be given time to achieve results and that top-down security and premature state-building will backfire and cause greater conflict.³⁰

The stability argument is based on the historical experience of Somalia in which civil society and commerce tended to thrive when central authority was absent and was suppressed when it was reconstituted.³¹ Peter Leeson has found that this was the case in the period from 1995 – when the UN Mission to Somalia (UNOSOM) ended – to 2006, when the Islamic Courts Union defeated the warlords and united South-Central Somalia. During this period, civil society and commerce emerged and developed.³² There was bottom-up peacemaking at work, with many Somali civil society organizations striving to end the violence among the warlords, and there emerged relative stability and a balance of power among the clans.³³ Admittedly, at the same time there were problems that arose from the lack of a central

government and from warlords who occasionally strong-armed commercial firms and civil society organizations.

The problem has been the centralization of power, which has tended to lead to violence and degradation of civil society. The Siad Barre dictatorship featured 'state capture' by his sub-clan, massive abuses of state power, and the disintegration of both civil society and the state. In 2006, the ICU took over South-Central Somalia and centralized power at the expense of the warlords, which was initially welcomed. However, the ICU leadership came to be dominated by extremist elements that suppressed civil society and imposed draconian measures on Somalis. The extremists received arms shipments from Eritrea, Ethiopia's arch-enemy. Finally, they challenged Ethiopia's right to the Ogaden region, which helped to prompt the invasion in December 2006 and an escalation of violence and a flow of foreign violent extremist fighters into Somalia.

The 2007–2009 Ethiopian occupation and surge of Al Shabaab military activities devastated much of South-Central Somalia and quashed hopes for peace and renewal, as well as the development of civil society and representation. In addition, the SNAF attacked civil society organizations, which lowered Somali perceptions of the Transitional Federal Government and the top-down transition process. In sum, the experience from 2006 to 2012 enabled 'stability' proponents to make pessimistic predictions about the current top-down security approach and its impact on Somali society.³⁴ Even now, another Somalia expert and stability advocate, Roland Marchal, doubts the capability and the will of AMISOM forces and the SNAF to engage and defeat Al Shabaab in the countryside.³⁵

The 'Top-Down Security' Approach

In spite of the difficulties with state-building and stability in Somalia, African and Western states and international organizations have continued to pursue a top-down security approach, due to an inclination towards states and sovereignty as the basis for peace and security.³⁶ The African Union as well as IGAD member states, particularly Kenya, Uganda, and Djibouti as well as Ethiopia, persisted with the Somalia peace process that led to the establishment of the Transitional Federal Government in 2004 and AMISOM in 2007 and had the ultimate goal of reconstituting the Republic of Somalia. The African Union was established in 2001 largely to deal more vigorously with Africa's numerous security problems. The organization immediately set out to justify its existence by attempting to resolve as many conflicts as possible, with a mainly top-down approach. This included a concerted effort to stabilize Somalia, enforce peace, and reconstitute the state. The AU, like its predecessor, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), was oriented towards state sovereignty and used that guiding principle in its policies towards Somalia.³⁷

Similarly, IGAD was founded in order to protect Eastern African countries from man-made and natural threats to state survival and human security, and its approach was to seek the reconciliation of clan leaders and state reconstitution for Somalia, which was embodied in the Djibouti peace process. Kenya and Djibouti were especially concerned with establishing a state in Somalia in order to prevent spillover

from the conflict into their territories. Ethiopia was concerned with establishing a state that it could control, given the historical animosity between Somalia and Ethiopia. The United States and the European Union supported the African Union and IGAD in the hope that the Somalia problem could finally be resolved and in order to prevent Al Qaeda and other extremists from establishing a base there. Thus, there has been an inherent belief within Western and African policymaking circles that the establishment of a skeleton state with some form of representation would inevitably enhance security, which would bring stability as well as confidence that inter-clan dynamics could be managed by an inclusive government.³⁸ Therefore, the August 2012 deadline was set in order to end the TFG and pressure Somali leaders to establish a permanent government in Mogadishu.

The degree of commitment of Somalis to state-building and the reconstitution of the Republic of Somalia is crucial to the ultimate success or failure of the project. In the past decade, there were many Somali nationalists who joined the TFG process in order to revive the Somali state (for example, ICU leaders who joined as a result of the Djibouti peace process). However, the TFG was also filled with opportunists who enriched themselves by taking advantage of their positions and a process that was being funded by outsiders. A 2011 International Crisis Group report found that ‘Somalia’s Transitional Federal Government (TFG) has squandered the goodwill and support it received and achieved little of significance in the two years it has been in office. It is inept, increasingly corrupt and hobbled by President Sharif’s weak leadership’.³⁹ The 2012 UN report on the TFG found that, ‘in 2011, nearly one-quarter (USD 12 million) of all government expenditures were “absorbed” by the offices of President Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, Prime Minister Abdiweli Mohamed Ali and parliament speaker Sharif Hassan Sharif Adan’.⁴⁰ Clan politics were also predictably strong within the TFG. For example, the first president of the TFG (2004–2008), Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed, favoured his Darood clan and sought to marginalize the Hawiye clan.⁴¹ The TFG came to resemble the corrupt and ethnically imbalanced Hamid Karzai government in Afghanistan.⁴² Given the TFG’s sorry record, the spectre of corruption and questionable legitimacy will continue to pose challenges for the new Federal Republic of Somalia. Given the level of corruption and weakness, outsiders have remained engaged in the Somali state-building process in order to prevent its collapse and to provide incentives for continuing Somali buy-in.

After 11 September 2001, the United States became a major driver of the top-down security approach in Somalia, especially with the Bush administration’s ‘Global War on Terror’. In the wake of the American occupation of Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003, US officials and policy experts scrambled to find formula for stabilizing the two countries and for nation-building. Some pointed to the examples of American occupation of Germany and Japan as cases in which the reconstitution of the state and top-down security led to prosperity and success.⁴³ Until 2007, the United States tried reconstituting the state in Afghanistan and Iraq and tended to neglect bottom-up initiatives. The United States brought such a perspective to its Somalia policy and engaged in the support of state-building and top-down security.

The US Department of Defense (DOD) established the Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) in Djibouti not to engage in a bottom-up 'hearts and minds' campaign to win over Somalis, but rather to undertake kinetic operations against Al Qaeda and other extremists in the region. CJTF-HOA shifted its approach and adopted a bottom-up 'hearts and minds' campaign, which centred on the drilling of wells for Somali pastoralists living in areas adjacent to Somalia (especially in Kenya and Ethiopia). This shift happened at a time in which American experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan were leading to a strategy and policy review, which led to a change of course and adoption of counter-insurgency (COIN) strategies, which focused on engaging from the bottom up with local populations and securing them and providing services.⁴⁴ The CJTF-HOA campaign scored some initial successes but experienced serious setbacks in Ethiopia in 2007 and Kenya in 2009. CJTF-HOA was forced to reformulate the campaign, which became less focused on Somali pastoralists and relatively less effective in helping to achieve American security goals in the Horn.⁴⁵

In 2005, the new US Assistant Secretary of State for Africa, Jendayi Frazer, assumed a leading role in Somalia policy and a more robust strategy of indirectly combating Islamist extremism.⁴⁶ At first, the United States supported the Somali warlords versus the surging ICU, as well as backing the development of the Transitional Federal Government into a governing and military force. After the ICU defeated the warlords and united South-Central Somalia under its rule, the Bush administration acquiesced to the Ethiopian invasion of Somalia in December 2006, and the United States increased military assistance to Ethiopia. The Bush administration also backed the plan of the African Union to send a peacekeeping force to Somalia in early 2007. The US Department of State led the way in arranging the training and equipping of Ugandan and Burundian AMISOM forces and the new military of the TFG – the SNAF. From 2007 to 2011, the United States persevered with this policy, as several thousand AMISOM troops were pinned down by Al Shabaab in a perimeter consisting of ten square blocks in Mogadishu.

Up until 2012, US Department of Defense officials were generally not willing to engage AMISOM and the SNAF.⁴⁷ Some officials were dismissive of AMISOM and the SNAF, believing that both were too weak and poorly led and incapable of defeating Al Shabaab. Others were affected by the failed 1993 American mission that led to 'Black Hawk down' and the death of 18 American special forces personnel.⁴⁸ It was left to the Department of State Political-Military Affairs office, especially the Africa Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA) programme, and security cooperation officials in embassies in Kampala, Bujumbura, Addis Ababa, and Nairobi to engage with AMISOM and the SNAF. They organized the training and equipping of Burundian and Ugandan troops and the SNAF, and arranged assistance for their operations in Mogadishu and in the rest of South-Central Somalia.⁴⁹

The successor to Jendayi Frazer, Assistant Secretary of State Johnnie Carson, continued the top-down peace and state-building policy under the Obama administration, as articulated in March 2010:

US policy in Somalia is guided by our support for the Djibouti peace process. The Djibouti peace process is an African-led initiative which enjoys the support of IGAD, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development. It also enjoys the support of the African Union and the key states in the region. The Djibouti peace process has also been supported by the United Nations, the European Community, the Arab League, and the Organization of Islamic Conference. The Djibouti peace process recognizes the importance of trying to put together an inclusive Somali government and takes into account the importance of the history, culture, clan and sub-clan relations that have driven the conflict in Somalia for the past 20 years.⁵⁰

The United States spent USD 650 million from 2007 to 2012 in the top-down security enterprise.⁵¹ Most of the funds were channelled through the State Department ACOTA programme for training, equipping, and supporting Ugandan and Burundian forces, which became the core of AMISOM.⁵² The DOD provided support, with combined exercises and help in training. CJTF-HOA arranged intelligence sharing with AMISOM for defensive purposes. Finally, in April 2013, with the lifting of the arms embargo on Somalia, the United States began arms shipments to the SNAF.

The European Union and the UN have spent hundreds of millions of dollars on the top-down security approach in Somalia. The European Union was motivated by the threat posed to member states from Somali extremists as well as European solidarity with the United States in countering violent extremism. Italy and the United Kingdom, as the ex-colonial powers, were particularly concerned with the fate of Somalia and contributed bilaterally and through the European Union towards its renewal. Since AMISOM was established in March 2007, the EU has contributed EUR 411 million (USD 575 million) to AMISOM through the AU's African Peace Facility and EUR 4.7 million to support AMISOM's planning capacity. In 2010, the EU established its Training Mission in Somalia (EUTM) to train more than 3,000 members of the SNAF. The EU has also funded the training and development of the new Somali national police force. The EU has spent hundreds of millions of euros supporting governance and security, education, and economic initiatives for Somalia.⁵³

In January 2009, the UN Security Council passed resolution 1863, which established the UN Office of Support for AMISOM (UNSOA) and mandated the delivery of a logistics capacity support package that would normally be reserved for UN peacekeeping operations. The resolution authorized AMISOM to support the Transitional Federal Government and the transition to the Federal Government and to help train the SNAF and support the development of the police force.⁵⁴ UNSOA has remained the vehicle through which the UN supports top-down security efforts in Somalia. The UN Security Council was unwilling to authorize the establishment of a UN peacekeeping mission to Somalia, given that there was no peace to keep and UN peacekeepers would be put in harm's way. Even so, Uganda and Burundi continued to request that AMISOM be converted into a UN peacekeeping operation with the hope that additional resources and troops would flow into Somalia. However, the AMISOM arrangement remains, with a much expanded force of 17,731 African troops on the ground.

Evidence and Analysis

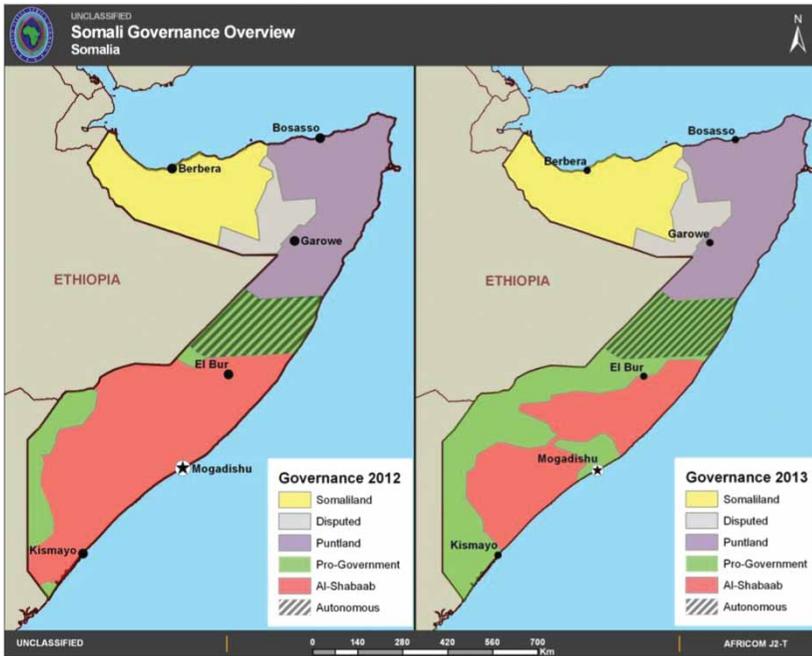
Evidence shows that AMISOM and SNAF strengthened and scored major successes against Al Shabaab, and that the Federal Republic of Somalia has been reconstituted. This is contrary to the contention of some bottom-up stability advocates that a top-down security approach would be a non-starter. Of particular significance were the August 2011 liberation of Mogadishu and the Kenyan intervention in Somalia that led to the takeover of the Al Shabaab stronghold of Kismayo and much of the surrounding province of Jubaland (see Figure 2).⁵⁵ Thus far, Somali clans and inter-clan dynamics have not been negatively affected by the AMISOM and TFG offensive, state reconstitution, and the election of President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud.⁵⁶

The Transitional Federal Government has been superseded by the Federal Republic of Somalia government, which has been striving to rebuild the state and provide security and representation. The federal constitution is being implemented, the federal parliament has been legislating, and President Mohamud has been exerting his authority. However, it is still uncertain how much change there will be and how the new government will work, as Al Shabaab continues to pose a threat and as many of the old faces from the TFG remain players in the political process.

The establishment of the Federal Republic of Somalia, the SNAF, and the national police force presents an opportunity to bring about security, representation, and renewal, but the outlook is not clear. Al Shabaab has been on the defensive, and AMISOM and the SNAF may eventually prevail.⁵⁷ In spite of the progress that has been made, there is still evidence that top-down security in Somalia is not likely to bring about security, representation, and renewal. The government of President Mohamud, the SNAF and AMISOM may still disturb the equilibrium and balance of power among the clans, especially if the government gravitates towards one clan and suppresses others. Clan structures will remain in place, and clans still have their militias and will be able to resist both positive and negative top-down centralization measures. AMISOM will eventually be drawn down and will depart Somalia. The government and its forces are likely to remain weak and unable to gain full control over South-Central Somalia.⁵⁸ Corruption will still be a problem for some time to come. Representation will be exercised through the new Somali parliament, but it may struggle to exercise leverage over the new president and other decision-makers. In regard to renewal, it will be slow and remain dependent on international aid.

Analysis shows that the hypothesis that peace could be enforced in Somalia has been validated due to several factors. Uganda and Burundi made a long-term commitment of several thousand troops to the AMISOM mission. As of January 2013, there were 6,000 Ugandan and 5,430 Burundian troops in Somalia.⁵⁹ In particular, Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni was driven by a pan-Africanist, anti-colonial ideology and was determined to prevent violent extremists from outside of Africa (that is, Southwest Asia) from taking over an African country.⁶⁰ It is likely that President Museveni would have sent Ugandan troops to Somalia without external funding. However, support from the AU, the United States, the EU, and the UN

FIGURE 2
SOMALIA GOVERNANCE



Source: Statement by General Carter Ham, Commander US Africa Command (Washington, DC: US Senate, Committee on Armed Services, 7 March 2013).

has provided an extra incentive to keep the troops there until the mission is completed.

Burundi decided in 2007 to send troops because of the promise of funding for its military through the African Union, the European Union, the United Nations, and the United States. Also, Burundi was in the process of peacebuilding itself, with a military that was composed of soldiers from various armed groups that had been fighting each other until 2004 and required a peace and stability operation to help forge a national military. Although Burundian troops did not have much incentive to take the offensive in Mogadishu, they risked death to engage with Somali citizens door-to-door, which proved important in winning hearts and minds in the capital city.⁶¹

Also important in the success of the top-down security approach and peace enforcement were the Kenyan and Ethiopian interventions in late 2011. Suddenly, Al Shabaab was confronted with adversaries on different fronts. This helped in Al Shabaab's defeat in Kismayo and other important urban centres. Kenya decided to intervene in Somalia in October 2011 because of the kidnapping of Western tourists along the coast near the border with Somalia, as well as other concerns of a political and national security nature.⁶² Kenya was also willing to be a part of AMISOM and receive training and support from the international community. The commitment

to AMISOM held the promise of improving the professionalism and effectiveness of the Kenyan Defence Forces (KDF), as it had for the Ugandan and Burundian militaries. Due to legal hold-ups concerning Kenya's incursion across Somalia's border, Kenya was only made part of AMISOM in June 2012. As of January 2013, there were 5,500 Kenyan troops in Somalia.⁶³

Ethiopia decided to intervene in Somalia in November 2011, after it withdrew in January 2009 because of a stated desire to support AMISOM and SNAF operations. Ethiopia also wanted to have a stake in Somalia, as AMISOM advanced and the Federal Republic of Somalia was reconstituted. However, Ethiopia did not join AMISOM. For more than half a century, Ethiopia has been wary of a strong and united Somalia that might interfere in Ethiopia's Somali region (otherwise known as the Ogaden). Ethiopian troops continue to occupy areas south of its border with Somalia, although it has pledged to turn these areas over to AMISOM forces, the FRS, and SNAF.

Training under the State Department's ACOTA programme by contractors, such as Bancroft Global Development Corporation and Pacific Architects and Engineering, was important in raising the combat proficiency level of the AMISOM forces to a point where they could fight Al Shabaab and win. Leadership was important, especially by a new AMISOM force commander (Major General Fred Mugisha) and a new Ugandan Peoples Defence Force (UPDF) contingent commander (Colonel Paul Lokech) in 2011, who led AMISOM and TFG (SNAF) forces in the liberation of Mogadishu. They replaced less capable and less assertive commanders. The AMISOM offensive succeeded in capturing the national stadium, which put pressure on Al Shabaab strongholds within the city. SNAF troops improved their performance, thanks to training by the European Union and the United States and because they fought alongside their more professional Ugandan, Burundian, and Kenyan counterparts.⁶⁴

Al Shabaab was not as powerful as thought, partly because the movement alienated the local population by imposing numerous restrictions, such as banning music and other cultural activities, and inflicting cruel and unusual punishments under *shar'ia* law. Another factor was a split in the leadership of Al Shabaab. In June 2008, Sheikh Moktar Abu Zubair, known as 'Godane', pledged allegiance to Osama bin Laden and, in September 2009, Godane appeared in an Al Shabaab video in which he offered his movement's services to Al Qaeda. The linkage with Al Qaeda was not well received among some of the more nationalistic members of Al Shabaab. Also, Godane was from the Isaaq clan in Somaliland and not from the Rahanweyn clan which predominated in Al Shabaab. In December 2010, Godane was removed as Emir of Al Shabaab by a former leader, Sheikh Moktar Robow, when Godane opposed the inclusion of the veteran extremist, Sheikh Hassan Dahir Aweys, in a leadership role after Aweys' militia, Hizbul Islam, merged with Al Shabaab.⁶⁵ This split and others, as well as the departure of some foreign fighters in the wake of AMISOM's advance in 2011, weakened Al Shabaab.⁶⁶ In September 2012, Al Shabaab suffered defections from a segment of Hisbul Islamiyya, a once independent, more Somalia-focused guerrilla group fighting against AMISOM and the TFG.⁶⁷ Some Somalia

experts have predicted that Al Shabaab will turn into a less religious and more nationalistic militia that will carry the banner of the Rahanweyn clan.⁶⁸

It is possible that the clan structure and clan militias are not as significant a force as they were in the warlord days of the 1990s and early 2000s. The years of anarchy and the rise of Islamism as an alternative force appear to have weakened the power of the warlords.⁶⁹ These factors appear to make state-building and peacebuilding more viable than they were a decade ago.⁷⁰

On the one hand, the hypothesis that top-down security was bound to fail will not hold up if AMISOM and Somali forces continue to make progress and the political process in Somalia continues to advance. Some advocates of the bottom-up stability approach have refused to consider that the top-down security approach might work. Some security experts who observe Somalia provide an *affective explanation*, suggesting that some advocates have been too emotionally wedded to the bottom-up stability model.⁷¹ Others provide a *cognitive explanation*, given the experience of failed state reconstitution efforts for the last two decades and the continued fragmentation of Somali society.⁷²

On the other hand, if the government and its forces do not succeed in reconstituting Somalia, it will be yet another case of relying too much on top-down solutions. The tendency is for international organizations and state actors to adopt top-down approaches and neglect bottom-up methods, due to an unwillingness to go and learn about local conditions and engage with grassroots populations.⁷³ In addition, these actors share the belief that states can eventually be made to work. International organization officials are often seconded from governments and are accustomed to dealing with states and not the grassroots. Thus, the 'New York orthodoxy', to which the UN and other organizations subscribe, is drawn from a *systemic bias* in favour of states and sovereignty.⁷⁴

Comparative analysis shows that local capacity is the greatest encumbrance to the rebuilding of Somalia, as it is in most recovering failed states. In their book on peacebuilding, Michael Doyle and Nicholas Sambanis find that local capacity, degree of international support, and degree of hostility among factions are key determinants of success or failure.⁷⁵ In Somalia, the degree of international support is now relatively high, with 17,731 AMISOM security forces on the ground and continued funding from the African Union, the European Union, the United Nations, and the United States. The degree of hostility between Al Shabaab and other Somali armed groups, measured in deaths inflicted, proved not to be as high as previously feared. Al Shabaab and the other groups proved not to have the military capability to cause widespread death.⁷⁶ In sum, the lack of local capacity leaves Somalia susceptible to continuing violence as well as degeneration back towards state collapse.

Representation in Somalia has taken place through traditional clan leaders, and a representative balance has been sought among clans, which has provided a degree of stability. Since the Transitional Federal Government was formed in 2004, members of parliament have been chosen by clan leaders or *shura* councils, and a '4.5' formula has been used to balance the four major clans (Darod, Dir, Hawiye, and Rahanweyn) and a coalition of minor clans in positions of power. In August 2012, clan elders elected the Federal Parliament of Somalia who then met to elect a

president. TFG President Sheikh Sharif Ahmed was expected to be easily elected as president of the Federal Republic, as he supposedly had support from the leaders of all the clans, was a member of the powerful Abgaal sub-clan of the Hawiye clan, and had external support and financial resources to sway the electorate. However, one of his opponents, Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, who was also a member of the Abgaal sub-clan, ran an effective anti-incumbent and pro-reconstruction campaign as the head of Somalia's first political party (the Peace and Development Party) and was not dependent on external support or vote-buying. Although he was an academic and not accustomed to the rough-and-tumble of Somalia politics, Hassan Sheikh Mohamud was able to win support from clan leaders and members of the new parliament and was elected by 179 votes to 90.⁷⁷

Afghanistan, like Somalia, collapsed as a state into civil war in the 1990s and began a peacebuilding process in the 2000s. The stability hypothesis and inter-clan balance of power argument about representation in Somalia are similar to those that have been made regarding Afghanistan, especially regarding ethnic Tajiks and Uzbeks and Pashtun tribes. Stability proponents have warned for years that post-Taliban Afghanistan has been unduly controlled by Tajiks over Pashtuns, even though a Pashtun, Hamid Karzai, was installed as president in 2002. Continued Tajik control has helped to fuel the Taliban insurgency. Stability proponents also point to an imbalance among Pashtun tribes. The Taliban has deep roots in the Ghilzai tribe, which has traditionally competed with the Durrani federation of tribes (to which President Hamid Karzai and Afghan kings have belonged) for leadership over the Pashtun and Afghanistan. Until a balance is created in which the Ghilzai tribe and elements of the Taliban are given greater power, the war is likely to continue. The United States and NATO only began to pay serious attention to ethnic and tribal balances in Afghanistan when a bottom-up counter-insurgency strategy led to greater focus on the Pashtun tribes in southern Afghanistan. According to Thomas Johnson and Chris Mason:

In both southern Afghanistan and the tribal areas of Pakistan, rather than seeking to 'extend the reach of the central government,' which simply foments insurgency among a proto-insurgent people, the United States and the international community should be doing everything in their means to empower the tribal elders and restore balance to a tribal/cultural system that has been disintegrating since the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in 1979.⁷⁸

The case of Afghanistan provides an object lesson for Somalia. It is important for Somalia, as it rebuilds and eventually holds general elections, to maintain the elite pact, especially regarding the 4.5 clan balance, in order to prevent a return to fighting among warlords, which would open the door for an Al Shabaab comeback. It is uncertain whether inter-clan dynamics will be maintained as the process of rebuilding the country proceeds.

As in the case of Somalia in 2012, Afghan traditional leaders met in 2002 in a *loya jirga* and approved Hamid Karzai as interim president. Afterwards, Afghanistan moved to general elections. After two rounds of elections in 2005 and 2010, a more assertive parliament has resulted. For example, parliament in August 2012

passed votes of no confidence in Karzai's interior and defence ministers, which led to their removal. Even though Afghanistan has progressed towards representative democracy and has enjoyed tremendous international support, local capacity remains low and the state is weak and corrupt and susceptible to being overthrown by the Taliban. Somalia may follow the same path, unless President Mohamud is able to maintain the Federal Republic's links to civil society in order to counter corruption. Like Afghanistan, it is quite uncertain whether Somalia will progress to become a fully developed representative democracy.⁷⁹

President Mohamud indicated his intention to take a 'bottom-up' approach to building representation, whereby local administrations would be formed first and involved in the selection of regional actors. The government plan is to deploy local parliamentarians into their constituencies to assist with the setting up of interim, 90-day administrations that would be replaced, in due course, by locally elected bodies.⁸⁰ Eventually, representation would reach the federal government level.

Conclusion

This article comes at an advantageous moment for proponents of the top-down security approach in Somalia. The installation of a new government in Mogadishu and the success of AMISOM and SNAF are signs of the progress that has been made over the past two years and a vindication of the top-down approach. As a result, top-down security proponents claim that the advocates of the bottom-up stability approach have been too inflexible and unwilling to accept that peace enforcement and state-building would have a chance of success and would facilitate bottom-up efforts. The election of President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud involved top-down elite cooperation by clan leaders and clan balance as well as significant bottom-up support from civil society. His election demonstrates that both the top-down and bottom-up approaches are active in Somalia.

Two concluding observations can be made. First, the top-down security approach and the new Federal Republic of Somalia appear to be here to stay, and bottom-up stability advocates must promote real representation and holistic security and renewal within that framework. Second, it is likely that the cultivation of civil society and inter-clan stability and reconciliation from the bottom up is more likely to bring representation and renewal than a strictly top-down security approach. The ability of the Somaliland and Puntland governments to foster inter-clan stability through top-down and bottom-up approaches is instructive. If top-down security is not complemented by bottom-up stability, the new government will remain narrowly based and susceptible to authoritarianism and corruption. If the new constitutional order respects clan dynamics, civil society, and NGOs, there will be a better chance for genuine security, representation, and renewal to emerge for Somalis.

In regard to the interrelationship among security, representation, and renewal, the Somalia case has shown that security can be imposed from the top down and create conditions for representation and renewal. A number of post-conflict cases have demonstrated that the growth of representation is dependent on grassroots stability, the development of civil society, and service delivery by government, which can

bring legitimation. In addition, the COIN experience in Iraq and Afghanistan shows the interrelationship between sufficient security, service delivery, and grassroots stability and has created the possibility for legitimation and representation. Therefore, both security and representation are necessary for the renewal of state and society. For Somalia, renewal is a long-term proposition, which requires a sustainable peace-building approach, both from the top down and the bottom up.

In comparison to other cases, the Somalia experience is remarkable in that it demonstrates that a completely collapsed state can be revived. The process of revival has required considerable international support and intervention and the exhaustion of Somalis from two decades of war, which appears to have lowered the level of hostility and diminished their tolerance for conflict. If Somalia continues to progress, one can attribute it to the sustainment of outside support and skilful statecraft by President Mohamud and other leaders, as well as inter-clan balance and pressures from civil society. The possibility of renewal separates Somalia from states like the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), which is so large and the population so dispersed that it seems impossible for the central government to end the conflict in the east of the DRC and forge a Congolese nation state. The experiences of the DRC, as well as the Central African Republic (CAR) and Afghanistan, demonstrate the limitations of a top-down security approach.

It is uncertain whether Somalia can be fully reconstituted as it was before 1991. Somaliland continues to push for independence and recognition as a sovereign state, while the Federal Republic of Somalia wants Somaliland to become a federal state as part of a reunited Somalia. Currently, Somaliland is engaged in talks with the federal government of President Mohamud about the possibility of rejoining Somalia. However, Somaliland may not be persuaded to reunite, which could situate it on the trajectory of break-up that was traversed by previously divided states, such as Ethiopia–Eritrea and Sudan–South Sudan.

In Somalia, the African Union and AMISOM have demonstrated that they can successfully manage a major internal conflict and enforce peace with significant help from the United States, the European Union, and the United Nations. Thus, the credibility of the slogan ‘African solutions for African problems’ has been raised a few notches. The Somalia success holds out hope for stabilization efforts in Mali by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). Also, Uganda, Burundi, Kenya, and other states involved in the African Union Mission in Somalia should play a leading role in the operationalization of the African Standby Force.

For the United States, its indirect strategy has worked, so there has been no need for American personnel on the ground in Somalia. The US State Department must be given credit for sticking with the strategy and making it work. As for the US Defense Department, including AFRICOM, it has been less instrumental and was unwilling to engage with AMISOM until sufficient progress was demonstrated in 2012. The DOD managed to arrange for intelligence-sharing and joint exercises and training with AMISOM forces, which proved useful. However, the civil affairs activities of the

Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) have had little effect on Somalis and the stabilization process.

A new phase for American, European, and UN involvement in Somalia has begun. They must decide how much of a presence to establish in Somalia, and how much they should focus on supporting the top-down state-building process, and how much on bottom-up reconciliation and development activities.⁸¹

After the September 2011 violent extremist raid on the American consulate in Benghazi, Libya, the Department of State will likely be more cautious in opening an embassy in Mogadishu, although the US Agency for International Development has been supporting NGO operations inside the country. Although US Africa Command and CJTF-HOA have become more operationally assertive, the spectre of Benghazi may prevent the conduct of civil affairs inside Somalia.

The Somalia peacebuilding process is just beginning, and it will go through various painful phases. Concerted and sustained international engagement from the top down, coupled with Somali efforts from the bottom up, will make the process less painful and will create greater opportunities for success.

DISCLAIMER

The research and conclusions in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views and policy of the US Air War College, Air University, the US Air Force, the Department of Defense, or any other agency of the United States government.

NOTES

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