

## **Warlords and Peace Strategies: The Case of Somalia**

by  
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### **INTRODUCTION**

Peace negotiation after peace negotiation in Somalia fails. Is it really possible to achieve peace? This article will argue that earlier attempts at peace-making might present lessons that can enhance future attempts. The article will first examine the Somali clan system in general. It will then group the different strategies used to achieve peace in Somalia into four distinct categories, in order to understand how factors like centralization and the use of traditional structures have influenced earlier negotiations. The article concludes by strongly arguing that an active use of traditional clan structures must be a part of any successful peace strategy.

### **Clan and Patrimony**

In order to comprehend Somali politics, a basic understanding of the clan system is necessary.<sup>1</sup> The Somali clan system is patrilinear in the sense that the affiliation is most commonly transferred from father to son. It consists of two large groups, Saab and Samale, supposedly originating from the names of two brothers. Saab, who was a farmer, is identified as the forefather of the agricultural lineages Digil and Rahanwein.<sup>2</sup> The main lineages descending from the other brother, Samale, are Dir, Darod, Isaq, and Hawiye. The well-known expert on Somalia, Ioan Lewis, refers to these six lineages – Digil, Rahanwein, Dir, Darod, Isaq, and Hawiye – as the six Somali clan families, with Digil and Rahanwein being traditionally viewed as inferior due to their agricultural occupations.<sup>3</sup> However, these lineages were too large to function as effective political entities. Sub-lineages nominally descending from the descendants of these six main clan families were more important both traditionally and today. The different lineages had traditional leaders with titles like Suldaan, Malak, Ugaas, Garaad, or Boqor.<sup>4</sup> Lewis describes how these leaders functioned: “Although only a *primus inter pares*, the clan head is a symbol and focus of the agnatic solidarity of his clan.”<sup>5</sup>

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Once established, the office of the clan head was principally hereditary in the lineage of its foundation. Succession was primarily through primogeniture. The position of a traditional leader was somewhat weak and he had to pay attention to the opinions in his clan and the results of traditional councils.<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless, he had two very important functions, as described by Lewis:

When, however, the various lineages in a clan unite in an opposition to an external threat, the Sultan (the traditional leaders) position places him ideally at the front of his clan elders. With their support he represents his clan in external relations, as for example when deputations of different clans parley with each other in an attempt to settle a dispute. And within his clan he should concern himself with the general welfare of his people. Indeed, amongst his clansmen, a Sultan is ideally an arbitrator and a peacemaker concerned with maintenance of clan solidarity.<sup>7</sup>

It is important to notice that few among the most famous so-called warlords are traditional clan leaders with such titles, and that the warlords are in many ways exogenous to the traditional clan system.<sup>8</sup> The lower levels of traditional leaders, elders, are appointed in the local low-level clan council where most adult males participate. They thus fluctuate more than the Sultans. Many of them have appointed themselves by making popular suggestions in the local council or by taking popular initiatives. The elders might lose their role if their performance is perceived to be unsatisfactory by their “electorate.” The clan systems played, and still plays, a peace and reconciliation function, in large meetings of clan elders (*Gurti*) who officiate as mediators between feuding clans or families.<sup>9</sup> The clan elders come together and reach solutions through negotiations aimed at consensus. Such meetings take much time; the large Somaliland clan meetings, Shirs, that defused the tension in Somaliland, usually took more than six months.

Socio-economic factors, including patronage – a system in which a patron distributes gifts and services to his clients to assure their loyalty – are a part of the dynamics of the clan system; sometimes patronage is enough to make a person a clan elder.<sup>10</sup> This reflects the important distributive and economic aspects of the clan system. According to Amhed Alazhari, the system functions much like an insurance company, from which one can get help in times of hardship; thus, clansmen experiencing drought can get support from members of their clans. According to *Heer*, the traditional Somali clan law, the system actually incorporates such functions.<sup>11</sup>

Flexibility and fluctuation are key words when one tries to understand the clan system. Catherine Besteman indicates this in her controversial examination of the processes in which individuals changed places between lineages or changed affiliation within the lineage. One may gain a formal affiliation through a process called *sheegad*. The clan elders determine the conditions of acceptance,

usually consisting of some kind of payment in kind, such as livestock. After making such payment, the individual gains access to physical and financial protection by their new clan family.<sup>12</sup> Her study focused on Juba valley, the area with perhaps the most flexible clan structures in Somalia; nevertheless she and other researchers also stress this flexibility for the whole of Somalia.<sup>13</sup> The alliances within all the Somali lineages have been notoriously unstable during the last 12 years and intra-clan fighting, often with one group of a clan allied to another faction from a different clan, was and still is common.<sup>14</sup>

One must be careful not to overestimate the importance of the clan system in Somali politics. A more direct form of patrimonialism has influenced Somali politics and indeed the clan system itself.<sup>15</sup> While much lip service was paid to a nationalist agenda, greed dominated the politics of the Somali republic from 1960-69, and worsened closer to its end. The parties were divided along clan lines during and before the elections. This changed when the election ended and the candidates defected from their parties in order to get offices in the public administration. Party leaders who distributed positions and money thus gained loyalty.<sup>16</sup> Lewis correctly claims that the parliament was “a sordid marketplace.”<sup>17</sup> The coup of Siad Barre in 1969 was a reaction against corruption as well as an effort to facilitate a general shift toward a more nationalistic agenda, demanding reclamation of those parts of French Somaliland (Djibouti), Kenya, and Ethiopia containing a Somali majority.<sup>18</sup> However, the loss of the Ogadeen War (1977-78) became the turning point for this policy; his nationalistic agenda became bankrupt, and he partly started to depend on the same patrimonial strategies that had been one of the most prevalent features of the preceding regime, manipulating the clan system.<sup>19</sup> Siad Barre’s regime has long since vanished but the clan system and the patrimonial traits still exist. This combination has ultimately influenced all the peace-building strategies employed in Somali, of which there have been many.

### **Strategies for Peace in Somalia**

A variety of different peace-building strategies have been applied in Somalia. Although there are probably many ways to categorize them, this article will try to use four categories based on the degree of centralization of the peace negotiations and the degree of affiliation with the local community, the latter meaning both grass root organizations and traditional clan leaders.<sup>20</sup> One category could be named the *building block approach*.<sup>21</sup> This approach was promoted by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) from 1997 and subsequently by the United Nations.<sup>22</sup> This approach tried to find local solutions, involving traditional mechanisms of conflict resolution and often traditional clan leaders. It was not a new approach, as Somalis themselves had earlier used such strategies, perhaps most successfully in Somaliland. Nor was it new among international organizations; the Life and Peace Institute advisory group

had earlier advised the United Nations to apply such an approach, supported by advice from notable Somali experts like Lewis. This advice was given to, among others, UNOSOM (United Nations Operation in Somalia).<sup>23</sup> The former chief of cabinet in Puntland, Ismail Haji Warsame, defines the approach perfectly when he states the foundations of Puntland's policy:

We believe, however, that Somalia shall never return to the unitary system of government and that every future political arrangement will focus on a power-sharing formula between a weaker central government and stronger autonomous regional states. Thus, the future Somali Central Government will be formed on the basis of power-sharing between the would-be formed regional states.<sup>24</sup>

The *building block approach* promotes a decentralized state consisting of regions that have extensive powers. Puntland and Somaliland are cited as examples that have benefitted from such a strategy. Councils of clan elders were supposed to elect a local administration. This approach suggested that Somalia should be federalized and that peace must be created locally before it can be achieved centrally. This approach was associated with the use of the traditional clan system and civil society, but the relationship was not clearly defined, and so enabled the warlords to exploit building block rhetoric to gain additional funds and power.<sup>25</sup> The weakness of the *building block approach*, at least in the south, was that in practice it allowed the warlords power, and it became dependent on their will. The use of the more powerful upper echelons of the clan was lacking in the south, thus the checks and balance system of the north never developed, and the southern warlords were allowed to rule in an absolutist way.

However, the *building block approach* seemed superficially to have been a major success in Somaliland and to have been somewhat successful in Puntland. Somaliland appeared to have adopted a system of governance that was anchored in the clan-based political culture of the predominantly nomadic northern Somali society. *Shir beeleedyo*, conferences attended by representatives of all the local clans in Somaliland, played a central role in peace-making.<sup>26</sup> 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. Each of the three influenced conditions in Somaliland. The first (Bur'ao *Shir Beeleed*) declared independence from Somalia and installed the first Somaliland interim administration. However, it was ultimately frustrated by the lack of resources as the clans still controlled sources of income.<sup>27</sup> The second and more broadly based Borama *Shir Beeleed*, held from January to May 1993, elected Mohamed Ibrahim 'Egal' as president and replaced the old interim administration with a new one. Ibrahim Egal was the last democratically elected prime minister of Somalia and an experienced politician able to play on patrimonialistic connections. The third *Shir Beeleed* in Hargeysa, held from October 1996 to February 1997, re-elected President Egal

and endorsed an interim constitution. A parliament with an upper chamber of traditional elders, the *Gurti*, was this constitution's most central institution.<sup>28</sup> These arrangements seem to function well; while Somaliland still has some problems, they are of an entirely different nature than those of the rest of the country. Somaliland's problems are often linked to the frustration of former members of the Somali National Movement (SNM) that relinquished power by themselves and felt ill-treated by the governments of Egal and his successor, Dahir Riyale Kahin. In January 2002, President Egal's term was extended by one year by the parliament, amid protests by most of the new Somaliland parties, many of whom feared that Egal was becoming another African leader that refused to step down from power. Nevertheless, when Egal died in May 2002 during his medical treatment in South Africa, the constitution functioned and the vice-president, Kahin, was inaugurated as president without any problems. A successful local election was held in December 2002 while a presidential election took place in April 2003.<sup>29</sup> The elections, combined with the clan identity of the new president, a Gadabursi, was important because Somaliland now had democratic structures paralleling its clan-based structures, a mixture that functions extremely well.

The arrangements in Puntland were similar to those in Somaliland. A revitalized, and almost entirely Majerteen-based Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF) assumed power in 1991. However, the organization was militarily weak and was fragmented by internal quarrels.<sup>30</sup> This state of affairs made the administration ineffectual, and allowed discontent to spread among the local population.<sup>31</sup> In 1998, SSDF convened a *Shir Beeleed* in Garowe, where more than 400 delegates established the Puntland state of Somalia. Puntland, in contrast to Somaliland, was formally declared a part of Somalia.<sup>32</sup> Traditional elders elected the former head of SSDF, Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed, as interim president.<sup>33</sup> Yusuf was perceived by the Ethiopian government as being their champion against Islamic fundamentalism; he had survived a coup attempt by Islamic fundamentalists and subsequently became known as an ardent enemy of the latter. His election thus ensured Ethiopian support for the Puntland effort. However, Yusuf, who had previously shown a ruthless style of leadership when he headed the SSDF, conformed approximately to William Reno's definition of a warlord, turning his political authority into an effective means for controlling markets without relying on formal state institutions.<sup>34</sup> This disregard for formal state institutions surfaced clearly in 2001 when Yusuf's interim period ended. Yusuf, whose term of office ended on 30 June 2001, claimed that his mandate had been extended by parliament. Puntland's traditional elders, meeting in Garowe in July, rejected his claim to an extended mandate and named Yusuf Haji Nur, Puntland's former chief justice, as acting president until the election of a new administration. The elders subsequently convened a general congress in August 2001 and, on 14 November, elected Jama Ali Jama to a three-year term in the hope that this would end the leadership conflict. However, this strategy failed. A war followed, where Yusuf's part of the Majerteen clan, Omar Mahmud, supplied him with sol-

diers while another faction of the Majerteen clan, Osman Mahmod, supplied his enemy. Receiving military support from Ethiopia, Yusuf won the struggle, while Jama Ali Jama failed to control any cities. Subsequently, Puntland became an authoritarian structure without any opposition or traditional foundation.

Another peace-making approach attempted in Somalia was the centralized *top down approach* applied in the UN-sponsored Addis Ababa Conferences (1993) and later in the Ethiopian-sponsored Sodere talks (1996-97) in addition to 10 other major conferences.<sup>35</sup> This approach is often associated with the second United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II). It was centralized in the sense that it tried to find a solution for the whole of Somalia, and top down in the sense that it focused on the leaders of the different fractions, the warlords, paying less attention to the clan leaders and civil society. The promoters of such an approach believed that centralized negotiations between the warlords could resolve Somalia's problems. Due to their military power, warlords were regarded as the only partners capable of creating peace. Nevertheless, some of these meetings involved traditional leaders and indeed former political leaders.<sup>36</sup> The third Addis Ababa conference in March 1993 stipulated a federal solution, a so-called two-tier approach. The centrally negotiated arrangement was to be combined with directly elected district councils and 18 regional councils. Three representatives from each of these regional councils were supposed to participate in a transitional national council.<sup>37</sup> However, this so-called bottom up approach became very centralized when the United Nations appointed many important officials. Kinfe Abraham states that:

Some of the manifestos of the above were that expatriates, who often had little or no experience in Somalia or their particular job, were recruited as Zonal directors and given power to match those of regional governors.<sup>38</sup>

The relationship with the "grass roots," the indigenous council of elders, was uneasy, the latter often being ignored.<sup>39</sup> The district councils were indeed a product of centralized, top down efforts. All in all, local politicians and traditional leaders always had less influence than the warlords, especially when the latter were given media attention and financial support to encourage them to participate. The key national positions were also often reserved for the warlords. For example, at the Addis Ababa conference all the positions in the important Transitional Charter Drafting Committee were initially reserved for them.<sup>40</sup> The warlords' vested interests made the centrally arranged negotiations into a game where the intention was to create a "cake," meaning the state structure. The second step, which usually was treated as most important for the warlords, was the allocation of the shares from this cake. In general, all of the high profile, centralized negotiations drew much media attention. There were some results, such as ceasefires, but they never lasted.<sup>41</sup> This type of negotiation thus strengthened the militia leaders and warlords through a process of legitimization but achieved

little else. As Ken Menkhaus claims, “In the process, UNOSOM established a precedent that crystallized the factions as the centrepiece of national reconciliation.”<sup>42</sup>

However, the regional security body, IGAD, under the active leadership of Kenya and Ethiopia, chose to use this approach for the latest attempt to bring peace to Somalia, the Eldoret/Nairobi process that started during the autumn of 2002. The sport of dividing up the state for personal benefit was put last on the agenda, a very positive idea that turned the focus of negotiations away from the usual spoils game, and constitutional arrangements were to be settled before this issue was to be raised. In-depth discussion of reconciliation was stressed, as were the procedural and constitutional process. The technical committee, consisting of representatives from the IGAD countries, was to plan the process; they stipulated a longer time frame, a minimum of six to nine months for negotiations, and more delegates. The Eldoret/Nairobi negotiations stipulated a three-phase process. The first phase was to facilitate a cessation of hostilities, and establish a 300-member plenary, consisting mostly of representatives from the warlords’ organizations.<sup>43</sup> The technical committee later applied a clan-based, participation formula, where 400 seats were distributed: 84 seats to each major clan, 42 seats to the minorities, and 22 seats that the technical committee could distribute among the participants. The IGAD technical committee appointed a leaders’ committee, consisting of 22 individuals, mostly representatives of warlords. The second phase was to create six committees, for the constitution and federal government, land and property, disarmament, conflict resolution, development, and regional/international issues, each having 23 members. These were to present draft papers to the plenary session that were to be discussed and approved or amended. Then the issues of power sharing and the formation of an inclusive broad-based government were to be handled.

The warlords were thus empowered and, not surprisingly, soon after the initial ceasefire fighting between them started again. Nevertheless, heavy pressure from the IGAD countries made the warlords return to the table to negotiate. Pressure from Ethiopia – what many Somalis regarded as improper Ethiopian interference – created a new alliance, the G8 of political leaders and warlords who united to decrease Ethiopian influence during the meetings.<sup>44</sup> Thus, fragmentation and problems again became the order of the day. However, the constitutional committee, guided by consultants, seemed to open up to more traditional representation. Thus, perhaps this process is the start of a third type of process, a *dynamic approach*, where the focus might change from the warlords to more legitimate structures, although, given the power already granted to the warlords, it might be doubtful if such change can be achieved.

This *dynamic approach* has actually been applied earlier. The first leader of UNOSOM I, Mohammed Sahnoun, is often regarded as the man behind this strategy. While actively trying to support and facilitate the traditional Somali

clan negotiation structures and local governance, such a strategy also focused on low profile talks with the warlords. The idea was, as Sahnoun put it: “to do what the Somalis always recommended to me: that is, plucking feathers one at a time until the eagle ultimately cannot fly.”<sup>45</sup> Sahnoun carried out some notable projects, often in cooperation with the Swedish Life and Peace Institute. One of them was the Seychelles consultation of October 1992, which brought together civil society leaders to discuss the most appropriate approach to reconciliation in Somalia. However, the meeting was only intended to provide guidance and not to be a negotiating meeting. UNOSOM I also dealt with warlords: between 4 May and 19 July 1992 Sahnoun met Mohammed Farah Aideed, a very prominent USC warlord, at least three times, and met Ali Madi, another prominent warlord, several times. Sahnoun also had meetings with representatives from all the other major warlords. In a United Nations report made by Boutros Boutros-Ghali, although only one meeting with the elders is mentioned explicitly, it noted that the elders should be emphasized.<sup>46</sup> Robert Oakley, the American special envoy to Somalia, also promoted the dynamic strategy, as did Leonard Kapungo, the head of UNOSOM’S political division.<sup>47</sup> All of them dealt and negotiated with the warlords.

The fourth strategy was the *centralized bottom up approach* that produced the Transitional National Government (TNG). It was centralized in the sense that it tried to create a solution for the whole of Somalia; it was bottom up in the sense that it actively sought to involve the civil society. Unlike the previous 12 failed central peace plans, it was the first initiative not to focus on the warlords and faction leaders. The former Djibouti president, Hassan Guled Aptidon, first initiated this approach in 1998. The president, who then held the IGAD chair, asserted that any Somali peace process should be moved away from the faction leaders and warlords.<sup>48</sup> Djibouti’s next president, Ismail Omar Guelleh, headed the planning process. The conference was set to start on 2 May 2000. It resembled a traditional *Shir Beeleed* in its time frame. A slow and time-consuming negotiation technique was employed and made the conference last for some eight months. Siad Dualeh, from the president’s organizing team, told Reuters, “Warlords willing to participate . . . are welcome, but they will not be given a leading role.”<sup>49</sup>

The traditional clan leaders, women’s organizations, and Somali NGOs were actively invited to participate. As well, the Rahanwein Resistance Army (RRA), which had been founded in 1995 to protect the Rahanwein clan that previously had been taken advantage of in a most brutal way by the Somali National Alliance, and probably *al-Ithad al-Islam*, a fundamentalist association with connections to *al-Qaeda* during the early nineties, attended the conference.<sup>50</sup> Almost 1,000 participants attended the conference itself and a new parliament was elected for three years duration.<sup>51</sup> Abdulkasim Salad Hassan, a former minister during Siad Barre’s reign, beat his closest rival, Abdullah Ahmed Addow by 145 votes to 92 and was elected as president of a Transitional National Government.<sup>52</sup>



This was the most grassroots-based, centralized conference that the Somalis ever had, but it infuriated many of the warlords, and Hussein Aideed and Osman Atto refused to attend, partly because of the limited power they were granted. Other warlords, including Muhammad Sa'id Hirsi "Morgan," attended but later withdrew.<sup>53</sup> Morgan was offered a seat in the parliament, but refused to accept it. Most important, the RRA later withdrew from the agreement, partly because of the lack of focus on the redistribution of occupied lands and resources, and partly because it felt that it had received few powerful positions in the TNG. The RRA also objected when Mogadishu was selected as the capital instead of Baidoa, the city the RRA proposed.<sup>54</sup> Ethiopia also resisted the result of the Arta conference, feeling partly that Djibouti was too dominant, but also fearing the influence of Islamic fundamentalists in the conference itself.

### **Do These Strategies Work?**

Not one of these approaches has been fully successful. Nevertheless, a few of them actually achieved some minor successes. The centralized *top down approach* has been a failure and never created lasting arrangements. One explanation for this failure could be that inter-organizational and regional squabbles have unnecessarily increased the difficulty of centralized processes. For example, the Cairo conference of November/December 1997 was influenced by the rivalries between Egypt and Ethiopia.<sup>55</sup> Ethiopia, and also Eritrea and Djibouti, accused Egypt of disregarding the results of their previous attempts, of failing to mention their previous achievements in the documents produced under the Cairo conference, and of disregarding the security interests of Somalia's neighbors.<sup>56</sup> Ethiopia's closest ally in Somalia, Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed, condemned the Cairo conference in strong terms. Lurking behind the scenes were suspicions of Egyptian plans to weaken Ethiopia, another round in the old rivalry between the two states.

One could also focus on the brief amount of time allocated for negotiations in the conferences. The first Addis Ababa conference lasted from 4 January 1993 to the 22nd of the same month, some 18 days, a short time to resolve the difficult problems encountered.<sup>57</sup> However, by concentrating on these issues alone, one risks missing an essential point. Many of the warlords have vested interests in sustaining the conflict. They gain wealth, power, and legitimacy from it, and in some cases even protection from prosecution for grave offences against human rights. When no central government exists one can collect levies from areas allegedly "protected" by a warlord; when participating in a large congress few ask about human right violations.

The *top down approach* has been an unmitigated failure; it has bestowed legitimacy on the warlords and thus wasted a great deal of money and resources. Agreements were often achieved, but never respected. This argument could be countered by claiming that one needs to negotiate with people that have the

power to make peace. Such claims overestimate the degree of power that is wielded by most warlords, power derived partly from patrimonial relations with the traditional clan structure, and partly from money. David Keen claims, "Taking the power of warlords as given during civil wars may be a mistake; their influence is not simply possessed, but conferred by their supporters and foot soldiers."<sup>58</sup>

Such possession is often obtained by an active redistribution of resources or money, sometimes through the patrimonial channels in the clan system, but also through more direct connections transcending the clan system. In the former case, upkeep for clan elders is paid, in the latter case, the warlord simply hires his henchmen directly. Developments in Somalia in the late nineties showed how warlords became weaker as their money dwindled. Many of the international organizations trying to solve Somalia's problems, especially UNOSOM II and Unified Task Force (UNITAF), active between December 1992 and March 1995, failed to understand warlordism as an economic system. They often did not see the patrimonial side of the militia system in central parts of Somalia. Militia leaders and warlords needed money and resources, partially to pay their personal militia and partly to bribe local clan leaders into loyalty. The warlords also used the money to establish a more general system of patronage. More money made it possible to hire more soldiers, strengthen clan ties and thus increase the power of the warlord. A rich warlord was also able to threaten traditional clan leaders into loyalty.<sup>59</sup> As the late Bernard Helander put it:

Militia strength and the ability of factional leaders to hijack Somalia's future is a function of the levels of influx of dollars and aid. The more funds that come in, the more likely it is that the artificial factions will be able to continue to cling on to aspirations for power.<sup>60</sup>

Indeed, the developments of the late 1990s proved Helander right; the warlords lost power and their soldiers were bought by businessmen establishing their own militias. Eric J. Hobsbawm's description of rich pre-capitalist landowners' strategies to increase their own power by harnessing uncommitted armed forces is in many ways a good description of the warlord system and how influence in negotiations are bought by men who, "if they can be induced to accept the patronage of some gentleman or magnate, will greatly add to his prestige and may well on a suitable occasion add to his fighting or vote-getting force."<sup>61</sup>

The warlords could draw upon traditional militia and sympathizers if they somehow managed to gain prestige, often through patronage, which included the distribution of spoils along clan lines, but also focusing more directly upon the traditional clan leaders. They could also draw upon the entire clan structure when the traditional clan leaders felt threatened, as when UNOSOM II tried to remove the weapons of the clans.<sup>62</sup> The mechanisms employed by warlords are best

summed up by the Human Right Watch report from 1995 entitled, “Somalia Faces the Future”; although the quotation focuses on Mogadishu, and uses the more neutral name war leader for warlord, the mechanisms described seem to be very valid indeed:

Much of the war leaders’ strength was founded on a promise of protection, supremacy and spoils for their clans, and the domination of others in an order founded on social and economic division and discrimination.<sup>63</sup>

UNITAF and the UNOSOM II created a huge capital inflow into Mogadishu. Karl Joakim Gundel claims:

In the UNOSOM period, rented houses cost 10-12,000 dollars a month, an additional \$2,000 were paid per month for each security guard. An armed car, a so-called ‘technical’ cost \$300 per day. Considering that at least 100 houses were rented, and about 380 ‘technicals’ were used by the UN agencies and INGOs each day in Mogadishu, business was good. In addition, duties and fees were put on everything from landing fees on planes, cargo, ships entering the port etc. Numerous service contracts were concluded with local Somalis.<sup>64</sup>

Warlords thus controlled the production of most goods and services, thereby gaining money and subsequently “militia” for themselves. This especially strengthened Muhammed Farah Aideed as the United Nations bought most of its services in areas under his control. UNOSOM II did this while they officially declared him as an enemy, thus effectively subsidizing the attacks by his forces. Some of the Somali warlords were aware of these factors: Ali Mahdi Muhammad complained to the United Nations that Aideed benefited economically from this arrangement, but UNOSOM took no action.<sup>65</sup> As Ken Menkhaus and John Pendregast state, “The faction leaders – especially Aideed – greatly benefited from rents, security contracts, employment, currency transactions and a variety of other fringe benefits courtesy of the UNOSOM cash cow.”<sup>66</sup>

High profile negotiation efforts made by UNOSOM I, UNITAF, and UNOSOM II also yielded legitimacy to the warlords.<sup>67</sup> As one Somali elder remarked, UNOSOM came to save Somalis from the warlords; and ended up aligning with them.<sup>68</sup> It is interesting to note how international peace efforts actually have strengthened the warlord system in the past. It could be useful to dwell upon Sahnoun’s comment on the American pursuit of Mohammed Farah Aideed:

It would have been much wiser to gather a maximum of arguments proving the guilt of Aideed or anyone else, and then persuading the elders and other sub clan leaders of the need to cooperate with the UN in bringing the culprits to justice.<sup>69</sup>

Combined with a sound political economical strategy, such actions might have had a high probability for success. The major point seems to be that, because their power is to a certain extent dependent on the redistribution of spoils and income, the less money available to them meant less power for most of the warlords.

The *building block approach* also failed when it involved high profile warlords. Warlords distrusted other warlord partners, they lacked traditional legitimacy and thus failed to prevent fragmentation within their own groups, and they were dependent on their financial income. The sole exception to this was Puntland, but only until Abdullahi Yusuf created trouble by refusing to relinquish office in the summer of 2001, and failing to pay heed to the parliamentary structures of Puntland in order to keep power. Warlords in the south also actively worked against this strategy, some feeling that they would lose power if it was implemented. However, the *building block approach* has a vital advantage as long as the focus is on the use of the clan system to achieve peace and to build up local institutions. A decentralized use of the traditional clan system enforces the traditional Somali way of creating peace, and uses the traditional form of communication between clan elders and sultans. This is a valuable tool in heterogeneous areas consisting of many clans, facilitating communication between them as it did in Somaliland between the Isaqs, Dolbahantes, Gadabursis, Issas, and Warsangelis. This effectively quelled the possibility of warlords gaining power, due to the improvement in security conditions. A popular counter argument raised against a focus on clan structures in the south claims that the structures are weaker there; nevertheless, even among the Rahanwein, the clan with the weakest clan structure, local clan leaders have been most efficient in ending conflicts. In contrast to all centralized approaches, this process is less likely to increase violence in the whole of Somalia, since the focus of negotiation is on one region at a time. If it fails, it becomes easier to limit the subsequent violence. However, if the *building block approach* becomes an excuse for regional authoritarian “banana republics,” totally dependent on the whims and the income of the local warlord, even this approach is bound to fail. A *building block approach* has to focus on legitimacy to function, legitimacy through formal procedures, active inclusion of elders and sultans, and through civil society.

Somaliland is often highlighted as one of the successes for a *building block approach* based on traditional clan structures, and seems to confirm the validity of such an approach. It is difficult to establish if Somaliland’s success was due to this approach alone, however. Forces from the most democratic of the different Somali military factions created Somaliland. According to Pål Høydal, the SNM was more dependent on funding from the Diaspora than the other rebel organizations. This made the leadership of the organization more aware of opinions within their group of supporters and thus more democratic.<sup>70</sup> This might subsequently have made it easier for them to yield power to Egal. Other explanations might also be important. Ahmed Alazhari suggests that the clan system was

stronger in the north due to the colonial practices of Great Britain, which supported the clan system by actively using it for management purposes. Southern Somalia had previously been colonized by Italy, and in contrast had been governed in a way that weakened the clan system, when the Italians actively tried to change and manipulate it. Thus, it became easier to use traditional clan mediation procedures in the north.<sup>71</sup> However, it is important to stress the relative peace-making successes of southern clan leaders compared with other peace-making attempts. Mary Jane Fox convincingly argues that economic and colonial factors influenced the political culture of Somaliland in a way that made it easier to facilitate peace.<sup>72</sup> Nevertheless, some of the southern clans have many similar traits with the ones Fox stresses.

Another factor that may have been employed to promote peace could have been the late president, Egal. Egal seems to have used a system of active patronage to quell conflict, and, together with his right-hand man, the former colonial serviceman John Drysdale, managed to build consensus and coalitions outside the Isaq clan, partly by distributing gifts and positions within the government.<sup>73</sup> Thus, patrimony and economic factors might also facilitate solutions, in combination with the active use of the more popularly legitimate structures of the clan system.

The third approach, the *dynamic approach*, is difficult to evaluate as Sahnoun, the main individual behind it, was disruptively removed from his position as the UN Secretary-General's special envoy in October 1992. Robert Oakely, a self-stated believer in the *dynamic approach*, also left office in March 1993. Nevertheless, it seems that this strategy also yielded some legitimacy to the warlords, even when Sahnoun led the efforts.<sup>74</sup> Thus, the approach ultimately has the potential to become a victim of the dynamics of the warlord system. Indeed, it seems as if the organization they were members of – the United Nations – fed the warlord system through their economic activities. However, Sahnoun kept a lower profile in his dealings with the warlords than the other individuals applying this approach have done. He might have succeeded had he been allowed “to rip more feathers of the warlords,” gradually decreasing their power, as he claimed he wanted to do. At least the dynamic strategy seemed to give the United Nations opportunities to deliver humanitarian aid to the needy of Somalia during the years 1992 and 1993.

The last approach, the *centralized bottom up approach*, also achieved some results. It produced a parliament, which had its first parliamentary crisis in October 2001. This was ultimately handled in a constitutionally correct manner. The prime minister was required to leave office and he did so in accordance with the official procedure for changeover. However, there are accusations of clan connections and corruption directed toward the new government, and the army is presumed to be controlled by the Ayr sub, sub clan. Many of the officials are former members of the Barre government; indeed President Abdulkassim Salad

Hassan was Barre's Minister of the Interior.<sup>75</sup> Still, as the Somali president put it, "so were a whole generation of Somalis." The exceptions here are some of the warlords and the younger generation that came of age during the chaos of the nineties. RRA's leader, Colonel Hassan Mohamed Nur "Shatigadud," used to be a member of Barre's feared National Security Service (NSS), Somaliland's president, Dahir Riyale Kahin, is a former colleague of his; thus, unfortunately, the elite of Barre still dominates much of the political life in the whole of Somalia, regardless of the organization in question. Nevertheless, it might not be important that the accusations against the TNG seemed unfair; the perceptions of them, combined with active Ethiopian resistance toward the results of the Arta conference – it was seen as a Djiboutian project only – made even this solution fail. The results were increased tension and renewed fighting in many parts of Somalia, and the TNG lost respect as it failed to gain momentum. The issue of legitimacy was still a question: the invocation of the traditional clan structures could have provided more popular legitimacy, and it could have made the allegations against the TNG less powerful.

### Warlords and the Economics of Peace

There are lessons to be learned from the results of the strategies used to create peace in Somalia. Lessons, vital not only for Somalis, but also in other societies where clan systems and patrimonialism prevail. Both the *top down approach*, the *building block approach*, and the *dynamic approach* involved warlords. The *top down approach* always involved them and always failed. The *building block approach* sometimes involved them and always failed when it did. The *dynamic approach* was interrupted, but bestowed legitimacy upon them. It seems that, as a rule, the approaches' chances of success are inversely proportional to the involvement of the warlords. Oliver Roy describes one of the mechanisms for these failures. He writes on the warlord-system in Afghanistan but his claims seem equally accurate in Somalia: "Often a right-hand man (of the warlord) jealous of his chief would open a front as one might open a shop. Then, to attract a 'clientele' he had to give not just arms, but also humanitarian aid."<sup>76</sup>

Loyalty to the warlord most often depends on his ability to hand out money and resources, at least when he is not perceived to be protecting the clan as the whole. If he lacks the resources, his subordinates will often change loyalty or, to use Roy's phrase, "open a shop." The warlord will weaken if economic resources dwindle and other organizations are viewed as creating stability. In this dynamic lies the second important lesson. This logic also worked for President Egal of Somaliland, albeit as a uniting factor through his ability to distribute services and goods as rewards for loyalty. However, he became stronger than a warlord, when he operated within the structure of the traditional clan system. He also operated within the Somaliland constitution. Thus, he reinforced the clan system, which, according to Amhed Alazhari, already had a tendency toward redistribution, and

created more stability. The use of the traditional clan system, and a constitutional political structure legitimized Egal in return. Patrimonialism can thus also be used as a tool for peace and even for the foundation of democracy. The failures in the economic intelligence of the UNOSOM II operation is much more significant in the Somali context or indeed in any context with similar warlord dynamics, as they were strengthening the bonds of loyalty between their enemy, Aideed, and his potential allies.

Warlords might be accommodated; they might even stand for election for positions within local or federal parliaments. However, if the search for accommodation becomes extreme, it will again strengthen the warlords. Many warlords are making a living from the war and therefore have no interest in making peace, except in a peace that ensures equal wealth for them, a peace that will prove unsustainable in the long run. Warlords cannot be stable partners in peace. As Said Samantar claims:

. . . The warlords do not have the power to make peace, only the capacity to disrupt and destroy. Their power and influence solely depends on the dynamics of war. Therefore, they have no interest in a peaceful settlement, because it would lead to the diminution of their power.<sup>77</sup>

The international community should not support them and make sure that aid donations do not make the southern warlords more able to hire “Moriyaan” or to employ an active system of patronage. This is a complex situation containing both push and pull factors. Mark Chingono suggests that the role of young men in violence cannot be properly understood without looking at economic factors, such as unemployment; this also applies to the case of the “Moriyaan.”<sup>78</sup> Alternative work and educational programs for current and potential members is therefore integral to the establishment of a lasting peace. However, aid programs implemented too rashly might make things worse: the political-economical consequences have to be thoroughly mapped out before such programs are implemented.

## CONCLUSIONS

The main lesson drawn from the practice of all the above-mentioned strategies must be to consider the role of the warlords and their accommodation. An overly strong effort to accommodate warlords will only prolong the conflict. They are not so strong as they are often perceived, being very dependent on their sources of income, and thus very vulnerable to strategies focusing on smart sanctions against their financial basis and an enforced effort to stop outside powers from supplying them. Therefore, a superimposed, centralized *top down approach*, indirectly supporting the warlord system, must never be applied again. Many of the weaknesses of the former are inherent in the *dynamic approach*,

which also legitimized and fuelled the warlord system. Subsequently, this approach complicates efforts to decrease the power of the warlords. Two strategies remain, the *building block approach* and the *centralized bottom up approach*, which have shown weakness and failures. Nevertheless, they were often defeated on account of outside interference and of the inclusion of warlords as in the case of the TNG and Puntland.<sup>79</sup> However, the former functioned well when empowering the traditional clan system, while the latter showed the importance of formalized procedure and structures. Clear constitutional frames and an inclusion of traditional clan structures will always be essential in any successful attempt to promote peace in Somalia. It yields legitimacy to the solutions, and it decreases tension by having clear and legitimate structures to deal with conflict. An approach focusing on these two pillars might be supported in a way that hinders conflict if diplomatic pressure is exerted and aid is made conditional upon respect for other existing positive political grass roots-based initiatives, which in the process avoid creating a centralized state that might become another “cake” for the warlords to share. This might put the focus on legitimacy rather than allowing the negotiation to become another cake-sharing exercise. These lessons can be applied in other contexts as well.<sup>80</sup> Aid, financial support, and the economic activities of international organizations, both military and civilian, will always have an impact in a war zone. Such economic measures become important where a patrimonialist system prevails, consequently they can be used to facilitate peace. Unfortunately, such activities can also be misused, sometimes as a part of a large strategic scheme – as was the case of Eritrean and more recent Ethiopian involvement – and thus exacerbate existing conflict.<sup>81</sup> Indeed, during a civil war, purchases become politics. Both NGOs, the United Nations, and military organizations planning to participate in peacekeeping or humanitarian interventions should strive to understand the consequences of warlord systems, a system that seldom will create the necessary conditions for stable and durable peace.<sup>82</sup> As David Keen claims, “Rather than simply ask which groups support a rebellion or a counter insurgency, it is important to ask which group takes advantage of these situations for their own purposes.”<sup>83</sup>

One might also ask how they manage to take advantage of these situations. These questions have to be asked regardless of the strategy employed. One can also conclude that outsiders’ insistence on holding high profile, centralized peace conferences for Somalia gives warlords incentives to continue fighting. If they are disruptive enough to defeat peace proposals, they get included in talks, which subsequently increases their reputation and consolidates their position. If they “only” represent legitimate interests of a local community, they have a tendency to be forced to concede powers. Thus, the international community empowers the violent warlords.

The alternatives that give adequate respect to legitimacy, by creating formal procedures based on some form of constitution and by actively employing the clan system seem the best alternatives. They include more legitimate inter-



ests that give the resulting arrangements more legitimacy in return. That is if they receive support. However, such approaches must give credit to the stable governance structures already developed in Somalia. This could be a lesson that Somalis can teach the world. It seems like the current ongoing round of negotiations are starting to take this lesson into account: let's hope that they learn quickly enough.<sup>84</sup>

## Endnotes

Note: The author would like to thank Gesine Kapelle, Christina May-Ling Young, Hassan Quaire, Abdrahaman Ahmed Mohammed, Nicholas Wheeler, Rita Abrahamsen, Torstein Berchan, Karl J. Gundel, and Rebecca L. Nesvet for their comments and suggestions.

1. Warlordism, a somewhat vague concept in itself, will be defined as the transformation of political authority into an effective means for controlling markets without the reliance on formal state institutions. William Reno, *Warlord politics and African states* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1998). Patrimonialism is being defined as a process of elite accommodation, whereby rulers bound potential rivals to themselves in exchange for largesse. Jean-François Bayart, *The State in Africa. The Politics of the Belly* (London: Longman, 1993).
2. Saadia Touval, *Somali Nationalism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963), pp. 16-17.
3. Isaq used to be treated as a part of Dir, but has according to Lewis looked upon themselves as a separate clan, and Lewis' categorization is now the most common. Ioan M. Lewis, *A Pastoral Democracy* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), p. 14.
4. One meaning of the word Boqor is actually derived from a belt binding people together. The word Garaad also means "mind," "Wisdom," "Understanding." Lewis, *Pastoral Democracy*, p. 203.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 209.
6. There are always problems with generalizations. The Majerteen sultan had more power than common among Somali clan leaders with extensive taxation rights. The Warsangeli sultan at times had a standing army. There are many such variations. See Lewis, *Pastoral Democracy*, pp. 208-09.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 205.
8. One notable exception is Muhammed Farah Aideed. His father was a Garad.
9. Interview with Ahmed Alazhari, September 1998. See Musa Yusuf Hussein, "The Causes of Conflict," in Musa Yusuf Hussein, ed., *Spared from the Spear, Traditional Somali Behavior in Warfare* (Nairobi: ICRC, 1997), pp. 11-21, for a good account of traditional Heer and its implications in traditional conflict.
10. Jean-François Bayart, *The State in Africa. The Politics of the Belly* (London: Longman 1993), pp. 7-8.
11. Interview with Ahmed Alazhari (Head of Horn of Africa College), 12 September 1998.
12. Catherine Besteman, *Unraveling Somalia, Race, Class, and the Legacy of Slavery* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), p. 80.
13. Catherine Bestemans, "Representing Violence and Othering Somalia," *Cultural Anthropology* 11 (1996), is heavily contested by other experts on Somalia like Bernard Helander, in "The emperor's new clothes removed: a critique of Bestemans violent politics and the politics of violence," *Peace Research Abstracts* 37, no. 5 (2000). Helander nevertheless also stresses the flexibility of the clan structure, albeit to a much lesser degree.
14. An example is the present split of Hawiye between the Transitional National Government, the SNA, and the Osman Atto faction.

15. Bernard Helander, "Somalia, aid fuels the conflict," *News from the Nordic institute of African Studies* 3 (1995); Jason P. Sorens and Leonard Wantchekon, "Social Order without the State: The Case of Somalia," *African Studies Working Paper* (1997).
16. When Abdullahi Aden Osman became president in 1960, he appointed Abdurashid Ali Shermarke as his first president. In 1964, the president made Abdirizak Haji Hussen prime minister. However, Shermarke later democratically contested the presidency and became the new president of Somalia in 1967. He appointed Mohamed Ibrahim 'Egal' as prime minister. The high level of corruption was shown on many occasions as during the floods in 1962. The elections were also troubled by cheating and rigging and "Walanwein" became a famous word in Somali. "Walanwein" was a small village where the governing party received a gigantic number of votes, much more than the actual inhabitants living in the town. The corrupt practices were especially high during the 1969 election; one of the respondents interviewed in Hargeisa in 1998, told the author how the then Somali prime minister, Egal forced the army to help him into office, by making them selectively transport his voters, and only his, during the election. While this practice in many ways seems harmless, it must have been a practice that was seen as shameful for the army officials in question. The same election showed how the political system was fragmenting, with 62 new parties participating.
17. Ioan M. Lewis, *A Modern History of Somalia: Nation and State in the Horn of Africa* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1985).
18. "Nationalism" may sound strange when one looks at Somalia today, but nationalist rhetoric was important and very popular in Somalia at least until the Ogadeen War in 1977-78. The earliest rebel organizations formed in the period 1976-1981. Soerns and Wantchekon, "Social order," p. 3.
19. Although the influence of the patrimonial traits of the republic and of the regime of Siad Barre are very interesting, they are too comprehensive to treat here.
20. In Ken Menkhaus, "International Peace building and the Dynamics of Local and National Reconciliation in Somalia," chapter three in Walter Clarke, and Jeffery Herbst, eds., *Learning from Somalia: The lessons of armed humanitarian intervention* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1997). He differentiates between factionally-based and community-based local initiatives and thus distinguishes between the factions of the warlords and the civic community/clan structure. He also differentiates according to founding sources.
21. It is often called the *bottom up approach*, but I will use the present name to distinguish it from the centralized grass root process that took place in Arta. For further information on this approach, refer to Ahmed Yusuf Farah, "Civil-military Relations in Somaliland and Northeast Somalia," Paper presented at the Conference on Civil-Military Relations, April 1999; and "Somalia, are building blocks the solution?" UN OCHA Integrated Regional Information Network for Central and Eastern Africa (IRIN-CEA), 17 July 1999.
22. IGAD was founded as IGADD (Inter-Governmental Authority on Drought and Development) in 1986 and was meant to handle drought and development problems; later it took an active role in peace negotiations in Sudan and Somalia. Its members are Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, and Uganda. See their web homepage, <http://www.igadregion.org>, for more information.
23. The Life and Peace Institute is a Christian organization focused on conflict resolution and is based in Upsala, Sweden. Ioan M. Lewis, "Misunderstanding the Somali Crisis," *Anthropology Today* 9, no. 4 (1993), pp. 1-3.
24. Ismail Haji Warsame, *introduction*, 24 November 2001, internet source: <http://members.tripod.com/~Puntland/>.
25. In August 1998, the faction leaders, Hussein Aideed, Ali Mahdi, and Mohamed Qanyare, set up a Mogadishu administration with Egyptian and Libyan support. Libyan funding was worth US \$800,000. The supposed administration possessed neither the resources nor the will to dismantle the factional groups, and it came to nothing. See "Somalia, are building blocks the solution?"

26. The singular form of *Shir beeleedyo* is *Shir Beeled*.
27. Farah, "Civil-Military Relations."
28. *Ibid.*, p. 27.
29. There are now three parties in Somaliland: UDUB, KULMIYE, and UCID (pronounced UHID). UDUB won the local elections in December 2002 and won a tight victory in the presidential elections, winning with between 80 and 217 votes. (The former were the figures of the National electoral commission, the latter the figures of the supreme court).
30. Former politicians from the first republic had formed an organization called the Somali Democratic Action Front (SODAF) in 1976, and Siad Barre had imprisoned some of his former ministers, generals, and civil servants. On 9 April 1978, some officers, mostly Majerteen, tried to arrange a coup to remove Barre from power. The coup failed, but sympathizers joined SODAF and together they created a new organization, the Somali Salvation Front (SSF). They later joined with two small communist parties, the Somali Workers Party and the Somali Democratic Front for the Liberation of Somalia, to form the first major Somali opposition group, the Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF). SSDF was not the pure Majerteen organization many believed it to be; indeed, many of its most prominent leaders were from other clans. The organization's fatal weakness was that it consisted of three groups with entirely different goals. The former politicians wanted a new republic; the former officers were interested in army affairs, and many of them were only slightly communistic; and the Moscow friendly communist parties wanted a communist state with strong connection with the Soviet Union. The latter were strongly detested by the democratic politicians from SODAF and by the former army officers who tended to blame the Soviets for the Somali defeat in 1978. The many contradictions within the SSDF were more or less bound to lead to their failure. Abdullahi Yusuf, the leader of the SSDF, was accused of initiating the killing of the leader of the SSDF communist faction and relations between the SSDF officers and the former SODAF politicians worsened rapidly. The SSDF had a policy of centralizing their bases within Ethiopia, and some SNM leaders were delighted with this as it aided the SNM's recruitment effort. This also helped the Ethiopian government in its effort to control the SSDF and the organization was dealt a severe blow when Abdullahi Yusuf was arrested on 12 October 1985. The SSDF never recovered fully. This information is based on Daniel Compagnon, "The Somali Opposition Fronts," *Horn of Africa* 15 (1990), pp. 29-54; and my own field research.
31. Farah, "Civil-Military Relations," p. 21.
32. The structure of the government consisted of three branches: the legislative (69 members), executive (nine ministries), and an independent judiciary.
33. Farah, "Civil-Military Relations," p. 21.
34. Reno, *Warlord politics and African states*.
35. The most important conferences were Djibouti I (June 1991), Djibouti II (July 1991), Addis Ababa I (January 1993), Addis Ababa II (March 1993), Addis Ababa salvage talks (December 1993), Cairo I (March 1994), Nairobi I (March 1994), Nairobi II (April 1996), Nairobi III (October 1996), Sodere (December 1996-January 1997), Cairo II (November/December 1997), Eldore/ Nairobi (October 2002). A number of NSC (National Salvation Council) conferences are not included, nor are talks between three or less factional leaders.
36. The Djibouti meeting that started on 15 July 1991 was actually chaired by Aden Abdulle Osman, a former Somali president, and included former speaker of the House of Parliament, Skeikh Mukhtar Mohamed Hussen, and former prime ministers Mohamed Ibrahim Egal and Abdirizak Haji Hussein. Abdiraman Mohammed, "The peace process in Somalia," paper presented at Somali Symposium at La Trobe University, 12 May 2001.
37. The district councils were to provide local administration and would be part of an institutional build-up and help in coordinating foreign aid programs. In addition, district councils were to form the lowest level of recruitment into an interim Transitional National Council, as stipulated in the Addis Ababa Agreement. Some of them managed to function quite well for a while.

All of them were supposed to be recruited from the civil society and not from the traditional clan structure, nor from the warlords' organizations.

38. Kinfe Abraham, *Somalia Calling: the Crisis of Statehood and the Quest for Peace* (Addis Ababa: Ethiopian International Institute For Peace And Development, 2002), p. 78.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 77.
40. For a comprehensive comment on the Addis Ababa conferences, see Ahmed I. Samatar, "The Curse of Allah: Civic Disembowelment and the Collapse of the State in Somalia" in Ahmed I. Samantar, ed., *The Somali Challenge: From Catastrophe to Renewal* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1994). The text of the Addis Ababa conference in March 1993 and the Cairo agreement in 1997 are available on the INCORE internet page on peace agreements in Africa: <http://www.incore.ulst.ac.uk/cds/agreements/africa.html> (24 November 2001).
41. Mohammed, "The peace process"; Menkhaus, "International peace building," p. 60.
42. *Ibid.*, p. 61.
43. However, 1000 participants showed up, creating quarrels and unpaid hotel bills as the Kenyan hosts tried to narrow the number down. Eight hundred members were allowed to participate.
44. The most powerful members of this group were its leader Muahammed Quanyare Afrah and Omar "Finish" Muhammed Muahammed. It also contained the Somali leaders who most directly felt Ethiopian power as Puntlands, Ali Jama Ali and Adan Shaik Madobe from the RRA. One of the factors that bound them together was Ethiopia's strong support for Abdullahi Yusuf.
45. Mohamed M. Sahnoun, "Prevention in conflict resolution: The case of Somalia," chapter eighteen in Hussein M Adam, and Richard Ford ed., *Mending rips in the Sky: options for Somali communities in the 21 Century* (Asmara: Red Sea Press, 1997), p. 315.
46. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, "UNOSOM I and the famine of 1992," "document S/24342, 22 July 1992" in Boutros Boutros-Gahli, ed, *United Nations and Somalia 1992-1996* (New York Department of Public Information, 1996).
47. Oakley actually used the same "plucking the bird" allegory as Sahnoun. Unfortunately, this comment was broadcast to Somalia by the BBC, a move that subsequently decreased Oakley's possibilities of dealing with the warlords. John Drysdale, *Whatever Happened to Somalia? A tale of tragic blunders* (London: Haan Associates, 1994), pp. 13 and 110.
48. "Somali civilians in new peace drive," *BBC*, 2 May 2000.
49. "Some Somali leaders boycott talks," *IRIN-CEA*, 3 May 2000.
50. "Heavy weight clan joins peace talks in Djibouti," AFP 5 May 2000; "Murder, slavery, beatings, theft in Somalia," *Agence France Presse*, 25 June 1995. On *al-Itihad al-Islam*, see Medhane Tadesse, *Al-Itihad, Political Islam and black economy in Somalia* (Addis Ababa: First Printing, 2002).
51. "New parliament for Somalia," *BBC*, 13 August 2000. The breakdown of clans in the conference were as follows: Darod (175), Hawiye (175), and Digil-mirifle (175); Dir (205) including Isaq 100, Gadabursi 40, Issa 30, Southern Dir 35; Alliance of minorities (90) including (not exclusively) Jareer, Midgaan, and Yibir; Women (100). Some women were also included in the clan delegations. IRIN/ UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs 27, November 2001, internet source: <http://www.soomaaliya.com/IRIN%20-%20Somalia%20Guide%20to%20the%20Somali%20National%20Peace%20Conference,%2030%20Jun%202000.htm>.
52. The winner needed a simple majority of 123 votes in the 245-seat assembly. "Little Mogadishu celebrates," *BBC News Online*, 29 August 2000.
53. Fiona Lortan, "Rebuilding the Somali State" *African Security Review* 9, no. 5/6 (2000).
54. Sarmaan Gorodaase, *Mr president or Mr chief Clansman, an open letter to President Hassan*, 2000, Internet source: [http://www.arlaadinet.com/mr\\_president\\_or\\_mr\\_chief\\_clans.htm](http://www.arlaadinet.com/mr_president_or_mr_chief_clans.htm); "Interview with Hassan Mohamed Nur 'Shatigadudo'," *IRIN*, 4 February 2002. The present leader of the RRA is Hassan Mohamed Nur 'Shatigadud,' albeit contested by two of his former colleagues in the organization.

55. "Interview with UN Representative David Stephen," *IRIN*, 9 May 2000. The Nile is central to this rivalry, where Egypt faces a security dilemma since the sources of their main waterway are partly under Ethiopian control. Traditionally, Egypt and Ethiopia have been facing each other as enemies. This is one of the reasons why Ethiopia traditionally has been close to Israel.
56. Abraham, *Somalia Calling*, pp. 256-60.
57. Terrence Lyons and Ahmed I. Samantar, *Somalia, State Collapse, Multilateral Intervention and Strategies for Political Reconstruction* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1995), p. 199. I do not count the Addis Ababa preparatory rounds in December 1992.
58. David Keen, "The Economic Functions of Violence in Civil Wars" *Adelphi Paper* 320 (1998), p. 62.
59. It is important to notice that this clear cut warlord-militia system seems to be much weaker today than it was during the period 1992-94. The faction leaders' power is weakened by the split with the business community, and they find their access to revenue curtailed. Consequently, they are no longer able to pay their militiamen who have been defecting to the business community. Lortan, "Rebuilding the Somali state." For descriptions of warlords atrocities against traditional elders, see "Witnesses Report a Somali Massacre before U.S Arrival," *New York Times*, 29 December 1992.
60. Helander, "Somalia, aid fuels the conflict," p. 1.
61. Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Bandits* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1969), p. 91.
62. Sahnoun's food for arms program was an extremely interesting alternative; unfortunately it ended when he resigned. Ismail I. Ahmed and Reginald H. Green, "Heritage of war and state collapse in Somalia and Somaliland," *Third World Quarterly* 20, no. 1 (1999), p. 123.
63. Human Rights Watch, "Somalia Faces the Future: Human rights in a fragmented Society," (1995), internet source: [www.hrw.org](http://www.hrw.org)
64. Karl J. Gundel, *The Role of Humanitarian Assistance in the Transformations of the Somali Political Mosaic* (Oslo: Christian Michelsens Institute, forthcoming)
65. Gundel presents a record of a meeting between Ali Mahadi and UNOSOM on 17 January 1994 where Ali Mahdi angrily complains that Aideed is benefiting financially, and is in effect claiming his share of the spoils. UNOSOM responded with reference to bureaucratic procedures. See Gundel, *Role of Humanitarian Assistance*.
66. Ken Menkhaus and John Pendregast, "Political economy of Post Intervention Somalia," *Somalia Task Force Issue Paper* 3 (1995).
67. For a clear description of this process, see Samantar, "The course of Allah."
68. Menkhaus and Pendregast, "Political Economy," p. 12.
69. Sahnoun, "Prevention," p. 315.
70. Pål Høydal, *Somalia* (Huseby: Forsvarets overkommando, 1993).
71. Interview with Ahmed Alazhari, September 1998.
72. Mary J. Fox, "Somalia Divided: The African Cerberus." Paper Presented at the International Studies Association Convention, Washington DC, 20 February 1999. Mary J. Fox, "Political Culture in Somalia: Tracing Paths to Peace and Conflict," *Department of Peace and Conflict Research Report* 56 (2001).
73. These conclusions are based on information gathered during fieldwork in 1998. It is, however, quite easy to find possible indications of this strategy. See *Somaliland Times*, Issue no. 8 (2 March 2002) for an example.
74. I refer to the technical meeting in December 1992, and to Sahnoun's relationship with Muhammed Farah Aideed.
75. Steve Kibble, "Somaliland: Surviving without recognition; Somalia: Recognised but Failing?" *International Relations* 15, no. 5 (2001), p. 17.

76. Oliver Roy, *From Holy War to Civil War* (Princeton, NJ: Darwin Press, 1995).
77. Samantar, "The course," p. 17.
78. Mark F. Chingono, *The State, violence and development. The political economy of war in Mozambique, 1975-1992* (Aldershot: Avebury, 1996).
79. In the summer of 2002, the RRA splintered seriously. Fighting first broke out on 1 July between forces loyal to the head of the RRA, Hasan Muhammad Nur Shatigadud, and those of his two deputies, Shaykh Adan Madobe and Muhammad Ibrahim Habsade, who clashed over the establishment of the South West State of Somalia.
80. Hopefully, the most positive Somali forces, the forces with a more legitimate and stable base than the warlords, the transitional government, the government of Somaliland, and the RRA, will manage to cooperate and to create a durable peace among the Somalis. One must, however, not put undue pressure on Somaliland for integration; it is important to acknowledge their great achievements and positive example with regards to the promulgation of peace.
81. Sometimes a warlord is used as a strategic ally, as in 1998 when Eritrea wanted to untie the deadlock of the Eritrean-Ethiopian War by supporting Aideed's faction. Currently, this is probably happening again, as claims of Ethiopian support for SRRC frequently surface. One of them was made by the Somali newspaper, *Quran*, on 6 November 2000 and translated by the BBC monitoring services:

A consignment of arms for chairman Muse Sudi Yalahow from Ethiopia is expected to arrive in Mogadishu in the next few hours. Reliable sources close to Mr Yalahow's faction confirmed the impending arrival of the consignment, which is being ferried from the Ethiopian-Somali border by lorries. The consignment is mainly ammunition for light and heavy machine guns. This is not the first delivery of arms to faction leaders allied to Ethiopia. There was heavy presence of Mr Yalahow's militiamen in the Shabeellaha Dhexe Region, which is one of the areas under his control. Residents discussed the arms which are going to be delivered to Mr Yalahow.
- In 2000, the Secretary-General's representative for Somalia, David Stephen, was asked by IRIN if regional politics had played a role in the previous failures of peace processes in Somalia: his answer was, "Very much so." Unfortunately, the warlords have often received support from abroad, sometimes unknowingly, as when UNOSOM II supported Aideed, sometimes as a part of negotiations as in the earlier mentioned regional self-governance scheme of Aideed, Qanyare, and Mahdi in 1998. See "Interview with UN Representative David Stephen," *IRIN*, 9 May 2000.
82. It is also important to establish a truth commission for Somalia, partly to block the political participation of individuals known to have committed war crimes and other criminal offences and facilitate payment to individuals or clans who lost land. If the TNG had addressed this and had been helped to do so, RRA might have been a part of them today. It would also end rumors circling around innocent individuals, rumors that put strains on more regional negotiations.
83. Keen, *The economic foundations*, p. 12.
84. On 15 September 2003, an interim constitution was agreed upon by the delegates to the peace talks. However, at the time of the writing of this article the president of the TNG, Abdulkasim Salad Hassan, such powerful warlords as Muse Yalahow, Bare Hiirale, and RRA leader Muhammad Ibrahim Habsade refused to sign.