Number 144 January 1993

CSIS AFRICA NOTES

A publication of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, D.C.

What Are the Lessons To Be Learned From Somalia?

by Ken Menkhaus and Terrence Lyons

The overthrow in January 1991 of the increasingly corrupt and repressive regime of Major General Mohamed Siad Barre, who took power in a 1969 coup, had been predicted throughout the 1980s and therefore came as no surprise to observers. The subsequent disintegration of the Somali state and the ensuing two years of violent anarchy had not been foreseen, however, by Horn of Africa specialists or the Somali leaders involved. In retrospect, it now seems clear that the end of the Cold War has produced an international environment in which weak, artificial state structures in societies fractured by ethnic tension are highly susceptible to fragmentation or collapse, particularly in regions where East-West competition involved high levels of militarization.

The Somali state imposed by colonial powers (Britain in northern Somalia and Italy in the central and southern regions) on a predominantly pastoral and decentralized society was particularly vulnerable to such collapse. Since independence in 1960, Somalia has been dependent on foreign economic aid to fund its entire development budget and much of its regular budget, as well as to finance the important patronage system that kept key social constituencies (clans) wedded to participation in the government. And over time, the Siad Barre regime came to rely on outside military aid in maintaining a control based on repression and force over an increasingly rebellious populace. When most foreign aid was frozen in 1988, the inherent weakness of the Somali state was exposed and the Siad Barre government collapsed within a few years.

This issue of *CSIS Africa Notes* analyzes the events leading up to the 1992 "humanitarian intervention" by the international community, assesses the challenges facing the intervention and prospects for national reconciliation in Somalia, and evaluates the lessons and implications of a major U.S. foreign policy and military initiative.

The Clan Factor

Centralized governance in Somalia has faced since independence the intractable challenge of lineage-based, or clan, identity. Clan affiliation is fluid and complex, shifting according to the political situation at hand. The fluidity of clan alliances creates persistent political instability, and the

CSIS
CENTER FOR STRATEGIC & INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

intransigence of clan identity has sabotaged efforts to build an enduring pan-Somali nationalism and an allegiance to the state.

Under Siad Barre, a genuine effort was made in the early 1970s to eradicate "clanism" and build a spirit of national unity. References to clan names were outlawed, the unifying ideologies of Somali nationalism and socialism were invoked, and the dozens of fractious clan-based political parties were abolished in favor of a highly centralized single-party system. The state, it was hoped, would transcend rather than reflect social divisions. In fact, the first five years of Siad Barre's rule were marked by some real successes and a spirit of cooperation and renewal.

Yet by the late 1970s, especially after the 1977 invasion of the largely Somali-inhabited Ogaden region of Ethiopia ended in a disastrous military defeat, it became clear that Siad Barre could maintain power only by exploiting rather than eradicating clan rivalries, following a pattern of divide-and-rule initiated by the colonial powers. Over time, he relied increasingly on a narrow coalition of clans, known by the acronym MOD (Marehan-Ogaden-Dolbahante), and placed relatives in key positions of power. By 1988, the regime had acquired a reputation as one of the world's worst human rights violators. Many critics hold Siad Barre's regime responsible for fostering deep divisions between clans, creating scores of vendettas and a level of mistrust that subsequently made it impossible to create a post-Siad Barre coalition government.

Opposition to the Siad Barre regime grew in the late 1980s. In 1988, he pursued détente with Ethiopia in the hope of reducing the latter's support for Somali opposition groupings, notably the Somali National Movement (SNM), an Isaq-based force concentrated in and around northern Somalia. Ethiopia agreed to close down the SNM bases within its borders, but the result was unexpectedly counterproductive from Siad Barre's standpoint. The SNM insurgents responded by attempting to establish a permanent position within Somalia, fighting their way into the country's north in May and June 1988 and seizing most of the region, including Hargeisa, the second-largest Somali city. Siad Barre countered with a genocidal military campaign that left Hargeisa in ruins and drove 400,000 Isaq Somalis into refuge in Ethiopia and Djibouti. In response, other clan-based opposition movements formed, initiating military actions in southern and central Somalia. By 1990, Siad Barre's regime exercised only intermittent control over the regions surrounding Mogadishu (the capital) and other major southern towns.

Cold War Distortions

The evidence is clear that Cold War competition between the two superpowers in what was perceived as a strategic area played a key role in Somalia's current crisis. The region's politics were transformed as massive military and economic assistance flowed to regimes in Ethiopia and Somalia. In particular, 20 years of arms imports from the Soviet Union rendered the Horn one of the world's most militarized regions, allowing both old and new feuds to be played out with late-twentieth-century military technology.

U.S. and Italian support of Siad Barre's regime in the 1980s, although never approaching the level of military assistance provided by the Soviet Union before the friendship treaty with Moscow was abrogated in 1977, nevertheless helped prop up a repressive government that otherwise might not have survived the decade. U.S. policymakers viewed economic, military, and food aid to Somalia, running between $80 and $120 million per year from 1979 to 1988 (totaling $840 million since 1979), as essential in securing access to the airstrip at Berbera, which was considered vital to the rapid deployment force safeguarding U.S. interests in the Gulf.

In the late 1980s, the waning of the Cold War gave the West greater latitude to condition foreign aid on improvements in human rights. Decreasing U.S. concern about the Horn's strategic significance, combined with reports of the Siad Barre regime's genocidal campaign in northern Somalia, moved Congress to freeze Washington's assistance in mid-1988. Since 1990, no Somali faction has succeeded in soliciting enough outside military assistance to establish itself as a new government.

The 1992-1992 Descent Into Chaos

Since the overthrow of the Siad Barre regime in January 1991, the south has been plagued by warfare, banditry, and famine. Although central and northern Somalia too are in urgent need of economic rehabilitation, some modicum of local and regional authority has emerged in the north in the wake of the SNM's May 1991 unilateral declaration of independence (as yet unrecognized internationally) for the "Republic of Somaliland."

Southern Somalia has experienced anarchy and

CSIS AFRICA NOTES is a briefing paper series designed to serve the special needs of decision makers and analysts with Africa-related responsibilities in governments, corporations, the media, research institutions, universities, and other arenas. It is a publication of the African Studies Program of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, D.C. CSIS is a private, nonpartisan, nonprofit policy research institute founded in 1962.

Editor: Director of African Studies Helen Kitchen
Deputy Editor: J. Coleman Kitchen

SUBSCRIPTION RATE: *CSIS Africa Notes* is sent airmail/first class to subscribers worldwide. The annual subscription price for 12 issues and occasional supplements is $48.00. Please make checks payable to: *CSIS Africa Notes*, Suite 400, 1800 K Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006, U.S.A.
Telephone: (202) 775-3219. Telex: 7108229583.
Cables: CENSTRAT. Fax: (202) 775-3199.

ISSN 0736-9506

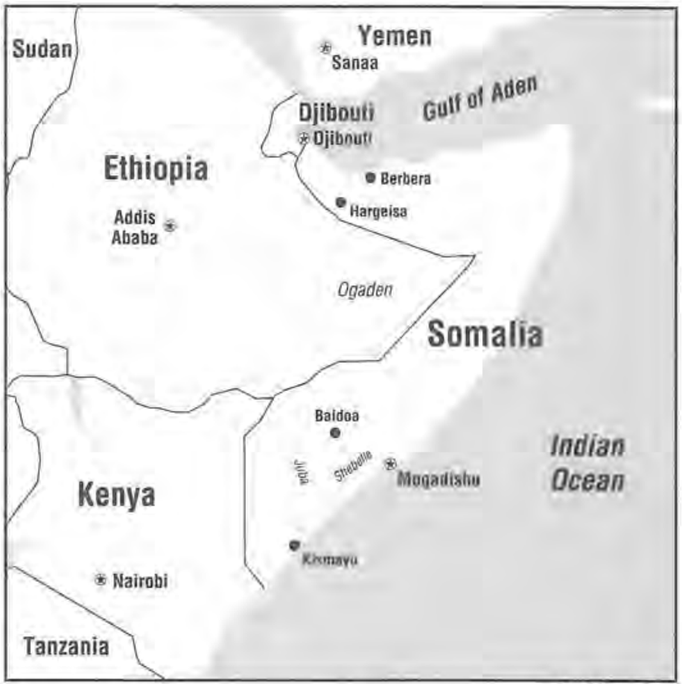
violence on two distinct levels. The primary conflict is factional, pitting clans and subclans against one another for control of territory and resources. Beneath the factional wars, looting and banditry are carried out by armed teenaged gangs, known as "technicals" or *mooryaan*. The *mooryaan* may at times fight on behalf of a faction or warlord, primarily to gain access to war booty, but are essentially beholden to no one.

In the first six months of 1991, most of the factional fighting occurred in the inter-riverine zone between Mogadishu and the cities of Kismayu and Bardera in the Juba river valley. Following the ouster of Siad Barre, his immediate clan, the Marehan, and many members of their larger clan-family, the Darod, fled south across the Juba river, where they regrouped in the traditional Darod territory from Kismayu upriver to Bardera and on to the Ethiopian border. There, amid tensions and occasional skirmishes within the Darod clan-family, they divided into several factions: the Somali Patriotic Movement (SPM), the Somali National Front (SNF), and the Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF). Meanwhile, the Hawiye-based United Somali Congress (USC) took control of Mogadishu and regions north of the capital where the Hawiye have traditionally been predominant. The military arm of the USC, led by General Mohamed Farah Aidid, subsequently fought a series of highly mobile but inconclusive skirmishes with various Darod factions, in battles ranging from Afgoi (near Mogadishu) all the way to Kismayu. Some fighting occurred between the USC and Darod factions in central Somalia as well.

Caught in the middle of this fighting were the large but politically powerless and poorly armed agricultural and agro-pastoral communities of the Rahanwin, Digil, Gosha, and others. Some of the riverine populations, such as the Gosha, are descendants of slaves from Tanzania and Mozambique and suffer particularly low social status as "hard hairs," physically dissimilar from the rest of Somali society. These communities, as well as the ethnically distinct Benadir coastal town dwellers, were devastated by looting, rape, and massacres during periods of military occupation by various factions. With the theft of their grain reserves and other valuables, they became the first group acutely vulnerable to famine. And because this group has been unable to cultivate in the midst of the war, the best agricultural region in Somalia has produced no harvests of any consequence for two years.

The warfare and banditry triggered a massive movement of refugees as well as a tide of internally displaced persons. An estimated 400,000 Somalis have sought refuge in Kenya, 300,000 are in refugee camps in Ethiopia, and several hundred thousand are scattered in the Gulf states, Europe, and North America.

Many of the inter-riverine people as well as tens of thousands of pastoral families fled to major towns in the hope of securing access to food, but did not find them to be much safer. An initial wave of banditry wreaked havoc in the coastal cities of Kismayu, Brava, and Mogadishu, destroying buildings and what was left of the economic infrastructure. In late 1991, a series of destructive battles broke out in Mogadishu within the USC, pitting the Abgal subclan, led by Ali Mahdi Mohamed (who in January 1991 had been appointed interim president of Somalia by the USC), against Aidid's Habir Gedir subclan. Eventually a "Green Line" was established separating the two factions within what remained of Mogadishu.



© Jens A. Zimmerman 1993

The initial aim of each faction was to secure control of the capital, forge interclan alliances, and gain recognition as the country's new government. Aidid has been most persistent in pursuit of this goal, fashioning a multiclan alliance (the Somali National Alliance) with several small southern clans and one Darod faction, led by Colonel Ahmed Umar Jays, who now holds precarious control over the coastal port of Kismayu. Ali Mahdi's USC faction has likewise attempted to fashion alliances with Darod clans. As a result, divisions within each of the large Hawiye and Darod clans have deepened.

The Problem of Looting

Over time, with the country locked in a violent stalemate, factional goals became more immediate—to profit from the control of international food aid. Following the initial rounds of looting, there was little left of value over which to fight except international food relief, which was slow to arrive (due to a combination of Western preoccupation with the Gulf war, donor fatigue, and delayed United Nations response to the Somali crisis), but increased in quantity during late 1991 and 1992. Most of the factional fighting in 1992 had to do with maintaining control over key points of arrival (airports and harbors) and channels of distribution (roads and feeding centers).

Although some international observers believed that Somalis were "looting to eat" and therefore advocated a policy of flooding Somalia with aid to reduce food insecurity, this perception of the situation was incorrect.

The control of food relief was extremely lucrative for warlords and their allied merchants. A faction in control of a port could derive profits not only from exorbitant "taxes" levied on deliveries and from cuts of 10 to 20 percent of the incoming food shipments, but also from the hiring out of "technicals," ostensibly to protect the delivery of food. (Even guarded convoys of food relief were frequently looted, however, often by the very technicals paid to defend them.) Some stolen food stayed in the urban markets of Mogadishu, but much was resold outside the country, where the profits were used to enrich the warlords' overseas bank accounts, to purchase more weapons, or to ship into Somalia the mild narcotic *qat*, a leaf to which many young fighters are addicted.

A constituency of looters, from the small-scale teenage bandits to the powerful "big pocket" merchants and warlords, had entrenched themselves between the famine victim and the international relief operation. Relief organizations warned throughout 1991 and 1992 that 1 to 2 million Somalis (mostly those from unarmed inter-riverine communities that bore no responsibility for the war) were at risk of starvation, but conventional relief efforts were unable to reach the vulnerable groups with meaningful assistance. Indeed, some argued that the food relief was fueling the very war that had initially caused the famine.

One potential solution to the chronic insecurity of relief operations would have been to increase the presence and the mandate of UN peacekeeping forces in Somalia. The UN secretary-general's special representative to Somalia, Ambassador Mohamed Sahnoun, pursued this option, but was largely blocked by restrictions imposed by members of the UN Security Council. The Security Council initially approved the deployment of 500 UN troops, an obviously inadequate number, and stipulated that they be deployed only with the approval of key local forces. Aidid, whose faction of the USC exercised control over the Mogadishu harbor and airport, was reluctant to grant such permission and bogged the UN operation down in endless negotiations. The Security Council eventually approved the deployment of 3,500 troops, spread across four operation zones in Somalia, but always contingent on the approval of the local warlord.

The Security Council's intention was clearly to avoid a unilateral UN troop deployment in order to prevent the possibility of these troops encountering hostilities, which would have forced the UN into the unprecedented role of peace*maker* rather than peace*keeper* in a nominally sovereign state. By September 1992, 500 Pakistani troops were present at the Mogadishu airport, but were inadequately armed and constrained by rules of engagement that prevented them from securing critical relief transit sites. A frustrated Sahnoun repeatedly criticized the UN for its inaction and on October 27, after receiving a strongly worded reprimand from UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, tendered his resignation. He was replaced by Ismat Kittani, a veteran Iraqi diplomat.

International Intervention

Although closely followed and reported by human rights groups, international relief organizations, and private and government analysts, the Somali crisis remained largely beyond the public purview until the Western media began extensive coverage of the famine and war in July 1992. Disturbing images of mass starvation and desperate Somali boat people, coupled with extensive documentation of the diversion of international relief by armed factions and bandits, generated increased public pressure in the West for more effective action. In Washington, the House Select Committee for Hunger, as well as Senators Nancy Kassebaum (who traveled to Somalia in July) and Paul Simon, drew further attention to the crisis.

President Bush's initial response, on August 12, was to assign U.S. military aircraft to transport food relief, ostensibly to speed up delivery of food to remote towns in the interior and circumvent Mogadishu's bandit-infested harbor. Neither this initiative nor a parallel attempt to auction some food relief to Mogadishu merchants at reduced prices succeeded in overcoming the fundamental problem of food looting.

Through much of late 1992, a sequence of diplomatic efforts to broker an end to the Somali impasse failed. As intense media coverage continued to highlight the crisis in November, many groups and commentators advocated unilateral armed intervention. A report by Boutros-Ghali concluded that the UN's Somalia policy was "untenable" and suggested that basic UN principles might have to be reconsidered in dealing with this case.

In Washington, the National Security Council's deputies committee met on November 21 to consider U.S. options. Although Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Colin Powell and others in the Pentagon earlier had resisted sending forces without a clear mandate, support for deployment was announced at this meeting. When President Bush met with his senior NSC advisers on November 25, he chose the most forceful option—to offer the use of U.S. troops to lead a UN action. After reviewing UN policy options, Boutros-Ghali proposed to the Security Council on November 30 that it approve an international military operation in Somalia, led by the United States. After some negotiations over whether U.S. forces would be under international or American command, the Security Council passed Resolution 794 on December 3, approving the use of "all necessary means to establish as soon as possible a secure environment for humanitarian relief operations in Somalia." In the end, the resolution passed unanimously. This landmark decision represented the first instance of unilateral UN intervention, with offensive military force, in a sovereign state.

During the month of December, some 22,000 U.S. troops and 7,000 troops from other countries were deployed in key towns and food distribution centers throughout central and southern Somalia. Extraordinary precautions were taken to minimize risks to the troops, particularly in the early phases of the operation. Indeed, there were some complaints that the deployment was proceeding too deliberately, thereby delaying food relief to hard-hit areas deep in the interior. Yet within a month the intervention effectively achieved its primary goal of securing food deliveries to famine zones, and death rates fell dramatically among vulnerable populations. The initial phase of the deployment was facilitated by an enthusiastic response from the Somali populace and by a tactical decision on the part of key warlords to welcome the U.S. troops and cooperate with the intervention. Fears of widespread resistance, snipers, and terrorist attacks on the troops proved generally unfounded. A month after the initiation of Operation Restore Hope, only two Americans had lost their lives—one from a land mine explosion and another in a sniper ambush.

Security in Mogadishu was only temporarily improved, however, by the overwhelming foreign military presence. Within a week, gun-toting teenagers began to reappear on the streets, and incidents of armed assaults, robberies, and even factional fighting sharply increased in number. This prompted growing criticism of U.S. unwillingness to commit troops to a campaign of disarmament. President Bush and Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali publicly differed on the mandate of the U.S. force, with President Bush maintaining that troops would only be used to safeguard food and medical shipments to famine zones, while Boutros-Ghali insisted that U.S. forces disarm Mogadishu as a precondition for UN peacekeeping operations there. The U.S. decision not to disarm Somalis was apparently a tactical move to avoid direct conflict with factions and bandits in the early stages of the operation.

By late December, security within Mogadishu had deteriorated dramatically, and U.S. troops began to be targeted by sporadic shootings. During President Bush's New Year's Day visit to Mogadishu and Baidoa, heavy firefights broke out in Mogadishu's northern districts. Subsequently, the United States initiated a new "stabilization" phase of the operation and undertook to patrol streets more aggressively and disarm gunmen. By mid-January this strategy had paid off in improved security throughout the capital. Security elsewhere in southern Somalia also improved, but only in limited zones of enforcement. In the southern port of Kismayu, violence continued to plague townspeople and relief workers.

The longer-term objectives of the U.S. mission in Somalia remain a subject of debate in the U.S. government and media as of late January 1993. President Bush's initial statements that U.S. troops would be withdrawn by January 20 were not taken literally, but his words were interpreted as a signal that U.S. objectives in Somalia are quite narrow in scope and limited in duration. Many observers believed that a premature troop withdrawal would plunge Somalia back into anarchy and undermine the success of the operation, especially in light of the fact that the UN lacked both the diplomatic credibility and military force to replace the U.S. presence. Others, however, saw greater danger in an open-ended commitment to disarmament and to the political and economic rehabilitation of a potential "quagmire" where no obvious U.S. national interests are at stake.

In a compromise measure, the Bush administration announced on January 6 its willingness to contribute 5,000 U.S. troops to a longer-term presence in Somalia under UN auspices—the first time the United States has been willing to allow its troops to operate under direct UN command. These troops would be "non-shooters," however, so it was unclear whether they could effectively bolster the credibility of UN peacekeeping forces. Meanwhile, President Bush assured the UN that the U.S. withdrawal would be phased to coincide with the arrival of UN replacement troops from 20 other nations. President-elect Clinton, whose new government will ultimately chart the direction of U.S. involvement in Somalia, voiced support for U.S. initiatives in the weeks before his inauguration, but gave no indications as to how his administration would handle longer-term issues of troop deployment and national reconciliation in Somalia.

Few hopes were pinned on the "Informal Preparatory Meeting" for Somali national reconciliation (sponsored by the UN and facilitated by Ethiopian leader Meles Zenawi) convened in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in early January. Delegations representing the major Somali factions as well as various weak and newly formed groups (see "Major Somali Movements, January 1993," page 6) met in an attempt to work out a cease-fire agreement and shape the agenda and composition of a national reconciliation conference to be held at a later date. Although an agreement in principle on a cease-fire was signed, the terms remained to be negotiated. The factions loosely allied with Ali Mahdi conditioned their acceptance of a cease-fire on the prior return of each clan to its territorial base, to be followed immediately by a national reconciliation conference. Aidid and his allies in the Somali National Alliance (who had gained control of territory in the inter-riverine area and in the cities of Mogadishu and Kismayu well beyond their clans' traditional boundaries, and wanted to consolidate their power over these regions) demanded an immediate cease-fire, with no national reconciliation conference until July. In the end, it was tentatively agreed that the national reconciliation conference would take place on March 15.

Observers expressed concern that the preliminary meeting had been rushed by a UN determined to reassert its diplomatic role. It was also noted that the meeting consisted primarily of warlords and their armed factions posing as "parties," while bona fide community representatives were absent.

Some Positive Short-Term Prospects

The multinational intervention has significantly enhanced short-term prospects for averting famine in southern Somalia and stabilizing the health of that region's communities. The intervention comes at the beginning of the long dry season, *jilaal*, when track roads dry out

Major Somali Movements, January 1993

(in alphabetical order)

The following factions participated in the January 1993 "Informal Preparatory Meeting" for Somali national reconciliation in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Several organizations are listed twice, with different leadership; these are factions that are currently split internally (usually along subclan lines) but which have chosen not to rename their movement. The frequency of shifts in factional and clan alliances means that portions of this list may quickly become outdated. As of mid-January 1993, the most important coalition is the Somali National Alliance, composed of several entities: a faction within the Hawiye clan (a portion of the United Somali Congress) led by Mohamed Farah Aidid; a portion of the (Ogadeni) Somali Patriotic Movement (SPM) led by Colonel Ahmed Umar Jays; the Southern Somali National Movement (SSNM), a Bimaal group; and a portion of the Somali Democratic Movement (SDM), a Rahanwin group, led by Mohamed Nur Aliyow.

Somalia Africans Muki Organization (SAMO). Represented at the meeting in Addis Ababa by a delegation led by Mohamed Ramadan Arbow, SAMO represents minority populations of Bantu origin in the southern riverine regions, the most vulnerable victims of the war and famine. New and relatively weak.

Somali Democratic Alliance (SDA). Represented at the meeting in Addis Ababa by a delegation led by Mohamed Farah Abdullahi, SDA is a Gadabursi (of the Dir clan) organization. Because it was formed by members of a minority clan in the Isaq-dominated north, its principal policy is to resist the SNM's effort to implement the secession of "Somaliland."

Somali Democratic Movement (SDM). Represented at the Addis Ababa meeting by a delegation headed by Abdulkadir Mohamed Adan, this civilian SDM wing is generally allied to Ali Mahdi Mohamed's faction within the USC. It speaks for the Rahanwin, an ethnic group hard-hit by the war and famine.

Somali Democratic Movement (SDM). Chaired by Mohamed Nur Aliyow, this SDM group (part of the Somali National Alliance coalition) represents the military faction of the Rahanwin (an ethnic group hard-hit by the war and famine) that until recently sided with the USC faction led by Aidid.

Somali National Democratic Union (SNDU). Represented at Addis Ababa by a delegation led by Ali I. Abdi, this is a new Darod faction.

Somali National Front (SNF). Represented at Addis Ababa by a delegation led by General Omar Haji Mohamed Hersi, the SNF is composed of Marehan (the deposed Siad Barre's ethnic group) and has a loose alliance with General Aden Abdullahi Noor and his Mohamed Zubeir Ogadeni faction of the SPM.

Somali National Movement (SNM). A delegation led by Ibrahim Meygag Samatar attended the Addis Ababa meeting as observers, but did not sign the agreement. The SNM is an Isaq movement that has been operative since the early 1980s. It fought a protracted war against Siad Barre's troops in the north, gained control of that region in 1991, and declared a unilateral independence for the north (the "Republic of Somaliland"). Although beset by intraclan tensions, the movement is led by Abdurahman Ahmed Ali Tour. Rejectionist to date toward calls for national reunification of Somalia.

Somali National Union (SNU). Represented at Addis Ababa by a delegation chaired by Mohamed Ragis Mohamed, this Reer-Hamar group speaks for coastal urban Somalis. It has weak clan links to the Somali nation but significant ties to the Indian Ocean trade network. Historically economically advantaged as a commercial and industrial community, but part of the minority population in Somalia. Badly hurt by the violence and banditry of the last two years.

Somali Patriotic Movement (SPM). Represented at Addis Ababa by a delegation chaired by General Aden Abdullahi Noor, or "Gabio," this SPM faction represents the Ogadeni (of the Darod clan) group based in Afmadow in southernmost Somalia (the Mohamed Zubeir subclan) and is loosely allied with the SNF. Gabio was a general during Siad Barre's rule.

Somali Patriotic Movement (SPM). Chaired by Colonel Ahmed Umar Jays, this grouping represents Ogadenis (of the Darod clan) who have attempted to lay claim to the region around the southern port of Kismayu, thereby triggering conflict with the Mohamed Zubeir Ogadenis as well as the SSDF. Allied with Aidid's USC faction (in the Somali National Alliance coalition), Jays's group has broken ranks with other Darod clans.

Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF). Led by General Mohamed Abshir Musse, the SSDF is a Mijerteen (of the Darod clan) group. Its regional stronghold is central Somalia, where it has established considerable law and order; it faces a threat there from an ascendant Muslim Brotherhood. A smaller group of the SSDF, the Herti subclan, is located near Kismayu, and is in conflict with the SPM faction of Ahmed Umar Jays.

Southern Somali National Movement (SSNM). Led by Abdi Warsame Isaq, this Dir clan movement, composed especially of the Bimaal subclan in southern coastal Somalia, is part of the Somali National Alliance coalition and is allied with Aidid's USC faction.

United Somali Congress (USC). Led by Ali Mahdi Mohamed, this faction within the USC is dominated by the Abgal subclan of the Hawiye clan, which is concentrated around Mogadishu and currently controls the northern half of the city. Its fiercest adversary is the USC faction composed of Aidid's rival Habir Gedir subclan. Most of the fighting in Mogadishu has been between these two USC factions.

United Somali Congress (USC). Chaired by General Mohamed Farah Aidid, this USC faction is dominated by the Habir Gedir subclan of the Hawiye clan, in alliance with numerous smaller Hawiye subclans. The Habir Gedir's regional base is in central Somalia, but it now controls the southern half of Mogadishu as well. Aidid leads the multiclan Somali National Alliance coalition and his faction is one of the most significant military forces in Somalia. Aidid has obstructed national reconciliation, has poor relations with the UN, and only reluctantly welcomed international intervention.

United Somali Front (USF). Chaired by Abdurahman Du'aleh Ali, this Issa group is centered in the far northwest.

United Somali Party (USP). Represented at Addis Ababa by a delegation headed by Mohamed Abdi Hashi, the USP is a Dolbahante-Warsangali faction (of the Darod clan). It is in conflict with the SNM, because it represents non-Isaq clans living in the north.

and remote villages become accessible. Between January and April, the multinational effort should be able to reach all vulnerable communities with food relief, basic medical care, and rudimentary agricultural extension and veterinary services.

A key short-range goal in the inter-riverine area must be to promote a quick return to economic self-sufficiency once the population is fed and restored to health. A primary challenge for the humanitarian effort will be to provide the farming communities with adequate assistance to prepare their land for a full planting season by April, when the heavy *gu* rains normally arrive. If the agricultural communities regain their strength, and are provided seeds and hoes, they may be able to harvest enough grain in July to put them well on the way toward renewed food self-sufficiency. Some may even be able to sell vegetables and fruits to urban centers. The successful revival of the agricultural sector would be a critical first step toward revitalizing the overall regional economy in the south.

Inter-riverine farmers will not return to their villages and attempt to sow, however, if they feel that their personal safety is threatened by bandits or believe that looters are likely to seize their summer harvest. Continued insecurity in the rural areas would probably trigger further migration by villagers to major relief centers, leaving the farming zones depopulated during the key planting season. Resuscitation of food production in the next six months is therefore dependent on the ability of the multinational forces to maximize regional security in the inter-riverine zone.

One short-term policy option would be to declare the inter-riverine area a "no-go" zone for armed Somalis; unless appointed as local police by villages and towns, all armed Somalis would have their weapons confiscated by patrolling multinational forces. Although difficult to enforce in such a large zone, this policy would effectively rid the farming region of armed Hawiye and Darod bandits whose clans have no legitimate claim to most of the inter-riverine area. While providing security to farmers, such a policy would also provide greater security for commerce along the region's two important arteries (Kismayu-Mogadishu and Bardera-Baidoa-Mogadishu).

It is also imperative in the months before the *gu* planting season to reassure farmers that international food relief will not depress the value of their harvests on local and regional markets. Either the United States or the UN may wish to consider creating a temporary marketing board guaranteeing a fixed price for locally harvested grain to provide an incentive to produce in a market distorted by free food aid.

Reconciliation and Reconstruction Priorities

What will happen if diplomatic and foreign assistance efforts in the coming year do not yield durable national reconciliation and the first steps toward economic revitalization in Somalia? One possibility is that a frustrated international community will withdraw in despair, leaving Somalia to slip back into factional fighting, anarchy, and renewed famine. A second possibility is that the United Nations will reluctantly opt to establish a protectorate over Somalia.

Both of these scenarios are highly undesirable for the international community and for the Somali people. Rebuilding a viable political order and a functional economic base in Somalia—mutually reinforcing processes, each of which is a necessary condition for the other's success—are therefore top priorities. For a durable peace to emerge, Somalis must themselves determine their new political order; but the United States and the UN also have essential roles to play. How well they play them may determine the success or failure of the peace process.

1. How to Define National Reconciliation? Somali society has been badly fractured by years of violence between and within clans. The divide-and-rule tactics that enabled Siad Barre to keep his grip on power in Somalia for over 20 years left a legacy of vendettas and animosity within Somali society. These grievances have been multiplied by countless atrocities in the past two years. Some factional leaders currently vying for top positions in a new political order may be held accountable for crimes against humanity committed either during the final years of the Siad Barre regime or since its fall.

For U.S. and UN diplomats, determining who is or is not qualified to participate in national reconciliation is an inescapable and thorny issue. In theory, a process of political reconciliation should allow the Somali people themselves to determine who may or may not speak as their representatives. In reality, warlords are using military force to intimidate or assassinate potential civic rivals, preventing legitimate community leaders from emerging. (A recent glaring example was the execution, just before the arrival of U.S. marines, of over 100 prominent Harti elders in Kismayu by the Ogadeni warlord Colonel Ahmed Umar Jays.)

To insure a legitimate peace process, strategies must be developed to enhance personal security for all Somalis, particularly community leaders, and this commitment must be expressed in clear terms to factional leaders. Beyond this, the choices made by the United States and the UN over whom to negotiate with, what titles to give factional leaders, and which groups to invite to preliminary peace conferences will inevitably affect the outcome of reconciliation.

In the initial phase of the U.S. intervention, Ambassador Robert Oakley opted to accept the authority of the two major rival leaders in the capital, Ali Mahdi and Aidid. As a tactical move, this was probably unavoidable, because the United States wished to secure the capital without engaging in hostilities with either faction. In the long run, however, the bestowal of such recognition and credibility on political figures with dubious legitimacy in their own community may distort the process of national reconciliation.

The most important U.S. contribution to national reconciliation in Somalia has already been made with the military intervention itself. By imposing a temporary cease-fire, the intervention is providing the Somali people with a "window of opportunity" to meet, talk, and negotiate for the first time in two years. The intervention has also served to erode at least part of the power base of the factional leaders, by reducing the effectiveness of military force as a political instrument and by eliminating the practice of looting food relief to finance the extensive patronage system on which the warlords rely.

This partial marginalization of the warlords is a critical step in establishing a more level playing field on which national reconciliation can proceed. If the factional leaders wish to play an important role in the future political life of Somalia, they will have to demonstrate that they represent real constituencies. Some of the warlords may be able to make this transition, and should be encouraged to do so; others will not.

2. Timing of U.S. Withdrawal. The duration of the U.S. commitment of troops to Somalia, a politically sensitive issue in Washington, will also have an impact on the outcome of the peace process. The longer the cease-fire is imposed, the more likely it is that community leaders—traditional elders, clerics, merchants, professionals, teachers, and local NGO leaders, including women—will find their collective voice and step forward to begin rebuilding local and national political structures. If permitted to organize, community leaders will enjoy significant grass-roots support from a war-weary "silent majority" eager to see an end to the fighting. There will be considerable pressure brought to bear on political representatives not to squander the opportunity to reach a peace, and impatience with foot-dragging or undue haggling over the new political order. If Somalis sense that the U.S. intervention will be brief and a subsequent UN intervention ineffective, however, there will be reluctance on the part of community leaders to take a stand. A rapid withdrawal by U.S. troops would therefore almost certainly play into the hands of the warlords.

Despite this concern, recent Washington policy statements suggest that the United States is committed to withdrawal of most U.S. troops by March and will insist that the UN begin expanding its peacekeeping role in Somalia. This policy trend could be troubling unless the Clinton administration acts to create new capacity for UN action. The UN currently possesses neither the military resources nor the respect of key Somali factions needed to carry out its projected role successfully. Somalia may well become a "quagmire"—not for the United States but for the UN—unless Washington takes adequate steps to strengthen the UN's mandate, resources, and diplomatic reputation in the country.

The process of addressing collective grievances, selecting legitimate spokespersons, forging and reforging social alliances, and eventually creating local and national polities will take a long time, longer than Washington and the UN may yet realize. Forcing too rapid a pace on the national reconciliation process could unintentionally sabotage the effort. A more deliberate pace, with patience on the part of foreigners when the inevitable setbacks occur, will permit authentic community leaders to emerge from Somali society.

3. The Problem of Disarmament. A third obstacle to conflict resolution in Somalia is that the society is and will remain heavily militarized, regardless of whatever disarmament schemes the multinational forces may attempt to implement. Given the current political uncertainty, individual Somalis as well as factions and clans will consider it more prudent to hide their weapons than to allow themselves to be disarmed. This will complicate (but not necessarily prevent) national reconciliation. Any clan or faction that considers itself underrepresented in a new political order will have easy recourse to armed resistance, playing a "spoiler" role in a fragile new government. Because total disarmament is not feasible, the key aim of both the peacekeeping forces and a future interim Somali government must be to create a political and economic climate in which buried guns stay buried. This will require inspired political leadership and diplomatic skills on the part of Somali leaders. In the meantime, the intervention forces can facilitate the task by continuing to expand the current efforts aimed at policing the capital and confiscating weapons from the teenage bandits, and by monitoring the arsenals of rival warlords.

4. Reintegration of the *Mooryaan*. A fourth challenge to political and economic reconstruction in Somalia is the social reintegration of the *mooryaan*—a "lost generation" that has grown up knowing only repression, violence, and rule by terror. Some have committed atrocities and will be afraid to return as unarmed civilians to the capital, where they may be vulnerable either to reprisals or to arrest by a reestablished justice system. Many of the *mooryaan* in this category have fled the advancing intervention forces and remain in the rural areas, and may evolve into a permanent class of outlaws.

Moreover, the *mooryaan* lack economic incentive to return to civic society. Many were forcibly conscripted into Siad Barre's army in the late 1980s and possess no skills except soldiering. Unless they are provided training opportunities in a revived economy that offers them some opportunity for making a living, many in this underclass will make an economically rational choice to remain looters. Immediate, labor-intensive reconstruction projects, and the reopening of schools, will provide at least some opportunities for training and employment.

5. Foreign Economic Aid. Somalia's economy and infrastructure are shattered, and this represents a fifth challenge to political and economic rehabilitation. Worse still, the end of the Cold War means that Somalia cannot hope for the kind of outside support that sustained both its economy and political system over the previous three decades. With a smaller "national pie" to allocate, political pacts between clans will be more difficult to cement, and competition for scarce national resources and opportunities will be fiercer.

It is critical that the international community not repeat the mistakes of the past, when nearly all of the entrepreneurial energies of professional Somalis were devoted to obtaining a share of the funds disbursed by large, centralized foreign aid projects, and when control of access to such funding was a political lever. Although the country will be in need of massive outside assistance for the foreseeable future, both for reconstruction and for the financing of basic governmental functions, aid will be effective only if it is provided in ways that foster productive rather than parasitic economic behavior.

Until a new national government is formed, technical assistance for small-scale rehabilitation of local infrastructure should be channeled through local and regional authorities. Local communities should be provided maximum discretion to identify and implement rehabilitation projects with outside assistance. Targeting flexible, small-scale aid at the local and regional level will promote a "bottom-up" process of both economic and political reconstruction and will restore a sense of self-reliance and self-determination to communities traumatized by years of powerlessness and intimidation. Such a policy will also circumvent, and thereby further marginalize, warlords and factional leaders who will certainly attempt to control and divert developmental aid.

Foreign assistance requiring technical expertise should carry with it a requirement that an effort be made to hire some of the many Somali professionals currently living abroad. There are tens of thousands of highly skilled Somalis in engineering, medicine, agriculture, and other relevant fields who might be willing to return to Somalia to assist in the country's reconstruction, if they are given economic incentives to do so. It is crucial to the success of Somalia's economic revitalization that at least some of this important professional class be induced to come back.

Somalis abroad are not only a source of skilled labor but also a source of capital. Even prior to the country's collapse, Somali society relied heavily on remittances from expatriates working in the Gulf, Europe, and North America. Many affluent and middle-class Somalis who no longer wish to return home would be eager to invest some of their savings in small businesses operated by relatives in Somalia. They will be reluctant to do so, however, in an environment of political insecurity and high risk. Policies designed to mitigate these risks—a foreign aid program providing some form of guarantees on Somali investments, similar to the loan guarantees to U.S. banks and businesses made by the Overseas Private Investment Corporation and the Export-Import Bank—would promote expatriate investment.

Additionally, the economy could be stimulated at little cost to donors through a generous preferential trade arrangement. Cottage industries could take advantage of these arrangements to export a variety of locally produced, labor-intensive items, such as leather goods, woven baskets, cloth, and processed agricultural products. One sector which should not be encouraged by the international community, however, is the production of bananas for export. Although there have been banana plantations along Somalia's two rivers since the colonial era, numerous studies have shown them to be only marginally profitable and a poor use of Somalia's most fertile and irrigable land. Worse, the development of large-scale plantations and state farms in the 1970s and 1980s was accompanied by the forcible displacement of tens of thousands of productive smallholders along the rivers; it is such farmers on whom the country depends for its production of staple foods. In the current situation, the international community should strongly encourage the production of food crops rather than cash crops, and smallholder rather than plantation production.

U.S. and other international agencies should be aware that a resurgence in the economic viability of agricultural production will generate complex and heated debates over land ownership. During the period of land expropriation along the Shebelle and Juba rivers in the 1970s and 1980s, smallholder rights were almost entirely ignored by urban civil servants exploiting new land registration laws. Some of these urban claimants will almost certainly return to villages demanding access to land traditionally held by local communities. Special attention should be given to safeguarding the interests of the politically weak riverine communities by insisting on their right to gain access to adequate riverine farmland.

6. The Structure of the New Somali State(s). A sharp debate is already under way over the structure of tomorrow's Somalia, pitting advocates of a decentralized federated system in which each clan has control over its own affairs against those who call for a centralized state transcending rather than institutionalizing clan divisions. Generally, smaller or geographically scattered clans fear marginalization in a federal system, while larger clans are more disposed to consider regional autonomy.

The most politically sensitive aspect of this debate is the issue of the "Republic of Somaliland" in the north. In May 1991, the Isaq-based Somali National Movement (SNM) unilaterally declared the secession of a region roughly covering the former British protectorate. This move was fueled by Isaq outrage at years of repressive military occupation by the Siad Barre regime, culminating in the 1988-1989 military campaign that left much of the north in ruins. One problem facing the secessionists is that the self-proclaimed republic's boundaries encompass non-Isaq minorities, particularly the Gadabursi (of the Dir clan), and the Warsangali and Dolbahante (both of the Darod clan). These clans have resisted the secessionist move and the SNM's claim to speak for the north. The secessionist effort has been further handicapped by the international community's unwillingness to grant "Somaliland" diplomatic recognition, mostly out of concern that such a precedent could have negative ramifications elsewhere in Africa and in the Middle East. Hence the "Republic" has remained isolated and has received only nominal amounts of emergency relief assistance.

Over time, the SNM may choose to engage in a renewed dialogue on Somali national reconciliation, using its threat of secession as a bargaining device with other factions. In the meantime, however, the north's diplomatic isolation is contributing to the growing inability of the SNM to maintain even marginal governance over the region. Observers have grown increasingly concerned that an upsurge in factional fighting in the north could soon yield a crisis comparable to that in the south. It has been suggested that the international community take proactive measures, through the provision of assistance for reconstruction in the north, to shore up local governance and prevent a collapse into anarchy. This can be done without implicitly recognizing the secessionist claim.

Lessons and Long-Term Prospects

The catastrophe in Somalia demonstrates in a particularly tragic manner the costs of ignoring a problem during its early stages. The costs of action in Somalia would have been much less—for both Somalis and the world—if the international community had acted to pressure Siad Barre to leave office before civil war polarized and disrupted society, or if coordinated, concentrated action had been initiated in 1991 or even early 1992. The need to intervene militarily in Somalia is the result of a failure to respond adequately to many earlier opportunities. Many Somalis regard the intervention as humiliating evidence of an inability to manage their own affairs, but responsibility for the catastrophe is global. Regional organizations such as the Organization of African Unity and the Arab League were unable or unwilling to take action while their neighbors died; the United Nations lacked the flexibility and vision to break bureaucratic impasses; and the major powers averted their attention until the problem developed into a crisis and the crisis into a catastrophe.

Perhaps the most important lesson of the Somali debacle is that nothing can replace policies of preemptive diplomacy, crisis avoidance, and assistance programs designed to prevent social and political breakdown. If this lesson is not learned, the international community will spend the coming decade trying to put out similar regional brushfires around the world. The international attention Somalia is receiving should therefore not come at the expense of initiatives directed at preventing chaos in places such as Zaire and Angola, nurturing democracy in such countries as Kenya, Ethiopia, Nigeria, and Zambia, or facilitating the implementation of peace agreements in war-torn states such as Mozambique.

It is especially important that the international community recognize the Somali crisis as intricately connected with developments in neighboring states in the Horn. Spillover effects from the collapse of governance in Somalia has generated large refugee populations—over 700,000—that burden and threaten to destabilize Kenya, Ethiopia, and Djibouti. Banditry in Somalia has also spilled over into Ethiopia, Kenya, and Djibouti, rendering considerable portions of these states ungovernable. The problem of arms control and disarmament is likewise a regional affair. The active participation of Ethiopian leader Meles Zenawi in current Somali national reconciliation talks demonstrates a recognition that the fates of these countries are interlocked. International proposals to manage economic reconstruction and political rehabilitation in Somalia should therefore be conceived within a regional context. A regional approach to the Horn's ongoing crises will not be incompatible with the trend toward decentralization in Somali political affairs. Indeed, both serve to de-emphasize the central Somali state, which has been at the heart of many of Somalia's current woes.

On a broader level, the international intervention in Somalia sets precedents and provides lessons that world leaders will scrutinize as they struggle with humanitarian crises and the breakdown of governance throughout many regions of the world. The unanimous vote by the UN Security Council endorsing the intervention in Somalia suggests that unilateral humanitarian intervention is now considered justifiable in crises where human tragedies reach untenable levels. Neither the UN nor the Washington, however, has begun to articulate how this principle is to be codified or enforced.

Unless the United States wishes to bear the burden of intervention in the future, it must assist in the development of new mechanisms empowering the United Nations to take on more ambitious diplomatic and peacemaking roles. The UN's poor performance in the Somali crisis suggests that major reforms are required to reshape the organization to meet contemporary needs. If the UN is to perform the new tasks it is being assigned on our post-Cold War globe, the major powers must provide the organization with the tools to meet these challenges.

Despite the far-reaching implications of Operation Restore Hope, the longer-term political strategy of the United States and the United Nations remains underdeveloped, and many of the local dynamics that will determine the success of the mission are still poorly understood. The international community has not yet decided what role it will play in the construction of a new political order in Somalia in the event that current negotiations fail to produce a working government and a national peace. Yet the real possibility of an impasse in national reconciliation in Somalia suggests that the United States and the UN need to prepare for such a contingency.

Ken Menkhaus, an assistant professor of Political Science at Davidson College in Davidson, North Carolina, conducted research in rural southern Somalia in 1987-1988 on a Fulbright-Hays grant and in July 1991 made an emergency needs assessment in southern Somalia on behalf of the private relief agency World Concern. He has since served as a consultant to the United Nations and the Department of State on the Somali crisis and is the author of several published articles on Somalia.

Terrence Lyons is a senior research analyst in the Foreign Policy Studies Program of the Brookings Institution. His most recent publication on the Horn of Africa is "Great Powers and Conflict Reduction in the Horn of Africa" in *Cooperative Security: Reducing Third World Wars*, I. William Zartman, ed. (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, forthcoming). A previous contribution to *CSIS Africa Notes* was "The Transition in Ethiopia" (no. 127, August 1991).